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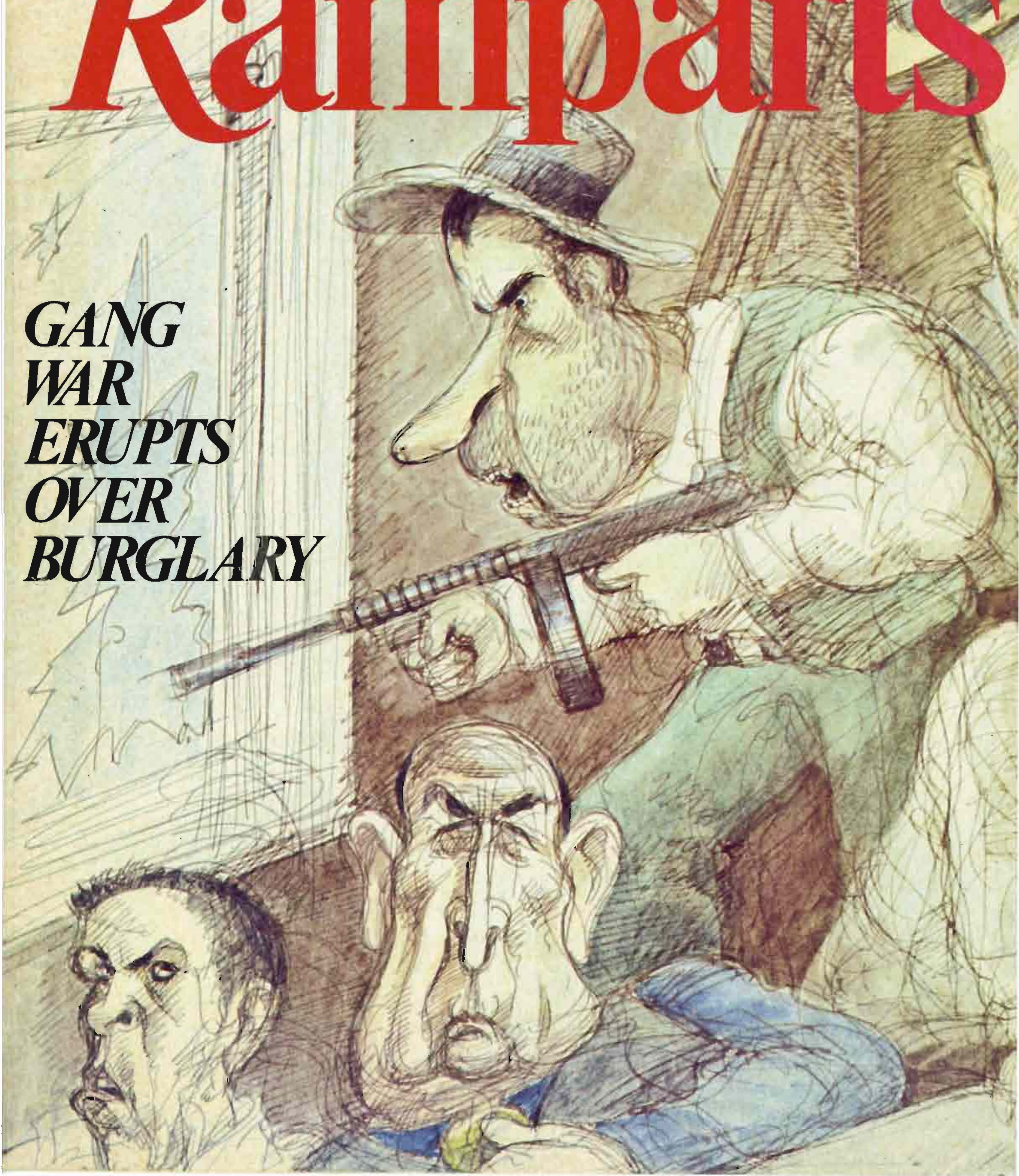
Aug.-Sept. 1973 / Viet Vets on Trial; The Informer Nexus; Farmworkers Fight to Survive; What About Watergate? / $1

Ramparts



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Land Reform: Reclaiming Mother Earth

PRIVATE PROPERTY
NO
TRESPASSING
VIOLATORS WILL BE PROSECUTED!
RIGHT TO PASS BY PERMISSION, AND SUBJECT TO CONTROL OF OWNER SECTION 1008, CIVIL CODE.
TEJON RANCH CO.

