

State police guard ALRB after new UFW picketing

By JOHN NUNES

Staff writer

California State Police continue to guard the Agricultural Labor Relations Board office and its employes today in El Centro as the United Farm Workers protest of the state farm labor agency moved into its fourth day this morning.

About 70 UFW shouting, jeering supporters picketed in front of the state office, at 582 State St., from 2 to 7:30 p.m. Wednesday.

This morning, six demonstrators, carrying UFW flags, continued the vigil.

No one has been arrested since the mass booking on Tuesday. In fact, law enforcement sources said the ALRB told state police not to arrest anyone, despite a court order that limits UFW to 10 persons at one time in the office.

About 5 p.m., Fred Lopez, ALRB office director, allowed 20 picketers inside.

They discussed today's election being conducted by the ALRB in Calexico, Winterhaven and Huron. It is for about 100 farm laborers employed by Royal Packing, a Salinas-based produce firm.

The UFW is protesting the ALRB's decision to allow a Royal employes group to petition for the election. To cover itself, however, the UFW filed to be placed on the ballot.

State police were stationed inside and outside the building during the demonstration Wednesday. The special police force was aided by sheriff's deputies and El Centro police, but not on such a large scale as Tuesday.

State police is a division of the state Department of General Services. "We are assigned to sensitive areas," said Sgt. R.A. Singer. Most can be found working in Sacramento, but there are branch offices in major cities. There are only 500 state policemen.

Tuesday was the first time the special police were used by the Brown Administration to make arrests.

Gov. Brown is under heavy criticism by the union because of the "police state tactics."

Cesar Chavez conducted a five-hour sit-in Wednesday at the ALRB office in San Diego.

The mass arrests in El Centro also touched off UFW demonstrations at ALRB offices in Sacramento, Coachella, Salinas, Oxnard and Fresno.

A Brown aide said Wednesday that the governor knew nothing prior to the arrests.

"The Agricultural Labor Relations Board is an independent agency and made no request of this office for guidance in making their decision," said Gray Davis, the Brown spokesman.

Earlier, Chavez said he intended to "invite arrest" with the demonstration and would stay at the office "one day, two days, a week or a year, if we have to, to get some answers."

Faced with a lack of anyone in authority, the sit-in ended five hours later.

The United Farm Workers promised to bombard Gov. Brown with telephone complaints today over the arrests and the election.

Harry Delizonna, counsel for the farm

labor board, said the Chavez union has been unable to produce any proof Agrupacion Independiente de Trabajadores, the Royal employes group, is company-backed.

He said he told the State Police to allow Chavez and his up to 80 backers, who chanted and sang Spanish-language songs, to remain at the San Diego office as long as they wished, so long as there wasn't vandalism, as police said preceded the El Centro arrests.

"Lopez preferred to maintain the peace," Sgt. Singer explained this morning, referring to Wednesday night's demonstration.

Although there were no incidents
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UNDER PRESSURE — ALRB employes try to go about their business Wednesday while about 70 UFW supporters picket outside. On Monday and Tuesday,

the demonstrators came inside the office and allegedly physically and verbally abused the workers.



STATE POLICE — Three of the six California state police officers ordered to the ALRB office Tuesday, continued to stand guard Wednesday. The special police expect to leave tonight. (Staff photos)

ALRB office guarded after new demonstration

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Wednesday, tension was high.

At least two ALRB employes, both female, were seen being escorted from the building by state police. They exited through a side door, away from the picketing.

The state police crossed State Street with them and took them to their cars.

The special police expect to remain guarding the state office until today's election is over. Polls close at 6 p.m. and the votes will be counted about 7 p.m. in the Imperial Irrigation District auditorium in El Centro.

The state police have not been asked to stand guard at the polls or the vote count, Singer said.

Farm labor unions have been trying to unionize Royal Packing since the state farm labor law became effective in the summer of 1975.

On Sept. 12, 1975, the UFW won an ALRB-conducted election at Royal Packing in Salinas.

But the Chavez union won by only four votes over the Teamsters Union and there were enough ballots challenged to warrant a runoff.

On Sept. 25, 1975, the Teamsters won the runoff election.

The election was thrown out by the ALRB in February 1976 on charges by the UFW that a member of Royal Packing management, before the runoff, threatened to shut

down the firm's operations in Salinas if the UFW ended up representing its workers.

