Published: July 30, 1973
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STRIKES WIDENED BY CHAVEZ UNION
Grape Growers Contracts in California Expire

BY EARL CALLOWELL
Appeal to The New York Times

BAKERSFIELD, Calif., July 26—Grape growers in Cali-

fornia table grape growers spread across the entire San Joaquin Valley today were bargaining with United Farm Workers Union. The growers refused to sign contracts with their workers.

The strike that was called this afternoon left the farm having just two contracts with the workers.

Once the strike was an-

ounced by Cesar Chavez, the union chief, there was specu-

lation that the 29 growers in the Delano area would sign specific procedures and the union by the Brotherhood of Teamsters. The growers, who have already taken action to freeze contracts from the fledgling U.F.W.U., had been fighting their earlier strike attempt in the Delano contracts, which would take the existence of the growing industry in California.

It had been forecast that if the Chavez union spokesmen could not hold the Delano contracts, it would have been very damaging. It was pointed out that the union's membership in California 40 years ago had fallen from 19,350 and would dip to a 40,000 for these contracts were lost.

Backroom Rules

However, officials of the U.F.W.U. were busy announcing that they were not about to give away power to the Delano growers to three key speakers.

Mr. Chavez said that nego-

tiations had broken down between the United Farm Workers Union and the growers in the Delano contracts. He said that the union was trying to stop the growers from engaging in pesticide and pollutant control, which some union spokesmen have called the "backroom rules" of the growers.

Mr. Chavez added that the negotiations were "an important and crucial action to date in the history of the United Farm Workers Union" and that the growers would simply "yield as much as possible for the sake of the Delano contracts.

The growers are expected to be particularly bitter because it is considered to be the union's strong point.

It was learned that in 1970 the grape growers, after a labor agreement with Mr. Chavez and his union five years ago, signed contracts that have led to what is known as a result of the U.F.W.U. was accepted by the growers, industry across the state. The growers had to agree to a provision that the contracts have to expire three years later.

The U.F.W.U., the growers began to sign with the union of the growers in the first place in the Coachella Valley, and nothing was signed all but two growers, Mr. Chavez said in the Coachella Valley, and nothing was signed all but two growers, Mr. Chavez said.

Mr. Chavez indicated that he

would not be surprised if the Delano growers went to the teamsters. He said that the growers said "the teamsters have the right to negotiate the back room alone without consulting us." He did not elaborate.

Mr. Chavez said that the union did not give in on the hiring hall issue because "people must have the right to set fair rules on hiring practices and to eliminate labor contractors.

On the issue of union recog-

nition, he said that provincial contracts covered all crops but that in these negotiations the growers were insisting that the contracts cover only grapes.

"That would be unreasonable," Mr. Chavez said. "You might be working for three hours under the morning under a contract and then move to an orchard in the afternoon and not be covered by the contract.

Mr. Chavez said that the crops now are "worse than they were three years ago" and that some effort to force a new contract was needed in the contract. He said that the union also wanted provisions for pesticide control written into the contract.

The report of his union that it was in deep trouble and that it might not survive this labor crisis, Mr. Chavez said in a statement:

"The strike is not going to be easy but we may not win it. If they [the growers] don't sign this year, their union will sign next year and if not next year, we will be in a position. We have nothing left to lose, no place to go but the highway and we have our patience."