A progress report by Warren Weber

Land reform is surfacing as an important political issue in the United States, and, as if to mark the event, advocates of land reform held a national conference in San Francisco this spring.

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George Seldes: Muckraker Emeritus

A biographical essay by Derek Shearer

In the 1930's and 1940's George Seldes was a leading figure in independent journalism. His newsletter, *In Fact,* had a major influence on such people as I. F. Stone, Howard Zinn and Daniel Ellsberg.

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Informers: The Enemy Within

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Behind the glare of the Watergate spectacle lies the murky netherworld of extra-legal and quasi-legal police techniques: notably, the burgeoning use of police informers, who often turn out to provoke "crimes" they then inform on.

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The Gainesville Eight: Dirty Tricks on Trial

A report from Florida by Rob Elder

Eight members of the Vietnam Veterans Against the War are currently on trial in Gainesville, Florida for alleged plans to disrupt the GOP Miami convention. Now it turns out the Vets themselves were victims of assorted informers and *agents provocateurs,* including the ubiquitous White House "plumbers unit."

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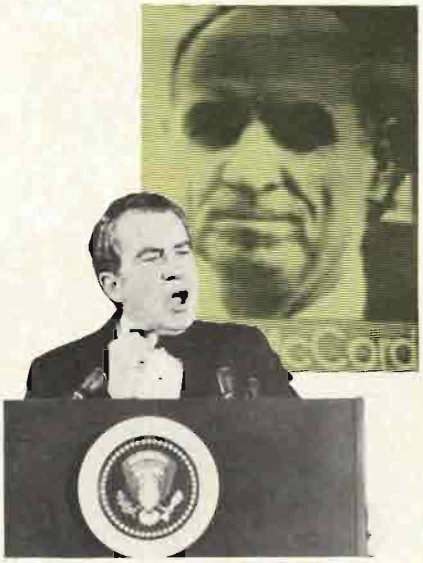
Chavez and the Teamsters: Showdown in the Coachella Valley

An on-the-scene report by George Baker

The United Farm Workers, who won reluctant recognition from California grape growers three years ago — after a crippling nationwide boycott — are back on the picket lines. This time they face not only the growers but a well-paid goon squad sponsored by the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. Cesar Chavez has won against long odds before, but this battle is a critical one.



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Watergate

An editorial essay

One common view holds that the Watergate investigation represents the "long arm of the Founding Fathers reaching down across two centuries to save us all." Not true, say the editors of *Ramparts;* if anything, it merely uncovers the bankruptcy of the American system.

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The cold war has had dozens of academic apologists in the United States, and only a handful of the so-called "revisionist" historians have bucked the trend — often at considerable cost to themselves. Now, when the Indochina disaster has finally gained a hearing for the revisionist view, the cold warriors of academe have launched their counterattack, with George Kennan and Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. leading the charge.

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The Second Frame-up of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg

A review by Walter Schneir

Twenty years after the Rosenberg "atom spy" case ended with the defendants' execution, courtroom impresario Louis Nizer has stepped forward with a dramatic "final verdict" on the case. Walter Schneir examines Nizer's book and delivers his own "final verdict": *The Implosion Conspiracy* is a "fast brush show" filled with inaccuracies and deliberate misrepresentations.

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State of Seige, the controversial new film by Costa-Gavras, raises timely issues about political crisis, "internal security," and revolution.

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Chavez and the Teamsters:

SHOWDOWN IN THE

William L. Kircher, the AFL-CIO national director of organizing, was only half-jesting when he said, "Maybe the Teamsters' best organizing area would be to organize a prison union." But the union that gave America Dave Beck and James R. Hoffa, and that recently made the front pages for its ties with Mafia figures anxious to get ahold of the $1.6 billion Teamsters Pension Fund, isn't organizing prisons yet. Instead they have strong-armed their way into California's Central Valley and turned their attention to the 250,000 farmworkers who have been struggling to organize for more than half a century. Working with the growers to crush Cesar Chavez' United Farm Workers, the Teamsters have brought a new labor war to the California vineyards and eagle flags have appeared once again and cries of "Viva La Causa" and "Viva La Huelga" are heard, as the Farmworkers' Union fights for its life.

The Teamsters' interest in farmworkers is a relatively recent one. It is, in fact, one of the ironies of the current situation that organized labor paid slight attention to this part of the work force until Cesar Chavez called a strike against Delano, California table grape growers in September 1965. At that time a farmworkers union, operating on a shoe-string budget and consisting mostly of Chicano and Filipino farmworkers, was given little chance against California's multi-billion dollar agribusiness establishment that accounts for one of every seven jobs in the state.

