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Mark Twain once said that "reports of my death have been greatly exaggerated." We in the United Farm Workers have had to call upon that expression many times during the last 20 years.

When we first began organizing the UFW in the early 1960s most people -- including some of our friends -- said we were crazy to believe there could be a union for farm workers. When we took on the table grape industry -- and California's agribusiness empire -- in 1965, they said we could never overcome the growers' power. When growers signed sweetheart contracts with the Teamsters in 1970 and 1973, they said we were finished.

Now that Republican Governor George Deukmejian has dismantled enforcement of the state's farm labor law and growers have renewed their resolve to destroy our movement, the "experts" are once again counting us out. Our obituaries are reappearing in some newspapers. Our opponents... and even some of our friends... are questioning whether the UFW is still viable and vibrant.

This issue of *Food and Justice* highlights only a few aspects of the farm workers' movement today. It exposes our enemies' predictions for what they are -- wishful thinking. 🐔

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Some of the first retired farm workers to receive pension benefits posed with Cesar Chavez in Oxnard: (left to right) Arcadio Heredia, Antonio Carrillo, Chavez, Celso Cortez, and Uvaldo Ortega.

Pensions: A 'Great Event' For Farm Workers

Most great achievements in the battle for social change begin as a dream in the minds of a few dedicated men and women. They blossom and grow amidst conflict and controversy. They become a reality through resolution and sacrifice.

Such is the case with the Juan De La Cruz Farm Workers Pension Plan -- the first program of its kind for farm workers in the nation.

For generations, farm workers spent their lives building up the wealth of their employers only to be left out in the cold when their bodies were too tired to withstand the rigors of farm work. Providing for elderly farm workers was an early goal of the fledgling United Farm Workers when it was founded in 1962.

In April 1973, the UFW first began negotiating contracts with pension benefits. Then only four grape growers paid contributions of 1¢ per box of grapes picked into the infant Farm Workers' Pension Plan.

In September 1973, 65-year old farm worker Juan De La Cruz was brutally shot to death on a picketline near Bakersfield during the bitter grape strike that swept California that year. He was standing peacefully next to his wife when an imported strike-breaker passing in a car fired a rifle into the line of striking grape workers.

Juan De La Cruz was one of the UFW's original members. His death at the hands of grower goons symbolized the injustice farm workers still endure in the richest agricultural



Processing pension applications in the Juan De La Cruz Plan office at La Paz.

state in the country.

The UFW's pension plan was named in memory of Juan De La Cruz.

In its second year there were 10 companies contributing into the plan. And contributions jumped to 2¢ per grape box. By the end of that year, contributions surpassed \$100,000.

Twelve year after it was founded, some 165 agricultural employers pay pension benefits for their farm workers who are protected by UFW contracts. Hourly contributions have gone from 1¢ per box of grapes to as much as 25¢ per hour for each hour worked under a UFW contract. The plan has grown to \$29 million; 100,000 farm workers are registered under the program.

To obtain pension benefits under normal or early retirement, workers are required to have 10 years of service under UFW contract with 500 or more hours in each of those years. Pension programs such as the UFW's De La Cruz Plan are tightly regulated by the federal government. So it was not until June 1983 that the first pension checks were finally issued.

Thousands of farm workers were on hand across the state to witness



Cesar Chavez helped present the first pension checks to farm worker retirees in Salinas last year.

the presentation of the first regular pension benefits for agricultural workers in U.S. history.

Since benefits began to be paid more than one year ago, the UFW's pension plan has paid out more than \$400,000 in monthly checks to over 200 retirees. Monthly benefits range from \$50 to \$100. Some pensioners received retroactive payments of as much as \$3,000.

Now applications are being received and processed every day by pension plan staff at the UFW's La Paz headquarters in Central California.



Pensioners receiving checks in Coachella.

Testimony from Retired Farm Workers

Feliscimo Abad
Filipino Farm Worker

It is an honor to be one of the first persons to receive a pension check. Other Filipino brothers are still waiting for this great moment. I have been in the UFW since 1965. We started the grape strike in that year. Since then the achievements of the union have been very great. The pension plan is a good example of these achievements.

