

Mexicans For Justice Present Demands

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At least three representatives of the newly-formed Mexicans for Justice (MFJ) were scheduled to join Watsonville city representatives in a low income housing discussion with department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) today in San Francisco.

That was decided after more than 25 Mexican-Americans and Negroes aired views on housing grievances to five Watsonville council members and other city officials Wednesday in an informal four hour session.

The three named were Ramon Martinez, Jesus Medina and Tereso Morales. More were expected to join the trio when Medina said he would provide transportation, after Watsonville Mayor William Murphy said the city had car space for only two persons.

Wednesday's session was a turnaround of Tuesday's sit-in at Watsonville at city hall, where two men were arrested, a woman reportedly was struck and a policeman injured.

Murphy called the session because "we want to hear what they have on their mind."

The group of more than 100 seemed pleased to have the opportunity to speak before the five solemn-faced city councilmen. Aside from Murphy, councilmen present were Ted Colton, Ed Hall, Joe Richards and Rex Clarke.

The council was presented with six demands from the Mexicans for Justice at the start of the meeting.

Included were "equal representation" in community matters such as housing, schools, jobs and welfare advisory boards; formation of a citizens advisory board of Mexican American and low income representatives, to be appointed by MFJ; a low income housing

time table be made up "in consultation with" MFJ; establishment of a county housing authority, the advisory board of which will be made up of at least two-thirds minority people; business and housing agencies to include MFJ representatives; and two members of MFJ to join city officials in San Francisco to discuss emergency housing programs with HUD.

Murphy informed the group that the council would not be able to act on the demands "tonight because the informal session possibly may be in violation of the Brown Act," part of which states no official meeting should be called without 24 hours notice to the general public.

Another demand was added to the six written. John San-

chez, 34, arrested Tuesday night, said, "We want to add that the charges against the two arrested be dropped."

However, Martinez, the other person arrested, said, "That does not include me. I'll fight my own case."

Henry Mello, chairman of the county board of supervisors, said "The demands are not unreasonable. As a matter of fact the county low income housing commission will present us with a program at our Tuesday meeting, and many of the demands you talk about are in it. This took more than a year to complete," he added after being asked why such a report was not made before.

The governmental officials heard of "housing conditions worse than deplorable" from

group spokesmen. They said it had become so bad that "human dignity has been stripped," and the "health of our children threatened."

Phillip Sanchez asked the council "for help in this big crisis. When we have a crisis overseas, we are ready to help, but what happens when it involves houses to rent for farm workers?"

There were some speakers who told the council to "start doing something now, or else things will happen."

A young lady in the crowd asked how the city could afford "a new recreation area (at Pinto Lake) and yet let housing go on as it has here."

Murphy explained that funds for the \$200,000 park area were derived from the state "with the stipulation that they could be used only for recreation purposes, if at all."

Asked to define the Mexicans for Justice group, Manuel Santana, who acted as a translator during the proceedings, said "It was formed as a result of this (low income housing) situation."