But Chavez and his farmworkers kept up the pressure. When growers imported strikebreakers (often Mexican aliens who entered the country illegally), he began a nationwide boycott of table grapes. It had a devastating affect on the sale of grapes and the growers—whose economic sensibilities are more finely tuned than their social conscience—finally gave in. On July 29, 1970, 26 Delano growers signed three-year contracts with the United Farm Workers Union, AFL-CIO. Scores of other contracts with other grape growers followed, with many of them including an expiration date of April 14, 1973.

This should have meant that the UFW's long war was

George Baker is a San Joaquin Valley (Calif.) newsman and free lance who has been following the farm labor scene.

by George Baker

won: but it didn't. Over the past three years, the growers have mapped out a new strategy. When the contracts expired this spring most growers did not renew with the UFW, but instead signed four-year pacts with the Western Conference of Teamsters which claimed that it had the allegiance of a majority of the workers, particularly in the Coachella Valley of Southern California.

Chavez' union lost 150 of 182 contracts, with 30 more up for renewal on July 29. The number of dues-paying union members has dropped from 40,000 to 10,000. "We feel the growers came to them [The Teamsters] late last year and made an offer," Chavez says. "That way they could kill two birds with one stone. They could kill the farmworkers union and insulate themselves against a meaningful contract."

The growers deny this and insist they signed with the Teamsters only because it was the favored union among the workers. To prove their point they cite signatures of over 4,000 workers who allegedly signed petitions calling for Teamster representation. But the Rural Manpower Service, a state agency, has pointed out that only 1,800 workers were in the vineyards at the time the signatures were collected, and the UFW contends that many of the signatures were obtained by fraud or deceit. Chavez has said that the situation can easily be decided—by elections to determine which union, if any, the workers want to join. But the Teamsters, with contracts in hand, have rejected this option. Because farmworkers are excluded from the 1935 National Labor Relations Act, there are no laws which compel representational elections.

[AGAINST LONG ODDS]

Chavez has faced long odds before, but this may well be the final battle. Before he was confronting only the growers; this time he faces the growers and the Teamsters—with over 2 million members, the largest union in the non-communist world. Moreover, the political climate has changed. The late 1960s were times of great social ferment, when causes like the Farm Workers' had a large and sympathetic constituency. But now charisma such as that of Cesar Chavez is not as marketable a commodity as it once was, and the UFW finds that in its time of need there is not only widespread apathy among its former allies but also a widespread misapprehension that the war was won three years ago.

The fact is that the plight of the farmworker remains one of America's gravest social problems. An OEO study in 1971 showed that the average annual per-family income of a migrant was just over $2,000. Last year, 2.8 million farmworkers worked an average of 88 days and earned $1,160, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The hourly composite wage of farmworkers in 1970 was $1.42, 42 percent of the average factory worker's wage.

The UFW had slowly begun to change all that. From the outset it was more than a labor union; it was a political and social movement, dedicated to wrenching a measure of justice from an oppressive industry that had dominated the lives of workers for longer than it cared to remember. Five-man ranch committees, elected by the workers themselves, were established at each farm under contract and growers

COACHELLA VALLEY

had to deal face-to-face with the farmworkers. It was one of the few "grass roots" successes in recent American history.

The UFW was so involved in bettering the situation of the farmworkers that it never created the machinery to defend itself from attack. As a consequence, Chavez faces the Teamsters with somewhat less public support than he once enjoyed. There is a network of clergy of all faiths who have stuck by him, however. And George Meany, although he has never trusted Chavez and his non-traditional trade union tactics, and abhors the farmworkers' politics, was appalled by what he describes as a "despicable" raid on the UFW–an AFL-CIO charter union. Thus Meany got the AFL-CIO Executive Council to grant $1.6 million to the UFW to help fund its strike this summer against growers in California's agricultural valleys.

Yet there is a disquieting aspect to all this as well. The Farmworkers have been submerged–at least in the newspaper headlines and weekly magazine pieces–in the rhetoric of the labor giants–the AFL-CIO and the Teamsters. It is something that Chavez says he doesn't sense, but he was well aware of the meeting which Meany and Fitzsimmons held in Washington, D.C., during June–ostensibly to settle their differences.

