




Farm Labor Organizing Committee

"hasta la victoria" 714½ s. saint clair street, toledo, oh 43609 phone 419-243-3456 

TO: FLOC Boycott Committees, Friends and Contacts

FROM: Baldemar Velasquez, FLOC President *BV*

RE: Press Conference Marking Official Beginning of International Boycott Effort

DATE: January 20, 1979

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On Thursday, January 25, 1979, FLOC will hold a press conference which will mark the official beginning of the international boycott of Libby, McNeil, Libby and Campbell Soup products. The following Sunday, January 28th a rally and fundraiser will be held (flier enclosed) to kick-off the boycott.

Enclosed in this package of information you will find various materials which FLOC Boycott/Support Committees, friends and contacts can use when writing to store managers, Libby or Campbell head offices, gathering petitions or raising funds. Please use the material as your efforts are needed for our final victory.

FLOC is also asking that you send a brief message in the form of a mail-gram stating that you are active as a committee, organization or individual, pledging your support to the farmworker cause. All messages will be read at the rally on Sunday and should be received at the FLOC office no later than Saturday, January 27th.

SUPPORT FARMWORKERS

In early August, 1978, farmworkers in the tomato fields of Ohio went on strike. Their demands:

- better housing (i.e. running water, electricity...)
- a guaranteed minimum wage
- guaranteed work
- medical coverage
- the right to participate in the annual contract negotiations between growers and canneries.

The canneries however, refuse to negotiate with the farmworker's union, the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC); claiming they have no responsibility for the conditions farmworkers live and labor in. "Its the growers, not us" they chant, trying to hide their control of the growers income. Yet, the canneries determine how many acres of tomatoes they'll take from a grower and how much s/he'll get paid for them. The money the farmer receives has to pay all of his/her expenses. This determines how much can go to the farmworker, in terms of wages, housing, etc. FLOC recognizes that farmworkers must negotiate with both growers and canneries to assure that farmworkers get better housing, higher wages, etc.



Woodcut by Carlos Cortez from Industrial Worker

Along with better living conditions, farmworkers are demanding more control over their lives. The most important question they face is: what will happen to them when the canneries have forced growers to harvest tomatoes by machine? In this society, the workers usually bear the cost of technological change. FLOC, however, feels that the canneries, who will benefit the most from the switch to machines, should also foot the bill. This includes providing for the workers' welfare, by such means as training them for new jobs. The costs involved would be small compared to the money the canneries have already made off the workers labor. However, the particular program under which this would occur can only be settled in negotiations between the canneries and the farmworkers: Until they settle,

BOYCOTT CAMPBELL'S and LIBBY'S

BOYCOTT CAMPBELL'S and LIBBY'S

LIBBY-MCNEILL-LIBBY

- All Nestle's products (Nestle's is the parent company of Libby-McNeill-Libby)
- All vegetables, fruits, meats, and juices with the Libby's label

CAMPBELL'S

- Campbell's soup
- Swanson frozen prepared dinners and meats
- V-8 vegetable juice
- Efficient food service products
- Recipe pet food
- Hanover Trail restaurants
- Franco-American products
- Lexington Gardens retail garden centers
- Pepperidge Farm products
- Granny's soups
- Bounty canned chili and entrees
- Godiva chocolates
- Pietro's Gold Coast pizzas
- Delacre cookies and pastries
- Herfy's restaurants
- Kia-ora food products
- Vlasic



PLEASE WRITE TO THE COMPANIES
TO TELL THEM THAT YOU ARE
BOYCOTTING THEIR PRODUCTS
AND WHY:

Douglas B. Wells, President
Libby, McNeill & Libby
200 S. Michigan
Chicago, Illinois 60604

D.Y. Robinson
Director of Consumer Services
Campbell's Soup
Camden, N.J. 08101

- I am boycotting all Campbell's and Libby's products.
- I would like to work on spreading the boycott.
- I am donating _____ to help cover the expenses of boycott work.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel: _____

Mail to : FLOC
714½ S. St. Clair
Toledo, Ohio 43609

FARMWORKER ORGANIZING IN THE MIDWEST

Farm Labor Organizing Committee
714½ S. St. Clair St.
Toledo, Ohio
43609

This summer close to 2,000 farmworkers struck the tomato fields of Northwest Ohio demanding better wages, working and living conditions. Although the harvest has come to an end for this year, the struggle against the principal targets of Campbell Soup and Libby-McNeill-Libby has not. The farmworkers, under the leadership of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC), has now called for a nationwide consumer boycott of these companies' products.

Farmworkers have long been denied their rights as working men and women. While there has been some national attention focused on the problem through the United Farm Workers' boycotts of grapes and lettuce, outside of California the problem has been largely ignored. Now, following the example set by the UFW, other farmworkers are taking up the struggle to help build the national farmworker movement.

On August 25, 1979, 2,000 farmworkers closed over 70 tomato farms contracted with Campbell's and Libby's. Although the tomato farms are owned by independent farmers who also invest acreage in other crops and who are the farmworkers immediate employers, FLOC insists that the canning companies should bear the responsibilities for the increase welfare and benefits of the farmworker.

The cannery agrees, before the tomato season begins, to pay the grower so much per ton, therefore predetermining the price that the grower can pay the workers. The workers are paid by the grower on a piece rate system (before the strike most workers were being offered 19-24¢ per 33 lb. hamper), and it is a no-win system for the worker. If he asks the grower for a raise, the grower tells the worker that the cannery must pay him more before he can afford to pay the worker more. If the workers strike solely the grower for a pay raise, there would be a repeat of what happened in 1968: Farmworkers represented by FLOC struck and won twenty-two contracts in 1968 and lost eleven of the contracts the next year when the growers decided to plant corn, wheat or soybeans. Although the growers can give moderate wage in-

creases, they do not have the economic flexibility to give farmworkers long deserved but costly benefits such as health insurance.

Organizing is difficult in the Midwest because almost all of the workers come annually from Florida and Texas for summer seasonal work, allowing only one to three months' time to mobilize any effective action. Nevertheless, there is great determination to overcome any obstacles to a farmworker victory. The patience and discipline shown by the strikers bear testimony to the fact that they are prepared for this fight to be a long one, one that may take several years to win.

Although strikes will continue to be a major tool against the canneries, only through a hard and probably long struggle will FLOC be able to win this fight. FLOC is now calling on its friends throughout the country to help organize boycott committees in their communities and to help raise funds to support this continuing struggle.

TOLEDO FLOC SUPPORT COMMITTEE

January 19, 1979

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As you know farm workers in Ohio are struggling to achieve the most basic human needs, living wages and decent working conditions. Large multinational corporations stand in the way of these workers as they attempt to make gains through the collective bargaining process. During the late summer the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) called a strike against tomato growers contracted by Campbell's Soups and Libbeys, two of the most exploitive multinationals in the world. Thousands of migrant farm workers walked out of the fields. No one is naive enough to believe that Campbell's and Libbeys can be seriously crippled by an Ohio strike, but the potential of an international boycott has far reaching implications.

On Sunday, January 28, FLOC will formally announce such an international boycott. Plans for this boycott have been in the making for months and support has been growing. Nearly 50 boycott committees have been established in the U. S., and endorsements have come in from labor organizations and progressive movements both here and abroad. The boycott has received active support from the United Farm Workers and Cesar Chavez.

The enclosed flier announces the rally and fundraiser which will kick off the FLOC boycott. Please attend this important event and urge the officers of your organization, your members, families and friends to attend as well. A coalition of labor, church groups, civic organizations and progressive individuals and groups is the essential key to FLOC's success. This coalition must provide the financial foundation upon which the boycott will be built. So while the rally and fundraiser will be an enjoyable and fun event, its message will be serious for anyone who believes in the most basic human rights.

We know that we shall see you and your families at the rally. In the meantime, advance pledges of financial support would be appreciated as well as resolutions of support. Both can be sent to FLOC. The address is on the enclosed pledge form. Please distribute or post the enclosed fliers, and we'll see you at the rally.

In Support of the Boycott

MEMBERS OF THE TOLEDO FLOC SUPPORT COMMITTEE

Jerry Ceille
TOLEDO METROPOLITAN MISSION

Maggie Howell
TOLEDO/N.W. OHIO NATIONAL CLIENT'S COUNCIL

Lynne Stankey
AFSCME OHIO COUNCIL 8

Ray Santiago
SECRETARY-TREASURER, FLOC

Tom Nowel
AFSCME OHIO COUNCIL 8

Kathy Kozlowski
LOCAL 2916

jmh

I want to support the farm worker's fight for better wages and decent working conditions. I am contributing the following amount:

\$ _____

I would also like to pledge \$ _____
to be paid monthly in order to insure continued financial support of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee.

All checks should be made payable to FLOC and sent to:

FLOC
714 S. St. Clair
Toledo, Ohio 43609
(419) 243-3456

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE _____

UNION/ORGANIZATION _____

PHONE _____

FARM LABOR ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

714½ S St Clair
Toledo, Ohio 43609

419 243-3456

January 19, 1979



PRESS RELEASE

For More Information Contact:
Ray Santiago - 243-3456 (419)

The Farm Labor Organizing Committee cordially invites the news media to attend a press conference at the F.L.O.C. office, 714½ S. St. Clair, on January 25th at 9:00AM.

The purpose of the press conference is to publically announce FLOC's current activities toward building its international boycott of Libby-McNeil-Libby and Campbell Soup products. Striking farmworkers from Texas and Florida will be present at the conference.

FLOC, which led last summer's strike of 2,000 Ohio farmworkers will also be holding a benefit rally on January 28th at 2:00PM at the Retail Clerk's Union Hall, 730 N. Summit Street in Toledo to officially kick-off its boycott. Baldemar Velasquez, president of FLOC will be joined by a roster of local and national speakers.

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FARM LABOR ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

714¹/₂ S. St. Clair
Toledo, Ohio 43609

419 243-3456

January 16, 1979



Public Service Director:

The Farm Labor Organizing Committee would appreciate it very much if you would air this important public service announcement as often as possible before the 28th of January.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Ray Santiago
FLOC, Secretary-Treasurer

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT -

The Farm Labor Organizing Committee, which led last summer's strike of 2,000 Ohio farmworkers will be holding a benefit rally on January 28th at 2:00PM at the Retail Clerk's Union Hall, 730 North Summit Street in Toledo to officially kick-off its international boycott.

Come hear local and national FLOC supporters speak.

There will be live music and refreshments.

Join the striking farmworkers on Sunday, January 28th at 2:00PM at the Retail Clerks' Hall.

For more information, call 419-243-3456.

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MYTHS ABOUT UNIONS

Union leaders are corrupt and have ties with racketeers and organized crime. There have been instances of corruption in union leadership, but certainly no more, and maybe less, than in other institutions, such as government and business. The Watergate scandal was a perfect example of political corruption at the highest levels; however, it would be grossly unfair to label all politicians "corrupt" because of isolated incidents such as Watergate. The same is true of charges that union leaders are corrupt. Those few corrupt leaders are far outnumbered by the honest ones.

Unions are racist and reactionary. There is no question that instances of racial discrimination by unions can be found, but there is no single institution in America that is entirely free of racial discrimination. Union members can be proud of the fact that organized labor has done more to eliminate discriminatory practices than any other segment of society. In fact, it was the political support and legislative skill of the labor unions which made it possible to turn the civil rights agitation of the fifties and sixties into civil rights legislation.

Organized labor has historically played an advocacy role in society rather than a reactive one. Labor unions have led movements which ultimately benefitted all Americans economically and socially, such as Social Security, Medicare, minimum wage and public works programs, as well as civil rights legislation. Labor unions "react" when human rights are violated -- union or non-union -- and if that classifies unions as "reactionary" then it is a title unions bear proudly.

Unions hinder the talented and protect the incompetent. Unions do not put any type of restrictions on a person's output, so it is difficult to see how they could hinder the talented or ambitious person. Collectively bargained contracts simply provide a base from which a person may build. If anything, unions are responsible for working conditions that are more conducive to improving the output of the ambitious, as well as workers who are content in the job they possess.

As far as protecting the incompetent, this occurs far less in union shops than in open shops, where favoritism often prevails. Most union shops insist on job descriptions which ensure that qualified people, rather than management favorites, are competing for jobs. Unions do, however, provide protection for employees from undue harassment of firing at the employer's whim, which was a prevalent practice before unions came into being.

Unions are only beneficial to blue-collar workers -- professionals don't need them. Professional people have to eat and pay bills just as blue-collar workers do. Today more and more professionals are realizing the benefits that union membership has to offer all workers, such as better pay, job security and improved working conditions. Teachers, writers, actors, physicians, engineers, insurance salesmen and many other professionals have realized the advantages of union membership for many years. As the fight for professional positions becomes more competitive, indications are that more and more professionals will be trading in "snobbery" for union security.

Unions have become too powerful and are socially irresponsible. The questions of whether or not unions are too powerful depends upon the context in which the comparison is being made. For instance, a small business man dealing with a large union may think unions are too powerful, but when even a large union deals with

a multinational corporation, the situation is reversed. As far as political power goes, union members may contribute limited financial and personal support to political candidates; but as recent legislative battles have demonstrated, such support does not guarantee "powerful" influence once a candidate is elected.

The influence and power that organized labor does possess, however, has been used to improve the quality of life for all working Americans, both union and non-union. Only one out of five Americans belong to labor unions, but the majority of legislative programs and reforms supported by labor unions have been for the benefit of all Americans.

Union members are overpaid and stike too much. Charges of union members being overpaid for the work that they perform is usually propagated by employers who increase their profits by exploiting their workers. As the cost of living continues to rise, so must wages. Sure, it costs more today to hire a carpenter than it did 10 years ago and a very small part of the added cost can be attributed to the carpenter's wage increase. The cost of land, building materials and loan money has skyrocketed in the last 10 years. That carpenter has to go to the store and pay the same price for a loaf of bread that anyone else does. Union tradesmen are well-trained; they feel that their skills are a quality product and should be priced accordingly.

The National Association of Home Builders, no friend of organized labor, has analysed the cost of building a house in 1949 and 1976 and came up with these facts:

The cost of an average house has gone from \$9,780 in 1949 to \$43,700 in 1976.

But the on-site labor cost of that house has dropped from 33% of the purchase price in 1949 to 16% in 1976.

The big increases have come in the cost of land and financing. And certainly no labor union sets the price of land or controls mortgage rates.

Many people feel that unions strike too much because that is often the only time unions receive any news coverage about their activities. The fact of the matter is that very little working time is lost due to strike activity. The Bureau of Labor Statistics shows that for 1976 less than two tenths of one percent of total working time was lost due to strikes.

Here is the percentage of estimated total working time lost due to strikes, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics:

1950	33/100 of 1%
1955	22/100 of 1%
1960	14/100 of 1%
1965	15/100 of 1%
1970	37/100 of 1%
1975	16/100 of 1%
1976	19/100 of 1%

from BLUEPRINT

Write for many excellent items on "Religion and Labor":

Institute of Human Relations
Loyola University
New Orleans, LA 70118



Farm
Labor
Organizing
Committee

"hasta la victoria" 714½ s. saint clair street, toledo, oh 43609 phone 419-243-3456

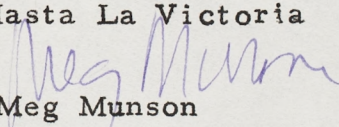
February 18, 1979

Dear Friends,

Farm workers just left Ohio after a long productive week of strategizing about the boycott and the ongoing organization of farm workers in Texas and Florida. It certainly rekindled in me a sense of urgency in our work as boycott organizers.

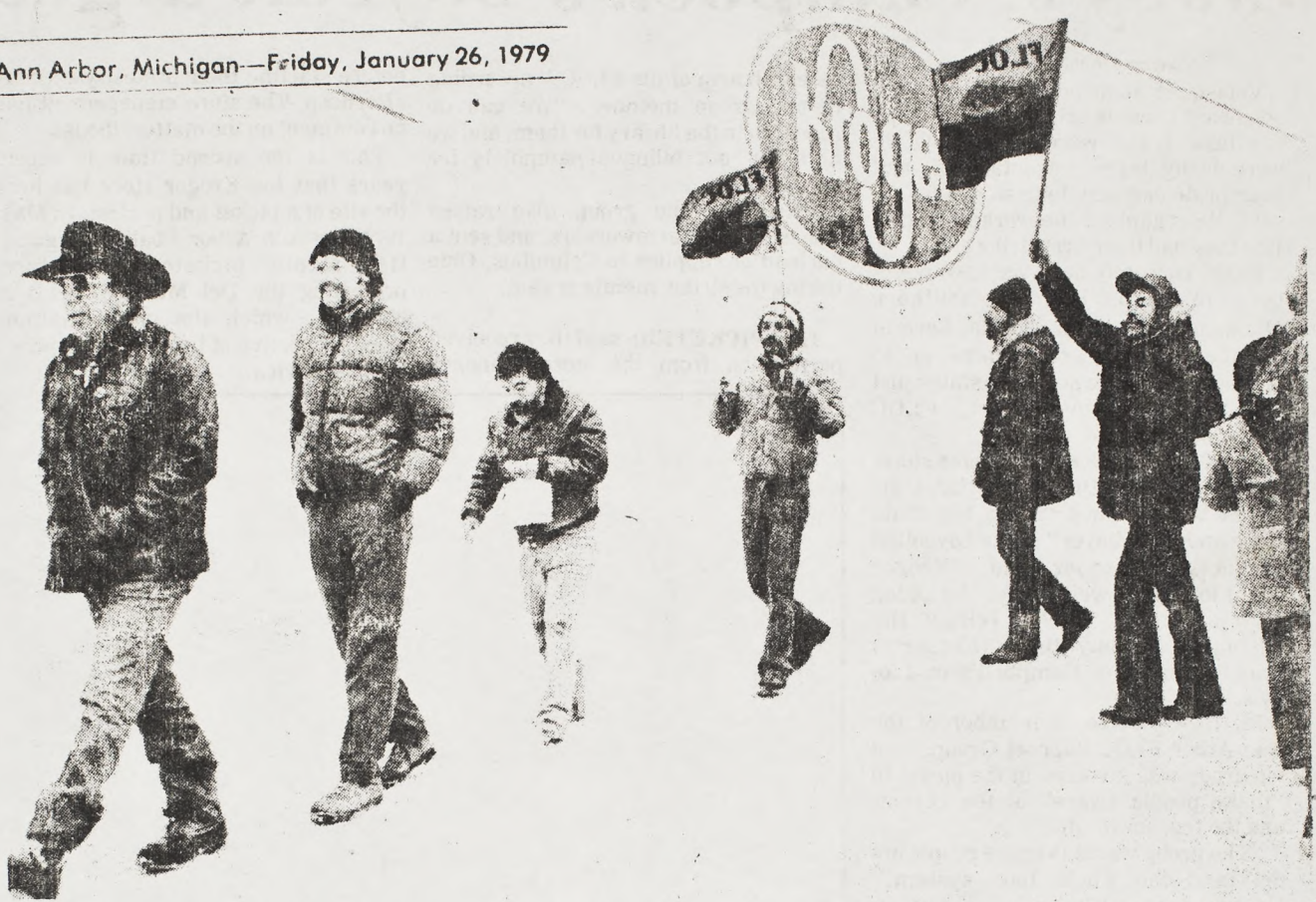
I've sent a mixed bag of materials which hopefully you'll find useful. At best we can develop a communication network such that we are all sharing our ideas, articles, leaflets, activities, etc. with each other. Much of what is included in this packet was done in other committees. So please keep in close touch.

Hasta La Victoria


Meg Munson

The Michigan Daily

Ann Arbor, Michigan—Friday, January 26, 1979



Daily Photo by CYRENA CHANG

MEMBERS OF THE Ohio-based Farm Labor Organizing Committee came to Ann Arbor yesterday to push their boycott of Campbell's and Libby's foods. The farm workers, along with local supporters, picketed outside the Broadway Kroger's store.

Pickets push boycott of Libby's, Campbell's foods

By RON GIFFORD

Undaunted by the cold wind and temperature, over 50 placard-carrying members and backers of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) picketed a local Kroger store yesterday afternoon to focus local attention on the FLOC's boycott of Campbell's and Libby's food products.

The FLOC has called for an international boycott against these companies, claiming they exploit farmworkers by refusing to negotiate with them over wages and working conditions.

MEMBERS OF THE Ann Arbor FLOC Support Group joined 30 migrant workers, carrying placards denouncing Libby's and Campbell's, and distributing literature to customers as they entered the Broadway Street store.

According to FLOC President Baldemar Velasquez, the boycott is intended to bring pressure on the companies so they will begin negotiations with the farmworkers. Besides the boycott, the FLOC plans to go on strike during the harvest period in August.

In early August of 1978, farmworkers in the tomato fields

of Ohio went on strike, demanding better housing, a guaranteed minimum wage of \$3.25 per hour, medical coverage, and the right to participate in the annual contract negotiations between the growers and the canneries, FLOC members said.

THE UNION LEADER said workers are presently working on publicizing the boycott.

"We are active in 50 cities around the country," Velasquez said. "We are planning how to structure the boycott and how to better organize the FLOC for the best effect on it.

"We are also working in cooperation with other farm groups, like Cesar Chavez's United Farm Workers, who support us entirely," he added.

Velasquez said the boycott may not economically affect the companies. But, by making the customers aware of the situation, pressure can be brought upon the food producers, he said.

"IF THE COMPANIES start getting letters from customers supporting the farmworkers, they will start to listen more closely to what we say," he claimed.

See LIBBY'S, Page 7

Libby's, Campbell's boycott urged

(Continued from Page 1)

Velasquez founded FLOC in 1967, because "There is only so much anyone can take. I was working knowing we were being taken advantage of, and your pride can only take so much," he said. He organized the workers and in 1968 they had their first strike.

FLOC currently has over 3,500 members in Ohio, Indiana, southern Michigan, Texas and Florida. Several members of the group came up to Michigan from the southern states just for this picketing effort, FLOC spokespersons said.

FLOC SELECTED the Kroger store, located at 1140 Broadway, for their picket because they "are a big chain store and a big buyer" of the boycotted products, Velasquez said. "Kroger ought to be glad we're here," he added with a smile. "We're telling the customers to buy their (Kroger's) brands instead of Campbell's or Libby's."

Matthew Levine, a member of the Ann Arbor FLOC Support Group, said his group was involved in the picket to "make people aware" of the boycott and the reasons for it.

"The group wants to make people understand the whole food system," Levine said. "There is a human element to the system, one that is grossly underpaid. We want the customers to realize that actual people are involved."

ALSO SAID the group would try to get University food services to boycott the food products, also.

The Ann Arbor Support Group is "a

research arm of the FLOC," according to one group member. "We can do research in the library for them, and we have put out bilingual pamphlets for them."

This year the group also raised money for the farmworkers, and sent a carload of supplies to Columbus, Ohio during the strike, members said.

THE PICKETERS said they received permission from the store manager

before starting their protest yesterday afternoon. The store management had no comment on the matter, though.

This is the second time in recent years that the Kroger store has been the site of a picket and protest. In May, 1977, the Ann Arbor Coalition Against Del Monte picketed the store, protesting the Del Monte policies in Namibia, which the group claimed were supportive of the apartheid policy in South Africa.

"They're going to be out of work," he said, "because everyone else up here is going to be going to machines. They'll have to go up north farther to Michigan and pick cherries or something."

As for the Farm Labor Organizing Committee, Ray Santiago, a spokesman, said: "Even though there is a big push for mechanization, there are a lot of farmers who are not going that route. We're just sitting back now and waiting to see what develops next summer."

Tomatoes have always been grown here, along with corn, soybeans and other crops. But in the last generation, as Campbell, Hunt, Heinz, Libby McNeill & Libby and other major processors have established plants in the area to take advantage of the ready supply, most of the small tomato growers have given up the business rather than expand to meet the demands of the canneries.

Labor-Intensive Crop

Tomatoes have been a labor-intensive crop, especially in the short harvest season, from about the last week of August until the first of October. With one worker needed for every two acres, thousands of migrants have flooded the area every summer in recent years to harvest the 20,000 or so acres planted in tomatoes.

Although the profits to the farmer can be high, from \$350 to \$400 an acre, so can the risks, from weather and disease. And only the most serious growers have been able to afford to take those risks and recruit and house the large numbers of workers needed for transplanting in the spring and harvesting in the fall.

With the increasing number of workers came a rising Government interest in the condition of camps, in the enforcing of child-labor, Social Security and other laws. In 1967 the Farm Labor Organizing Committee, emulating the Chavez forces, was formed in nearby Ottawa to try to unionize workers and sign contracts with growers. Some workers joined, but no contracts were forthcoming. Then last year the committee changed its tactics, calling a strike against two major processors, Campbell and Libby.

Failed on 2 Counts

The strike was intended to force the processors to pay more to the growers so they could pay more to the farm workers. It was also meant to enlist the sympathy of the growers. But it failed on both counts.

The growers were shocked and frightened by the threat of a strike at harvest time. Campbell and Libby insisted that they would not bargain with the farm workers, since the pickers were employed by the growers, not by them.

In the meantime, over the last few years, mechanical tomato harvesters developed in California began making slow inroads here. At first, growers in this area had little interest in the machines, contending that they were too heavy for the Ohio fields.

But lighter models, tractor-pulled rather than self-propelled, were developed. In 1975, 10.4 percent of the Ohio tomato crop was harvested by machine. By last year the figure was 29 percent. This year, growers and other farm experts here predict, the total

to anywhere from 50 to 70 percent. Within three to five years, most growers say, virtually all tomatoes here will be harvested by machine.

Like Assembly Lines

"It's no different than the auto industry going to assembly lines," said Donald E. Kimmel, the Putnam County agricultural extension agent in Ottawa. "Labor had always been willing to come up here and work. Now, for the first time, the labor is questionable. The risk now is equaled out."

Dick Ricker of Fort Jennings, the head of a new growers' association formed to conduct contract negotiations with Libby, which has a plant in Leipsic, agreed that many would make their move this year.

Agricultural experts at Ohio State University have calculated that it costs about \$39,000 to hand-harvest 100 acres, compared with less than \$20,000 to harvest by machine.

Dave Metzger, a tomato-growing neighbor of Mr. Ricker, said his father, Frank, an implement dealer, had already sold eight harvesters this year, compared with eight all last year.

Most observers credit the Campbell Soup Company, which has a large plant here in Napoleon, with being another catalyst for the rapid change. Although the company insists that its new contracts with growers do not require that they use machine-harvesting methods, a spokesman acknowledged that Campbell put out its contracts months earlier than usual to give farmers time to make the shift and encourage them to do it.

