

Scabs undermining union

Toronto supermarkets selling California grapes

By **SHELLEY RABINOVITCH**

Food City, Miracle Food Mart, Dominion and Safeway grocery stores are selling scab-picked California grapes in Toronto, said Miguel Confreras, United Farm Workers Union speaker, last Thursday.

Only 12 students attended the meeting, sponsored by the York Young Socialists. There was a speech on the Artistic Woodwork strike at the same time.

The non-union grape pickers (usu-

ally illegal Mexican immigrants) have been undermining the UFW's bargaining power with the California growers, bringing unemployment and poor wages to union members.

"In 1970, after eight years of planning and organizing," said Confreras, "the migrant workers of the southwestern United States had finally been granted the rights assured any other American: a minimum wage, toilets, drinking water, rest periods in the fields, and a ban on child labour and the use of pesticides."

The 1970 contracts, however, were not renewed this year. The grape boycott, first employed in 1965, began again.

Since the revival of the boycotts and picket lines there have been about 6,000 arrests, 300 migrants have been hospitalized and two strikers killed.

A 24 year old was killed by deputies who hit him over the head with a two foot flashlight, said Confreras, and a 60 year old was shot to death. "His killer has never been found," the

UFW speaker stated.

One rancher hired 300 "Hell's Angels" types from Fresno County at \$67.50 a day to harass and physically assault the picketers. "They (the farmers) called them guards," said Confreras, "we call them goons."

Confreras also said the average life expectancy of a migrant worker is 49 years: 800,000 of the workers are children under the age of 16; family income for five averages \$2,700 a year; and few workers have any more than a

fourth grade education.

In California, the UFW motto is "Huelga!" meaning "Strike." In Arizona it is "Si, se puede", meaning "Yes, it can be done."

The UFW has won some battles. Arizona governor Jack Williams has been "recalled" for outlawing farm unions like Chavez's in that state.

Recall is allowed in very few states. If enough registered voters' sign a petition, any government official in such a state must face a "recall election."

The ranchers claim the migrants are happy: They say they pay higher wages than many other states and let the workers live on the farms after the picking season.

Confreras claimed the houses are corrugated cardboard, and are bulldozed whenever a migrant complains.

Mayor Crombie, The Toronto Star, the Roman Catholic Church, Canadian trade unions and the New Democratic Party have all expressed support for the boycott.

Toronto city council has declared November 3 "Grape Boycott Day". There will be a march with Cesar Chavez, UFW head, November 3 at 12 noon in Queen's Park. Chavez will also speak at Massey Hall November 2 at 7:30 p.m.

According to Confreras, "this is the first time in the history of the United Farm Workers that a march will be led by bagpipes. Normally we use a Mexican Mariachi band."

Confreras offered these suggestions to those who want to help the UFW: Don't buy or eat California label grapes; urge your friends to boycott and explain why; buy a "Boycott Grapes" button or sticker; ask your neighbourhood grocer to take California grapes off his shelves; and sign the sheet indicating you will give some time to LA CAUSA either with store delegations or picketing.

The UFW has put out a list of wine companies not in violation of UFW agreements and ethics. The wines to buy are:

- Almaden
- Beaulieu
- Christian Brothers
- Inglenook
- Italian Swiss Colony
- Paul Masson

All other American produced wines, including Gallo, are being boycotted in support of UFW goals.

Lettuce boycott still on

CALIFORNIA (CPS-CUP)—The United Farm Workers' lettuce boycott will continue until the much publicized peace treaty with the Teamsters Union is signed by Teamster president Frank E. Fitzsimmons.

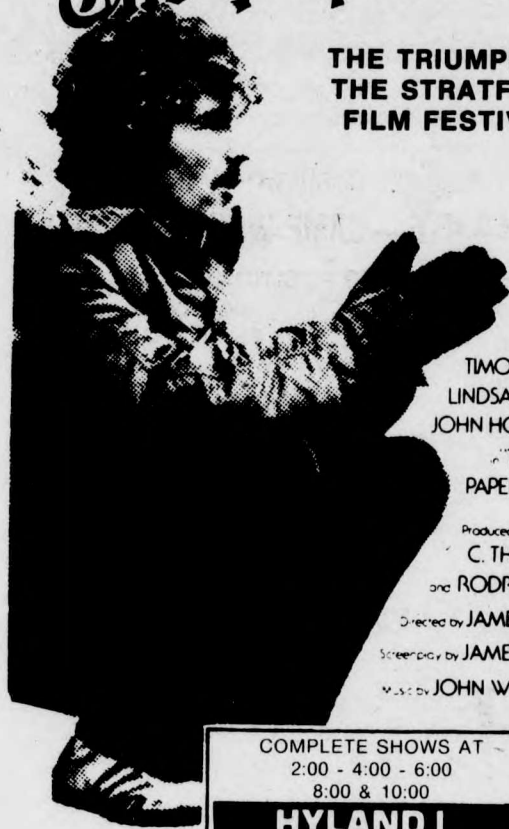
The agreement, already signed by AFL-CIO president George Meany and UFW president Cesar Chavez, states that the Teamsters would rescind most of the contracts they have signed with growers concerning field workers, eventually returning jurisdiction to the UFW.

Fitzsimmons' delay in signing the agreement has aroused the suspicions of the UFW, since it would take a great effort to get the lettuce boycott underway again.

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