And there are many who remember the departure of Larry Itliong in the fall of 1971. Itliong, at the time number two man in the union, had headed the AFL-CIO's Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee when it was merged with Chavez' National Farmworkers Association in 1966. He quit because he was unhappy with what he termed the "brain trust" surrounding Chavez. "All I can say is that the thinking of the farmworkers and brother Chavez is influenced by their thinking," he said. His resignation came after the union had abandoned its Delano headquarters and moved to a mountain sanitarium 30 miles east of Bakersfield. The appearance that the union was removing itself from farmworkers figuratively as well as literally caused internal strife. There was fear that the movement, in its haste to consolidate its gains, was becoming a bureaucracy and losing its distinctive humanitarian quality.

Be that as it may, the new UFW struggle brings with it an opportunity for revitalization. If it wins (and there is optimism among union leaders) it will be a stronger force. With the Meany grant, the union has expanded its strike beyond the Coachella Valley. The larger battle will come in the San Joaquin Valley which has far greater grape production than Coachella and where the spark of the movement was ignited in 1965.

At the outset, the Teamsters were relatively peaceful, marshalling their forces more for show than brutality. But in June it turned ugly. They began unleashing a reign of terror in the state's agricultural valleys, indiscriminately attacking pickets, strike leaders and intimidating some newsmen. Sheriff's deputies in both Riverside and Kern Counties, no friends of the Chavez movement, were so outraged they publicly called many of the attacks "unprovoked" and "without reason." One of the most blatant examples of this occurred near Bakersfield when 30 Teamsters waded into a group of UFW members with 2x2 grape stakes, fracturing the skull of a 60-year-old man. The 30 were arrested on a variety of charges including conspiracy.

While all this went on, Meany and Fitzsimmons met behind the scenes in Washington trying to rid themselves of what has turned out to be a rather untidy affair for the two latter-day labor spokesmen. No doubt they would like to avert a situation that threatens to turn the vineyards into a burgundy red battleground. What each side will have to give is unknown, but Chavez has seen too many Teamster agreements turn to dust to be impressed by this latest overture.

[AT STRIKE HEADQUARTERS]

The UFW's strike headquarters is housed in a cramped room littered with legal files, accounting ledgers, newspaper clippings and telephones that ring continually. It is near midnight when only a few stragglers remain after a series of endless meetings, planning for the next day's strike activities. Chavez sits at a desk in the rear, his two German Shepard dogs, "Boycott" and "Huelga" stirring at his feet.

He is alternately tense and confident, relaxed and defiant. Perhaps it is because he has just spent another 18-hour day, engineering the strike, boosting morale, meeting with families who were kicked out of labor camps for joining the strike, and talking to religious, political and labor leaders across the country. Or perhaps he realizes the "life and death" aspects of the struggle. After spending a decade devoting this life to the struggle of the worker, it is all on the line.

Physically Chavez has changed little in recent years. Victimized by repeated lengthy fasts, his small frame is still firm. He has presence, a sense of importance. Occasionally his tiny hands slash the air to make a point. And his straight black hair, greying at the temples now, hangs over his collar. If anything, there is determination about him now that once was lacking. He is a leader of a union and movement, not simply a Chicano mystic leading his people out of the wilderness.

"When I was out on the picket line the other day, I asked this lady what, besides the wages, she likes best about the union," Chavez says. "Well, she thought for a minute and then said, 'I think when it's hotter than hell out in the fields, the growers don't push us around any more, they don't try to enslave us as before.' That's what we're proud of," he says, slapping the table with the palm of his hand. "And that's what the growers don't want. We tell the workers–they're not going to push you around any more."

When Chavez went on strike in 1965 the base wage was $1.20 an hour. There were no toilets for workers in the fields, no rest periods, no ice water, no health benefits, no pension fund. Workers either accepted the employer's terms of employment or they didn't work. La Huelga changed all that. Gone were the vicious labor contractors who imported labor like latter-day slave traders. The two UFW contracts that were signed this year have a base wage of $2.40 an hour, a 100 percent jump in eight years. The fringe benefits that workers only dreamed of a decade ago are now recognized.

The most dramatic break with the past involved the manner in which farm labor was recruited. Before, the growers used farm labor contractors or brought in 50

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY BOB FITCH

Cesar Chavez with striking farmworkers.

UF
AFL-CIO

enemy foreign governments.