Jose Sevilla Valadez
Mexican Farm Worker

I am very grateful to be one of the eligible persons to obtain a pension. I live now in Guadalajara, Mexico. I receive my pension check every month. The money that I already received from my pension fund is the fruit of our sacrifices in the struggle to bring a better life for the farm workers. Our UFW is the best. I will continue supporting our struggle by telling others about our movement and of the great support we received from many Americans who helped us during our struggle. And I hope they will continue to do so.

Gus Swaby
Anglo Farm Worker

Farm workers won pension benefits only because they have UFW. As long as I can stand up, I will support the United Farm Workers in any way I can. I can tell you that in order to win better conditions, you will have to sacrifice a little. In the end, it is well worthwhile.

Gonzalo Ramirez
Mexican Farm Worker

I feel proud. I have no words to thank for this special moment I am living. Our union, Cesar Chavez, all the people who made possible this plan should be happy and proud of this historic event in our cause. My pension check is the result of a lot of sacrifice. I want to say that I will continue fighting for our cause for the rest of my life.

Jose Pacheco
Portuguese Farm Worker

I am glad to be one of the grantees to receive a pension check. I never thought that this day will come up in my life. The amount of effort we put on the picket lines, on the boycott never was in vain. The victory came with this pension check. A victory that should be for all the farm workers of America.



Boycott California Grapes*

Retiring with dignity is a dream shared by most Americans. It's an elusive dream for too many American farm workers who sacrifice their youth and torture their bodies to produce the greatest bounty of food known in the world.

Some farm workers who are protected by UFW contracts now receive pension benefits for the first time in history. Thousands of others will get monthly pension checks when they retire.

But for most grape workers like Pablo Saludado and Francisco Garcia (pictured above) the dream of a dignified retirement is fading. The law that protects their right to organize is not being enforced by Republican Governor George Deukmejian. More than 36,000 California farm workers who voted for the UFW are still not protected because growers refuse to bargain in good faith and sign contracts.

Their hope is your support for the new boycott of California grapes*. Please help. Unless you are sure the grapes in you supermarket come in boxes marked with the UFW's black eagle symbol...don't buy them!

*except the 3% of grapes produced under UFW contract

Alpha Beta, Sav-on Boycott Opens with Mass Picketing

A new farm workers' boycott against Alpha Beta supermarkets and Sav-on drugstores began with a flood of leafleting and picketing throughout California. American Stores Inc., the giant Utah-based corporation that owns Alpha Beta and Sav-on, is buying lettuce from Bruce Church Inc. after the company was convicted of violating its farm workers' rights.

In January 1984, Lucky Stores Inc. became the first major supermarket to honor the Church boycott after the Agricultural Labor Relations Board found the grower guilty of bad-faith bargaining. Since then, dozens of supermarkets have followed Lucky's lead.

American Stores sells Church lettuce through two other supermarket chains it owns in other parts of the country. Chicago-based Jewel stores -- 204 supermarkets mostly in Illinois -- and Acme stores -- 315 supermarkets headquartered in Philadelphia -- promote Church produce.

From the day the new boycott was announced on October 22, hundreds of farm workers and UFW supporters have picketed in Oxnard, Bakersfield, Porterville, Coachella, Modesto, San Jose, Salinas, Sacramento, Stockton, San Diego, Santa Ana, Riverside, Fresno, Visalia, Los Angeles and at Alpha Beta headquarters in La Habra in Southern California.

There has been much press coverage of the Alpha Beta boycott. UFW President Cesar Chavez said the boycott was kicked off as a last resort after Alpha Beta, Sav-on and their parent company -- American Stores -- ignored repeated requests to meet and discuss Bruce Church's violation of California law. Phone calls and telegrams from the UFW to the companies were repeatedly disregarded.



UFW picketlines at Alpha Beta stores have spread across California.



Farm workers turn Alpha Beta's ad slogan against the supermarket.



A new generation of boycotters.



UFW supporters join farm workers at an Alpha Beta picketline in San Diego.

McDonald's and Taco Bell Boycott Bruce Church

Recent agreements between the UFW and two of the nation's largest fast-food restaurants resulted in victories for the boycott of Bruce Church produce and angry reactions from company Vice President Mike Payne.

In October, after discussions between McDonald's officials and UFW President Cesar Chavez, the giant corporation agreed to stop buying Church's "Red Coach" lettuce at all of its many restaurants throughout the U.S. The commitment followed brief picketing at McDonald's restaurant in Hollister, Salinas and Calexico.

