
Proposition 14: A Blank Check for Bureacracy

Last year, after intensive negotiations between growers, representatives of farm laborers, legislators and the Governor, the Agricultural Labor Relations Act of 1975 was passed, giving farm workers the right to select and join unions of their own choosing. It was heralded as a landmark in farm labor relations.

But there were problems. A biased Agricultural Labor Relations Board, (ALRB) a new bureaucracy that was spending a year's budget in less than six months, incensed the state's growers (they were promised an impartial board) and infuriated most legislators.

It became almost automatic for a union to charge "unfair labor practices" if they lost an election. There were disputes about disputes. When the ALRB found itself completely out of funds and requested \$3.85 million more, the legislature refused to grant additional funding until some glaring inequities were corrected.

No sooner had the ALRB lapsed into limbo than the United Farm Workers of America — AFL-CIO (UFWA) began an initiative campaign. Maintaining that the ALRB was out of existence, UFWA qualified an initiative — Proposition 14 for the November 2 General Election Ballot. The initiative is UFWA's idea of how farm labor in California should be handled. The initiative repeals the Agricultural Labor Relations Act of 1975 and replaces the existing statute with its own version.

Voters will be told in ballot arguments by Cesar Chavez, Lieutenant Governor Mervyn M. Dymally, and Assemblyman Richard J. Alatorre that "the right to vote is still at issue . . ." This deliberately misleads voters. The existing law grants workers the right to vote. The ALRB is in existence and the Board has been changed to more accurately reflect an objective viewpoint. But the initiative is still with us . . . an initiative that carries the potential of emasculating California's premier industry, poses staggering costs to taxpayers and would erode private property rights.

This ballot proposition, if passed, would give unions a virtual strangle-hold on the state's agriculture industry . . . to find out what this will mean to all Californians, read the next three pages of this report . . .