James McCord acted as he did because he was convinced, by past training, of the accuracy of the reports he was given from what he described as "sensitive sources,": these reports asserted that "violence-oriented" groups were threatening life and property. Probably he never knew that in one of these allegedly "violence-oriented" groups, the "sensitive source" was a police informer, one of the men most vociferous in promoting violence in the entire organization.

"I was not there to think. I was there to follow orders, not to think," Bernard Barker, a committed anti-Communist, told the Senators to justify his participation in the Ellsberg and Watergate burglaries. But Barker did think—he was and is still convinced that what he did was "proper" to protect his vision of "national security."

And so we return, full circle, all around the mulberry bush, back to where we started. FDR and James McCord, both acting out of concern for the "national interest," both become involved in illegal and unconstitutional acts. During the '30s, an obscure, miniscule Marxist group to which I belonged was infiltrated by a government informer whose lies about the organization contributed to the later repressive atmosphere of the country. In the '70s, the same kind of lies were told by a government informer about the Vietnam Veterans Against the War, lies which were believed by James McCord.

Perhaps if Watergate does nothing else, it will strip the rhetoric from the reality, will reduce the verbiage to the essence of the matter: each administration in our government acts to protect *itself* from those it considers to be *its* enemies; each administration identified itself as *the* guardian of the national interest and each administration arrogates to itself the right to protect that interest in the ways *it* deems proper.

Yet, perhaps now the possibility exists that many Americans, seeing and hearing Watergate in its true garb of sanctimonious, hypocritical patriotism, will conclude, even reluctantly, that the institutions of government have become dysfunctional. If that happens, if Americans shake, if they lose the past certainty of their government's absolute moral superiority and rectitude, it's conceivable that the Watergate revelations may help bring about a transformation of the same social system which produced the operation. ■

FARMWORKERS

(From page 30)

workers to do the work of 20. Chavez instituted a hiring hall where workers were given jobs on the basis of seniority. Growers had to order labor through the hiring hall where the worker picked up his dispatch card. Without a dispatch card he couldn't work. While it had the effect of tightening the union's control over its members, the hiring hall also went a long way toward stabilizing the labor force. It was an essential and far-reaching change and as such was the primary cause of friction between growers and the union.

Growers usually cite two reasons for turning to the Teamsters. First, they claim that local UFW officials were antagonistic, spiteful, abrasive. Second, they say the union was administratively inept—an argument which even sympathetic reporters have accepted. Lionel Steinberg, the biggest grower in the valley and one of the two who signed with the UFW, has been widely quoted as saying that if the union had administered its affairs better, the growers would have rushed to sign new contracts.

Chavez doesn't think so. "The problem is we signed a damned contract and found the growers couldn't live up to the damned thing," he says heatedly. "We enforce our contracts. They know it. We came here in December for pre-negotiating sessions and they were ready to stab us in the back. They'd come up to me and say, 'Cesar, I have this little problem: I've got a foreman whose brother-in-law needs a job. Can you help us out?' I told them no, the seniority system doesn't work that way. Or they'd say, 'It's only a minor thing but do we have to have all those toilets out there in the fields?' The little things we didn't give in on. If we sign a contract we have to live up to it. They tried to fire union men without cause and we said, 'Shit no. "

"We have over 500 grievances that were never acted upon; that's the problem. The growers didn't want to handle any grievances. They just signed the contracts to get away from the boycott. They no more wanted those contracts than the man in the moon."

Chavez and other union officials concede that the union had growing pains. To expect a union of untrained, unskilled farmworkers to be transformed into a smooth-running organization overnight is too much to expect. As he says, "You know, 9,000 different people work in the Coachella Valley—some of them do thinning, pruning or picking. It's a damned mess, it's a shame how this industry works. We have to refashion the whole hiring pattern. It's going to change and maybe Coachella Valley will be the place."

One thing is certain: if the Teamsters win there won't be any changes. They epitomize a labor movement that has gone flabby from success and too often works for employers and not union members. Yet this has come to be taken for granted. In this case, moreover, the Teamsters are breaking up another union in their attempt to capitalize on the fears of the reactionary growers. The best example of this came in the early days of the Coachella strike when Teamster members shoved farmworkers back into the fields after they had heeded UFW calls to join the strike. It was a tragic scene that summed up not only the nature of the alliance between Teamsters and growers, but also the powerful forces Chavez faces.

A comparison of the UFW and Teamster contracts reveals minor differences in the basic wages and fringe benefits. The Teamster pacts have a base wage of $2.30 for pickers, a ten-cent-an-hour employer contribution to the pension fund, employer-funded unemployment compensation and a health and welfare plan. The UFW has a base of $2.40 an hour with higher wages for irrigators and tractor drivers, a smaller pension contribution and similar unemployment compensation and health plans.