Only a week later, Taco Bell -- with 1,800 stores -- also joined the boycott of Church. This second victory was achieved with little pressure and no picketing. John Martin, president of Taco Bell, said his company would stop buying from Church because of a telephone call from Cesar Chavez, who "told us we were hurting his cause by buying products from Bruce Church." Martin said "we decided it didn't make business sense to continue buying from Church."

Payne's reaction to McDonald's decision was predictable. He said he was "shocked" and accused McDonald's of "selling out" to the UFW. He expressed disgust with McDonald's officials for having "put their tail between their legs and cut and run because of the Chavez threat."

A week later, in response to Taco Bell's decision, Payne falsely claimed that Taco Bell was not a Church customer and that the grower would not be hurt by its action. ▼



Meeting with church and community leaders in Cleveland about the new grape boycott.

Cesar Chavez Takes Grape Boycott to Cleveland, St. Louis and Detroit

In whirlwind tour of three major U.S. cities, Cesar Chavez has taken the message of the new grape boycott to millions of Americans.

The farm workers' leader is spreading news of the new boycott with speeches to church groups, labor unions, community organizations and in interviews and news conferences with radio, television and newspaper reporters. He has addressed Catholic Church dinners in Cleveland, anti-war rallies in St. Louis, and union conferences in Detroit.

Chavez called the trips a complete success. "We had a chance to meet so many of our old supporters who are still with us all the way. We also got the boycott message out to hundreds of thousands of new people we can count on for help in our new boycott."

The first grape boycott became a rallying cry for millions of people during the 1960s and '70s. "We are convinced that those people and that good will have not disappeared," Chavez said. "Millions of Americans are still willing to respond to farm workers who are struggling non-violently for a just cause."

In 1975, the nationwide Louis Harris poll revealed that 17 million Americans supported the UFW by boycotting grapes. Chavez said he expects the union's new boycott of grapes (except the 3% of grapes produced under UFW contract) will also be successful.

A Boston tour, which includes an address by Chavez before the prestigious Harvard Law School Forum on February 28, is being planned. 🏴‍☠️

The Movement Is His Parish

In 1977, Rev. Ken Irrgang, a Catholic priest from central Minnesota, gave up his post as campus pastor at the College of St. Benedict in St. Joseph and moved to California to serve full time with the farm workers' movement.

It was a big move.

Rev. Irrgang first came west to help farm workers in 1973 after learning of the deaths of two strikers during struggles with grape growers and their Teamster allies. He returned to Minnesota to organize support for the UFW's grape and lettuce boycott on the St. Benedict campus. In the years to come he helped sponsor groups of college students who sacrificed their vacations to work as volunteers at the UFW's La Paz headquarters.

After moving to California, Ken Irrgang served on the staff of the Robert Kennedy Medical Plan, helping UFW members obtain medical care under the nation's only comprehensive family medical plan for farm workers. For a year and a half he served in Boston and New York as an organizer for the farm workers' boycott of Bruce Church Inc. lettuce. He now writes for the UFW's two new monthly magazines: *El Malcriado* for union members and *Food and Justice*, which goes to farm worker supporters.

But Rev. Irrgang says his "greatest joy has been my pastoral and liturgical work at La Paz and wherever the farm workers need me." He serves as pastor for the 200 people who live and work at the farm workers' headquarters. He also ministers to retirees -- mostly elderly Filipinos -- who live at the movement's Agbayani Retirement Village near Delano.

