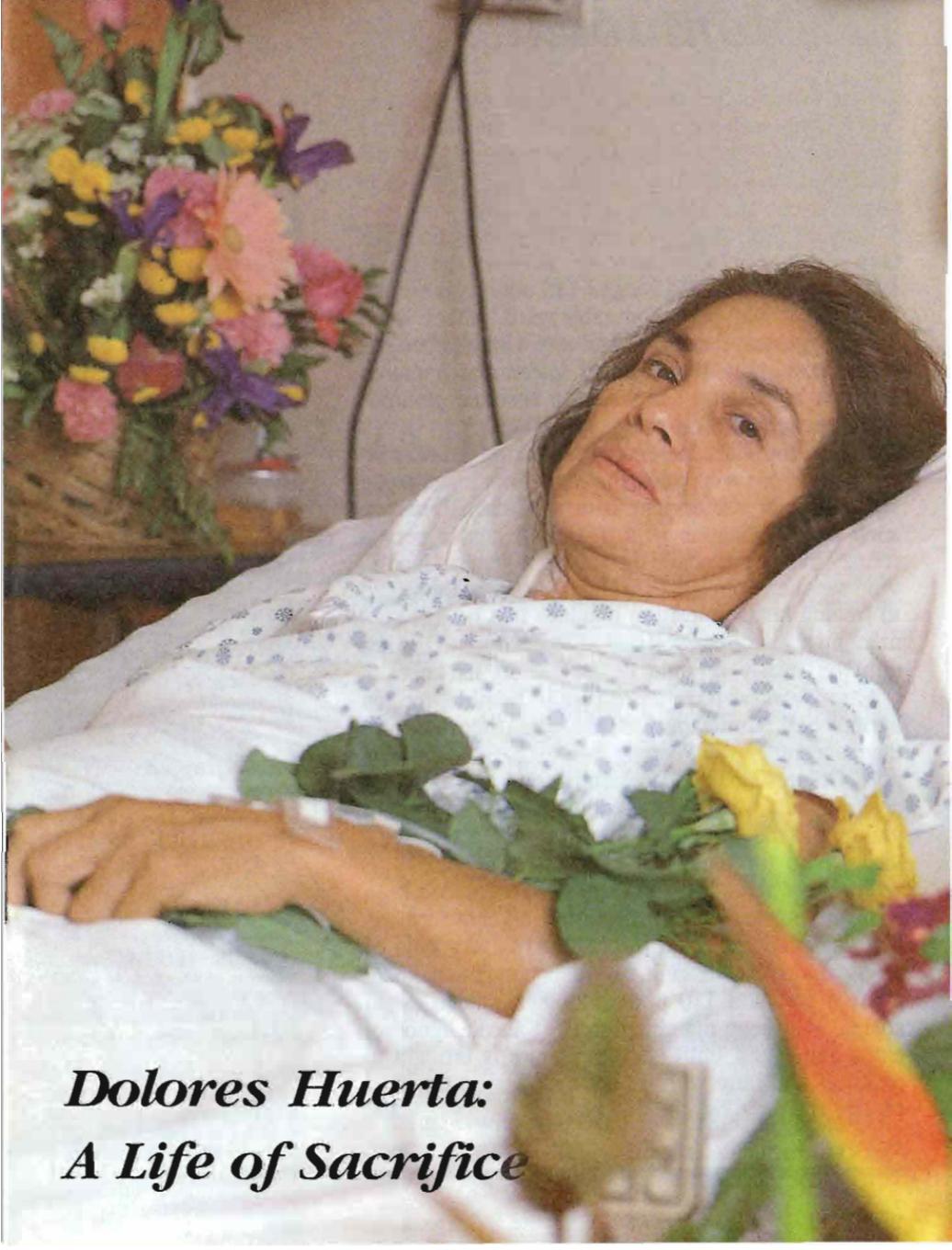


The Fast Continues... The Boycott Spreads

FOOD AND JUSTICE

Published by the United Farm Workers

October 1988



*Dolores Huerta:
A Life of Sacrifice*

A Model of Nonviolence

Our cover story on the brutal beating Dolores Huerta suffered at the hands of San Francisco police in mid-September illustrates once again the high cost of espousing — and living up to — a commitment to nonviolence.

