

CONTRACTOR OF THE RESIDENCE OF THE PROPERTY OF

**LEARNE AND EXEMPLE** 

In incredible each of a people's depending on Strike in 1911 sacrifice.

here does a union, this Union, begin?
On hot flat stretches of highway in the central California Valley?
Lodged like hard seed in the bent back hours of the short handled lettuce hoe? In the towns whose names drip like sand in the brain: Parlier, Dinuba, Visalia Selma Mendota; in the throat clawing heat of peach orchards; in the fine dust, air with cutting edges, half bent under gnat swarming vines; or in fog swelled cold, wet and heavy on hunched shoulders in winter time Delano? Is it in the glass littered and unrepaired streets of East LA, or in the half memory of what a grandfather said, what a father dreamed, what a mother did?

A thickening of all these parts; a man, some friends, men and women, memories and hopes fuse and surge like metal under the welder's torch, thirty seconds, but lived for a life time. Organizing

Day after day on the road. Half awake night times and green lit dashboards; wet hot days, flat tires, and talking, incessantly talking. Reminding others of their own dreams. Se puede? se puede, si, si se puede. Passing on the fire. An association

A way to help each other. Bring each other out of shadows, to see each other. National Farm Workers Association. Help is there when it is called upon.

1965. A strike. Groups of people standing on the edges of the field in unbelief. We've done it! We've cleared the field and now stand together. We can see. The fruit does not pick itself, nor fall into boxes alone — only with our work. And we work only when we have a say in how our lives are used.

Long days. The excitement floats off. Supporters smile wan smiles and return home and days replace more days. Plans, strategies, a March. 24 days to Sacramento. Hundreds of valley people, many without English, are sent out, across America. Boycott.

An old Irish tactic, reinvented every twenty years now hefted and honed, a weapon in nonviolence; a weapon without the threat of death. Boycott! The people are understood.

1970. Contracts! For the first time — ever. After years: the Chinese, Filipinos, Hindu, Japanese, Oklahomans, Blacks, Mexicans — years of migrants buried here and replaced. Organizing failed again and again. Now, two hundred contracts, and more.

Fire under the plains. In every bent backed laborer from Florida to Oregon weariness begins to yield to desire. Hope is the quiet talk in the catches of conversation.

But. 1973. It all seems shattered. A lumbering monolith. Teamsters International, not the people but once again their leaders, strides in the front (continued on inside back cover)

#### (continued from inside front cover)

door and misses the fields themselves. The growers smile widely and sign small sheets of paper, shaking hands. This is the way we do business! Overnight conditions change. Three years of improvements fall away, like small change lost in the dust.

"Don't worry about pesticide poisoning. It's only in your dreams!"

Workers leave the fields. Strike! Strike is heard again — from voices which would rather speak of troubled pasts, now raised again against an ominous future.

And Again. The Boycott. Like the flow of a river. Every major city. Every major store. It touches the lives of millions of people and they are joined. The most simple act of justice: refuse to take that which is unjust. Like the unpicked fruit it can not move. It must die if we refuse it.

1974. The year of the boycott. Workers leaving deteriorating conditions everywhere: Michigan, Florida, California, Arizona. We have been left to lie. Now we leave the fruit, the row crops...

Until we are recognized. Until our humanness is not denied by the wretchedness of our lives. And then — we will return, in peace as we have fought in peace, to the shared tasks of providing for the sustenance of all. 1975.

# \* COMING \* Cesar Chavez

Autobiography of La Causa, by Jaques Levy

The inside story of La Causa as told for the first time by Cesar Chavez and others involved. Prize winning reporter, Jaques Levy, brings together the exciting story of the man and the union, their victories against great odds, and the plots to destroy them.

To be published this winter by: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.



Strike meeting, Coachella Valley.

A Farm Worker Film

# Fighting For Our Lives

#### MUSIC:

"Trabajadores Campesino" "Brown Eyed Children of the Sun"

"De Colores"

"Huelga En General" No. 2

"No Nos Moveran"

"Nosotros Venceremos"

\*("We Shall Overcome")

#### DANIEL and LUIS VALDEZ & EL TEATRO CAMPESINO

\* "Deportee"

\* "Pastures of Plenty"

JOAN BAEZ

Thumb Piano

TAJ MAHAL

"Huelga En General" No. 1

CONCEPCION & MARIA ELENA ALVAREZ and JULIA SALAZAR

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All Photos by Bob Fitch



Taj Mahal and Joan Baez at the funeral of Juan de la Cruz.

A Farm Worker Film



# Fighting For Our Lives

Photographed and Edited by GLEN PEARCY

Location Sound Recorded by CRESSON FRALEY GAYANNE FIETINGHOFF DAVE SMITH GLEN PEARCY

> Editorial Consultant ROBERT DALVA

General Consultant FRANKLIN GREER

Narration Written by GLEN PEARCY PETER MATTHIESSEN

> Narration Spoken by LUIS VALDEZ

LUIS VALDEZ

Sound Mixing TODD BOEKELHEIDE

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PUBLIC MEDIA CENTER

Color, Titles & Opticals by CONSOLIDATED FILM INDUSTRIES, Hollywood Edited & Mixed at

AMERICAN ZOETROPE, San Francisco



Frank Valenzuela, AFSCME, beaten off the picket line — Lamont, California, July 1973.





Scenes from the funerals of Juan de la Cruz and Nagi Daiffulah.

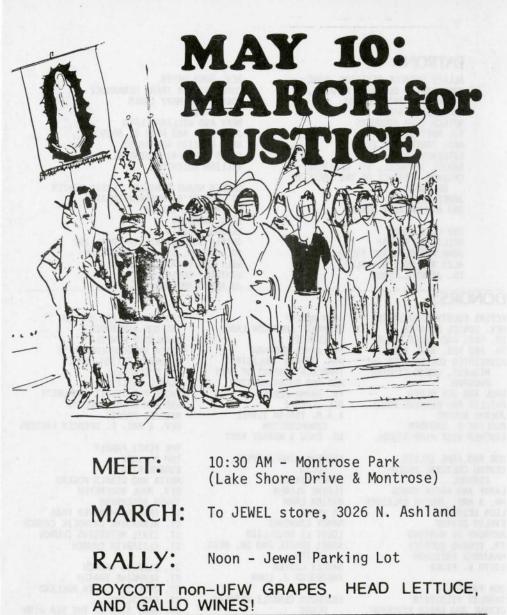




Huelguista confronts California grape grower, John Giumarra.



Huelguistas encourage scab to join "La Causa"



YES! I will march with the farm workers on May 10.

Enclosed is my contribution to the farm workers.

I will help leaflet about the boycott.

EL PALACIO THEATER 4040 N. Sheridan, Chicago April 16, 1975

6:30 PM Reception

8:00 PM El Teatro Del Barrio

8:10 PM FIGHTING FOR OUR LIVES

9:00 PM Dolores Huerta First Vice President United Farm Workers of America





DOLORES HUERTA was born in New Mexico, and began working in the fields as a child. She is a founding member of the United Farm Workers and in September, 1973, was voted First Vice President by the delegates to the UFW's First Constitutional Convention. Dolores is 45 years old and the mother of ten children. She is the highest ranked woman union official in the United States. In the latest issue of Redbook Magazine, she was nominated for Secretary of Agriculture.

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