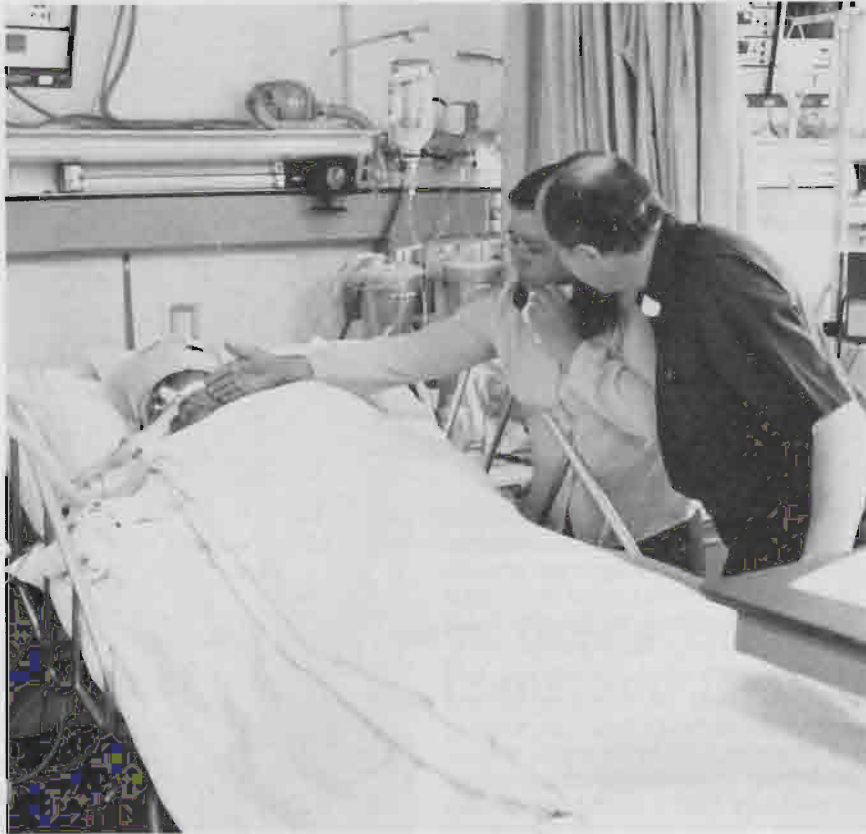
During strikes and marches Rev.



Rev. Ken Irrgang with two young parishioners in a conference room that doubles as a chapel at La Paz.

Irrgang has organized masses for thousands of farm workers on flatbed trucks parked by rural roadsides. He oversees religious observances at UFW conventions and conferences, and joins farm workers and other UFW staff on boycott picketlines and political campaigns across California and Arizona.

When farm worker Rene Lopez was shot in the head by two grower gunmen after he voted in a September 1983 union election, Rev. Irrgang



Copyright: The Fresno Bee

Rev. Irgang comforts Dolores Lopez as her son, Rene, lies dying after being shot by grower gunmen near Fresno.

spent time comforting the Lopez family as the 21-year old UFW member lay dying in a Fresno hospital.

Ken Irgang was born in 1928, the fourth of 10 children in the small town of Nicollet, Minnesota. He graduated with a degree in English from Mankato State College, taught high school for seven years and earned a masters degree before entering St. John's Seminary in 1963. He was ordained a priest five years later.

After serving as a Catholic school principal and parish priest, Rev. Irgang

became campus pastor of the College of St. Benedict in 1972.

Rev. Irgang never regretted his decision to serve full time with the UFW. "Being a part of this movement has brought me more spiritual satisfaction than I ever dreamed possible during the first days of my priesthood. To this very moment I am grateful to God for having been led to share in a movement that is so committed to non-violence, down-to-earth ecumenism, brother-and-sisterhood, and justice for the oppressed."



Rev. Ken Irgang is only one of dozens of dedicated men and women who have made the farm workers an important part of their lives by volunteering full time within the movement. (See story, page 13.)

If you or someone you know is interested in serving full time with the farm workers' movement, send in for more information by returning this form.

(tear off and return to:)

Cesar Chavez
Food and Justice
P.O. Box 62
Keene, CA 93531

Dear Cesar Chavez:

I would like more information about your work for social justice sent to:

Name _____
 (please print)

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

The Farm Workers March on Salinas

The farm workers' contracts with vegetable growers had expired in the rich Salinas Valley...the "Salad Bowl of the Nation." Corporate growers demanded "give backs" -- they wanted farm workers to accept wage cuts and reductions in medical benefits and other hard-won rights.

On October 7, Cesar Chavez led 10,000 farm workers and their families in a Solidarity March through the streets of Salinas. The next day, thousands of farm workers from more than 40 lettuce and broccoli companies stayed off work in a mass sick-out called by the UFW.

At dozens of ranches across the valley, individual farm workers displayed the UFW's red and black flags in the fields.

The march and sick-out worked. The growers' "give back" strategy failed and farm workers won new contracts with decent wages and benefits.



The march began with an early morning mass in a vacant field outside town.