Anyone who thinks Dolores Huerta has no other choice but to be nonviolent just because she stands only five foot two and weighs 110 pounds is simply not familiar with her indomitable spirit. In fact, some have suggested, the 240-pound cop who clubbed her to the hospital with a ruptured spleen and fractured ribs can be grateful she made an absolute commitment to nonviolence many years ago.

Such a commitment repudiates striking out or striking back at one's enemies, but it does not mean being submissive or subservient. It means, instead, having such utter dedication to a just cause that a person refuses to be sidetracked by seeking revenge. Gandhi, who weighed even less than Huerta, was so committed to freeing his people from bondage that he just kept marching, marching, relentlessly marching to the sea until he finally brought an empire to its knees.

Farm workers have an empire to humble, too, an agribusiness empire that has subjugated them for more than a century. In keeping her eyes fixed on that goal, Dolores Huerta successfully combines a driving desire to achieve it with a readiness to do so without yielding to the temptation to return violence for violence, hate for hate.

For more than 26 years, Dolores Huerta has been an inspiration to all of us in the farm worker movement. She has been subjected to practically every kind of physical and verbal assault. But this courageous woman, all five feet and 110 pounds of her, spleen or no spleen, will keep marching straight ahead, ignoring clubs and thugs, until another empire is brought to its knees and farm workers are raised up to the level of respect they rightly deserve.

Volume 5, Number 7

Food and Justice

October 1988

Magazine of the United
Farm Workers of
America, AFL-CIO
La Paz, Keene, CA 93570



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Food and Justice (ISSN 0885-0704) is published monthly for \$5 per year by the United Farm Workers of America, AFL-CIO, Old Highway 58, La Paz, Keene, California 93570.



No march is too long, no task too hard for Dolores Huerta if it means taking a step forward for the rights of farm workers.

HUERTA SURVIVES NEAR-FATAL BEATING

"Twenty minutes to a half an hour more and it would have been too late," a surgeon said after an emergency operation on Dolores Huerta, first vice-president and co-founder with Cesar Chavez of the United Farm Workers of America.

The surgeon's grim comment followed major surgery to remove a ruptured spleen and repair three fractured ribs the 58-year-old mother of 11 and grandmother of 10 suffered during a severe beating by San Francisco police on September 14.

"No one realized how serious her injuries were at first," said her husband, Richard Chavez, who is also the brother of farm labor leader Cesar Chavez. "We didn't find out until later how close she came to dying from internal bleeding while we sat with her in the waiting room." Hospitalized for more than a week, Huerta is now back at UFW headquarters in La Paz making a slow but steady recovery.

Huerta, who stands five feet, two inches

tall and weighs only 110 pounds, had been rushed to San Francisco General Hospital after being repeatedly jabbed in the stomach and clubbed by baton-wielding police during a demonstration of almost 1,000 people against Vice-President George Bush, who was speaking at a fundraiser at the St. Francis Hotel.

Howard Wallace, a UFW boycott organizer who was also struck while helping Huerta pass out a press release at the demonstration, said, "It was a harrowing, terrifying experience" as the phalanx of police moved in, jabbing at them with three-foot nightsticks. "We were scrupulously obeying the law" and heard no warnings from police before the attack, he said.

KRON-TV film footage of the incident shows police spearing and clubbing protesters, who appear to be complying with police orders and offering no physical resistance. Huerta can be seen saying at one point, "I am moving." Later, a

husky policeman with his back to the camera is shown making full-body lunging, stabbing motions at her.

