

# EL MALCRIADITO

The Voice of the Los Angeles Boycott

Vol. 2 No. 1 — January 1976



Photo by Dorrit Thomsen

William Robertson and Mayor Tom Bradley at Salazar Park rally

Photo by Sam Kushner

Photo by Juan J. Sanchez

## 1976 — The Year of the Soaring Eagle Victories in the Fields Los Angeles is Mobilizing

By the end of the first week of the new year the United Farm Workers had beaten the Teamsters Union by a better than four to one margin in elections in Imperial and Palo Verde Valleys.

On 17 ranches, most of which were formerly under contract with the Teamsters, the UFW emerged the victor. Notable as are the results in this region in the southernmost part of the state it is highlighted by the outcome of the balloting near Blythe in the Palo Verde Valley where the UFW won all eight elections. All but two of these ranches were formerly under Teamster contract.

Of the four Teamsters victories, three were won before the UFW organizing campaign in Imperial Valley got under way and the Sam Andrews Ranch outcome has been challenged by the UFW. One of the largest elections in that region took place on Jan. 7 at the Mario Saikhon Ranch, formerly under Teamster contract. When the votes were finally tallied this ranch too was in the UFW camp with 156 votes cast for the union led by Cesar Chavez and 62 for the Teamsters. Three votes were cast for "no union."

All of this was viewed as a prelude for the intensive drive in Imperial Valley during the rest of January and in the following months. The union has had to contend with phantom crews who moved from ranch to ranch in an attempt to give the Teamsters the edge in the voting. Now there have emerged phantom companies with a new name but with the same workers and foremen. For example, the Admiral Company which was certified as a UFW ranch in November emerged in January in large part as the Far West Marketing Company. It took some real searching by law students assisting the UFW to track this one down and to expose the management's chicanery.

Meanwhile the UFW has kept widening its margin over the Teamsters statewide. There were 355 elections held throughout the state by Jan. 3. Challenges left the outcome of 42 elections in doubt according to the tally compiled by the UFW national office in La Paz. However, in 12 of these undecided elections the decisive issue was whether the strikers had a right to vote.

Continued on Page 5

An intensive six-week door-to-door canvassing campaign will begin on Jan. 24, according to Ken Fujimoto, L.A. Boycott director.

"Because the farm workers have spoken so decisively in the elections on the side of the UFW," Fujimoto said, "we are in a new historic stage in the support movement and it is necessary to consolidate our support as well as to enlist additional help in these very critical days ahead."

The seven-day, 84-mile march throughout Los Angeles County has set the stage for the new drive according to Fujimoto.

The three-pronged door-to-door drive throughout much of Los Angeles County is aimed at:

- Educating the public about the latest stage of the organizing drive taking place in the fields of California.
- Further encouraging support of the UFW drives to get consumers to buy produce with the Black Eagle label.
- Recruiting more assistance in the forthcoming campaigns to support the UFW.

"We want all those who have supported us in the past to join in the door-to-door campaign," Fujimoto said. "All who want to assist can do so by contacting the office at 1434 W. Olympic Blvd. (phone 381-1136). Also there is an increased need for full-time volunteers and we hope to recruit many new people in the course of this canvassing." After a week of preparation the drive will be kicked off on Jan. 24. It will come to a close on Feb. 28.

The Black Eagle is flying in the fields as never before. Now the goal of the L.A. support movement is to help make that Eagle soar in the city as well as in the fields.

For farm workers 1976 can be the year of numerous victories: new contracts, renewed contracts, service centers, medical clinics, pension plans, healthier working conditions, higher standard of living. The elections predict this.

But it can only happen with your help. Join us on the Los Angeles Boycott staff to actualize the farm workers' dreams. If you're willing to make a three-month commitment to a righteous struggle, we are looking for good dedicated workers to effect social changes. Call UFW, 381-1136; ask for Vicki. Now.

See Pages 3 and 4 for L.A. March Story and Pictures

## A Working Visit to Fields For L.A. Boycott Staff

According to peak-season harvests, the Los Angeles Boycott is currently situated in geographic proximity to ranch election sites. As a result, the boycott staff in L.A. has recently had the opportunity to travel to the Imperial Valley and partake in the actual field organizing.