Hundreds of farm workers joined Cesar Chavez (center) at mass before the start of the march.



Some of the people who triumphed over corporate agribusiness in 1984.



*"A flag-waving and chanting procession...that snaked six miles through Salinas" --
The Salinas Californian.*



Thousands joined the march as it passed through Salinas' Hispanic barrios.



Farm workers and their children marched together.



These farm workers have learned how to stand up for their rights.



The march demonstrated the farm workers' "force, power and courage," Cesar Chavez told a mass rally following the trek.



Showing the flag in Salinas.

Farm Workers Respond to 'Immoral' Attack by Affirming UFW's Legacy

The United Farm Workers filed a multi-million dollar libel suit in San Francisco Superior Court last November 30 against Bruce Church Inc. and two newspapers for publishing "a corrupt and immoral attack" on the farm workers' movement.

The UFW is suing sensationalist publisher Rupert Murdoch's Village Voice, which first printed a two-part attack on the union August 14 and 21, and the San Francisco Examiner-Chronicle, which reprinted the Village Voice stories on October 21. Bruce Church was sued because the huge grower distributed the articles nationwide.

"These counterfeit allegations, fabricated stories and twisted charges attempt to ruin the life work of countless men and women who have sacrificed themselves for a just cause," Cesar Chavez said. "They are an attempt to damage and destroy a legitimate poor people's movement that has enjoyed widespread respect and support."

On November 9, the farm labor leader also responded to attacks from the UFW's enemies by accepting an invitation to address the prestigious and generally conservative Commonwealth Club in San Francisco. Reporters noted that among the 300 people who listened attentively to Chavez's wideranging speech were a number of Central Valley growers. The following are excerpts from his remarks:

All my life, I have been driven by one dream, one goal, one vision: To overthrow a farm labor system in this nation that treats farm workers as if they were not important human beings. Farm workers are not agricul-



Photo by Shirly Cohelan Burton
Suburban News Service

Cesar Chavez addressing the Commonwealth Club in San Francisco.

tural implements -- they are not beasts of burden -- to be used and discarded.

That dream was born in my youth. It was nurtured in my early days of organizing. It has flourished. It has been attacked.

That vision grew from my own experience with racism, with hope, with the desire to be treated fairly and to see my people treated as human beings and not as chattel. It grew from anger and rage -- emotions I felt 40 years ago when people of my color were denied the right to see a movie or eat at a restaurant in many parts of California. It grew from the humiliation I felt as a boy who couldn't understand how the growers could abuse and exploit farm workers when there were so many of us and so few of them.

All Hispanics -- urban and rural, young and old -- are connected to the farm workers' experience. We had all lived through the fields or our parents

had. We shared that common humiliation.

How could our people believe that their children could become lawyers and doctors and business people while this shame, this injustice was permitted to continue?

More Than a Union

Those who attack our cause often say, 'It's not really a union. It's something else: a social movement, a civil rights movement. It's something dangerous.'

They're half right.

The United Farm Workers is first and foremost a union. But the UFW has always been something more than a union, although it's never been dangerous if you believe in the Bill of Rights.

We attacked that historical source of shame and infamy that our people in this country lived with. We attacked that injustice not by complaining; not

be seeking hand-outs; not by becoming soldiers in the War on Poverty.

We organized! Farm workers acknowledged we had allowed ourselves to become victims in a democratic society, a society where majority rule and collective bargaining are supposed to be more than academic theories or political rhetoric. And by addressing this historical problem, we created confidence and pride and hope in an entire people's ability to create the future.

The UFW's survival, its very existence, sent out a signal to all Hispanics that we were fighting for our dignity; that we were challenging and overcoming injustice; that we were empowering the least educated among us, the poorest among us.

The message was clear: If it could happen in the fields, it could happen anywhere -- in the cities, in the courts, in the city councils, in the state legislatures.



Wherever Cesar Chavez goes, farm workers bring him their problems: 'We are not beasts of burden.'

Empowering People

From time to time you will hear our opponents declare that the UFW is weak; that the UFW has no support; that the UFW has not grown fast enough. Our obituary has been written many times.

How ironic it is that the same forces that argue so passionately that we are not influential are the same forces that continue to fight us so hard. The UFW's power in agriculture has nothing to do with the number of farm workers under contract...or even the farm workers' ability to conduct successful boycotts.

