

GRAPE S O F W A R

1. U.S. Grape Shipments to South Vietnam

In 1965 and 1966, when the Delano grape strike began, South Vietnam was the 25th largest importer of U.S. fresh grapes, importing under 350,000 pounds or \$40,000 worth of grapes (U.S. Dept. of Commerce figures). California produces over 90% of U.S. fresh table grapes. During this period, UFWOC was striking several major California wine grape growers.

In 1967, the year UFWOC initiated the boycott of Giumarra grapes (the Giumarra Corp. is the worlds largest grape grower). In 1968, with the UFWOC boycott expanded to all California grapes, private shipments to South Vietnam were nearly tripled to \$476,607 (2,855,016). This impoverished nation has become the worlds second largest importer of California grapes.

It should be noted that these export figures are for private, commercial sales and do not include grape shipments to U.S. Armed Forces, to U.S. government employees overseas, or to the Canal Zone. However, in addition to private exports shipments, these U.S. Department of Commerce figures DO NOT INCLUDE shipments under foreign aid under Foreign Assistance Act, for Dept. of Defense Military Assistance Program grants and for agricultural commodities under P.L. 480. Since specific breakdowns of U.S. grape exports under these government programs are not shown in this report, the following questions arise: (1) are non-union California grapes being exported to South Vietnam under U.S. government programs? (2) are California grapes transported to South Vietnam in U.S. government ships and planes? (3) are these grapes imported by South Vietnamese middlemen for resale to U.S. government commissaries and PX's? In short, is the U.S. Government using public programs to break the UFWOC strike and boy tt by providing new markets for struck grape growers?

<u>USE</u>	<u>GRAPE PURCHASES</u>		
	<u>FISCAL YEAR</u>	<u>POUNDS</u>	<u>DOLLARS</u>
1. Total Department of Defense Purchase ¹	1966-67-68 (3 yr. average)	7,500,000	1,200,000
	1969-2 quarters	8,000,000	1,260,000
	1969-estimate	16,000,000	2,500,000
2. Department of Defense Purchase for S. Vietman	1967	468,000	70,200
	1968	555,000	94,350
	1969-2 quarters*	2,047,695	n.a.
	1969-estimate	4,000,000	n.a.
3. Private Commercial Shipments to South Vietnam ²	<u>CALENDAR YEAR</u>		
	1965	244,952	32,438
	1966	331,662	67,533
	1967	1,194,988	214,330
	1968	2,855,016	476,607

Source: 1. U.S. Dept. of Defense fact sheet Dept. of Defense use of table grapes, 2/12/68: Frank Mankiewicz and Tom Braden "Eight Pounds of Grapes Per Man" Fresno Bee 4/25/60.

2. U.S. Bureau of the Census, U.S. Exports, Report ft 410, annual.

*July-December only: n.a., not available

(con't on other side)

2. Military Grape Purchases

The military has been buying up dumped California grapes, especially for shipment to South Vietnam. In response to repeated requests by U.S. Senators and Representatives, concerned religious groups, the press and UFWOC, the Pentagon has finally made public information on its grape purchases.

In 1969, the Defense Department was shipping EIGHT POUNDS OF GRAPES PER MAN to American soldiers in South Vietnam.

A recent SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE (10/4/68 p.2) article notes that "local Defense Department officials acknowledged buying the grapes, and in ever increasing amounts, from some of the growers who are targets of a nation wide farm union boycott.

At 15¢ per pound, one fact is clear--the U.S. Dept. of Defense is providing a market of last resort for the grapes struck growers are dumping on the market.

The gigantic jump in Dept. of Defense grape shipments to Vietnam in 1968-69--at a time when the troop level there had been stable for two years--raises other disturbing questions. Who's eating all these grapes--certainly they are not flown in refrigerated mess kits to our boys in the field? Also which growers provided the Dept. of Defense with table grapes? Are the contracts allocated across the boarder or are they concentrated in the hands of a few grower-packer-shipper conglomerates like the Giumarra Corp., which has 12,459 acres of land and receives \$278,721 subsidy from the U.S. Government under the 1967 agricultural soil bank program?

Why is the Pentagon giving increasing aid to the growers? The Dept. of Defense claims that the existence of a labor dispute has no bearing on the allocation of defense contracts and contends that:

"The resolution of labor disputes involves complex and delicate areas of judgement and interpretation for which the responsibility has been vested by the Congress in other agencies of the Government. FROM THE DIVERSE OPINIONS THAT HAVE APPEARED IN VARIOUS NEWS MEDIA, it is quite apparent that the dispute over California table grapes falls in this category." (Fact Sheet, p.1 emphasis added)

When the Pentagon begins formulating the law of the land on the basis of "diverse opinions" in the newspapers, then we are all in trouble. This incredulous statement reflects an ignorance of the U.S. Labor law that is only surpassed by President Nixon's claim during the campaign that the boycott is "clearly illegal" and that farmworkers have "...the National Labor Relations Board to impartially supervise the election of collective bargaining agents, and to safeguard the rights of the organizers." It is precisely because farmworkers have been specifically excluded from the National Labor Relations Act for over 30 years that the grape boycott is necessary. Either the Dept of Defense and President Nixon, a lawyer himself, are ignorant of the law, or they are lying. In Nixon's case, it seems that telling the truth is less important than getting campaign contributions from agribusiness.

At a recent speech to the National Security Industrial Association, outgoing Secretary of Defense, Clark Clifford, urged that the Pentagon has "not only a moral obligation but an opportunity to contribute far more to the social needs of our country than we have ever done before." This is rank hypocrisy. The U.S. government declares a "War on Poverty" on one hand and systematically subverts, by buying up huge quantities of struck California grapes, the American farmworkers efforts to better himself through organization.

UNITED FARM WORKERS
ORGANIZING COMMITTEE AFL-CIO
WESTERN DIVISIONS OFFICE
1912 S. 6TH AVE.
CHICAGO, ILL. 60653