

STATEMENT BY THE RELIGIOUS, CIVIC AND LABOR LEADERS  
WHO CONDUCTED A POLL OF FARM WORKERS IN THE COACHELLA VALLEY  
April 10, 1973

We have come to the Coachella Valley because we believe in justice for farmworkers and because we believe that farmworkers should be represented by a union they believe in. We have watched Cesar Chavez and the farmworkers with him work and struggle to build a union by and for farmworkers. We look forward to the day when the grass roots union can serve all migrant and seasonal farmworkers in our country.

The Western Conference of Teamsters has re-entered the grape fields. We have been told there are many Teamster organizers in the Coachella Valley and that they have been talking to workers and growers for more than a month. The teamsters claim to represent a majority of the farmworkers in the Coachella Valley.

Today our group of 25 church leaders, congressmen and their representatives, and labor leaders, visited approximately 1,000 workers in the grape fields. We went in small groups to 31 fields. We introduced ourselves, spoke to the workers in Spanish, and asked them to mark a simple survey form to indicate to us their preference for union representation. We did not ask the workers to sign their names and we made it plain that their participation in the survey was voluntary. A few workers chose not to mark survey forms. Most workers indicated their preference. We have kept personal custody of the ballots and the results are as follows.

United Farm Workers AFL-CIO.....	795
Teamsters.....	80
No Union.....	78

It is clear to us that the vast majority of farmworkers in the Coachella Valley want to be represented by Cesar Chavez UFW, want to continue under the protections of UFW contracts and resent the intrusion of the Teamsters Union. It would be a great injustice to the workers if the grape growers make agreements with the Teamsters against the will of their workers. Such agreements would certainly not result in labor peace in the Valley. We find it hard to understand why any responsible labor union would attempt to make agreements with employers when it is clear that they do not represent the workers.

We wish to encourage the grape growers to take seriously the expressed wishes of their workers. We will return to our communities, our groups, and our churches to report on what we have found here and to continue to support the right of farmworkers to their own union.

"OVER"

RELIGIOUS, CIVIC AND LABOR LEADERS WHO CONDUCTED SURVEY OF

FARMWORKERS - COACHELLA VALLEY

April 10, 1973

The Reverend Lynn Hodges North California Ecumenical Council San Francisco, Calif.

Monsignor George Higgins, Secretary for Research US Catholic Conference Washington, D. C.

Congressman, Edward R. Roybal, Los Angeles, California

The Reverend Juan Romero, Executive Director of Padres and Representative for Bishop Patrick Flores San Antonio, Texas.

Louise Davidson, National Vice-President for Church Women United New York, New York

Dr. Lawrence Durgin, Pastor of the Broadway United Church of Christ New York, New York, New York City Inter-faith Committee

Reverend Juan Hurtado, Office of Ethnic Affairs Roman Catholic Diocese of San Diego

Reverend Alan McCoy, Provincial for Western Province of Franciscans, Oakland, California

William L. Kircher, Director of Organization, AFL-CIO Washington, D. C.

Reverend Horacio Rios, Wesley Community Center Phoenix, Arizona

Ms. Li Conley, Florida Christian Migrant Ministry Orlando, Fla.

Reverend Sean Flanagan, Parish Priest & Chairman of Subcommittee on Farm Labor of Priest Senate of Los Angeles Ms. Kathie Arscott, YWCA Downey, California

Reverend Robert Weirbach, Superintendent, Riverside District United Methodist Church

Ruben Diaz, Representative National AFL-CIO, Los Angeles, California

John Zarate, Field Representative for Congressman George Brown Pat Hoffman, Social and Ecumenical Concerns Committee, Presbytery of the Pacific, United Presbyterian Church

Ed Sarafield Field Representative for Congressman Phil Burton

6-1-73

STATEMENT BY 125 RELIGIOUS LEADERS, COACHELLA CA. MAY 18, 1973

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

THE REV. WAYNE C. HARTMIRE, JR.  
THE REV. FRED EYSTER (213) 386-6130

We have come from every major religious group and from every region of the Nation to be with the farm workers of this valley in a time of crisis for their Union. We are convinced that love must take the shape of justice in the affairs of society and we deeply believe that Caesar Chavez and the farm workers with him are an example to all of us what it means to sacrifice and to struggle non-violently for self-determination and justice.

We have concluded that the largest growers in the west are collaborating with officials of the Teamsters Union to destroy the United Farm Workers movement. It is shamefully immoral and a disgrace to the labor movement that any union such as the Teamsters would allow itself to be used by employers against a poor peoples union that is composed primarily of black and brown workers.

We have pressed Cesar Chavez on the question of elections and he is willing to proceed as soon as the other parties are also willing.