Scott Rombach, the Campbell spokesman, said the company had already signed up growers for the full 4,000 acres, or about 80,000 tons, of tomatoes it needs for its Napoleon plant this year and that all would be mechanically harvested. To further encourage growers to go to machine harvesters, the company set its price at \$65 a ton, down \$7 from what it paid last year. However, it also installed electronic sorting equipment at the plant, so that farmers do not even need to employ hand sorters to ride the machines.

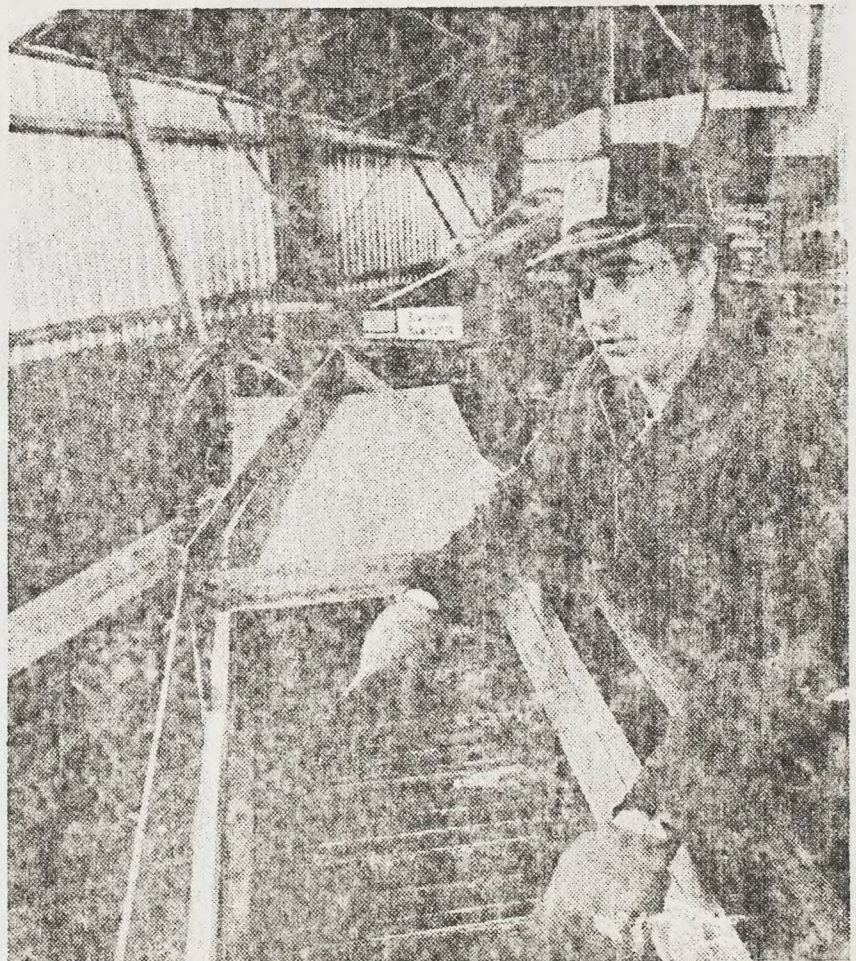
Still, not all the growers are switching to machines immediately. It is generally conceded that since one machine can handle up to 80 or 100 acres, it is uneconomical for those with contracts for fewer than 40 acres to make the investment.

Bob Moser and his father raised 30 acres last year for Hunt. Now, they are not sure which way to go.

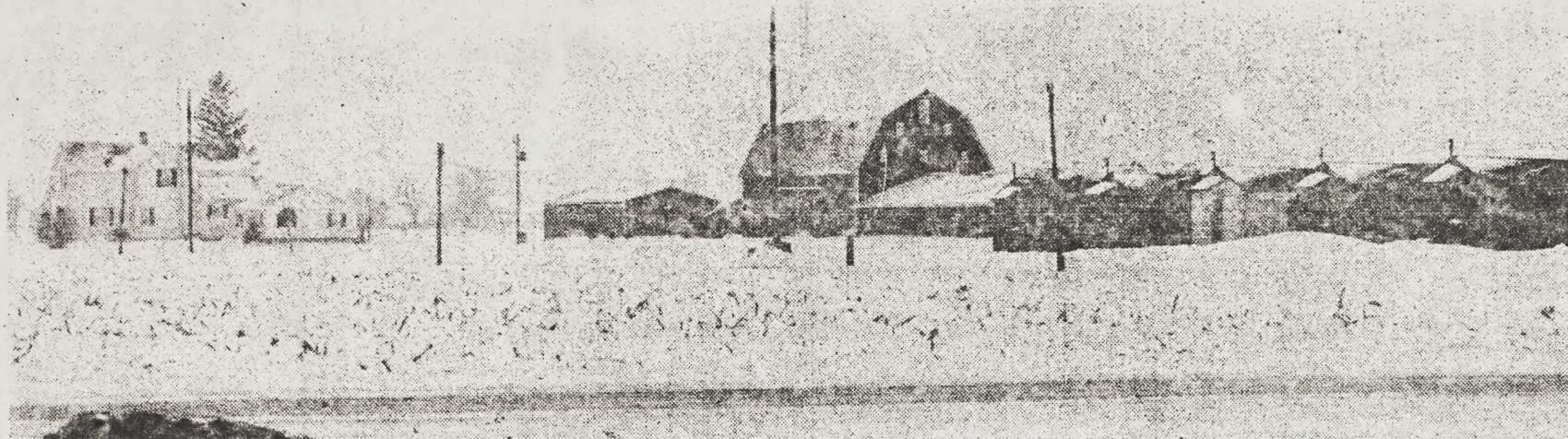
"They said if we can get a harvester we can get another 40," he said, "but we're not sure we want to take on that many. But if we don't grow tomatoes, we've got to find some other way to make it. We can't make it on corn."

And some farmers have already decided to get out altogether. James Dimick, who had a harvester, is one. He is not happy with the revolution, so he sold his equipment.

"I'm 50 years old and I've been in it 15 years," he said, "but there's just too much harassment by government and by labor. There comes a point when what's the use? Tomatoes have paid the way around here for a long time, but ..."



Dave Metzger with harvester of type his father is selling to tomato growers



The New York Times/Mary Anne Fackelman

Homes for migrant workers,

Mechanical tomato harvesters will replace much of the migrant labor this growing season.

Machines Rapidly Displacing Ohio Tomato Pickers

By DOUGLAS E. KNEELAND

Special to The New York Times

NAPOLEON, Ohio, Feb. 10 — Lee Diller sounded saddened but resigned to the prospect of change.

"On the way back home, Dad'll drive through Texas and tell them the bad news," he said. Pausing, he added regretfully, "Our crew chief has been with us 29 years."

The end of an era is at hand for a lot of farmers in the northwest corner of Ohio.

Peter Diller, who is vacationing with his wife in Phoenix, will tell his old crew chief in Mission, Tex., down in the Rio Grande Valley, that the Dillers will not be needing migrant workers this summer. They ordinarily employ 250 or so at harvest time on their 1,300 acres of rich, table-flat farm land.

The Dillers have ordered two new mechanical tomato harvesters, machines that cost about \$40,000 each, from Frank Metzger over in Fort Jennings to replace their hand labor.

Sudden and Visible Shift

Of course, eras are always ending for the American farmer, and have been at least since Cyrus McCormick invented his wonderful reaper and altered life forever in the wheat country of the Great Plains. But seldom is the shift so sudden, the social and economic reasons so visible, the number of farmers and the area affected small enough to watch the change begin.

While the American Agriculture Movement is strongly protesting farm prices in Washington and the latest lettuce strike by Cesar Chavez's United Farm Workers is stirring passions in California, a minirevolution is under way amid the frigid February fields of northwestern Ohio.

It is being fueled by a classic conflict among processors, who want a sure supply of tomatoes as cheap as possible; growers, who want a safe and economical harvest at the best price they can get, and field workers, who want more money and better working and living conditions.

Change to Other Crops

Before it is over, as sure as the snow blanket that covers the broad fields here will disappear with spring, some of Ohio's 450 or so tomato growers will change to other crops or give up farming rather than make the heavy investment in mechanical harvesters. And just as surely, thousands of farm workers will find themselves displaced.

For the American farmer and farm worker, it is a process that has been as inexorable as the advance of the 20th century. In the mid-1930's, the nation's farm population stood at about 32 million. Now it is less than eight million. Total farm employment, including farmers and their hired workers, was 12.7 million in 1935. Now it is just over four million.

"It was the labor thing, that and because it's less expensive and besides, you don't have to put up with the government inspections and all," said Lee Diller, who stayed behind to keep an eye on the farm in Mount Corey, in explaining why his father decided to switch from hand labor to machines this year.

Still, he acknowledged a certain twinge of feeling for the workers who will be replaced.

Ohio farmworkers face fight against canneries

By Erica Salzman

On Thursday, January 25th, the beginning of a boycott of Libby's and Campbell's products was marked by a picket-line locally and several press conferences across the nation. This boycott is part of the struggle of farmworkers in Ohio to bring about a change in their living and working conditions. The boycott was organized by the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC), a union representing Ohio farmworkers that was started in 1968. The boycott is directed against Libby's and Campbell's because they are the two largest canneries in the areas where FLOC is organizing. In order to more fully support the boycott and the other efforts of the farmworkers, it is useful to understand the history and the present dynamics of their situation.

Farmworkers are among the most oppressed of all workers in this country, and certainly among the poorest. The fact that the Ohio farmworkers are migrant workers, traveling between Texas or Florida and Ohio, means that they are only in Ohio for several months of the year. This makes it especially difficult for them to organize effectively.

THE FARMWORKERS in Ohio are currently paid 19-24¢ for a 33 lb. hamper of tomatoes, which barely makes minimum wage when picking is good, and doesn't account for the times when picking is poor or must stop temporarily.

Most of the camps the workers and their families live in are far below even the meagre standards of the state of Ohio, with no inside plumbing, flimsy plasterboard and nail construction, extension wires for electricity, and totally inadequate sanitation facilities. These camps are supposed to nurture the people, including children, who do some of the country's

hardest labor, and who produce much of our food.

Who is responsible for the farmworkers' plight? At first glance it would seem to be the governors, who actually pay the farmworkers and also run and "keep up" the camps. However, the growers are for the most part small or medium sized farmers who have experienced increasing stress as inflated costs quickly outpace the growth in their own incomes. In addition, the growers don't have all that much control over their income or the decisions which affect it. They sign contracts with canneries, the most powerful ones being large national or multi-national corporations or subsidiaries of these, such as Libby's (a subsidiary of Nestlé's) and Campbell's.

These contracts specify the amount of tomatoes the canneries will buy from each grower, and the contracts severely limit the growers' option to sell any extra produce, especially to other canneries. In addition the canneries sell the growers their tomato seed, or young tomato plants, tell them when to spray what on the fields, inspect the farmerworker camps, and in general oversee the whole of the tomato operation.

So that, in fact, the growers, who are under contract to only grow a certain amount, and to get a certain price for what they grow, must squeeze all their costs within the amount they have contracted to receive. From their point of view the labor and housing costs of the farmworkers are a major cost of operation, to be minimized wherever possible. Most moderate size growers are not wealthy, or in a position to



—Photo by K. Yih

continued

give the farmworkers what they need and deserve.

A breakdown of the gross receipts from the tomato industry shows that 83 per cent of these receipts go to the canneries and retail outlets, whereas farmers get 9 per cent and both the migrant workers and cannery workers only 4 per cent each. The farmer is in a similar position to the farmworker in terms of power and revenue when they are each compared to the cannery. If anyone is in a position to give more, it is the cannery rather than the farmer. A contract between farmer and farmworker which doesn't include the cannery puts the responsibility on the farmer, which is unfair and unrealistic in light of where the money is.

ALTHOUGH IT is clear to the farmworkers at this point that they must be included in contract negotiations with the canneries and farmers, the canneries refuse to negotiate or even admit that they have any responsibility for the conditions of the farmworkers. Their position is that they contract with the growers "at fair and reasonable prices" and that that is as far as their responsibility goes.

Included in the farmworkers demands, aside from three-way contracts, are such things as a raise in minimum hamper-rate, a minimum hourly wage for when the piece-rate falls too low, minimum work hours guaranteed per week, seasonal transportation costs, some medical coverage, some improvements in housing conditions, and some guaranteed coverage for farmworker crew leaders. Last August, the farmworkers finally decided to strike since their efforts to get the canneries and growers to negotiate had failed. About 2000 farmworkers refused to pick tomatoes throughout the harvest.

The farmworkers plan to strike against the growers again this summer and as long as they need to in order to win their struggle. The support they receive from consumers in boycotting Campbell's and Libby's products is very important in terms of the economic pressure brought to bear on these companies and more importantly in terms of the canneries' awareness of the broad base of public support that the farmworkers have.

ANYONE WHO CAN give support to the farmworkers by boycotting Campbell's and Libby's products and by writing to these companies to let them know of such actions is making a contribution to the farmworkers' struggle for self-determination. In Ann Arbor, the FLOG support group is affiliated with Science-for-the-People, whose office is in 4104 of the Michigan Union.

It is important not to make the mistake of feeling remote from issues like the farmworkers' struggle. We are depending on their labor to produce much of the food we eat, a vital concern for everyone. If it is hard to empathize with the farmworkers simply because most of our lives are more comfortable, we should remember that our comfort is not "free" and that others such as the farmworkers shouldn't pay its price through their own exploited labor.



(UNITY photo)

Ohio farmworkers gear up for 1979 strike

Toledo, OH. — Close to 500 farmworkers and supporters rallied on January 28 to build support for a 1979 tomato strike and a renewed boycott of Campbell's and Libby's products — the two canneries which contract with most of the tomato farms in the region. Last August, nearly 2,000 farmworkers organized by the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC), struck the Ohio tomato fields.

Most of the mainly Mexican and Chicano farmworkers migrate each season from their homes in the South. The farmworkers' demands include a minimum pay of \$3.25 per hour or 35¢ per hamper, transportation money back to the workers' permanent homes, a medical plan, a pesticide inspection program, and unionization.

As one worker told UNITY, "As long as you work for practically nothing, you're a good Mexican. The only way you don't get discriminated is to live with your head down, and we're through with that!"

THE COURIER

Findlay, Ohio, Saturday Morning, February 3, 1979

20¢

FLOC Reaction

Push For Tomato Harvester?

By MICHAEL B. LAFFERTY
Associated Press Writer

NAPOLEON, Ohio (AP) — Some Campbell's Soup Co. growers are saying the company is trying to avoid farm labor problems in requiring mechanical harvesting of all tomatoes for the company's Napoleon processing plant.

"Until this guy started in we didn't have any trouble with our labor," said Robert Chriseman, a Henry County grower who is raising 300 acres of tomatoes for Campbell's. Chriseman referred to the leader of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee, Baldmar Velasquez.

Ohio's 1978 fall tomato harvest was interrupted by a migrant worker strike for higher wages organized by the Farm

Labor Organizing Committee.

Scott Rambaugh, public relations manager for Campbell's, said the company is not trying to drive migrant workers from Ohio tomato fields. He also said the company has no policy to only contract with farmers who own machinery.

However, one long-time Campbell's grower said he has not been offered a contract for 1979, and he says he and other growers are probably out of the tomato growing business for good.

To keep growing for Campbell's, Chriseman plans to buy three mechanical harvesting machines at about \$140,000 each.

Chriseman said he doesn't mind spend-

ing more than \$400,000 on machinery, but a state farm official said most growers would like to use hand labor. "The problem with machinery is that we don't have a variety of tomatoes that all ripen at once," said the official, who declined to be identified.

Campbell tomato grower Arthur Erford has used a mechanical harvester for four years. Erford, also of Henry County, likes the machines but said they don't work as well on damp days, when it's a little wet or when it's foggy. One year, he wasn't able to use his harvester at all because soil was too wet.

Erford also said he is only growing 20 acres of tomatoes for Campbell's this year

instead of the usual 30 acres because he's afraid the Napoleon plant won't be able to process tomatoes fast enough when the entire crop is picked by machine. Once tomatoes are picked, Erford said they must be processed immediately because the fruit tends to break down overnight and brings a lower price.

Erford also said Campbell's cut its price for No. 1 tomatoes \$7 a ton to \$65 a ton over last year and also reduced its total contracted acreage to 4,000, down from 4,700 acres last year.

Campbell's officials could not be reached for comment.

Chriseman said farmers who don't have machines or who don't want to buy them are getting out of the business.

FLOC

Boycott against canners

to be launched at Jan. 28 rally

By RENE MURAWSKI

The Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) plans to launch a boycott of Campbell's and Libby's products Jan. 28 with a rally in Toledo.

Ray Santiago, FLOC secretary-treasurer, said the group will concentrate efforts in about 40 major cities in the country where the United Farm Workers organized boycott committees in the past. Those cities include Toledo, Columbus, Cincinnati, Ann Arbor, Mich.; Chicago and Notre Dame, Ind.

The boycott, which Santiago said is being headed by labor and church groups, is being called to pressure the firms into meeting the group's demands.

Santiago said FLOC is asking by and large for the same terms it asked for last summer during a work stoppage ordered at the height of the tomato growing season.

Some changes may be announced at the Jan. 28 rally, he said, but declined to elaborate on those changes.

The workers are asking for medical insurance to be paid in part by processors, priority for migrant truck drivers over other farmers in lines at processing plants and partial payment by processors of the cost for transportation of workers who come from Texas and Florida to work in northwest Ohio.

FLOC's demands have also included a minimum wage of \$3.25 per hour, to be put into effect when the piece rate does not equal that amount.

Although FLOC's demands were not filled by the summer strike, Santiago said the work stoppage "definitely had a positive influence on the industry."

As a result of the summer strike, FLOC has come to represent between 2,000 and 3,000 farm laborers in Ohio, according to Santiago.

He estimates that members giving FLOC the power to negotiate in their behalf include about one-fourth of the migrant work force in Ohio.

The strike also resulted in a push by the major canneries to get farmers contracting with them to move to greater mechanization, according to Santiago.

"Mechanization was always coming. We might be pushing it to happen a little sooner. But there will still be a need for field workers. Workers will still be needed in the thousands, and as long as that need exists we'll be pushing for our demands. We feel we're merely asking for justifiable issues. These aren't even debatable issues," Santiago said.

Santiago said FLOC's efforts are being directed at the canners and not farmers because "We feel they're (farmers) in the same boat with us."

FLOC organizer Baldemar Velasquez has been invited to address the tractorcade of farmers organized by the American Agriculture Movement (AAM) when it reaches Washington D.C. on Feb. 2.

The AAM, organized a year ago, has planned the national demonstration to protest low market prices for farm commodities.

Area News

The AAM is asking that two conditions of the 1977 Farm Bill be implemented immediately. They are asking that loan levels on all basic commodities be set at 90 percent of parity and provisions be set aside to ensure a balance between supply and demand.

"We've had our differences with farmers in the past, but we're fighting for the same cause now,"

Sanditago said.

"We're both being used by the industry. The grower and the worker have been pitted against each other in the past, but we're both being exploited by someone else.

"We feel the American Agriculture Movement is taking the right position in the problem of agricultural economics. The issues they're raising are the same ones we're asking for," Santiago said.

The AAM tractorcade, which is expected to have about 2,000 tractors by the time it reaches Washington, is scheduled to pass through Ohio about Jan. 27.

(FARM LABOR ORGANIZING COMMITTEE)
PLEASE SUPPORT MIDWEST FARMWORKERS--

BOYCOTT



the following companies and their products:

LIBBY-MCNEILL-LIBBY

- All Nestle's products (Nestle's is the parent company of Libby-McNeill-Libby)
- All vegetables, fruits, meats, and juices with the Libby's label

CAMPBELL'S

- Campbell's Soup
- Swanson frozen prepared dinners and meats
- V-8 vegetable juice
- Efficient food service products
- Recipe pet food
- Hanover Trail restaurants
- Franco-American products
- Lexington Gardens retail garden centers
- Pepperidge Farm products
- Granny's Soups
- Bounty canned chili and entrees
- Godiva chocolates
- Pietro's Gold Coast pizzas
- Delacre cookies and pastries
- Herfy's Restaurants
- Kia-ora food products
- VLASIC

These companies continue to contribute to exploitation of farmworkers by refusing to participate in negotiations for betterment of wages and working conditions. The farmworker, grower, and canning company form a triangle in the Midwestern tomato canning industry. While the companies insist they have no responsibility for the plight of farmworkers and that the grower is the employer, our union recognizes that the company is ultimately responsible for the worker's conditions and must work together with the grower to bring about economic change for the worker.

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JUSTICE

FOR OHIO FARMWORKERS

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Coverage of Pickers

- \$.35 per hamper (33 lbs.) (Present rate \$.24 per hamper)
- Minimum Wage of \$3.25 per hour. (Presently some farmers are paying \$2.65) Put in effect when piece rate does not come out to \$3.25 per hr.
- Work guarantee of 28 hours every 2 weeks. If it rains two weeks we should be paid for the 28 hours. If we work only 10 hours within any two week period then we should be paid for the other 18 hours guaranteed. (This is already a state law in Wisconsin) These hours to be paid at the \$3.25 rate.
- Transportation to Texas, Florida or home residence. Rate of \$.08 per mile plus \$.02 per worker passengers.
- Medical program. There is one policy available that will cover 4 months for \$196.00 per family. Coverage is minimum \$30.00 per person/\$70.00 room and board per day for 120 days.
- Custodian for each camp. His rate of pay to be whatever other workers are averaging in his location. Minimum to be \$3.25 but at peak season when workers can make over that amount under the piece rate system (35¢ per hamper) then the custodian's pay to increase to be commensurate with that of other workers at his camp location.

Coverage for Crew Leaders

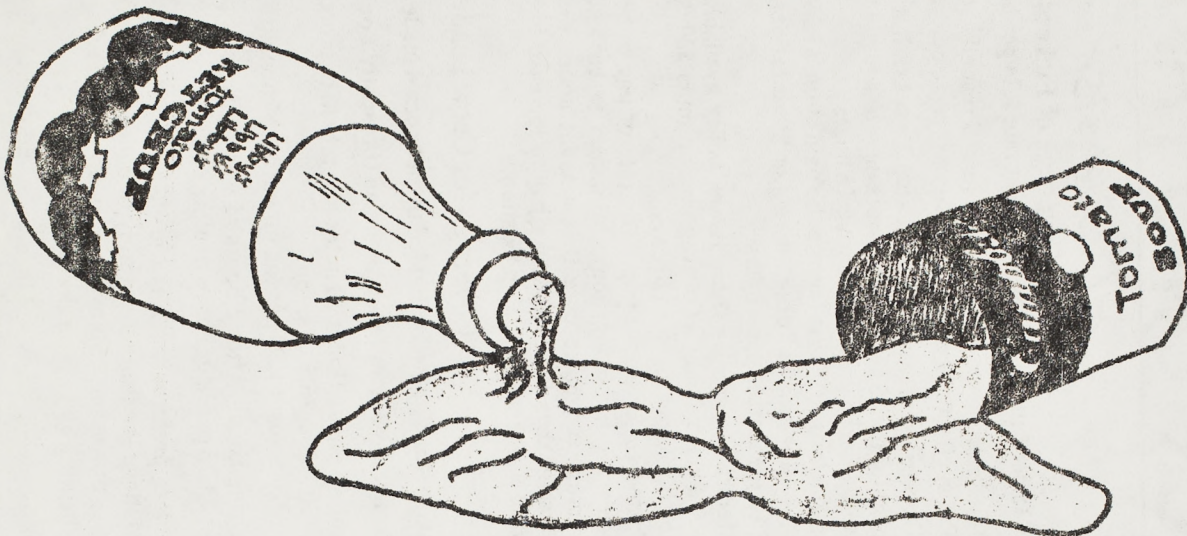
- \$.06 for loading (to be divided up between 4 leaders) (Presently 2 - 4¢)
- \$.05 to crew leader for supervision (Presently 1 or 2¢)
- Hauling rates: Under 10 miles (from field to processor) - \$.425 per ton
10 - 20 miles - \$.650 per ton
Over 20 miles - \$1.00 per ton for each additional 10 miles with \$.650 per ton base
- Waiting time: After 2 hours of waiting time at processing plant drivers to be paid \$3.25 per hour above hauling rates.
- Hauling preference: Any crew leader who brings a crew to work on any farm shall have the first opportunity to haul tomatoes from the field's history works to the processor. Many growers are now buying their own trucks and taking the hauling away from the migrant crew leaders.
- 50% payment of costs of insurance and license plates for crew leaders' trucks.

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D.Y. Robinson
Director of Consumer Services
Campbell's Soup
Camden, N.J. 08101

Douglas B. Wells, President
Libby, McNeill & Libby
200 S. Michigan
Chicago, Illinois 60604

FLOC 714½ S. St Clair Toledo, Ohio

43604

PICKETERS' FACT SHEET

All FLOC pickets should be guided by the following principles:

1. Report to the picket captain as soon as you get to the store.
2. All pickets shall obey the picket captain in all matters.
3. The picket captain alone shall talk to the store manager, police, growers' representative, reporters, or government officials. If any such person approaches you, send them to the picket captain.
4. FLOC is non-violent. No picket shall engage in any violent activity, threats of violence, or any destruction of other peoples' property, even if others act so toward the picketer.
5. No picket shall use vile or profane language. No picket shall become abusive or insulting to anyone, even if other people are.
6. Picketers should not stand in front of any doorway so as to prevent people from entering or leaving.
7. If you see anyone showing disrespect for our cause by throwing away leaflets, please pick them up. You can not be arrested for littering if someone else throws the paper, but it looks bad to have literature thrown away. Pickets should not litter.
8. If people make it clear that they do not want to talk to you, let them pass. If people are rude or abusive, do not fire back with sarcasm or abusive language. It may relieve your frustration but it does not help the cause.
9. The only picket signs and leaflets to be used are those approved by FLOC.
10. The picket captain shall have the right to immediately suspend any picket for violation of these rules.
11. It is our policy to follow the law of the place in which we operate.

Let all pickets bear in mind that our purpose is to bring a message to the nation which is justice for farm workers. This message is directed at the minds and consciences of the people with whom we are coming into contact. If we succeed in this task, we will not need violence, destruction of property or abuse; If we fail, none of these things will do us any good.

