

Around the Nation

Major Grower Negotiates In California Lettuce Strike

CALEXICO, Calif., Feb. 15 (AP) — Representatives of the nation's largest lettuce producer met independently today with Cesar Chavez, the United Farm Workers leader, in an apparent breakthrough in the four-week-old lettuce strike.

Roland Kemp, executive vice president of SunHarvest Inc., said that representatives of his company had met with Mr. Chavez in Los Angeles. "Our primary objective is to get the conflict out of the fields and back to the negotiating table," he said.

He refused to say if SunHarvest had made a new money offer to the union or whether the company might sign a separate agreement with the U.F.W. He said the talks with SunHarvest, a subsidiary of United Brands Inc., had been sought by Mr. Chavez.

The strike by U.F.W. workers against 28 vegetable growers in California and Arizona has halted the harvest of 40 percent of the nation's lettuce crop.

At the farms, 4,300 strikers resumed picketing after a three-day moratorium held to honor Rufino Contreras, a slain farm worker. Formal murder charges were filed against two farm foremen and a truck driver in his death.

Since the walkout began Jan. 19, more than \$4 million in vegetables have rotted unharvested in the Imperial Valley, while a coalition of 28 California and Arizona growers has resisted union demands. Supermarket prices for a head of lettuce have soared from 39 cents to as much as 89 cents.

3 Are Arrested in Scranton In 'Execution' of Prisoner

Special to The New York Times

SCRANTON, Pa., Feb. 15 — Three prisoners at the Lackawanna County jail were arrested here today in connection with an in-jail "court" that allegedly convicted another prisoner of murder, sentenced him to death and then carried out the sentence.

Clifford Doolittle, 21 years old, a drifter charged with the beating death of another drifter in a downtown rooming house, was found hanging in his cell in the prison on Feb. 6. The police made a tentative finding of suicide, but a later investigation uncovered evidence that his death might have been homicide.

Then, after days of rumors and press reports about a kangaroo court, the police arrested Nicholas Karabin Jr., 34 years old, and James R. Martin, 39, on a charge of murder and Joseph Bossick, 32, on a charge of conspiracy.

The state charges that Mr. Doolittle was hanged with a piece of sheet from his cot, and it was made to look as though he had stood on the cot and kicked it away, causing him to fall and be strangled to death.

New Orleans Police Action Perils Mardi Gras Parades

NEW ORLEANS, Feb. 15 (AP) — The city rejected a union offer today to extend police contract talks beyond the Mardi Gras carnival, and Mayor Ernest Morial, faced with a strike deadline, said he would cancel parades if the walkout threat was not lifted.

City officials said the offer to extend contract talks until April 1 had been rejected because the agreement would have sent the dispute to binding arbitration if no contract was reached by that date.

Mayor Morial said that negotiations were continuing, but Vincent Bruno, the union president, said, "I am afraid this means we are going to strike." The police have set a strike deadline for tomorrow, but no hour has been specified.

The Mayor said he talked to Gov. Edwin Edwards about the prospect of the city's second police strike in this month.

"The Governor advised me that neither the state police nor the National Guard is equipped to handle or control the Mardi Gras crowds, that no one can handle the Mardi Gras crowds other than the New Orleans Police Department," he said.

Philadelphia Will Not Deny Permit for Nazi Party Rally

PHILADELPHIA, Feb. 15 (UPI) — City officials said today that they could not deny a group calling itself the American Nazi Party permission to hold a rally outside Independence Hall next week.

Frank Collin, head of the National Socialist Party of America, said he may attend the demonstration and that those participating in the rally would carry guns if the police did not provide protection.

Hobart Cawood, superintendent of Independence National Park, said a man identifying himself as James Guttman, 21 years old, had applied for a permit to rally on Tuesday but later called to say the date may be changed to Wednesday. Mr. Guttman said the "white power" rally would include members of the Ku Klux Klan and Mr. Collin, who led a rally on Chicago's Southwest Side last July.

7 Arkansas Road Shootings Are Reported Since Killing

NORTH LITTLE ROCK, Ark., Feb. 15 (AP) — At least seven random shootings have occurred along central Arkansas highways since a young reporter was fatally wounded 10 days ago, and a police spokesman said today the situation could be "getting out of hand."

"Probably there are people out there who get caught up in the publicity that's going on," said Tommy Robinsor, director of the Arkansas Department of Public Safety. "The more incidents that are reported in the media, that seems to attract the weirdo who says, 'I think I'll be a sniper.'"

The confirmed shootings and dozens of unconfirmed ones have occurred in the area since Judy Danielak, 21 years old, a reporter for United Press International, was shot Feb. 6 while driving on Interstate 40 in North Little Rock. She died three days later. No arrests have been made.

The New York Times

Published: February 16, 1979

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