FARM UNION STRIFE SEEN DESPITE LAW

Ruling of California Board Called U.F.W. Victory

SACRAMENTO, Calif., Aug. 30 — California's new farm labor law went into effect this week, but two days of hearings on its provisions indicated that the controversy, after a decade of strife in the state's $6-billion industry, was far from over.

The law, enacted in June, gives farm workers the right for the first time to ask for secret ballot elections for the union of their choice or to vote against a union.

The United Farm Workers and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, the two unions battling to sign up field hands, are expected to submit petitions on Tuesday for a number of ranches, indicating that workers want elections.

An election must be held within one week after the petition is received by the Agricultural Labor Relations Board, created to administer the new law.

Over the protest of several major farm groups, the board ruled yesterday that union organizers would be allowed access to workers in the fields 60 minutes before work, 60 minutes after work and during lunch breaks. This was the board's first major ruling, and it came one day after the five members officially took office, and followed 14 hours of public hearings.

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Some lawyers for the farm workers said they would advise their clients that they did not have to obey the access rule because they felt it exceeded the board's authority and violated property rights.

Rod Blonien, executive director of the California Peace Officers Association, said that if law enforcement agents found a conflict between existing access rules and new rules issued by the farm labor law, the law would take precedence.

The California union elections will involve 40,000 to 50,000 workers, of the total farm labor force of 280,000.

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