

TAPE ARC - 14, TC 6:00:00

ABC, NEWSREEL #206

CESAR CHAVEZ interview:

6:03:40 REPORTER: Don't the growers realize that they're fighting a losing battle here, that the farm workers are going to be organized eventually?

6:03:48 CHAVEZ: You know it's a very strange mentality that we're up against. I think that they cannot fail but realize that this is coming, it's inevitable. But on the other hand, uh, there's always that last hope you know that maybe something will happen and the union will get destroyed. And uh, it's difficult to understand how, why they would continue to fight and uh, against, uh against the wishes of workers to organize. And uh, workers who have made up their minds and are going to get a union, regardless of how long it takes, they're going to get a union. Uh, the mentality is very, very strange.

PICKETER on strike line, speaking to workers in field:

6:11:43 ...fellow workers, let us come to realize that the only language that these greedy growers understand is working class solidarity. We've got to stand together to form one union. When in you lives have you ever saw a more beautiful cause than this one? Today is the birth of a union and you have the opportunity to take part in it while it is still young. When the Filipino went out on strike in 1955, he didn't realize that he would be firing shots that would be heard in agricultural quarters throughout the nation. We have very many people helping us from all

walks of life, people from different church groups, people from different unions, people throughout the nation respect our boycott, because our tactics are non-violent. And let us be proud of that. We have good leadership. We have Cesar Chavez. He's a great leader. If you knew him as we did, as we do, then you would respect him also, and you would help him to try to form his union....

CESAR CHAVEZ interviewed on strike line:

6:13:03 REPORTER: Mr. Chavez, how is this Giumarra strike different from other strikes that you have fought and won?

6:13:08 CHAVEZ: Well, I think that it's different in two respects (PIC ROLL OFF)

6:13:30 CHAVEZ: Well, it's different mainly two respects. One is that we've been able to engage the corporation fully on the economic conflict within a very short period of time. Uh, it's 25 days today that we started the strike and we've got a very strong boycott going at this point. This hasn't been the case in other instances. The other one is that this corporation has used the green carder against the regulations, and also wetbacks to break the strike. And they've used quite a bit of them and uh, this is one of the issues that we weren't confronted with the other corporations. Here they're using them. The Immigration Service has taken them out of the fields, but not nearly enough. And we're having a difficult time trying to get the Immigration Service to enforce the regulations. And so uh, but we claim that from 90 - 95% of those who are working behind the picket line are green carders who were brought here exclusively for the purpose of breaking the strike, or they're wetbacks.

6:14:36 REPORTER: Giumarra one of the last big hurdles?

6:14:42 CHAVEZ: No not by a long shot, there are many, many more. But I think that if we win at Giumarra, and I think we will, it's just a matter of how long it's going to take. This is going to be a different, uh, if we win we'll be able to prove conclusively that the boycott really works.

6:15:00 REPORTER: You're referring then to the boycott of their products on the market?

6:15:03 CHAVEZ: Right, see we've had, we've boycotted mostly in the past mostly wines, and very few fresh grapes, and this case we have to boycott fresh grapes and we have to boycott like a million labels because they're changing labels on us, but I think we're able to identify them as soon as they appear in the fields, and I think that we're going to be a success, it's just a matter of time.

6:15:26 REPORTER: ...after two years, union have more power?

6:15:41 CHAVEZ: Well what we find is that we have more friends who are influential and have power than what we had in the beginning. And so, although it's not easy it's at least somewhat easier than we had in the beginning. But the whole attitude of the Immigration Naturalization Service is one of, "well we don't want to," as one of the officials here in Bakersfield put it, "we don't want to incur the wrath of the growers." We can't very well get them to go behind the picket lines and investigate. They've done it, sporadically, but they won't go in with the kind of drive that we think is needed to be able to clean them out.

6:16:17 REPORTER: ...trying to give the workers some social justice and equality...

6:16:29 CHAVEZ: Well, we're concerned not only with the questions of organizing a union and signing a contract, and raising the wages and bettering the working conditions, but we are also concerned with what happens to the worker and the problems in the community. And here we're uh, engaged in a number of projects, uh, cooperative projects and health programs, and service center programs, to try to meet the needs of the worker not only as I said before, not only in the fields, and not only with employment, but to have a broad coverage. And I think that we've been successful. It's just a question of not having enough time to do all the things that we would like to do. But if we are able to build successfully the kinds of programs, the cooperative, the health clinic, and the social service program, then I think we're going to have uh, quite a program for workers.

6:17:30 REPORTER: Have you notice quite a lot of difference in the pride of the worker?

6:17:38 CHAVEZ: You know this is one thing most noticeable. Uh, human beings have a way of reacting to those things that bring them success in terms of uh, respecting their worth as human beings and bringing too them that human dignity that was lost some time back. Uh, you can see individuals, workers growing be leaps and bounds, leaps and bounds. I guess the most gratifying event I guess that takes place is things like this.

6:18:10 REPORTER: ...any turning point in battle last two years?

6:18:21 CHAVEZ: No, it's difficult to say, we, we, look at each event, at each strike, as a do or die thing. Each one is a difficult undertaking. But we are building a union. We have a lot more members than the past. It's not a question of trying to convince people by promising things, they're actual facts now. So this gives us some strength. But, all in all it's still an uphill fight, very much.

[REPORTER REPEATS QUESTIONS ON CAMERA]