Is the picketing legal? The right to peacefully picket and distribute leaflets is guaranteed by the United States Constitution and no city ordinance or state statute prohibiting the distribution of leaflets because they may litter the streets or impede traffic is valid. This was decided by the United States Supreme Court in the case of *Schneider v. State of New Jersey*, 308, U.S. 147. This case overruled the case of *Commonwealth v. Nicolas*, 301, Mass. 584. In *Commonwealth v. Pascone* 308, Mass. 591, Supreme Court of Massachusetts ruled that it had to follow the United States Supreme Court and hold any ordinance or statute which forbade the distribution of leaflets as being invalid and unenforceable.

Private v. Public Property. The right to pass our leaflets and to picket is guaranteed by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution. Sidewalks in front of stores are public property with the possible exception of those surrounded by a private parking lot servicing a single store, as in the case of a shopping center, which is public property as soon as the doors of such stores are open to the public. Likewise, the sidewalks included in a closed mall, of every store in a shopping center complex are public property. This was decided in the Logan Hill Shopping center case (Pennsylvania), 1968.

Is the boycott legal? Yes. Some forms of boycotts, especially secondary boycotts (i.e. saying 'Boycott this store because they sell scab products' instead of 'Boycott Campbell's and Libby's brand products') are barred or restricted by the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA). Farmworkers, however, were excluded from coverage when NLRA was originally passed; none of these regulations apply to FLOC and its boycotts.

PICKETERS' FACT SHEET

Being questioned by the police. If there is an argument about your rights to picket or passout leaflets, let your picket captain handle it. Explain calmly to the police what you believe your rights to be and him/her to contact her/his superior officers about it. If the police say you must cease picketing, avoid being arrested. If you are stopped by the police: (1) you may remain silent, you do not have to answer any questions other than your name and address, (2) The police may search you for weapons by patting the outside of your clothing. Whatever happens, you must not resist arrest even if you are innocent.

Acts of violence against you or other pickets. If anyone commits any acts of violence against you, do not strike back. You should call the police and take statements from any witnesses. They should state who were involved and their names and addresses, what happened, when, where, why and how.

Please do not...but if you are arrested. (1) As soon as you are booked, you have the right to complete at least two phone calls, one to a relative, friend, or an attorney, the other to a bail bondsman. (2) The police must give you a receipt for everything taken from you, including your wallet, clothing and packages you were carrying when arrested. (3) You must be allowed to hire and see a lawyer immediately. (4) You must be allowed to post bail in most cases, but you must be able to pay a bail bondsman fee. If you can not pay the fee you may ask the judge to release you from custody without bail, but s/he does not have to do so. (5) You do not have to give a statement to the police nor do you have to sign any statement you might give them. (6) The police must bring you into court or release you within 48 hours after your arrest (unless the time ends on a weekend or holiday, and then they must bring you before a judge the first day court is in session).

IN ANY CASE CALL FLOC OR SCIENCE FOR THE PEOPLE IF YOU HAVE ANY PROBLEMS OR QUESTIONS

Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC)
714 1/2 S. Saint Clair Street
Toledo, Ohio 43609
(419) 243-3456

Science for the People
4104 Michigan Union
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109
(313) 971-1165/(313) 764-1446

The Green Bay Catholic Compass

Serving the Diocese of Green Bay in Northeastern Wisconsin

February 3, 1979

(USPS 228-180)

Vol. No. 1, No. 18 — 12 pages

Farm union calls for national boycott

WASHINGTON —(NC)— A Midwest farm workers union has announced a nationwide boycott of Campbell Soups and Libby, McNeill and Libby, Inc.

Farm Labor Organizing Committee president Baldemar Valasquez announced the boycott January 18 at a press conference in Washington and asked for support from labor and religious organizations.

The boycott of the two major tomato canneries has been in the planning stage since last summer when FLOC workers struck the tomato fields of northwest Ohio demanding bet-

ter wages, working and living conditions.

Valasquez said that although his union has had some success in negotiating with tomato growers, the canneries decide how much the growers will receive before the season begins, therefore predetermining the price that the grower pays the workers. Valasquez insisted that the canning companies bear the responsibilities for the increased welfare and benefits of the farmworkers.

"We invited the canneries to sit with us last summer but there was no response," Valasquez said. He said last sum-

mer 2,000 strikers closed 70 farms and that the strike will continue next summer.

"We're boycotting because you can't strike all year 'round. The tomato growing season is only a month long, so we'll boycott 12 months and strike one month."

A spokesperson for the United Farm Workers said Cesar Chavez supports the boycott "100 percent." Sister Pearl McGiviney of the Office for Migrant Ministries said the office supports the farm workers. Other migrant organizations also offered support and

Valasquez said FLOC is receiving support from labor locals across the country.

Pablo Sedillo, Jr., head of the Secretariat for Hispanic Affairs of the U.S. Catholic Conference, said the secretariat supports the boycott, "just as it supported the boycott of the United Farm Workers. It's no different than that.

"An effective boycott is the only way to justice," Sedillo said. He said the secretariat is considering specific ways to assist farm workers and is working with NAFO, a group which represents 50 farm worker organizations.

PARTIAL LIST OF ENDORSEMENTS

American Federation of Teachers - Toledo, Ohio
 A.M.O.S. - Indianapolis, Indiana
 Committee on Chicano Rights - National City, California
 Commission on Catholic Community Action, Diocese of Cleveland
 Concilio Compesino Del Suresta - Roswell, New Mexico
 Ohio State Council 8, A.F.S.C.M.E. - Columbus, Ohio
 Eastern Farm Workers Association - Riverhead, New York
 Farm Labor Service Center - Philadelphia, Pa
 Indiana State Council of N.O.W.
 Las Hermanas - Milwaukee, Wisconsin
 Maricopa County Organizing Project - Phoenix, Arizona
 National Association of Farm Worker Organization - Washington D.C.
 National Sharecroppers Fund - Charlotte, North Carolina
 North Dakota Migrant Council
 Padres - San Antonio
 Secretariat for Hispanic Affairs of the U.S. Catholic Conference
 Peoples Alliance - New York, N.Y.
 Toledo Area Council of Churches
 United Farm Workers, AFL- CIO ,
 United Labor Committee - Toledo, Ohio
 United Steel Workers of America, Local 110 - Lorain, Ohio
 West Coast International Longshoreman and Warehousemen's Union
 World Federation of Trade Unions
 West Shore Unitarian Church - Rocky River, Ohio

Migrant Strike Aftermath: Tomato Farmers' Profits 'Lying In The Fields'

By NANCY NEUBRECHT
Staff Writer

LEIPSIC — Members of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) have gone south for the winter, but tomato farmers in Putnam and Henry counties are still feeling the effects of the migrant strike.

About 60 to 70 percent of the tomatoes in the two-county area have been harvested, according to Don Kimmet, Putnam County Cooperative Extension agent. But for most farmers, "the profits are still lying in the fields," he said.

Members of FLOC disrupted the tomato harvest in those two counties earlier this month, when they drove through the area in caravans, stopping to coax other migrants out of the fields.

The strikers were demanding 35 cents for each hamper of tomatoes picked or a minimum wage of \$3.25 an hour, whichever was greater. They also were asking farmers to provide them with medical insurance and a say in the annual bargaining process between the canneries and growers.

Tomato farmers said they could not afford to give the migrants an increase unless the canneries paid them more for each ton of tomatoes. The canneries refused to give them more than a token increase, maintaining it was not the time to negotiate since this year's contracts already were signed.

As FLOC members pulled more and more workers out of the fields, farmers began raising the wages of those still working by a few cents a hamper. In the Leipsic area, hardest hit by FLOC, the average rate was 25 cents a hamper before the strike. Two weeks ago, nine-year-old sons of Leipsic area farmers said they were being paid 30 cents a hamper to pick the crop.

Although FLOC claims to represent 1,500 of the 8,000 or 9,000 migrants who come to work in Ohio each summer, the growers and the canneries refuse to recognize FLOC as the migrants' bargaining agent.

To focus national attention on their demands, FLOC members marched to the state capital on Labor Day. But after the march, many FLOC members headed south.

Farmers busied themselves recruiting other laborers to replace those lost. Some of the replacements were migrant workers who came from other states, or high school students. Other farmers bought or borrowed mechanical harvesters to pick the tomatoes. In one instance, a farmer drove to Kentucky to pick up a harvester.

Kimmet says most growers have hauled an average of 12 to 15 tons of tomatoes an acre to the canneries. By the end of a good year, Kimmet says most have delivered 20 to 25 tons.

On some days the canneries have more loads than they can handle and ask some farmers to deliver a few less loads on those days.

Kimmet says growers are now hoping for a late frost and dry weather until the crop is in.

He admitted FLOC adversely affected this year's harvest, but the crop ripened

very late this year which gave farmers a chance to make up for lost time.

"If we'd had rainy or hot weather earlier, the strike could have caused a lot of problems," he said.

Kimmet claimed he had heard of only one farmer in the two-county area whose tomatoes rotted before he had time to harvest them.

In that instance, the grower abandoned 20 acres of his 35 acre farm and is now concentrating breaking even by harvesting the other 15.

FLOC's Clerk-Treasurer Ray Santiago maintains the strikers had a much greater impact on the area than farmers are willing to acknowledge.

"Even though they (the farmers) refuse to admit they have tomatoes rotting in the fields we see them," Santiago said.

"They have been recruiting workers as quickly as possible to try to salvage the crop before the canneries close," he continued.

But Santiago says FLOC has "made a definite impact on the industry and next year, our impact is going to be much greater and we'll be able to sustain a much larger strike."

He says FLOC members are now driving through the two counties and recording the names of the migrants still working in the fields. Over the winter, he and other FLOC members will make periodic trips to Texas and Florida and try to convince them to join the labor organizing committee.

During the last week, he and other group members have been meeting with other farm labor groups across the country and asking them to support a boycott of canned tomato products produced by Libby, McNeill & Libby and Campbell's Soup Co.

Santiago says the National Association of Farm Worker Organizations "overwhelmingly endorsed the idea. They are going to go back to their respective states and begin to mobilize people to boycott Libby and Campbell tomato products," he said.

"If we look at the whole thing I think we were very successful," he said. The campaign generated the support of members of other labor organizations, religious groups and Hispanic members of the community, he added.

Some farmers say they will buy harvesters this year to eliminate their dependence on migrant labor.

But Hancock County Cooperative Extension agent Harry Freeman said the harvester is not a simple solution.

He explained that farmers who have less than 100 acres of tomatoes would have to go into a partnership with another grower to make the machine pay for itself.

Another problem, he says, is that most of them are quite large and take good field conditions. If you have too much rain close to harvest time you can't even get them across the field."

Freeman said that one year it rained so much that a local farmer who had purchased a harvester "never had it out of the barn. Well, you can't afford that."

FARM WORKERS STRIKE IN OHIO — ANNOUNCE BOYCOTT! UFW OFFERS SUPPORT

In August 1978, 2,000 farm workers struck the tomato fields of Northwestern Ohio. These workers have organized themselves under the banner of FLOC (Farm Labor Organizing Committee), which began organizing in Ohio, Michigan and Indiana in the fall of 1967 under the leadership of Baldemar Velasquez. The hand harvested Ohio tomato crop is grown and sold under contract to canneries, including Libby McNeil & Libby and the Campbell Soup Company.

FLOC has expressed sympathy for the tomato farmer, who negotiates individually with the cannery on the cannery's terms: "*commercial tomato farmers are actually just agricultural laborers who happen to supply land with their labor.*" The strike was preceded by a number of FLOC-sponsored meetings to which farmers, cannery officials and workers were invited. Only a few farmers and no cannery representatives attended any of the meetings. One hundred to 200 farm workers were at each meeting.

The strikers' demands included:

- a third party role in annual contract negotiations between growers and canneries
- a wage increase from 25¢ to 35¢ per 33 lb. hamper
- travel pay and medical benefits
- cleaner and safer labor camps

During the 2-week strike farm worker leaders were arrested and workers were evicted from their labor camp homes; they took up residence in a "tent city" in Belmore — from which the mayor of Belmore tried to evict them. Vigilantes threatened strikers and followed them around the area. At one point the workers picketed the Libby's cannery in Leipsic:

"In the early hours of the strike, a woman picket was brushed by and bounced off a truck driven by a man delivering 7 tons of tomatoes. Having delivered them the same driver raced through another gate, striking Fernando Cuevas, another picket who managed to grab the front of the truck and lifted himself off the ground.... Another group of strikers was later shoved backwards by a truck loaded with tomatoes. The truck burned its rear tires on the pavement, straining against the weight of the pickets. The driver finally backed off and drove away." —Plain Dealer, 8/27/78

High school students and children as young as nine were hired to break the strike — and were paid more than the workers were asking. (Findlay Courier, 9/23/78). Mechanical harvesters were also used to replace the strikers. Libby's, which had refused all requests to meet with the workers prior to the strike, filed suit against FLOC for losses of more than \$1 million. From 10% to 30% of the crop went unpicked. A county agricultural agent said, "*The profit is still in the ground.*" (Findlay Courier, 9/23/78)

When the harvest ended, the canneries were still refusing to negotiate. FLOC immediately began planning a boycott of the Campbell Soup Company and Libby McNeil & Libby, which is a subsidiary of Nestle. Baldemar Velasquez, President of FLOC has said that plans are being made to strike the tomato fields again in 1979.

The United Farm Workers' union has pledged support to FLOC's organizing efforts. National Farm Worker Ministry member organizations and farm worker support committees are being asked to get in touch with FLOC and to offer their assistance in the boycott. FLOC's address and phone: 714½ S. St. Clair St., Toledo, OH 43609, 419/243-3457.

BOYCOTT CAMPBELL'S SOUPS

BOYCOTT NESTLE'S & LIBBY MCNEIL & LIBBY

National Farm Worker Ministry
1430 W. Olympic Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90015

419 243-3456

NEWS RELEASE: March 13, 1979

For More Information:
Ray Santiago,
Media Coordinator/Secretary-Treasurer

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



MECHANIZATION OF TOMATO HARVESTING: One Of Many Issues Raised By F.L.O.C.'s Boycott Of Campbell Soup & Libby, McNeill & Libby Products.

Though everyone eats daily, few people ever think about how food arrives at their table; about the very few corporations who are the food industry in America, growing more wealthy and stronger every day while causing the ruin of the family farmer and the exploitation of the farmworker. Fewer people know the hardship of a farmworker's life -- the daily struggle for survival. Farmworkers lead miserable lives with shabby housing, no guaranteed work, extremely low wages, no medical coverage, no pensions, and little or no representation.

Most farmworkers are migrants and must travel much of the year to follow the harvest from Florida and Texas in the spring to Indiana, Michigan and Ohio in the summer and fall.

Only in the past few years have farmworkers achieved some degree of strength through solidarity in unionizing efforts like those of the United Farmworkers (UFW) of America, AFL-CIO, and the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC). Despite some union victories the struggle for justice and dignity continues around the country. Late last summer Ohio saw its first major farmworker strike when the farmworkers, who toil in the tomato fields of Northwest Ohio, refused to submit further to the

-more-

deprivation with which they were forced to live. [REDACTED] the right to participate in annual contract negotiations with the farmers and processors to ensure for themselves: better housing with running water and electricity, an increase in the piece rate from 24¢ to 35¢ per 33 pound hamper of tomatoes, a guaranteed minimum wage of \$3.25 per hour (when the piece rate does not equal the guaranteed minimum wage, work guarantee of 28 hours every 2 weeks, and medical coverage.

The organization representing the farmworkers in the Mid-West is the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC). FLOC was founded in 1967 and currently has 3,500 members throughout Florida, Texas, Indiana, Michigan and Ohio. FLOC, like the UFW and other farm labor organizations, cannot achieve its goals by merely striking. Farmworkers are not covered by the National Labor Relations Act or other protective labor legislation that other workers utilize in their unionizing efforts. Farmworkers often must rely on consumers to help force the farmers and canneries to recognize the collective bargaining rights of farmworkers.

A major issue that has been facing farmworkers and farmers (further down the road) is mechanization. It is an issue that FLOC and its members have been aware of and addressing since 1967. In an article published in the July, 1975, issue of Nuestra Lucha FLOC stated the importance in "...developing worker plans for the mechanical harvesting of crops." The article went on to state "...that the food processors and canneries are the ones responsible for the cruel exploitation of the labor and lives of the farmworkers and serious financial crunch sometimes placed upon the small farmers. Baldemar Velasquez, FLOC president, emphasized that small farmers cannot bring economic justice to the farmworkers; the processors squeeze the grower in one hand and the farmworker in the other. 'Small farmers must also organize against corporate agriculture.' He went on to suggest that FLOC would be

[REDACTED] and farmworkers) to force canneries to bargain fairly in the future...

Workers are again being forced to bear the brunt of technological change. Not a thought is being given to the destruction of the farmworkers' lives by the agricultural industry. Farmworkers are not being protected by the government who's laws prohibit research that: 1) does not promote the maintenance of maximum employment; 2) does not lead to the improvement of rural life; 3) and will not, in the long run, lead to a sound and prosperous agricultural industry. The government itself is in fact leading the development of the machines that almost solely benefit the largest of the agricultural companies: companies who should be made responsible for all the social and economic consequences of mechanization. Society should guard itself against corporations who with equal indifference maul the environment and the lives of workers. Corporations should pay for damages to the fabric of society as they do for damage to the environment.

On January 28, 1979, FLOC officially kicked off its national consumer boycott against the products of Campbell Soup and Libby, McNeill & Libby, a subsidiary of the huge Swiss run Nestlé conglomerate. FLOC is asking consumers everywhere to help farmworkers win justice by not purchasing Campbell's and Libby's products and by writing these corporations to show support for the farmworkers.

Building the boycott is one of the two main priorities for FLOC; the other is preparing farmworkers for this summer's organizing campaign and strike. Presently, Baldemar Velasquez is meeting with workers in Texas and Florida to discuss this coming summer's activities. The farmworkers will continue the strike during the tomato harvest while maintaining a twelve month effort on the boycott until their cause is won. The problems caused by mechanization will be corrected because of the joint effort of farmworkers striking and concerned consumers boycotting to apply pressure on the processors.



Joe Velasquez of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee shows slides during his March 1 presentation at the Ohio State University Newman Center.

Campbell, Libby boycott urged

To achieve collective bargaining rights with tomato processors is the goal of Ohio migrant farm workers through a nationwide boycott of Libby, McNeil & Libby products and Campbell Soup.

The boycott against the two companies which operate canneries in Northwestern Ohio was launched recently by the Farm Labor Organizing Committee. FLOC is a Toledo-based union of some 3,500 members.

FLOC VICE PRESIDENT Joe Velasquez was at the Newman Center in Columbus March 1 to interest people in organizing a local boycott.

He said that once collective bargaining is a reality, FLOC wants the corporations to pay for retraining farm laborers. It is inevitable that migrant workers will be displaced because of increased use of mechanical harvesters, he said.

"Mechanization, if not approached conscientiously, will be a burden to the taxpayer in terms of welfare, food stamps and retraining," Velasquez said.

"Large corporations are phasing migrants out without considering the social implications to workers and their families.

Their main concern is profit," he charged.

Those who profit, not taxpayers, should be responsible for retraining, he said, noting companies benefit from government-funded research on harvesters and tomatoes.

HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT the consumer would then probably have to pay a somewhat higher price for cannery products since corporations want to protect their profit margin.

Velasquez said this year Campbell plans to sign contracts only with farmers using mechanical harvesters.

If the boycott is not effective, the 11-year-old union will again strike in the fields this summer, he said. Between 8,000 and 9,000 migrant laborers come to the state annually for the picking season, which runs from late August to early October.

FLOC continues to work for better wages and working conditions, asking 35 cents per hamper of tomatoes picked or a \$3.25 per-hour minimum wage. In the past the union asked to participate in some way as processors and growers set the price for tomatoes.

VELASQUEZ ALSO POINTED out that

"only little changes" have been made since the late '50s in migrant housing, protection against pesticides, sanitation in the fields and other working conditions. FLOC has taken steps to assist laborers through its legal clinic, medical aides program, social services referral and information programs.

Persons interested in working on the local boycott can call Mike Sisson after 6 p.m. at 294-1253.

Products boycotted include Libby items and those from its parent corporation, Nestle's. Campbell's products, besides Campbell's Soup and Granny's Soup, include Swanson frozen prepared dinners and meats, V-8 vegetable juice, Franco-American and Pepperidge Farm products, Bounty canned chili and entrees and Vlasic pickles.

Velasquez also suggests writing letters in support of collective bargaining rights to: Douglas B. Wells, president of Libby, McNeill & Libby, 200 S. Michigan, Chicago 60604; and D.Y. Robinson, director of consumer services for Campbell Soup, Camden, N.J. 08101.

Food boycott to help farm workers

eastern michigan university—ypsilanti michigan

monday february 26 1979

By JACQUELYNN BOYLE
Assistant News Editor

If it says Libby's, Libby's, Libby's (or Campbell's and Nestle's) on the label, label, label—don't buy it.

At least that's what the Chicano Students Association (CSA) and the Minority Affairs committee of student senate are advocating. The organizations are asking students to support a boycott of products manufactured by those three companies.

The boycott, organized by the Farm Labor Organizing Committee of Toledo, Ohio, supports Ohio farmworkers in their quest for a wage increase and better working conditions.

ACCORDING TO Jesus Trevino, president of CSA, Libby's, Campbell's and Nestle's have refused to negotiate with both farmers and workers, claiming that the responsibility lies with the farmers, who are the actual employers.

But Trevino said the farmworkers' union feels that the canneries are ultimately responsible to the worker also and must work together with the farmers.

"CSA heartily supports the boycott and hopefully the University will too," Trevino said. "We've been writing letters to the companies to let them know we support the farmworkers."

Maria Rodriguez, of the Minority Affairs Committee, said workers are

asking for a wage increase, better housing facilities, improved medical coverage and more sanitary working conditions.

SHE SAID CSA and Minority Affairs want students to be aware of what is happening and voice their support through letters and petitions to the companies.

"We plan to circulate petitions around campus and send copies of them, with letters, to the canneries," Rodriguez said. "We want to get the students involved."

Trevino said he contacted Dan Olson, head of University Food Services, and requested that the University support the boycott by not serving foods produced by those companies in the dining commons.

According to Trevino, Olson said it would be impossible to stop using these products because the University has a back supply. Olson told Trevino the only alternative would be to get students to stop eating these foods, which would force the University to resell them. But Olson warned that this would cause an increase in food costs, which would ultimately be passed on the student.

TREVINO SAID the boycott was organized in mid-January and will continue until the canneries agree to negotiate.

The following products are included in the boycott:

- All Nestle's products.
- All vegetables, fruits, meats and juices with the Libby's label.
- Campbell's soups.
- Swanson frozen prepared dinners and meats.
- V.8 vegetable juice.
- Franco-American products.
- Recipe pet food.
- Pepperidge Farm products.
- Granny's Soup.
- Bounty canned chili and entrees.
- Vlasic products.

FARM LABOR ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

714 1/2 South St. Clair

Toledo, Ohio 43605

Phone: (419) 243-3456

I want to support the farmworker's struggle for better wages and decent working conditions. I am contributing the following amount \$ _____.

I would also like to pledge \$ _____ to be paid monthly in order to insure continued financial support of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee.

All checks should be made payable to FLOC and sent to the above address.


Name: _____

Street or Box No. City State Zip

BOYCOTT CAMPBELL'S & LIBBY'S!



Farm
Labor
Organizing
Committee

"hasta la victoria" 714½ s. saint clair street, toledo, oh 43609 phone 419-243-3456 

April 25, 1979

Dear Friend,

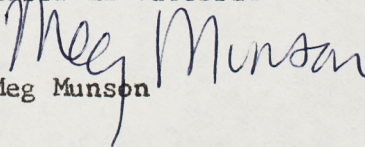
As the summer is almost upon us, we've begun to anticipate our organizing campaign concerning both the strike and the boycott. Just recently the staff held a two day retreat to bring all of our ideas together and brainstorm how they might best be carried out. Hopefully you too have begun to think about how you might use the strike to your advantage in building the boycott - and raising funds.

Fundraising should be considered a top priority. Our goal is to raise \$50,000 for the strike fund before August. The letter enclosed is a part of this fundraising campaign.

Keep in the back of your mind the 1st and 2nd weekend in August when we'll be having our first organizational mini-convention (the date still has not been set). We're hoping you all can attend and at best help with it. Farmworker delegates from Texas, Florida, and northwest Ohio will be discussing the organization of the union, and generally just gearing up for the strike a week or two away.


Again, please send me the names and addresses of committee members and community people who you feel would be interested in receiving the Boycott Update.

Hasta La Victoria


Meg Munson



Farm Labor Organizing Committee

"hasta la victoria" 714½ s. saint clair street, toledo, oh 43609 phone 419-243-3456 

April 18, 1979

Dear Friends,

The summer of '79 is fast approaching for the Farm Labor Organizing Committee. The tomatoes will ripen but the farmworkers will not be there to pick the crop. They will be out of the fields this year striking against the canneries who refuse to recognize the worker's right to organize. Farmworkers who come to the Midwest are determined to have a voice in the decision making process that controls their lives, and are therefore, willing to make great sacrifices in order to achieve justice. As they leave the fields to join the striking forces, they often forfeit whatever inadequate housing they may have had in a migrant camp. FLOC must see to it that these families are cared for by providing them with shelter, food, gas and the encouragement to continue their struggle.

Since strikes are expensive, FLOC has made a pledge to raise \$50,000. before August to add to the strike fund. Our dedication to the cause of these farmworkers has made it imperative that we once again ask for your financial help in raising this amount. In a time when inflation seems to be defeating us all, making it difficult to contribute to causes we believe in, we have to remember that this is a moral issue involving real people who have suffered for too long.

You are on our mailing list because you are interested in the farmworker movement. This is an opportunity for you to personally participate in helping FLOC achieve its goal of union recognition. Enclosed is an envelope for your convenience in sending whatever you have decided to give. If you find it easier to send a small amount each month, a pledge card has also been enclosed for this purpose. You may be assured that every penny you send will be greatly appreciated and will be used in directly helping the striking farmworkers in this time of crisis.

Without your help much of our work would not be possible, so thank you in advance for your contribution or pledge.

Hasta La Victoria!