The very fact of our existence forces an entire industry -- unionized and nonunionized -- to spend millions of dollars year after year on increased wages, improved working conditions, and benefits for workers.

If we're so weak and unsuccessful, why do the growers continue to fight us with such passion? Because as long as we continue to exist, farm workers will benefit from our existence even if they don't work under union contract. In that sense, it doesn't really matter whether we have 100,000 members or 500,000 members. In truth, hundreds of thousands of farm workers are better off today because of our work. And Hispanics who don't work in agriculture are better off today because of what the farm workers taught people about organization, about pride and strength, about seizing control over their own lives.

Our union will forever exist as an empowering force among people. That means our influence will grow and not diminish.

Two major trends give us hope.

New Grape Boycott

First, we have returned to a tried and tested weapon in the farm workers' nonviolent arsenal -- the



Farm labor leader Cesar Chavez speaks to 85,000 people at an anti-nuclear rally in the Rose Bowl: "We are filled with hope and encouragement."

boycott!

After the Agricultural Labor Relations Act became law in 1975, we dismantled our boycott to work with the law. The law helped farm workers make progress in overcoming poverty and injustice. But under Republican Governor George Deukmejian, the law that guarantees our right to organize no longer protects farm workers.

Farm workers were forced to declare a new international boycott of California grapes (except the 3% of grapes produced under UFW contract). The Harris poll showed that 17 million Americans boycotted grapes. We are convinced that those people and that good will have not disappeared. They are responding again not to picketlines and leaf-letting alone, but to the high-tech boycott of today -- a boycott that uses computers and direct mail and advertising techniques which have revolutionized business and politics in recent years. We achieved more success with the boycott in 1984 than we achieved in the 14 years since 1970.

The other trend which gives us hope is the monumental growth of Hispanic influence in this country.



South of the Sacramento River in California, Hispanics now make up more than 25% of the population. That figure will top 30% by the year 2000. There are 1.1 million Hispanic voters in California.

In light of these trends, it is absurd to believe or suggest that we are going to go back in time as an organization or as a people!

History On Our Side

I am told why farm workers should be discouraged and pessimistic: Republicans control the Governor's Office and the White House. There is a conservative trend in the nation.

Yet we are filled with hope and encouragement.

We have looked into the future and the future is ours! History and inevitability are on our side. The farm workers and their children -- and the Hispanics and their children -- are the future in California! And corporate growers are the past!

These trends are part of the forces of history which cannot be stopped! No person and no organization can resist them for very long. They are inevitable!

Once social change begins, it cannot be reversed. You cannot unedu-

cate the person who has learned to read. You cannot humiliate the person who feels pride. You cannot oppress the people who are not afraid anymore.

Our opponents must understand that it's not just a union we have built. For nearly 20 years our movement has been on the cutting edge or a people's cause. And you cannot do away with an entire people; You cannot stamp out a people's cause.

Like the other immigrant groups, the day will come when we win the economic and political rewards which are in keeping with our numbers in society. The day will come when the politicians will do the right thing by our people out of political necessity and not out of charity or idealism.

That day may not come this year. That day may not come during this decade. But it will come, someday!

And when that day comes, we shall see the fulfillment of that passage from the Book of Matthew in the New Testament, "That the last shall be first and the first shall be last."

And on that day, our nation shall fulfill its creed. And that fulfillment shall enrich us all. ♣

Farm Workers Key to Democrats' Election Victory

On November 6, California voters overwhelmingly re-elected Republican President Ronald Reagan. They also voted to keep Democrats in firm control of the state Legislature and to reject three statewide propositions that would have hurt Hispanics and poor people.

Reporters and political observers were surprised that Democrats did so well despite Reagan's landslide win.

Much of the credit for the Democratic legislative victory and for the defeat of the three propositions went to the nearly 6,000 farm workers who volunteered to turn out voters in Hispanic neighborhoods in the days before the election.

From San Diego to San Jose -- and in every part of California where the UFW is active -- farm workers either worked on local campaigns or travelled to cities to help get-out-the-vote among Spanish-speaking people.

The UFW does not require union members to work in elections. But thousands of individual farm workers volunteer for election duty because they know how important it is for them to be active in politics.

