

FOOD JUSTICE

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The Grape Boycott in Canada:
UFW Flag Over Toronto City Hall



Recent boycott tours of Texas and Canada (reported in this issue) provide heartwarming testimony to the mounting support people everywhere are providing our new boycott of California fresh grapes.*

Texans and Canadians responded by the thousands enthusiastically to our boycott message. We also attracted extensive press coverage for the grape boycott in every city and town we visited. The threats posed to farm workers and consumers by the pesticide poisoning of grapes was a special source of interest and concern.

People are shocked to learn that farm workers are being just as badly abused today as they were before California's farm labor law was passed in 1975. They are angered to learn how law-and-order Gov. George Deukmejian refuses to enforce the law enacted 10 years ago to protect farm workers.

There are other signs the boycott is working. Grape prices are down to 39¢ a pound...and even lower in some areas. Cold storage facilities are crammed with unsold grapes. One grape producer recently told a member of the UFW's executive board: "We were positive you guys could never pull off another successful boycott. But we're hurting already." 

*except the 3% of grapes produced under UFW contract

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Workers of America, AFL-CIO
La Paz, Keene, CA 93570



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Boycott Hopes Soar in Canada

During his grueling 28-day, 17-city, 4,000 mile coast-to-coast boycott tour of Canada, Cesar Chavez didn't suffer from jet lag. The entire trip was made in a used '79 Olds 88.

But while Chavez kept his feet on the ground, hopes for success of the new international boycott of non-UFW fresh grapes were flying high.

In Toronto, Chavez watched respectfully as the Canadian flag -- a red maple leaf brilliant against a white background -- was slowly raised to the top of the flagpole over City Hall on October 8.

But the Canadian flag fluttered in the breeze for only a few moments before it was slowly lowered. Then Chavez watched with pride as another flag took the maple leaf's place over Toronto for the rest of the day -- the black eagle emblem of the United Farm Workers of America.

Chavez met with Toronto Mayor Art Eggleton and the city council. The council passed a unanimous resolution in support of the grape boycott and Mayor Eggleton proclaimed October 8 "Grape Boycott Day." "I urge all Torontonians not to buy grapes until legal protections are restored to California farm workers," the Mayor said.

Thanking the council for its endorsement, Chavez said cutting off California grape sales in Toronto was important: "Toronto is the third-largest market for fresh grapes in North America. You consume grapes at a rate far out of proportion to your almost three million population."

Chavez also noted that Canadians buy 15 percent of the fresh grapes produced in California and that Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal are three of the 10 largest markets in the world for west coast produce. "You



Fifteen Members of Parliament from the three major political parties pledged support for grape boycott in the House of Commons in Ottawa, the capital of Canada.



Canadians expressing support for the grape boycott.

can see why your help was so important in our previous boycott victories and why we have come back to ask you to help us again," he said.

Vancouver

Chavez' extended tour of Canada got off to an impressive start in Vancouver, where leaders of major labor organizations pledged substantial support. Dennis McDermott, president of the Canadian Labour Congress which has championed the farm workers' cause for almost 20 years, provided staff and resource support for Chavez' Canadian tour. In addition, McDermott agreed to Chavez' request to spearhead a fact-finding group which will travel to California and investigate abuses against farm workers by growers and the Deukmejian administration.

Art Kube, president of the British Columbia Federation of Labour, expressed solid support for California farm workers: "Your struggle has always been our struggle and we will stand with you now as we have since the earliest days of 'la causa.'"

Raj Chouhan, president of the Canadian Farm Workers Union, promised to join the UFW in its war on pesticides, which is also a problem in Canada. "From the grape fields of Delano to the apple orchards of British

Columbia, farm workers risk their lives by working with toxic pesticides," he said.

Parliament

In Ottawa, the nation's capital, the boycott produced a rare display of unity when 15 Members of Parliament representing the three major Canadian political parties -- Liberal, Conservative, and New Democrats -- appeared with Chavez at a Parliament Hill press conference and signed a huge pledge card supporting the boycott.

