Workers Can Speak For Themselves

By ROBERT COLES

Millions of American men and women live and work and try to make do the best they can; and do they not find their way to the buildings where the corporate agribusiness, through its workers, is organized on the National Labor Relations Board, has moved for an injunction against all consumer boycotts supporting the organizational efforts of the United Farm Workers Union. UFW boycotts, beginning with the five-year grape campaign, have proved the only effective, non-violent means by which America's poorest, most exploited workers have been able to win some of the protection and security which other workers enjoy. Oscar Chavez, UFW director, has launched a nationwide pressure campaign against the Republican Party hoping to make the Nixon NLRB rescind the injunction threat.

UFW Boycott: Non-Violent Power

In 1935, pressure from fruit and vegetable growers forced the Congress and the state to establish the National Labor Relations Board. The NLRB was also to prevent unfair labor practices by management and unions. While other workers were able to demand elections to force recognition of their chosen union, farm workers trying to band together were forced out of the country, faced beatings, large scale firings, and blacklisting.

The UFW's Delano grape strike, which began in 1965 and ended with contracts won in 1970, broke this dismal, repeated pattern of failure and increased misery. The nation-wide consumer grape boycott made the difference. Growers could still count the state and local power structures (police, elected officials, and judges) on their side. They could still import hundreds or thousands of desperately poor, illegal Mexican "webbacks" to pick their grapes, with the connivance of immigration authorities. They could even order thousands of extra hogs of grapes to the United States Army which enormously increased its grape purchases. But the millions of individuals and thousands of institutions who stopped buying grapes in support of the UFW, the economic power to force contracts from the unions and the growers. The boycott, the organized commitment of concerned citizens to securing justice for the indispensable workers who pick their food, gives the union power to make contracts that are worth more than the power of corporate agribusiness. This farmer...

(Continued on page 4)

Krishnan Nair To Visit

By LIZ BUTTERS and DAVE GEORGE

We have just returned from India. Our main reasons for going were to attain a perspective on how the spiritual and activist dimensions can be combined to make nonviolence a way of life and not simply a technique; to strengthen our own practice of mediation; and to learn first-hand from the Gandhi movement, particularly the land-reform movement.

We became good friends with a very inspiring man, Krishnan Nair. Talking together we felt it would be a wonderful idea to sponsor him in coming to the U.S. We felt it would be a good way to share the richness of our experience in India with our friends in the movement here. We also felt it was an opportunity to make international learning and exchange more mutual, i.e., less one-sided.

With this background, let us share a little more about Krishnan Nair as a person and about the specifics of our plans and needs.

Who Is Krishnan Nair?

Krishnan Nair is an Indian of 49 years born in a village in the Trivandrum District of Kerala (Continued on page 2)
36 East First

By MICHAEL LLOYD

Last night the heavens opened up: down came the rain, the sleet and the snow; lightning flashed and the sky thundered, as if to mock the sunshine of the afternoon. Just a few days ago, it seemed that winter had packed up his bag and gone, the sun was so hot, the C.O.W. doors were wide open, people sat outside, the bobcats coursed on the concrete, and there was everywhere the lightness of heart such a warmth brings. It's strange how easily the moods of our cares are altered by the elements: as unexpected sunshine and turning leaves prevent you from being sorrowful, look deep into your heart and you shall find it is only that which has given you sorrow that is giving you joy. When you are joyful, look deep into your heart and you shall see that in truth you are being watched over by that which has been your delight.

Sunshine and rain, summer and winter, conventional images for happiness and sadness. But let it be said that all colors are woven together, as a dress of sunshine and rain are woven together, to cast a blanket of dulness and drabness. And yet, during the winter, during the times that seem dark, as if the sky is a great, broad mirror, the bright colors of the sunshine. Bright colored clothes are always the first to go from the clothing room.

Too often we forget the colors when thinking of men who are down on their luck, this is especially true of the homeless. Perhaps because they have a broken down, “disadvantaged” “Bowery home.” Even though many may have “aspired to reach the penthouse,” the color of shades of fever and understanding are very much there, as they are with all of us: the colors of hopes and aspirations. They are the colors, of reminiscences of past warmth.

Within St. Joseph’s House itself, it is easier for the colors to be even brighter more often, because we have the strength of being part of a community. I have been in one of the windows, one of the cracked windows on our ground floor, each of us one of the cracks as a piece of color. It filters through, but is refracted and reflected in strangely confused and crooked directions—mostly love, with its intricacies of love, its fears and pain, its splinterings of joy and sadness. One of the disadvantages about windows that are cracked is that those looking in from the outside have a distorted view of the inside; similarly, those on the inside cannot see with any clarity what is going on outside.