It is on the question of control of the workforce that the real differences appear between the Teamsters and Farmworkers. The labor contracting system is not only countenanced but encouraged by the Teamsters. They allow what has been shown to be an exploitive system to continue intact.

There is also a difference in attitude toward the health of workers and the risks of pesticide poisoning. According to a proviso in the Teamster pacts, "The company agrees to strictly abide and strictly comply with all applicable federal and state laws, rules and regulations promulgated for the health and safety of the employees." Having the sanction of such laws would seem to be a reasonable approach except when one realizes that according to the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, several hundred farmworkers die of pesticide poisonings each year. The UFW contracts, on the other hand, specifically limit the extent of pesticide use and establish a health and safety committee at each ranch to deal with the problem. Such chlorinated hydrocarbons as DDT, DDD and 2, 4-D are banned and more lethal organo-phosphates such as parathion or malathion can be used only under carefully prescribed rules. Moreover, each grower must keep extensive records on each application of any economic poison.

[ON THE PICKET LINE]

At 6:30 a.m. the sun begins to sneak over the Orocopia Mountains that wall in the Coachella Valley. For more than an hour and a half the pickets have been at the Harry Carian Ranch, waving their banners and yelling to workers to come out of the fields. The day begins at 4:30 a.m. when the farmworkers gather in darkness at the Coachella City Park. The union's system of infiltration has told them which places are being worked today and picket captains lead an automobile convoy to those ranches.

Harry Carian, who grows 300 acres of grapes, is standing at the edge of his vineyard with his Filipino crewboss, looking at the 250 UFW pickets and muttering to himself. He is almost a cartoon of the grower. Dressed in a blue shirt, white patent leather boots, powder blue pants, and a white belt, he occasionally puffs a six-inch-long cigar and stands looking at the scene like a *patron.* A visitor asks if he fears the kind of boycott that bankrupted several of his friends. "We'd have to be fools to go through this again intentionally," he says grandly. "There had to be a reason, and it's right out here." He sweeps his hand across the fields. "We just felt the workers wanted the Teamsters more than Chavez."

"Hey Harry," shouted a picket, "You think you got problems with your wife now, wait until we get through with you. You won't even be able to afford to go to that fancy hairdresser of yours." Carian ignores him. "A lot of the workers were just plain disgruntled," he said. "The union tried to run their personal lives. They'd get fined for missing a meeting or not going to picketing duty. You know we wanted elections back in 1969 and 1970 and Chavez didn't feel it was necessary. We wanted very seriously to renegotiate a contract this year, but we couldn't get him to sit down."

The sights, the sounds, the smells are out of the past. Sheriff's cars patrol up and down the road, deputies occasionally getting out of their cars to watch. The loudspeakers blare out a Spanish message to the workers inside to come out of the fields and join the strike. The UFW women with their red bandanas and straw hats carry UFW banners. The men, their wrinkled faces reflecting years of backbreaking toil, yell at the workers in the field.

Sixty feet away (a court ordered distance) are Teamster "guards," as they call themselves. A past era of labor would have called them "strikebreaking goons," for they are there only to intimidate. "I feel sorry for these people," one of them wearing a hard hat said. "You know they've been brainwashed. They don't know anything about the Teamsters' contracts. If they did they wouldn't be out here. I think I've got an open mind. When I first came out here I felt sorry for these people. I thought Chavez was right. These people just don't understand that we've got a good union and that we can help them. Nobody told me to come out here. Hell, they pay me $50 a day plus $17.50 for expenses, but I could net more money driving a truck. I'm here to help my brothers, not to start trouble."

These truck drivers are sometimes joined by a fearsome group of freight handlers from Los Angeles who are called "the animals" by their fellow Teamsters, and whose demeanor is closer to a Hells' Angel Chapter than to the blue collar worker. They have bulging biceps and bellies, and often start swigging beer by 7 a.m. One morning a group of about ten of them walked into a restaurant and spotted a UFW supporter who happened to be a priest without his cloth. Father John Bank of Youngstown, Ohio was having breakfast with *Wall Street Journal* reporter William Wong of San Francisco. Two of the Teamsters began taunting Bank and after ten minutes Bank suggested in classic understatement that they would be well cast in a B-grade movie. Whereupon a 6'4", 300-pounder named Mike Falco smashed Bank in the face, breaking his nose, and then turned to ask the terrified Wong if he had anything to say. Fitzsimmons' rationale for the appearance of these men is that they are "guarding their Mexican-American fellow members because the minute they turn their backs the Chavistas are entering the fields and beating up the grape workers."

