



United Farm Workers Organizing Committee/AFL-CIO

Cesar E. Chavez, Director Larry Itliong, Asst. Director

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Cesar Chavez
United Farm Workers
Post Office Box 130
Delano, California 93215

Dear Cesar,

As you requested, I am sending you my impressions of the mid-west boycott conference held in Chicago on March 5, 6, and 7. Full-time staff members from the following cities attended the conference:

| | | |
|------------|-------------|--------------|
| Boston | Pittsburgh | Quad Cities |
| Cleveland | Minneapolis | Madison |
| Cincinnati | St. Louis | Grand Rapids |
| Detroit | Kansas City | Chicago |

There were also representatives from our part-time offices in Illinois, Iowa, and Indiana, along with some of our strongest Chicago area supporters. In all, there were about 100 people attending the conference.

I think, Cesar, that at this point morale is somewhat low. One of the big reasons for this is because of the lack of information from California. The biggest gripe - and we aired quite a few - was the decision to leave off the eagle on some lettuce boxes. The entire conference was literally outraged that such a decision had been made in the first place. But there was also a lot of discontent with the fact that we had not even been informed of the decision. We found out about it through our supporters who came across the boxes in their store-checking. It is exactly this second-hand information that we are concerned about. Too often we find out about important decisions after they have made, and frankly we look like fools when our supporters come to us asking questions that we cannot answer. There is also the feeling among the boycott staff that they are not participating in any of the important decisions that are being made. They are just there to carry out orders from someone else and are not really involved in the decision-making process.

Another problem that has discouraged some boycotters - particularly old boycotters - is the whole question of strategy. It seems as though California, and specifically Marshall, is trying to run each

boycott city from the union office. It simply cannot be done. Each city has its own problems, its own climate factors, and its own boycott staff. What works in one city does not necessarily work in another. We have been receiving orders to go after Antle, and then after the Military, and then after Church, and then Abatti. All of us agree that some coordination is necessary, but boycott staffs can best make the decisions about how to run their own cities. It is much easier for Marshall to call on Friday, tell us to have a demonstration on Monday, and expect good results than it is for boycott staff to hustle up that necessary support on such short notice.

In addition, the strategy itself has created a good deal of confusion among our supporters. It is very difficult to have an effective program with so much jumping around. It is very difficult to keep our supporters on top of the facts and make sure they know what is going on.

I guess the question raised by just about everyone at the conference is "Is it Marshall's job to run the boycott in all thirty cities across the country, or is that job to be left up to the boycott staffs?"

The conference gave us a chance to air a lot of gripes, as I said. Some of them are included in the letter to Marshall which I have enclosed, so there is no need to repeat them.

Looking on the more positive side, there is definitely still a very strong commitment among the boycott staff - volunteers as well as farm workers. I think it is important to note that all are well aware of the threat that legislation could bring to the organizing of farm labor we talked about it quite a bit, and everyone is very clear on just where we stand. In fact, about a week ago a bill was defeated in Indiana which would have extended some sort of collective bargaining rights for farm workers. (I will send you a copy as soon as we get one made.) These bills, you probably know, are popping up all over the place. We talked about the need to immediately grab on to a few key people to keep their eyes on what is happening in the state legislatures without making a lot of noise about it. We do need, I feel, some direction from California as to how to handle this situation which will be confronting most mid-western states soon.

I think that one of the things that we need most for those of us on the boycott, is some idea of what the union is doing asied from striking and boycotting. We get enough of that. We would like to know, for example, about what is going on at La Paz, or programs that are being started in the Union, or how programs are going which are already in effect. For example, it was exciting for all of us in Chicago to review the plans for the Medical Clinic. That kind of news is really good for morale. We all know these things are going on or are being talked about, but to actually be able to hear about the progress - even though we cannot see it yet - is great. It gives

us so much added energy, and so much to be proud of. It also gives us something to take to our supporters. They, too, are interested in hearing about the services that the union is providing for farm workers.

I must add one thing which has just happened and which is a good example of the lack of communication that we talked about at the conference. On Friday, and again on Monday I talked with Marshall about the "Teamster settlement." The word from him was that as of Wednesday we would stop present boycott activities and begin a selective campaign. In other words, the news from Marshall made the settlement and moratorium seem pretty definite.

For us in Chicago, it meant halting a massive drive against National Food Stores at a time when we were really getting good supporter turnout. We had a Spring Offensive planned that involved six weeks of varied boycott activities against National. After talking with Marshall, we started racking our brains about what to do to keep our people busy during the moratorium, and we scrapped our original Offensive. We began to put some new ideas into effect, including lining up people to make early morning visits to wholesalers next week. Today I received your memo, which I interpret to mean that we should go back to our original plans to boycott National. Needless to say, we are pretty confused by now, especially since we have received no word at all from California to explain why the delay, or just what the hell is going on. I have also been receiving calls from our secondary cities. We keep in close touch with them, and they too need to know what is happening so they can know what to plan.

I hope we find out soon what is going on. Confusion is not conducive to effective boycotting.

Viva La Huelga!

Eliseo
Eliseo Medina
Chicago Boycott

EM/dj
cc: Marshall Ganz
enclosure

UNITED FARM WORKERS
1300 South Wabash Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60605
March 8, 1971

Marshall Ganz
UFWOC
Post Box 1319
El Centro, California

Dear Marshall,

The boycotters who attended the conference held in Chicago March 5, 6 and 7, discussed many of the problems we have in our own cities which make it difficult to work as effectively as possible. Following is a list of the complaints that were brought up that concern California. We have included the action which we hope will be taken with regard to these complaints.

