



Cops prepare to gas Colorado farm workers in the Kitayama floral workers strike at Brighton.

Equality Under The Law In Florida

BELLE GLADE, FLORIDA -- A Florida law prohibits a farm worker who rents a house or an apartment in a labor camp from having any visitors, even his attorney, to his dwelling that the owner of the house or apartment disapproves of for any reason, it was revealed at a conference on migrant legislation here.

Another Florida law which came under discussion permits toilet facilities to be located 200 feet from the house. One toilet for every 15 women or 20 men is a permissible ratio.

And that's America in 1969.

Cops Tear-Gas Colorado Strikers

BRIGHTON, COLORADO--The eight-month National Floral Workers Organization strike against Kitayama Brothers flower farm near Brighton ended on Saturday, February 15, with the tear-gassing of five women-picketers who had chained themselves to the gates of the farm.

The five women, Mrs. Mary Padilla; Mrs. Martha del Real, Mrs. Lupe Briseno, NFWO president, Mrs. Rachel Sandoval, and Mrs. Mary Salas, fastened loops of chain around their waists to keep scab workers from entering the fields, but scabs entered through a back road.

It was reported that at about 7:30 AM, Weld County Deputy Sheriffs advanced on the women carrying a device with a nozzle labeled "pepper fog" after a Kitayama employee had cut the chain at each post of the gate.

Sgt. D. R. Rutz of the sheriff's department thrustured on the machine, throwing a snow-white layer of gas on the women. Half-crawling, half-walking, the picketers dragged the chain with them out onto the roadway, assisted by men in the group.

The NFWO, composed mostly of Chicana women who worked for Kitayama, began the strike and picketing for higher wages and better working conditions.

Led by Mrs. Briseno, who was fired from the company in May, they demanded \$1.60 per hour, which is a 45-cent an hour increase, and recognition of the newly formed union. Kitayama has refused to negotiate on any of the demands.

The Crusade for Justice and several other Mexican-American organizations in Denver have pledged to support the NFWO all the way.

In another incident, Gina Gonzalez, 17 year old daughter

of Corky Gonzales, director of the Crusade for Justice, was run down by a car while on the NFWO picket line.

After the incidents, members of the NFWO gathered at the Brighton Action Center for a conference in which they decided to call off the strike temporarily.

Jim Garcia, a spokesman for the organization, said after the conference, "We are ending the strike today. We are quitting the picket line, but we are not quitting our struggle for farm and floral workers."

"We are changing the battleground to the state legislature. And I can almost guarantee that, come summer, there will be similar type struggles to unionize floral workers in northeastern Colorado."

The pickets, waving the red banner with the black eagles and "Viva la huelga" signs, drove away promising to "come back again, and again, as long as Kitayama oppresses people."

Peach Growers Hear Cohen

STOCKTON, February 20--UPWOC Attorney Jerome Cohen spoke to the California Freestone Peach Association's annual meeting here last night, and pointed out that there was no difference between farm workers bargaining with canners and processors to get a better price for their peaches. The Peach Association was organized by peach growers as a collective bargaining agent for the growers, in dealing with the canners. The Union serves the same function for the workers, Cohen noted.

Cohen thanked the peach growers for inviting a representative of UPWOC to speak to them. "If the

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THREE DIE IN LABOR CAMP BLAZE

FLORIDA MIGRANTS STUNNED BY TRAGEDY

HOMESTEAD, FLORIDA -- Migrant farm workers, farmers, businessmen, clergymen and public officials met in Homestead, Florida, on Thursday, February 20, to discuss housing conditions for migrant workers. The meeting was called after three children burned to death in a labor camp fire in South Dade, Florida.

Rev. David Russell of the Archdiocese of Miami, one of the meeting participants, called migrant shacks "incinerators of human flesh," and said that if no action is taken, "I suppose next year more children will burn to death."

Russell also pointed out that the \$50 a month rental paid by many migrants, for bare, two room frame shacks, is far higher than most middle class residents of South Dade pay for their homes.

"A Migrant Legal Service study of housing shows migrants pay \$1.89 per square foot per year, compared to an attorney's home, with air conditioning, plumbing and all conveniences, that costs \$1.74 per square foot per year," Frederika Smith of the Migrant Legal Service reported.

Russell also suggested the elimination of the "grandfather clause," which exempts pre-1963 migrant housing from new regulations and said a housing code for camps must be enforced.

At the meeting, a 10-man committee was named to study the problem of migrant housing and to recommend improvements. Not a single farm worker was assigned to this committee.

The children who burned to death during the fire were a daughter and two grandsons of Mr. and Mrs. James Lewis. They live in a 16- by 16-foot shack at the Krome Avenue Farm Housing Center, for which they pay \$12.80 a week.

Just recently, they almost had a house provided by the Homestead Housing Authority. A migrant aide found it for them, then discovered that they were

ineligible. The house had two bed rooms, but county regulations say there are too many in the Lewis family to live in a house that small. So they have to stay in their 16-foot-square hovel where county regulations do not apply.



Two of the surviving children of the Lewis family asleep in their one-room Homestead, Florida shack.

DON'T WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE TO DO YOUR TAXES.

TAX PROBLEMS?



Union members who need help in filling in their tax forms should come to the Service Center, 105 Asti St. in Delano, or the UPWOC Office at 10913 Main Street in Lamont for assistance. Bring all available information, check stubs, or records of income. Deadline for filing taxes is April 15.