

Trial Set to April 22

Cesar Chavez sat in the courtroom, weakened and pained by 13 days of his religious fast.

Along the corridors, around the lobby walls, and lining the walkways outside, more than 1,000 Mexican, Negro, Filipino, and Anglo farm workers stood silently or quietly singing.

The date was February 27. Chavez and the Union were on trial.

The charge: 12 alleged violations of an anti-strike injunction issued last August by Kern County Superior Court Judge J. Kelly Steele.

The characters in the drama had first appeared the day before. But the presiding judge of the Kern County Superior Court claimed no courtroom was available for hearing the case. Witnesses were ordered to report the following day.

Meanwhile, Kern County judicial officials were hurriedly arranging for retired Los Angeles Judge Morton Barker to come to Bakersfield to hear the case.

No local judge would take it on, many observers said.

On the second day, the Los Angeles judge an-

nounced that he would not subject the fasting Chavez to the ordeal of a lengthy trial at that time.

He asked how much time UFWOC wanted for an extension and then granted 45 days, suggesting April 15 as a possible new date. Giumarra's attorney, William A. Quinlan, told the judge he couldn't make it on the 15th, so the hearing was re-set for April 22 in Superior Court at Bakersfield.

After the hearing, more than a thousand people returned to Delano for a meeting at the Forty Acres. Representatives of all the Union ranches came to camp for several days in tents beside the building where Chavez was keeping his fast.

Farm workers, Union staff people and representatives from the country's most important labor organizations expressed their solidarity and resolved to return for another orderly demonstration on April 22.

William Kircher of the AFL-CIO and Walter Reuther of United Auto Workers addressed the crowd, and Almaden ranch committee chairman Francisco Soria

sang "Las Mananitas" in honor of Cesar's name day.

And while the Union waited for the second act of its frame-up ordeal, Giumarra's foremen continued to cruise the picketlines with their rifles mounted in their pickup trucks, trying the patience of farm workers who have been on strike for more than 50 months.



by Juanita Herrera
as told to El Malcriado
Mrs. Herrera, striking farm worker and mother of four, recently returned from New York. She tells of strike activities in New York and of the shocking arrests of several farm workers last month:

There are about 50 of us, mostly from Delano and Richgrove and around here, that are on the boycott in New York. Six people just left with Marcos Muñoz for Boston, and some are going to Chicago.

For three weeks there was no snow, but now there is snow and slush. It was 18 degrees when we left. We used to picket every day at the Produce Market, where they sell the fruit and vegetables to the markets. But we haven't done much picketing since the arrest. My husband and myself were arrested, and 22 1/2 in all (we say 1/2 because there was a 6 year old boy. We were in jail all day, and we didn't have anything to eat all day but one slice of bologna and two slices of bread apiece.

Now I think I know New York, because we were

in jail there! We were in jail from 7 in the morning until 4 in the afternoon. It was in the Bronx. We hope that the arrest and being in jail will bring some benefits for us.

They said we were disturbing the peace. We were surprised when they arrested us. We only said "Don't buy scab grapes" and we were singing sometimes. A lot of people came to the jail and protested the arrest. There buses of San ferners and Longshoremen came and picketed to support us. The guy that put the complaint dropped the charge.

Now we contact unions, small groups, churches. We talk to them, ask for help and support. We tell them how the strike began and how we want a union. We have great support there, unions, churches, students, Puerto Ricans, Negroes. Everyone knows about our strike.

Boycott Builds

NEW YORK, March 14--The Huelega has come to New York. Over 50 strikers left Delano in January and traveled by bus to New York, to start a full time boycott of Giumarra grapes and other grapes grown by growers who won't sign contracts with the Union.

Now full time boycott activities have started in Chicago, under Eliseo Medina, and in Boston, under Marcos Muñoz. Dolores Huerta and Fred Ross lead the boycott in New York.

"We will stay here right through the next season, if necessary," Fred Ross told El Malcriado last week.

The basic tactic is to inform and organize every sympathetic group in the East to support the farm workers' struggle, Ross said. The main pressure has been directed against Victor Joseph and Son, vegetable and fruit brokers, who sell Giumarra grapes to many of the big Eastern chain stores.

The boycott also includes all non-union grapes, since Giumarra uses many other growers' labels in an effort to defeat the boycott.

Members of all major unions, students, clergy and religious groups, civil rights groups, Negro and Puerto Rican

groups, and concerned citizens have formed a massive coalition to close the New York area to scab grapes. If necessary, the entire Hunts Point Produce Market, the huge fresh fruit and vegetable market serving the New York-New Jersey area, will be picketed.

As one sympathetic labor leader from New York put it, "Since Giumarra is deaf to the pleas of the strikers, maybe he will listen to us. Giumarra better either bargain with and recognize the Union, or send no more grapes to New York. We would hate to tie up this beautiful market next spring."