This mutual incompleteness of vision often causes misunderstanding, hesitation, bitterness—and from this comes unhappiness. Too much outside-presence often makes us forget that the outside is still very much there.

We hope that one day our windows may be clear, to tell of the weather poured down the next, and there prevail a mood of gloom and clamped-up-ness.

When you are joyous, look deep into your heart and you shall see that in truth you are being watched over by that which has been your delight.
Introducing Paulo Freire

Paulo Freire is a Brazilian educator gifted with a truly radical vision of human potential. He believes that, at heralded Freire’s method, grow out of a truly radical vision of radical concert the oppressed to the extent that we see our- self, and others as defined and self and others as being at the mercy of an oppressive coercion serving the interests of the oppressor. All who are unfree (and we are all unfree to the extent that we see ourselves and others as defined and limited by social roles) would be happy to dilute Freire’s vision and escape the fearful, life-limiting opportunity with which it confronts us.

Freire is now receiving large amounts of publicity as a “new educational star,” a man who has a corner on a “new miracle method” of forcing information into the thick heads of hopeless students. Recently, Fordham University offered him $400 a head (to those who could pay) to give a seminar on “the Freire method.” Thus he is being, relatively speaking, a university lecture circuit. And the National Catholic Reporter ran a lead article on Freire’s methodology, “Education for the Oppressed.” Kristin McNamara, the review’s author, worked with Freire in Chile. A sister of Loretto, she presently lives in Kansas City, Mo. She preserves undiluted Freire’s radical message to us all.

Freire has something far greater to offer us than this nonsense. He emphasizes that “techniques” (the heralded Freire method) grow out of concrete observation of society and reflection on our potential freedom. Nonetheless, through his experience in applying American “fuss” among Third World culture, heavily bearded, aggressively jingoistic that’s what you hear, liberation this way or that. They can not do justice to the people who wrote the book, the teachers, the workers who are unfree and we are all as brainwashed dupes. It should be, the people who wrote the Declaration of Independence.

The longer I know this man, the more I hear him talk, the harder it is for me to think of him as black, as an intellectual, as that face among the faces I see doing so feel halfway responsive to the jargon that is my mind’s way of thinking I can’t do justice to the complexity of his life, let alone the “problem” that others assign to educators. I don’t think he can’t find three hours a week to talk with him and with others more or less like him.

Mere Berew projects perhaps I should have known that or moral or religious or moral or religious or moral or religious or moral or religious or moral or religious or moral or religious or moral or religious or moral or religious or moral or religious or 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worker power is non-violent power, power which consists of people acting together out of a love of justice strong enough to take sacrifice upon itself. For most, the element of sacrifice is barely noticeable: a mere choice of the inconvenience of turning away from a store when confronted with a UFW picket line, or perhaps of doing without grapes, or certain wines, or lettuce for a time. For active supporters, it has meant giving time and energy to picket lines and demonstrations. For the organizers of the boycott, farm workers and volunteers, the sacrifice has been more demanding, carrying on day after day after day the hard, frustrating round of picketing, leafletting and consciousness raising, trying to interest busy city dwellers, who may never have considered where their food came from, in the well-being of far-away families who often speak another language, or are of another race. For the workers in the fields, committing themselves to the union can come close to risking life itself: risking eviction, arrest, blacklisting; committing their families’ livelihood, food and shelter, to the unlikely possibility of success, to move to other chimeras, but will be able to support them through a long struggle (this has been going on for ten years).

Growers Attack Boycott

The proven strength of the non-violent farmworker boycott has led growers to seek desperate means to defeat it. They hope again to use the law to deny farm workers and supporters the opportunity to act conscientiously for justice. Their immediate threat is the grower-inspired effort of the Republican-dominated NLRB to get an injunction against the UFW boycott.

This new legal challenge seems pre­posterous at first glance. All previous NLRB decisions in relation to farm workers have taken the position that the National Labor Relations Act neither covers, protects, nor restricts the UFW. In fact, they have repeatedly denied having any jurisdiction in connection with farm workers. Now, suddenly, Nixon-appointed NLRB general counsel, Peter Nash, who once served the UFW. In fact, they have repeatedly denied having any jurisdiction in connection with farm workers. Now, suddenly, Nixon-appointed NLRB general counsel, Peter Nash, who once served the UFW, is being used by the NLRB, which has said it has no authority, to attack farm workers in the UFW. This move is pre­posterous — why should workers whose annual average wages are $1,600 a year, who are forced to live crowded together in one room shacks without sanitation, whose children cannot go to school because of local cost, constant moves, and sometimes lack of clothes, who are in danger of losing their marginal employment through automation, have to wait for perhaps years in the courts mall over a phony legal challenge?

