

Grape Workers Assail Judges As Arrests of Pickets Continue

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FRESNO, Calif., July 20 — Striking farm workers, determined to slow the harvest of grapes here in the San Joaquin Valley, used picket lines that defied court orders again today and as a result hundreds more were arrested.

Nearly 1,000 workers have been arrested here in the last two days. Because of the large number, the sheriff's department has not jailed the workers. Instead, they have been issued citations ordering them to appear in court in 11 days.

In Tulare and Kern counties to the south, however, the jails are filled. Still, the arrests continued today in Tulare, where some 50 workers were taken into custody before noon. The Kern County jail in Bakersfield remained filled when workers arrested on Wednesday refused to post \$1,000 bond for their release.

Some 250 workers were arrested before noon here today. Hundreds more refused to obey the injunctions that limit the use of bullhorns and require pickets to be 100 feet apart and no closer than 15 feet to the edge of the vineyards.

Judges Are Criticized

The strikers, members of the United Farm Workers headed by Cesar Chavez, insisted that the injunctions are unconstitutional and said they had been conspiring with growers and law enforcement officials to break the strike.

Mr. Chavez called the strikers here in the valley when growers signed contracts with the International Brotherhood of Teamsters rather than renew their pacts with the farm union.

Although some 1,500 strike have now been jailed in the San Joaquin Valley dispute, the demonstrations themselves remained peaceful. There were indications that the situation might change next week when the prime harvest season begins for both wine and table grapes. Then, the strikers are expected to attempt to enter the vineyards, if necessary, to persuade workers crossing the picket lines not to deliver the harvest.

In the meantime, Jim Smith, area supervisor for the teamsters' union, said that "the United Farm Workers union is through."

He said that letters of recognition were being sent to 26 other major growers in the Kern County area, advising them that the majority of their workers want to be represented by the teamsters. Mr. Smith said that these workers had formerly been under farm union contracts.

Mr. Smith said that violence, lawbreaking, harassment and intimidation by members of the farm union had added to what he said was the death of and disinterest in the farm workers union.

Mr. Chavez discounted contentions that his union was dead. He conceded that he has lost some 14 contracts but said that his union still had the support of the people.

"I'd say that they [the teamsters] have the contracts but we have the people," Mr. Chavez said. He added that the issue now was whether or not the growers "have the right to run

away from us into the laps of the teamsters."

The seriousness of the dispute is reflected by the decision by the farm workers to face jail rather than be restricted in their picketing. Mr. Chavez said yesterday that this was the first time that members of his union had had to turn to acts of civil disobedience in the struggle to gain and maintain contracts with growers.

In addition to waging strikes that are designed to slow and if possible halt the harvest of grapes, the farm union is again leading secondary boycott of table grapes.

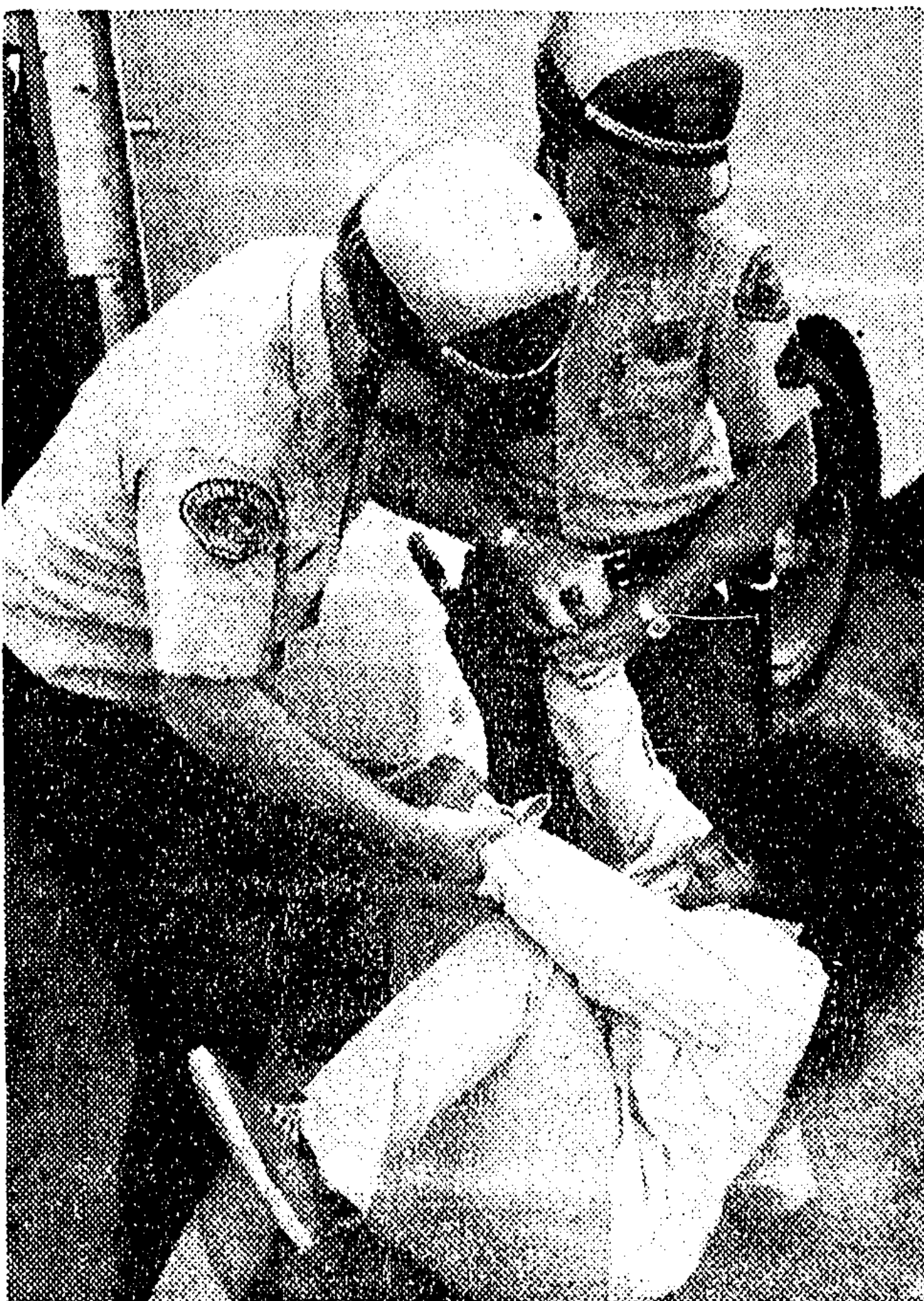
Although growers are maintaining that they are having no trouble thus far obtaining the workers they need, the underlying fear is that the dispute may soon turn violent.

One indication of that concern was expressed yesterday by a grower who said that official requests had been made for the National Guard to come into the valley to assist sheriff's departments, where needed.

Additional evidence of that concern came today when it learned that the special Watergate prosecutor, Archibald Cox, had been asked to reopen a 1971 investigation into an alleged plot to assassinate Mr. Chavez. In 1971, when the investigation was first made by the Federal authorities, an informant said that certain growers in the San Joaquin Valley had put up \$25,000 to finance the alleged plot.

According to sources close to the union, information has been presented Mr. Cox that supposedly offers additional evidence on the alleged plot.

Union officials made little comment but it was verified that a letter had been sent to Mr. Cox along with certain other documents described as pertinent evidence.



The New York Times/Stephen Shames

Striking farm worker being arrested at farm near Bakersfield, Calif., Wednesday. Pickets there defied court order restricting placement of demonstrators.