On Dec. 29, 16 members of the boycott arrived in San Ysidro near the Mexican border to learn first hand about the election campaign in the San Diego County. Scott Washburn, UFW regional director, told the staff that business in the area concerned mostly compiling ranch seniority lists which is done by the workers themselves for future use in the UFW hiring hall after contracts are signed. Of the 16 elections already won, four have been certified and four are in the courts (of which three expect to be overturned).

Tomatoes and celery were the ready crops at this time so the L.A. staff was immediately utilized in the afternoon's work of leaf-letting various ranches. Since workers often rotate onto different ranches during harvest, it was important to inform all workers regardless whether they had voted in previous elections.

That evening the group traveled southeast to the border town of Calexico where a massive organizing campaign is peaking with the harvest crops. Marshall Ganz, director of the Imperial Valley drive, briefed everyone on the situation, including the winning of 13 of the 14 elections up to that time. These election results, Ganz contended, are a likely indication of what would have happened earlier in other regions had the Agricultural Labor Relations Board enforced the law properly. The union is now putting a concerted effort into organizing workers on the Bruce Church Ranch, the nation's third largest producer of lettuce.

At daybreak the following morning the boycott staff was divided into four groups and sent with organizers to leaflet different work crews coming over from Mexico. One group then traveled to the Bruce Church property in Arizona to talk with workers, while another group leafleted at a local labor camp and the remaining two groups went to witness elections on two separate ranches, both won by the UFW.

By late afternoon the L.A. staff re-grouped and went out to billboard at the border where workers were crossing back over to Mexicali; another billboard line went to receive the labor buses arriving at "El Hoyo" (The Hole), the world's biggest shape-up arena, and a third line situated itself along the main street of Calexico — all urging farm workers to vote for the UFW: "Ahora es cuando" (now is the time).

The final activity of the program was a farm worker community meeting Tuesday evening which started off with traditional union songs, then dealt with workers' issues and ended with recognition and tributes to the Los Angeles Boycott staff for its dedication to the farm worker cause.

## Eagle Flies in Rose Parade

Spectators watching the 87th annual Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena on New Year's Day might also have glimpsed members of the Los Angeles Boycott complete with billboards and waving union flags as the flowery floats cruised by.

On the afternoon of the 31st, Echo Park supporter and former UFW organizer Susan Metchnick reserved a choice spot directly across from the TV cameras and began the long wait for morning. Temperatures dropped into the 30's during the night when she was joined by eight other farm worker supporters and UFW coordinator Conrado Terraza.

By dawn more than 1.38 million people had lined up along the 5½-mile route. On several occasions during the two-hour parade the boycotters were harassed by Pasadena police when they were ordered to remove the giant huelga flag posted on a fence. The group, however, refused to comply after seeing numerous other signs displayed all around them.

Sources estimate that more than 100 million viewers around the world watched the spectacle on television.

## At Last ALRB Cites Gunmen in Posse

At long last the California Agricultural Labor Relations Board has issued a formal complaint against the Posse Comitatus for pointing guns at organizers of the United Farm Workers outside a Stockton tomato field last September.

The complaint issued Dec. 18 lists 20 members of the Posse Comitatus, as many as 50 John Does and the Western Tomato Growers and Shippers, Inc.

The ALRB asks that the vigilante group and the grower be required to make a public apology to the workers during the next peak season and also a public statement to the employees stating that the employer will not engage in the conduct again.

The complaint also calls for the Western Tomato Growers to permit UFW organizers expanded access to their fields during the coming harvest. The employer is further required to mail a notice containing the terms of the ALRB's order in writing to all peak season employees.

The complaint is an outgrowth of confrontations that occurred Sept. 2-3 when organizers for the UFW attempted to enter a Western Tomato Growers field but were blocked by dozens of Posse members armed with pick handles, pistols, and shotguns.

A hearing on the complaint will be held in Stockton on Feb. 23, 1976 in the California State Office Building, 31 E. Channel, Stockton.

This is a very important case for the ALRB and the UFW because hundreds of UFW organizers were prevented from entering the fields this summer by employers in spite of the ALRB ruling allowing organizers the right to enter the fields to talk to the workers.

After months of investigation the ALRB has issued a complaint against the most serious offender in the entire state, the Posse Comitatus and their complicity with the company.

