

I saw most of these petitions and when I saw them there were very, very few signatures on them because we were doing quite a bit of work on the inside. The workers had seen how the Teamsters were operating, their tactics, what they were doing and saying.

Even though we are just grape pickers and not very intelligent, we know what we want. We know what is best for us, and so on.

Now, as time went by, DiGiorgio kept on firing workers. It is very easy to understand how they knew who to fire because those workers who wanted AFL-CIO never signed a petition; they never signed a Teamster card. So, it would be very easy for the company to understand what this worker had in mind, what the other worker had in mind.

In the month of July, just before the elections, all those Mexicans who live in this one camp were fired and they immediately went to the union saying that they were fired for no reason at all. The company leader said that these people were not fired; they were simply being laid off or there was not any work available.

Now, having worked there for many, many years, I will say that from time to time we do get laid off but as a rule all of us would get laid off; there would only be a skeleton crew left to do whatever work there was. In other words, the older workers would stay and everybody else would go.

But, in this particular case, only these people were singled out and here is the way it happened. When they got in that day from work their luggage or whatever it was was out there on the front lawn and the bunkhouses and the cabins were padlocked. Many of these workers told the company that they wanted to stay there and sleep overnight and they were told that they had to leave. When they kept on insisting, within a matter of a few minutes there were three police cars out there and those people were told that they had to go.

Later on I came to find out that Cesar had talked to somebody or done something and the major part of those people were rehired again. I take it that the idea was for those people just to disappear because the elections were being talked about or negotiated in some way or another.

Later in that month of July, we were told that there would be an election at Sierra Vista to see what union we wanted to represent us. We were told by Cesar to boycott those elections, that they were false.

Now, I may be wrong in this, but I understand that Cesar had a meeting with the company officials and a distant date was set for elections and then the company the following day, I believe, said, "We will have elections the day after tomorrow."

That irritated Cesar quite a bit and, if I am not mistaken, he had a court order to get the union's name off of the ballot. So, actually, the voting turned out to be what they call a write-in because the Teamsters also were dropped.

We were taken to this voting area by one truck at a time. When my crew got there, all of us refused to get off to vote. We were told many times to vote, that we had to vote. Before all this, we had been told many times before by company personnel that we had to vote with the Teamsters.