

# Will a Piggyback on Proposition 14 Help the Carter Candidacy?

SAN FRANCISCO, Oct. 1—"If my name were Fourteen," Mayor George Moscone quipped the other day, "I'd run for President this year."

The Democratic Presidential nominee's name is Jimmy Carter, not Fourteen, but in a sense he's taking Mr. Moscone's advice. Last weekend, Mr. Carter came out strongly for Proposition 14, the ballot initiative aimed at insuring fair labor practices on California's rich farmlands; and since Proposition 14 is attracting more attention here than a moribund Presidential campaign, Mr. Carter might find himself riding a winner.

Not everyone agrees. Assembly Speaker Leo McCarthy, for example, thinks Proposition 14 supporters would have backed Mr. Carter anyway, while his endorsement may have cost him some support in rural areas where his Southern farm background ought to be an asset. Assemblyman Willie Brown, San Francisco's dynamic black leader, thinks Proposition 14 is too divisive to be Mr. Carter's instrument for victory in California.

Most other California Democrats seem to think the Carter candidacy can ride piggyback on the "Yes on 14" campaign spearheaded by Gov. Jerry Brown and Cesar Chavez's United Farm Workers. Proposition 14 would put the force of a public referendum behind what is essentially the Agricultural Labor Relations Act devised by Governor Brown in 1975, and make it immune to changes except by further statewide initiatives.

The advantages of endorsement to Mr. Carter seem obvious. Governor Brown, his most effective primary rival, is supporting him more enthusiastically than might have been expected. Mexican-American and black support for the Democratic ticket should have been cemented. Labor and liberal support ought also to have been energized for a candidate little known in this state.

The United Farm Workers' support, moreover, brings the best organizational force in California politics to Mr. Carter's campaign. Already, the United Farm Workers—using \$100,000

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By Tom Wicker

from the Democratic National Committee, via the state Democratic committee—have registered more than 200,000 Californians to vote Nov. 2. They expect to reach 300,000 by the Oct. 4 deadline—not as much as some Democrats had hoped to do, but the best registration effort in the state. The militant union might be able to do the Carter campaign an incalculable service on Election Day, moreover, by shoring up California's usual weak get-out-the-vote effort.

Given the Carter campaign's lack of funds—only \$288,000 from headquarters in Atlanta for California field operations—the United Farm Workers' organizational contributions could be decisive. On the other hand, as Mr. McCarthy insists, had Mr. Carter declined to take a stand on grounds that Proposition 14 was only a state issue, it's hard to imagine the United

Farm Workers going over to Gerald Ford. And there's little doubt that not only in California but in Texas and other major agricultural states, Mr. Carter's support for the farm initiative could cost him the backing of growers and ranchers who might otherwise have looked on him with favor as a fellow farmer.

That's primarily because the opposition to Proposition 14 is focusing on its provision that union organizers can enter an employer's property to campaign for their union. California growers are making this emotional "access" issue sound like a major infraction of their constitutional rights.

In fact, of course, such organizing opportunity has long been permitted in nonfarm unions operating under the National Labor Relations Board. Growers can campaign against unions any time and place they choose, and the fact is that organizers could hardly reach most California farm workers at all unless they had access to growers' property. Many of these workers live in grower-owned camps and

housing and, while these may be growers' property, they are also the rented homes of the workers. Proposition 14, moreover, specifies the times of day and limits the duration of the organizers' access.

But California political buffs recall that another Proposition 14—that one dealing with fair housing—went down to defeat here 12 years ago under the slogan that "a man's home is his castle." The growers are trying to make much the same emotional point, however speciously, on the issue of organizers' access to their farms and ranches.

The major advantage to Mr. Carter in Proposition 14 may be in its effect on the turnout Nov. 2. California Democrats, far outnumbering Republicans, are notoriously bad about going to the polls—particularly the low-income persons among them. If Proposition 14 brings out a heavy vote, it may well help Jimmy Carter join Harry Truman and Lyndon Johnson as the only Democratic Presidential nominees to carry California since World War II.

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