## New Cabrillo Village Battle

The Los Angeles Boycott staff joined members of the San Francisco/San Jose Boycott staffs, and approximately 75 residents of Cabrillo Village for a New Year's Eve protest march and rally.

The group marched several miles through freezing weather in candlelight procession from the C.V. labor camp to a vacant lot across from the home of Saticoy Lemon Assoc. Manager Carl McKnight, chanting "Justice Now" and "We want our homes."

During the late evening rally, Larry Tramutt, director of Oxnard field office, explained that residents of Cabrillo Village, which is owned by Saticoy Lemon Association, have been continually harassed by the company for their strong union sympathies and were served eviction notices last fall in an effort to eliminate the Chavistas (see story last issue). When these maneuvers failed to intimidate the workers, the association attempted to sell the camp valued at \$240,000 to Herculano Villasenor, a labor contractor, for a measly \$80,000.

Mounting pressure on Villasenor due to active protests from the C.V. inhabitants, in addition to statewide attention brought about by UFW concern, forced him to withdraw from the deal, thus opening channels again for possible purchase by the lemon pickers.

While McKnight is refusing at this time to meet with the workers to discuss the transaction, the Los Angeles Boycott is planning a massive letter-writing campaign of persuasion, to McKnight emphasizing popular support of the workers in their right to buy their own houses; as well as considering the more forceful alternative of a boycott on Sunkist which markets all S&F citrus picked by residents of Cabrillo Village.

The rally ended with a lively teatro performed by the San Francisco/San Jose Boycotts and C.V. residents enacting the history of this controversy, and a midnight mass.



Dolores Huerta and Chris Hartmire Photo by Dorrit Thomsen



Photo by Juan J. Sanchez



J.J. Rodriguez

Photo by Juan J. Sanchez



and the children, too

Photo by Julia London

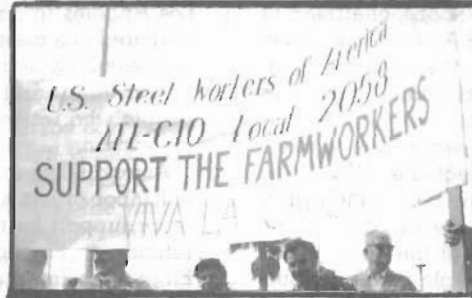
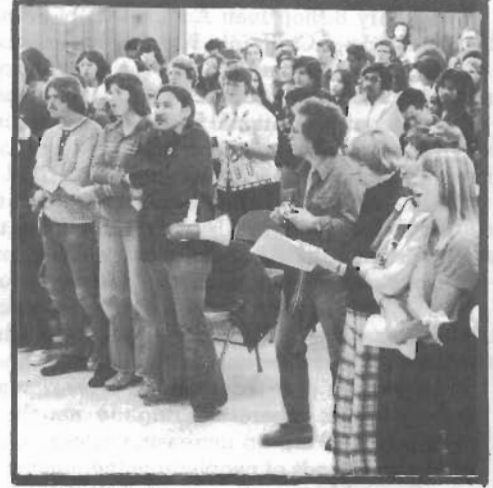


Photo by Juan J. Sanchez



at the kick-off rally

Photo by Dorrit Thomsen



Christy Menadier



Photo by Julia London



Assemblyman Art Torres

Photo by Julia London



Photo by Julia London



Grace Montanez Davis



Ray Olivas, Delano farm worker



Archbishop Juan Arzube



Bill Demeers

## Bruce Church Agrees After Foreman Sings

One of the more dramatic Agricultural Labor Relations Board hearings took place in El Centro in early December when a series of unfair labor charges against the Bruce Church Company were publicly ventilated. And the outcome of the week-long public exposition of the company's misdeeds was in large measure a vindication of the UFW's position.

It all ended up with the company agreeing to a series of actions which should make it possible to get a fair election on its properties in the near future. These are some of the things the company agreed to do:

- Reinstatement of Ramon Rubio and to pay him back pay of over \$2,000. Rubio was among those who had been fired by the company and the UFW had charged that it was because of his union activity.
- Agree to allow union organizers to board company buses during lunch breaks to speak with workers and distribute literature to them. A set of rules was outlined under which this will take place.
- Allow a union organizer in the fields DURING WORKING HOURS "for organizational purposes for each crew and distribute literature."
- Furnish a list by crew of the names and addresses of all the company's agricultural employees.