We ask the Teamsters and growers to honor the rights of the workers and agree to a fair election. If the Teamsters are unwilling to let farm workers have a voice in their own affairs then we demand that the Teamsters leave the field so that farm workers will be free to develop their own union.

Most of us do not live in the Coachella Valley. We will be returning to our own organizations and communities. We make a personal pledge today to boycott non-union head lettuce and table grapes. We will also avoid Safeway and A and P stores until these major chains agree to support the farm workers efforts. If the teamsters and the growers do not agree to elections in a reasonable period of time we will use all the means at our disposal to spread the word of the boycott to our friends and constituents. We are prepared to support the farm workers boycott for as long as it is needed.

Delivered by Rabbi Norman D. Hirsh, Temple Beth Am, Seattle, Washington.

-OVER-

## DELEGATION OF RELIGIOUS LEADERS TO COACHELLA, MAY 17-19, 1973

Msgr. George Higgins, Secretary for Research, U. S. Catholic Conference, Wash. D. C.  
 Very Rev. Stephen Ryan OSM Conference of Major Superiors of Men. Buena Park, CA.  
 Dr. Fred Register, Conference Minister, So. Calif. Conference of the United Church of Christ, Pasadena, CA.  
 Owen Brooks, Director, Delta Ministry, Greenville, Miss.  
 The Rev. Harold K. Schulz, Exec. Dir., Council for Christian Social Action, United Church of Christ.

John E. Cosgrove, Director of Urban Affairs, U. S. Catholic Conference, Wash. D. C.  
 The Rev. Eugene Boyle, National Federation of Priests Councils, (Chicago, Ill.)  
 San, Francisco, CA.

Rabbi Norman D. Hirsch, Temple Beth Am, Seattle, Washington

James E. McNeil, National Office of Black Catholics, Washington, D. C.

The Rev. A. C. Cuppy, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Kansas City, Kansas

Dr. Robert Blaney, Bd. of Church and Society, U. Meth. Church Stockton, CA.

The Rev. Dave Schillup, Inter-Father Committee for Justice for Farm Workers, San Jose, CA.

Katrina Carter, Inter-Faith Comm. to Aid Farm Workers, L. A. CA.

The Rev. Juan Romero, Padres, San Antonio, Texas

The Rev. Howard Matson, Unitarian-Universalist Migrant Ministry, Berkeley, CA.

The Rev. Stephen Fritchman, Unitarian Fellowship, Palm Springs, CA.

The Rev. Jim G. Casey, San Francisco Priests Senate, San Francisco, CA.

Bob Levering, American Friends Service Committee, San Francisco, CA.

The Rev. Bill Leininger, Catholic Council for Social Justice, San Jose, CA.

The Rev. Steven C. Johnson, Dallas, Texas

Ann Cohen, So. Calif. Conference, United Church of Christ, Pasadena, CA.

Dr. Ralph Kennedy, Shalom Ecumenical Fellowship, Fullerton, CA.

Angel Martin, Director, Mt. Diablo Peace Center, Walnut Creek, CA.

Harold and Martha Bakke, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Seattle, Wash.

Leilani Schreiner, British Columbia Farmers Union, Vancouver, B. C.

Michael Lowry, Perkins School of Theology, Dallas Texas

The Rev. Jim Burke, S. J. Jesuit School of Theology, Berkeley CA.

The Rev. Paul C. Jesurada, Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, CA.

Maria Hernandez, Gavilan College, Hollister, CA.

Sr. Elaine Huber, OP, Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, CA.

Woody Garvin, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

Andrea Heikkinen, Social Concerns Committee, Newman Hall, Berkeley, CA.

Gary and Peggy Hawk, Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley, CA.

Bill Tierney, British Columbia Farmers Union, Vancouver, B. C.

(Titles for identification only)

6-1-73

"CESAR CHAVEZ & THE FARMWORKERS RENEW THEIR STRUGGLE IN THE GRAPES"

Farmworkers struggled for five years to get the first table grape contracts in the Coachella Valley in Southern California. Those contracts expired April 15, 1973. Even before the contracts expired, grape growers were negotiating secretly with the Teamsters because of their desire to sign with a union that does not represent their workers and thus will demand little of the growers. Here is a brief run-down of the current situation:

- 1) The Teamsters apparently have contracts with 85% of the table grape growers in the Coachella Valley. Only two growers (David Freedman Co. and Keene Larson) have renewed their UFW contracts.
- 2) The table grape growers to the north of Coachella in Arvin, Delano and Fresno are watching the events in Coachella; it is likely that they will also go with the Teamsters. Most of those contracts expire this summer. Strikes are in progress at several ranches where contracts have already expired.
- 3) The lettuce struggle continues. Strikes are in progress at D'Arrigo farms and La Victoria farms (formerly Pic'nPac). The harvest has now moved to Salinas.
- 4) The Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare is investigating the charges that growers made illegal cash payments to the Teamsters in Salinas in 1970.
- 5) Cesar Chavez has asked for secret ballot elections in Coachella but so far the Teamsters and the growers are not interested.