Bush Eats Grapes, Mocks Boycott

Huerta was in San Francisco directing the grape boycott following the end of Chavez' 36-day water fast on August 21. She and Wallace had gone to the hotel to distribute to the media a press release responding to attacks on the UFW grape boycott Bush made during earlier campaign stops in California. At a "photo opportunity" before a campaign speech in the San Joaquin Valley, Bush joined Republican Gov. George Deukmejian in gulping down table grapes and ridiculing Chavez, farm workers, and the grape boycott.

Commenting on Bush's behavior, Huerta stated in the press release she was distributing: "Mr. Bush's statement demonstrates again that he is wealthy and comfortable and insensitive to the struggles of working people in our country. It also reveals his ignorance of the pesticide threat to our environment and our people."

Public Outrage

The attack on Huerta unleashed a storm of protest as angry labor, legislative, religious, and community leaders held press conferences and public vigils to denounce the police action and demand investigations. John Henning, executive secretary-

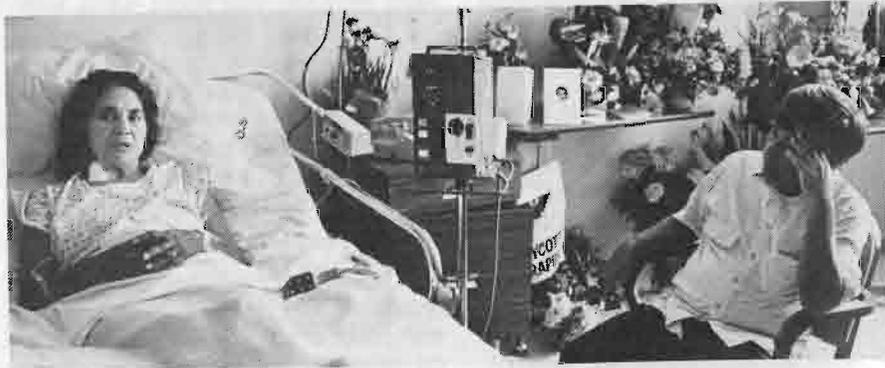
treasurer of the California Labor Federation, said, "We're asking the Department of Justice to investigate. This is a classic example of the denial of civil rights." (The FBI is currently conducting an investigation.)

At a religious service held in front of the main entrance to the San Francisco General Hospital, prominent Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish leaders prayed "for this valiant woman and ardent union leader who has fearlessly and nonviolently committed her life to the struggle for justice for the most exploited workers in our country, the farm workers."

In response to both the film evidence and the public outcry, the district attorney immediately launched a grand jury investigation, and Mayor Art Agnos ordered two separate investigations by the police department's Management Control Unit and the Office of Citizen Complaints.

Scores of newspaper editorials and television and radio commentaries across the country denounced the injury done to Huerta as well as Bush's campaign rhetoric that preceded it.

An editorial in the *National Catholic Reporter* stated: "In siding with the growers and eating grapes, Bush continued the callousness, even downright disdain, toward the poor and the minorities that the Reagan administration has attempted to institutionalize during the last eight years." ▾



Chavez, still weakened from his long fast, visits with Huerta shortly after her operation.

"A Multitude of Simple Deeds"

The staff of *Food and Justice* have never been more grateful than they are this month that "a picture is worth a thousand words."

But even if the illustration and photographs on the following four pages were each worth a hundred thousand words, they would still fall far short of reflecting the "multitude of simple deeds for justice" that have been carried out throughout the U.S. and Canada since Cesar Chavez ended his Fast for Life on August 21.

Prominent among them in creating widespread awareness of the UFW grape boycott was the national fast begun by the Reverend Jesse Jackson, who took up where Chavez left off, fasting on water for three days before passing on the fast, symbolized by a cross or medallion, to a galaxy of celebrities and community leaders that kept expanding around the country. As of October 19, when River Phoenix received the cross from Martha Plimpton, his co-star in "Running on Empty," in the Tampa-St. Petersburg area, the fast had continued without break for two months. And Kris Kristofferson, Ed Asner, Joe Spano, Mollie Yard, and Chris Kennedy were among a long list of others waiting, as Jackson said, to "share the burden."