The same day, Rod Murphy, Member of Parliament from Churchill, addressed the House of Commons: "I hope all Members of this House will take the lead in encouraging Canadians to support this cause" on behalf of California grape workers who "continue to be fired, coerced and abused by the corporate grape growers."

Even though Chavez himself could barely manage a heavily accented Mexican American "Bon jours!" in predominantly French-speaking Quebec, friends and supporters translated the boycott message throughout Montreal and the rest of the province: "Boycottons des raisins de table de la Californie!"

Montreal residents provided many opportunities for Chavez to learn and

use "Merci beaucoup!" The Quebec Federation of Labor, the Montreal Central Labor Council, the Loyola Jesuit Community, the Montreal Citizens Movement, the United Food and Commercial Workers, the Teachers Union, the Confederation of National Trade Unions, the Social Justice Committee of the Archdiocese of Montreal, and other groups and individuals all expressed support for the boycott.

The People

Arturo Rodriguez, a UFW national executive board member who accompanied Chavez on the trip, said the friendliness and hospitality shown in Vancouver were impressive but not unique. "Everywhere we went," he said, "people made their resources available to us and threw open their homes to us."

In a speech in London, Ontario, Chavez also spoke of the rewards that

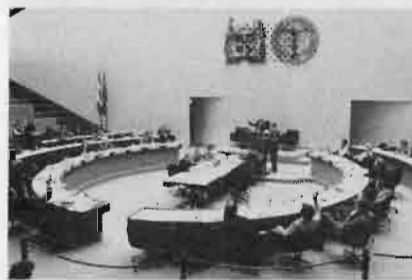
came from making the long and arduous trip across Canada by car -- staying in people's homes and visiting with them in restaurants, gas stations, and drug stores. He took note of the special concern the Canadian people and government have for the suffering and oppressed outside the nation's borders. "We farm workers, certainly, but the down and out in other countries, too, are grateful there are such people as Canadians -- you give us hope," he said.

The month-long journey covered large and small cities in nearly all of the 10 provinces of the second-largest country in the world.

Chavez stopped to promote the boycott in the provinces of British Columbia (Vancouver); Alberta (over the Rockies to Edmonton, Red Deer, and Calgary); Saskatchewan (Saskatoon and Regina); Manitoba (Winnipeg); Ontario (Thunder Bay, Sault Ste.



Art Kube, president of the British Columbia Federation of Labour (second from left, back row), and Raj Chouhan, president of the Canadian Farm Workers Union (second from left, front row), and other labor leaders welcomed Chavez and UFW National Executive Board Member Arturo Rodriguez (extreme left, front row) to Vancouver.



Toronto Mayor Art Eggleton (with hand raised at podium) and City Council members vote to endorse the UFW grape boycott.

Marie, Sudbury, London, Hamilton, Toronto, and Ottawa); Quebec (Montreal); and Nova Scotia (Halifax).

Sandwiched between Toronto and Ottawa was a two-day side-trip to Chicago, where Chavez met with Mayor Harold Washington. Washington presented him with the key to the city, praised the UFW leader for publicizing the dangers of pesticide poisoning to farm workers and consumers, and pledged support for the grape boycott. 🍇



The '79 Olds 88 that carried Cesar Chavez across the length of Canada.



Cesar Chavez spent two days in Chicago promoting the boycott. Mayor Harold Washington presented the key to the city and pledged support for the grape boycott.

In addition to innumerable individual endorsements, the following Canadian organizations endorsed the boycott:

Alberta Provincial Council of Solidarity
Canadian Farm Workers Union
Canadian Labour Congress
Canadian Union of Public Employees
Confederation of National Trade Unions
District Labour Councils of Calgary, Edmonton, Halifax, Hamilton, London, Montreal, Ottawa, Red Deer, Regina, Saskatoon, Sault Ste. Marie, Sudbury, Thunder Bay, Toronto, Vancouver, Winnipeg
Federations of Labour of Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Quebec, Saskatchewan
Hamilton Mayor Bob Morrow and City Council
Manitoba New Democratic Party
Members of Parliament: Charles Caccia, Mike Cassidy, Simon de Jong, Suzanne Duplessis, Ernie Epp, Jim Fulton, Dan Heap, Stan Hovdebo, Rod Murphy, Lorne Nystrom, Andre Ouellet, Keith Penner, John Parry, Alan Redway, Nelson Riis, Svend Robinson
National Farmers Union
National Teachers Union
Ottawa Mayor Marion Dewar and City Council
Social Justice Commission, Archdiocese of Edmonton
Toronto Mayor Art Eggleton and City Council
Vancouver Mayor Michael Harcourt

Canadians Speak Out on the Boycott



Sam Saumur

Sam Saumur, London, Ontario:

I was in California a couple times and saw the injustices grape workers endure. We have to fight against injustice wherever it's found.