Baldemar Velasquez
President

NATIONAL FARM WORKER MINISTRY

NEWSLETTER
March, 1979

UFW TEXAS ORGANIZING CONVOCATION

Cesar Chavez described in very clear terms the long, hard road ahead in his address to the first Texas Organizing Convocation in Pharr, Texas, on February 25, 1979: *"The farm workers' struggle can be divided into four distinct phases: first, when we begin, the workers are afraid; after so many years of failure, they believe it just cannot be done: once we have started the work a little, we are ridiculed by friend and foe alike. As we do more work and the organizing begins to take form, the ridicule from our opponents turns to worry and we encounter stern opposition. It is at this stage that the workers' blood, sweat and tears are shed. Finally, during the fourth stage, victory is achieved and there is acceptance of the union by the employers. The farm workers of California have reached the third phase; they are no longer afraid of the growers and that is perhaps the greatest single achievement this union has made. The Texas farm workers are still struggling through the first phase."*

More than 350 farm worker delegates met at the Pharr High School gym to hear Cesar and other speakers and to form themselves into organizing committees for the struggle ahead. The delegates were elected to represent 30 colonias throughout the lower Rio Grande Valley and Reynoso, Tamaulipas, Mexico. In addition to the delegates, 1500 farm workers and supporters attended the one day convocation.

Baldemar Velasquez, President of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) addressed the convention and led more than 100 FLOC members in a floor demonstration on the theme "una sola union". Olga Sandman, President of the NFWM Board opened the convocation; other speakers included Msgr. George Higgins, Bishop John J. Fitzpatrick of the Diocese of Brownsville and Harry L. Hubbard, President of the Texas AFL-CIO.

FLOC Makes Plans for Summer 1979

In August 1978, 2,000 farm workers struck the tomato fields of Northwestern, Ohio, under the banner of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) which began organizing in Ohio, Michigan, and Indiana in the fall of 1967. The hand-harvested Ohio tomato crop is grown and sold under contract to canneries, including Libby, McNeil & Libby and the Campbell Soup Co.

The FLOC strike was preceded by a number of meetings to which farmers, cannery officials and workers were invited. Only a few farmers and no cannery representatives attended the meetings. The workers demands included: (1) a third party role in annual contract negotiations between growers and canneries (2) a wage increase from 25¢ to 35¢ per 33-lb. hamper (3) travel pay and medical benefits (4) cleaner and safer labor camps.

When the harvest ended, the canneries were still refusing to negotiate. FLOC has now launched a boycott of Campbell Soup Co. and Libby, McNeil & Libby (a subsidiary of Nestle). At the same time FLOC leadership is working with its migrant membership in Florida and Texas to prepare for the tomato harvest of 1979. Baldemar Velasquez, President of FLOC, has said that the workers will strike again this year if the canneries do not recognize the legitimate rights of the farm workers.

March 8, 1979

Migrants Asked to Boycott Libby's, Campbell's Growers

SAN JUAN — The leader of the Ohio-based Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) is in the Valley asking area migrant farm laborers not to work for growers producing tomatoes for Libby's and Campbell's Soup Companies.

Baldemar Velasquez, who organized FLOC in 1967, said in a press conference at the United Farm Workers center here today that this summer FLOC will continue a strike against growers for the two companies that began last year. Velasquez said that of about 8,000 farm laborers who annually work the tomato harvest in Ohio, 75 per cent are from Texas and most live in the Valley.

FLOC is concentrating its efforts against Libby's and Campbell's, because the two companies buy most of the tomato crop grown in Ohio and, according to Velasquez, effectively set the wage which is paid to farmworkers. When the two companies set the price for tomatoes, Velasquez said, that "automatically sets the wage for the laborers."

FLOC is seeking a wage of 35 cents for each 33 pound hamper of tomatoes picked, or \$3.25 per hour, whichever is higher. Workers are currently paid 25 cents per hamper, or in some cases \$2.65 per hour.

In addition, FLOC seeks a guarantee of 28

hours of work every two weeks, a transportation allowance for travel from Texas or Florida to Ohio, a medical program, and a custodian in each labor camp.

Velasquez, whose efforts with FLOC were endorsed by the United Farm Workers Union in its first Texas organizing convention in Pharr recently, said that FLOC has repeatedly asked to be allowed to participate in negotiations between growers and the two companies, to ask for a higher price to be paid to growers. Although FLOC has backed the growers for a higher price, he said, "They have steadfastly refused" to endorse any participation by FLOC in the negotiations.

In an attempt to bring pressure on the companies, FLOC has asked its supporters to boycott all products produced by Libby's and its parent company Nestle's and all products of Campbell's Soup and its subsidiaries.

Velasquez said that last summer's strike involved about 2,000 workers, and that a substantial portion of the tomato crop went unharvested. He said he will spend three weeks in the Valley asking area farmworkers not to work for the growers who sell their products to the two companies when the Ohio tomato harvest begins in August.

UNITED FARM WORKERS OF AMERICA, AFL-CIO

ORGANIZING CONVOCATION OF TEXAS
February 25, 1979

Resolution 22: SOLIDARITY WITH THE STRIKING FARM WORKERS IN OHIO

WHEREAS many farm workers in Texas migrate north to work in the tomato fields of Ohio, and

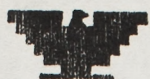
WHEREAS for years the wages in Ohio have remained at 19¢ to 24¢ for a 33-pound tub of tomatoes,

WHEREAS, in August 1978, more than 2,000 farm workers went on strike in Ohio for better wages and working conditions, under the leadership of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee, and,

WHEREAS, the national tomato companies of Libby and Campbell set the prevailing wages for the tomato industry in Ohio and these companies refuse to negotiate a contract with our brothers and sisters who work in Ohio,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the members of the United Farm Workers of America, AFL-CIO, convened here in San Juan, Texas, continue supporting our brothers and sisters in their struggle in Ohio, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we commend and express our solidarity with the work of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee of Ohio to achieve better wages and working conditions for agricultural laborers.



UNITED FARM WORKERS of AMERICA AFL-CIO

National Headquarters: La Paz, Keene, California 93531

(805) 822-5571

July 27, 1977

Mr. Baldemar Velasquez
Farm Labor Organizing Committee
408 Segur Avenue
Toledo, Ohio 43609

Dear Baldemar :

Following is a confirmation of the telegram sent to you on July 15, 1977:

The United Farm Workers of America, recognizes and supports the struggle of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee to win dignity and justice for farm workers in the Midwest.

We share common goals and a common commitment to liberating farm workers from the discrimination and exploitation that impoverishes so many of our people in this rich land. Through our struggle, one more step is being taken in realizing through one national effort an end to the suffering that farm workers have known.

Let us spread the good news which the message of cooperation and solidarity brings and the progress that will come from our efforts.

With warmest regards.

Viva la Causa!

Cesar E. Chavez
President

CEC/df



PARTIAL LIST OF ENDORSEMENTS/SUPPORTERS

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees,
Ohio State Council 8 - Columbus, Ohio

American Federation of Teachers - Toledo, Ohio

Associated Migrants Opportunity Services - Indianapolis, Indiana

Bowling Green State University Student Government Association

Clergy & Laity Concerned - Cleveland, Ohio

Coalition Against World Hunger

Commission on Catholic Community Action, Diocese of Cleveland

Commission on Spanish Speaking Affairs - Columbus, Ohio

Committee on Chicano Rights - National City, California

Concilio Campesino Del Sureste - Roswell, New Mexico

Conference of Major Superiors of Men Religious

Consumers League of Ohio - Cleveland, Ohio

Denver Catholic Community Services

Dept. of Social Action/Archdiocese of Cincinnati

Farm Labor Service Center - Philadelphia, Pa

Federation of Ohio Rivera Cooperatives - Columbus, Ohio

Hotel & Restaurant Employees & Bartenders' Union Local 505 -
Columbus, Ohio

Illinois Farm Worker Ministry

Indiana State Council of N.O.W.

La Cofradia Guadalupana

Las Hermanas - Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Latinas Unidas Para Accion - Toledo, Ohio

Leadership Conference of Women Religious

Lorain Council for Latin American Advancement

Michigan Federation of Cooperatives

Midwest Council of La Raza - Notre Dame, Indiana

Minnesota Migrant Council

PARTIAL LIST OF ENDORSEMENTS/SUPPORTERS

- Most Rev. John J. Fitzpatrick, Diocese of Brownsville
- Most Rev. Raymond J. Gallagher, Diocese of Lafayette
- National Association of Farm Worker Organizations - Washington D.C.
- National Farm Worker Ministry - Los Angeles, California
- National Immigration Coalition - Sun Valley, California
- National Sharecroppers' Fund - Charlotte, North Carolina
- New American Movement - Detroit, Michigan
- North Dakota Migrant Council
- Ohio Citizens for Farm Labor - Cleveland, Ohio
- Ohioans for Utility Reform - Toledo, Ohio
- Padres - San Antonio, Texas
- Peoples Alliance - New York
- Secretariat for Hispanic Affairs of the U.A.A. Catholic Conference - Washington D.C.
- Science for the People - Ann Arbor, Michigan
- Spanish Speaking Catholic Commission, Midwest Region - South Bend, In.
- Toledo Coalition for Safe Energy
- Toledo Metropolitan Mission
- Toledo United Auto Workers CAP/locals 1216 and 12
- United Farm Workers of America, AFL-CIO - Keene, California
- United Labor Committee - Toledo, Ohio
- United Steel Workers of America, Local 110 - Lorain, Ohio
- Victory Noll Sisters - Huntington, In.
- West Coast International Longshoremen and Warehousemen's Union - San Francisco, California
- West Shore Unitarian Church - Rocky River, Ohio
- Women Speak Out for Peace and Justice - Cleveland, Ohio
- World Federation of Trade Unions - Prague, Czechoslovakia

TO: Baldemar Velasquez
FROM: Don Brittnacher
DATE: February 28, 1979
SUBJECT: Mechanization and Farmworker Jobs

FACTS: The Agricultural Research Service of the Department of Agriculture is doing research at Michigan State University on mechanical pepper-pickers. The success of this research would seriously affect the employment situation of farmworkers in Michigan.

QUESTION: Does the Agricultural Research Service have the authority to conduct this research?

The Agricultural Research Service was established under the Secretary of Agriculture's Memorandum 1320, Supplement 4, dated Nov. 2, 1953, and handles the research activities of the Department of Agriculture. Since agriculture is a small-unit industry and cannot afford private research facilities, Congress has authorized the Department of Agriculture to set up its own facilities for research, to contract with private facilities, and to aid states in funding their own experiment stations. Federal funding via the ARS of state experiment stations is restricted by Congress to research compatible with certain policy considerations.

The following brief historical sketch of Congressional acts shows how a changing Congressional policy has affected the scope of allowable research:

HATCH ACT, 24 Stat. 440-441 (1887)

The Act authorized the establishment of agricultural experiment stations in connection with state colleges, funded in part by the federal government. The scope of research was confined to areas involving an understanding of the character of and relationships between plants, animals and soils,

"and such other researches or experiments bearing directly on the agricultural industry of the United States as may in each case be deemed advisable, having due regard to the varying conditions and needs of the respective States or Territories."

It appears that research was required to be tapered, then,

to the needs of the state of the particular experiment station.

ADAMS ACT, 34 Stat. 63 (1906)

The Act increased federal funding, requiring only that it go toward

"necessary expenses of conducting original researches or experiments bearing directly on the agricultural industry of the United States, having due regard to the varying conditions and needs of the respective States or Territories."

PURNELL ACT, 43 Stat. 970 (1925)

The Act provided:

The funds appropriated pursuant to this Act shall be applied only to paying the necessary expenses of conducting investigations or making experiments bearing directly on the production, manufacture, preparation, use, distribution, and marketing of agricultural products and including such scientific researches as have for their purpose the establishment and maintenance of a permanent and efficient agricultural industry, and such economic and sociological investigations as have for their purpose the development and improvement of the rural home and rural life, and for printing and disseminating the results of said researches.

The scope of allowable research was expanded to all facets of agriculture, from production through to marketing, with the caveat that the research leads to "a permanent and efficient agricultural industry." It was also Congressional policy to fund research on the improvement of the rural home and rural life.

BANKHEAD-JONES ACT, 49 Stat. 436 (1935)

The Act further expanded the scope of allowable experimentation, extending it to include the "basic problems of agriculture in its broadest aspects." One specifically-listed area of possible research was the "development of new and improved methods of production."

AMENDMENT OF BANKHEAD-JONES ACT, 60 Stat. 1082-1083 (1946)

The Amendment repealed the section containing the above provisions of the Bankhead-Jones Act; the ideas therein were incorporated into the Amendment, but the scope for permissible research was predicated on the expressed

Congressional policy of promoting "a sound and prosperous agriculture and rural life", and "maximum employment", among other things:

"SECTION 1. It is hereby declared to be the policy of the Congress to promote the efficient production and utilization of products of the soil as essential to the health and welfare of our people and to promote a sound and prosperous agriculture and rural life as indispensable to the maintenance of maximum employment and national prosperity. It is also the intent of Congress to assure agriculture a position in research equal to that of industry which will aid in maintaining an equitable balance between agriculture and other sections of our economy. For the attainment of these objectives, the Secretary of Agriculture is authorized and directed to conduct and to stimulate research into the laws and principles underlying the basic problems of agriculture in its broadest aspects, including but not limited to: Research relating to the improvement of the quality of, and the development of new and improved methods of the production, marketing, distribution, processing, and utilization of plant and animal commodities at all stages from the original producer through to the ultimate consumer; research into the problems of human nutrition and the nutritive value of agricultural commodities, with particular reference to their content of vitamins, minerals, amino and fatty acids, and all other constituents that may be found necessary for the health of the consumer and to the gains or losses in nutritive value that may take place at any stage in their production, distribution, processing, and preparation for use by the consumer; research relating to the development of present, new, and extended uses and markets for agricultural commodities and byproducts as food or in commerce, manufacture, or trade, both at home and abroad, with particular reference to those foods and fibers for which our capacity to produce exceeds or may exceed existing economic demand; research to encourage the discovery, introduction, and breeding of new and useful agricultural crops, plants, and animals, both foreign and native, particularly for those crops and plants which may be adapted to utilization in chemical and manufacturing industries; research relating to new and more profitable uses for our resources of agricultural manpower, soils, plants, animals, and equipment than those to which they are now, or may hereafter be, devoted; research relating to the conservation, development, and use of land, forest, and water resources for agricultural purposes; research relating to the design, development, and the more efficient and satisfactory use of farm buildings, farm homes, farm machinery, including the application of electricity and other forms of power; research relating to the diversification of farm enterprises, both as to the type of commodities produced, and as to the types of operations performed, on the individual farm; research relating to any other laws and principles that may contribute to the establishment and maintenance of a permanent and effective agricultural industry including such investigations as have for their purpose the development and improvement of the rural home and rural life, and the maximum contribution by agriculture to the welfare of the consumer and the maintenance of maximum employment and national prosperity; and such other researches or experiments bearing on the agricultural industry or on rural homes of the United States as may in each case be deemed advisable, having due regard to the varying conditions and needs of Puerto Rico, the respective States, and Territories. In effectuating the purposes of this section, maximum use shall be made of existing research facilities owned or controlled by the Federal Government or by State agricultural experiment stations and of the facilities of the Federal and State extension services. Research authorized under this section shall be in addition to research provided for under existing law (but both activities shall be coordinated so far as practicable)."

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AMENDMENT OF HATCH ACT, 7 U.S.C. §§361a, 361b, 69 Stat. 671 (1955)

The Amendment expresses the present Congressional policy on federal funding of state agricultural experiment stations:

"SECTION 1. It is the policy of Congress to continue the agricultural research at State agricultural experiment stations which has been encouraged and supported by the Hatch Act of 1887, the Adams Act of 1906, the Purnell Act of 1925, the Bankhead-Jones Act of 1935, and title I, section 9, of that Act as added by the Act of August 14, 1946, and Acts amendatory and supplementary thereto, and to promote the efficiency of such research by a codification and simplification of such laws. As used in this Act, the terms 'State' or 'States' are defined to include the several States, Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico. As used in this Act, the term 'State agricultural experiment station' means a department which shall have been established, under direction of the college or university or agricultural departments of the college or university in each State in accordance with an Act approved July 2, 1862 (12 Stat. 503), entitled 'An Act donating public lands to the several States and Territories which may provide colleges for the benefit of agriculture and the mechanic arts'; or such other substantially equivalent arrangements as any State shall determine.

"SEC. 2. It is further the policy of the Congress to promote the efficient production, marketing, distribution, and utilization of products of the farm as essential to the health and welfare of our peoples and to promote a sound and prosperous agriculture and rural life as indispensable to the maintenance of maximum employment and national prosperity and security. It is also the intent of Congress to assure agriculture a position in research equal to that of industry, which will aid in maintaining an equitable balance between agriculture and other segments of our economy. It shall be the object and duty of the State agricultural experiment stations through the expenditure of the appropriations hereinafter authorized to conduct original and other researches, investigations, and experiments bearing directly on and contributing to the establishment and maintenance of a permanent and effective agricultural industry of the United States, including researches basic to the problems of agriculture in its broadest aspects, and such investigations as have for their purpose the development and improvement of the rural home and rural life and the maximum contribution by agriculture to the welfare of the consumer, as may be deemed advisable, having due regard to the varying conditions and needs of the respective States.

Of particular interest is the emphasis on the promotion of a sound and prosperous agriculture and rural life, the maintenance of maximum employment, the goal of Congress to put agriculture on an equal footing with industry (where job security is a well-protected right), and the requirement that research be tapered to the needs of the state of the particular experiment station.

CONCLUSION

It appears that the Congressional stance toward agricultural research has changed over the years from its initial encouragement of a better understanding of plants, animals and soils, to its full-speed-ahead-maximize-production approach of the middle of this century, to its present emphasis on streamlining production while "saving" rural life. Evidently Congress now feels that a stable agricultural segment of our society is needed for the long-term welfare of this country. If this is the case, and if the following points can be successfully-argued, then the Agriculture Research Service is not authorized to fund the research of the mechanical pepper-picker at Michigan State University:

- 1) The research inhibits, rather than facilitates, the reaching of valid needs of the State of Michigan.
- 2) The research does not promote the maintenance of maximum employment.
- 3) The research does not lead to the improvement of rural life.
- 4) The research will not lead, in the long run, to a sound and prosperous agricultural industry.

Campesinos Organizandose en Mediooeste

Este verano cerca de 2,000 trabajadores salieron en huelga de las labores de tomate en el noroeste de Ohio demandando mejoramiento de sueldos, condiciones de trabajo y viviendas. Aunque la cosecha se ha terminado por este año, la lucha continua en contra de los principales motivos de la huelga, la Campbell's Soup y la Libby's. Campesinos bajo el liderato del Comité Organizador de Trabajadores de la Labor (FLOC), han iniciado un boicoteo nacional de productos de estas compañías.

A los campesinos se les ha negado desde hace mucho tiempo sus derechos como trabajadores/trabajadoras. Mientras los Campesinos Obreros Unidos de America (UFWA) han enfocado atención nacional a la situación por medio de los boicoteos de uva y lechuga, fuera de California el problema casi se ignora. Ahora, siguiendo el ejemplo sentado por el UFWA otros campesinos están tomando la lucha para ayudar a formar el movimiento campesino nacional.

El 25 de agosto, 2,000 campesinos cerraron cerca de 70 ranchos de tomate, quiénes tenían contrato con las compañías Campbell's y Libby's. Aunque los rancheros de tomate son independientes de la compañía, los rancheros invierten su terreno en el tomate así como en otras cosechas y en este sentido son los empleadores inmediatos de los campesinos, FLOC insiste en que las compañías como Libby's y Campbell's deben ser responsables de los beneficios y el bienestar del campesino.

En efecto este sistema trabaja como sigue; antes de que empiece la temporada del tomate, la compañía hace un contrato con el rancharo para pagarle cantidad de dinero por tonelada, de este modo están pre determinando el precio que el rancharo le paga a sus trabajadores. Los campesinos son pagados por los rancheros a razón de pieza (antes de la huelga a muchos de los trabajadores se les estaba ofreciendo 19 a 24 centavos por canasta lo que significa 23 libras). Si el campesino pide un aumento de sueldo, el rancharo contesta al campesino que compañías como Libby's y Campbell's tienen que pagarle a él más dinero por tonelada para en esa forma poder él ajustar su ganancia. Si los campesinos se levantan en huelga, se repetira lo que ocurrió en 1968: campesinos representados por FLOC se levantaron en huelga ganando 22 contratos en 1968 y perdieron 11 contratos al año siguiente cuando los rancheros decidieron plantar maíz, trigo o soya. Se ha determinado que los rancheros pueden darles aumento de sueldo a los campesinos, pero bajo este sistema no tienen la flexibilidad de darle al campesino beneficios como aseguranza de salud.

Organizar al campesino en el medio Oeste es difícil porque casi todos los campesinos vienen cada verano de los estados de Florida y Texas, dejando solamente tres meses para mobilizar alguna acción efectiva. Se anticipa que la lucha será larga y costosa pero la paciencia y la disciplina por parte de los huelguistas es testimonio de que se en-

cuentran preparados a luchar, lucha que puede llevar algunos años antes de ganarse.

La huelga sigue siendo el mecanismo mayor contra las embotelladoras, solamente a través de una unidad nacional de amigos del campesino tanto como de sus abogantes se podrá ganar esta lucha.

Para mayor información sobre el comité del boicoteo nacional en su area favor de comunicarse con:

Farm Labor Organizing Committee
714½ St. Clair
Toledo, Ohio 43609
Teléfono: (419) 243-4356

A continuación la lista de Productos Libby's y Campbell's: *Campbell's Campbell's Soup*, "Swanson" comidas y carnes congeladas, V-8 jugos de vegetales, *Efficient* productos generales de comida, *Recipe* comida para animales, *Hanover Trail* cadena de restaurantes, *Franco-American*, *Lexiton-Gardens*, *Pepperidge Farm*, *Granny's Soup*, *Bounty*, chocolates *Godiva*, pizzas *Pietro's*, galletas y dulces *Delacre*, restaurantes *Herfy's*, productos comestibles *Kia-ora* y *Vlasic*.

Libby-McNeill-Libby: Todos los vegetales, frutas, carnes y jugos que traen la etiqueta *Libby's*.

Productos *Nestle's*: (Nestlé's es la compañía matriz de Libby-McNeill-Libby) Chocolates *Nestle's*, *Quick*, Nescafé, Nestea, Taster's Choice, Sunrise Instant Coffee, Souptime, quesos Jalesburg, Stouffer's, Crosse & Blackwell, Sopas Maggi, Cosméticos L'Oreal.

the National *FARMWORKER*

An Independent Information Network of the National Association of Farmworker Organizations

January/February 1979

Farmworkers Organizing in the Midwest

This summer close to 2,000 farmworkers struck the tomato fields of Northwest Ohio demanding better wages, working and living conditions. Although the harvest has come to an end for this year, the struggle against the principle targets of Campbell's Soup and Libby-McNeill-Libby has not. The farmworkers under the leadership of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC), has now called for a nationwide consumer boycott of these companies' products.

Farmworkers have long been denied their rights as working men and women. While there has been some national attention focused on the problem through the United Farm Workers' boycotts of grapes and lettuce, outside of California the problem has been largely ignored. Now, following the example set by the UFW, other farmworkers are taking up the struggle to help build the national farmworker movement.

On August 25, 1978, 2,000 farmworkers closed over 70 tomato farms contracted with Campbell's and Libby's. Although the tomato farms are owned by independent farmers who also invest acreage in other crops and who are the farmworkers' immediate employers, FLOC insists that the cann-

ing companies should bear the responsibilities for the increased welfare and benefits of the farmworker.

The cannery agrees, before the tomato season begins, to pay the grower so much per ton, therefore predetermining the price that the grower can pay the workers. The workers are paid by the grower on a piece rate system (before the strike most workers were being offered 19-24¢ per 33 lb. hamper), and it is a no-win system for the worker. If he asks the grower for a raise, the grower tells the worker that the cannery must pay him more before he can afford to pay the worker more. If the workers strike solely the grower for a pay raise, there would be a repeat of what happened in 1968: Farmworkers represented by FLOC struck and won twenty-two contracts in 1968 and lost eleven of the contracts the next year when the growers decided to plant corn, wheat or soybeans. Although the growers can give moderate wage increases, they do not have the economic flexibility to give farmworkers long deserved by costly benefits such as health insurance.

Organizing is difficult in the Midwest because almost all of the workers come annually from Florida

allowing only one to three months' time to mobilize any effective action. Nevertheless, there is great determination to overcome any obstacles to a farmworker victory. The patience and discipline shown by the strikers bear testimony to the fact that they are prepared for this fight to be a long one, one that may take several years to win.

Although strikes will continue to be a major tool against the canneries, only through a hard and probably long struggle will FLOC be able to win this fight. FLOC is now calling on its friends throughout the country to help organize boycott committees in their communities and to help raise funds to support this continuing struggle.

For information on organizing a boycott committee in your area contact: The Farm Labor Organizing Committee, 7141/2 St. Clair, Toledo, Ohio 43609. Telephone (419) 243-3456.

The following are the products on the boycott list. *Campbell's*: *Campbell's Soup*, *Swanson* frozen prepared dinners and meats, *V-8* vegetable juice, *Efficient* food service products, *Recipe* pet food, *Hanover Trail* restaurants, *Franco - American* products, *Lexington Gardens* retail garden centers, *Pepperidge Farm* products, *Granny's* soups, *Bounty* canned chili and entrees, *Godiva* chocolates, *Pietro's Gold Coast* pizzas, *Delacre* cookies and pastries, *Herfy's Restaurants*, *Kia-ora* food products and *Vlasic*.

Libby-Mc Neill - Libby: all vegetables, fruits, meats and juices with the Libby's label.

Nestle's products: (Nestle's is the parent company of Libby - McNeill - Libby) *Nestle's Quick and Chocolates*, *Nescafe*, *Nestea*, *Taster's Choice*, *Sunrise Instant Coffee*, *Souptime*, *Jarlesburg Cheese*, *Stouffer's Brand*, *Crosse & Blackwell*, *Maggi Soups*, *L'Oreal* cosmetics.

Catholic funding of FLOC is debated

By DAVID C. MILLER
Sentinel-Tribune County Editor

Continued funding by the Catholic church of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) was debated for two and a half hours in Bowling Green on Saturday.

Supporters of the funding said there is more at issue than just the picking of tomatoes in Northwest Ohio. They feel this is a moral issue in which the church should help bring about justice and dignity to a powerless and underprivileged segment of society.

They testified that the uneducated migrant worker is at the bottom of the totem pole in a power relationship which is headed by international industrial conglomerates — the "true obstacles" along with racism standing in the way of farm workers being able to bargain collectively for wages and benefits.

