

Sept. 23, 1967

# THE TAXI SITUATION

On Sept. 18, 1967, there was a Brawley City Council meeting at which 2 important subjects were taken up. One was the increase in taxi fares and the other was the matter of Mr. Orlicky's Recreation Center. The Brawley News the next day reported a shouting contest between Mayor Pat Williams and myself. The report was written by an ignoramus Jim Duke who is the reporter for the Brawley News. This report was written in a way that was derogatory to me and so that the readers should not know why the argument arose.

The matter of the taxis will be taken up in this Newsletter and the Recreation Center will be taken up in a future one. On Sept. 22, 1967, Jim Duke in his youthful ignorance wrote an editorial entitled "COUNCIL SHOUT FEST A SORRY SIGHT" in which he criticized me and wrote "the mayor often exhibited remarkable restraint in permitting the doctor to speak his piece on subjects strangely irrelevant to the immediate matters on hand".

So after reading this Newsletter, just compare what you read in the Brawley News with what you learn here, and you can come to a decision if Jim Duke knows what he is writing about. Now this is not the first time that Pat Williams the Mayor has told me to shut up. So you must know who Pat Williams is and his record. In plain language Williams is a stooge of the big farmers. Now no man wants to be a stooge. But what can the Mayor do since he supports himself and family by doing contract farmwork like haybaling, etc. for the big ranchers. If he does anything against the big farmers, he and his family will starve for he will not be given work.

The same holds true for Woody Adams, Nick Pricola, and Joe Maya-- all whose livelihood depends on the big farmers. Long before I became a Councilman, I appeared before the City Council because 200 families on the Eastside had their water cut off because they could not pay the \$4.50 per month bill. The reason they could not pay was that the Public Law #78 braceros from Mexico had the farmwork jobs and the local farmworkers could not get work. To make matters even worst the farm labor camps and particularly the Imperial Valley Farmers Association camp North of Brawley was getting its water much cheaper than the residents of the City of Brawley.

The Council then had Williams, Adams and Pricola but they did not go help the residents of Brawley and particularly nothing to help the poor of the Eastside who had to go with buckets to a neighbor who had water. The Casa De Amistad and the Boys Club did not exist then but the Soroptimists and Adyne Benedict were here then. But you never heard of Adyne Benedict or the Soroptimists making any complaints about how the poor were being treated by the City Council.

For that matter the Soroptimists have never been in the newspapers as complaining about the swindling in electricity bills and in taxes. This swindling amounts to millions and if the Soroptimists were not afraid and would open their mouths, many people would be helped and particularly the poor. Instead the Soroptimists give a donation of \$25 or \$100 and they make sure they get a big writeup in the Brawley News and all their names are printed. What are they trying to prove? That they are big philanthropists? Have they never learned that really charitable persons are anonymous? So as Shakespeare wrote, "Much ado about nothing". The Soroptimists piddle around with small sums of money and never help the poor from being swindled out of large sums of money.

About 4 years ago, Mayor Williams ran for Director of the Imperial Irrigation District. Because of his record in which he never helped the little people, I helped elect his opponent by 60 votes. Naturally, Williams does not love me and whenever I speak at a Council meeting where I criticize his friends, the big ranchers, he howls "Shut up". I was the main one who helped elect Joe Maya to the Council but he has been a traitor to the Mexican-American people for he has never helped the poor of the Eastside. I have attempted so far without success to have Williams, Adams, Pricola and Maya defeated when they ran for re-election. This year it was my turn to be Mayor but these 4 Councilmen who are the stooges of the big farmers of course would not make me Mayor. If I had been put in as Mayor, I could just as easily howled "Shut up" at the other Councilmen when I did not like what they were saying.

With this introduction, one can more easily understand the taxi fare problem here. All over the United States, bus lines, trolley lines, and subways, have wanted to increase the fares because of greater labor costs, etc. etc. Take Los Angeles and New York City as examples. The cities knew the companies had to get higher fares but the little people using these transportation facilities would be hurt badly by the higher fares. So the cities gave subsidies to the companies and the fare remained the same. But each year the subsidies got bigger and bigger so that finally the cities bought the private companies. At the present time, the fares have been raised but the cities subsidize the transportation facilities by taxes.

Do not forget that in the cities, the little people use bus, trolley and subways. THIS IS THE ESSENTIAL TRANSPORTATION. Others who can afford it, use taxis. Finally, those who have enough money for private autos have them. But in Brawley, there are no bus lines, no trolleys, and no subways to use. THE POOR HAVE TO USE TAXIS. The next time you see a taxi, look at it and you will find poor people in it who do not own autos.

The Taxi company is on the Eastside and 85% of its calls come from the Eastside. So who suffers with increased fares? The poor. They have to go to the doctor or go to the big stores and carry home big bundles and the only way they can do it is by taxi. I believe that the taxi company should make more money but I want the city to subsidize the taxi company so that the fares remain the same.

Here are the reasons. The City has an airport. Those using the airport do not pay the correct price for its use. These people who can afford autos and private airplanes (many are big ranchers) are being subsidized by the city on what can be called "luxury transportation". Why not subsidize the taxis so the poor can get "essential transportation"?

About 10 years ago, the wife of Dr. York, the veterinarian and the wealthy people of the Westside thought up the idea of the City buying the river bottom where the rodeo is now held. They were going to use it to stable the horses of the rich (and those who try to keep up with the rich). The children of the rich were going to do their horse riding there. So now you see in the Brawley News pictures of the rich kids winning blue ribbons in competition in other areas. They train here with Mrs. York and you residents of Brawley subsidize these rich kids with their "fancy luxury transportation---horses". The rodeo took place for many years at the Imperial Fairgrounds where the facilities are much better for rodeos. But in order to fool you taxpayers, the wealthy people with the connivance of the City Council brought the rodeo here as a smokescreen to disguise the subsidization of the rich kids.

I was not a Councilman then. But 3 years ago, the City Council was going to build a golf course across the river next to the Rodeo Park. I stopped this. So you can see that the wealthy are now subsidized on their airplane and horse transportation which are "luxury items". The poor should be subsidized on taxis. El Centro which has 6,000 more people does not have an airport, park for horsy rich kids or a golf course for the rich. The Soroptomists never asked for cheap taxi fares!