The voice of discontent

VINCELIA, March 27—Three hundred farm workers voted "unanimously" to continue their second class citizenship today. The Legislative Committee of Farm Workers of Tulare County, mostly UFWOC members, called a meeting to discuss unemployment insurance and NLRB coverage for agricultural workers. By the time the meeting was over, many had shown their anger and resolve to make immediate changes.

Eddie Cuellar, partially retired farm worker, played the most important part in developing a resolution which was agreed upon by the meeting. His resolution pointed out that the "1937 billmakers who established unemployment insurance promised coverage for farm workers within one year," and that the "NLRB discriminates by excluding farm workers." This situation of inequality for people in agriculture has continued for 30 years, "thus condemning all agricultural workers to the stigma of second class citizenship."

When discussion turned to the income tax, several workers gave the opinion that the tax laws, too, hurt farm workers by excluding deductions for transportation, rent, and work clothes.

The final note of the meeting was sounded with unanimous agreement, "that if the government continues to violate the rights of agricultural workers, neither agricultural workers nor their unions should be forced into the armed services to fight for the so-called freedom which discriminates completely against low-income workers."

The message is to go to General Hershey, head of the draft, the Internal Revenue Service; the President; all congressmen and distributed throughout the community.
Green Giant Not So Jolly Anymore

Yuba City

The Jolly Green Giant in Yuba City was found to be trampling on the workers in his asparagus fields. The Green Giant may have thought of those workers as the sultry little elves depicted in the TV commercials. On the other hand, the workers thought of themselves differently — as men of value and dignity who, when properly treated, would prove themselves far taller than the giant.

The men had been promised $4.75 per 100 pounds of asparagus cut. But when the men arrived at the camp they were offered $0.75 per 100 pounds. Receiver for the fields, a man named Darrin, promised the men that the raises would be paid after the end of the season.

The next day they failed to get their paychecks on time. When the paychecks finally did come, they were short. Gaytan refused to accept his abbreviated check and told the others to refuse the checks until they were filled out to the right amount.

Gaytan was then told to turn in his blanket and get out of the camp. Within minutes the police arrived and Gaytan was carted away, arrested for trespassing.

Nobody went back to work after the arrest. A series of meetings was held at the only available place, a local church. The men drew up demands: that charges against Gaytan be dropped, that all men fired for refusing to work without proper pay be rehired, that the company make its promises, and that the company pay according to its promises when the men were hired.

The morning of March 26 the sun came up on pickets ordered stationed at the entrances to the ranch, camp and packing shed. That same day a busload of 72 scabs arrived. They had been recruited by the California Department of Employment in Colusa and subjected to a 20-hour ride with one meal, and enough to make some of the men ill. The pickets convinced about 50 of the 72 scabs to join their picketing line. The company refused to fire any of the 20 strikers who refused to work.

After an all-night bargaining session the strike was ended. The company paid the strikers the amount they were due, and apparently no other men died of exposure. The company fired the rest of the pickets, and the picketing continued. Pickets were posted at the entrances to the ranch, camp and packing shed. That same day a busload of 72 scabs arrived. They had been recruited by the California Department of Employment in Colusa and subjected to a 20-hour ride with one meal, and enough to make some of the men ill. The pickets convinced about 50 of the 72 scabs to join their picketing line. The company refused to fire any of the 20 strikers who refused to work.

The picketing continued, aided by sympathetic Yuba City residents, while a six-man delegation of strikers discussed a settlement with three Green Giants flown out from the home office in Minneapolis.

As if to underline the terms of the settlement, the Jolly Green Giant wrote to the union, the AF of L, that the union would be paid for its services. The company agreed to go back to work.

Anybody who has ever worked in the sunlit swaths of California.

Growers fracture law

Despite the whispering places for law and order on the part of Bonnie Reegan, this administration does little or nothing to control the lawlessness of agri-power.

The Marysville office of the California Rural Legal Assistance Program recently ran a survey of labor law violations on the ranches of four counties. The survey was a part of the research necessary to represent a farmer who had been denied unemployment insurance when he refused a ranch job that had substantial conditions.

The survey was made in Northern California's Sutter, Yuba, Colusa and Butte counties. The employers sampled were a reasonable cross section of 737 ranches. The overall finding was that 95% of the ranches were in blatant violation of the law.

Ninety-one percent of the growers violated the law on drinking water. Either it was not available for the workers at all, or it was distributed in a way that could spread disease.

Ninety-eight percent of the ranches failed to live up to the laws which require clean toilets for the field workers.
Reagan recruits scabs

The California Department of Employment sent out an April Fool's Day letter to the six growers, Carole & Sons, Zanovech, Zavon, Seth & Sons, Jack Radovitch, and Anton Cartan & Sons. We assume they are all boys' names but they are not. The letter asked the farmers if they would agree to the strike-bound workers. There were two who were weathermen. Reagan sent a letter to the companies that were not parts of the strike line. The letter contained nothing of interest. Evidence, proof or argument of any kind was not requested. The Department declined to recognize the fact that the farmers might have arguments that contradict those of the workers.

The matter seemed to hinge upon whether or not the original strikers were still a part of the strike line against the growers.

The Union supplied Reagan's Labor Department with a list of some of the strikers who walked out more than two years ago. Many of them are still a part of the strike since 1965. Some have taken jobs with other growers and are either working out of the area, at Union ranches or for ranchers who are not being struck. The Union stated that the list was still a partial list but that many people were in Delano ready to be interviewed by the Labor Department. The list was never examined, the strikers never interviewed, and the decision was made.

