

Community Pressure Wins Funding For Chicano School

(Oakland, Calif.) - Following stinging criticism and widespread pressure from the Chicano, Black and poor community here, the Oakland Board of Education recently voted to build two new education centers for preschool children.

Some \$2.9 million will be spent on Centro Infantil Children's Center, attended by predominantly Spanish-speaking children, and Hoover Children's Center.

The community battle for decent facilities for Centro Infantil was particularly difficult, having been fought over a six-year period. Some 150 predominantly Chicano people, most of them parents of children at Centro Infantil, had to attend three consecutive meetings of the Oakland School Board to ensure that the seven-member board would approve the funds for a new school.

At one of these meetings, parents, children and supporters of Centro Infantil marched into the Board meeting loudly chanting their demand for a new school.

ANGRY PARENTS

Angry parent after angry parent spoke before School Board members, reminding them of a long string of broken promises the Board has made over the years concerning Centro Infantil.

Although financed by Oakland schools, Centro is largely community-run. Pre-school age children, ages two, three and four, are forced to attend classes in a building that once served as a warehouse. Parents pointed out that the building's heating system is totally inadequate and that there is only one bathroom for all the children in the school.

Several of the children of Centro Infantil went before the Board to demand that they be given a new school. In their short and simple statements, they clearly expressed their frustration at going to school in a cold, abandoned warehouse.

Among those who spoke in support of Centro Infantil parents and children was Oakland Community School Director Ericka Huggins. Ericka urged the Board to provide the funds needed for a new school.

The community had expected a decision by the Board at its January 31 meeting concerning Centro Infantil, but were outraged when conservative Board

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CALIFORNIA COALITION FORMED TO FIGHT WEBER CASE

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become agitators, and do some education and some organizing," Carlisle forcefully said.

The respected Black community leader then told of an incident involving a Black woman, who was elected as the first Black financial secretary of the International Association of Machinists. The woman Carlisle explained, was placed in an office apart from White women employed in the union office.

Angered at this blatant discrimination, Carlisle attempted to question union officials about it at the union meeting. When the officials refused to deal with the issue, Carlisle said, "I became totally upset. I was enraged that we have segregation in our union at this late date."

He went on to say that he criticized other Black men in his union local present at the meeting for not being as upset as he was. "I'm not as upset as he was," Carlisle explained, "maybe I'm deranged. Maybe something's wrong with me for carrying on this way. No one else seemed upset."

The next day when he went to work at the Caterpillar plant, Carlisle said that one of his Black co-workers congratulated him for having spoken out at the previous night's meeting. "Every Black man should have been upset over Sister Simmons being discriminated against," his friend said.

"There's a time to become upset, there's a time to become emotional, and if the Weber



Over 100 people met recently in East Oakland to form the Northern California Coalition to Overturn the Weber Case. Speakers included (left to right) JONINA ABRON, editor of THE BLACK PANTHER, LORENZA CARLISLE, spokesperson of the Caterpillar Antidiscrimination Committee and Dr. VICKI ALEXANDER, a representative of the Infant Mortality Coalition.

decision is going to be overturned, we all are going to have to get upset," Carlisle declared.

Bill Tamayo of NCOBD then explained the legal arguments in the Weber case. Brian Weber is a White worker at the Kaiser Aluminum and Chemical Company plant in Gramercy, Louisiana. Weber charges that a 1974 affirmative action program that the United Steel Workers of America (USWA) union local at the Gramercy plant forced Kaiser to enact "discriminates" against him by giving Black workers first consideration in promotions.

If the Supreme Court upholds the decisions made by lower courts which support Weber's position, then all job affirmative action programs in the country

would be threatened.

Tamayo emphasized that the majority of federally negotiated affirmative action programs are voluntary. Therefore, if the right of unions to negotiate affirmative action programs with companies is taken away by the Supreme court in the Weber case, most employers can be expected to end other programs.

