

Picketing on again

Demonstrators for the United Farm Workers Union will return to Fisher-Fazio's Severance Center store today, tomorrow and Saturday, but the picket line will be substantially shorter than it was last weekend.

The UFW mustered about 100 pickets to seek public support of its boycott of non-UFW grapes and lettuce on Saturday, but expects to have only 10 on hand for its repeat performance.

The drop in number, explained boycott organizer Mark Pitt, is because the pickets plan to fan out to three other Fisher-Fazio markets this weekend.

Protest marches are planned at two of the chain's west side stores at 4200 Fulton Rd. and W. 138th and Lorain Ave., and at the E. 131st and St. Clair Ave. market.

Pitt said picketing is planned from 3 to 5 p.m. today and tomorrow and all day Saturday at all four stores.

THE BOYCOTT EFFORT, which has been aimed at A & P for the past several weeks, will be concentrated on Fisher-Fazio now, since it is Greater Cleveland's largest food chain, Pitt said.

But prompting the change in targets was Fisher-Fazio's alleged use of the UFW label on its lettuce and grape bins at the chain's Eastgate store in Mayfield Heights July 11.

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Pickets at the Fisher-Fazio store at Severance Center included this Lyke, who cared more about his humb than lettuce. Below, from left, are pickets, the Rev. George

Hrbek, a Lutheran representative of the Interfaith Labor Committee, Sue Curtis and son Benji, and Mrs. Glenn Van Wagenen. (Sun photos by Tom Merce)

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Picketing

The label was inadvertently left on the price markers after the store's supply of UFW lettuce and grapes ran out, the produce manager said.

The UFW, an ALF-CIO affiliate, was joined on the picket line at Severance Center by representatives of other unions, the Interfaith Labor Committee, Women Speak Out, the Jewish Workmen's Circle organization and other social action groups.

Pitt, who led the demonstration, is a native of Baltimore and graduated from the University of Maryland with a degree in labor relations.

He faced possible arrest as the four-hour protest got underway at 11 a.m. because of the lengthy picket line that appeared to block entrance to the store.

Although a controversial court decision has set limits on the number of pickets, Carl Fixler, general manager of Severance Center, told Pitt he would take no action to stop the demonstration as long as it remained orderly and customers crossing the picket line were not harassed.

FIXLER reiterated this position to the Sunpapers when told of the UFW's plans to continue picketing at the shopping center this weekend.

Robert Duvin, attorney for Fisher-Fazio, also said the management is considering no legal action against the UFW at this time.

Nor will the Cleveland Heights law department interfere, since the demonstration is on private property. Any action to limit the number of pickets must be taken by the property owner in a civil suit, said Law Director Donald K. Barclay.

Meanwhile, Richard Bogomolny, vice president of Pick N' Pay, confirmed that his company had agreed to carry only UFW grapes and lettuce, but had to back off from its commitment.

BOGOMOLNY denied the reason was intimidation by the Teamsters Union, but said the management's pro-UFW position brought objections from many of its employees who are Teamster members.

The UFW charges that the growers have signed "sweetheart" contracts with the Teamsters who are ac-

tually protecting them, not the farm workers. The latter have denied the right to choose a union by secret elections, the UFW contends.

Since Pick 'N Pay has hundreds of Teamsters in its employ, Bogomolny said the management decided the fair policy would be to carry both UFW and Teamster lettuce and grapes.

Bogomolny said his company sympathizes with the farm workers' plight and has met several times with UFW members and Auxiliary Bishop William Cosgrove of the Cleveland Catholic Diocese, which has endorsed the grape and lettuce boycott.

Bogomolny explained that Bishop Cosgrove suggested that Pick 'N Pay request support of the Cleveland Food Industry, comprised of all food chain owners, to pressure the lettuce and grape growers for free elections for their workers.

IN TURN, Bogomolny said, the bishop promised an end to any illegal boycotting. A court ruling has decided that the UFW can ask for a boycott of non-UFW lettuce and grapes, but must not urge a general boycott of any store.

Bogomolny said he presented the bishop's suggestion, but was met with opposition from the other major food chains. In his view the complexities of the issue are so vast that he believes it will take legislation at the state or federal level to resolve the problem.

Meanwhile, Pick 'N Pay produce buyers are instructed to purchase lettuce and grapes picked and packed by both unions, he said. UFW produce is often higher priced, Bogomolny said, but his buyers have orders to purchase it whenever available.

CARL FAZIO, however, does not take the same position. He told a Sun reporter in a telephone conversation that the food firms are handling the matter through the Cleveland Food Industry.

"Whoever grows or harvests it (lettuce and grapes) doesn't make any difference to me," said Fazio.

He said emphatically he had no intention of meeting with representatives of the UFW.