Then in December in Imperial Valley, an employes group — reportedly not affiliated with the new employes group — tried and failed to petition for an election. The ALRB ruled it was not a bona fide union.

About two weeks later, the Teamsters' attempt to unionize the Imperial Valley ranch was thwarted as ALRB investigators found that the Teamsters forged election authorization cards.

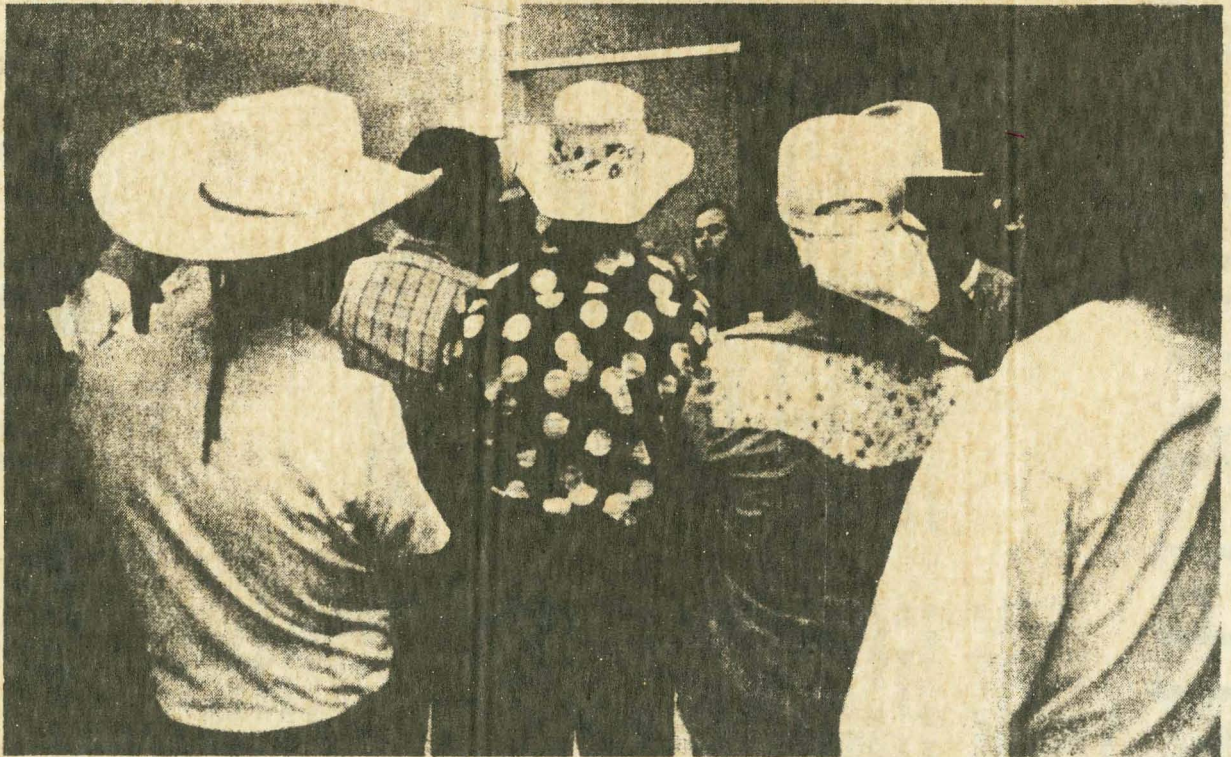
And, about a week later, the UFW failed to gain enough support at the Valley ranch to petition for an election.



UFW SIT-IN — United Farm Workers President Cesar Chavez (in checkered shirt) links hands with supporters during a demonstration Wednesday at the state Agricultural Labor Relations Board office in San

Diego. The mass arrests of union picketers by California State Police in El Centro Tuesday touched off demonstrations throughout the state.

(AP Wirephoto)



IN EL CENTRO — UFW demonstrators crowd into the ALRB office in El Centro Wednesday to meet with Fred Lopez (facing them) director of the office. They demanded to know why an employees group was allow-

ed on today's ballot for employees of Royal Packing to vote for the union or no union of their choice. Tuesday, state police arrested 28 UFW demonstrators at the office.

(Staff photo by Kenneth Forney)