

NEW PICKETS GO UP OUTSIDE ALRB IN E.C.

By JOHN NUNES

Staff writer

The United Farm Workers renewed picketing today at the state Agricultural Labor Relations Board office in El Centro.

Only eight demonstrators were on the picket lines this morning, but a UFW spokeswoman promised more "after the workers get off work" later today.

The ALRB office has been the target of the union since Feb. 28. Last week, 28 demonstrators were arrested and the state office, 582 State St., was taken over twice by the UFW.

The El Centro arrests touched off statewide demonstrations. UFW President Cesar Chavez unsuccessfully "invited arrest" during a sit-in at the state agency's San Diego office.

The union is still under a temporary restraining order, sought by the ALRB and issued by Superior Court Judge George Kirk last week, which limits the UFW to 10 persons inside the state office

at a time.

This morning, a hearing to make the temporary order a permanent one was continued to 9 a.m. Thursday at the request of the ALRB, an El Centro Superior Court clerk reported.

Meanwhile, the ALRB plans to enforce the temporary order. But Fred Lopez, in charge of the office, said today, "Perhaps the union is looking for a confrontation and I'm not going to oblige them.

"I don't want anyone hurt. If the police are called in, people may get excited."

A California State Police security agent is, however, stationed inside each of the ALRB offices in the state, Lopez noted.

"Their function is to make sure every office remains intact," Lopez said.

He also reported that none of the ALRB employes at the besieged El Centro office have requested a transfer.

"These people are used to

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No 'confrontation' seen with UFW: ALRB head

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demonstrations. Many of our agents have been working in farm labor for years."

The plot thickened Monday when the UFW filed a \$2.1 million civil rights suit in federal court in San Diego because of the El Centro incidents.

The suit, which seeks a court order halting alleged discriminatory practices, accuses ALRB officials of depriving UFW members of civil rights, including freedom of speech, assembly and association during the mass arrest.

It is filed against the State Police, ALRB General Counsel Harry Delizonna and other ALRB employees. The suit was filed by American Civil Liberties Union attorneys on behalf of the UFW.

It charges that the defendants engaged in a deliberate, systematic pattern of selective enforcement of laws against union members.

Under the direction of Delizonna, "The El Centro office of the ALRB has engaged in a pattern of discriminatory conduct designed to interfere with and discourage members and supporters of the UFW for association ..." with the union, according to the suit.

Twenty-eight UFW demonstrators were arrested during last Tuesday's incident

after 35 lawmen surrounded the state office.

The suit said the demonstrators were arrested while "exercising their rights of association and free speech, and were lawful and peacefully engaged in the exercise of their right to petition the government and to seek redress of their grievances."

The temporary restraining order against UFW was obtained by the ALRB after the mass arrest and after ALRB employees reported physical and verbal abuse by the demonstrators two days in a row, Feb. 28 and last Tuesday.

The Chavez union has been demonstrating because of an ALRB decision to allow "a company union" to file for an election among workers at the Royal Packing Co.

The "company union," which some label it, won the election Thursday. It is called Agrupacion Independiente de Trabajadores en Royal Packing Company.

The suit alleges that the lawmen did not have warrants for the arrests and had no probable cause.

Manuel Hernandez, one of the demonstrators, whom the suit contends did not resist, "was suddenly grabbed by a California State Police officer, who then twisted both arms behind his back, handcuffed him, picked him up and threw him into a corridor."

A woman who was also in the ALRB office was subjected to a body search by a male officer, according to the suit.

Lopez said this morning that one of his female ALRB employees was asked to conduct the body search. She declined and a policewoman conducting traffic outside was called in, according to Lopez.

The UFW also charges in its suit that the ALRB's discriminatory conduct includes failing to appear for or canceling appointments with workers or pre-election conferences without notifying the union or members involved and transferring ALRB agents who were in the middle of investigations.

Meanwhile, Delizonna issued a press release that was highly critical of the UFW.

"It is now apparent that a few organizers, led by Marshall Ganz, have shown that they intend to use every tool they can, including violence, to upset farm worker elections whenever they feel that the procedures or results are not to their liking.

"Although most UFW demonstrations are peaceful, Ganz and his band of organizers have pierced the peaceful veil that once was used by the UFW," Delizonna added.