Meanwhile, the force of the initial fast was spinning off satellite fasts and boycott actions in all directions. Tracking all of them was impossible, naming them individually unthinkable: governors and mayors and state and national legislators were fasting ... supervisors and council members were voting table grapes out of county and city institutions ... bishops and priests and sisters and rabbis and ministers were calling on dioceses and congregations to honor the boycott ... international and national labor leaders and local unions in the U.S. and Canada were

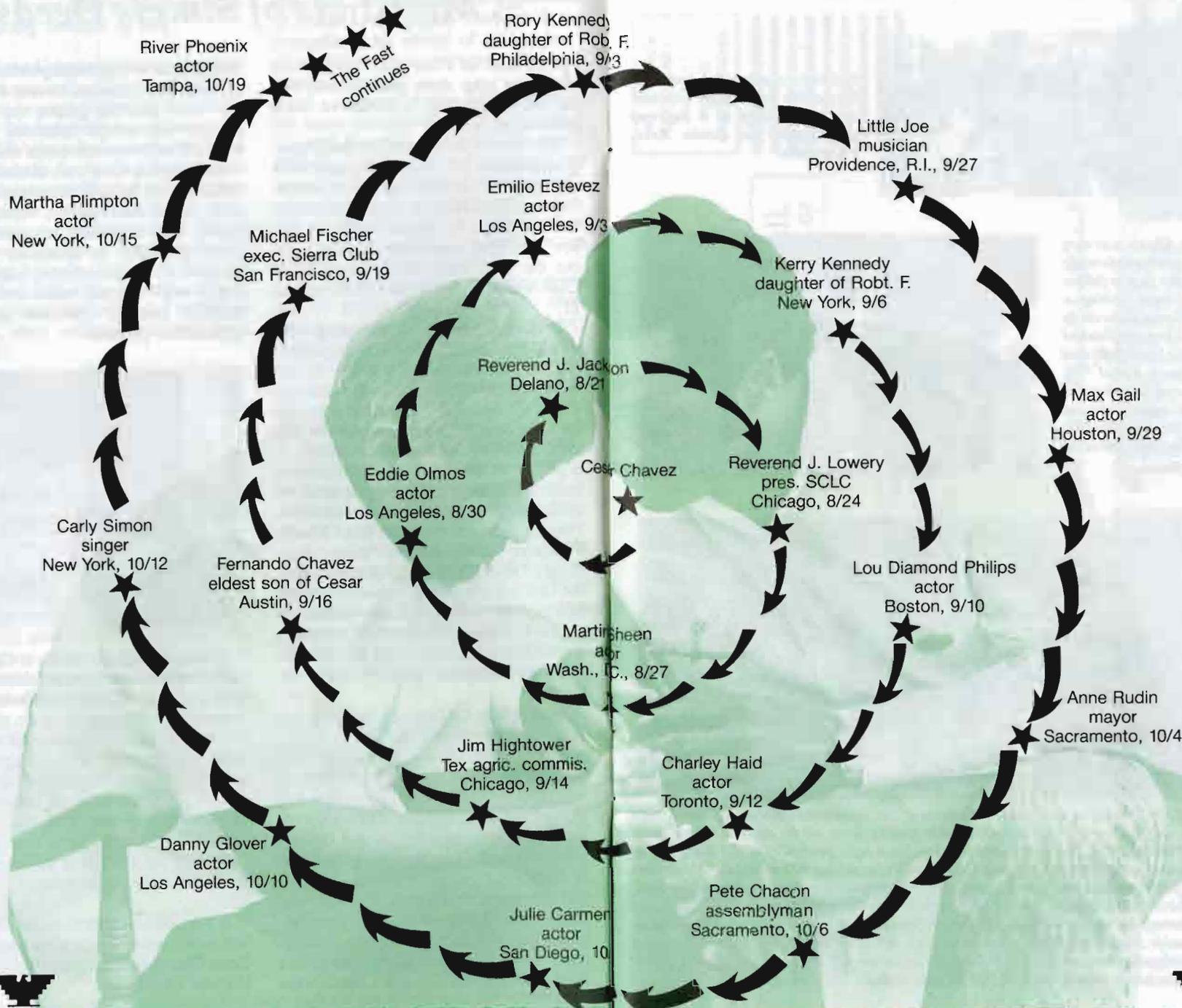
assigning staff to picket supermarkets carrying grapes ... student senates and councils were cleaning grapes out of their college and school cafeterias ... farm workers in the western states and Florida were initiating their own circles of fasts and stepping up their supermarket picketing ... and, most telling, supermarkets chains were beginning to agree to quit carrying grapes as consumer demand dropped and grape growers found themselves with sagging sales and storage facilities jammed with their poisoned, unpalatable product.



