

# UFW

## Out of the Capitol, onto the streets

Sam Kushner

"To put it bluntly, a few people in agriculture tried to blackmail the governor on this matter of financing the Agricultural Labor Relations Act. On the surface that doesn't sound like such a bad idea, but realistically, we all know that organized labor was not going to lay down and play dead under this treatment. So they have their counter-blackmail in the form of this initiative measure... That initiative would pass by a tremendous margin. Remember that an initiative measure cannot be changed, repealed or amended by the legislature."

(Editorial in the California Farmer March 6 by Editor Jack T. Pickett)

Overnight the farm labor law legislative battle has been transformed into a people's struggle which will involve every California before it is over.

In kicking off the United Farm Workers union initiative campaign Cesar Chavez made it clear that he is through begging the legislators to re-fund the farm labor board. Pressure, including mass delegations to Sacramento, sit-ins in the offices of key legislators, as well as maneuvering in the Sacramento power centers have thus far failed to pay off, according to the militant union leader. The official kick-off date for the Farm Worker Initiative was April 1.

Since Feb. 6 the new farm labor law lay dormant, a promise unfulfilled. For the leaders of the UFW this abrupt demise of the new farm labor law represented far more than a delay in its organizing campaign. "We compromised a lot of people in promising them that they would have the protection of the new law in their organizing efforts," Chavez explained. For farm workers it had been hailed as a virtual Magna Charta.

The growers and the Teamsters Union were apparently taken aback by the string of victories run

up by the UFW. Almost 70% of the 40,000 workers who had cast ballots in the five months that the new farm labor law had been operative voted for the UFW.

Because the farm labor law was new, one without legal precedents, many of the early elections were challenged and thousands of unfair labor charges were filed, most of them by the UFW. The original budget estimate of the labor board and the legislature was soon surpassed. Even after borrowing \$1.5 million from the state the ALRB was unable to continue to the end of this fiscal year.

Refunding became a political football. In the liberal state Assembly, it ran into unexpected stiff opposition from rural Democrats and the solid GOP contingent. The partial victory in the state Assembly, without a vote to spare, is what apparently convinced the UFW that it has to take the issue to the people and out of the hands of the politicians.

Speaking to Los Angeles supporters, Chavez put his finger on the procrastination of Assembly Speaker Leo T. McCarthy. The rural Democrats had demanded a price from the Speaker for their support. They claimed they come

from "marginal" districts and would face defeat in the forthcoming election if they cast their votes for the labor-backed refunding proposal.

In order to get the necessary votes in the Assembly McCarthy agreed to establish a joint legislative committee to oversee the ALRB's operation. That committee is scheduled to report to the legislature May 15.

McCarthy told the Assembly "It should be very clear that we are very serious. If we don't see these rule changes (demanded by the Teamsters and growers) this board is going to have a very short life."

Even as the legislature was wheeling and dealing the Agricultural Labor Board was undergoing some very important personnel changes. Leroy Chatfield last week resigned his membership from the Board. Chairman Bishop Roger Mahoney was making public statements about probable changes in the board's positions in the near future to make them more compatible with the demands of the growers. Chatfield and Joe Ortega, who had resigned earlier, were the two strongest pro-UFW members on the five-member board, reduced to three now, including a former grower lobbyist and a former Teamster attorney.

The growers and Teamsters are united, as they seem to have been all along the way on other issues, in forcing drastic changes in the law. However, James T. Pickett, editor of the prestigious and authoritative California Farmer, believes that the growers have overplayed their hand this time. He too agrees that there is a need for drastic change in the law, as it now stands. But he sees nothing but "big trouble" if the ALRB is not refunded. And he is convinced that the people of California will support the UFW and labor-sponsored initiative.

In 1972 the growers tried to reverse the trend to the UFW that had been demonstrated by the victories in the grape fields. They put Proposition 22 on the ballot, which if passed would have effectively crippled the UFW.

Now it is the UFW that is on the offensive. Included among those sponsoring the initiative are Lt. Gov. Mervyn Dymally, Mayor Tom Bradley, Mayor George Moscone (San Francisco),

From all indications the UFW, this time around, is not getting sidetracked from its job in the fields where contracts are being negotiated and clinics and service centers are being set up and improved.

Even as the UFW is once again embattled in California it is also waging a campaign in Florida for enactment of a farm labor law comparable to the one in California which is now being attacked.

On the streets of Los Angeles, where the UFW hopes to get one half of the 600,000 signatures of registered voters it is seeking, over 100 persons are working around the clock daily.

Judging by the initial response in shopping centers and at other locations the job can be done, according to Ken Fujimoto, the UFW boycott director in L.A. "Anyone wanting to join in this effort," he said, "should call us at 381-1136."



The United Farm Workers ask your help in their boycott of SUN-MAID and SUNSWEET products.

SUN-MAID and SUNSWEET growers led the fight to kill funding for the Agricultural Labor Relations Board which provided for free secret-ballot elections for California farm workers.

SUN-MAID controls 36% of the raisin industry in the U.S. SUNSWEET represents 3,400 growers and marketed about 50% of California's 133,000-ton walnut crop. DIAMOND SUNSWEET, INC. DIAMOND sales last year were \$62 million controls 54% of the state's walnut crop.

## Teamster strike Workers won't keep trucking

Sam Kushner

Teamsters Union officials, who were forced into calling the first nationwide strike of truckers, announced last week that the walkout had come to an end after three days. However, in the middle west and on the West Coast there were many who remained on the picketlines long after Teamsters Union boss Frank Fitzsimmons had gone on national television and announced that "the strike was over."

