

Migrants Continued from Page 1

ers recruited more than they needed to avoid a similar shortage."

Joe Rivera is another counselor at the Chicano Affairs Center and oversees the shelters. He said the surplus of workers this year also shortened the length of the harvest, so those who did find work were employed for a shorter period.

"And when they did work on the farms, 90 per cent lived in substandard housing, in tents or barns, without running water or cooking facilities," Rivera said. "One place near Harrisburg was charging 60 workers \$65 a month each to share five tents."

Rivera also said it is common for employers to take advantage of the surplus of workers and pay them less than the going rate for their work as the migrants fear losing their jobs in the tight market.

Simon Rojas, who stays at a migrant shelter, said he worked 11-hour shifts in a waterbed factory for less than three dollars an hour, but tolerated this because it was his first source of income in months. Although he now works in a mill, he said high rents in the area absorb most of his income.

"I used to send what money I could to my wife and children in Mexico," Rojas said in Spanish. "But now it's a struggle to survive from day to day."

Martin Hernandez also lived in migrant camps in Oregon over the summer. He said a common practice of those who ran the camps was to charge workers a "deposit" of around \$50 in addition to rent. He said that frequently the deposit was never returned. In any case, when the harvest ends the

camps are disbanded and the workers are out on their own.

"Somos vendidos," Hernandez said. "We are sold."

Migrant workers are reluctant to report these abuses because they often fear deportation and rarely know English. "They live in fear of the criminals and the authorities," Olalde said.

Salvadore Garcia is a homeless worker who was assaulted two weeks ago as he was walking from the Eugene Mission to a nearby store.

"Two men demanded that I give them my money," he said in Spanish. "I told them I didn't have any and they stabbed me in the side."

Although Garcia is now out of the hospital, he lost his job during his absence. He said many migrant workers avoid the Mission because of the crime and danger nearby.

In addition to these difficulties, many former employers are reluctant to provide workers with documentation and work records so workers can apply for immigration amnesty.

According to the Immigration Amnesty Act, Mexican citizens in the United States are eligible for amnesty if they can prove they have completed at least 90 days of agricultural work in the United States from May 1985 to May 1986. Signed statements from former employers are essential proof for amnesty.

Both Rojas and Hernandez have had former employers deny that they worked for them. Hernandez traveled from Spokane, Wash., to Fresno, Calif., to personally deliver his forms for signing and was refused. The deadline for application for amnesty is November 30.

But Rivera is suspicious of the new law, even though he helps people comply with it. He sees as particularly troublesome a provision that requires applicants to pass a comprehensive English, American history and citizenship examination within 30 months of the deadline.

"Most of these people don't have more than a sixth grade education in their own country," Rivera said. "They also work hard and put in long hours. How can we expect them to learn all this in two and a half years?"

"This new immigration law will create a police state," he said. "Once they have everyone registered and tagged, it will be a lot easier to deport them when they fail the test."

Still, Rivera and Olalde refer workers interested in learning English to the University of Oregon's High School Equivalency program, which has programs to help migrants learn English.

Rivera also said the new immigration law can do little to curb employer abuses.

"Farmers will still find and hire undocumented workers because they know they can get away with paying them less," Rivera said. "This has been going on for years and years, but only the big influx this year has brought it to public attention."

Apparently the right people have been listening. According to an Associated Press article, the Legislative Emergency Board on Friday approved a

\$500,000 emergency fund to help homeless migrant workers. The board also established a center for homeless workers in a former Governor's residence to receive donations and coordinate volunteer efforts to help migrants.

Governor Neil Goldschmidt and former Governor Bob Straub strongly urged approval of the funds in a joint appearance before a board subcommittee on Thursday.

According to an article in Friday's Statesman-Journal, Goldschmidt and Straub made emotional pitches before the subcommittee for migrant aid.

"It's a disgrace we've made no headway in 30 years," Straub said. "It's time to buckle down and deal with this in a humane and decent way....Half a million dollars can alleviate a lot of human suffering that otherwise may well result in the death of people this winter."



Get a 14" 1 item

Only \$5.25 PLUS ONE 32-oz. PEPSI

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____

687-8600 • 1432 Orchard
ONE COUPON PER PIZZA • Expires 11/21/88

UO Bookstore

Make your own movies!



VIDEO CAMERA RENTALS

29⁹⁵ PER DAY

49⁹⁵ WEEK END

UO 13th & Kincaid
M-F 7:30-5:30
SAT 10:00-5:00
BOOKSTORE 686-4331

University Neighborhood Dentist
Gentle care for students for 16 years.
Student Discount Available
J. Scott Baxter, D.M.D., P.C.

622 E. 22nd Ave Building F
(corner of Patterson & 22nd) **344-6371**

THE FAR SIDE By GARY LARSON