

President's Newsletter

Office of the President
United Farm Workers of America, AFL-CIO
La Paz, Keene, California 93531



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PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

National Executive Board Meeting

Our first National Executive Board meeting of 1978 was held at the UFW headquarters in La Paz the first week of April, with all board members present: President *Cesar Chavez*, Secretary-Treasurer *Gilbert Padilla*, First Vice President *Dolores Huerta*, Second Vice President *Eliseo Medina*, Third Vice President *Pete Velasco*, and Board Members *Richard Chavez*, *Marshall Ganz*, *Mack Lyons* and *Jessica Govea*.

From this meeting emerged many important and difficult decisions which will enable us to focus our efforts on our immediate goals. One of the major outcomes was to reassign most of the board members to new positions within the union. Eventually all of the board members will take on union-wide responsibilities, to have an overall picture of the organization when making important decisions. Sister *Dolores Huerta*, who has been in charge of operations in Delano, will head the Citizenship Participation Department, the union's legislative action fund. Sister *Huerta* will begin setting up CPD councils of workers in areas where we have field offices and of supporters in the cities of California.

Brother *Eliseo Medina*, who has been heading operations in Coachella, will begin to scientifically develop and plan an Organizing Department which he will head. Workers in other states have been calling for us to help them organize in their areas, especially in Florida, Texas, Arizona, Washington and Oregon. It is time we begin paying attention to the workers in those states.

Brother *Mack Lyons* will be returning to Florida to continue his good work reaching out to workers there. Sister *Jessica Govea* has been assigned to scientifically develop a new Negotiations Department which she will head. Brother *Gilbert Padilla* will concentrate his efforts in developing a Contract Administration Department which will focus on contract and field office administration. Brother *Pete Velasco* will head the Information Research Department for the union. Brother *Marshall Ganz* will continue heading operations in the Salinas area, and Brother *Richard Chavez* will continue as head of construction projects for the movement.

New Action Taken

The spirit of this Executive Board Meeting was one of re-examining old tools and methods and altering them to fit future needs. Last summer the Executive Board made a momentous decision to concentrate efforts on a single area as a means of moving faster towards our immediate goals. Since then we've realized that to really concentrate we must eliminate all union activities not central to fulfilling our goals. This has led us to a major decision to close down our boycott offices and to bring the staff to California to work on other projects. However, the boycott department remains ready to become reactivated at any time it becomes necessary.

It was also decided the union would close down and consolidate some field offices where necessary. And a new policy was set to give union members priority in receiving services available through our campesino centers and clinics.

Finally, we determined the CPD Political Endorsing Convention will be held in San Jose in the month of August. Staff and workers will be advised of the details of the conference in a future Newsletter.

Department Reports

UFW Department and Entity heads presented their quarterly reports to the Executive Board members. In addition, a lengthy report was submitted on information gathered by Brother *Kent Winterrowd* on setting up the Juan de la Cruz Pension Fund for farm workers under contract. Later this month we will begin visiting ranches to get your input on the type of pension plan you would like to see formed.

Brother *Marc Grossman* presented a report on a plan to begin developing rules and uniform bi-laws which would govern the ranch communities. The plan here is also to visit ranch leadership in California to get worker input before drawing up the bi-laws. Within the next month ranch leadership will be informed of meetings which will take place on the bi-laws sometime this summer. At a later date the rules and uniform bi-laws will be presented to the workers for ratification.

Information Research

The Information Research Department headed by Brother *Pete Velasco*, compiled pertinent collective bargaining information to give the Board Members an overall perspective. We learned that the UFW has been certified collective bargaining representative at 225 ranches. We presently have contracts at 116 of those companies, representing nearly 20,000 workers. And we are negotiating with 72 companies, representing an additional 13,000 workers.

Between 1975 and the end of 1977 a total of 424 secret ballot elections were held in California's fields: 247 were won by the UFW, 73 were won by the Teamsters Union, 5 were won by other unions. In 27 elections no union won, and 72 elections are still unresolved.

Citizenship Participation Department

Brother *Michael Linfield* of the Citizenship Participation Department reported that several new pieces of legislation attacking the Agricultural Labor Relations Act have been introduced into the state legislature in the past two weeks. Previously six bills had already been introduced to amend the ALRA (see Newsletter, April 3) including the "Mori Bill", which would delegate a substantial amount of the board members' responsibilities to the general counsel.

Four of the five latest bills have been introduced into the State Senate; the other into the Assembly.

* SB 1785 (Buich) would require the ALRB to be open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, making it the only state agency to hold such ridiculous hours.

* SB 1827 (Johnson) prevents secondary boycott, including picketing, and prevents picketing to inform the public that an item is being produced by a grower with whom there is a labor dispute. This bill would cripple farm workers' ability to organize.

* SB 1923 (Stull) prevents secondary boycott, including picketing. It's almost exactly the same bill as Johnson's. It was introduced as a "spot bill", meaning it was entered just before the legislative deadline to reserve a spot for a different bill. At a later date this bill will be amended to become completely different.

* SB 2060 (Nimmo) prevents union organizers from having access to speak with workers prior to an election. We feel that without access there can be no informed workers. The seasonal and migratory nature of the work force and the short seven day election period make access to the workers on a ranch imperative.

* AB 3381 (Thurman) removes the ALRB's exclusive jurisdiction on farm labor issues and would allow parties to go to local courts on any farm labor disputes. The bill is unnecessary as the Board is already well equipped to deal with misconduct or potential misconduct of the parties.