On the other side of the debate were persons testifying that it is not the function of a church to fund a strike, especially one that is hurting the small farmers and hastening the trend toward larger farming operations.

And they warned if the farmworker strike FLOC initiated last year continues through this coming year there will be no more work from migrants in Northwest Ohio. Either mechanical harvesting will take over all of the tomato picking in Northwest Ohio, or, they said, all of the processors will leave the area, giving California's mechanical harvesters a virtual monopoly on the nation's tomato production.

\$97,000 Being Requested

The debate occurred at an open hearing by the Local Allocations Board of the Campaign for Human Development of the 19-county Catholic Diocese of Toledo.

The Rev. Daniel J. Ring, diocesan CHD director, said after the hearing that FLOC is requesting \$97,000 in national CHD funding for the coming year. FLOC received \$89,000 in

national CHD funding for this current fiscal year, he added.

There was no vote by the local board at the end of the hearing, which had testimony from eight proponents of FLOC's proposal and seven opponents. Each person was limited to 10 minutes of testimony, with only members of the committee allowed to ask questions at the end of each individual's testimony.

At the start of the meeting, Ring said the local board was holding the hearing to see if the proposal fits the criteria for CHD funding, which is to go for educational and "self-help projects to benefit the poor." The hearing is one way the church can be "a listening church," allowing its members "to gain a bit more ownership of the campaign." He added, "we like to hear differences of opinion."

At the conclusion of the hearing, Ring said, "The results of this year's request for funds should be known toward the end of June."

The local committee will forward its recommendation on to the national CHD board.

During the hearing, Ring em-

phasized that the national CHD should not be confused with the "Bishop's Development Fund."

In addition to the \$89,000 national grant, FLOC also received \$5,000 in a Toledo Diocese CHD grant this past year, as well as other small grants from other churches.

FLOC Project Described

According to its application for CHD funding, FLOC will use the money to pay 10 farmworker coordinating teams to "carry out follow-up plans that have come about as a result of the 1978 union recognition campaign in Northwest Ohio. The summer of 1978 saw the biggest farmworker strike in the history of the midwest when 2,000 workers struck, demanding union recognition from two tomato canneries.

"The strike will continue into the 1979 season and will make the significance of the traveling organizing teams to Texas and Florida more important than

ever before."

The job of those teams will be to:

1) "Educate all farmworkers in the Rio Grande Valley in Texas and parts of Florida to support the union recognition campaign by either joining the strike or by boycotting the area where the two target canneries, Campbell Soup and Libby's, have farms contracted for produce.

2) "Educate the public about the boycott that was initiated in late January against Campbell Soup and Libby, McNeil, Libby products.

3) "Organize meetings with all FLOC members while in Texas and Florida to elect delegates to the first midwest farmworker convention. The convention will be part of the organizing activities and preparations for next summer's strike and will merge the FLOC leadership."

Oppose Funding A Strike

Leipsic farmer Charles Kneueven said "funding a strike is not the purpose" of CHD grants. "Most of FLOC's efforts are tied up in the strike or boycott. I find it hard to believe that the strike is not the main effort.

He added, FLOC has "refused to deal with individual growers" and is trying "to force farmers to organize, which they have no right to demand."

These activities are in opposi-

tion, he said, to the guidelines for CHD funds, which say that priority will be given to "projects which generate cooperation among and within diverse groups in the interest of a more integrated and mutually understanding society."

Kneueven also questioned "those who control FLOC," claiming it is "directed by a small number of persons who are no longer in the farmworker situation."

If FLOC strikes again this year it will "have wiped out the farmworker in Northwest Ohio," forcing farmers either to mechanical harvesters or out of the tomato business entirely —

"neither of which means an improvement for the farmworker. I don't want to see it come. Don't force it in faster than it has to come."

Because of last year's strike, he says 80 percent of this coming season's tomato crop will be mechanically harvested, meaning that 60 percent of the labor last year will not have work this year."

As for himself, "I'm going to give my labor another chance. But if they walk out on me another year I'll have to get out" of the tomato business.

195 Jobs Lost in One County

Sandusky County Extension Agent Glenn Maddy said that 20 of his county's 58 tomato growers harvested with machine last year. But 11 more have purchased mechanical harvesters for this coming year. Those 11 grew 390 acres of tomatoes last year. Figuring that one farmworker can harvest two acres, those 11 machines will replace 390 workers he testified.

Maddy estimated that one-third of Sandusky County's 3,280 acres of tomatoes were

harvested by machine last year, while from 1,200 to 1,500 farmworkers picked the rest of the crop.

And while machines "won't work very well on clay soil in a wet year," he said the "tomato industry is already moving to sandy areas" where the machines can be used during wet harvests.

Because it requires 60 to 100 acres to make it economical to use machines, Maddy said, FLOC's strike "is pushing bigness in agriculture by pushing the farmer into mechanical harvesting."

Mechanization Inevitable

Baldemar Velasquez, president of FLOC, said mechanization is an inevitable trend — "it's coming whether there's a union or not."

It has been occurring in all of agriculture over the last two decades, pushing Mexican-Americans "from rural to urban migrants," he stated.

"We're being squeezed out of agricultural production," not because of the farmworker unions, but "because industry has found a cheaper way to produce its products."

Velasquez added, "the union is not a goal in and of itself, but a vehicle to do some better

things for our people," so they can "do something about the changes that are coming about."

Because "our days in are numbered" in agriculture, that is "all the more reason why we have to have strong organizations" and why "we should organize the workers so we can deal with these changes."

Twenty years ago, he said, land grant universities in Ohio and California began experimenting with mechanical harvesting. "Tax dollars perfected machines for the benefit of industry."

Over the last four years, FLOC has "gone to the farmers to ask them to sit down and talk to us," but "we never got to first base."

Speaking to the farmers in the audience, he said, "We've got to take on Campbell Soup even without you. We can't wait on you forever."

Excluded From Labor Act

Tom Nowel of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees said farmworkers are excluded from the National Labor Relations Act that guarantees others the right to organize and to bargain collectively.

"Farmworkers are at the bottom of the totem pole. The only thing they have is the ability to strike."

Farmworkers are not covered by the labor act "because they don't have any political power." Later, he added that "racism is a major part of the answer" as to why farmworkers continue to be excluded from the act.

"FLOC has the support of progressive areas in the labor movement," and "the labor movement is concerned that FLOC remains a viable organization. It is critical that the funding continues and be increased."

"It would be criminal to take away funding from FLOC. It would be a solid victory for Campbells and Libby's," which Nowel claimed are interested in "food for profit, not food for people."

Conglomerates Criticized

The Rev. Richard Notter, pastor of parishes at Holgate and Hamler, said "the issue is much bigger than how much we pay to pick tomatoes in Northwest Ohio"

He said "farmers are afraid to tuckie" the fact that processors are not hurting as much as farmers tend to believe they are.

"Food is America's largest business, but no longer are farmers in charge of this industry. Processing and retailing empires of conglomerates take 60 cents of every food dollar. Fifty national processors corner 90 percent of the profits and monopolize the market place."

"Major corporations are really not too worried about the farmer."

"The family farm is going to go out of business if we don't do something."

Notter, who has been ministering to farmworkers for 19 years, added, "In recent years the efforts of FLOC have become well received in many parts of the country."

"There were a lot of allegations last year — rash talk" that has yet to be "substantiated," he said. In the confrontations that occurred during last year's strike, he added, "If anybody lost control of themselves it was not the farmworkers."

Exploited For Years

Ricardo Parra of the Midwest

Council of La Raza, said farmworkers have had "a silent struggle going for years, being ignored by those who profit from their labor. They have suffered and been exploited for years. Now they're beginning to make their stand" and are "seeking redistribution of the old power patterns."

For the canneries "to threaten farmworkers with machines is wrong."

"I hear about the farmers' costs, the canneries' costs, but not the farmworkers' costs. It has always been the farmworker who must sacrifice. It's up to the farmworker to defend his own rights."

Parra told the local CHD

board, "I urge you to champion the cause of FLOC and aid the powerless in obtaining the power denied to them for so many years."

He admits, "It takes courage to deal with these issues in one's own area." But he added, "Many eyes are watching here to see what will happen, whether institutional racism will continue."

Can't Depend On Labor

In order to secure operating loans, farmers cannot continue to rely on farmworkers with the threat of a strike hanging over their heads, stated Lanny Boes, a Fostoria area grower.

"Before anyone goes into a field, you've got \$500 an acre tied up" in expenses...\$700 an acre with a mechanical harvester. With that type of an investment, the bankers "want to be sure you can pay it back."

If a grower relies on hand picking, that is "not money in the bank because we can't depend on labor after last year. So we have to go to machines."

And since "you make \$200 an acre more with machines, the bankers are willing to go along."

Describing himself as a small farmer — he grew 20 acres of tomatoes last year — he was faced with the decision to either mechanically harvest at least 40 acres "or quit."

He also said, "we definitely are in direct competition with California; the proof is in your grocery store" where Ohio-grown tomato products are priced 8 to 12 cents a can higher than California-grown products.

Boes used to grow tomatoes for the former A & P plant at Bloomdale, which "sits as an empty reminder that Ohio cannot compete with California." Saturday's hearing was held in the United Christian Fellowship Center, located only a block away from the former H.J. Heinz processing plant.

Boes told the local CHD board he can "see CHD continue to fund FLOC with the stipulation that it does something beside strike." He suggested a self-help project "to help migrants find better jobs."

If FLOC continues its strike, "you're going to strike yourself out of a job. I don't understand that, but maybe I'm just a dumb farmer."

Put 45 Out Of Work

Wood County tomato grower Wally Wagner, 4347 Portage Road, Wayne, told the board, "In my case, FLOC put 45 people out of work in the tomato season."

For the past four or five years, he "used considerable hand labor" in addition to running a mechanical harvester.

"But as of this year, I'm strictly a mechanical harvester operator," due to the "confusion and disruption of the labor force FLOC is bringing. The headaches of labor now equalize the complications of mechanical harvesting," and he added that his creditors have got to have something more reliable than tomatoes that may or may not be hand picked.

"I can't wait until the 10th of September" to hear his labor say "we aren't going to pick it."

So far, he has used local labor to run his machines and "I dare not switch to migrant labor on machines — I can't afford to run the risk."

During this past winter, he went to the Rio Grande Valley to see how the migrant families he has been employing live in comparison to others in the area. "There is no question that the worker who comes north has more than the man who doesn't. It's very obvious that he's better off."

Using FLOC's claim of having 2,000 members, he questioned whether two percent of the migrant work force "should dictate what the other 98 percent do."

A member of St. Aloysius parish himself, Wagner said the church is concerned about world hunger. But "more than once," he heard FLOC say last year — "let the crop rot in the fields."

Processors and farmers would be able to pay farmworkers more if it wasn't for "our government's cheap food policy." That policy is not the fault of the canneries, but the result of "95 percent of the people who want cheap food." He added, people often talk about boycotting beef, "but I don't hear anybody talking about boycotting gasoline" despite its rapidly rising prices.

The taxpayer may have paid to develop mechanical harvesters, "but he (Velasquez) is selling them. He's one of the best salesmen."

Speaking near the end of the meeting and after the television cameras had long since left, Wagner said the word exploit had been very overworked to describe the plight of the migrants. After checking the dictionary's definition of the word, he believes "FLOC is exploiting the committee (CHD board). But I guess that's the way this country works."

Ann Arbor FLOC Support Group--Minutes, 22 April 1979

Cesar Chavez will be speaking at Notre Dame on Monday, 30 April at 7:30pm. This is the day before their election to boycott Campbell's and Libby's. The FLOC boycott committee there is urging us to attend, Kathy will coordinate rides.

Erica and Kathy will arrange an appointment with Jane Myers (AA News) to do a column on FLOC. Erica is also sending in an editorial, will ask them when it will be printed.

Reports: This week we leafleted at the Fox Village A&P, with fairly good response. The A&P manager told us all the managers in Ann Arbor (there are 3) got together and decided not to put Campbell's or Libby's on displays or on specials, in order to avoid hassles. Bob and John will coordinate leafleting for next week, after that we will try to routinize the process.

The supportive Kroger cashier told us that the sales of Campbell's and Libby's are only low when we are actually out in front of the store leafleting. She had three suggestions (not necessarily legal ones): put a sign on Kroger's window; put signs next to the products on the selves; or expand our hours of leafleting.

Obviously, the boycott needs to be publicized thru other channels. Unions and churches are two good routes to go, and, since we will have fewer people now that school is over, maybe we should concentrate on them for May at least.

To contact unions: call up the office and make an appointment to see the local president. When talking to the pres., what we want are the following: to make a presentation at an membership meeting and the memberships endorsement of and support for the strike and the boycott; leaflets sent to all members thru the mail; and articles printed in the locals paper; also, money. The endorsement from the Huron Valley Labor Council should be an opening for approaching the local AFL-CIO unions. The UAW should be sympathetic, especially as it has a similar position with respect to automation. Wayne State and Wayne County Community College each has a labor studies program we can contact. Eventually, would we picket store loading docks to prevent deliveries of Campbell's and Libby's?

Most churches are members of the Interfaith Council for Peace, whose established network we have already made some use of. Presentations should be made to the Social Concerns Committees of each church. Perhaps we could start with one big meeting of all the chairpeople of these committees?

Newspapers: we need to make a greater effort to get stories in them, and constantly bombard them with press releases.

Should be able to get on radio talk shows, e.g. WUOM, WCBN, WJR's "MY Point of view", Jackie and Memo will see what they can arrange.

Erica, Jody and Jackie will work on the exhibit for Nutrition Action's food mobile, and Jody will talk to the Radical Arts Troupe about doing a benefit for FLOC. Table at Art Fair?

Tues., 8 May, 7:30p.m., a mass meeting to recruit people to work here and in Ohio this summer. Bob will call FLOC to see if they can send someone up. Estela is going to work for FLOC in Ohio starting in July. Wei-Ling will call Ma Bell about our getting a telephone in the office.

Erica called FLOC a couple of weeks ago and has the following report:

75% of the pickers come from Texas, most of them have been contacted by FLOC. However, the growers are trying to recruit scabs from Texas, Florida and Mexico. Nobody has yet registered with the US employment office to pick tomatoes this summer, which people are requested to do. Boycott committees now exist in 45 cities. Can we get a list? Bob will see. Also, FLOC would like to get people from all over the country to come to Ohio to picket with the workers for a few weeks in the latter part of the summer.

Columbus DISPATCH, Tues April 3, 1979

Despite Mechanizing, Fight For Farm Laborer Goes On

By Carol Ann Lease
Of The Dispatch Staff

Tomato-picking machines are driving migrant workers out of the fields, but a union can promote change in other places as well as on the job, according to the president of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee.

Baldemar Velazquez said in Columbus Monday that after 2,000 migrant workers struck in Ohio and Indiana last harvest, the big canning company, Campbell Soup, said, "We're mechanizing all our tomatoes anyway. We don't need those Mexicans."

"FOR YEARS mechanization has been coming," Velazquez said at Ohio State University's Student Union. Machines picked 29 percent of the harvest in the strike area last year and will pick an additional 10 percent to 15 percent this year.

But, "what's going to happen if we don't do anything?" he asked. "More of our people . . . are being forced out of agriculture" into city slums.

"The union will promote change in other places."

ABOUT 40 PERSONS attended his talk sponsored by OSU's Office of Hispanic Student Programs and *Hermanidad Latina* as part of Hispanic Awareness Week which runs through Saturday.

Velazquez said he recently returned from meeting with workers in



BALDEMAR VELAZQUEZ
Farm Laborer Organizer

Florida and Texas who will be coming to Ohio for the harvest this summer.

Instead of government programs like food stamps, which he said "are a subsidy to the food industry," they "want to restructure this industry so we make the big multinational industries more responsible for the worker."

PART OF THE fight will be a boycott, being organized in 41 cities, against products by Campbell and

Libby, a subsidiary of the Nestle Co. Inc.

Velazquez said the committee is starting with these companies because they buy 90 percent of the tomatoes in the northwest Ohio area where the farm labor committee is organizing.

As an example of the union's strength, he said Campbell gave growers a \$2-a-ton increase in the middle of the strike, to be passed on to the workers, to encourage others not to join the walkout.

VELAZQUEZ SAID what the farmers want would cost the food companies \$8 more a ton — a three-month hospitalization plan, transportation from Texas to Florida and back, a 14-hour guaranteed workweek, a minimum wage of \$3.25 an hour and an increase from 23 cents to 35 cents a hamper for piece work.

Boycott rallies against Libby and Campbell products are being planned for Columbus groceries. An organizing meeting is to be held at 8 p.m. Thursday at 60 E. Patterson Ave.

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Automation won't end farmworker labor

by Larry Vellani

"Mechanization of tomato harvesting was bound to come. Last fall's strike proved that the canneries and big growers could not defeat FLOC in the fields. So they decided to try to reduce the number of workers needed in agricultural production. The workers are demanding justice. The harvesting machines only demand oil and gas."

This was Ray Santiago's analysis of



JOE VELASQUEZ, TOLEDO ORGANIZER FOR THE FARM LABOR ORGANIZING COMMITTEE, SPOKE IN COLUMBUS MARCH 1.

photo: Bob Roehm

the recent canning industry media blitz concerning introduction of mechanical tomato harvesters in the vegetable fields of northwest Ohio. Santiago is Secretary-Treasurer of the Toledo-based Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC). He was in Columbus March 1 along with FLOC organizer Joe Velasquez, speaking at the Newman Center on West Lane Ave.

The two presented a slide-lecture on the history of FLOC, last fall's harvest-time strike, and FLOC's current international boycott against products of Campbell and Libby, two major canners that refuse to negotiate with FLOC over wages and work conditions.

Santiago discounted rumors that automation would mean the death of FLOC in Ohio, Indiana, and Michigan fields. "You can't go from labor-intensive to capital-intensive production overnight. Sure, the big canneries have been putting the squeeze on the small grower to either go deeper into debt or get out of the business. But there is no way that more than 40% of the '79 harvest can be harvested mechanically, compared with 25% last year." Santiago predicted that human labor will remain an important factor in tomato production.

"FLOC has always been concerned with more than just narrow workplace issues," Santiago continued. "FLOC responds to the total needs of Hispanic people in the Ohio-Indiana-Michigan border region. FLOC includes not only farmworkers who travel up from Texas and Florida every year, but permanent residents as well.

"Even if the canning industry's wild-

est schemes of displacing workers from production take place, it will only mean that more of the ex-migrating workers will settle in the tri-state area—which indeed is already happening. FLOC will continue to be an important vehicle fighting for justice and dignity for all people, but especially Spanish-speaking people, in the civic and economic life of the region."

The two FLOC spokespersons urged people in Columbus to respect the Campbell-Libby boycott and to encourage others to do the same. "In Campbell and Nestle (the Swiss-based owners of the Libby canning complex), we're up against two giant multinational corporations whose disregard for human needs reach from southern Michigan to southern Africa. Many people have been agitating against Nestle's baby formula sales in Latin America and Africa. Hopefully, our blows against Libby here help increase the pressure on Nestle in other places in the world."

Anyone interested in information or in building support for FLOC in central Ohio should come to a meeting at the North-end Community Center, 5 W. Northwood, at 7:30 pm March 8 (Room 205). Further information can be obtained by calling evenings at 294-1253 or 262-6569.

FARMWORKERS



Protesting farmworkers: Work Yes! Machines No!

FIGHT

By Douglas Foster

A long-simmering feud between University of California officials and farmworkers over the volatile issue of automation of agricultural field work has moved into the courts, where a legal decision could send ripple effects across America.

The California Rural Legal Assistance (CRLA) organization has charged in a lawsuit that six University of California regents and at least two other officials have misused public funds in support of automation research at the University, and have personally benefitted from field mechanization through ownership of land or interests in agribusiness companies.

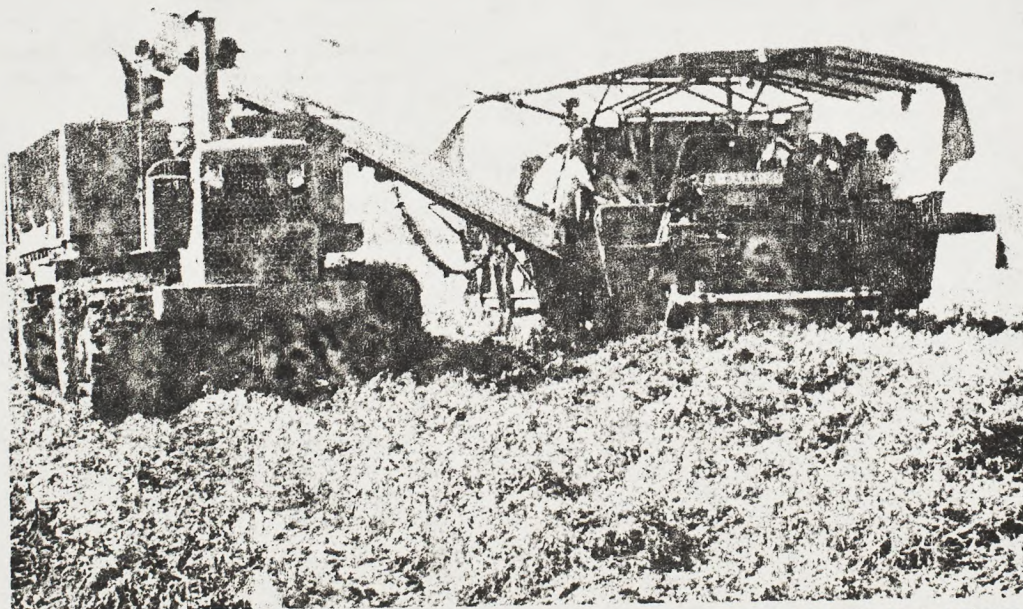
The suit also alleges that the mechanization of field work has benefitted only "narrow private interests" at the expense of farmworkers, taxpayers, small farmers and consumers. It charges that 32,000 field jobs have been lost to machines developed by university researchers with public funds, that thousands of small farmers have been forced out of business and that consumers have been obliged to pay higher prices for poorer quality food harvested by machines.

In California alone, control over more than \$80 million in annual public funds for agriculture is at stake. Since the state produces some 40 percent of the nation's fruits and vegetables, any ruling on the suit is certain to be felt well beyond California.

The suit, filed in Alameda County Superior Court on behalf of 19 farmworkers and the Agrarian Action Project, named six University of California regents, among others, as defendants. It asked for an immediate injunction against further mechanization research on projects where misuse of public funds has occurred.

If the court supports the farmworkers, the six regents, two university vice presi-

MECHANIZATION



Mechanical harvester

Agrarian Action Project photos

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dents and numerous agricultural researchers could be barred from further public employment in the state on grounds of conflict of interest.

The CRLA has also asked for a court order requiring the university to use royalty payments on mechanical inventions to retrain and provide relief for farmworkers who have lost jobs to the machines. It also seeks a case-by-case scrutiny of agricultural mechanization research to ferret out favoritism to agribusiness corporations.

In Sacramento, CRLA regional counsel Albert Meyerhoff called the state policy on mechanization a travesty. "On the one hand," he said, "we have the Brown administration attempting to severely limit welfare cost-of-living increases and to force people off welfare. On the other hand, we have the same government using millions of tax dollars to build machines forcing people who want to work into unemployment and onto tax-financed benefits.

"It's outrageous to all concerned — all except the agribusiness interests that benefit," Meyerhoff said.

At a recent CRLA press conference in Los Angeles, farmworkers spoke about "the fear hanging over farmworkers." "Some of them tie cauliflower," said Robert Garcia, CRLA community worker. "Bud Antle (one of the largest lettuce companies in California) is using a machine right now for that. They know the threat is there Lettuce workers are less sure about when the machine will come but all of them know it is coming eventually."

Agrarian Action Project spokesperson Paul Barnett said farmworkers have seen thousands of tomato harvesting jobs slip away in the past 16 years as a result of the commercial adoption of a tomato harvester developed with public monies at University of California at Davis.

Government studies, including a University of California at Santa Cruz study on mechanization of the tomato harvest* and a U.S. Labor Department study on costs in the 1976 *Consumer Price Index Food Items Bulletin*, show that the new harvester drove 3,400 small- and medium-sized growers out of the tomato business during the period the harvesters were introduced. The price of processed tomatoes went up 37 percent more than other processed food during the same

time.

CRLA attorney Tim McCarthy said the university had violated its responsibility as a public trust and had repeatedly broken provisions of the Land Grant Acts, which require that university research ensure "the maintenance of maximum employment and natural prosperity" and "the improvement of the rural home and rural life."

Among the defendants responsible for violation of state and federal law, McCarthy argues, are regents Robert Reynolds, William Wilson, William Coblenz, John Lawrence, William Smith and Edward Carter, as well as University of California Vice President J.B. Kendrick, and former Vice President Chester McCorkle.

They are charged with financial conflicts in setting direction for university agricultural research including:

- Regent Edward Carter's \$78,000 investment in Del Monte Corporation and his membership on the company's Board of Directors;

- Regent Robert Reynold's partnership in J.G. Boswell Company, California's largest grower;

- Regent William Smith's investments in Pacific Lighting Company and Blue Goose Growers.

Carter and Reynolds could not be reached for comment, but Smith acknowledged that he is on the Board of Directors of the company which owns Blue Goose, a diversified agricultural operation. He said, however, that 688 acres of farmland in the names of Regent Wilson and himself were "just being held in trust."

Asked who it was being held for, he replied, "For Governor Reagan."

Regents General Counsel Donald Reidhaar scoffed at the allegations contained in the suit and said he was confident the university could successfully beat back CRLA's legal challenge. "It all sounds patently unsustainable," Reidhaar said.

"We can't fence off California and say we're going to stop the clock," he added.

Regent John Lawrence characterized the suit as an attempt to interfere with "freedom of choice" and academic freedom.

Lawrence said he would fight against any move to deny researchers a share in royalty profits on university-developed machines — a 50 percent return which CRLA says encourages mechanical inventions in place of study about nutrition, food quality and alternatives to

pesticides, studies which do not result in patentable inventions.

"I'm in favor of a man who's creative . . . benefitting from it," Lawrence said. Regent Smith angrily charged that "CRLA is using the litigation process to advance a political position," a comment echoed by Regent Coblenz.

Coblenz said his business ties were misrepresented in the CRLA complaint, which listed him as managing director of three Japanese-owned California farms. He said he only acted as attorney for the owners. "I have no right, no title, no interest whatever in any of these entities," he said.