"Republicans Are Responsible"

The UFW reasons that it is the Re­publican Party NLRB appointees who are providing the growers with this chance to attack the workers’ only power. Therefore, the union is mount­ing a nation-wide campaign to expose the Republican threat to its existence. Farm worker supporters are urged to send letters and telegrams and letters of protest to Senator Robert J. Dole, Chairman of the Republican National Committee (310 First St., S.E., Washington, D. C. 20008). If the injunction threat is not blocked, the growers have promised to bring 25,000 farm workers to the San Diego National Republican Convention in August.

Jim Drake, UFW’s director of organization, has said, ‘‘Dole, Nixon, and their henchmen have decided to take on migrant farm workers and we say, ‘Okay, let’s fight it out.’ But we vow to push ourselves into every Republican’s campaign in the nation. Whenever a candidate quotes the Republican Party’s stance on the same question, ‘Why does the Republican Party deprive farm workers of a union? ‘The Republican Party may have a plan to destroy us and maybe they will, but it seems to me that migrant workers will take some Republican Senators and Congressmen down with them this one. For us to boycott is to live, so we will fight to the end to save our right to live.”

Growers Sponsor Labor Bills

This Republican NLRB injunction threat is only the latest in the series of grower attempts to destroy the union by enlisting the supposedly “impartial” help of the law. In 1971, lettuce growers faced with a boycott, pushed the union into a radio phony negotiations. Meanwhile, they put all their energy and power into labor disputes in other industries - would render unionization of the farm workers impossible. This effort, the Cory bill, was defeated this summer by a national UFW campaign to persuade Democratic Party leaders to restrain their California cohorts and a dil­ecte in the People’s Republic of China. In this state the law invites credit unions to become factories of construction. I’ve known and worked with many credit unions that have been doing just that, and are really doing well.

On housing estate, the famous Levitt and Son builder is the general contractor, and they are building a house to house the legislation designed to keep these people in line with modern economic organiza­tion and technology.

What an enormous amount of capital, skill and patience it takes to build houses in 1972? It is a long road from the beginning of an idea to the reality of construction. I’ve known and worked with organizers of co-op housing for over fifteen years. Now I am one of my friends doing the work, and their hair is turning white prematurely with the difficulties of dealing with so many government agencies. It is hard to bring together the skills necessary to build a modern community. Moreover, organizers and agencies often fail to recognize some fundamental truths about our system of political economy.

There is no such thing as a low cost house. Land is too high in price money is too expensive to borrow, building materials are sold like gold. Building labor is insecure in a world of fear or famine, that is, seasonal labor, and thereby demands a high hourly wage. The middle income family (earning as much as $12,000 a year) cannot pay for a new house today. These families do not realize that they are really house poor. It would be interesting to learn the difference between the subsidy given to lower high housing costs for poor families in Public Housing and the insubstantiality for housing for families earning $12,000 to $15,000 a year. We may discover that both need a lot of help. How sad and ironic that our laws treat them so vastly differently in how they own and control their property rights. Our tax funds are used by legislation to discriminate between the ways people are helped to gain good housing. People should know they are favored or discriminated against by the Government simply because of their economic and social position.

Abolition

Angel of Peace

Co-op Housing

By WILLIAM HORVATH

It is over ten months since I left house building to work as a construction supervisor. We are building a complex of co-op­erative apartments in the south­ern part of Detroit. The Michigan Credit Union League is sponsoring the project with a $500,000 loan. In this state the law invites credit unions to become factories of construction. I’ve known and worked with many credit unions that have been doing just that, and are really doing well.

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On Practice and Faith

The Bowery Resident's Committee (the most part made up of recovered alcoholics who are living or working in the neighborhood) opened a community center at 267 Bowery. One of its activities includes a medical clinic, counseling, employment referrals, briefings with community groups, and publicity about Bowery conditions.

The center occupies the former site of Sammy's Bowery Folies, once advertised as the “World Club of the Bowery,” which for nearly forty years (until 1970) was a popular stopping point for prospectors, upholsterers, and tourists who wanted to see how the other half staggered on the Bowery.

Center Opens


We often see that much of our social activity, which is that it should not do to have to be that way; that we need the help of others to become healthy ourselves, and yet we wonder at times what we can do. Perhaps the sense of health is too simple and joyful and thus frightens us. Maybe we do not really know what good health is.