Mayor Art Eggleton, Toronto:

The farm workers cause is absolutely just. We boycotted for them before to improve their conditions and we will do it now or any time in the future when they need our help.



Mayor Art Eggleton

Beth Seeman, Winnipeg:

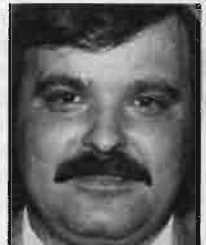
Working people have to stick together. We want to help farm workers win the boycott so they get the respect they have coming.



Beth Seeman

Mike MacIsaac, Winnipeg:

I support the boycott because of the repression farm workers still suffer down in California. It's a shame they have to keep boycotting to get what they have a right to by law.



Mike MacIsaac

Ralph Ortlieb, Georgetown:

Wherever people are treated badly by their employers, I'm gonna be there if I can. I've followed the farm workers' battles closely over the years and I'll stick with 'em 'til the day I die.



Ralph Ortlieb

Deborah Burke, Ottawa:

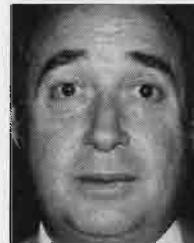
I'm all for a boycott when the law won't work and management won't bargain in good faith. We won't eat grapes again until we hear farm workers have their rights restored.



Deborah Burke

Raymond Murray, London, Ontario:

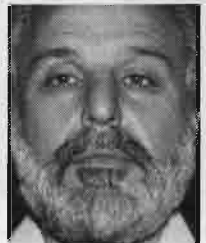
I'm all for the boycott because sometimes it's the only way people on the low end of the economic scale can band together to better themselves. We'll boycott grapes till we hear they've won.



Raymond Murray

Michael Lyons, Toronto:

As a member of the Labor movement, we have a responsibility to support all the efforts of people anywhere in the world to live in decency and equality. We're with the farm workers of California till their efforts are successful.



Michael Lyons

Deukmejian's Prosecutor Uses State Position to Lobby for Growers Against Grape Boycott

A political appointee of Gov. George Deukmejian whose job it is to impartially rule on disputes between growers and farm workers is using taxpayer funds to lobby against the UFW's fresh grape boycott on behalf of affected growers.

"I fully support what Dave Stirling has done," Deukmejian told reporters in defending the actions of the man he appointed as general counsel -- or chief prosecutor -- of the state Agricultural Labor Relations Board.

Stirling, a former Republican state lawmaker, used state funds to pay for a plane trip to Washington, D.C. where he opposed the grape

boycott at a national religious meeting in October.

He has shown no regret for what has been widely criticized as a stark display of pro-grower bias and a misuse of public money. "I used some of your money to go back and do this," Stirling told a Sacramento luncheon audience. The ALRB's chief counsel said he acted with Deukmejian's "knowledge and approval."

Stirling also used taxpayer funds to send letters to U.S. and Canadian governors and mayors, members of California's congressional delegation, and religious groups urging them not to support the UFW's boycott.

Fire Stirling

The Los Angeles Times said Deukmejian should dismiss Stirling because he is incapable of being fair and neutral. So did two groups of religious leaders (see story on page 10).

The Times said Gov. Deukmejian should "start looking for a replacement (for Stirling) who will be fair and neutral..." By taking management's side and attacking Chavez and the UFW, the newspaper said, "Stirling has badly undermined his ability to appear impartial, and therefore his ability to be effective."