"I think we will have to go to a basic discussion about mechanization," Coblenz added. "Are these people Luddites or what? We have to look at what mechanization has meant for society as a whole, both in industry and agriculture. We went through that discussion in the Industrial Revolution. I guess we'll have to do it again," said Coblenz.

The farmworkers insist they are not trying to halt mechanization. "I'm not saying that they should have to go back to hand-harvested tomatoes," Project spokesperson Paul Barnett said. But a shift in university policy, he said, might slow the pace of mechanization while government agencies prepare tens of thousands of displaced farmworkers for other jobs.

"There's a principle at stake," Barnett said. "If mechanization is so efficient, why do we have to subsidize it with public money? Mechanization will go on, this we know. But with all the problems it causes, why should the public pay for it?"
— Pacific News Service

Douglas Foster is a staff reporter for the Salinas Californian, and often writes on farm-labor issues for Pacific News Service.

Suggested readings for further information on the effects of mechanization on California agriculture:

Labor's Dwindling Harvest: The Impact of Mechanization on California Fruit and Vegetable Workers by the California Institute for Rural Studies, March 1979, 233 pp. Available from the Institute, P.O. Box 530, Davis, CA 95616 for \$6.00 plus postage and handling.

No Hands Touch the Land: Automating California Farms by the California Agrarian Action Project, February 1979, 12 pp. Available from the Project, P.O. Box 464, Davis, CA 95616 for 50¢. (Other resources are listed in the "Notes" section of *No Hands Touch the Land*.)

*"Destalking the Wily Tomato" by William Friedland & Amy Bartow, (University of California at Davis, Dept. of ABS, Research Monograph No. 15) June 1975.



The USA : Agricultural workers have no rights

PUBLISHED BY TRADE UNION INTERNATIONAL OF AGRICULTURAL, FORESTRY AND PLANTATION WORKERS --OPLETALOVA 57 PRAGUE 1 CZECHOSLOVAKIA--

«Migrant agricultural workers in the United States are one of the most oppressed sectors of the American working class. Being for the most part Mexicans or «Chicanos», and to a much lesser extent Blacks and Puerto Ricans, we constitute minority races, and consequently we are easily identifiable and subject to the persecutions of the authoritarian economic stratum...»

This is the testimony of Baldemar Velasquez, President of the Farm Labourers' organising Committee (FLOC), which was presented to the International Trade Union Conference for Radical Transformations of the Rural World, held in Algiers.

«With each passing day,» Velasquez continued, «we are aware that we have something in common with the other workers of the entire world, and it is that the transnational corporations and financial institutions that exploit us within the United States are also the main enemies which exploit many of you in one way or another. Who would not recognise the names of some of the world food monopolies, when one mentions the firms Nestlé, Libby's, Campbell Soup Company, G+W Sugars, Coca-Cola, Del Monte, United Fruit Company and others...?»

The President of the FLOC then described the difficult struggles that the migrant workers are waging against two of these monopolies —Campbell and Libby's, which exploit the production of tomatoes, one of the most important crops of the region.

«Of the 30,000 migrant agricultural workers», he said, «some 22,000 come from the states of Texas and Florida and the country of Mexico in order to bring in the harvest for one month. The transnationals do not own lands for the cultivation of tomatoes — they obtain their produce on the basis of contracts for purchasing them from the American farmers who, in turn, hire workers to gather the harvests.

«The transnationals very easily dictate the prices to the farmers and the latter automatically establish the wages to be paid to the workers. Those farmers who ask something more from the company are easily replaced by others. This method of the transnationals must be accepted by the farmers also when they sell their wheat, corn or soya. But unfortunately the farmer considers himself a businessman who must protect his margin of profits and he is not aware of the potential power that could be created by uniting and collaborating with the agricultural workers against their common exploiter.

«The American government stubbornly refuses to acknowledge the fact that agricultural workers have no rights. It places them in a «state of providence». This year, in the state of Ohio alone, more than 2 million dollars were devoted to emergency housing, transport and foodstuffs to combat malnutrition, and to other services. This money is actually a subvention to the transnationals; it institutionalises poverty and the relations of exploitation and dependence on the company and the government respectively.» he pointed out.

Baldemar Velasquez then drew a

picture of the struggles of the migrant workers to enforce respect for an elementary right: their right to organise. He stressed that the migrant agricultural workers have been specifically and nominatively excluded from legislation concerning the right to organise trade unions, thanks to the corridor intrigues of the agrobusinesses in the US Congress. These long struggles of the migrant workers have been necessary since, «in the face of the lack of protective legislation and in the face of the repressive forces, the power of the transnationals and the hostility of the farmers, the only way of having a trade union is to struggle for it.

«August 25, 1978 marked the beginning of a new battle against the Campbell Soup Company and Libby's, for the recognition of their union. More than 2,000 workers closed down more than 70 farms which produced tomatoes for these two companies. In spite of the many arrests, violence against the strikers — including the showering of the picketers with toxic pesticides — the workers continued the strike throughout the entire season. The transnationals considered it more advisable to lose that year's harvest, hoping that

our union would no longer exist next year. But next year the strike will continue until the large companies and farmers sign a contract with our union concerning its recognition, as well as better wages, housing, social security and other demands,» Velasquez continued.

«Nevertheless the strike had effects, especially in the neighbouring regions: the agricultural workers received wage increases of more than 100%, as an incitement not to organise. The tomato farmers felt our organised pressure and they themselves formed an association. Even though this appears to be an effort of resistance against our union, they are at present in the process of exerting pressure on Campbells and Libby's to obtain concessions.

«The trade unions of the industries in the urban districts of Ohio supported the agricultural workers' struggle: the automobile industry workers' unions, the state employees, teachers, metallurgical workers, electricians, students and trade unionists, militants for the civil rights of the Blacks and Indians and religious leaders brought the strikers food products, clothing and money. All of them came with the aim of putting an end to the inhuman exploitation of the migrant agricultural workers being inflicted by these transnationals,» stressed the President of the FLOC, who appealed to the organisations participating in the Algiers Conference to join in the boycotting of the products of the transnationals Campbell and Libby's...



FLOC strikers and supporters approaching Columbus at the end of a 104 mile march (over 167 km) for better living and working conditions.

FLOC lanza boicot nacional contra enlatadoras Campbell, Libby y Nestlé

Toledo—Cerca de 300 campesinos hicieron una concentración aquí, señalando el comienzo de un boicot nacional contra las enlatadoras de tomates. La concentración fue organizada por el Comité por la Organización de Labor (FLOC).

El boicot contra las compañías Libby, Campbells, y la Nestle, tiene por objeto ganar un contrato con las enlatadoras y lograr que acepten al FLOC como el sindicato de los trabajadores migrantes de Ohio.

El organizador del FLOC, Fernando Cuevas, dijo a *El Clarin* que cada vez que el FLOC lograba un contrato con un agricultor, las grandes enlatadoras le suspendían el negocio. "Por eso," dijo, "nos dimos cuenta de que nunca ganaríamos si no le entramos a las enlatadoras."

Con la ayuda del boicot los huelguistas esperan ganar las siguientes demandas: aumento 24¢ a 33¢ por cada canasta de tomate que recogen; un sueldo mínimo de \$3.25 por hora y 28 horas de trabajo garantizadas cada semana. También exigen el transporte pagado desde Florida, Texas o el estado de donde vengan. También piden asistencia médica y un cuidadero por cada campamento.

Para mayor información escriba a la: *Farm Organizing Committee*, 714½ St. Clair, Toledo, Ohio 43609. Tel: (419) 243-3456.

El Clarin, 12 de febrero, 1979



BOYCOTT! — Shouting "Boycott!" instead of "Huelga!" (strike), Fernando Cuevas (left), a Farm Labor Organizing Committee strike organizer, and FLOC President Baldemar Velasquez lead some 200 FLOC members and supporters into a Toledo union hall Sunday for a rally to kick off a boycott against Campbell and Libby, McNeill & Libby food products. FLOC is trying to force the food processing firms to include the union in contract negotiations with growers.

CATHOLIC CHRONICLE, FEBRUARY 2, 1979-

FLOC begins boycott of tomato canneries

Toledo—A militant rally of close to 300 farmworkers and their supporters Jan. 28 marked the beginning of a nationwide boycott against the big tomato canneries by the Farm Labor Organizing Committee.

The boycott against Libby's, Campbell's and Nestle's (Libby's parent company) is aimed at winning a contract agreement from the canneries and recognition of the FLOC as the migrant workers' union in northwest Ohio.

Speaking to *The Call*, FLOC organizer Fernando Cuevas briefly explained the reasons behind the boycott against Libby's, Campbell's and Nestle's.

"Over the past ten years, FLOC won contract agreements with some of the growers. Just as soon as that happened, the canneries would drop them and go to other growers instead. We realized we couldn't win any lasting victories if we didn't take on the big canneries themselves."

With the aid of the boycott, the strikers are determined to win some of the following demands: an increase from 24¢ to 33¢ per 33-lb. hamper of tomatoes, a minimum wage of \$3.25/hr., guaranteed 28 hours' work every two weeks, paid transportation to Florida, Texas or home residence, a decent medical program, a custodian for each camp, and other demands.

The Call, February 12, 1979

Farm labor boycotts Libby, Campbell

WASHINGTON (NC) — A Midwest farm workers union has announced a nationwide boycott of Campbell Soups and Libby, McNeil and Libby, Inc.

Farm Labor Organizing Committee president Baldemar Valasquez announced the boycott at a press conference in Washington and asked for support from labor and religious organizations.

The boycott of the two major tomato canneries has been in the planning stage

since last summer when FLOC workers struck the tomato fields of northwest Ohio demanding better wages, working and living conditions.

Valasquez said that although his union has had some success in negotiating with tomato growers, the canneries decide how much the growers will receive before the season begins, therefore predetermining the price that the grower pays the workers. Valasquez insisted that the canning companies bear the responsibilities for increasing welfare and benefits of the farmworkers.

"We invited the canneries to sit down with us last summer but there was no response," Valasquez said. He said last summer 2,000 strikers closed 70 farms and that the strike will continue next summer.

"We're boycotting because you can't strike all year 'round. The tomato growing season is only a month long, so we'll boycott 12 months and strike one month."

A spokesperson for the United Farm Workers said Cesar Chavez supports the boycott "100 percent." Sister Pearl McGiviney of the Office for Migrant Ministries said the office supports the farm workers. Other migrant organizations also offered support and Valasquez said FLOC is receiving support from labor locals across the country.

Pablo Sedillo, Jr., head of the Secretariat for Hispanic Affairs of the U.S. Catholic Conference, said the secretariat supports the boycott.

"An effective boycott is the only way to justice," Sedillo said. He said the secretariat

is considering specific ways to assist farm workers.

"The Church has been our main supporter during the 11 years in Ohio," Valasquez said of the years his committee has worked to organize migrants. "If not for Church people, we would have had a very difficult time last summer. Not just Church money, but witness."

Valasquez said priests and Religious have "put themselves on the line," during the years of organizing and strikes. He added that organizing is difficult in the Midwest because almost all of the workers come annually from Florida and Texas for summer seasonal work, allowing only one to three months time to mobilize them.

Migrants Seek \$375,000 In Suit

Claim Pandora Farmer Sprayed, Injured Plaintiffs

Three migrants are suing a Pandora, O., farmer for \$375,000 for damages they incurred when, they claim, they were sprayed with pesticide while taking part in a migrant worker organizing campaign last August.

Named in the suit in U.S. District Court are Peter Diller, an owner of Diller Farms, Inc.; the corporation itself, and Lee J. Diller, who is an employee and Mr. Diller's son.

Plaintiffs are Josue Salinas, a migrant farm worker from Westlaco, Tex.; Martha Cuevas, a migrant worker from

Winter Garden, Fla., and her daughter, Martha.

The lawsuit alleges that on Aug. 30, 1978, the three were in a caravan helping to organize migrant farm workers picking tomatoes in farm fields throughout northwest Ohio.

Allegedly In Vehicles On Berm

They were in vehicles parked on the berm of Putnam County Road 1 next to a tomato field owned by Diller Farms, Inc.

Mr. Salinas was standing on the public roadway talking with migrant workers employed by Diller Farms when Peter Diller ordered Lee Jay Diller to drive a tractor, with a spraying rig containing pesticides, alongside the roadway and spray the three persons, the lawsuit alleges.

Lee Jay Diller also is accused in the lawsuit of driving a truck toward Mr. Salinas and almost hitting him.

The pesticide in question is labeled by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as not applicable to humans, and use inconsistent with the label is a violation of federal law, the suit contends.

Claim Injuries To Eyes, Throat

The three persons contend they have suffered serious injuries and disability to the eyes, throat, and respiratory and nervous systems. Mr. Salinas has been unable to work, the suit states.

Mr. Salinas seeks \$150,000 in damages, and the two women \$112,500 each.

The case has been assigned to Judge Nicholas Walinski.

Advocates for Basic Legal Equality, a law-reform group, is the attorney for the three migrants.

Peter Diller said Monday night that he has not seen a copy of the suit and declined to comment.

We'll be writing more on this soon.

Changes Predicted In Tomato Industry

By STEVE POLLICK
Blade Staff Writer

The increasing use of mechanical harvesters on northwestern Ohio's tomato crop is only a surface indication of deeper changes that will affect the industry over the next five years, an agricultural agent predicted Thursday night.

These deeper changes will come about, he said, as economic forces deal a "get big or go to something else" blow to both farmers and seasonal farm workers.

The large food processors that own the canneries really want to work only with the most efficient farmers, the ones who are the best businessmen, Don Kimmel, extension agent for Putnam County, said in an interview in Defiance, O.

In turn, the only seasonal farm workers of today who will be farm workers five years from now will be the ones who can adapt well to the changes, the ones who can start a business with their farm trucks, for example, or who can learn to work with the most efficient farmers, running mechanical harvesters with their electronic tomato sorters, he said.

Panel Discusses Farm Labor

Mr. Kimmel was one of seven panelists in a workshop on "Dealing with the Issue of Farm Labor in Ohio" held at Defiance College and sponsored by the Ohio College Three consortium (Defiance, Findlay, and Bluffton colleges).

Total mechanization is inevitable, he said. Campbell Soup Co., a major area canner and one of two strike and boycott targets of seasonal farm workers, is signing contracts this year only with farmers who will have mechanical harvesters and who will use them as much as possible.

Libby, McNeill & Libby, the other area farm worker target, is expected to sign up to about 70 per cent of its contracts with mechanized growers.

The companies, the agent notes, have designed their contracts to favor mechanical harvesting, which should lead to several other developments, Mr. Kimmel said.

For example, northwestern Ohio is known as "wet soils" territory, and heavy rains at harvest time make heavy mud which stops the machines.

The potential for losing a substantial portion of a crop because of weather is too great, so canneries will encourage spreading out the tomato crop to other areas so that a season's harvest is less dependent on local or even regional weather, he said.

As canneries will want less acreage in northwestern Ohio, marginal farmers with smaller tomato plots simply will fall by the wayside, the agent said.

Farmers May Turn To Other Crops

In his remarks during the panel discussion, Mr. Kimmel noted that about 35 per cent of the county's tomato crop was mechanically picked. This year, 50 to 75 per cent of the crop will be harvested by machine, and within five years, 90 to 100 per cent will be, the agent said.

The issue, he said, is not hand labor or machines, but whether farmers will continue to grow the tomato in Ohio. If they cannot turn a profit they can live with, they will turn to corn, soybeans, pickles, and other regional crops.

Baldemar Velasquez, FLOC president and a panelist, said that the farm worker's union is not a goal in itself, but rather the tool to give migrant workers a voice in their future.

At one point during the workshop, he acknowledged that canneries intend to "mechanize (farm) workers out of their jobs." But he stresses that it should be the canneries' responsibility to pay for retraining displaced farm workers.

Boycott Of Area Firms To Continue

Mr. Velasquez said that FLOC will continue its boycott of Campbell and Libby products, adding that boycott committees have been organized in 40 cities across the country. He also vowed that farm workers will strike for a month at the peak of tomato harvest in the summer in efforts to force the canneries to the bargaining table.

Somewhat surprisingly, the FLOC leader said his organization supports the American Agricultural Movement. The reason, he said, is that farmers simply are caught in the middle between the farm workers and the processors.

The Rev. Richard Notter, of St. Mary's parish, Holgate, O., and a panelist, urged that a look be taken at the bigger issue of control of the food industry by huge processing and retailing conglomerates that "take 60 cents of every food dollar."

Less than one per cent of the industry owns practically every brand, he said, adding that the impression of healthy competition is false.

"Consumers pay dearly for (such) market control," he said. Father Notter also is president of Ohio Citizens for Farm Labor, and was active in the fields last summer.

Other panelists included Charles Hendrix, regional director of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees; Lewis Klass, a Leipsic, O., area tomato grower; Sheriff Robert Beutler, of Putnam County, another figure in last summer's farm labor unrest, and Karen Christy, business editor of the Defiance Crescent-News.

Dr. Kenneth Christiansen, workshop moderator, said that extensive attempts to enlist a cannery representative for the panel were unsuccessful.

Canneries In Area Predict Boost In Tomatoes Harvested By Machine

Libby, McNeill & Libby, in Leipsic, O., will have at least 50 per cent and possibly as much as 70 per cent of its tomatoes harvested mechanically this year, Richard Ricker, chairman of Libby Growers Tomato Bargaining Association, said.

About 30 per cent of Libby's tomatoes were machine-picked last year, Mr. Ricker said.

floc--eliminating migrant worker exploitation

Every year from April through September migrant farm workers travel to the midwest to plant, hoe and harvest the tomatoes, cucumbers, sugar beets and other crops of Ohio. They come from primarily Texas and Florida to pick the tomatoes that we later eat in the form of tomato catsup, soup, juice and other tomato products. However, those who are aware of their presence in this area will note a drastic change in the significance of migrant farm workers in the tomato fields during the coming season.

For 10 year, the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) has been working to unite the midwest migrant farm worker into voicing a more powerful cry against the injustices toward their community. FLOC's movement toward higher wages and better living conditions has reached a peak during the last few months. Supported by groups nationwide and characterized by a theme of "hasta la victoria," or until victory, the migrant farm worker has broken the silence of years of oppression.

The migrant farm workers are making two basic demands in their plea, higher wages and better living conditions. Presently migrant farm

By Mary Kirchner

workers earn .24 per 33 lb. hamper of tomatoes and have no work guarantee during bad working conditions.

They are proposing an .11 increase per hamper of tomatoes and a work guarantee of 28 hours every two weeks to be paid at minimum wage. For travelling tremendous distance from Texas and Florida, these are minimal increases for a working class where the average family consists of six members.

Child labor law violations were the highest in the state of Ohio last year due to the fact that families find it necessary to have their children work in order to maintain their existence.

Second, a custodian is asked of every work camp to be paid the wages of other workers in that area. Presently migrant farm workers are responsible for taking care of camp grounds in addition to working all day in the fields.

The average migrant farm worker camp consists of filthy wooden shacks of which 90 percent have no sink and 95 percent have no toilet. Bathing facilities in many cases consist of four

outdoor showers for 50 families.

Due to a lack of response to meeting invitations for a three-way contract negotiation between migrant farm workers, farmers and canneries to discuss these problems, this summer migrant farm workers voted to strike against the tomato canneries of Campbell soup and Libby-McNeill-Libby. A nationwide boycott against the products of these canneries was announced on January 28 of this year.

The canneries are ultimately responsible for the worker, for it is they who pay the farmer, who ultimately pays the migrant farm worker. However, they consistently refuse to negotiate with the migrant farm worker for a contract.

Instead, their answer is an announcement of their refusal to contract with the tomato farmer during the coming season unless he agrees to use a mechanical harvester. Thus, it is a "solution" which not only forces the farmer into a \$40,000 to \$100,000 investment, but, at the same time, forces the migrant farm worker out of a job.

The migrant farm worker, for years the most essential factor in food production, is easily ignored by the

multi-million dollar corporations. In return for his services he receives the lowest wages, lives in the worst living conditions and has the least control over his labor than any other segment of the population.

The farmer is caught in the middle in the changeover to mechanization. A \$40,000 harvester cannot be used during rainy weather conditions, nor can it differentiate between ripe and unripe tomatoes. Thus, the farmer is forced to refrain from using the new machinery until his crop is at its ripest to reap the best tomatoes. Bad weather conditions pose a tremendous threat to the mechanized system.

If the farmer invests tremendous amounts of money to avoid losing a contract with the cannery, at the same time, he loses a hard-working laborer who ultimately works more efficiently than the new machinery.

FLOC asks that the migrant farm worker be trained by the canneries in other vocational areas to work side by side with the new machinery.

A changeover to mechanization cannot be denied by anyone in the tomato business. Yet, as Baldemar Velasquez, president of FLOC, stated, "As industry is responsible for its

environmental pollution, so too should the canneries be responsible for their human pollution in forcing the migrant farm worker out of a job."

These migrant farm workers put food on the tables of families nationwide, of many to whom it couldn't matter whether these migrant farm workers had enough food to feed their own children. They are asking us to help them help themselves by joining them in their nationwide boycott of the products of Campbell and Libby. The strength of a nationwide boycott is being developed presently in 40 major cities throughout the country.

The existence of a support committee here on campus opens the opportunity for everyone to play an actual role in the movement. During the past quarter various student groups have been approached for their support of the boycott.

Thus far, many students have deviated from the conservative light in which this campus is often seen. Yet others have refrained from becoming involved in an activity which is "too political." As students in an area close to the problem, each of us has a responsibility to take a stance in this moral issue.

SGA will be voting on Wednesday night on a proposal to support the migrant farm worker movement. This presents the opportunity for student government as well as other organizations to play an active role within the University and the community at large. Taking the initiative in supporting the migrant farm worker entails supporting fundamental human rights which none of us would want denied ourselves.

Activities vary for any supporter of the movement from boycotting Campbell and Libby products to petitioning, leafleting, letter writing and fund raising. The voice of the student body can be influential in gaining the support the migrant farm worker needs.

Such an immediate issue cannot be easily ignored. Passive noninvolvement constitutes consent. Surely no decent, morally mature individual supports the exploitation and dehumanization of an entire working class. The sacrifice that any of us would have to make to support the boycott is minute in comparison to the suffering of the migrant farm worker during his lifetime.

Mary Beth Kirchner is a student at the University.

SGA hears migrant request for support

By Cynthia Leise
Staff Reporter

The Student Government Association (SGA) last night was asked to support the migrant farmworkers' nationwide boycott of products produced by Campbell's Soup Co. and Libby-McNeill-Libby Co.

That support could include a policy statement supporting the farmworkers' low-wage plight and a ban in University cafeterias and food services of products included in the boycott.

SESARIO DURAN, vice president of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC), which is coordinating the boycott, told SGA that they should support the boycott because the migrants are being treated unfairly. He said the food companies do not pay Northwestern

Ohio tomato farmers enough for their crop so farmers cannot pay migrants who pick the tomatoes a decent wage.

He said migrants, farmers and cannery workers only receive 17 percent of the money paid for the products.

"The people who do all the work only get 17 percent," Duran said, adding that the companies benefit from low prices paid for the tomatoes without being responsible for the migrants' time, health or living conditions.

He said the companies should be responsible for what he called "human pollution" just as they are responsible for air or water pollution.

Mary Beth Kirschner, a University student supporting the migrants' plight, told SGA that other university student governments,

including those at Notre Dame University and the University of Michigan have supported the boycott or banned the use of their products.

SGA STATE and Community Affairs Coordinator Steve Hook likened the FLOC request for support of the boycott to last year's SGA support of the resolution for University divestment of South African investments. He asked for prompt action by SGA, saying, "This is close to home. I do hope we show some support for this."

SGA president Michael C. Voll told SGA members to research the FLOC request for support and ask their constituents their opinions on it, adding that SGA will consider the matter at another meeting.

In other action, SGA presidential assistant Michael Zinicola told SGA that the refusal by the College of

Business Administration executive council to support the proposed Professor Course Description Booklet has left the project "in a state of limbo."

Zinicola said the council refused Thursday to support the proposed booklet, citing doubts about its value, survey makeup and possible harm to professors whose courses would be critiqued.

THE BOOKLET, which would have contained information on courses and teachers in the business college from a survey of students and teachers, had already been approved by Faculty Senate and Karl E. Vogt, dean of the college.

SGA set up a committee to investigate alternative ways to compile the booklet, although Zinicola said he believes the project would work best with full faculty support.

The BGG News

Bowling Green State University

Thursday, March 8, 1979

By Cynthia Leise
Staff Reporter

SGA votes to endorse migrants

After heated and emotional debate, the Student Government Association (SGA) last night narrowly approved a resolution supporting the efforts of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC), to bring justice to migrant farmworkers.

FLOC members and students supporting migrants had urged SGA to endorse FLOC's efforts, which include a nationwide boycott of goods produced by Campbell's Soup Co. and Libby-McNeill-Libby Co., at SGA's past three meetings.

However, last night SGA support for the migrant's plight crystalized after FLOC members again emphasized to

SGA the inhumanity of the low wages and poor living conditions the migrants face when they work in Northwestern Ohio's tomato fields, which supply the Campbell's and Libby canneries.

Jim Lemay, SGA senator representing Kohl and Roger's dormitories, said SGA should stop stalling on whether to support the migrants' plight because he said students should realize low wages paid the workers give them little chance to break the poverty cycle.

"We've been afforded an incredible amount of opportunity," Lemay said. "We're getting a college education and their children can't even go to school. I think we owe them this."

Approximately 20 FLOC member supported and applauded Lemay's

statement. However, debate on whether to support FLOC's efforts was not closed as some SGA members and officials argued that they did not know enough about the issue or wanted to protect scholarships and monies given the University.

SGA then approved the resolution supporting FLOC efforts seven to five with two abstentions. Several senators said they voted against the resolution because some of their constituents said they believed migrants don't have bad working conditions and pay.

After the vote was taken, SGA senator Dana L. Kortokraz, who represents Founder's dormitory, chided SGA senators and officials for talking and making jokes about the migrants during the debate, saying "some of the laughing and kidding around was disgusting."

"Bee-oh-why-see-oh-tee-tee" Called On "En-ee-es-tee-el-ee-es"

Migrant Workers Taking On Multinational Corporations

By ROBERT H. HOLDEN

An international consumer boycott of all products made by Campbell's Soup and the Nestle Co. has been called by the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC), the migrant workers' union that has been on strike in northwest Ohio since last summer.

The two multinational corporations are the main targets of the strike, and a boycott can force them to the bargaining table, Baldemar Velasquez, the president of FLOC, told *The Citizen*.