The demands of the Northern California Coalition to Overturn the Weber Case are: 1) Overturn the Weber case; 2) Defend and expand affirmative action; and 3) End economic discrimination against minorities and women.

Anyone wishing further information about the Coalition and its work may call (415) 465-6433. □

Striking Farmworkers Shut Down Winter Lettuce Harvesting

(El Centro, Calif.) - Harvesting of nearly all of the nation's winter lettuce was halted in mid-February when United Farm Workers (UFW) union members held a work stoppage to mourn a fellow worker shot to death during a bitter month-long strike.

"Virtually everything in the Imperial Valley is shut down," said Marc Grossman, a top aide to UFW leader Cesar Chavez.

The one-day walkout, which affected 30 growers, came in the midst of a strike by 4,200 UFW members against 10 major growers and shippers in California and Arizona who account for about 40 per cent of the nation's winter lettuce.

The work stoppage occurred two days after UFW striker Rufino Contreras, 27, was shot to death during a confrontation

with growers at a farm outside Holtville.

To ease tensions, Chavez ordered an end to all picketing until Contreras was buried and called for a general work stoppage on the day of the funeral.

"Monday's walkout came as a surprise," Chavez said at the union's strike headquarters in Calexico, just across the border from Mexico. "It was spontaneous. The workers just refused to board buses to go to the fields."

The UFW has been highly successful in shutting down the 10 growers thus far in a step-by-step escalation of the month-long strike. Since the killing of Contreras, the sheriff's force has been tripled by calling in deputies from three surrounding counties.

The union is seeking a contract with 28 produce firms — about

half of them local and the remainder "global" outfits that operate in Arizona and/or the California coastal valley.

About 7,000 of the 10,000 harvest workers here belong to the UFW, with about 4,300 on strike. Negotiations are underway with United Brand's Sun Harvest, Inc.

The UFW wants a three-year wage increase from the current average of \$3.70 an hour to about \$5.50 an hour.

At one point, Chavez threatened a nationwide boycott in response to threats made by the Ku Klux Klan that it would help growers. The UFW leader indicated that at least half of the security guards hired to work in the fields during the strike were members of or sympathizers of the KKK. □



Chicano youth demand needed funds for their school, Centro infantil, at an Oakland School Board meeting. OCS Director ERICKA HUGGINS spoke in support of their demands.

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members David Tucker and Russell Bruno claimed that funding for Centro Infantil and Hoover, plus a center for Chinese children already promised, would force cuts in the budgets of

elementary and secondary schools.

The vote on the issue was postponed until the Board's meeting of the following week, at which action was again delayed until the next week. □

Black Rebellion In America

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1819 — slaves in Augusta, Georgia, planned to burn the city. Their leader, Coo, also known as Coot, was caught and executed.

1821 — Rebellion led by Isam, alias General Jackson, took place through concerted activities of maroon groups in Onslow, Carteret and Bladen counties in North Carolina. Joint action planned between outlaws, field hands and some free Blacks against slaveholders. It took 300 militiamen 23 days to subdue the insurrection.

1822 — Betrayal by a house slave of Denmark Vesey conspiracy involving thousands of Blacks in Charleston, South Carolina and environs. Four Whites, 131 Blacks arrested; 37 hanged (including Vesey and five of his aides).

1823 — Bob Ferebee, outlaw slave leader, captured and executed.

1827 — In Mobile County, Alabama, maroon community builds a stockade fort which fell after a three day attack by armed slaveholders.

1830 — Maroon communities cause insubordination in Sampson, Bladen, Onslow, New Hanover and Dublin Counties, North Carolina. According to one leader, Moses, an uprising was planned with considerable arms, ammunition, runners and food supply.

1831 — Nat Turner Revolt in Southampton County, Virginia

results in the death of 60 Whites. Turner is captured and hanged.