The Teamsters and growers are seeking to destroy the UFW by continuing the fight in the lettuce while at the same time chopping away at the farmworkers' base of strength in the grape industry. It is the worst kind of grower-union collusion aimed at defeating an indigenous, poor peoples' movement.

Cesar Chavez and the farmworkers with him intend to keep organizing and striking and boycotting for as long as it takes to win. Since UFW has to drive the Teamsters out of the fields they might as well do it on the issue of grapes. A lot of Americans joined the farmworkers in the long grape boycott. All of us feel robbed!

You can help in the following ways:

- Priority #1: Observe the Safeway and A & P boycotts and tell all your friends and colleagues.
- Priority #2: Continue the non-UFW iceberg lettuce boycott and expand it to include non-UFW table grapes. The first table grapes will reach the market in late May. Please get the word out in resolutions, publications, action networks, etc.
- Priority #3: In California and Arizona food is needed for the strikers. Contact Pat Hoffman in the L. A. office of NFWM for details.
- Priority #4: Cash contributions are needed for food, for people, for paper and phone, etc. Checks can be made out to NFWM or UFW and sent to the address below.
- Priority #5: Give Fitzsimmons a piece of your mind and please send us a copy of your letter. (Frank Fitzsimmons, General President, International Brotherhood of Teamsters, 25 Louisiana Avenue, N. W., Washington, D. C. 20001.)

Farmworkers want their own union. They are willing to keep sacrificing and struggling for that goal. They are asking for our prayers and our deeds.

NATIONAL FARM WORKER MINISTRY, 1411 W. OLYMPIC BLVD., RM. 511 LOS ANGELES, CA. 90015- PHONE 213/386-8130



## ELECTIONS AND LEGISLATION IN AGRICULTURE-by the Rev. Wayne C. Hartmire, Jr.

Agribusiness interests, the Farm Bureau and the John Birch Society have decided on a common theme for attacking Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers: "Chavez is a power hungry labor boss who is opposed to secret ballot elections for farm workers." The growers, the labor contractors and their allies are now parading as the only true champions of "the rights of the workers." If it weren't a serious matter for the future of the farm workers' union, it would be laughable.

First let's look at some history:

- 1) In 1935 growers successfully opposed the inclusion of farm workers in the original Wagner Act (National Labor Relations Act).
- 2) From 1935 to 1970 growers successfully kept farm workers out of the NLRA and most other protective legislation for workers.
- 3) For over 100 years growers have fought (often violently) to crush every labor organizing effort by farm workers.
- 4) In September 1965 Cesar Chavez and the grape workers asked the Delano grape growers for elections and were refused.
- 5) On August 30, 1966 UFWOC won the first secret ballot election in farm worker history despite the fact that the company campaigned for another union. (Results: UFWOC-530, Teamsters-DiGiorgio-331, No Union-12)
- 6) In September, 1966 UFWOC asked Perelli-Minetti for an election and was refused.
- 7) In June and July 1967 UFWOC asked Giumarra Vineyards for an election and was refused. August 3, 1967, 90% of Giumarra's workers went on strike to prove they wanted to be represented by Cesar Chavez' UFWOC.
- 8) In the spring of 1968 UFWOC asked all California and Arizona table grape growers for elections: not one responded.
- 9) In July and August of 1970, UFWOC asked California and Arizona lettuce growers for elections: all but one refused. On August 24, 1970, 5-7,000 lettuce workers went on strike to prove they wanted to be represented by UFW.
- 10) From 1965 to 1971, there have been well over 50 valid elections in California, Arizona and Washington agriculture. In every case but one the election has been won by United Farm Workers. The one exception is being appealed because the labor contractor illegally intimidated his Filipino workers ("If Chavez wins you will all be fired and replaced by Mexicans").

The Farm Bureau has tried to argue that these many elections were not valid elections. But the evidence proves that they were:

- a) The elections were supervised by a neutral arbitrator chosen by all parties to the elections, e.g. American Arbitration Association, Federal Mediation & Conciliation Service, Protestant Clergy like the Rev. Lloyd Saatjian of the Methodist Church of Palm Springs and the Roman Catholic Bishops Committee.
- b) The rules and procedures for every election were agreed to in advance by all parties to the elections.
- c) The different kinds of elections used (card check, secret ballot and ratification) are all approved by the NLRA as valid expression of the will of the workers (under many circumstances strikes are also recognized by the NLRA as valid expressions of the will of the workers.)