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Hurt? Get paid for their own claim, unless he has studied the law and is a professional at the same game. A farm worker knows farm law; and in the event that a worker is hurt on the job he needs a lawyer to deal with his problems. When you are hurt on the job you need both a doctor and a lawyer. Always report an injury to your foreman or supervisor. Never trust the company's doctor, lawyers, or anybody who tries to beat you out of the compensation that you have coming to you.

When you are injured you should get a lawyer you can trust. It will cost you nothing. The lawyer's is set by the Wages and Compensation Board. It usually runs around twenty percent of the final award. If the company has to pay you ten thousand dollars, then the lawyer gets a 20% of that money. The lawyer is not allowed to take any money from you directly. The WCB gets the lawyer's fee and the company has to pay it. The union service center can help you get a good lawyer.

The next time you have any accident at work, go to the union office and get help from your representative. You never know how serious a small injury can get in later years. Any time you have to lose work for reversion from a job injury you can be nation compensation which is at least fifteen percent of your regular earnings. It goes on for twenty-six weeks of total disability. The final disability award which workmen's compensation can often amount to thousands. It can even be doubled if you have any medication.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION, ASK YOUR QUESTION TO EL MALCRIO.
193,000 workers cheated
by bosses

A Department of Labor investigation has revealed that during the first six months of 1967 at least 193,000 American workers were cheated by their bosses. This was a rise of 6% over 1966. The Labor Department investigators found 135,000 cases where workers did not get time-and-a-half pay for working overtime, and 78,000 workers who were paid less than the Federal Minimum Wage and who were covered by the law. The Department of Labor admitted that they had only discovered a fraction of the cheating that goes on.

Farm workers are now covered by the Federal Minimum Wage law and they should be receiving at least $1.15 an hour for every hour worked. If your boss is not paying $1.15 an hour, he is breaking the law. If you work more than 42 hours a week, you are entitled to overtime pay at least 1.5 times the minimum wage, ($1.72 an hour).

EL MALCHADO SAYS: There is a lot of talk about "crime in the streets" and "cracking down on crime." But this type of crime, cheating poor workers out of money that they have earned through hard work, the worst possible type of crime, and hurts the people who can least afford it. The Union can help stop these criminal practices.

Who killed King?

Continued from page 3

society. He acted for every Klansman who ever wore a hood. He acted for every cop who ever beat a black out nothing. He acted for every judge who ever ruled to maintain the nationwide standard of racism, national, ethnic and economic inequality before the law. He acted for every member of Congress who ever allowed this nation to withhold the natural rights of a man because he was poor or black. He acted for every employer who ever drove a penny of profit by exploiting the group differences between men. He acted for every newspaper, movie company, TV mogul and educator who allowed racism to permeate our society, whether by design or default.

King's killer acted for every man whose courage weakened when another said "nigger" or "greaser" or "faggot" or "kike" and he failed to say NO. Those who never challenged the racist institutions such as the draft and the war killed King. Just as surely as if they had raised their guns.

Racism, subtle or strong, direct or passive, taints the past and present of Americans.

Whether or not the trigger man is brought to Justice, we know who the killer is.

"Our King is dead. Our King of Peace is dead. Long live our King."

At a memorial service for Dr. King held in Bakersfield recently, Rev. Emilio Carranza, minister-farm worker, and UFWC vice president Andy Imutan were speakers. We reprint here Brother Imutan's talk.

For the farm worker, Dr. King's influence has been and will continue to be the greatest source of our strength next to our united numbers. Through his life he has validated the concept of non-violence, organization and unity into living concrete examples which give us hope for a future with justice.

Commitment to non-violence has become for us in the Farm Workers Union a way of life. The basis of our movement is a belief in the importance of each individual human life. We cannot compromise. The measure of a man is not how violent he may be - it is in his strength and his will to achieve justice through just means.

In this measure Dr. King was a truly great man. It is this greatness to which our Union is committed.

We may take today to mourn the death of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, but that really doesn't mean much. Words of mourning have fallen from the lips of many enemies of the cause of social justice. The very racist Dr. King was railing against in Memphis have put up a reward for his arrest.

Rather than mourn his death, we should learn from his life and work in our own lives according to his wisdom. Dr. King stated many times: "If a man has nothing worth dying for, then he also has no reason to live." The farm workers who are waging the non-violent battle for dignity and a decent life accept that statement and live by it. When each one of us takes that statement as a code of our own lives we will be honoring the man, Martin Luther King, and his memory.
Court okays gun threat

LAMONT, April 6 — The law in Kern County ruled today that it’s okay to pull a pistol on a strikers, just as long as you back up the pistol threat with a waved-off shotgun. Judge Hand ruled on a case which originated last August when Miss Josephine Goen, UFWC secretary, failed to serve a subpoena at a Gilmarra labor camp.

On an evening at the beginning of the strike, Miss Goen, riding in a car driven by union organizer Marion Marks, arrived at the camp and court business to serve a paper. According to sworn testimony, the men greeted company foreman Ed Hoover, who over the huff and puff of his pistol, ordered them to leave.

In the court testimony, Hoover spoke of the gun as his pistol.

Miss Goen, a shy, soft-spoken woman, tried to convince Hoover to allow her to com-