The Sacramento Bee, in an editorial entitled "Dave Stirling, Boycott Buster," responded to Stirling's argument that his anti-boycott actions would not jeopardize his impartiality when handling farm labor law violations: "That's bunk," the Bee stated, "unless, of course, one believes that

Stirling never had any impartiality to jeopardize."

Jerome Waldie, a member of the ALRB, said Stirling's "public statement of contempt for the UFW and its officers on issues unrelated to the agency make ludicrous his contention that he is just carrying out the mandate given to him by the governor to make the agency balanced, even-handed and professional."

Eight members of Stirling's own staff at the regional ALRB office in Salinas disassociated themselves from his anti-UFW lobbying. In a strongly worded letter of protest, the group stated, "We are alarmed that this agency's chief prosecutor would both interject himself into the table grape boycott and launch a vicious personal attack against the president of an agricultural union."

Bishop Calls for Probe

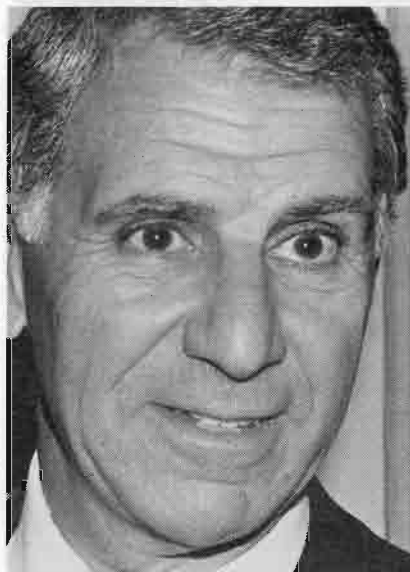
Catholic Bishop Juan Arzube, auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, took exception to Stirling's claim that he is operating the ALRB "in a fair and balanced fashion": "How can Mr. Stirling possibly make this statement after attacking Cesar Chavez and the UFW so vehemently...?"

"I sincerely believe an investigation should be made as to his suitability to occupy his present position," Bishop Arzube said.

Three other Los Angeles religious leaders -- Episcopal Bishop Oliver Garver, Rabbi Sidney Jacobs, and Fr. Luis Olivares -- also protested the Deukmejian administration's bias.

"We strongly urge Mr. Stirling to cease his personal attacks on Mr. Chavez...and, instead, to return to his proper duties: scrupulously administering the farm labor law with a fairness and balance that respects the rights and dignity of farm workers as much as their employers," they wrote.

Ironically, in the midst of demands for his firing and criticism for being prejudiced, Stirling announced his intention to explore the possibility of running for the Republican nomination for state attorney general in 1986. "The major factor," Stirling told reporters, "is whether enough money can be raised" for his campaign. ▼



Governor George Deukmejian



Dave Stirling

Religious Leaders Urge Deukmejian to Fire Farm Labor Board Chief

Two ecumenical religious groups recently joined the rising chorus of angry criticism of Dave Stirling, general counsel of the Agricultural Labor Relations Board, and strongly urged Gov. George Deukmejian to fire him.

Los Angeles' Catholic Archbishop Roger M. Mahoney led the list of eight major religious leaders in Southern California who wrote to Gov. Deukmejian in early November: "(Stirling) has proved publicly that he does not meet the basic requirements for impartiality or objectivity, and we strongly urge you to dismiss him."



They were upset with Stirling for two reasons. First, he viciously attacked farm labor leader Cesar Chavez and the grape boycott in by-line article in The Los Angeles Times on September 24. Then, in October, he used agency funds to fly to Washington, D.C. to lobby the board of the United Methodist Church of Christ against the grape boycott.

Two weeks earlier, an ecumenical group from Northern California expressed their anger in a letter to Gov. Deukmejian: "In particular, we are outraged by the General Counsel's trip -- at taxpayers' expense -- to Washington, D.C. to lobby against the boycott."

According to Bishop Leontine Kelley of the United Methodist Church, Stirling threatened the Methodist board with a lawsuit if it voted to support the boycott.

In addition, the clergy officials wrote, "Mr. Stirling is using taxpayer dollars to blitz religious leaders...with letters attacking the United Farm Workers...and opposing the boycott."

Stirling was unmoved by the criticism. "Churches ought not to be involved in political activity," he said.