In the face of this history and this evidence the growers continue to try to sell the view that UFWOC is afraid of elections. What possible basis do they have for their argument? There are three happenings the growers point to in making their case:

- 1) Prior to strikes and boycotts the union has consistently called for elections. But in the face of grower refusal even to talk about elections UFWOC has said publicly that if a grower by his intransigence forces the workers into a strike then the strike will be the election (i.e., the expression of the will of workers). Despite this formal position UFWOC has consented to elections in industry where there have been long strikes and boycotts.
- 2) On some farms and in some communities the farm workers have agreed that free and fair elections are impossible, e.g., where the whole community, including elected officials, police, etc., is intimidating the workers or where a grower has fired his original work force and replaced them with Anglo high school students.
- 3) UFWOC has fought against collective bargaining legislation in Washington, Oregon, California and elsewhere, the growers argue that UFWOC is opposed to elections for workers. But, in every case UFWOC has opposed the legislation for other reasons:

---The legislation outlawed the boycott or strikes at harvest.

---It provided for elections but not for good faith collective bargaining.

---It eliminated migrant and seasonal workers from the right to vote.

---It turned over the election process to a group hostile to the farm workers' union (e.g., Governor Reagan and his political appointees).

Friends of the farm workers' union need to be very careful about collective bargaining legislation.

Contrary to some views legislation is not the solution to all problems. Farm workers don't want

legislation unless it helps them gain their primary goal: a strong union that will give all farm workers

in this country collective strength, independence and new found dignity. Thru' 6 years of work and

sacrifice Cesar Chavez and the farm workers with him have found a way to struggle and succeed.

The Farm Bureau and the right wing would like to take that strike and boycott power away and leave

farm workers with theoretical rights but no real program of pressure.

As legislation appears that is designed to "help farm workers" please ask questions like the

following:

- 1) What do organized farm workers think of it?
- 2) Who is supporting it? (labor contractors are not farm workers)
- 3) Does it outlaw strikes at harvest time?
- 4) Does it outlaw the secondary boycott?
- 5) Who will supervise the election process? Is that party acceptable to the workers and growers?
- 6) What is the election process like? Are hearings involved? Who is eligible to vote? Will the seasonal farm workers be around when the election finally takes place?
- 7) Does the legislation provide for other kinds of elections other than secret ballot elections (under federal law card check elections are the most common form of election)?
- 8) Does the farm workers' union have to be approved by state officials? Is this a special requirement that only applies to farm workers unions?
- 9) Are their remedies for workers against unfair pressure and intimidation by growers and others in the community?
- 10) Does the bill ban bargaining on certain specific issues (e.g., one bill eliminated pesticides as

as issue for collective bargaining)?

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NATIONAL FARM WORKER MINISTRY

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THE CATHOLIC CHURCH'S TOP NATIONAL LABOR EXPERT  
SPEAKS OUT ABOUT THE LETTUCE DISPUTE!

Msgr. George G. Higgins  
Secretary for Research  
United States Catholic Conference

"Father Higgins", as he is known to thousands of trade unionists, knows as much about this Farm Worker crisis as any living American. He helped end the infamous Bracero Program. He has mediated national disputes in the railroad and copper industries. He is the chairman of the famous UAW Public Review Board. Most important, he is chief consultant to the American Catholic Bishops' Committee on Farm Labor.

Here are four recent columns of his nationally syndicated "The Yardstick" which appeared in February and March of this year on the role of the Teamsters Union in the lettuce controversy. Father Higgins tells it as it is! No one is better qualified to do so.

UNITED FARM WORKERS, AFL-CIO

P. O. Box 62 Keene, Calif. 93531  
(labor donated)

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Discovering a new plot: (First In The Series)  
DEFYING TEAMSTERS AND FARM BUREAU

In 1935, when the National Labor Relations Act (the so-called Wagner Act) became the law of the land, farm workers were excluded from its coverage. Why? For one reason and one reason only: Because the National Farm Bureau Federation and all of the other leading growers' organizations in the United States wanted to prevent farm workers from exercising their right to organize, and had enough political clout to bend the Congress to their will. It was just as simple--and as cynical--as that.

In 1949, when the Wagner Act was rather drastically amended, farm workers were again excluded from coverage. Why? Again, for the very same reason: Because the National Farm Bureau Federation and its satellites were as determined as ever to prevent them from organizing and joining a union of their own choosing. They thought the best way to do this was to exclude farm workers from coverage under the federal law.

