

August 6, 1976

To: Members, National Executive Board
Division Directors, Contract Administration Department
Field Office Directors
Boycott Offices
La Paz Community

From: Eliseo Medina, Director
Contract Administration Department

Re: Report on Recent Teamster Activity

We want to bring you up to date on the latest Teamster "organizing drive" that took place over the past week in the Lamont area.

We had heard rumors that there was to be a Teamster-called strike at the Mosesian Ranch on Monday, August 2, 1976. Larry Tramutt, Central Valley Division Director and Vince Silva, Lamont Field Office Director, went there Monday morning to check things out.

At 6 AM there were about 8 Teamster organizers present, including Pete Baclig. They told the workers that if they did not walk out, the company would think they had a Mickey Mouse operation. At 7 AM the supervisor told some workers that if they wanted to go out on strike it was OK. The end result was that of the 1,000 workers, about 150 were stopped for about 1/2 hour. Mosesian showed up at the field and announced that he was going to start paying \$3.15/hour (a 45¢/hour increase and the same wage as is in the newly signed Teamster contract with Dalton-Richardson.)

We learned that Mosesian told a reporter that on August 1, about 8 Lamont growers met with Teamster reps at the Mosesian camp. The Teamsters said that if the growers did not sign the Dalton-Richardson agreement, there would be a good possibility of a walk out on Monday. Mosesian said that on Monday the workers did not know what was happening and that they did not want to walk out. He said he agreed to sign a new contract with the Teamsters because he was trying to prevent a massacre. The Teamsters, he said, had guns and clubs, and rocks were thrown. People were jerked out of the fields by their shirts.

The same reporter also talked with Teamster rep Pete Baclig on Monday. Baclig claimed that 90% of the 1,000 Mosesian workers walked off their jobs on Monday morning in a wild cat strike. "They called the Teamster office," Baclig said, "and asked for help. We were completely surprised by the workers' action and did not sanction the strike."

On August 3, the Teamsters moved over to El Rancho and were telling workers to walk out the next morning and attend a rally at the local school. We had a meeting with our people and decided to start visiting all the workers to let them know their rights. The next morning, some of our people went to the school and found about 13 Teamster goons and no workers. When it was obvious that nobody was going to show up, our organizers went out to El Rancho fields and leafleted the 800 workers. The response was very good, with lots of shouts of "Viva Chavez." The Teamsters were caught off guard and could think about nothing but trying to harrass our people. A lot of the workers got really mad at the Teamsters because of it.

Our organizers also talked with many people who signed declarations stating that on Monday the Teamsters had pulled guns on them to try to get them to come out.

On the evening of August 4, we got about 40 workers to go see Kossian at his house. They had three demands:

1. that everybody get the \$3.15 wage increase
2. that the people who had been laid off get rehired
3. that the company not sign with the Teamsters

Kossian agreed to rehire all who were present who had been laid off, and said that he was not going to sign with the Teamsters unless they could get him an indemnification clause to protect him in case he was sued for signing an illegal contract.

The next morning all the workers were leafleted announcing our victory at Kossian. Everybody was really excited about it.

Other growers in the area share Kossian's sentiments about the Teamsters. John J. Kovasewich has circulated a leaflet in English and Spanish telling the employees that it would be illegal for him to negotiate a new contract with the Teamsters even if he wanted to, which he does not. At Maldenian, Foreman Gene Fleitas told our organizers that the workers did not care at all about the Teamsters and that they would not walk out.

However our organizers went, they were welcomed by the workers. And towards the end of the week, the Teamster goons had disappeared. Rumors are that they are going to Delano, hoping to shake the loose image they are rapidly earning. They have lost in Coachella; They have lost in Lamont. Delano next. These strikes and they're out!