Whenever the UFW loudspeakers begin blaring, Ray Griego, a San Diego Teamster, wheels up in his blue Dodge, equipped with its own speaker system. Griego, wearing a Spanish picador's hat, struts in front of the pickets like a rooster preening himself for a cockfight. He likes to taunt the pickets about the "easy virtues" of UFW women. But his favorite device is a cassette tape recording of the song, "Bye, Bye Blackbird" that he inserts in the tape recorder on the hood of his car. It is an oblique reference to the union's Aztec eagle symbol. "Pack up all your cares and woe, here I go winging low. . . . Bye, Bye Blackbird.

[UNION BUSTING]

The history of Teamster union busting can be traced back to the summer of 1970 when Chavez had just finished signing his historic agreements with the Delano growers. For several months his organizers had been working the lettuce fields of Salinas, preparing to take on those growers when the grape contracts were concluded. Naturally, the lettuce growers were apprehensive. In late July the growers approached the Teamsters, who represent their truck

FARM BUREAU

GLEN PEARCY — EL MALCRIADO

Teamster President Frank Fitzsimmons

drivers and equipment operators, and felt them out about representing the field hands. Working swiftly, the two sides concluded recognition agreements and more than 200 contracts were signed. When Chavez signed up the Delano growers he was presented with a *fait accompli* in Salinas.

That August he called the most successful strike in U.S. farm history, pulling more than 5,000 workers out of the fields and paralyzing the "nation's salad bowl" at the peak of harvest. He went to jail to protest a restrictive Monterey County court order that prohibited strike activities because of an alleged jurisdictional dispute. Last December the California Supreme Court voided that injunction and found there was no jurisdictional dispute because the growers had made no attempt to find out what their workers wanted.

Out of the lettuce dispute emerged an agreement that left field hands to the UFW and food handlers and processors to the Teamsters. Additionally, those growers who had signed with the Teamsters were invited to give up their contracts and execute new ones with Chavez. Only five did. The jurisdictional agreement, which does not expire until next year, was repeatedly violated by the Teamsters and long ago fell into disuse.

At that point—late 1970—Chavez appeared to be on an inexorable march toward unionizing all of California agriculture, but in the next year the UFW ran into serious difficulties. In early 1971 he began negotiating with the remaining lettuce growers in an effort to reach an accord. The negotiations, which apparently never got off dead center, were called off nine months later. According to insiders, the Teamsters Director of Organizing, William Grami, was telling the lettuce growers to hold out as long as they could because the Teamsters would be reentering the farm labor field soon.

By late 1971 Chavez was determined to move against the lettuce growers with a nationwide boycott. But in California he was severely hampered by the Monterey Court order, still on appeal. Just as the boycott was to be started in the rest of the country, the National Labor Relations Board, in a politically inspired move, sued the union, charging that it was covered by the National Labor Relations Act and that therefore any boycotting would be illegal. The union had acquired some winery workers in the Napa Valley and the NLRB was now saying that a law that had not applied to farmworkers for 37 years was now in force. In the end, the UFW dropped the winery workers and the NLRB dropped the suit.

Then the union launched its boycott on national television at the National Democratic Convention, where delegation after delegation pitched in with shouts of "boycott lettuce." But just as the boycott was picking up strength, the growers once again forced the union into a critical test. Using what were later found to be fraudulent methods, the growers' representatives solicited enough signatures to put Proposition 22 on California's November ballot. It was labelled the "Farm Labor Relations Initiative," but in reality it was a Farm Bureau-sponsored measure that would have made it impossible to unionize the state's farmworkers. The boycott was shunted aside while all available manpower was thrown into defeating the proposition—a successful but costly effort.

At the same time it was fighting the proposition, the union was striking White River Farms near Delano, the successor to Schenley Industries which had signed the union's first contract in 1966. White River, owned by Buttes Gas & Oil Co., refused to negotiate a new contract. It lost $1 million in the harvest but succeeded in beating back a bitter and sometimes violent strike. So here it was, November 1972, and the union, confronted at every turn by grower and government opposition, had not moved much farther from the position it had occupied in July 1970.