Since 1949 the Farm Bureau Federation and its anti-union allies have done everything within their power--which to this day, is very considerable--to maintain the status quo. No, that's not altogether accurate. It would be more accurate to say that, not content with having excluded farm workers from coverage under the federal law, they have done everything within their power to undo the status quo by imposing restrictive legislation on farm workers at the state level.

They have already succeeded in doing this in Arizona. More recently, they failed to achieve their purpose in California--but not for want of trying. Their desperate effort in

Come to think of it, maybe the Teamsters are hoping that this will happen. If so, they

business.

The Teamsters, in supporting the coverage of farm workers under the present federal law, will probably say that they are doing so because they see this as the only orderly way of handling labor-management relations in the agricultural industry. That's a plausible argument, but the Teamsters know that the argument is also full of holes. They know very well that to outlaw the boycott at this particular time would play right into the hands of the most recalcitrant, anti-union growers and could conceivably put the Farm Workers Union out of

it's just as simple--and as cynical--as that.

check the effective use which the United Farm Workers Union has made of the boycott. Again, Farm Bureau, in reversing its position on this matter, has only one purpose in mind: To

on this issue as phony as a \$3.00 bill. They know perfectly well, in other words, that the worker legislation. They know as well as I do that the Farm Bureau's alleged "conversion" of themselves for playing party-cake with the Farm Bureau Federation on the issue of farm about them in this context. I am sorry about that, but the fact is that they ought to be ashamed better than I do that the Teamsters will holler bloody murder when they read what I am saying. There is no one in the whole wide world who, by reason of personal experience, knows

quite capable of bringing Goliath to his knees.

da. When the chips are down, they may well discover--and I hope they do--that David is political influence and are making the fatal mistake of beginning to believe their own propaganda. Federation and the Teamsters have an exaggerated notion of their own economic power and the United Farm Workers Union. Unless I am badly mistaken, however, the Farm Bureau Brotherhood of Teamsters which, in a moment of madness, recently declared open warfare on only by the Farm Bureau Federation but also, for reasons of its own, by the International This I rather doubt. I realize, of course, that the bill will be strongly supported not

passing this year.

cation and Labor Committee--Rep. John R. Erlenborn (R-Ill.)--it has a good chance of effect will be introduced within the near future. According to one member of the House Education and Labor Relations Act be amended--some 38 years after it was first enacted--to include farm workers under its coverage. The indications are that a bill to this or not, that the National Labor Relations Act be amended--some 38 years after it was first agricultural industry have completely reversed themselves and are now insisting, believe it learn that, within recent weeks, the Farm Bureau Federation and many of its allies in the Against this brief historical background, the average reader may be surprised to

under way to enact an Arizona-type statute in several other agricultural states. will make another all-out effort to enact a similar proposition in 1974. Meanwhile plans are Nothing daunted, however, spokesmen for the industry have publicly announced that they

intervention of the California bishops.

million dollars. Proposition 22 was roundly defeated, thanks in large measure to the timely to cripple, if not to destroy the United Farm Workers--reportedly cost them well over a California last November to enact the infamous Proposition 22--which was clearly designed

are not as smart as they think they are--and certainly not as smart as I, for one, had always thought of them as being.

I say this with due respect for what the Teamsters, with all their human faults and failings, have done for their own membership over the course of the years and with all due apologies to the officers of the union, some of whom are ( or were ) very good friends of mine. There is nothing personal in my criticism of their unfortunate alliance with the Farm Bureau Federation in a joint effort to cut the ground out from under the United Farm Workers Union. I just happen to disagree with them, as I have told them man to man on more than one occasion in recent weeks. My disagreement will be formalized if and when the Congress gets around to holding public hearings on the kind of bill the Farm Bureau Federation and the Teamsters are promoting. I will testify against such a bill and will encourage others, in and out of the labor movement, to do the same.

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Anti-labor group, union married? (Second in Series)

ANOTHER CHAPTER ON STRANGE ALLIANCE

In my previous column I severely criticized the American Farm Bureau Federation for trying to cripple, if not to destroy, the United Farm Workers Union by means of federal and state legislation. I also said that the Teamsters ought to be ashamed of themselves for collaborating with the Farm Bureau Federation in such a cynical and transparently phony operation.

These are admittedly hard words, but frankly I can see no point in beating around the bush on an issue of such crucial importance to one of the most disadvantaged groups of workers in the American economy. The Teamsters know perfectly well that the Farm Bureau's record in the area under discussion has always been completely reactionary by any reasonable set of standards, including the standards which the Teamsters themselves profess to live by as the largest and one of the most influential trade union centers in the United States.

This being the case, I must leave it to the Teamsters to explain why they have joined forces with the Farm Bureau Federation in a desperate effort to pull the rug out from under the Farm Workers Union. In due time they will undoubtedly come up with some sort of explanation for public consumption, but I doubt that they will be able to make it stick.