El Taller Grafico

A number of boycotter are not satisfied with the present Taller Grafico set-up.

- (a) Our orders are not being filled accurately by Taller Grafico, nor are the orders being sent out promptly enough. Some cities have waited as long as two months for their orders to be sent, and have then received inadequate materials.
- (b) The inventory form is unreasonable. The general feeling is that we are in the boycott business, not the inventory business.
- (c) Individual boycott cities have their own button and bumper sticker needs depending on their own campaigns, population make-up, etc. Also, each city seems to have its own taste in button designs, and it is very difficult for buttons coming out of Delano to please everyone and satisfy their needs.
- (d) Some materials, such as calendars, are too expensive.
- (e) Many boycotters are questioning the amount of money that is being spent on shipping costs.
- (f) There is no union label on the bumper stickers.
- (g) Some cities are receiving materials - and consequently bills - from El Taller Grafico that they did not order.
- (h) Bumper stickers coming from Delano are not standing up to the weather in many of the mid-west cities.

As representatives for everyone who attended the boycott conference we encourage you to implement the following program in order to resolve the above problems:

- (a) Each boycott city, if they so choose, should be allowed to print up their own buttons and bumper stickers. We feel that money need not be taken out of our monthly budget. Each city can secure funds from another source to finance the printing. Any possible increased printing costs that might result from individual printing will be offset by the decrease in shipping costs.

- (b) We feel the inventory system can be simplified by paying El Taller Grafico out of the donation money we send to Delano each month. The receipts we send in provide the breakdown according to posters, buttons, etc., so it would be possible for Delano to transfer the funds needed to pay El Taller Grafico.
- (c) We ask that no materials (posters, buttons, etc.) be sent unless requested by the cities.

Research

Many cities are complaining that we are not being kept informed of the important, factual information that we must have. We suggest that Hub, or someone else, be assigned to keep us informed and supplied with such things as:

- (a) Two reports from the U. S. Bishop's Committee (April 1970, November 1970).
- (b) Teamster contracts - a complete set dating back to 1961.
- (c) List of endorsements.
- (d) Cal Matkin's court statement.
- (e) Judge Marion Smith's ruling.
- (f) List of chain stores and what kinds of lettuce is being carried in boycott cities (% of Antle, % of UFWOC, % of other.) This could be included in the weekly boycott report.
- (g) Pictures of strikers, labor camps, spray rigs, etc. that are suitable for leaflets.
- (h) Copy of Bud Antle's depositions and affidavits.
- (i) Good pesticide information - What pesticides are used on lettuce and other crops? How are they applied? What is the tolerance level in humans, etc.?

Most important, make sure that information coming to us from California is accurate. T.V., newspaper and other media publication of mis-information is not only embarrassing for boycotters but also detrimental to the credibility of UFWOC.

Eagle on the Box

A number of cities reported that they had found UFWOC lettuce boxes in their cities that did not have the eagle stamped on the box.

Discussion brought out the following strong complaints:

- (a) The decision to leave off the eagle was made without consulting - or even informing - boycott cities.
- (b) Some cities, where union warehouse workers do not handle anything but UFWOC union lettuce, got into embarrassing situations because they saw no eagle, and therefore did not handle the lettuce. Although this does demonstrate to chain store executives a measure of our support, it puts solid union backers in awkward situations and really does nothing to our relationship with them.
- (c) The decision itself was very bad. In the first place, taking off the eagle was, in fact, breaking or ignoring a provision in our contracts. If this kind of precedent is set, it can be applied to other contract areas. Secondly, a major part of our job is to educate the public so they will say that no eagle means no sale. We are

encouraging them to always look for the eagle while California is making a decision to remove it.

We propose:

- (a) That that kind of unilateral decision never be made without at least informing boycotters.
- (b) That pressure be put on union growers who are wrapping lettuce to get the eagle on the wrapper. (Andy Boy and Amigo wrapped lettuce lacks the eagle.)
- (c) That the eagle never be taken off any box, crate, or wrapper. As Marcos Munoz pointed out to the entire conference, "Making deals on the label is like making deals with our lives."

Communications

Boycotters would like to know exactly what Hub, Jessica, and Marshall have for job responsibilities. Is Marshall, for example, in charge of communicating with boycott cities? It was brought up that some boycotters tried to reach Marshall for a number of days while he was out on a picket line. It is the opinion of the boycott staff that Marshall - or whoever is in charge of communicating with boycott cities - should be available and should not be getting tied up with other activities.

Also, many boycott cities have found it necessary to open up a number of offices in cities throughout their states which are manned by part-time volunteers. These offices have been particularly important in attacking Bud Antle. We once again request that information sent to primary boycott cities also be sent to secondary cities. We request that you communicate with us by sending copies of your response to this letter to those of us signing below.

Thank you.

VIVA LA HUELGA !

Bill Patterson, Pittsburgh
Shirley Charbonneau, Detroit
Rogelio Uvalle, Minneapolis
Nick Jones, Kansas City
Doug and Harriet, St. Louis
Marcos Munoz, Boston
Father John Bank, Cincinnati
David Carcia, Madison
Jim Lago, Grand Rapids

Fred Heredia and
David Cormier, Fort Wayne -
South Bend
Joe Noll, Dubuque
Richard Trejo, Davenport
Nina Samuels, Ann Arbor
Eliseo Medina, Chicago
Tom Cannon, Indianapolis
Andy Plesko, Champaign