It was enough to make a California table grape commission president fulminate and equivocate — both of which Bruce Obbink managed to do at hastily arranged press conferences. In back-to-back sentences, he first thundered that the grape boycott absolutely is not working — "It's not even an issue east of the Rockies" — and then announced a \$250,000 ad campaign in major newspapers as the first in a series of "creative activities" to counteract the boycott.

It was also enough to make recuperation more bearable for a still-weakened Cesar Chavez and a battered but unbeaten Dolores Huerta. ▾

NATIONAL FAST FOR LIFE



ACROSS THE COUNTRY



Spirited students at Sonoma State University encourage consumers not to shop at a Safeway supermarket in Santa Rosa, California.

Actor Martin Sheen answers questions at a press conference after passing the fast to fellow actor Eddie Olmos during a Mass at La Placita Church in Los Angeles. They are flanked by actor Charlie Haid (left) and Jimmy Rodriguez, Local 770, United Food and Commercial Workers. Standing at center are Father Luis Olivares and at his left UFW Boycott Director Oscar Mondragon.



John Catsimatides, chairman of Red Apple Supermarkets, announces that the 26-store chain in New York City will remove California table grapes from all its stores. At the press conference on October 20, David Dinkins (second from left), president of the Borough of Manhattan, presented a citation honoring Catsimatides for taking this action to help protect the health of farm workers and consumers. Others present are Andrew Stein (far left), president of the New York City Council, and, in front row left to right from Dinkins, Kerry Kennedy, Courtney Kennedy-Ruhe, daughters of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, and Manhattan West Side Leader Jerry Goldfader. The same day, the New York City Council passed a resolution asking all city agencies to stop buying California table grapes and urged all New Yorkers to do the same as long as the UFW boycott lasts.



(Above) A street fair audience in San Francisco gets the boycott message. (Right) After receiving the cross and fast from Sierra Club President Michael Fischer, Rory Kennedy, youngest child of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, addresses boycott supporters in Philadelphia.



Bob Vidler



Doug Brugge

In Boston, Kerry Kennedy, daughter of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, marches with actor Lou Diamond Phillips before passing the fast to him. With them for the march and passing-the-cross ceremony are Fr. Joachim Lally (left) and Boston City Councilman David Scodras. The Boston City Council subsequently passed a resolution asking all city agencies not to purchase California table grapes and urged Bostonians to join the boycott for as long as it lasts.

Lou Diamond Phillips talks to boycott supporters in Toronto right after passing the fast and symbolic cross to actor Charlie Haid at right. At center, holding the Canadian flag, is Julie Davis, executive vice-president of the Ontario Federation of Labour. At left is Abby Pollonetzky, New Democratic Party candidate for Member of Parliament.



David Smiley



J.J. Johnson

In a ceremony in front of D'Agostino's Supermarket in New York City, actor Danny Glover passes the three-day fast to singer Carly Simon as he places the cross around her neck. At right is UFW Boycott Director Arturo Rodriguez.

Table Grapes Flunk Screen Test

The scene was all set.

The table grapes of a mysterious California grower, not named but described in *The Packer* (Sept. 9, 1988) as "an innovative grape grower who uses a minimum of pesticides," were to be the featured star of a series of TV, radio, and newspaper ads by Sacramento-based Raley's Supermarkets to tout its produce as safe for consumers—a publicity campaign dubbed by Raley's as "educational advertising."