There is simply no way they can rationalize their unfortunate (and, in the annals of labor history, unprecedented) decision to team up with a notoriously anti-labor organization in an effort to sell the Farm Workers down the river. Their peers in the trade union movement and scores of other interested parties whose good will presumably mean something to the Teamsters are too sophisticated in their knowledge of the farm labor problem and too familiar with the Farm Bureau's anti-labor record to be taken in by any amount of double talk.

If the Farm Bureau Federation and the Teamsters think that I am pushing this point too hard, I can only refer them to Chapter XI, "Profiteering With Poverty," in Samuel R. Berger's  
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1971 study entitled "Dollar Harvest: An Expose of the Farm Bureau (D. C. Heath and Co., Lexington, Mass., \$7.95). Mr. Berger's summary of the Farm Bureau's position on the subject of agricultural labor reads, in part, as follows:

"Because of its size, resources, and influence among rural Americans, the Farm Bureau has had more opportunity to alleviate rural poverty than any other organization outside the federal government. But not only has the Farm Bureau not been part of the solution, it has actually been part of the problem. While the Farm Bureau certainly did not create poverty in America, it can justifiably take partial credit for its continued existence. It has erected roadblocks to decisive government action to help the poor--both rural and urban. It has fought efforts to improve the life of the country's farm workers; and it has led the advocates of a farm policy that would further widen the gap between rich and poor on America's farms.

"Not only has the Farm Bureau . . . made farm workers second class citizens within the Bureau, it has also suppressed their attempts to form their own organizations. It is terrified of the movement to organize farm laborers and willing to commit the entire force of its resources to stop it.

"There is no other issue on the Congressional front, except perhaps dismantling the government farm program, to which the Farm Bureau devotes more time, energy and money than farm legislation. . . .

"The Farm Bureau's Washington lobby has also worked against extending the coverage of Social Security unemployment insurance to farm workers. . . . In recent years (it) has emerged as a leading opponent of the efforts to unionize farm workers. It has steadily increased the intensity of its assaults on Cesar Chavez and his United Farm Workers Organizing Committee (now the United Farm Workers Union) and has committed its vast resources to frustrating the national boycotts, first of non-union grapes and, more recently, of lettuce."

The Farm Bureau's record, as summarized by Berger--and I have quoted only a portion of his summary--speaks for itself. The Teamsters recent decision, in the face of this deplorable record, to join forces with the Farm Bureau Federation in an effort to undercut the Farm Workers Union also speaks for itself. I am frank to say that what it tells us is not very flattering to the Teamsters.

Mind you, it isn't as though the Teamsters had no other alternative but to enter into an unseemly alliance with the Farm Bureau Federation on the subject of agricultural labor legislation. They claim that bringing farm workers under the coverage of the amended National Labor Relations act is the only way to provide an orderly method of handling labor-management relations in the agricultural industry. Well, if that's their only objective, why don't they support Congressman James O'Hara's Farm Workers Bill of Rights (H. R. 881)? The kind of legislation that the Teamsters and the Farm Bureau Federation are supporting would make it illegal for farm workers to engage in secondary boycotts.

By contrast, O'Hara's omnibus bill would bring agricultural workers under the coverage of the original National Labor Relations Act, rather than under the more restrictive provisions

of either Taft-Hartley or Landrum-Griffin. The Michigan Democrat thinks that this is essential "to encourage the broadest possible organizing efforts in the agricultural industry."

I thoroughly agree with Congressman O'Hara and thoroughly disagree with the position being taken by the Farm Bureau Federation and the Teamsters. I would also give substantial odds that the overwhelming majority (let's say 99 percent) of the priests, ministers and rabbis who have studied the farm labor problem will strongly oppose the Teamster-Farm Bureau bill if and when it ever sees the light of day.

I say "if and when" because it is entirely possible--even probable in my opinion--that, when the chips are down, the Teamsters and the Farm Bureau Federation will not be able to agree upon the terms of their proposed anti-UFWU bill. Judging from their past performance in Washington and at the state level, I would anticipate that the Farm Bureau Federation will strenuously push for amendments (e.g., the prohibition of strikes at harvest time) which even the Teamsters will not be able to swallow. If that happens, the Teamster-Farm Bureau alliance may well come apart at the seams and the strangest bedfellows in the history of the American labor movement may decide to go their separate ways.

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#### THIS MARRIAGE DESTINED TO BUST (Third in Series)

This is the last in a series of three columns on the subject of farm labor legislation. In the first two columns, we noted that the American Farm Bureau Federation and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters were working in tandem on the farm labor issue at the expense of the United Farm Workers Union, led by Cesar Chavez.