These new bills bring the total number of bills amending the ALRA to 11, and it's reported that more are on the way. It's obvious that grower interests are once again trying to destroy the law, which has thus far been successful in defending farm workers' rights.

Transportation Department

Brother *George Sheridan* reported to the Executive Board that he is in the process of setting up an effective transportation Department which will meet the transportation needs of movement staff. The first step for this new department is to meet with union and entity directors and administrators on April 23 in a conference which will set standards and priorities for cars. Brother *Sheridan* will then be able to ascertain which movement jobs or positions need cars.

the most. Assignments will then be made, and staff will be held accountable for their car's upkeep.

Board Endorses CRLA Strikers

The National Executive Board voted to support the strike of about 60 clerical employees against California Rural Legal Assistance. The members of United Legal Workers of California walked out of CRLA regional offices March 6, after the management refused to negotiate a contract with the workers.

CRLA provides legal services for farm workers and other poor people living in rural areas throughout California. We notified United Legal Workers of our support, saying, "Your resolute struggle for the most basic rights of working men and women is a reminder of the vigilance with which we must defend our dignity and security. Your efforts merit our enthusiastic support."

Board Endorses Nestle and Time Boycotts

The National Executive Board endorsed two separate boycotts: that of Nestle products and Time Magazine.

Nestle, the gigantic Swiss producer of many foods, has led an aggressive promotional campaign of its infant formula in Third World Countries without educating mothers on its safe an proper use. Third World mothers, convinced that breast feeding is primitive, are using infant formulas mixed with contaminated water or over diluted because they can't afford to buy the quantity they need. The result has been thousands of babies dead from malnutrition. Thus far Nestle has not responded to pressure from groups such as World Health Organization or National Council of Churches to stop its promotion of infant formula to mothers who can't afford to use it safely. A boycott has been called and the following products are owned or controlled by Nestle: Nestle Quick Instant Chocolate, Nestea, Nescafe, Taster's Choice, Nestle chocolate chips, Nestle Crunch candy, Libby's canned goods, Stouffer's products, Souptime and Lactogen.

In a similar action we endorsed Synanon's boycott of Time Magazine. We told Synanon Foundation, inc.: "We join thousands of decent Americans who admire Synanon's outstanding work in rehabilitating drug addicts, alcoholics and character disorder people. Therefore we were angered and shocked when Time Magazine published its twisted article smearing Synanon and its leaders. The real victims of Time's thoughtless and reckless reporting will be the thousands of people who could be saved through Synanon's good work and humanizing lifestyle, but who will not seek help because of Time's vicious attack."

Fresno Bee Disputes Farm Bureau Charges

Charges by the American Farm Bureau that a Labor Department grant to the National Farm Workers Service Center, Inc. was intended for a variety of union activities besides the program's goal of teaching English to migrant farm workers are false, the *Fresno Bee* reported on April 9.

"In seeking to verify the farm bureau's charges, *The Bee* found those other activities were contained in a thick application for federal funds submitted last September by the NFWSC. However, none of these activities would have been part of the \$500,000 grant; the Labor Department had made no move to fund them." according to a department spokesman.

AFBF claimed that the farm workers and the Labor Depart-

ment were attempting to fool the public by using English language training to hide other, union-related programs.

"They just made complete fools of themselves," *Marc Grossman*, our assistant told the Bee. "You put a lot of things in an application for federal funds. Then you negotiate. All those items the farm bureau is talking about are not included. Either they don't know what they're talking about, which is characteristic of the farm bureau, or they are lying, which is also characteristic of the farm bureau."

National Farm Bureau president Allen Grant was questioned on the bureau's charges recently when he spoke to the Fresno County Farm Bureau's annual banquet. "We have a firm of attorneys in Washington checking this sort of thing, and the source where I get my information is from those attorneys," he said.

RFK MEDICAL PLAN

When is a member eligible for Low, Medium or High Plan?

A member is eligible for **Low Plan**

1. if he/she has a total of 50 hours for the 3 consecutive months prior to the month of medical service;
2. or he/she has a total of 100 hours for the 6 consecutive months prior to the month of medical service;
3. or he/she has a total of 150 hours for 9 consecutive months prior to the month of medical service.

A member is eligible for **Medium Plan**

1. if he/she has a total of 250 hours for the three consecutive months prior to the month of medical service;
2. or he/she has a total of 500 hours for the 6 consecutive months prior to the month of medical service;
3. or he/she has a total of 750 hours for the 9 consecutive months prior to the month of medical service.

A member is eligible for **High Plan**

1. if he/she has a total of 400 hours for the 3 consecutive months prior to the month of medical service;
2. or he/she has a total of 800 hours for the 6 consecutive months prior to the month of medical service;
3. or he/she has a total of 1200 hours for the 9 consecutive months prior to the month of medical service.

OFFICIAL NOTICES

Latest Elections

Jackson Farm Management Co./Calexico/asparagus/UFW, 83; no union, 28; challenged ballots, 26.

Newman Seed/Imperial Valley/onions/UFW, 38; no union, 17.

New Certifications

E.T. Wall Co./Coachella/citrus/4-5-78

Coastal Growers Assn/Oxnard/citrus/4-5-78

New Contracts

K.K. Ito/Oxnard/row crops: lettuce, celery, tomatoes

Personnel

New Staff	Location	Department
Nancy Trudeau	La Paz	Word Management
Julie Arciaga	La Paz	Word Management
Clara Solis	La Paz	Word Management

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