Catholic Archbishop Roger Mahoney of Los Angeles served as first chairman of the Agricultural Labor Relations Board.

Boycott Takes Off in Texas

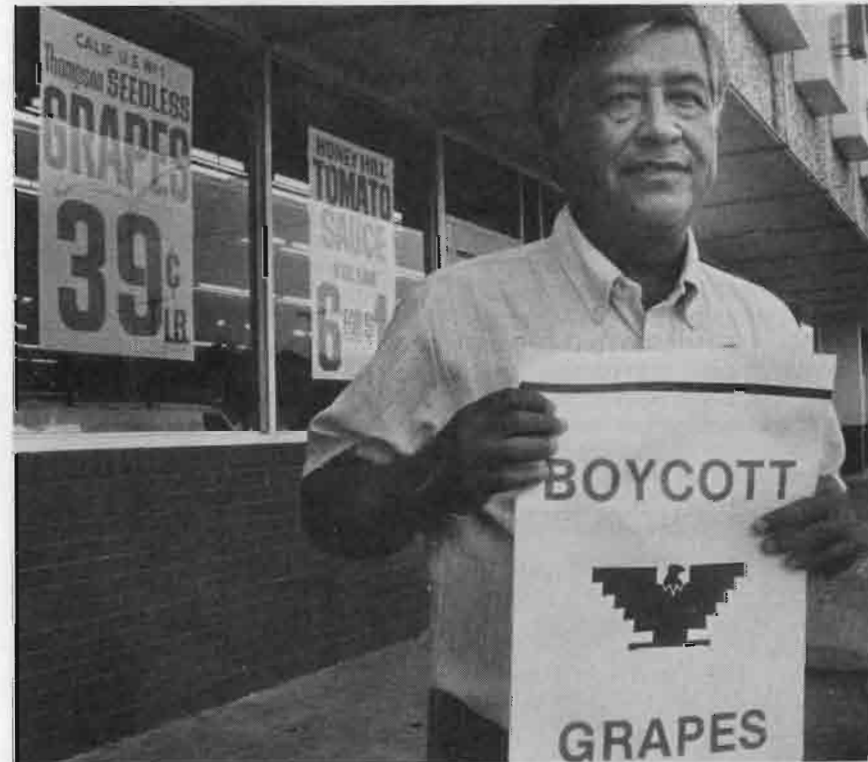
In September the boycott of non-UFW California fresh grapes received another big boost. Big -- as in Texas!

United Farm Workers President Cesar Chavez reaped a rich harvest of support for the grape boycott during a 10-day tour of five major Texas cities: Dallas, Fort Worth, Austin, Houston, and San Antonio.

The first stop was the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Chavez marched with

supporters at the Minyard Supermarket in Dallas and was delighted to find the price of grapes as low in Texas as in California: "Everywhere we go, grape prices are down. The boycott is working."

Chavez met with the Dallas Central Labor Council, visited with Catholic Bishop Joseph Delaney of Fort Worth and Bishop Thomas Tschoepe of Dallas. He was inter-



The boycott is working! California fresh grapes are down to 39 cents and lower in San Antonio, Texas and in other parts of the country.

viewed by reporters and editors from the major daily newspapers and the religious press, and he appeared on radio and TV news programs.

At the law library on the Southern Methodist University campus Chavez emphasized the need for better protection for farm workers and consumers from growers' reckless use of dangerous pesticides. "In California," he said, "we have a governor who vetoed a field posting bill to warn farm workers of pesticide dangers because the growers said it would be too costly for them to buy the signs."

In Austin, city and county officials joined Chavez at a news conference at the University of Texas. They announced unanimous endorsements of the grape boycott by both the Austin City Council and the Travis County Commissioners.

Later, at a fundraiser at the Austin Opera House attended by more than 300 UFW supporters -- including former U.S. Secretary of Labor Ray Marshall and key religious, labor, community, and political leaders -- Chavez outlined the three important goals of the current grape boycott: free and fair elections, good-faith bargaining by growers and protection of both farm workers and consumers from deadly pesticides.