Campbell's and Nestle operate the canneries that buy tomatoes under contracts with growers. The growers hire migrant workers to pick the tomatoes when they ripen in August, September and October.

Last August, almost 2,000 migrant workers walked off the fields in northwest Ohio in a strike aimed at forcing the canneries as well as the growers to the bargaining table. Since it was founded in 1969, FLOC has

signed contracts with several tomato growers, but quickly recognized that most of the growers were at the mercy of the canneries.

The farmers negotiate annually with the canneries for the prices they will get for their tomatoes, and for that reason have very little to say about how much to pay the workers. So FLOC's main demand has been that it be allowed to sit down with growers and the canneries to bargain a contract that will cover all three parties.

Picketing at the canneries and the farms was suspended last October after the harvest, but will be resumed in April when planting begins, Velasquez said. More than 100 farms — those with contracts with Campbell's and the Nestle subsidiary of Libby — will be picketed in northwest Ohio and southern Michigan. FLOC's headquarters is at 714½ S. St. Clair St., Toledo.

A wage study conducted three years ago by the American

Friends Service Committee, the Quaker organization, found that the migrant worker's average hourly wage was \$1.94, and Velasquez said that figure has hardly changed since the study was done. Workers are paid a piece rate, usually 19 cents to 24 cents for a 33-lb. basket.

In addition, FLOC wants the canneries to pay for job training programs for workers who are displaced by machines, a growing threat in the tomato fields.

FLOC's struggle is fully supported by the United Farm Workers, AFL-CIO. FLOC leaders recently spent three days at

products, Granny's soups, and Vlasic pickles.

Nestle products are also being boycotted by consumers protesting the sale of the company's infant formulas in underdeveloped countries, where many babies are said to be suffering and dying from malnutrition as a result of Nestle's promotion of its formula. Mothers who are capable of nursing their children themselves are persuaded to switch to the formula, which many of them cannot prepare properly because of poverty and their unawareness of sterilization procedures. That boycott is being organized by the Infant Formula Action Coalition, 3410 19th St., San Francisco, CA., 94110.

Nestle, a Swiss-based conglomerate, also owns Stouffer's inns and restaurants, including the new Stouffer's Inn on Public Square, which is the target of an AFL-CIO boycott. The hotel refused to rehire members of the Hotel, Motel & Restaurant Employees Union when it bought the hotel from Sheraton Inns.

Nestle sells products under these names: Nestle, Nescafe, Taster's Choice, Sunrise coffee, SoupTime, Jarlesburg Cheese, Stouffer's, Libby's, Crosse and Blackwell, Maggi soups, Crawford Products, Deer Park Mountain Spring Water, Swiss Knight cheeses, QUIK, CRUNCH, Los Hermanos wines.

FLOC leaders recently spent three days at UFW headquarters in California for training and discussions with Cesar Chavez . . .

FLOC has demanded at least 35 cents per basket, and an hourly wage of \$3.25 an hour if the piece rate does not come out to \$3.25 an hour; at least 28 hours of work every two weeks; reimbursement of some transportation costs from the workers' homes in Florida and Texas; and health insurance. In

UFW headquarters in California for training and discussions with Cesar Chavez and others in preparation for the boycott and the resumption of the strike.

Local boycott efforts are being coordinated by Jorge Reyes of the Spanish Community Development Task Force. The task force is affiliated with the Catholic Community Action Commission, where Reyes may be reached at 696-6525.

Besides soup, Campbell also sells Swanson prepared dinners, V-8 vegetable juice, Franco-American products, Pepperidge

The
CLEVELAND CITIZEN
America's Oldest Labor Newspaper

Founded in 1891 by Max S. Hayes

March 2, 1979

THE CLEVELAND CITIZEN

Of farm labor story, conversion to harvesters

Tomato growers urged to tell their side

By DAVID C. MILLER
Sentinel-Tribune County Editor

DESHLER — Northwest Ohio tomato growers were urged here Wednesday to tell their side of the farm labor dispute story and to "emphasize the positive" about their conversion to mechanical harvesters.

During last year's strike by migrant tomato pickers, the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) "outdid us news coverage wise," according to Don Kimmel, Putnam County agriculture extension agent.

"They had us off guard" and the news reports "made us look bad," he told growers attending the one-day Defiance Area Tomato School west of Deshler. But a Feb. 2 news story by John T. Kady of United Press International "changed this whole picture within the last month," Kimmel stated.

Kady called him on Feb. 1 to find out if anything new had developed concerning the farm labor situation.

"I mentioned that one of the processing companies was leaning toward mechanical harvesters."

From that tip, Kady went on to learn that the Napoleon plant of the Campbell Soup Co. was signing contracts this year only with farmers planning to use mechanical harvesters.

Within 24 hours of Kady's story going out over the UPI wire, "I received 28 calls from major newspapers and television stations" both in and out of Ohio, Kimmel stated.

"It had a real impact. For the first time, FLOC had to change its story," as reporters began asking FLOC what it was going to do to help the unemployed migrants.

Kimmel referred to Kady's story as "one of the most effective things that happened" in the area of public relations for the growers.

"Answer The Media"

Last year, FLOC "put on a beautiful show. They outshined us on news releases."

Kimmel praised FLOC for being able to "take something negative and make it positive."

Meanwhile, he said, the processors were advising "don't say anything."

And when farmers did talk to the media, Kimmel said, a television crew would spend an hour with a grower and then show three minutes of the interview that "made us look bad."

"Answer the media," Kimmel said, but "you fellas be positive this year. If you cut down housing, stress that you were eliminating poor housing. Emphasize the positive."

Migrants Want To Work

And "regardless of the media and some of the stories that have been played up," he said enough migrants want to work in Ohio to meet the needs of the growers.

"The feedback I get is that labor wants to come up and work."

The reason is simple — farm workers have payments to make on their homes, trucks and cars, just like non-farm workers, he said.

When Kimmel and Baldemar Velasquez, FLOC president, debated each other recently at Bluffton College, Velasquez told Kimmel, "I am not going to bother you folks during pickle season," Kimmel reported to the growers.

"And I don't think he will bother us with pickles." That would stretch an active strike over too long of a season, and it would be hard for FLOC to keep its members together that long, Kimmel explained.

But migrants coming into Ohio to pick pickles "are going to have to make a decision to go home or stay" at the end of pickle season. Those who decide to leave "will work better in pickles since that will be their only income."

Look For Alternatives

But unlike last year, the growers and processors are anticipating labor problems this year in time "to look for alternatives."

Last year, "you were thrown into the situation when you had a crop ready to get out at delivery time. You've had a year to get geared up for it this year."

Even with advance warning, Kimmel quipped, "If you're close to a heart attack, I suggest you lay off tomatoes."

For those who "make sizeable investments in harvesters, you're going to be committed to growing tomatoes" for several years.

"You'll have to be better managers and work closely with processors on joint problems."

In addition to Campbell's total emphasis on mechanical harvesting, he said Libby, McNeill and Libby Inc., Leipsic, is "getting a decent sign-up" for mechanical harvesting. And the recently-formed Libby's growers association "is one step toward working together" more closely with the processor.

Growers using machines will have to plan to deliver according to the processor's schedules. The processors "have been putting in more tanks for something to pull from if you can't deliver, not to take the glut of the harvest."

"They're also spreading their acres out" throughout Ohio and into Michigan. "There are a lot of reasons for that. Some of you are going to have to cut down your acres."

50 To 70 Pct. By Machine

Kimmel predicted, "I think we'll harvest 50 to 70 percent mechanical this year." In previous years, 35 percent was the highest level of mechanical harvesting in Putnam County.

If the weather is good, it will be 70 percent. Bad weather would cut it to 50 percent, he said.

"We'll use 30 to 35 percent less labor this year."

His forecast for this season also includes "lots of floating labor," since many farm

workers in Texas have not been informed of the accelerated conversion to machines.

Growers have found "a lot of labor willing to contract for 28 to 30 cents a bushel" for this season. Last year, the average was 24 to 26 cents a bushel, while FLOC was demanding 35 cents a bushel.

Kimmel's segment of the tomato school was called an update on labor, which he called "a key issue for this group. The amount of time spent on this has been terrific."

Problems For FLOC

In addition to the jump in mechanical harvesting intentions, a major problem he sees facing FLOC this year is money — FLOC "has to have money" to continue its strike.

That's the main reason he does not foresee FLOC resorting to any violence. If FLOC "leans on violence," Kimmel said, the church organizations would no longer support FLOC financially.

"Last year, it was a clean operation, with no violence." The closest last fall's strike came to violence was when "it got to be a game to follow the caravans."

Kimmel warned that violence on the part of the growers would be as disastrous as it would be if FLOC would do it. "If we start doing that, we've got problems."

Another problem facing FLOC this year will be where it can set up its strike headquarters. "They have to come up with a site for their people."

Inspection Procedures

After Kimmel concluded his talk, George Fruth of the Northwest District Office of the Ohio Department of Health briefly discussed the inspection procedure this year.

There will be two inspections before a labor camp is licensed. "The second inspection will pretty much determine if you get a license. So try to be there for the inspection."

In an effort to speed up the inspections and the reports, the inspectors will personally hand the reports to the grower during the inspections.

John Stark, chief of the Rural Manpower Section of the Ohio Bureau of Employment Services, said his department's inspections will be held in conjunction with one of the ODH inspections of each camp.

He is "hoping to solicit orders" for farm workers from the south, although "we're not being very successful at this time."

Most of this year's tomato school centered around aspects of mechanical harvesting.

The 1979 Cooperative Extension Service booklet on "Ohio Guidelines for Production of Machine-Harvested Tomatoes for Processing" was handed out to growers attending the program.

The booklet stated, "The interest in machine harvesting is increasing rapidly at present. Part of this increased interest is due to increased wages for hand harvest crews, increased cost of housing for labor crews, increased costs of Social Security

and other benefits and more governmental regulation affecting labor."

It went on to say, "There is

also concern on availability of satisfactory labor for hand harvesting. Since local crews are frequently employed by

growers with machines, there seems to be more certainty regarding this labor as compared to migrant labor."

Campbell Co. Signs Ohio Grower Contracts For A Mechanically Harvested Tomato Crop

BY JOHN T. KADY

United Press International

The Campbell Soup Co., the largest tomato user in Ohio has signed contracts with all of its growers for 4,000 acres of tomatoes that will be mechanically picked, eliminating hundreds of jobs for migrant workers in northwestern Ohio, UPI has learned.

The company, headquartered

in Camden, N.J., and with a large plant at Napoleon, said all of its growers will use mechanical harvesters this year.

Libby, McNeill & Libby, the second largest user of tomatoes in the Buckeye State, will have between 50 and 60 percent of its tomatoes picked by mechanical harvester, UPI has also learned.

SCOTT ROMBACH, a

spokesman for Campbell Soup Co., told UPI 35 percent of the tomatoes used by the firm at its Napoleon plant last year were mechanically picked and 25 percent were mechanically picked in 1977.

Daryl Amstutz, Pandora, vice-chairman of the Libby Growers Tomato Bargaining Association, said about 33 percent of the tomatoes delivered to the Libby McNeill & Libby

plant at Leipsic last year were mechanically harvested.

Both Rombach and Amstutz said the trend has been to mechanical harvesters but a strike last year by the Farm Labor Organizing Committee, which represents migrant workers, speeded up the process.

"WE HAVE signed with growers for 4,000 acres and all are using mechanical harvesters," Rombach said.

The contract price for the tomatoes sold to Campbell's is \$65 a ton, \$7 less than last year.

"But we are going to be doing the sorting at the plant," said Rombach.

Campbell's has installed a mechanical sorter, using water, at its Napoleon plant to eliminate the need for extra hands who used to ride the mechanical harvesters and sort out rotten tomatoes and weeds.

"THE WHOLE area is going mechanical," said Rombach. "We've had 100 percent machine harvested tomatoes in California since 1967."

Amstutz said he personally would continue to use migrant workers for at least one more year.

"But six or eight of the big growers have gone the

mechanical harvester route," said Amstutz. "And it was mainly due to the problems they had last year.

"If there are the same kind of problems this year then some of the small growers are going to have to double their acres to make a mechanical harvester feasible or just quit," Amstutz said. "A lot of the smaller growers have already quit this year."

"THIS HAS been coming for several years," Amstutz said. "The worst part of it is that a lot of good crews aren't going to have work and that's bad.

"They come up here to make some money and they are just scared out by what happened last year," he said. "But all, in all, it's cheaper to go to mechanical harvesters and that's the way the big growers are going."

Ray Santiago, secretary-treasurer of FLOC which has called for a boycott of all Campbell's and Libby's products, says if it rains during the harvesting season next summer, then the farmers with the mechanical harvesters are in trouble.

Santiago says the harvesters are not nearly as efficient in rainy weather which causes muddy field conditions.

THE BLADE'S Pages of Opinion

SEC. B, PAGE 4

TOLEDO, OHIO, SUNDAY, FEB. 25, 1979

On Picking Tomatoes

MECHEANIZATION, long a possibility in the northwestern Ohio tomato fields, apparently has been spurred tremendously by the activities of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee, which last fall struck area canneries and growers. The net result of FLOC's efforts is likely to be a profound change in this important and labor-intensive industry.

Growing tomatoes or other produce is a high-yield, high-risk activity. Northwestern Ohio farmers have been able to make good profits on limited acreage through the use of hand harvesting. Cultivating tomatoes undoubtedly has enabled many smaller family farms to survive. But the investment in machine harvesters, at an average cost in this area of \$40,000 each, virtually dictates either that farmers devote more acreage to the crop or that they give it up entirely. Moreover, canneries are giving strong encouragement to farmers to mechanize, which ultimately means fewer growers, fewer migrant workers,

larger fields, and the introduction of agribusiness methods to what was in a sense a cottage industry.

One farmer put it bluntly: "There's just too much harassment by government and by labor. There comes a point when what's the use? Tomatoes have paid the way around here for a long time, but . . ."

Baldemar Velasquez, local FLOC president, professes to take this development in stride. He suggests that through a union the farm workers can demand that tomato processors be held responsible for retraining and other assistance to pickers to enable them to find permanent jobs as they settle out of the migrant stream. But while many migrants have made the change successfully, one suspects that it will be a wrenching readjustment for others whose farm jobs will simply disappear. And as to the costs of whatever retraining might be done, they will be paid not by the processors, who have no contracts with the workers, but by the taxpayers generally.

Ohio farmworkers announce nationwide boycott of Campbell's; Libby's

On January 28, this year, the Farm Labor Organizing Committee officially kicked-off its international boycott of Libby-McNeil, Libby and Campbell Soup products.

FLOC, which led last summer's strike of 2,000 farm-workers from tomato fields, initiated the boycott because of the canners and growers unwillingness to respond to peaceful invitations by union leaders to negotiate, according to Nuestra Lucha newspaper from Ohio.

"The canner has the grower under his thumb and the grower has the worker under his thumb," said Baldemar Velasquez, FLOC President. For this reason, FLOC is hoping that the boycott can pressure canners into requiring better wages and working conditions for farm-workers from the grower.

In retrospect, Velasquez said the 1969 strike against the growers prove that very limited benefits were possible

because of the relationship between the canneries and the growers.

During the harvest season, the estimated 16,000 migrant farm laborers in Ohio, Indiana and southern Michigan earn only \$.24 cents per hamper of tomatoes picked. FLOC is demanding of a rate of 35¢ per hamper which is 33 lbs.

Other union demands include: A work guarantee of 28 hours every two weeks. If it rains for two weeks the picker shall be paid for 28 hours. This is already a state law in Wisconsin.

The following list includes other provisions that FLOC is demanding for the migrant laborers:

- Minimum wage of \$3.25 per hour.

- Transportation to Texas, Florida or home residence following seasonal work. Rate of 8¢/mile plus 2¢ per worker passengers.

- A medical program. (There is a policy available that will cover four

months for \$196 per family).

- Custodian for each camp. His rate of pay will average whatever other workers earn in his location.

The Farm Labor Organizing Committee is totally committed to helping farm laborers achieve better wages and working conditions. They have received support from various institutions including the United Farmworkers Union under Cesar Chavez.

But organizing in the midwest is difficult. Most Ohio farmworkers migrate each summer from Florida and Texas, allowing only a few months to mobilize into effective action, according to FLOC.

Harassment by the growers to break last year's tomato strike couldn't even stop the union. There were growers who would attempt violent attacks on picketers, and one organizer recalled a night that there was a crossburning, Ku Klux Klan style near the tents where some strikers were living.

- There were even high-speed chases, with growers in pick-up trucks trying to run FLOC organizers off the road in isolated rural highways.

- Hundreds of striking workers would allow themselves to go to jail when influential canneries sought court orders to break the strike.

- On September 4, 1978 (Labor Day), farmworkers and supporters marched 104 miles from Findlay to Columbus to dramatize their demands and willingness to struggle for justice in the fields.

But FLOC's commitment to farmworkers isn't their only area of concentration. They are also participating in the boycott of Nestle products, which they say is the parent company of Libby. "Nestle's promotion of infant formula for feeding babies in third world and developing nations has caused alarm in many circles. Reports have tied infant formulas to malnutrition and even death to

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Boulder, Colorado

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children of unsuspecting mothers. From farm-workers to babies, Nestle's and Libby's have no principles in making profits," FLOC said.

In July of last year, FLOC mailed 442 letters of invitation to Ohio growers and 55 to canners, but only 16 growers attended the meeting. The farmers at the meeting generally agreed that growers would refuse to make pacts with FLOC.

After the meeting farmers mentioned that it will not take much to make them do away with migrant laborers in their operations. They discussed the use of mechanical picking equipment and the option of "cultivating crops that do not require the use of human hands."

Churches and church agencies in the Ohio area have given support to negotiating between FLOC and growers. The department of churches in Society said church support for FLOC couldn't be otherwise.

FLOC began the negotiating campaign this summer with a \$89,000 grant from the U.S. Bishops' Campaign for Human Development. Donations to the organization can be sent to:

Farm Labor Organizing Committee
714½ S. St. Clair Street
Toledo, Ohio 43609
(419) 243-3456

BOYCOTT SUPPORT FARMWORKERS

Libby's and Campbell's companies have refused to negotiate with Ohio farmworkers over wages and working conditions. It is for this reason that FLOC is calling a nation-wide consumer boycott of the following companies and their products.

LIBBY-MCNEIL-LIBBY

— All Nestle's products (Nestle's is the parent company of Libby-McNeil-Libby)

— All vegetables, fruits, meats and juices with the Libby's label

CAMPBELL'S

- Campbell's Soup
- Swanson frozen prepared dinners and meats
- V-8 vegetable juice
- Efficient food service products
- Recipe pet food
- Hanover Trail restaurants
- Franco-American products
- Lexington Gardens retail garden centers
- Pepperidge Farm products
- Granny's Soups
- Bounty canned chili and entrees
- Godiva Chocolates
- Pietro's Gold Coast pizzas
- Delacré cookies and pastries
- Herfy's Restaurants
- Kia-ora food products
- VLASIC

For more information about how you can help the farmworkers with their boycott, contact:

FARM LABOR ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

714½ St. Clair
Toledo, Ohio 43609
(419) 243-3456



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SOCIAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE
OF
THE WEST SHORE UNITARIAN CHURCH
20401 HILLIARD ROAD
ROCKY RIVER, OHIO 44116

AGAIN - A HARVEST OF SHAME

In the 20 years since Edward R. Murrow's classic, there has been little observable change in the basic living and working conditions for migrants. Ohio's 30,000 workers who pick tomatoes and cucumbers are attempting to bargain for the following:

- * An increase in piecework rate to 1¢ a pound
- * Hospitalization (not eligible for hospital care in Ohio)
- * Transportation allowance
- * Enforcement of housing, sanitation, minimum wage laws
- * Better washing facilities
- * A guarantee of 14 hours a week work (Wisconsin law)

A bottle of Ketchup, 14 oz. costs 63¢ today -- a raise in the rate to pickers would mean an increase for consumers of 1/4th cent!!

The Social Concerns Committee has adopted the following resolution:

WHEREAS the migrant farm workers of Northwestern Ohio are currently on strike, and
WHEREAS their demands are for wages and working conditions which in all other segments of American society would be regarded as the bare minimum for subsistence and the maintenance of basic human decency, and
WHEREAS these grossly substandard conditions are the result of a consistent policy of exploitation of farm workers and growers alike on the part of processors owned by multinational corporate entities, and
WHEREAS the Unitarian denomination has since its inception actively promoted human dignity and freedom, and
WHEREAS we, as Unitarians and responsible Americans can neither countenance conditions approaching peonage in American society nor contribute to the enrichment of multinational corporations that create these conditions and profit from them,
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:
that the Social Concerns Committee of the West Shore Unitarian Church go on record in full support of the migrant farm workers of Western Ohio and their Farm Labor Organizing Committee in their struggle for a decent life, and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:
that we pledge ourselves to refrain from buying the products of any subsidiary of the multinational Nestle Corporation, owners of Libby, McNeil, Libby, the primary adversary of the migrant strike action, and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:
that we invite all our fellow Unitarian Universalists locally, regionally and nationally to join us in this action.

NESTLE is a Swiss corporation known for chocolate and candy bars. It also holds:

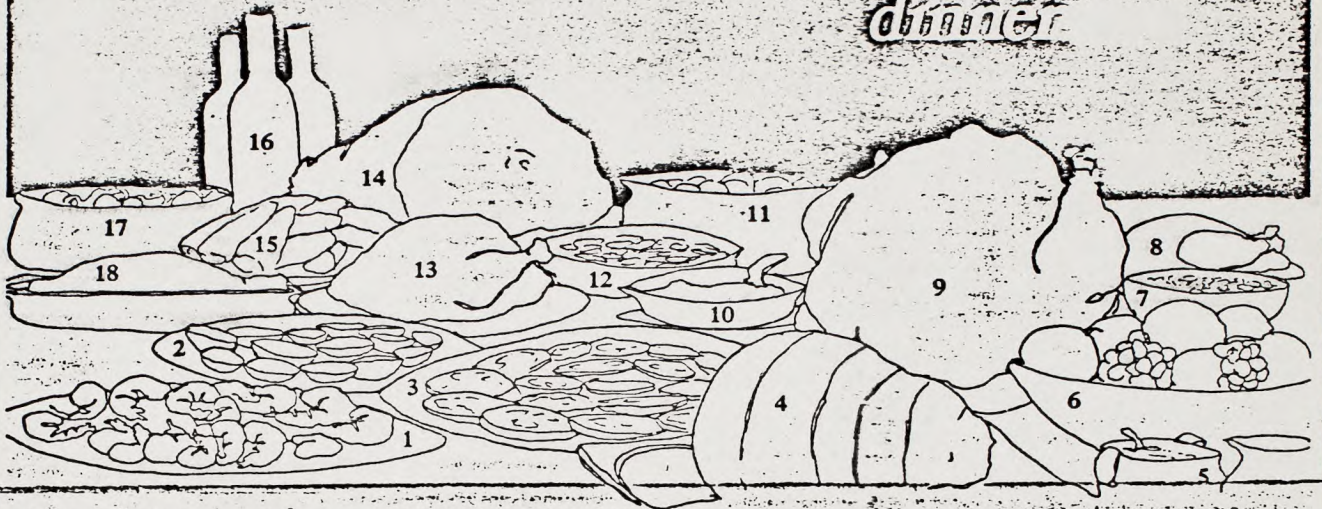
Crosse & Blackwell soups and wines
Nescafe, Nestea, Taster's Choice
Gerbers baby food, insurance, baby supplies

Wispride cheese products
Stouffers Foods, Restaurants and Inns

NESTLE has come in for criticism for its promotion of infant formula in underdeveloped countries where breast feeding is more appropriate and safer.

Those who wish to contribute to help workers now may send checks to the Farm Labor Organizing Committee at 714 1/2 South St. Clair Street, Toledo, Ohio 43609

The Fortune 500 is now serving dinner



You can enjoy these corporate-grown products for Christmas:

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Shrimp by Coca Cola | 7. Almonds and walnuts by Getty Oil | 13. Chicken by Greyhound |
| 2. Deviled eggs by Cargill | Macadamia nuts by IU/International | 14. Ham by LTV |
| 3. Tomatoes by Ogden Corporation | 8. Duckling by Schlitz | 15. Corn by Boeing |
| 4. Beef by Gulf & Western | 9. Turkey by Esmark | 16. Wine grapes by Prudential |
| 5. Sugar by H.L. Hunt International Resources | 10. Applesauce by American Brands | 17. Mushrooms by Clorox |
| 6. Cream by Aetna Life and Casualty Company | 11. Potatoes by U.S. Steel | 18. Salmon by Unilever |
| 6. Citrus by International Minerals and Chemicals | 12. Carrots by Tenneco | |

Corporate chefs cook consumer's goose

By JIM HIGHTOWER and SUSAN DeMARCO
 Special to the National Catholic Reporter
 Austin, Texas

THINK A MOMENT of the foods of Christmas — hams and breads, eggnogs and cakes, roasts and pies. They are a full part of the warmth and richness of the season, and the smells from the kitchen can stir about as much expectation in adults as presents under the tree create in children.

But, today, not all the surprises are under the tree. Strange things are being done to the traditional meal, and they are not being done by cooks, by farmers or by Mother Nature. Unbeknownst to most Americans, modern dinner is fast becoming the product of monopolized markets, conglomerate bookkeeping, genetic engineering, integrated factory systems, centralized procurement, national advertising, chemical artifice, standardized taste and The Bottom Line. It's not especially good, or good for you, and it's very expensive, but you can be thankful for one thing: there's plenty of it.

Christmas 1978 is an appropriate time to take stock of our larder and begin to consider just how grateful we are, and to whom. What follows is

not an attempt to say what's good for you to eat; rather, it is to inform you that if current trends continue, you'll have little choice in the matter. The food industry, which has always been among America's most competitive, is fast becoming one of our least competitive, and consumers, independent farmers and local businesses are much the worse for the change.

Getting a grip on dinner

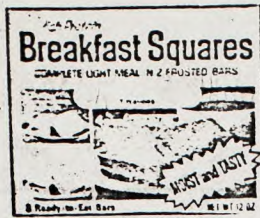
It's easy to forget that food remains America's largest business — larger than oil, chemicals, steel or automobiles. Last year, U.S. eaters spent \$223 billion on this most basic consumer item. To offer some perspective, the entire commercial music industry (records, concerts, clubs, etc.) had \$3 billion in sales last year, while just the sale of potato chips, popcorn, pretzels and other snack foods totaled more than that — \$3.8 billion.