Chavez himself, when we last met with him in California some three or four weeks ago, seemed quite confident that their joint effort to pull the rug out from under the UFWU by means of restrictive federal legislation will not succeed. For my own part, I would be willing to wager that Chavez' confidence in this regard will prove to have been well founded.

The Farm Bureau Federation and the Teamsters are an odd couple if I ever saw one, and I doubt that they really have as much in common on the issue of farm labor legislation as they presently think (or would like to pretend) that they have. The Teamsters claim that they are only interested in bringing farm workers under the coverage of the Taft-Hartley Act. This in itself would be enough, of course, to cripple the UFWU, for it would deprive the organization of the use of the secondary boycott.

In my judgment, however, the Teamsters are kidding themselves if they think that, when the chips are down, the Farm Bureau Federation will be willing to settle for Taft-Hartley coverage--period. To the contrary, as previously noted in this series, the Farm Bureau Federation, at some point in the legislative process, will very probably raise the ante and will insistently demand--among other restrictive measures--that strikes at harvest time be prohibited or, in any event, severely limited by law.

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At that point the Teamsters and the Farm Bureau Federation are likely to start scratching at one another, and their eccentric alliance--a marriage of convenience which never made any sense to begin with--will probably go on the rocks. All of this is posted, of course, on the assumption--no, the conviction--that the Teamsters are still in touch with reality and that, in the final analysis, they are not about to cut off their own trade union nose to spite their face--or to undercut Chavez' union--or, for that matter, even to accommodate the Administration, whose credentials in this area, it must be said very bluntly, are absolutely nil.

The likelihood that the Teamsters and the Farm Bureau Federation will eventually have a rather unromantic falling-out is not the only reason, however, for thinking that anti-UFWU legislation is out of the question, at least for the time being. The most vocal and potentially most effective opposition to any kind of farm labor legislation, including the kind that the Teamsters are promoting, is coming through loud and clear--as might have been anticipated--from individuals and organizations which, if such a thing is possible, are even more conservative and more anti-labor than the farm Bureau Federation itself.

The point of view of these individuals and organizations is very simple. Some of them argue that since the organization of farm workers into any kind of union, including the Teamsters, would be disastrous, it follows that legislation which recognizes the right of farm workers to organize or in any way guarantees the free exercise of this right is to be avoided at all costs. Others argue that while farm workers have a right to organize, any kind of legislation--including the Taft-Hartley Act--which sanctions the union shop is unconstitutional, un-American, or what have you and, again, is to be avoided.

Sylvester Petro, Professor of Law at New York University, is a veteran spokesman for the first of these two points of view. In a 25-page article, "Agriculture and Labor Policy", published in the January issue of the Labor Law Journal, Professor Petro lays his doctrine anti-unionism right on the line with the no ifs ands, or buts. "Subjecting agriculture to . . . Taft-Hartley. . . would . . . more than likely mean, in a relatively short time, about as much unionization as prevails in American factories." Presumably Petro can't think of anything worse than that.

James Kilpatrick, a nationally syndicated columnist, is an irrefragable spokesman for the second point of view referred to above. Kilpatrick, who looks down his nose at Chavez and the Farm Workers Union and has peddled more than his share of misinformation about the farm labor problem, would probably agree that the farm workers have a right to organize. He would also agree, I assume, that they should be protected in the free exercise of this right if they are stupid enough to think that joining the Farm Workers Union or any other labor organization would be in their own best interest. On the other hand, he is absolutely opposed to the union shop, and, for this reason, he too thinks that the leaders of the Farm Bureau Federation must be out of their minds to be advocating the coverage of farm workers under the Taft-Hartley Act, with or without restrictive or crippling amendments.

In a recent column which is even-handedly anti-Teamster and anti-Chavez, Kilpatrick argues that "to advocate the extension of Taft-Hartley is implicitly to accept extension of the union shop. The Farm Bureau invites a situation, a few years hence, when large farmers would be caught like so many fish in a net of NLRB regulations."

Petro and Kilpatrick have a sizable following among the more conservative elements in this country. This is not to say that the groups that they are speaking for (e.g., the National Right to Work Committee) are strong enough to bend the Congress to their own will. On the other hand, they may well have enough influence to prevent the enactment of any kind of farm labor legislation in the immediate future. In my judgment, their labor philosophy is hopelessly out of touch with reality. Nevertheless, from Chavez' point of view--which happens to be my own as well--their opposition to any kind of farm worker legislation may paradoxically prove to be providential if it hastens the dissolution of the Teamster-Farm Bureau alliance and forces the Teamsters to take another look at their cards and another look at the kind of anti-labor company they are keeping in their ill-advised and predictably futile effort to force Chavez' union to the wall.