Chavez met in Houston with the

editors of The Houston Post and The Houston Chronicle. He appeared on radio and TV shows, and spoke to groups of supporters, including students at the University of Houston. He also met with Galveston-Houston Bishop John E. McCarthy and other religious leaders.

At an evening reception and fundraiser in the Machinists Union Hall, Chavez thanked Houstonians for their support of the grape boycott. "The boycott is not a popularity contest," he said. "It's an economic program. We just want to get enough people to stop buying grapes so we can force growers to obey the farm labor law and Gov. George Deukmejian will enforce it when they don't."

In San Antonio, where Chavez' 10-day tour of Texas ended, Mayor Henry Cisneros led a list of individuals and organizations which endorsed the boycott. Describing Chavez as "one of the greatest figures of our time," Cisneros said, "It's a pleasure to lend my support to the boycott."

At a picket line at a Handy Andy's store, Chavez found everything to his liking -- the number of supporters high and the price of grapes low. After a steady stream of media appearances, a speech at St. Mary's University, and a reception at the Communication Workers Hall, Chavez returned to California.

Accompanying Chavez were Arturo Rodriguez, UFW national executive board member, and UFW Texas Director Rebecca Flores Harrington.

Texas farm workers in solidarity with California farm workers.

Dr. Marion Moses' "Deadly Dozen" Pesticide Series CAPTAN



Dr. Marion Moses.

Captan, one of the most widely used fungicides in the world, is a carcinogen, teratogen (causes birth defects) and a mutagen (causes changes in genetic material) and its residues contaminate fruits and vegetables all over the world. Because it is not **acutely** toxic, i.e. it does not cause immediate and obvious harm, it has been considered to be a "safe" pesticide.

Chemicals such as Captan that are considered safe in the short term may be the most hazardous of all in terms of chronic effects such as cancer and birth defects. We know of a child born without arms and legs whose mother worked during the first three months of her pregnancy picking grapes known to have been sprayed with teratogenic pesticides. Captan, which is one of the

pesticides she may have been exposed to, is structurally similar to Thalidomide, the sedative drug used by pregnant women in Europe in the early 1960s that caused thousands of infants to be born without arms or legs.

28 million pounds of Captan are estimated to be used annually in the world, one-third of it in the U.S. alone. In California in 1983, about one million pounds were used in agriculture with the biggest use being on grapes (344,243 lbs.). In the rest of the U.S. major use is on apples and potatoes. There are also many formulations for home and garden use. Captan is the major fungicide in wallpaper paste and in oil-based paints. It is used in the treatment of vinyl-coated textiles such as mattress covers, mats, curtains, etc. It is also used in cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, and shampoos.

In 1977, there was a big scandal when it was discovered that Industrial Biotest Laboratories (IBT) had sent fraudulent data to EPA in support of 100 pesticide registrations. Captan was among them and **none** of its 12 tests were valid. This meant that the NOEL (no observable effect level) used in the "scientific" determination was also fraudulent.

The U.S. government did nothing about the tolerance level or the maximum allowable residue on marketed food in spite of these findings. However, Canada reduced their tolerance to 5 ppm on grapes, and Sweden to 15 ppm. In the U.S. 50 ppm remains the tolerance on grapes. Captan is the pesticide found most frequently in residue testing of grapes.