Until the union was born, growers dominated the Legislature and the entire state's political process. Now farm workers enjoy increasing respect among political leaders in Sacramento. As a result of the 1984 elections, the UFW is in a stronger position with the Legislature than ever before.

That's important because growers hope to convince the Legislature to destroy the law protecting the farm workers' right to organize and bargain with growers. Agribusiness also wants to outlaw the right to strike and boycott.

If such grower-sponsored measures are passed by the Legislature they would be immediately signed into

law by Republican Governor George Deukmejian, a sworn enemy of the UFW.

The growers traditionally give most of their money and political support to the Republican cause. Growers hoped that the GOP would defeat more Democrats in November and, eventually, seize control of both the State Assembly and Senate.

Most experts predicted Democrats in the Assembly would lose at least five seats and that Republicans would score gains in the Senate. Reagan's expected landslide victory over Democratic presidential candidate Walter Mondale would also help Republican legislative candidates, it was predicted.

The experts were proven wrong; the growers' strategy was defeated. Largely because of the efforts of thousands of farm workers, the Democrats lost only one seat in the Assembly (there are now 47 Democrats and 33 Republicans). Democrats kept their 25 seat majority in the Senate.

Farm workers played key roles in electing Democratic candidates in Oxnard, Santa Ana, Stockton, Riverside and San Bernardino County. The only UFW-backed candidate who lost ran strongest among Hispanic voters in a Los Angeles County district.

Another serious defeat for the growers and Governor Deukmejian was the defeat of Proposition 39, which would have redrawn the boundary lines from which state legislators and U.S. congressmen are chosen. Under Deukmejian's proposal, many of the farm workers' political friends would be sacrificed so more Republicans could be elected. Proposition 39 would have split apart Hispanic communities so Mexican American political strength would be diluted.



Going door-to-door in San Diego.

Growers contributed much of the nearly \$4 million that was spent on behalf of Proposition 39. "Agriculture is having problems pushing its labor proposals (to outlaw farm worker rights) through the state Assembly," complained grower Don Daley, head of the political fund for the anti-farm worker Western Growers Association. "Supporting (Proposition 39) is the only way agriculture can hope to survive," Daley said.

In addition to its door-to-door work in the cities, the UFW also sent mail appeals to the 1.1 million Hispanic registered voters in California.

Two other propositions opposed by farm workers were also defeated. Proposition 41 would have slashed

welfare and medical care for the working poor and for the elderly, disabled, and poverty-stricken women and children -- too many of whom are Spanish-speaking.

Proposition 36, another anti-Hispanic proposal, was turned down. It would have taken money away from schools and cut local programs for the poor.

The UFW's 1984 election campaigning was a huge success. Democratic leaders were open in their praise of the union's work (see Guest Column by Assembly Speaker Willie Brown, Page 33) and the farm workers won many new political friends. 🐦



Farm worker Francisco Magallanes talking to voters about the "evil" propositions.

“Much of the credit for the Democratic legislative victory and for the defeat of the three propositions went to the nearly 6,000 farm workers who volunteered to turn out voters in Hispanic neighborhoods in the days before the election.”



UFW members being greeted by Cesar Chavez at a campaign headquarters in Riverside.



UFW Vice President Frank Ortiz meets with farm worker political campaigners in a Los Angeles area church.



Some of the farm workers who volunteered to get-out-the-vote get briefed in East Los Angeles.



Farm workers rally Hispanics by marching through the Oxnard barrio behind (left to right) Assemblymen Richard Alatorre and Jack O'Connell, and Cesar Chavez.

“The UFW’s 1984 election campaign was a huge success. Democratic leaders were open in their praise of the union’s work, and the farm workers won many new political friends.”



by California Assembly Speaker Willie Brown

I welcome the chance to share with you a few thoughts on the current state of the farm workers' movement.

It is astonishing to listen to the things that are said about Cesar Chavez and the cause he leads by the enemies of the United Farm Workers: That the union is spent and powerless; that its leadership is weak and without support; that the farm workers are no longer a force to be respected in labor or politics. It almost seems fashionable in some circles to dump on the UFW.

My own recent experiences with the farm workers in California may offer some insight.

Much of my effort during this past election was consumed with opposition to several statewide propositions placed on the California ballot by the most sinister "New Right" reactionaries who have come to dominate the Republican Party in my state.

