

It is a great pleasure for me to join with you in listening to this testimony which I am sure will be most helpful to all of us in our deliberations on this matter.

Thank you.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you very much, Mr. Burton.

You are indeed welcome, Mr. Chavez, and it is a pleasure to have you here. If you would, introduce those who are with you for the benefit of the stenographer, and then you may proceed as you wish.

STATEMENTS OF CESAR CHAVEZ, DIRECTOR, UFWOC, AFL-CIO, DELANO, CALIF.; JOE SERDA, CHAIRMAN, RANCH COMMITTEE, SIERRA VISTA RANCH, DELANO, CALIF.; MACK LYONS, CHAIRMAN, DIGIORGIO RANCH COMMITTEE, ARVIN, CALIF.; GILBERT PADILLA, DIRECTOR OF ORGANIZATION, UFWOC, AFL-CIO, RIO GRANDE CITY, TEX.; DOMINGO ARREDONDO, CHAIRMAN, UFWOC, AFL-CIO, RIO GRANDE CITY, TEX.; LARRY ITLIONG, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, UFWOC, AFL-CIO, DELANO, CALIF.; MRS. DOLORES HUERTA, DIRECTOR OF NEGOTIATIONS, UFWOC, AFL-CIO, DELANO, CALIF.

Mr. CHAVEZ. Thank you very much.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, we are very happy to be here this morning to tell you about our efforts to organize farmworkers and to point out to you the need of passing the legislation to cover farmworkers under the National Labor Relations Act.

First of all, to my extreme left, we have Brother Joe Serda, who is the chairman of the Sierra Vista Ranch.

Then we have Mrs. Dolores Huerta, who heads the negotiations for the union.

Then to my immediate left, Brother Larry Itliong, who is the assistant director of the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee.

To my extreme right, we have Mack Lyons, who is the chairman of the DiGiorgio Arvin Ranch Committee.

Then next to him is Brother Gilbert Padilla, who is leading the Texas strike for the union in Rio Grande City.

Then to my immediate right, we have Brother Domingo Arredondo, a striker in Texas and Rio Grande City.

With your permission, we are going to speak from notes and will attempt to give you the story of our struggles, mostly in Delano, to point out the need for such legislation.

In September 1965, the farmworkers strike started in Delano. The strike was one for recognition; over 3,600 workers assembled and voted to strike 40 grape growers in the area.

The evening when the strike vote was taken, we asked the workers for a 4-day period in which to try to get to the growers and see if we could convince them to negotiate with us. In that 4-day period, we sent to them people who we thought they would listen to in the community and they were, of course, rejected.

We sent registered letters to them. When that failed, and failed in the form that they refused to accept the letters, then we sent wires to them. Then we tried to get a priest in the community to go see them