

EL MALCRIADO/3

# Arrests Torpedo W&B Smear Campaign on Fires

RICHGROVE, October 16 -- The latest smear campaign against the farm workers by Whitaker & Baxter, the growers' public relations firm, appeared to go up in a cloud of smoke today, with the arrest of a group of volunteer firemen from Richgrove, who are accused of setting a series of fires in Tulare County.

Five young men were arraigned before Judge Del Rey in Piskey Justice Court and accused of burning down the Jack Radovich packing shed, a number of haystacks, a farm labor camp owned by a Richgrove labor contractor, and several piles of grape boxes at the Schenley Ranch. The young men, including two juveniles, were with one exception members of the Tulare County Volunteer Fire Department, and Tulare County District Attorney Robert Bereman stated, "As far as we can determine, the motivation was merely the additional wages they get with the volunteer fire department making a run to one of the fires."

Whitaker & Baxter, which has been bankrolled by a \$2 million slash fund by the growers to spread anti-union propaganda, had sponsored a series of press conferences

throughout the nation in an attempt to imply a link between the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee and the fires. W & B had brought in a sharp-tongued Michigan State Senator, Mrs. Lorraine Beebe, to read the W & B press release, but the whole publicity campaign had been cooked up in the W & B offices in San Francisco.

W & B's lawyers have managed through careful wording of their releases and smears to avoid outright libel. The fact that their implications are disproved time and again had are totally without any basis in truth or facts doesn't seem to daunt the PR men.

Meanwhile, the local hysteria over the fires, whipped up by W & B, the Delano Record (the local newspaper and mouthpiece of the growers), and grower Jack Pandol, threatens to deprive the accused kids of their rights. Residents of Richgrove reported that cops, sheriff, forestry service investigators, FBI investigators, and State Attorney General's office investigators have been combing through the little town in a veritable witch hunt. When the kids were arrested, some accused with no more than participating in the burning of a haystack, bail was set

at \$12,500 each.

Though none of the accused had any connection with the UPWOC, the Delano Record and grape grower Jack Pandol were still talking about a "link", even after the arrests.

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 EL MALCRIADO SAYS: We have been concerned over these fires, and even more concerned that the growers seem to be using the fires to whip up anti-union hysteria. We hope that the arrests will end both the fires and the hysteria. However, the damage done by W & B and the growers and Delano Record may take a long time to be corrected. It is too much to expect that they will ever apologize for their accusations. It is probably too much to expect that the Delano Police and Fire Departments will ever find out who burned the UPWOC bus or committed other acts of vandalism against the Union offices.

The only one that comes out ahead in a tragedy like this is Whitaker and Baxter, which has pocketed their fees for this phase of the propaganda campaign and are now dreaming up the next act to try to spring on the public.

## STATEMENT OF CIRCULATION

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1979	32,000	3,200
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1983	42,000	4,200
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1986	50,000	5,000
1987	52,000	5,200
1988	55,000	5,500
1989	58,000	5,800
1990	60,000	6,000
1991	62,000	6,200
1992	65,000	6,500
1993	68,000	6,800
1994	70,000	7,000
1995	72,000	7,200
1996	75,000	7,500
1997	78,000	7,800
1998	80,000	8,000
1999	82,000	8,200
2000	85,000	8,500
2001	88,000	8,800
2002	90,000	9,000
2003	92,000	9,200
2004	95,000	9,500
2005	98,000	9,800
2006	100,000	10,000
2007	102,000	10,200
2008	105,000	10,500
2009	108,000	10,800
2010	110,000	11,000
2011	112,000	11,200
2012	115,000	11,500
2013	118,000	11,800
2014	120,000	12,000
2015	122,000	12,200
2016	125,000	12,500
2017	128,000	12,800
2018	130,000	13,000
2019	132,000	13,200
2020	135,000	13,500
2021	138,000	13,800
2022	140,000	14,000
2023	142,000	14,200
2024	145,000	14,500
2025	148,000	14,800
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# CONDONING POISONED FOOD CHAVEZ BLASTS FDA FOR

WASHINGTON, D.C., October 1-- Cesar Chavez, National Director of the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee and several hundred supporters of the farm workers movement picketed in front of the Food and Drug Administration today to protest the FDA's refusal to protect the health of farm workers and consumers being poisoned by chemical pesticides.

Similar protests were planned at FDA offices throughout the nation.

"The FDA has consistently joined with the U. S. Department of Agriculture and other Federal and state agencies in white-washing the problem of pesticides," stated Chavez. "Farm workers are being poisoned while these officials tell the public, 'All is safe, all is well.'"

"Sometimes these agencies seem more concerned about satisfying the big oil companies, chemical companies, and others who produce the poisons, and the ranchers with whom they deal, than with protecting the workers and consumers.

"We're going to tell the American public that these bureaucrats are facilitating the poisoning of America's food, not protecting it."

FDA officials have already pleaded guilty to some of the charges put out by Chavez, or blamed the Department of Agriculture for the growing menace of pesticides on food. "We can't protect the public," complained one regional director of the FDA. "We have only two investigators for the region from Utah to Hawaii." How can we possibly be aware of or control poisonous residues on foods in this area, he complained.

The Union has charged that many foods, and specifically grapes, are covered with poisons when they appear in the markets. FDA officials have claimed, however, that these poisons fall under the pesticide laws, and not under the "Food Additive" law which was used re-

cently to ban cyanamates, chemical sweeteners added to diet soft drinks. The Union has pointed out that the FDA impounded cranberries several years ago because they were contaminated with a poisonous herbicide, amino triazole. Yet FDA officials refused to act when the Union pointed out that over 1000 acres of grapes were treated with this same poison, and that residues of the even more deadly parathion have been found on grapes in many supermarkets.

Finally, there is a law that states, "Food is adulterated if picked, packed, or prepared in conditions where it is exposed to filth." When farm workers pointed out to FDA officials in one confrontation that this is universally the case in Cali-

fornia agriculture, that there are almost never toilets or sanitary facilities available to workers in the fields, the official replied, "We have no evidence of such a thing."

"They certainly invent plenty of excuses as to why they can't, or won't act," said Mrs. Dolores Huerta, UPWOC Vice President, after a run-in with an FDA official. "When you know that there are no controls, it makes you nervous just to buy fruit and vegetables at the stores. This is a problem bigger than our Union, bigger than the grape strike. But we, as farm workers, are the first to suffer from lack of controls in the unrestrained use of these poisons. We have to lead the way in establishing controls, safety procedures, and protection for workers and consumers."

# Poisons In Our Food



The beautiful fruit may have a bitter after-taste