

# President's Newsletter



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Office of the President  
United Farm Workers of America, AFL-CIO  
La Paz, Keene, California 93531



## PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

### Labor Dept. Denies H-2 to Arizona Citrus Growers

In a news release issued on October 5, the U.S. Department of Labor announced it had denied requests by seven Arizona citrus growers to import foreign workers under the federal government's H-2 program.

The Department of Labor action, which was a real victory for the farm workers, came less than two weeks after we travelled to Phoenix to blast the Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES), the state employment office, and the growers, for discriminating against local Arizonians who sought jobs in the citrus industry. We stated that the DES acted to enable growers to prevent Arizona workers from obtaining jobs with employers who sought permission to import foreign workers under the H-2 program.

At that same September 23 news conference, we called on the Department of Labor to investigate DES practices and those Arizona citrus growers who requested H-2 workers.

*William Haltigan*, regional administrator for the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration in San Francisco, said the denials of the growers' requests were made on grounds that the growers did not comply with Labor Department regulations "designed to protect the wages and working conditions of domestic workers and to ensure that available domestic workers receive first consideration for jobs."

*Haltigan* said his department would work closely with the DES to ensure that every effort was made "to recruit American workers to harvest the citrus crops."

Our union charged that abuses of local workers by the state employment office and growers included requiring unprecedented job references from local workers, insisting on personal interviews before residents were hired, demanding that Arizona workers live in company camps, and requiring a two day training period on hourly wages before local workers could earn the more profitable piece rate pay.

*Haltigan* said the application for 58 foreign workers by Sunny Valley Citrus was denied because the grower failed to cooperate with U.S. officials

in the recruitment of qualified domestic workers.

"There were 107 workers who were available for referral to the grower," *Haltigan* said. "We also found that the grower rejected two applicants (local workers) for other than job-related reasons."

The applications by the other six growers and a second Sunny Valley application for 25 workers were denied for reasons such as inadequate housing and substandard wage rates, *Haltigan* said.

The other growers whose H-2 applications were denied were Bodine Produce Co., Central Citrus Co., Fletcher Farms, Goldmar, Inc. Mesa Citrus Growers and Clark Packers. They are all located in the Phoenix area.

Last June in Texas, when the Department of Labor denied Presidio melon and onion growers H-2 workers, the employers found a friendly federal judge in El Paso who ordered the Labor and Justice Departments to permit the foreign workers to enter the U.S. (see Newsletter, July 10, 1978).

The H-2 workers were subjected to such poor working conditions and substandard pay that 150 of them struck one company.

Supporters across the U.S. are continuing to write Secretary of Labor *Ray Marshall* to oppose grower use of the H-2 program to keep out unions and lower wages, working conditions and job opportunities for resident farm workers.

## COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

### Settlements - San Ysidro

Two separate grievances at two different ranches in San Ysidro were settled at the second step recently. The grievances involved workers at the Koichi Yamamoto ranch and Piper Ranch.

At Koichi Yamamoto ranch, we charged the company with violating the seniority rights of Brothers *Juan Quijas* and *Pablo Nerey* when they were temporarily laid off out of seniority order. This violation occurred on September 29. At the second step meeting on October 12, the company agreed to pay Brothers *Quijas* and *Nerey* for the five hours of wages and

benefits that they lost. The company also agreed to respect the seniority rights of the workers in the future.

Brothers *Quijas* and *Nerey* were aided in the grievance by Brother *Javier Acosta*, UFW field representative and Brothers *Jesus Gonzalez*, president of the ranch committee at Yamamoto, and *Cesario de la Luz*, ranch steward.

The grievance at Piper Ranch concerned the company's violations of holiday pay, which occurred when three irrigators on the ranch, Brothers *Felix Navarro*, *Refugio Rea*, and *Quintin Carretero* were not paid holiday pay for work that they did on Labor Day. According to our contract at Piper, workers who work on holidays such as Labor Day should receive the daily average pay earned during the payroll week immediately preceding the holiday. Since these three workers did not receive this pay, the company agreed to compensate Brothers *Navarro*, *Rea* and *Carretero* for their proper holiday wages.

Brothers *Eucebio Carretero*, president of the Piper ranch committee and Brother *Felipe Samano*, ranch steward, helped Brothers *Navarro*, *Rea*, and *Carretero* with the grievance. They were also assisted by Brother *Javier Acosta*.

## NATIONAL FARM WORKER MINISTRY

### Florida Working Group Supports Farm Workers

The Florida Working Group of the National Farm Worker Ministry (NFWM), which includes all the UFW Florida support committees as well as church support groups, met on September 30 at Faith Presbyterian Church in Dunedin, Florida.

At the meeting the Florida support committees gave reports on their activities which includes writing letters to Secretary of Labor *Ray Marshall* protesting the growers' use of the H-2 program, fundraising, and planning a "Day of Fasting" event for November 21, in conjunction with the NFWM and other support committees around the country.