A national meeting of local union officials was scheduled for last Wednesday in the mid-west to hear the terms of the settlement reached with the owners. There was confusion in the locals as the workers were rushed back to work Monday, April 5.

Los Angeles Local 208 officials kept the lines going for most of the weekend claiming that they never had been officially notified of the end of the strike. Some of the pickets had the words "sick leave" painted on their signs, recalling the bitter six week wildcat over this issue six years ago. It had been

announced earlier that the contract included a sick leave clause for the first time. "We have any idea whether we actually go it this time, it may have been bargained away in the last bargaining," said one Local official.

Also members of this local were bitter over the death on picketline of Dominic Aiello, union activist. The driver of a truck that killed Aiello was one of the scabs who drove through lines in the Los Angeles area.

Even before the settlement was announced the Teamsters in Decent Contract called proposed settlement a "sell-out." From all indications the contract ratification will be by thereby cutting the ability of rank and filers to point out weaknesses in the agreement. Nevertheless it is expected rank and filers will push for a strong vote against the agreement on the grounds that it does not include essential security and overtime provisions.

All sides were waiting this week to see the fine print in the announced settlement. Six years ago the "final settlement" reopened after a nationwide series of protests and wildcats. This time the rank and file movement was much stronger as it was able to force a strike and the winning cost-of-living provision. Whether the movement has the muscle for even greater concessions of the trucking firms this year remains one of the big questions.

Sam Kushner is a Los Angeles freelance known for his farm coverage. His book, Long Road Delano, was recently published.



CESAR CHAVEZ (Photo by Dorrit Thomsen).

## Latin political groups

(Continued from Page 7)

US corporations earn between 15 to 20 percent profit on investments annually. They have invested \$13 billion in the country during this century, yet 72% of the people are on food stamps, and there is 40% unemployment.

The US occupied Puerto Rico after it captured Cuba in 1898. Even though Puerto Rico had established its own autonomy under Spain one year before the occupation, the US justified the takeover as "war booty."

Puerto Rico's status was changed in 1952 to that of a "free associated state." Today, Puerto Ricans still can not vote in US elections although the US can confiscate any land or structure anytime. The US owns 14% of all arable land, using it mostly for scores of military bases, including six nuclear sites.

Puerto Ricans are not united on how to resolve their "territorial" status. Some want to become a state of the US, most want to keep the status quo temporarily, but a growing number are seeking independence. These latter are divided in theory and tactics, but often work together on specific actions. And the PSP is the only pro-independence Puerto Rican party organizing on the mainland.

\*\*\* PUERTO RICAN SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE (PRSC) is an anti-imperialist

support group for independence composed of all classes and ethnic groups, and backed by the PSP. It has chapters in several cities, including Los Angeles (P.O. Box 2522, Sepulveda, CA 91348).

The PRSC helped organize the rally for independence held at New York's Madison Square Garden two years ago. Twenty thousand people attended. The New York metropolitan area contains most of the two million Puerto Ricans living in the U.S. (Three million live in Puerto Rico.) Another 20,000 Puerto Ricans live in Los Angeles.

Both the PSP and the PRSC are organizing for a people's bicentennial march on Philadelphia, and Los Angeles, July 4. The PSP predicts its contingency in Philadelphia will number 15,000. (It can be contacted at: 5178 Whittier Blvd., in East Los Angeles).

A July 4 coalition has been established in Los Angeles, headed by CASA (2673 W. Pico Blvd.), and supported by all the Latin-American groups in LAGLAS. Actions throughout the spring and summer will center on the US role in repressing democracy in Latin America, and in the United States, especially for non-whites. May 1 marks the opening campaign, when a rally will take place at Westlake Park, Alvarado and Wilshire.



PULL OUT

## vanguard guide



INSTRUCTIONS AND PAINTINGS

MICHAEL DAVIS AND JAMES

BIE. (Thru April 21 at SPACE. 6015

Santa Monica Blvd., 461-8166.)

"BIRTH SITUATION" HAP TIVEY.

California's 133,000-perceptual process. (University of

Irvine. Tues.-Sat., 12-5.

Closed Sunday and Monday.)

PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBIT. THROUGH

LENS OF CHARLES KING

RICHELL. (Thru May 2. Harmonia

Bldg., 8885 Charleville Blvd., Bev.

Hills. Mon.-Sat., 11-5. Thurs. &amp; Fri.,

10-12. Closed Sun. 657-3439.)

"FACE AND PLACE. American and

European environmental artists present

films, films and videotapes. (UCLA Ex-

tension program. Wed. evenings thru

April 26. Rm. 2250, UCLA's Young

Institute. 266-1111.)

"IRIS, BEASTS, BLOSSOMS AND

"THE NATURE OF JAPAN." Ex-

hibition of rare screens, ceramics, kake-

mats, makemono and enamels. (UCLA

Art Gallery, Dickson Art Center,

1155 Hilgard Ave. Tues. thru Sun., 11-5.

Closed Monday.)

"SCULPTURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL

INSTALLATIONS. Solo exhibition by

artist. (Thru April 21. Sun., 1-4

p.m. Closed Mon. and Tues. Mt. St.

Museum of Art, 12001

Wilshire Blvd., 266-1111.)

"PAINTING AND SCULPTURE

EXHIBITION. 76 works by Georges

Graham, Hans Hinder, Hill, Murrill, Shap-

pey, and Teraoka. (County Museum of Art,

1000 Wilshire Blvd., 266-1111.)

Closed Mon. and Tues. 10 a.m.-6 p.m.

Closed Wed. 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

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