In The Geography of Faith, we find two people sincerely interested in better health for all of us. We first meet Dr. Coles, the author of this moving dialogue, a man dedicated to his work in child psychology. Then we meet, in a new way, Father Daniel Berrigan, then underground, knowing (even hoping) that he will be caught, yet standing witness wherever possible against the faces of death.

The Edge of Society

By placing himself in jeopardy, Daniel Berrigan finds himself "at the edge" of society, and it is here that he can take the "therapy" away from society itself. He does not hope to set up new systems, but rather simply to say "yes" to the "no" of society to everything and anything. But life and death are closely tied in every sphere of activity, and as we come to know the Edge of Society, we see only one war, at home and abroad. Armies, homes, and schools can have much in common if they succeed in molding lives and stifling youthful spirit. As Coles cautions, "We don't easily talk about in public." Many feel themselves victims of circumstances, of the way society has been as they have grown up in it. In responding to them, he reminds radical intellectuals: "We may eagerly challenge us in many ways . . . He asked us to forswear a partialistic view of human nature which . . . constantly sets up niches and categories . . . . He insisted that there are dozens and dozens of possibilities in all of us . . . What matters is not the letter, but the spirit, not what a generation's smug, self-satisfied pharisees say; but what the forgotten and forsaken might become."

Self-Surfeiting

Robert Coles knows how easy it is for us to make Daniel Berrigan an heroic figure and still not grow in our own right. "It is us, the onlookers, who set aside . . . the Berrigans of this world by conferring up "saintdom" upon them. That way they are special; it is not their community has been as they have grown up in it. In responding to them, he reminds radical intellectuals: "We may eagerly challenge us in many ways . . . He asked us to forswear a partialistic view of human nature which . . . constantly sets up niches and categories . . . . He insisted that there are dozens and dozens of possibilities in all of us . . . What matters is not the letter, but the spirit, not what a generation's smug, self-satisfied pharisees say; but what the forgotten and forsaken might become."

It is important then that we look at ourselves as well as society as we need better health. We must understand that the peaceful means are as important as the peaceful ends. And as the geography of faith unfolds before us, we are more clearly the freedom of the soul to assert its responsibility at whatever time or place.

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A visitor to the center around 5:30 p.m. was greeted by a large room bearing remnants of Ha- van discussing the "Worley" past on the walls as well as a display of art by a group of recovering alcoholics. He would find fifty or more men playing cards, chatting, being involved in the center's operation.

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City and Field
505 N. Cummings St.
Los Angeles, Calif.

Dear Dorothy,

Two weekends ago Jeff and I worked in Los Angeles on the United Farm Workers Campaign for Justice from Santa Maria and the Imperial Valley had come into the city to work with two other groups. Before that they had spent a weekend at La Paz being "inoculated." This is something which the Farmworkers often do every weekend—to bring families from the land into the city to work with boycott volunteers. All the volunteers with whom we spoke said how much the presence of campesinos renewed the work in the city.

Saturday evening, after a long day's boycottting of Ralph's Markets (on the "Wine Walk") we had a holiday dinner for a meal of rice, beans, tortillas, fresh lettuce and broccoli. In the kitchen we made tamales and tamales and tamales. There was a feeling that we were "sharing in the fruits of a struggle."

The day was one of real sharing. Or I should say it was a time when shared values and work and work issues dominated conversation after dinner, two members of each boycott group rose and reported how many customers had walked out and was applauded. We sang together "Solidaridad pa' siempre." And a poem of one campesino from Carlsbad, California, Gomez, was read. It recorded the Farmworker struggle, and earlier and earlier struggles over land.

That afternoon we had a long talk with Eugene (Winnie) Arbello who is now West Side coordinator for the boycott. He has been with the union for a year and a half. And before that he worked in the fields with his family. He has a lot of soul and body. His limbs are spare, his hands and face deeply tanned. He dresses simply and comfortably, but there is something striking about his presence, something close to the earth itself. The delicate bones in his hands and face cut out skin weathered by seasons.

There is so much more I could write about Winnie, about one man here. Winnie stressed the importance of self-discipline in the Farmworker struggle. It is a concrete way of creating an alternative—high school I wrote about this.

Bob Graf

Dear Dorothy,

Pat, David, and I have moved into the neighborhood near Casa Maria. With another family and three young people, we are living in a big old house which was given to the Casa Maria Community. As you may know, Mike Cullen and family have recently come back to Milwaukee. Mike has ideas about his future activities and is calling people together Friday evening to talk about them.

One of the people living in the house, Maureen Hoyler, is directly involved in the work of Casa. From her I gather Casa Maria is as busy as ever being a house of hospitality for needy families.