August 11-21, 1965 — A six-day rebellion erupted in Watts, Los Angeles. Thousands of National Guardsmen and state police were rushed in to crush the uprising, which was traced to the mistreatment and arrest of a Black youth by White policemen. The death toll was 35; 883 injured; and 3,598 reported arrested.

June 12-17, 1967 — One of the most devastating rebellions to sweep U.S. cities in the 1960's took place in Newark, New Jersey. White vigilante groups were formed to terrorize Blacks. Twenty-three people were killed, more than 1,000 injured and 1,600 arrested. □

The Poetry Of Black America

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Africa's land.
I am the dark girl who crossed the wide sea
Carrying in my body the seed of the free.
I am the woman who worked in the field
Bringing the cotton and the corn to yield.
I am the one who labored as a slave,
Beaten and mistreated for the work that I gave —
Children sold away from me, husband sold, too.
No safety, no love, no respect was I due.
Three hundred years in the deepest South:

"An Appeal To Colored Citizens"

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us nearly or quite to death to make us work in ignorance and miseries, to support them and their families.

They certainly think that we are a gang of fools.

Those among them, who have volunteered their services for our redemption, though we are unable to compensate them for their labours, we nevertheless thank them from the bottom of our hearts, and have our eyes steadfastly fixed upon them, and their labors of love for God and man. But do slaveholders think that we thank them for keeping us in miseries, and taking our lives by the inches?

They (the Whites) know well, if we are men — there is a secret monitor in their hearts which tells them we are — they know, I say, if we are men, and see them treating us in the manner they do, that there can be nothing in our hearts but death alone, for them, notwithstanding we may appear cheerful, when we see them murdering our dear mothers and wives, because we cannot help ourselves.

Man, in all ages and all nations of the earth, is the same. Man is a peculiar creature — he is the image of his God, though he may be subjected to the most wretched condition upon earth, yet the spirit and feeling which constitute the creature, man, can never be entirely erased from his breast, because the God who made him



after his own image, planted it in his heart; he cannot get rid of it.

The Whites knowing this, they do not know what to do; they know that they have done us so much injury, they are afraid that we, being men, and not brutes, will retaliate, and woe will be to them.

Therefore, that dreadful fear, together with an avaricious spirit, and the natural love in them, to be called masters, (which term will yet honor them with to their sorrow) bring them to the resolve that they will keep us in ignorance and wretchedness, as long as they possibly can, and make the best of their time, while it lasts.

Consequently they, themselves, (and not us) render themselves our natural enemies, by treating us so cruel. They keep us miserable now, and call us their property, but some of them will have enough of us by and by — their stomachs shall run over with us. They want us for their slaves, and shall have us to their fill.

We are all in the world together!! — I said above, because we cannot help ourselves, (viz. we cannot help the Whites murdering our mothers and our wives). But this statement is incorrect, for we can help ourselves; for, if we lay aside abject servility, and be determined to act like men, and not brutes, the murderers among the Whites would be afraid to show their cruel heads.

But O, my God! — in sorrow I must say it, that my color, all over the world, have a mean, servile spirit. They yield in a moment to the Whites, let them be right or wrong — the reason they are able to keep their feet on our throats.

Oh! my colored brethren, all over the world, when shall we arise from this death-like apathy? And be men!! □

But God put a song and a prayer in my mouth.

God put a dream like steel in my soul.

Now, through my children, I'm reaching the goal.

Dark ones of today, my dream must come true:

All you dark children in the world out there,

Remember my sweat, my pain, my despair.

Remember my years, heavy with sorrow —

And make of those years a torch for tomorrow.

Make of my past a road to the light

Out of the darkness, the ignorance, the night

Lift high my banner out of the dust.

Stand like free men supporting my trust.

Believe in the right, let none push you back.

For I will be with you no white brother

Dares keep down the children of the Negro mother.

"THE PEOPLE WILL BE FREE"

By Ericka Huggins

some people's lives begin easily
end easily and the shit in
between flows easily
not for me

it seems that from birth
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