In addition the company agreed to post in Spanish and English a notice that will state "the law provides that all employees have the right to organize and choose any union they desire. This right cannot be interfered with by anyone . . . The employees also have the right to talk with representatives of any union and sign authorization cards for any union . . . The company intends to comply with the law and hereby encourages the employees to exercise their rights under the law."

Putting to rest rumors, reportedly by foremen and other company representatives, that the company would lay off many workers or go out of business if the UFW won representation rights, the company publicly stated that it "has no intention to go out of business or reduce acreage in California regardless of which union the employees choose to represent them."

What brought all this about? At long last the law was beginning to work as originally intended. And at the hearing a foreman for the past five years for the company took the witness stand and exposed the company's drive against the UFW and its collaboration with the Teamsters Union. Jesse Ramirez had been in charge of the company's wrapping division in Salinas and Arizona.

He told how management personnel conspired to get the UFW supporters fired and how they tried to get election victories for the Teamsters Union. All of this was spelled out in great detail by Ramirez over a span of many days. When the evidence became so overwhelming the company announced that it was ready to enter into an agreement with the UFW and with the ALRB. While denying the allegations against it the company said it was coming to terms "in order to avoid unnecessary and costly expenses."

With this new set of rules and with the UFW rolling up victory after victory in the Imperial Valley organizing campaign the stage is now set for a possible statewide election in the Bruce Church properties in which the workers for the first time will have an opportunity to freely express their choice in a representation election.

## Latest in Elections

Continued from Page 1

The UFW has won almost two-thirds of the elections which have been decided according to this same tabulation. The UFW won 191 elections representing 27,294 workers in contrast to the Teamsters who emerged victorious 102 times and represented 12,344 workers. It should be kept in mind that 180 of the elections have taken place on ranches formerly under contract with the Teamsters and going into the round of elections there were 28,889 workers represented on them.

In only 20 instances have the workers voted for "no union" to represent them. Represented on these ranches were 2,294 workers.

In 163 elections, almost half of all those conducted, the UFW was on the ballot opposing "no union." Some of these were formerly Teamster ranches on which that union could not get the required number of authorizations to get on the ballot. Out of the 141 decided elections in this category the UFW won 126, representing 17,226 workers, and no union — the company — emerged victorious 15 times. Represented on these ranches were 1,471 workers. In 22 elections the outcome still remained in doubt.

As each new tabulation is made public the UFW margin of victory continues to grow. It is small wonder that the growers and the Teamsters are trying to stop the elections as reported in the last (December) issue of *El Malcriadito*.

## The Latest in Fashions: Wear A Huelga T-Shirt



Photo by Dorrit Thomsen

### DEMAND THE UFW LABEL!

Highest Quality Black T-Shirts printed in silver with the union logo are now available in women's and men's sizes (small, medium, large) at \$15.00 each.

All profit to the union!

Please send this coupon to Rogello Terronez, El Taller Grafico, 1434 W. Olympic Blvd., CA 90015.

I would like \_\_\_\_\_ T-shirts at \$15.00 each (including Calif. tax). I am enclosing a check or money order to the United Farm Workers for \$\_\_\_\_\_.

From \_\_\_\_\_ Size \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State and zip \_\_\_\_\_

Your T-shirt will be sent to you.

## Teamsters Double Cross Exposed in Orange Co.

Not only is the Teamsters Union working hand and glove with the growers in an unsuccessful attempt to destroy the United Farm Workers but it is also violating its agreements with other unions in an attempt to destroy them. The reason? It is because other unions are standing fast in their dedication to the age-old principle that "an injury to one is an injury to all" and are in one manner or another giving their support to the UFW.

About 15 years ago the AFL-CIO Printing Specialties and Paper Products Union signed a no-raid agreement with the Teamsters. Under its terms it was to remain in effect until either side gave six months notice that it would be abrogated. Suddenly in September the Teamsters began raiding one of the plants of the AFL-CIO union in Orange County. In view of the fact that the no-raid agreement was still in effect the officials of the Printing Specialties Union tried to utilize the procedure spelled out in the "no raid" agreement.

