



A Man of

border and the sugar-beet fields of Montana to the desert valleys near Mexico.

Larry still remembers his first strike as if it were yesterday. He was 16 and supporting himself (his family remained in the Philippines). He and about 1000 other Filipinos were picking lettuce for a big grower in Monroe, Washington State. Larry had already suffered a serious injury to one of his hands, but even one-handed, he could pick as fast as some of the best of them. The field workers were getting 80¢ a DAY in those days. The grower also had a big packing shed, with about 300 Anglo women and it was these women who started the strike. "They asked for 15¢ an hour", Larry recalls, "and when the boss refused, they went on strike. They asked us to join them, and we decided to ask for a raise, too." The strike went on for several weeks, and finally the grower gave in and raised the packing wage to 15¢ an hour. But the field workers were left at 80¢ a day.

"After that", Larry recalls, "I hit the road. I used to ride the trains all over the place, a regular tramp. I'd go wherever there was work. We had a route, and in the off-seasons we would hit the docks." Larry got work with the fishing fleets, out of San Pedro, Seattle, and even Alaska, when there was no work in the fields. And this first really successful organizing was related to this, when he helped organize the salmon and sardine cannery workers in the San Pedro-Wilmington area. The Filipino Community there, over 500 workers, elected him their leader. He was already a highly-skilled and very able organizer by then, and only 23 years old.

By this time Larry realized the value of unity, of working together, and he became more determined than ever to help the Filipino workers and all farm workers to form a strong union that could bring them justice. During the next 20 years he

Larry Iliang was only 15 when he left his family and his home town, San Nicolas, in the Philippine Islands. It was 1929 and young Larry set out across the ocean for booming, prosperous America, to get an education and to make his fortune. Larry Iliang never got rich. And as for his education, he recalls, "I only went to school for three months in this country. I was in Seattle. I soon ran out of money and I couldn't even buy lunch. So I had to go to work in the fields." But Larry has something that money can't buy, that you can't obtain by reading books. Larry has the loyalty, respect, gratitude, and admiration of thousands of Filipino and Mexican-American farm workers whom he has been helping over the past 30 years.

Larry Iliang is the Assistant Director of the United Farm Workers Association, and is Cesar Chavez's partner in the drive to win decent wages and justice for California's and the nation's farm workers. Larry has tasted the bitter injustices of farm work for almost four decades, has worked in almost every crop grown on the Pacific coast, and has worked from the cold Canadian

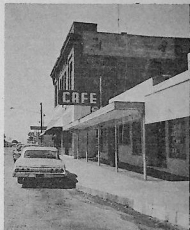
Dedication

worked for several unions, including the AFL-CIO and the Longshoremen, and also did a lot on his own, spreading his ideas about how workers could benefit if they helped each other and worked together. In the mid-1950's, while living in Stockton, he met Dolores Huerta, and they soon became close friends. They had a common goal, and realized that they were both trying to do the same thing to help the worker Dolores Huerta is now one of the Union's Vice-presidents.

In May of 1960, Larry began working full-time trying to build a union for farm workers, and Delano soon became the center of the best organized and most dedicated Filipino farm workers in the state. In August of 1965, the Filipinos decided that they had had enough of the bad wages and cheating growers. They voted to demand a wage of \$1.40 an hour and a written contract, the protection of their union, the A.W.O.C. When the growers refused, the workers went on strike, on September 8, 1965, with Larry Iliang as their leader. The Mexican-American farm workers under Cesar Chavez voted to join the strike a week later. Larry hasn't had much peace since then. He has worked closely and tirelessly with Cesar Chavez to plan the strategy of the strike. And much of the credit for the Schenley and DiGiorgio victories goes to the Filipino farm workers under Larry's leadership.

There is still a long road ahead, but Larry Iliang is not afraid of the challenge. He turned his back on the security of an easy life at home, when he left the Philippines 37 years ago. And with leaders like Larry and Cesar, and with the tenacity, bravery, and determination like that shown by the workers of Delano, all races working together, we will soon bring justice to every field and ranch in California and throughout the nation.

What is the Name of This Town?



In the last issue, there were many correct answers to the Game of the Towns, which was SANTA PAULA. The winners were Maxine Neal and Lazara A. Gomez, both of Santa Paula.