Allowable residues of Captan on



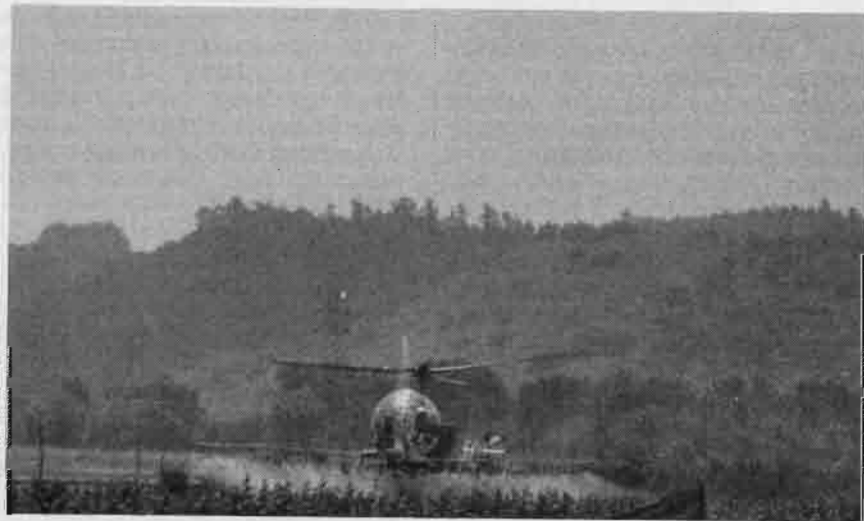
fruits and vegetables in the U.S. are among the highest in the world. EPA has bowed to industry pressure to allow continued use on food crops although it poses an unacceptable risk to human health. An assumption is made that there is such a thing as a "safe" level of exposure to a carcinogen. Other federal law prohibits any amount of a carcinogenic additive to be used on food (1956 Delaney amendment to Food Drug and Cosmetic Act). The Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) and the Consumer Product Safety Commission do not recognize **any** safe level of a carcinogen.

The setting of tolerances on food also doesn't take into account the considerable regional, ethnic, and age differences in eating patterns. Nor are possible synergistic effects of concurrent intake of other pesticide residues, pollutants in water (some of which are also pesticides), drugs etc. Basing intake on how much an "average" American eats doesn't make much

sense if the person eating the product is an infant, a sick person, or an elderly person with many other health problems. It is as if the shoe size of everyone were measured and then an "average" size shoe would be produced for all consumers.

Captan is a good example of how public health concerns are given short shrift in regulatory decision making. Why should decisions about residues of carcinogens and teratogens in the food supply be based mainly on the economic impact on the agricultural and chemical industry and not primarily on considerations of human health and safety? 

(Dr. Moses recently returned from lecturing in Ballentina, Ecuador at a week-long international seminar on "Safety and Health in Agriculture: Use of Pesticides and Effects on Human Health" sponsored by the International Federation of Plantation, Agricultural and Allied Workers. Representatives of agricultural workers from 13 Latin American countries attended.)



Applying pesticides by helicopter in California.

You Can Help Stop the Tragedy of Pesticide Poisoning



Amalia Larios, 3, was born with a piece of spine missing because of pesticides her parents believe they were exposed to when they worked in San Joaquin Valley fields. Doctors say Amalia will never walk. She is paralyzed from the waist down.

You can help farm workers and their children battle pesticide abuse by boycotting California fresh grapes*. Take a moment to send in your boycott pledge, an endorsement from your group, and the names of people we can contact to spread our boycott message.

*except the 3% of grapes produced under UFW contract

(detach and return to:)

Cesar Chavez, La Paz, CA 93570

Dear Cesar Chavez:

- ☐ I pledge to boycott California fresh grapes*.
- ☐ Enclosed is my group's endorsement of the boycott.
- ☐ Enclosed are addresses of people who I know will join the grape boycott if they are contacted.

Sincerely,

Name _____

Address _____
(please print)

City/State/Zip _____

GRAPE BOYCOTT PLEDGE

- I pledge to boycott California fresh grapes so that
- 1 farm workers can have free and fair union elections without grower threats and coercion;
 - 2 grape growers will bargain in good faith with the farm workers;
 - 3 growers cease the use of health-threatening pesticides on the grapes.

ENGAGEMENT

Je m'engage à boycotter les raisins frais de Californie, afin que:

- 1 les travailleurs agricoles aient droit à des élections syndicales libres de menaces et de coercion patronales;
- 2 les cultivateurs négocient de bonne foi avec les travailleurs;
- 3 les cultivateurs cessent de traiter les raisins avec des pesticides nocifs.



Fifteen members of Parliament from the three major political parties in Canada pledged to support the California fresh grape boycott during Cesar Chavez's visit to Ottawa, the nation's capitol. Four of the MPs who signed the pledge are (left to right) Nelson Riis (New Democratic Party), Andre Ouellet (Liberal), and Alan Pedway (Progressive Conservative). To Chavez's right is Richard Mercier, executive vice-president of the Canadian Labour Congress.

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