

*Rally and union meetings at Belle Glade*

We obtained information from several sources concerning activities in Belle Glade on December 11, 1966. In general, the information obtained from these various sources is in agreement as to the nature of the activities, although there is some inconsistency in details. The essence of the pertinent information obtained and the inconsistencies are summarized below.

*Permit for rally*

Mr. Howard Gorham, a staff writer for the Tampa Tribune stated to us that he had been told by James Pierce, IUD, AFL-CIO, that (1) he (Pierce) had applied for a permit to hold a union rally in Belle Glade but was rejected because he did not have a local office, (2) at that time Father Martin Walsh, President of the Coordinating Committee of Farm Workers (CCFW), "went down the line" of CCFW affiliates until he found one (CAF) who had a local office, and (3) CAF applied for and obtained the permit.

We examined a copy of the application for the permit for the rally and found that it was signed by Margaret Taylor, CAF Regional Director for Palm Beach County, and that the purpose of the rally was stated to be "to provide farm workers the opportunity of discussing mutual social and economic problems." The application showed that Ed King, a crew leader and President of UAWA, and Father Walsh, President of CCFW, would be in charge of the rally.

We were advised by Dr. Hardeman that the December 11, 1966, rally was not a union rally but, rather, a farm workers' rally, sponsored by CCFW, to provide farm workers an opportunity to discuss mutual social and economic problems. Richard Wiggins, CAF Program Director, said that CAF obtained the permit for the rally after CCFW's application for a permit was rejected because CCFW did not have a local office.

*Nature of rally*

Don Hoffman, Executive Director of the Management Research Institute, West Palm Beach, said that he was present at the rally; that there were a number of speakers, including Dr. Hardeman and Mr. Nicholas Zonarich, AFL-CIO; that all of the speeches had the same theme—organization; and that the principal speaker was Mr. Zonarich. Mr. Hoffman said that the speeches generally were to the effect that, if there was unity, there would be hope for the farm workers—better pay, better housing, better education, better sanitation, and better health facilities. Mr. Hoffman also said that in his speech Dr. Hardeman told the workers that the people on the platform, including Zonarich, could "do the job for you."

Mr. Charles Schiele, a field representative of the Management Research Institute, told us that he was present at the rally and that it was his conclusion that its sole purpose was to unite the farm workers through the union. Another observation by Mr. Schiele, with which Mr. Hoffman concurred, was that the general feeling among farm workers was that the whole attempt at union organizing had the approval and backing of Washington—meaning the Government poverty program. Mr. Schiele also said that the farm workers refer to CAF and AFSC employees and to VISTA volunteers as "people from Washington."

Howard Gorham said that he was present at the rally and that it was not entirely pitched to union organizing. He referred us to the following statement from an article which he wrote for the Tampa Tribune of December 12, 1966, and which he said was his recollection of the statement made at the rally by the President of CAF.

"Dr. Thomas P. Hardeman, director of the Community Action Fund and a member of the CCFW told the group it must seek its goals and, 'if there be farm work, you have got to have these things before the farm work is done. If your voice is not loud enough, it still won't be done—we have eight groups here (in the CCFW) and if all work together, we'll get it.'"

Mr. Gorham said that Dr. Hardeman's talk followed a talk by Father Walsh in which Father Walsh spoke of inadequate living conditions, lack of schooling for children, filth and lack of sanitation in the camps, and the unavailability of workmen's compensation. Mr. Gorham said that Dr. Hardeman's reference to eight groups in CCFW included IUD, AFL-CIO.

Mr. Calvin Clay, an employee of the Florida State Employment Service, Belle Glade, told us that he was present at the rally, that he had heard Dr. Hardeman tell the assemblage that the people on the platform could get them better housing and so forth, and that Father Walsh made this same statement several times during his talk.