The script was ready, the vineyard selected, the starring grapes in place, the

Though outwardly luscious-looking, the way some pesticides are designed to make grapes look, deep down they were too ugly, too full of poison.

supporting actors primed to perform: the proud grape grower, of course; a Raley's produce official; and a representative of NutriClean, an independent pesticide-residue testing firm in Oakland.

Then the shocker. The grapes blew their big chance for popular success. They flunked their screen test. Too many pesticide residues, NutriClean discovered. Though outwardly luscious-looking, the way some pesticides are designed to make

grapes look, deep down they were too ugly, too full of poison. Kill the commercials.

A Guilty Bunch

But that failure didn't faze Raley's or NutriClean. A new star was selected to hype Raley's safe-produce publicity campaign. So, on September 1, they went to Watsonville and filmed strawberries owned by Well-Pict Inc., which, NutriClean claimed, were free from detectable levels of pesticide residues.

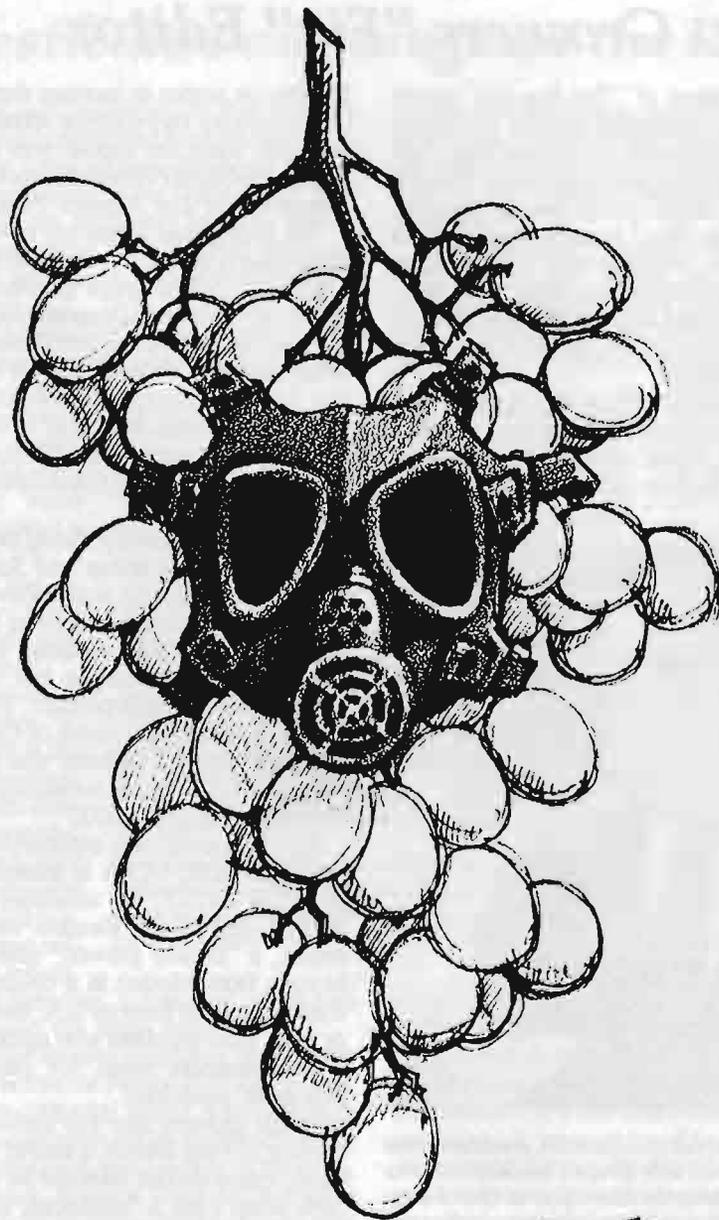
Raley's is not much better than the grower whose grapes flunked the test. At the same time they were shooting commercials about pesticide-free strawberries, they kept right on selling poisoned table grapes. The grapes might not have met NutriClean's standards, but they were still good enough for consumers!

