

AFTERNOON SESSION

Mr. THOMPSON. The subcommittee will be in order.

Mrs. HUERTA. Mr. Chairman, our next witness will be Mr. Mack Lyons.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you very much.

Will you please proceed as you wish?

STATEMENT OF MACK LYONS, CHAIRMAN, DIGIORGIO RANCH
COMMITTEE, ARVIN, CALIF.

Mr. LYONS. Mr. Chairman, I would like to tell you about 10 months of organizing but it would take too long to tell the whole story. What I really want to do now is tell you some of the experiences that I had during these 10 months.

You know, in the testimony you heard you have heard that it is pretty tough to organize without being covered by the laws that other industries have. Now, when the workers started to organize at the DiGiorgio Farms, like the Sierra Vista Ranch, they had to organize secretly; they had to sign authorization cards secretly. They thought they would get elections by doing this but instead company representatives came from Delano and they made speeches, they were telling the workers that they didn't object to them having unions, having elections, but when they left the workers at the DiGiorgio Farms never heard of elections, never heard of the DiGiorgio representatives any more. When they started to ask about elections some of them got fired, some of them got blacklisted. They were told not to be caught at union meetings, not to be talking to union organizers.

When the company found that this would not work, well, the Teamsters came and were permitted to come on company property at any hour that they wanted, they could talk to the workers. In fact, the company was encouraging the workers at DiGiorgio Farms to talk to Teamsters and there were instances where workers at the DiGiorgio Farms were hired by Teamsters. I do not know this to be a fact but I believe they were hired by Teamsters to sign other workers up on these authorization cards and they were getting \$5 for every person that they signed up.

After the workers found out they could talk to the Teamsters without being fired or blacklisted, they started asking the Teamsters for elections. When they talked to the Teamsters about elections the Teamsters would always talk about something else. If they pressed them too hard, they would just walk away from them, would not talk to them.

After DiGiorgio found that this would not work, the workers got together and signed a petition for an election. Out of 400 workers, 350 of them signed this petition and five of them took it to Governor Brown. About a week later Governor Brown sent letters to the workers that had signed this petition suggesting that they take this matter to Robert DiGiorgio, the president of the DiGiorgio Fruit Corp.

A week later 15 workers from Arvin left Arvin about 5 o'clock in the morning, we got to San Francisco at 12 noon the same day, and we went up to Mr. DiGiorgio's office. We asked to see Mr. DiGiorgio and the excuse was that he was out to lunch, but when they found that we were going to stay until Mr. DiGiorgio returned from lunch