Believe it or not these appeals ended up for the moment with a telegram from Teamsters President Frank Fitzsimmons to the officers of Teamsters Local 986, the raiding local, to cease and desist. But the raid continued nevertheless and officials of the Printing Specialties Union were being told that it would continue **UNLESS THEY STOPPED GIVING SUPPORT TO THE UFW.**

What about the "order" from Fitzsimmons? Local 986 officials told Printing Specialties Union officials that they had met with the Teamsters Union president at La Costa, the palatial property outside of La Jolla which it has been charged is often a hangout for underworld figures, and that they should ignore it. This they have proceeded to do even though the no-raid agreement is still legally in effect.

The UFW which has lived through many a Teamsters "agreement" while raids continued unabated can well appreciate the situation the Printing Specialties Union finds itself in.

The Teamsters Union may regret that it was they who threw the first stone. As a result of this workers under Teamsters Union contracts have been approaching the Printing Specialties organization. One of these was the Audio Magnetics plant which has been under a Teamsters contract. This is the situation that the AFL-CIO union found at this plant covering 175 workers.

The Teamsters have represented the workers at Audio Magnetics for the past four years. In February a new contract was negotiated by the Teamsters with this company which provided for **NO WAGE INCREASE, NO INCREASE IN BENEFITS AND A CONTINUATION OF COMPULSORY OVERTIME.** The starting rate at Audio Magnetics is \$2 an hour, in contrast to \$3 an hour for similar jobs in the Printing Trades Union. **EVEN THOUGH A MAJORITY OF THE WORKERS VOTED DOWN THE CONTRACT, THE TEAMSTERS PUT IT INTO FORCE BECAUSE TWO-THIRDS OF THE WORKERS HAD NOT REJECTED IT.**

At Audio Magnetics the Teamsters Union has numerous "letters of understanding" with the company that were never approved

## ARE STORE OWNERS GETTING MESSAGE OF NEW FARM LAW?

Are the food store chains going to change their posture in view of the new election law?

Prior to the ranch voting of the past four months the most common stance of markets in their efforts to ignore farm labor problems was to "justify" buying scab produce "in order to best service their customers with highest quality for the least amount of money."

The California agricultural situation has changed substantially with the election returns heavily favoring the United Farm Workers Union, thus corroborating the position of the boycott which has always maintained that the UFW is the true representative of farm workers.

In recent weeks several large food chains, namely Ralph's, Safeway, Fazio's, and Thriftmart, have been invited to participate in discussions with UFW L.A. Boycott Director Ken Fujimoto concerning possible future activities of the boycott machinery. Representatives of these markets were informed that in the likelihood of a "selective label boycott" resulting from growers' refusals to sign contracts on ranches won by the UFW, the union will actively and vigorously urge the public to buy only UFW-labeled produce. This would naturally occur only on the parking lots of the food stores carrying those particular non-UFW items under dispute.

Labor and religious delegations were also invited to these discussions. Among those present were Miriam Ludwig of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union, Manuel Sierras and Charles Bratton from the United Steel Workers Union, and Efren Barron, from the National Association of Letter Carriers. Sr. Kay Von Stralin, Fr. Pfeffer and Fr. Sean Flanagan participated, too.

The outcome of the talks left a certain ambiguity as to definite store policy in the future. A few representatives seemed unwilling to consolidate differences, said Fujimoto, but those who had already experienced the powerful boycott weapon in the past appeared wary of committing themselves to a continuation of current line of conduct. Byron Alumbaugh, president of Ralph's Market, the biggest volume chain store in Los Angeles, said, "We're tired of being the battleground of the boycott." It appeared that in large measure some of the store managements were beginning to look at things in a new light in view of the results of the farm labor law elections.

by the union committee in the plant or by membership. Now the Teamsters officials who have in the main ignored the problems of the workers in this plant over the years are busy trying to mend their fences. But it may be too late from all indications.

There have been reports of several other groups of workers in Orange County who have recently decided to leave the Teamsters Union. It might be well for the Teamsters to concern itself more about the welfare of its present members rather than to embark on raids against workers in other unions. And it should be kept in mind that those who first take action against labor solidarity are most often the victims of their own misdeeds.

### El Maleriadito

1434 W. Olympic Blvd.,  
L.A. 90015 (213) 381-1136



BULK RATE  
U. S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Permit No. 32019  
Los Angeles, Calif.