Susan DeMarco and Jim Hightower, who now live in Austin, Texas, have written extensively about the food economy. DeMarco currently is a consultant to the U.S. Department of Agriculture and is completing a book with Susan Sechler. Hightower is editor of The Texas Observer.

No longer are farmers in charge of this industry. Indeed, dramatic as their presence is, the new wave of industrial "farmers" poses the least problem in our food economy at the moment. Of far greater significance are the processing and retailing empires amassed in a very short period by a handful of food manufacturing conglomerates, national supermarket chains and fast-food franchisers. This middle sector between farmers and consumers takes 60 cents of every food dollar spent today. It is here that the chances for big profits lie in the food industry, and here is where the monopolists have concentrated.

Pop into any grocery store and you will be faced by a phantasmagoria of products, giving the impression of robust competition among thousands of companies. It's a false impression — there are more than 30,000 food processing companies in the U.S., but precious few of them are represented on the shelves of your supermarket. Instead, less than one per cent of them own practically every brand you see, and just 50 national processors corner about 90 per cent of the industry's profits.

These 50 are consumer product conglomerates that purvey hundreds of brands of highly
 (Continued on next page)



'Vitamin-dosed sweets' latest breakfast fad

IF THERE IS ONE THING on which nutritionists agree, it is that breakfast is our most important meal. Morning is the time we should stoke our bodies with nutrition in preparation for the long day ahead. But ours has become a society that skimps on breakfast, that grabs a quick bite on the run.

Far from fighting this unhealthy trend, food processors have seen it as a golden opportunity to market their manufactured products, and they have used their substantial advertising power to promote a culture that won't take time for breakfast. First came such products as instant oatmeal, frozen waffles, toaster pancakes, ready-to-eat cereals — products designed to save time in the kitchen.

Now, however, food companies have taken a giant leap beyond, attempting to eliminate the kitchen altogether by promoting on-the-run snacks for breakfast. In essence, these are cakes and candies fortified with vitamins.

"Smart eating in this busy world" is the advertising pitch for General Mills' Breakfast Squares — a super-sweet cake dosed with vitamins, offered in four flavors, wrapped in a foil pouch and packaged four to a box. In 1977 alone, General Mills spent \$1.5 million advertising this concoction, touted as the nutritional answer for people who "skip or skimp because of the morning rush."

General Mills assures us that such eating habits are just fine, because a two-bar serving is a "complete meal," containing 25 per cent of the U.S. recommended daily allowance of protein, 10 vitamins and five minerals.

In one test, Consumers Union fed Breakfast Squares to rats and found that the stuff has enough nutrients to sustain life, but that's all the good researchers could find to say about it. CU concluded that it certainly does not measure up to a well-balanced breakfast.

As for its enjoyment value, Breakfast Squares has a texture like sawdust and an icky-sweet taste. CU advised against feeding such instant breakfasts to children, saying that though they do offer a quick way to inject a few basic nutrients into the little ones, they also help them develop poor dietary habits, encourage tooth decay, promote empty calorie consumption and overstimulate a craving for sweets.

But regardless of criticism, the food marketing industry can be expected to push more of the same, as the high profits and potential for market expansion by advertising such products have proven to be the very lifeblood of corporate growth in today's food economy. —SD

Conglomerates gobble up s

(Continued from previous page)

processed, highly advertised food items and monopolize the marketplace. The two largest are not even U.S. firms — they are Unilever, a British-Dutch conglomerate (owning such brands as Lipton tea, Imperial margarine, Lucky Whip topping, Mrs. Butterworth syrup, Wish Bone salad dressings, Knox gelatine and Good Humor ice cream) and Nestle, the huge Swiss corporation (holding such U.S. brands as Nestea, Libby McNeil & Libby canned goods, Stouffer frozen foods and restaurants, Jarlsberg cheese and Taster's Choice coffee).

The largest U.S. food conglomerate bears a name you've probably never heard of — Beatrice Foods Company, a Chicago firm that made \$6.4 billion in sales last year on more than a hundred brands, including Dannon yogurt, LaChoy Chinese foods, Sunbeam bread, Meadow Gold milk, Martha White flour, Rosarita Mexican foods, Eckrich sausages, Louis Sherry ice cream, Rainbo pickles and Butter Krust bread.

Even the old-time food firms such as Kraft, Heinz, General Mills, Carnation and Borden are now holding companies that have bought up dozens of brands and are far removed from their original trade in milk, tomato products and cereals. They join a few other conglomerates — including such little-known giants as Consolidated Foods, Heublein, American Brands, CPC International, Anderson Clayton, Standard Brands, American Home Products and International Multifoods — in controlling the majority of grocery items.

Don't be fooled by the package — even if it's got a smiling granny or a down-home name on it, chances are it is in conglomerate hands, as these examples illustrate:

Brand name	Owner
Grandma's molasses	American Brands
Dad's root beer	IC Industries
Sara Lee	Consolidated Foods
coffeecake	
Hickory Farms of Ohio	International Multifoods
Orville	
Redenbacher's gourmet popcorn	Norton-Simon

Such conglomerates are operated by financial managers who are much less concerned with food than with corporate growth. They have not established their positions of market dominance by innovation, superior efficiency or any of the other grubby aspects of true free enterprise; rather, they have bought their positions, swallowing up regional brands that have already been established by independent entrepreneurs.

Beatrice Foods, which has made nearly 400 such acquisitions in the last 25 years, says that it looks for companies manufacturing products with regional brand identification, strong market share, long-term growth potential and higher-than-average profit margins. Beatrice managers refer to its 400 or so subsidiaries as "profit centers."

The merger activity of these giant firms is the biggest news in the food industry, yet there has been practically no press attention to it. Far from abating, the movement is escalating, with national companies now becoming takeover targets. Del Monte, the largest processor of fruits and vegetables, has just been bought by R. J. Reynolds. The big canner's chief rival, Green Giant, is now a subsidiary of Pillsbury. Seven-Up was bought this summer by Philip Morris. Tropicana has merged into Beatrice Foods. Pet, which itself is a billion-dollar-a-year conglomerate built by mergers, was picked off this year by IC Industries, the parent firm of the Illinois Central Railroad. It's hard to keep up, it's happening so fast.

Increasingly, these takeovers are, in the vernacular of Wall Street, "hostile," mean-

ing that the mergees do not want to be bought. Del Monte, Seven-Up, Tropicana and Pet all fought to remain independent, but finally had to succumb to the enormous sums of money the purchasers were offering stockholders.

Sometimes, the unwelcome suitors are successfully fought off — Gerber's management put up such a legal battle last year that Houston-based Anderson Clayton finally backed away from its attempt to gain control of the baby-food firm.

But such defeats are hardly the norm, and many cash-rich conglomerates are on the prowl, promising a continuation of mergers — for example, R. J. Reynolds's chief financial officer described his firm as "an enormously powerful financial machine" and announced in September that "we'll probably have a billion dollars" in cash and borrowing capacity to buy more companies over the next five years.

Shared monopolies

All this brand-name concentration means that there is far less competition than meets the eye in the supermarket. It is not that there is one big monopoly over food, as there is over automobiles, but that there is a series of shared monopolies in the food industry, with four or fewer firms controlling a majority of sales of a certain product.

As *Fortune* magazine explained the market-share game in its September issue, "... food-company managers look at the marketplace not as a whole, but by product category. A product category, in the consumer-goods sense, defines a distinct, self-contained market, the battleground upon which all the direct competitors of a product are to be found. What's important to the marketer is not what people are doing with food, but what they're doing with frozen lima beans or single-layer cake mixes."

Within these categories, there are fewer and fewer competitors. In fact, the food industry already has become more concentrated than most other industries, with the majority of sales in the average product category being controlled by four or fewer firms. Such oligopolies (or, shared monopolies) are reaching into every food line; in its July issue *Progressive Grocer*, a trade publication, reported the following astounding levels of market control by just the top three brands in various categories:

Product	Share of market held by top three brands
Table salt	91.7%
Flour	80.4%
Catsup	86.1%
Mustard	76.2%
Peanut butter	78.6%
Salad & cooking oil	85.5%
Vinegar	84.1%
Gelatin desserts	98.4%
Whipped toppings	85.6%
Canned evaporated milk	82.3%
Marshmallows	98.2%
Instant puddings	96.0%
Shortening	81.0%
Jams & jellies	75.2%
Nuts	80.7%
Honey	82.2%
Frozen potato products	82.2%
Frostings	97.7%
Spaghetti sauce	85.9%
Pickle relish	79.2%
Instant tea	86.0%
Frozen dinners	92.8%
Corn & tortilla chips	86.7%
Canned spaghetti & noodles	94.0%
Ready-to-serve dips	81.5%
Non-dairy cream substitutes	86.1%
Pretzels	85.6%
Dry milk	80.1%
Add-meal dinner mixes	90.7%
Canned stews	83.6%
Instant potatoes	83.9%
Pizza mix	86.6%
Instant breakfast mixes	90.8%

Picking up the tab

Consumers pay dearly for this kind of market control. Once a few firms gain a monopoly position in a product category, the market for that category is considered to be "mature," again using Wall Street's parlance, and the companies are able to "harvest" it, meaning that they can push up prices. Taking one product at a time, such artificial inflation doesn't make a dramatic impression on shoppers — a few cents more on shortening, a little extra for the pizza mix.

But when the whole market basket is pushed to the cash register, consumers have been nickel-and-dimed to death. These shared monopolies are the major cause of inflation in the food economy, which is one of the major causes of inflation in the whole economy.

In an extremely important but little-noted study, two highly regarded economists, one from the Federal Trade Commission and the other from the Department of Agriculture, have teamed up to calculate the extra price that consumers pay for food because of these monopolies. Russell Parker and John Connor figured the overcharge conservatively, using 1975 data and three different and independent methodological approaches. They concluded in a paper presented Aug. 30 that "Consumer loss due to monopoly in U.S. food manufacturing industries in 1975 was at least \$12 billion."

That's \$55 a year given away to food conglomerates by every man, woman and child in America. For a poverty-level family of four, it means 10 per cent of their total food budget is being misappropriated by monopolists. The industry's structure has become more concentrated since 1975, so the problem is only growing worse —

60 cents of U dollar fattens

OF THE TOTAL FOOD dollar in the to the middlemen — the processors, nearly all the inflation in food costs is

Even for raw food products like large and increasing share of the costing and packaging, the middleman's is why the major food manufacturers' greater consumption of highly processed

Here's a list of several food products prices that went to corporate middlemen year:

Apples	59%
Beans, dried	63%
Beef, choice	35%
Beets, canned	94%
Bread, whole wheat	92%
Butter	36%
Cabbage	60%
Carrots	70%
Celery	64%
Cheese	52%
Chicken, fryers	42%
Cookies, sandwich	89%
Corn, canned	83%
Corn flakes	93%
Cucumbers	52%
Eggs	41%
Flour, white	69%
Grapefruit	82%
Ice cream	65%
Lamb	41%
Lemons	82%
Lemonade, frozen	89%
Lettuce	60%

Food firms

convenience foods, have been directed at extending the convenience spectrum upward, attracting the consumer to its progressively higher reaches with new products and improvements in existing brands.

"Not coincidentally, in this direction usually lie an increase in the value added, higher (profit) margins and less dependence upon agricultural commodities."

What sort of new and improved products are they talking about? *Fortune* cites as "genuine innovations" General Mills' Breakfast Squares (see box) and General Foods' Stove Top Stuffing (which, the magazine notes, "makes it possible to serve stuffing without a bird"). Thanks a million.

The indispensable extra ingredient that makes these decoctions palatable to the public is advertising. Big-time advertising. Check the Thursday food ads in your newspaper and see what's being promoted, complete with 10-cents-off coupons. It's not basic foods they're trying to get you to eat; rather, it is their branded, instant, pre-cooked, cheese-kissed, ready-to-eat, frozen mug-o-lunch, which comes with a packet of spices and disposable spoon in each box. In 1977, the top 25 food advertisers spent \$2 billion on newspaper ads.

Better yet, spend a Saturday morning in front of the television set and get a load of what the big firms are selling to kids. For starters, if it doesn't have sugar on it, you won't find it advertised on what's come to be known as "kiddie-vision." The Federal Trade Commission finally cracked down on the use of a kid-show host to push the sponsors' creations, but the animated cartoon characters simply stepped in to do the shilling.

A recent industry survey found that while most Americans can't name their U.S. senator, more than 90 per cent of the country's three-year-olds know who Fred Flintstone is.

It takes a lot of ad dollars to impress a



product's name on even a three-year-old mind, and it is not surprising that half of the top 25 national advertisers are big food companies: Procter & Gamble, General Foods, Philip Morris, American Home Products, R.J. Reynolds, General Mills, Unilever, Norton-Simon, PepsiCo, Beatrice Foods, McDonald's and Colgate-Palmolive. Last year, just these dozen firms spent \$2.2 billion to tout their wares.

Not only do consumers pay for this needless cost directly in the form of higher prices, but they also pay in the form of reduced competition in the marketplace. Advertising — especially television advertising — has become a potent weapon wielded with greatest effect against local, mom-and-pop businesses.

Again quoting *Fortune*: "What the entry of the big companies into a product category usually means is a substantial increase

in marketing expenditures by everyone who can afford the raised ante." But very few homegrown enterprises can ante up and survive. McDonald's, for example, targets \$15,000 worth of advertising each year per store.

Can anything be done?

Yes. The shifting balance of power in the food economy is not an economic phenomenon, it is a political phenomenon. The monopolistic trend is ordained neither by God nor by the inevitable march of some economic dialectic; rather, the problem is that we have not paid much attention to the changes taking place and by default have allowed a few firms to gain too much power.

Plenty of methods and resources are at hand to redress the balance. If we had the political will, we might at least put state and federal governments to work for con-

sumers, competitive businesses and family farmers, using such means as cooperative banks, government procurement budgets, agricultural research and extension programs, direct marketing between farmers and consumers, hard-nosed antitrust enforcement, graduated corporate income taxes, limiting the tax deduction for advertising expenditures and so on.

As overwhelming as the facts of monopoly power seem to be, they ought not have a depressing effect. The corporate takeover of Christmas is not complete. There still are healthy competitive elements — mom-and-pop restaurants, a fledgling cooperative movement, independent processors, a struggling family-farm system — and if consumers can be enlisted, the drift can be halted. People cannot fight back until they know what they are fighting. Consider this the clarion call.

60 cents of U.S. food dollar fattens 'middlemen'

OF THE TOTAL FOOD dollar in the U.S., 60 cents goes not to the farmer but to the middlemen — the processors, distributors and retailers of food — and nearly all the inflation in food costs in recent years has been in their sector.

Even for raw food products like beef and fresh fruits, middlemen take a large and increasing share of the consumer's dollar. But with more processing and packaging, the middleman's share increases geometrically, which is why the major food manufacturers are doing all they can to encourage greater consumption of highly processed items.

Here's a list of several food products and the percentage of their retail prices that went to corporate middlemen during the second quarter of this year:

Apples	59%	Margarine	64%
Beans, dried	63%	Milk, in stores	45%
Beef, choice	35%	Milk, evaporated	53%
Beets, canned	94%	Onions	62%
Bread, whole wheat	92%	Oranges	74%
Butter	36%	Orange juice, frozen concentrate	55%
Cabbage	60%	Peaches, canned	80%
Carrots	70%	Pears, canned	62%
Celery	64%	Peas, canned	80%
Cheese	52%	Peas, frozen	84%
Chicken, fryers	42%	Peanut butter	60%
Cookies, sandwich	89%	Peppers	55%
Corn, canned	83%	Pork	40%
Corn flakes	93%	Potatoes	71%
Cucumbers	52%	Potatoes, french fried	86%
Eggs	41%	Rice	69%
Flour, white	69%	Salad & cooking oils	70%
Grapefruit	82%	Spaghetti, canned	89%
Ice cream	65%	Sugar	56%
Lamb	41%	Tomatoes	52%
Lemons	82%	Tomatoes, canned	87%
Lemonade, frozen	89%	Turkey	48%
Lettuce	60%	Vegetable shortening	54%

maller food firms

Parker and Connor estimate that "consumer loss for 1978 would be at least one to two billion dollars greater than the estimate for 1975."

A big chunk of this monopoly price-tag ends up in the coffers of the monopolists as excess profits — Parker and Connor calculate that \$3 billion of the 1975 overcharge went for profits that the firms would not have enjoyed in a competitive world. Here are a few of the profiteers:

— \$173 million in excess profits to the bread and cake purveyors, the top four of which are ITT, American Brands, Campbell Taggart and Interstate Brands.

— \$186 million to the breakfast cereal makers, the top four of which are General Foods, General Mills, Kellogg and Quaker Oats.

— \$333 million to the fluid milk marketers, the top four of which are Borden, Kraftco, Beatrice and Carnation.

— \$104 million to the canned specialties manufacturers, the top four of which are H. J. Heinz, Campbell Soup, American Home Products and Gerber.

— \$29 million to the frozen specialties firms, the top three of which are Campbell, RCA and Consolidated Foods.

— \$108 million to the coffee roasters, the top four of which are Procter & Gamble, General Foods, Nestle and Standard Brands.

— \$344 million to the brewers, the top four of which are Anheuser-Busch, Philip Morris, Schlitz and Pabst.

— \$343 million to the soft drink purveyors, the top four of which are Coca-Cola, PepsiCo, Royal Crown and Philip Morris.

— \$111 million to the shortening and

cooking oil makers, the top four of which are Kraftco, Norton-Simon, Procter & Gamble and Esmark.

Being this big and powerful may enrich the monopolists, but it does nothing for their efficiency.

In addition to excess profits, the \$12 billion overcharge in 1975 was the result of wasteful advertising and promotional expenses by the monopolists, conglomerate inefficiencies, managerial waste, collusive pricing decisions and excess capacity.

Unfortunately for consumers, the manufacturers do not form the only monopoly in the food economy. In most U.S. cities, supermarkets themselves are monopolistic, with four or fewer chains controlling a majority of local grocery sales, putting them in a position to set local prices. A report released last year by Congress's Joint Economic Committee calculated that these food retailing monopolies had cost U.S. consumers another \$662 million more than they would have paid if local market structures had been competitive.

Many states are fortunate to have several strong, homegrown grocery chains left to provide some minimal competitive force against the national chains, but chances are the locals have not stopped the encroachment of monopoly and may, in fact, share a monopoly position with one or more nationals.

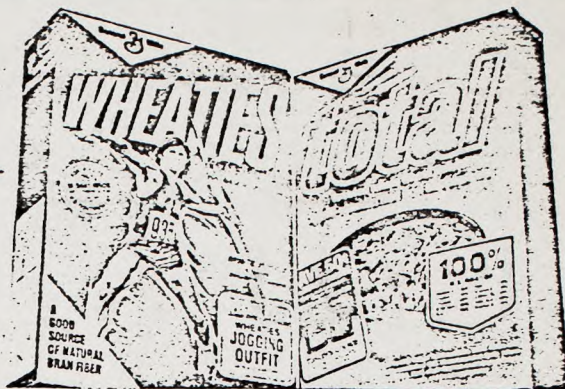
A recent survey by *Supermarket News*, another trade publication, found that 11 U.S. cities had a phenomenal level of market concentration, with the four leading supermarkets in each taking between 75 and 90 per cent of the business — the cities are Cincinnati, Seattle, Dallas/Fort Worth, Baltimore, Chicago, Milwaukee, Washington, D.C., Miami, Portland (Oregon), Cleveland and Denver.

Who's profiting from this level of market control? Local and regional chains get a piece of it here and there, but in every instance at least two of the big national chains are present — A&P, Kroger, Winn-Dixie, Lucky and so forth. By far the chief winner, however, is Safeway, which is the dominant supermarket in hundreds of towns and cities.

Safeway is the biggest grocery chain in the world — if it were listed among *Fortune's* top 500 financial firms, its \$11 billion in sales last year would rank it as the 13th largest, ahead of such giants as Shell Oil and U.S. Steel. It has more than 2,400 stores that in 1977 pulled \$2.3 billion in gross profits from local neighborhoods into its Oakland, Calif., headquarters.

That's enough, but, alas, it's not the end of it. Today, the fastest growing and most profitable segment of the food industry is the chain restaurant business, a fact that has not escaped the notice of many of the same firms already mentioned. Among those already in the restaurant business are:

Restaurant	Owner
Arby's Roast Beef	Royal Crown Cola
A&W Root Beer	United Brands
Burger Chef	General Foods
Burger King	Pillsbury
Dobbs House	Squibb
El Chico	Campbell Taggart
H. Salt Seafood	Heublein
Jack-in-the-Box	Ralston Purina
Kentucky Fried	
Chicken	Heublein
Lum's	Colgate-Palmolive
Pizza Hut	PepsiCo
Ranch House	Colgate-Palmolive
Red Lobster Inn	General Mills
Shakey's Pizza	Hunt International Resources
Sirloin Stockade	Lucky Stores
Steak & Ale	Pillsbury
Stouffer	Nestle
Stuckey's	IC Industries



Cereal and vitamins? That'll cost you extra

IF YOU DOUBT that a monopolistic position in the marketplace and a big advertising budget really make any difference, consider the two cents' worth of difference between Wheaties and Total.

Both are the stuff of General Mills, which holds 21 per cent of the U.S. breakfast cereal market by itself and shares a virtual monopoly of the whole industry with three other national firms. Last year, General Mills spent \$4.9 million advertising Wheaties, and \$6.7 million to push Total.

Despite its "breakfast of champions" slogan, there is not much wheat in Wheaties — only three or four cents' worth in a 12-ounce box. The box itself costs that much. Indeed, it turns out that there's not much nutrition of any kind in Wheaties — one critic of the industry asserts that consumers of the product would do just as well nutritionally if they were to chop up the box and pour milk and sugar on it.

If it's nutrition you want, says General Mills, you ought to be eating Total, which is advertised as being not only good, but good for you. What is Total? It's Wheaties with a dose of 15 vitamins added to it. Look at it, feel it, smell it, taste it — same stuff as Wheaties except the company sprays it with vitamins. The extra cost to General Mills for buying and spraying on the vitamins is two cents. But a 12-ounce box of Wheaties is currently selling for 69 cents, while the same amount of Total will cost you 99 cents. — JH

From 1972 to 1976, the number of meals eaten away from home doubled as restaurants became production units in a business with sales of over \$50 billion a year. What has traditionally been a mom-and-pop industry and a major channel of upward mobility in American society is fast falling to chain operators who use factory techniques and are backed by huge advertising budgets. Already, more than a fourth of American restaurants are chains, and a third of the total eating-out business is in the hands of the fast-food artists.

Just as in other segments of the food industry, competition in the restaurant business is shrinking. McDonald's alone holds 20 per cent of the national fast-food market and shares more than half of it with the next nine largest chains. But even that understates their reach — people generally do not travel beyond the city limits in search of a place to eat, and in the country's most heavily populated local markets, the national chains have a much tighter grip.

"Who cares?" you might ask. "McDonald's will fill you up cheaper than any hamburger joint in town!" Wrong. A "Big Mac" sells in Austin, Texas, for 90 cents. At a whopping four ounces (including bun and napkin), that's hamburger at \$3.60 a pound. At least two small local hamburger chains in Austin sell a bigger hamburger at half that cost, and they throw in flavor and nutrition.

The Fred Flintstone syndrome

Greyhound, the bus company that owns Armour meats and is one of the largest turkey producers in the country, sent a press release to food editors in November, trying to promote consumption of the traditional Thanksgiving feast: "Today's meaty, broad-breasted turkey is a far cry from the tough, wiry bird the Pilgrims knew," boasted the release. Indeed it is, but not

just because it's bigger; today's turkey (most specimens of which are produced nowadays by Greyhound, Cargill, Esmark and Ralston Purina) leads a crowded, caged, nasty and short assembly-line existence. The creature passes from the hatchery to intense formula-feeding to slaughter to dressing to the freezer — but not before fat, sodium, sugar, artificial flavor, artificial color, emulsifiers, preservatives, antioxidants and water are added to it. One brand even sticks an internal "thermometer" in its frozen bird.

Today's dinner is highly processed, and there is much more of the same in your future. Our "food" is becoming little more than a low-quality medium to which food manufacturers add coloring and flavoring to give the stuff minimal consumer appeal, a dozen or so basic vitamins to give it "nutrition," several chemicals to hold it together, preservatives to give it a shelf-life probably greater than your own allotted years, sugar to cover up any mistakes and a package to make it "convenient."

Every major food company is pushing more processing with a vengeance: even meat packers are launching a shift from simple cuts of meat to such advanced preparations as already-seasoned meats, gourmet cuts, sausages and cook-in-the-pouch servings. Why? Because basic foodstuffs are low-profit, slow-growth products that hold no fascination for the money machines now dominating the industry. By doing as much as possible to the food, they can puff the price far beyond the genuine value of the commodity, adding a profit for themselves at each stage of processing.

Fortune magazine has approvingly described the trend in these terms: "The efforts of a company like General Foods, which styles itself a processor of packaged (Continued on next page.)"

S. food 'middlemen'

S., 60 cents goes not to the farmer but distributors and retailers of food — and recent years has been in their sector.

And fresh fruits, middlemen take a mer's dollar. But with more processing increases geometrically, which are doing all they can to encourage ed items.

s and the percentage of their retail in during the second quarter of this

Margarine	64%
Milk, in stores	45%
Milk, evaporated	53%
Onions	62%
Oranges	74%
Orange juice, frozen concentrate	55%
Peaches, canned	80%
Peas, canned	82%
Peas, frozen	84%
Peanut butter	60%
Peppers	55%
Pork	40%
Potatoes	71%
Potatoes, french fried	86%
Rice	69%
Salad & cooking oils	70%
Spaghetti, canned	89%
Sugar	56%
Tomatoes	52%
Tomatoes, canned	87%
Turkey	48%
Vegetable shortening	54%



Farm
Labor
Organizing
Committee

"hasta la victoria" 714½ s. saint clair street, toledo, oh 43609 phone 419-243-3456

March 12, 1979

Dear Friends,

As you can see, mechanization has become quite an issue in the press. Since many will be raising questions about it, I have sent copies of articles where it has been discussed. As well, I have included FLOC's response in the form of a press release. We will send it out for immediate release tomorrow, March 13th, and would like you to do the same as soon as possible. It needn't be changed.

Very shortly we'll be sending you a newsletter, giving you an update - so hold tight. Could you please send me the names and addresses of your committee members, and other interested people. We would like it to reach as many as possible.

Hope all is going well and we always look forward to hearing from you.

Hasta La Victoria

Meg Munson

Meg Munson