Neither Linda Brown, public relations spokesperson for NutriClean, nor Frank McMinn, Raley's vice-president, would identify the "innovative" grower. In protecting his name for their own purposes, they allowed this grower to keep marketing table grapes containing easily detected pesticide residues.

Bruised Grapes

As for the grapes themselves, well, they have a severely bruised ego. To lose star billing to lowly strawberries, gaudy red, blackheads all over, with only a name like Well-Pict going for them, was almost too much to bear.

But they should take heart. They couldn't make it on TV but there's still a place for them in show biz — as top-notch models. For one thing, they've got just what it takes to make it big with *The Los Angeles Times* whenever it needs poisoned grapes to pose for cartoons like the one on the opposite page. 🍷



Frank McMinn
Grape Grower, Watsonville, 1988

Growers "Fix" Editor

Publication of "The Big Fix" article in the September issue of *California Farmer* magazine has caused anger and embarrassment among growers. They are trying to refute claims that the pesticide 4-CPA, or "Fix," is being used illegally on grapes. Growers were so furious, in fact, that the managing editor of the magazine, Richard Smoley, was forced to resign because of the attention generated by the article.

Although 4-CPA is registered for use only on tomatoes and bean sprouts, growers who asked to remain anonymous reported that the pesticide is widely used

illegally on grapes to increase their size. Grape growers' fury over the scandal was enflamed when the exposé was carried by the *Associated Press* and in such major dailies as the *Los Angeles Times*.

The widespread illegal use of 4-CPA, the article explained, was curtailed in 1985 when two Delano grape growers were sued by the California Department of Food and Agriculture for using it on Thompson's Seedless grapes. Prosper Dulcich & Sons and Jack and George Zaninovich (also known as Marlin Brothers) eventually settled out-of-court in June 1986 for paltry sums: Dulcich for \$2,000 and Zaninovich for \$3,000.

(It was, coincidentally, during that same time that Anton Caratan and Son, also a Delano-area grower, was discovered to have some unmarked containers in their vineyard which "held Orthene, a pesticide registered for cotton but not for grapes," the article reported. "Tests on foliage samples from seven of Caratan's vineyards showed Orthene was present in six of them." Caratan eventually settled out-of-court for \$12,000.)

Known scientifically as parachlorophenoxyacetic acid, 4-CPA is related to the herbicide 2,4,5-T, the infamous Agent Orange used in the Vietnam war. One source, a "Delano grower," said Fix is brought from Mexico in a concentrated form or brought from an L.A. distributor or from local suppliers who agree to sell it in containers made for other less expensive pesticides.

Grape growers like Fix because, according to Fred Jensen, a retired viticulturist, grape berries increase in size by 30% when even a "minuscule amount" is applied to the grape vine.

Commenting on the editor's firing, farm leader Cesar Chavez said, "Another person stands up to the growers and gets fired for telling the truth." ▼



Bruce Obbink (foreground), president of the California Table Grape Commission, who likes to describe himself as a "word merchant," is seen above at a press conference groping for words to answer reporters' embarrassing questions about the Fix scandal and cover-up and grape growers' probable continuing use of the chemical banned for grapes.

Pesticide Poisonings on the Rise

This past September, 71 farm workers were hospitalized because of injuries in three more separate incidents of pesticide poisoning in the Delano area. And as usual, the employers harassed and intimidated those who reported what occurred and those who sought medical attention.

On September 23, the largest group, 54 farm workers at Pandol Brothers Ranch, were treated after suffering severe symptoms of poisoning when they entered a vineyard which had recently been sprayed with Methomyl.

Only three days later, 16 workers at the Golden Gem Almonds company were hospitalized after they entered the packing-house and suffered inhalation of Gastoxin, a fumigant which had been used the night before.

