



# Foreign Leaders Show Interest in the Huelga

## AFRICAN FARM WORKER LEADER INTERVIEWED

"Farm worker unions can be the most powerful labor organizations throughout the world," one of Africa's top labor leaders said in Delano.

Benjamin Bentum, secretary-general of the Ghana Trades Union Congress, that country's equivalent to the AFL-CIO, visited La Huelga as part of a two-week tour of the United States.

In an exclusive interview with El Malcriado, Bentum said farm unions have strong potential in all countries because:

1- Farm Workers are people who are accustomed to hardships, they haven't grown soft as have some workers in some other industries. The more oppressive their condition, he said, the more the workers welcome the union.

2- The campesinos, who generally have been denied technical education and who have large families, therefore find it difficult to leave farm labor in the same way that a factory or office worker can quit if conditions are bad. Since the Farmworker cannot quit, his



Benjamin Bentum, Ghana's top union leader and a former leader of that country's farm workers union, visits with Cesar Chavez at UFWOC's Delano headquarters. They held important talks on problems of farm workers throughout the world.



Fidel Velazquez (front center) leader of Mexico's giant CFTM labor federation, and other Mexican labor leaders meet with Cesar Chavez during the UFWOC leader's visit to Mexico City. Cesar was specially invited to the meeting by Walter Reuther, United Auto Workers president. Velazquez was very much interested in the huelga. Cesar also visited with Aguirre Palancas, Mexican minister of agriculture and colonization.

only hope of betterment is through the Union.

Bentum had high praise for UFWOC's community-oriented efforts, such as the co-op store and credit Union, because the Union he helped organize in Ghana—a farmworkers union—is doing the same things.

The African leader was the first to organize government agriculture specialists in Ghana and later various unions were merged into one, making the Ghanaian farm union one of the country's strongest. It negotiates national agreements with the growers for its 50,000 members.

Bentum, a former secretary-general of the Ghana farm union, was elected to the Trades Union Council post after the Nkrumah regime was overthrown. Du-

ring Nkrumah's reign, he was ousted from his farm union post as well as from another position in the TUC.

"The strength of a union," he said, "doesn't lie in the size of the office, but in the size of the membership." That is why, he added, he has made it a point to get out of the office and among the members.

This strategy of strong solidarity with the members has in part brought Ghana minimum wage legislation and other measures not usually found in developing nations.

Accompanying Bentum to Delano was Dean Clowes, AFL-CIO deputy director of the African-American Labor Center in New York. Clowes is on leave from the United Steelworkers of America, AFL-CIO.

## Black and Guilty

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suit and after 60 days in Atlanta's version of Devil's Island, they were set free.

When Wilson's trial came up on February 1 and 2, he was tried on two state charges of "obprobrious" language and two state charges of assault. Considering the case was an all-white jury, for of the panel of 24 potential jurors, Robert Sparks, state assistant attorney general, had eliminated the five Negroes.

Sparks, throughout the trial, referred to SNCC and the Vietnam war and said, "If Johnny C. Wilson will not fight in Vietnam, why should he be allowed to fight in the

streets of Atlanta?"

City police and the army gave conflicting testimony. They could not identify the demonstrators except to say that they were certain that Wilson was the one who allegedly assaulted two cops. Captain Morris G. Redding of the Atlanta police said he saw Wilson about to throw a cop against a wall, but Redding couldn't identify the officer and no officer gave any supporting testimony.

The jury took only two hours to find Wilson guilty on all four charges and the civil rights worker was sentenced to three years on the Georgia chain gang.



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