

FARM WORKERS EVICTED FOR REVEALING WASCO SLUM CONDITIONS

WASCO, January 23--Two farm worker families were evicted from the Wasco Labor Camp on Monday, January 20, allegedly because they permitted cameramen from KERO-TV, Bakersfield, to film the inside of their cabins.

Wasco is about 10 miles southeast of Delano.

On December 24, the Bakersfield Californian had published an article which sharply criticized conditions in the camp.

Camp Manager C. B. Roberts, who appears in the film "Huelga", challenged the Californian's story and called reporter Bill Blocher a liar and the perpetrator of a hoax.

After the publication of the story, the Kern County Health Department investigated the camp, and Vernon S. Reichard, director of Environmental Health, gave a report.

The Wasco camp charges \$45 a month rent for two-room cabins. If there is a refrigerator, the cabins cost \$51 a month.

The Health Department report included the following items:

"Toilet facilities found to be in the most insanitary condition, revealing neglect or lack of maintenance. Needed dark stains, fecal matter, broken toilet seats, strong fecal odors and clogged wash basins."

"Waste water (in the laundry area) draining over the floor; water, dirt and debris cover the floor area where people stand and wash their clothes."

"No running water is provided to any of the units. Tenants are furnished with gas hot plates and these in most situations noted, provide heat also."

"Garbage cans found to be in the most insanitary condition and many cans were dilapidated and no longer serviceable."

The garbage cans are located at



Victor Antu and Jose Vigil and their families were the victims of a heartless act which left them homeless in the middle of the winter.

the ends of the buildings, where children play and tenants draw drinking water, the Californian said.

The manager, Roberts, replied that this was "better than living on a canal bank. We didn't ask these people to come here."

On Thursday, January 16, camp resident Victor Anni, who had talked with the KERO reporters, received the following letter from Roberts:

"We must have payment of your account by Monday, January 20th, 1969, or ask you to vacate the cabin. Your account amounts to \$42... Ten dollars of the total was for a 'deposit.'"

Monday came, Anni told EL MALCRIADO, he could not come up with the money, and he had to move out.

Mrs. Anni's sister and brother-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Jose Vigil, also were living in the Camp. When they, too, were evicted, both families

rented a \$48 shack in Wasco, where they are now living.

Both families told EL MALCRIADO that they are sure that they were evicted because they allowed the reporters to film the cabins in the camp.

Both Vigil and Anni said that they had previously arranged with camp authorities to pay the three weeks' rent they owed as soon as they began work in the potato packing shed.

At a meeting of many camp residents on Wednesday night, January 22, many families voiced complaints about conditions and appointed spokesmen to call for further investigation.

"The Wasco Camp was built 25 years ago to meet a World War II emergency need for male farm worker shelter," the Californian noted.

WISCONSIN BAN ON DDT:

Scientists Warn of Permanent Pesticide Effects

DELANO, January 27--Dr. Richard M. Welch, biochemical pharmacologist at Burroughs-Wellcome Research Laboratories reported that the pesticide DDT may be causing changes to human sex organs and hormones.

Welch told an audience in Madison, Wisconsin, that after experimenting with rats to determine the effects DDT had on them, he found that the sexual mechanisms of male and female rats were altered. He added that DDT injections caused a type of false pregnancy on the females. "If one can extrapolate data from animals to man, then one can say this change in animals probably does occur in man," Welch said.

Welch added that DDT also interferes with the normal use of drugs causing the body to break down the drugs faster than it normally would.

Meanwhile, the Izaak Walton League and Citizens for Natural Resources Association filed a petition with the State Natural Resources Department calling for a ban on DDT.

In Davis, California, James O. Keith, a biologist for the federal Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, reported that the careless use of pesticides such as DDT is a threat to the very existence of wild life. The ability of peregrine falcons, for instance, to reproduce successfully, has been affected by thin-shelled eggs resulting from the adult falcon's exposure to DDT.

In his study, Dr. Keith found that birds in contact with DDT produce eggs with thinner eggshells. These thin-shelled eggs usually break during nesting, making the extinction of several species of birds an immediate threat unless DDT is restricted from use.

Research from Keith and other biologists has shown that shell thickness for these species of birds was

consistent until 1945. From then on, as the use of DDT spread, the egg thickness averaged about 20 percent thinner.

Illinois Christians Condemn Grape Growers

CARBONDALE, ILL.--The Illinois Council of Churches voted to support the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee boycott of California table grapes at a meeting on January 17.

Of the 125 delegates present at the meeting, more than two thirds voted in favor of the boycott resolution.

Eliseo Medina is the UFWOC boycott representative for Illinois and spoke to the group before the vote was taken.

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GROWERS REJECT SANITATION LAWS

WASHINGTON, D.C.--The Food and Drug Administration of the Federal government proposed new regulations covering "sanitation and production practices, including the condition of plant buildings and grounds, equipment, sanitary facilities for employees, and controls in processing, packaging, and storing food products.

When the growers and packers of fruit and vegetables found they would have to keep food clean, they launched into action.

On December 20, the proposal was revised.

According to the Produce News, a produce industry trade paper known as the "Pink Sheet," the Food and Drug Administration has EXEMPTED establishments involved...in the harvesting, storage, or distribution of raw agricultural commodities from (the) regulations.

"Original proposals...would have included packers and packagers of fresh fruits and vegetables, but the United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Association successfully sought exemption for the industry," the Produce News gloated.

In other words, cleanliness is quite in order for food handlers...except for the fruit and vegetable industry.

Caveat emptor--Let the buyer beware.