Also presented at the meeting was a slide show about Project CHAIN (Combatting Hunger And Injustice Now), which is celebrating its second successful year of raising money for our union cause through contributions from various churches. The slide show was presented by Brother *Fred Webb*, pastor of Faith Church and Sister *Cathy Foss*, director of Project CHAIN.

Brother *Fred Eyster*, Florida director of the NFWM and Sister *Anne Kendrick*, NFWM Board member, will be planning a Farm Labor Consultation project for this fall and winter. These consultations will be on-site visits to different farm labor camps and fields in Florida. Included in these

visits will be talks with workers under UFW contracts, discussions with growers, visits to labor camps and strategizing on ways to develop support for farm workers within the religious community.

Highlighting the meeting were talks given by UFW state director *Stephen Roberson*, and Brothers *Elijah Woodson*, *Frank Lewis*, *Valentine Barajas*, and *Major Anderson*, from the Coca-Cola negotiating committee. They shared with the Working Group the situation with negotiations with the Coca-Cola Company. In his talk to the group, Brother *Roberson* expressed his thanks for the great help the support committees, churches and Project CHAIN have provided. In talking about the negotiations with Coke, he said, "This contract will provide a tremendous example for rates and benefits. We are not asking for a lot of money, we just want to negotiate the rates before the season starts so that workers have the security of knowing how much they are going to make."

Brother *Roberson* explained the status of the negotiations with Coke: "The company is using the same tactics they have used before; their chief tactic is to discourage the people by putting a freeze on further negotiations. Our tactic with the company is that we are not going to be discouraged, but encouraged. We are going to be persistent and stick to our demands. We're not going to give up!" Brother *Roberson* thanked the supporters for their help with the Coke negotiations in the past and asked them all to be ready to support the negotiations again.

The next meeting of the Working Group will be held on December 9 in Winter Haven, Florida.

## CITIZENSHIP PARTICIPATION DEPARTMENT

### Farm Workers Help Register 120,000 New California Voters

A massive voter registration campaign aided by the farm workers has registered more than 120,000 new California voters since early August.

Beginning on August 5, farm worker volunteers helped Governor *Brown's*

reelection campaign register 114,423 voters in East Los Angeles, San Jose, and Alameda and San Diego Counties. The drive registered 53,586 persons alone in Los Angeles. About 90% of the new voters were Democrats.

UFW National Executive Board members *Marshall Ganz* and *Jessica Govea* took leaves of absence from their UFW duties to coordinate the voter registration effort. Thanks to their hard work and the hard work of their staff, 85 to 100 volunteers turned out for the last three weekends in Los Angeles to help in the campaign.

The farm workers also conducted a major voter registration drive in the Kern County area. In a five day campaign—from October 5 to 9—volunteers registered approximately 6,000 voters—most of them Democrats—in Kern and portions of Tulare Counties, an unprecedented number of registrations in such a short period of time. These new voters account for about 5% of the total registered voters in Kern County.

The Kern County effort was sponsored by the National UFW Civic Action Project, which is supported by farm worker contributions to the Citizenship Participation Day Fund (CPD Fund). Although volunteers from La Paz and Delano registered every eligible person who wanted to register, the campaign was particularly interested in registering minority citizens—Chicanos, Blacks, and Filipinos—who have not traditionally participated in large numbers in the voting process.

During the 1976 general election, farm worker volunteers registered 350,000 voters during the fall campaign.

## OFFICIAL NOTICES

### Extra Credit

Credit for the remodeling of the Salinas field office should also go to Brother *Jose Soto*, who put much of his time and energy into reconstructing the office. Brother *Soto* is a member of the National Farm Worker Service Center's construction crew, which recently spent weeks working on the Salinas field office (see Newsletter, October 9, 1978).

## Latest Election

Montgomery Farms/ Delano/ olives/ UFW-24, no union-71/ Oct. 4.

## New Contract

Padula Farms/ Terra Bella, Exeter/ olives/ Sept. 19.

## Coors Boycott Update

Strikers from Brewery Workers Local no.366, now in their 19th month of a strike against the Adolph Coors Company in Golden, Colorado, report that the company is now saying that they "have what we want—a full work force and no unions. If the status quo continues for 10 years, it's all right with us."

However, the first six months of 1978 shows Coors net profits down 46% and the boycott has now claimed 54% of Coors' California market, with their other 15 marketing areas showing sharp declines. At the plant, production decreased by 250,000 barrels and beer sales are down 19%. As the pressure of the boycott continues to plummet Coors sales, the company has filed a law suit against the Brewery workers and the National AFL-CIO, seeking to have the boycott declared illegal.

## RFK Medical Plan

*If a member's spouse dies, do the member's hours (50 hours in the past year) provide him/her with "Spouse's Death Benefit"?* (The deceased spouse has not worked in the past year.)

Yes. The surviving spouse can be covered by the deceased employee's hours as long as the spouse could meet the 50 hour requirement. There is, however, no extension for Death Benefit Eligibility, nor can family hours be combined to meet the required 50 hours.

### RFK Question

If you have a question about the Robert F. Kennedy Medical Plan, please send it to us at the President's Newsletter, Post Office Box 62, Keene, California, 93531.

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