

Police Brutality

PREGNANT WOMAN BEATEN

A recent report from the U.S. Civil Rights commission is entitled: Mexican-Americans and the Administration of Justice in the Southwest. The 135 page booklet (available through the government printing office in Washington D.C.) thoroughly catalogues the injustices that Chicanos face with law enforcement agencies and the judicial process. The conclusions of the committee are as follows: Mexican-Americans are frequently discriminated against by law enforcement officers. More frequent use of excessive force is used against Mexicans than against Anglos. Harassment is constantly directed against Mexican-American juveniles in five Southwestern states.

Several factual examples are given, including the police harassment directed against the Figueroa brothers, Alfred and Miguel, in Blythe, California. The Figueroa brothers have made great sacrifices to help farm workers throughout southern California.

Police brutality showed its ugly face again in Delano in recent weeks. (See story on page 12). It seems hard to believe that at a time which many believe to be the post-civil rights era, Mexican-Americans are afraid of the authorities which are supposed to protect their lives and property.

Delano has more than its share of brutal cops, and something is dreadfully wrong when one of them brutally assaults a pregnant woman, and gets away with it. Delano needs two things immediately: effective community organization and leadership to get the psychopaths off the police force, and a thorough investigation by state and federal agencies into the recent occurrences at Delano High School. Unless these things are done, the seething cauldron of racial discontent will boil over. As one of the striking student's parents said recently: "The little man with the sombrero is no longer sleeping under the cactus. He is awake, and alive, and aware. He wants justice and he wants it now."



IN THIS ISSUE:

- UFWOC signs 13 more contracts..... page 4*
Strike hits plums, peaches, tomatoes.... page 6
Cops riot at Delano High School..... page 12
Women farm workers: their role..... page 16
Problems of farm worker organizing..... page 20

PHOTOS:

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