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Showdown bound to come: (Last In Series)

CESAR CHAVEZ AND JIMMY HOFFA AT ODDS

James R. Hoffa, former president of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, was 60 years of age on Valentine Day. At a mammoth birthday party sponsored by some of his middle-echelon pals in the International, he told a reporter that his chief ambition is to "be able to speak out again about the injustice to the little people of America."

I think we can all agree that that's a very worthy ambition. Unfortunately, however, the "little people" represented by the United Farm Workers Union have already learned, to their utter dismay, that, with friends and champions like Jimmy Hoffa, they really don't need any enemies. Speaking February 20 at Stanford University, Hoffa blithely characterized UFWU president Cesar Chavez as "incompetent." He also predicted--with a degree of self-assurance worthy of a better cause--that the Farm Workers Union will "go out of business" once it's jurisdictional dispute (sic) with the Teamsters is settled.

"We aren't going to give up to another union what is under our jurisdiction," Hoffa said at Stanford. "We will fight Chavez, just like we fight employers--until we win, and we will win." (This I doubt, but that's another matter).

Often drawing loud boos from the crowd of some 200 students, Hoffa added: "I think if you just have a little patience, Chavez will go out of business and we'll keep flourishing. If we are wrong (you are, Jimmy) Chavez will probably have a big powerful union. If we are right, Chavez will probably become part of us."

If Hoffa really believes that last statement, he is capable of believing almost anything.

It's interesting to note that the self-styled champion of the "little people" who is now threatening to put the Farm Workers Union out of business is the same Jimmy Hoffa who, less than six months ago, signed a lettuce boycott pledge and, shortly thereafter, strongly defended Cesar Chavez and his movement in a rather heated colloquy with William F. Buckley on the latter's television talk show.

(over)

ONE CAN only guess what prompted Hoffa to change his mind so suddenly and unexpectedly. My own guess is he has decided to get himself reelected president of the Teamsters International and with this goal in mind, is already scrounging around for rank-and-file support wherever he can find it.

Attorney General Richard G. Kleindienst has stated publicly, however, that he would move quickly to block any bid by Hoffa to return to union office in violation of the condition of his release from prison. Kleindienst said the government will strictly enforce the terms of President Nixon's commutation of Hoffa's sentence.

It remains to be seen, of course, whether or not the Department of Justice will, in fact, lower the boom on Hoffa if he decides, on advice of counsel, to disregard the Attorney General's warning. In any event, if Hoffa can eventually square himself with the government, I suppose he has as much right as any other Teamster to run for the presidency of the International. The decision is up to him. It is none of my business, one way or the other.

I think it is my business, however, to say very bluntly that Hoffa's cold-blooded threat to destroy the Farm Workers Union is absolutely disgraceful from the point of view of trade union ethics. I say this reluctantly and with deep regret, for the last thing in the world I would want to do would be to pick a fight with a man just released from prison and still on probation. Hoffa's record, then, is completely beside the point and has nothing to do with the matter under discussion. I am simply saying that his recent punch-drunk attack on Cesar Chavez and the Farm Workers Union marks him as a street-corner bully.

The only thing to do with a bully is to call his bluff. My calling his bluff, however, is obviously a rather meaningless gesture. I am sure he and the Teamsters International could care less about my opinion on this matter.

The only organization that can call their bluff and really make it stick--the only organization that can hit them where it hurts--is the national AFL-CIO. Fortunately there is good reason to think the Federation is preparing to do just that.

AT THE RECENT AFL-CIO Executive Council meeting in Miami Beach, George Meany went out of his way on two different occasions to let the media know the Federation fully intends to support the Farm Workers Union--and support it all the way--in its life-and-death struggle with the Teamsters. He said, among other things, "the agreement they (the Teamsters) made with the growers recently in California, to me is tantamount to strike breaking. And you can quote me on that."

Later in the same press conference, he added, for good measure, that "the Teamsters action in signing this back-door contract with the growers in California in order to destroy the Farm Workers Union. . . was from a trade union point of view, absolutely disgraceful."

Two days later, returning to the same subject, Meany said, with reference to Hoffa's Stanford tantrum, that "Jimmy has looked in his crystal ball many times in the past, and he hasn't always come out right."



I AGREE with Meany all the way. He was dead right in saying the Teamsters are not going to be successful in their unconscionable effort to destroy the Farm Workers Union.

Here's hoping that Hoffa and the Teamsters will get Meany's message and come to their senses before it's too late--not too late for Chavez and his struggling union, but too late for the Teamsters. The old adage is still true: the bigger they are, the harder they fall.