What happened in the next few months can best be described in retrospect as the "Nixon connection." For the sequence of events shows that the growers were already looking toward the Teamsters and that further, the Nixon Administration was all too willing to help consummate this marriage of convenience.

In early December of last year, Fitzsimmons went to Los Angeles to address the annual convention of the American Farm Bureau Federation. It was astonishing enough that Fitzsimmons would talk to these disciples of William McKinley and Rutherford B. Hayes. But when he suggested an alliance of agribusiness and the Teamsters to put Chavez out of business it was clear he was no ordinary labor leader.

How did Fitzsimmons happen to go to the convention? Laurence H. Silberman, the undersecretary of labor, has acknowledged he called Fitzsimmons last fall and told him the Farm Bureau would be interested in hearing his views on a number of subjects—including farm labor. This is the same Silberman who dropped the Administration's support of compulsory arbitration legislation in transportation strikes after the Teamsters dumped a suitcase full of money in Nixon's election kitty.

The Administration proved obliging in other ways. The Justice Department, for example, delayed a San Francisco Grand Jury investigation of payoffs by

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the growers to Teamsters during the 1970 lettuce strike in Salinas, in which witnesses testified that $5,000 bundles were handed over to the Teamsters to pay for protection; in addition, it called off FBI agents who were watching closely the budding friendship of Fitzsimmons and Mafia members who have moved into Southern California.

The day following the Farm Bureau speech, Fitzsimmons flew to San Francisco where he and Western Conference head Einar Mohn, once one of Dave Beck's most trusted assistants, announced they would renegotiate the lettuce contracts two years before they expired.

But before doing that the Teamsters offered Chavez a deal, relaying the message through the National Catholic Bishops Committee on Farm Labor: the Teamsters would not go after the grape growers if Chavez would give up his efforts to sign up the lettuce growers. According to UFW attorney Jerry Cohen, the deal was rejected out of hand. In January, the new lettuce contracts were announced and the Teamsters went after the grapes.

Can Chavez prevail against these forces? Before he received the AFL-CIO grant there were grave doubts. Now there is greater optimism. The strike underway in Coachella is taking hold. One grower said the growers will be lucky to get half the crop picked. Another said much of it will be "garbage" because of the untrained workers in the vineyards and cool weather. The Teamsters and growers talk of importing Mexican nationals with temporary visas if, as it appears, there are not enough workers to pick the crop. But Coachella will be only one phase of the struggle. As the weather turns warmer, the strike will move into the San Joaquin Valley, where the most recalcitrant growers operate.

Public opinion will play a great part in determining the ultimate winner. Once again Chavez is counting on a boycott of non-UFW grapes to bring the growers to their senses. But is the public so mesmerized by other events—Watergate and inflation, to name two—that the boycott will go unnoticed? It is an open question. At least one historian of the farm labor movement and one of its leaders in the 1950s, Ernesto Galarza, believes that a movement built on boycotts cannot sustain itself. "This strategy depends entirely on the union's ability to mobilize, on a national scale, people who are not in day-to-day contact with the union. I don't think the machinery for that kind of thing has been built by Chavez." Another unknown factor is the reported meetings between Frank Fitzsimmons and George Meany about the situation. No one knows whether any settlement between the two labor moguls will be satisfactory to the UFW.

But Chavez has the farmworkers with whom he has fought and won dubious battles in the past. "I don't think the growers know what they've gotten themselves into," he said. "We may not know how to organize growers, but we can organize farmworkers. That's our stock-in-trade." ■

COLD WAR

(From page 40)

In this way, the revisionist case soon became a basic text not only for students, but for a growing number of junior faculty, and a second generation of revisionist books and monographs began to make their appearance. The cold war critics had ceased to be intellectual pariahs, and it was no longer possible to simply ignore their arguments, nor to dismiss them out of hand, as had previously been the rule. The new reality was quickly impressed on Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., when he intemperately remarked in a letter to the *New York Review of Books* (October 1966), that it was time to "blow the whistle" on cold war revisionism. The following autumn, seven years after the first major revisionist works of Williams and Fleming, the first substantial confrontation with the revisionist case appeared in an article in *Foreign Affairs,* written by Schlesinger, Jr. himself.

[ORTHODOX CHAMPION]

Schlesinger, Jr. was in many ways an ideal candidate for the task of reasserting an orthodox stance towards the revisionist critique. A member of the Council on Foreign Relations, a former White House advisor, and one of the outspoken critics of Beard's book on Roosevelt when it