



Lionel Steinberg (right), a Coachella Valley grape grower and the United Farm Workers union organizer, Cesar Chavez, (second, right), sign an historic agreement between striking workers and three Coachella farmers during a press conference held by the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. Looking on are, front row, from left: Bishop Hugh A. Donohoe, Fresno, Archbishop Timothy Manning, Los Angeles and auxiliary Bishop Joseph Donnelly of Hartford. Standing, from left: Msgr. George Higgins, USSC, Bishop Mark Hurley, Santa Rosa and Msgr. Roger Mahoney, Fresno director of Catholic Social Services. Action was sponsored by U.S. bishops. (RNS)

New Accord Reached In Grape Situation

Coachella, Calif. — (RNS)— California's striking grape workers registered another breakthrough in their prolonged work stoppage here when the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee won union recognition on two ranches and the growers agreed to contract negotiations.

The union agreements with two ranch-owners — Kelvin K. Larson and his brother C. C. Larson who farm some 360 acres of grapes — brings to five the total number of agreements worked out since April 1.

On Kelvin's ranch the workers voted 79-2 for UFWOC affiliation, and at his brother's, the vote was 74 to 0.

Again, as in late March, the agreement was worked out with the assistance of a Catholic bishops' mediation group, established last November by the Na-

tional Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB). And contracts with the growers are expected to follow the terms of the accords reached April 1 between the David Freedman Co. of Thermal and Indio and two other growers and UFWOC.

The latest affiliation ballot was supervised by Msgr. Roger Mahony, director of Catholic Social Services for the Fresno diocese, and Rev. Lloyd Saatjin, pastor of the United Methodist Church in Palm Springs. Both sides had notified Auxiliary Bishop Joseph Donnelly of Hartford, Conn., chairman of the bishops mediation committee, that they would like the ballot conducted under the supervision of an NCCB representative and Mr. Saatjin.

In Hartford, Bishop Donnelly praised both sides for reaching an agreement to negotiate, and especially for ending doubts that the workers involved wanted union representation.

"We hope and pray," said the bishop, "that the contract negotiations will be successful. It is

obvious that there is much good will among the growers and workers in the Coachella Valley. A speedy settlement is in their mutual interest."

He expressed the gratitude of his fellow bishops on the mediating committee "for the opportunity to serve in the noble cause of bringing people together to settle their disputes in the spirit of justice and charity."

The grape harvest will involve some 7,000 acres of grapes and 55 growers. The April 1 agreement with Freedman Co. covered about 1,100 acres. If terms are reached with the Larson holdings, it will mean that about 20 per cent of the valleys grape acreage will be under union contracts.

Reportedly, two large growers from the Delano area in the San Joaquin Valley held secret talks last week in Los Angeles with Cesar Chavez and an official of the Federal Mediation Service. The talks recessed while both sides studied proposals.

Church's Role Questioned

Niles, Ill. — (NC) — Auxiliary Bishop Harold R. Perry, SVD., of New Orleans, asked priests meeting at St. John Brebeuf school here whether the Church is serious in teaching its doctrines of social justice.

Bishop Perry, the only black Catholic bishop in the U.S., raised his question after pointing out that no one is untouched by "the widening gap between separate societies . . . the most crucial domestic and religious question of our times."

All too often, the bishop continued, those seeking Church guidance on social questions are met with silence. "For the same fears, hesitancy and reluctance that afflict them have, on occasion, gripped their religious leaders."

Bishop Perry said the answer to whether the Church is serious in matters of social justice lies "in a total commitment of heads and hearts" to "convince a skeptical generation" that the gospel of love is genuine.

\$25 Billion For School Aid

Washington —(NC)— President Nixon signed into law a bill authorizing \$25 billion for school aid which should give Catholic education a larger dose of federal funds.

But the President's statement that signing the bill "should not be interpreted as a commitment to seek or approve this unrealistic level of appropriations," is worrying some educators. It is viewed by some as an indication he may not sign the bill Congress is expected to approve for release of funds the school aid bill authorizes.

The bill the President signed extends through June 30, 1973, 1965 Elementary and Secondary programs funded under the Education Act. ESEA has been called a "landmark in government legislation" by Catholic educators because it is one of the few school aid plans provid-

ing a number of programs in which public and nonpublic schools share equitably — particularly Title II of the act which makes grants to states for purchasing school library materials.

The new law also provides more than a half billion dollars more next year for ESEA Title I, providing aid to educationally disadvantaged children, and a consolidation of ESEA Title III and Title V-A of the National Defense Education Act, meaning that nonpublic school students who qualify for supplementary services under Title III will now be eligible for guidance and counseling programs under Title V-A.

The real value of the bill to both public and nonpublic schools depends on the funds Congress and the President release to be spent.

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