The Independent Learning Center, an alternative high school I wrote about in my last letter (CW, Feb. 1971), is still functioning. People interested in knowing how we began and about the struggles we face, can write us.

This summer I plan to leave ILC and hope to work in new areas in response to the need for fuller development of ideas. I firmly believe in creating alternative structures such as high schools, day care centers and the rest. This is our job to develop a new structure, to develop a new way of thinking and being. Unfortunately, not all the alternatives fall into place readily or seem to be based on a reasonable analysis and action upon the world in order to transform it.

In working for the liberation of the world, we are part of other struggles against deep seated problem—their only model is oppression. Thus, when they, the oppressor, begin to change, those who are in the liberation, think of being like the oppressor, that is, seeking power to control and to obtain what the oppressor has. Like their model, they think and act in solidarity with the oppressor, must perceive the reality of oppression not as a closed world from which there is no exit, but as a living situation which they can transform.

The world and action are intimately connected. But action is human only when there is other occupation but also preoccupation, which is, whether it be deepening or fruitless reflection. Problem-posing education erases the teacher-student relation; it helps the student to see the world in terms of a power struggle between the oppressor and the oppressed. The teacher's role to regulate the distribution of information. The educator presents the material (a situation) to the student for their consideration and he reconizes his earlier representation of the world. Action is intimately connected with other groups. We must perceive the reality of oppression not as a closed world from which there is no exit, but as an exit situation which they can transform.

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Workers Can Speak

(Continued from page 3)

just got a construction job, and he says he's had some good talks with the homey-whitehead kind. He says you can write them off; you can't write anyone off, not if you're on the bottom side of the world and you have to do the dirty work. rich people, the well-off white people, they can write their hands; it doesn't cost them anything, so I can't afford to think that way.

Class Consciousness

A particular kind of class consciousness is to be found in much of what I hear from such youths, black or white: 'We must work hard for relatively little and keep our mouths shut, others live well, call themselves “liberals” or “radicals” or other “bad” things, too. I suppose I...

Tivoli: A Farm With a View

(Continued From Page 4)

young man who is truly dedicated, who looks for questions and the answers outside, the mainstream, off the beaten path. Like Thoreau, he has found a niche, I think, that Dorothy will be able to finish her book A Life of Grace right here at the Catholic Worker farm with a view.

Tobias Story

Thaddy Day herself, who works wherever she goes, does much of her writing and work here. I do hope that Dorothy

UFW: Contending Anew for Life

(Continued From Page 4)

a balance between the politically equal, competitive interests: big labor and big business. For the UFW, in the hard early stages of organizing the previously voiceless, Taft-Hartley's ban on secondary boycotts (boycotts of stores which carry non-union produce), and Landrum-Griffin's ban on boycotts of...
Ain't Gonna Pay No More

Krishnan Nair To Visit

(Continued from page 1)

Nair is a man of extraordinary depth and passion. He has dedicated his life to nonviolent resistance, and his presence in the United States will be a significant event for the movement.

Krishnan Nair's purpose in visiting the U.S. is to continue his educational and motivational work. He will participate in a series of public appearances and speak at several prominent universities and community centers. His talks will focus on nonviolent resistance as a powerful tool for social change. Nair will discuss his experiences as a political prisoner in India and the importance of nonviolent methods for effecting change.

The proposed time of his visit is from March 1st to March 15th. The cost of his visit will be approximately $2,000, primarily for travel expenses to and from India.

In addition to his speaking engagements, Nair will participate in several workshops and seminars. He will also have time for one-on-one meetings with activists and community leaders to discuss strategies for nonviolent resistance in the U.S.

We are looking for sponsors and contributors to help make this trip possible. Your support is crucial in order to realize the full potential of Nair's visit. We are confident that his presence will inspire and galvanize the nonviolent resistance movement in the U.S.

Please consider making a donation to support Nair's visit. Contributions can be made by check or credit card through our website. Your generosity will make a significant difference in the strength and effectiveness of the nonviolent resistance movement in the U.S.

Thank you for your support. Together, we can continue to build a world of peace and justice through the power of nonviolent resistance.

Sincerely,
The War Tax Resistance

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The WTR is a grassroots organization dedicated to nonviolent resistance against U.S. military and government policies. We believe that tax resistance is a powerful tool for social change and that peace is possible through nonviolent means.

We are seeking to expand our network of supporters and volunteers in the U.S. who are committed to nonviolent resistance and to the principles of peace and justice. If you are interested in getting involved, please contact us at 1-800-WTR-RESIST or visit our website at www.wtr.org.

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For more information about nonviolent resistance, please visit www.peacecorps.gov or www.marchwithpeace.org.