Proposition 39 would have denied women and minorities a voice in the political process. Propositions 36 and 41 would have slashed welfare and medical aid to millions of the aged, poor and disabled; benefits for those already living in poverty -- particularly for women, children, Blacks, and Hispanics -- would have been cut to the level provided poor people in states like Mississippi and Alabama.

Faced with a perceived Reagan landslide, I joined other state Democratic leaders in beating a path to Cesar's door. Who else, we argued, could inspire the large voter turnout among Hispanics -- and among other progressive people -- that we felt was crucial to turning back the right-wing tide.

(California Assembly Speaker Willie Brown has been a nationally recognized leader in civil and human rights, and other progressive social and economic causes. He has also been a strong supporter of the farm workers' cause since the Delano Grape Strike in 1965.)



Assembly Speaker Willie Brown poses with Cesar Chavez and UFW members campaigning in Orange County.

Cesar and the farm workers committed their person-power, their time and their resources to the fight. They led a broad-based coalition of labor, church and community activists who worked against what came to be described in the press by Cesar as the "evil" propositions.

The UFW's printing presses and mailhouse facilities issued mail appeals into the homes of California's 1.1 million Hispanic voters. Cesar took his Hispanics Say "No!" crusade across the length and breadth of California as only he can -- exhorting local leaders into action, organizing indigenous support, and attracting the press' attention to the anti-initiative drive.

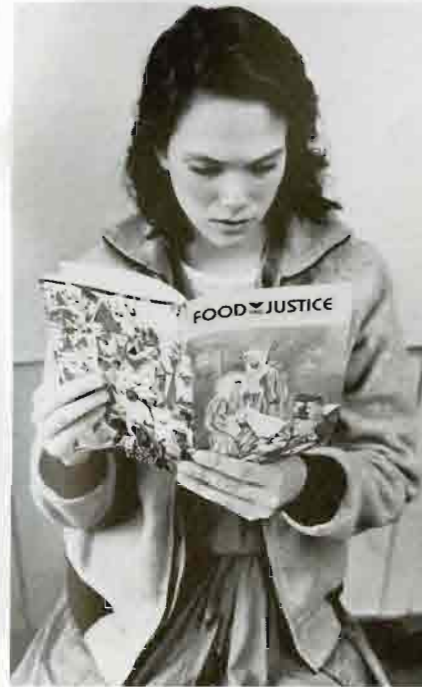
As the campaign drew to a close thousands of farm workers answered Cesar's call to get-out-the-vote in heavily Hispanic neighborhoods throughout the state.

I travelled to be with Cesar and the farm workers during those difficult days. It was a wonderous sight to see: hundreds of farm workers on the streets working longer and harder than anyone else...taking off work, sacrificing their pay to respond to a call from their union's leadership.

That sight mirrored my experience at the UFW's convention in Bakersfield where I and other legislative leaders had gone to ask the farm workers for their help. I saw a vibrant, democratic, animated organization that rightfully commands the respect of the farm workers as well as millions of Hispanics and other progressives across California and the nation.

The growers and their allies can say that Cesar Chavez is losing ground; that the UFW is on the decline. What I saw in 1984 convinced me that Cesar Chavez is the undisputed leader of California farm workers and that he, and the union he leads, symbolize hope and faith for millions of Hispanics and other good people who will never work on a farm. 🐔

What do you want to read in *Food and Justice*?



Since the early days of the movement, we have dreamed of publishing a monthly magazine to keep you informed. With the first issue of *Food and Justice* that dream became a reality.

Despite our current challenges -- including the farm workers' new boycott of California grapes* and California Governor George Deukmejian's scorn for the 1975 farm labor law -- we will work to keep sending you our magazine each month.

Food and Justice will tell you about our struggles and successes, our problems and concerns. But we also want to know what *you* would like to hear about.

Would you like to learn more about farm worker contracts, the pesticide threat, our volunteer staff, life at the La Paz headquarters?

Please let us know. Thank you.

*except the 3% of grapes produced under UFW contract.

(tear off and return to:)

Cesar Chavez, *Food and Justice*, P.O. Box 62, Keene, CA 93531

Dear Cesar Chavez:

I would like to see the following subjects covered in *Food and Justice*:

Sincerely,

Name _____
(please print)

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Sam Trickey
723 N.W. 19th St.
Gainesville, FL 32603