And in another poisoning about three weeks before the Pandol and Golden Gem incidents, Matilde Borga, a farm worker at the Enas Ranch, suffered chemical burns of the skin, rash and pimples on his arms, back, neck, stomach, chest and legs after working in an Enas vineyard only one day.

Pandol Image Tarnished

After two of 54 farm workers fell unconscious and more than a third suffered

symptoms of poisoning, including nausea, headaches, dizziness and blurred vision, the whole crew of Pandol Brothers, Inc., had to be taken to the hospital for examination.

The poisonings contradict the assertions made by Jack Pandol, Sr., president of Pandol Brothers, in an exclusive interview earlier this year with *Food and Justice*. "Our vineyards are clean, we don't

have red spider, we cure biologically," he stated. "In fact, we are on the verge of becoming what we call organic farming."

Sold under the commercial names of Lannate and Nudrin, Methomyl is used by growers to kill insects in the worm or larvae stage. Unfortunately, the chemical also destroys vital

enzymes in the nervous system of humans.

"I went twice and spoke to one of the workers who had to be hospitalized," said one of the poisoned workers who granted an interview to *Food and Justice* on the condition of anonymity. "At first the worker told me that we should try to get some help to correct the problems. Later he told me that Jack Pandol, Jr. had personally called him by telephone at the hospital and told him not to talk to anybody about what happened. The worker now says he is not hurt. Other workers fear they may be fired, as well, including



Jack Pandol, Sr., president of Pandol Brothers, never talks about the pesticide poisonings and harassment of farm workers at Pandol's in the many speeches he gives to agricultural and business groups.



Matilde Borga, center, shows reporters at a press conference in front of the Delano Save Mart the chemical burns and rash he suffered while working in a vineyard at the Enas Ranch in Lindsay.

myself.”

This year, within the past five months, the California Department of Food and Agriculture has changed the Methomyl re-entry regulations twice, but only after farm workers were poisoned. On June 23, 21 farm workers were hospitalized and 14 were found to have depressed enzyme levels. They had worked a short time in a field sprayed with Methomyl

six days prior to the harvesting. So the re-entry regulations were changed from 2 days to 7 days. Now, the recent poisonings at Pandol prompted them to change them again from 7 to 14 days.

Insult to Injury

On September 4, one day after he started working in an Enas Ranch vineyard, Matilde Borga began to get a rash. When he asked his foreman to be released from work to go to the doctor, he was told that the severe sores, pimples and rash would go away if he applied some cream and took a bath. “In front of everyone, he told one of my friends to give me a bath,” Borga said. “It’s painful, I feel inflammation and increasing dryness of the skin,” he said.

Borga explained that he has been a farm worker since 1985, has been in relatively good health and had not suffered any similar reaction until he started working at Enas.

Workers Resist Threat

The Golden Gem Almond workers were hospitalized after being required to work in the packinghouse the morning after it had been treated with the fumigant Gastoxin. “I started to vomit repeatedly, I felt pain in my chest, I could not talk

and my face and mouth went numb,” said Marta Chavarin, one of the workers who entered when told to do so. More than two and a half weeks after the incident, Chavarin still suffered chest pains, recurrent facial tingling and a sore throat.

According to Dr. Marion Moses, one of the nation’s leading authorities on environmental disease, Gastoxin has a 24-hour aeration period before re-entry is safe.

“I think that it was poison to kill worms,” said Chavarin, “because the inspector would not certify the almonds on Saturday because there were too many worms in them. They had to spray on Sunday after the late-night Saturday shift.”

“Our supervisor told us that we had until 7:30 a.m. to go back in and that we were not going to get paid for the time we were outside waiting for the odors to

subside,” said Maria Arevalos, another of the workers injured. The workers regularly start the 10-hour shift at 6:30 a.m.

“They gave me some milk, I recuperated a little, and they told us to re-enter again,” said Chavarin. “Again we went back in. When I was inside, I felt worse and when I could no longer stand it, I went outside to vomit.”

Nearly all the workers in the fumigated area refused to go back to work, even though they were told they would be fired if they didn’t, until the conditions in the packinghouse improved.

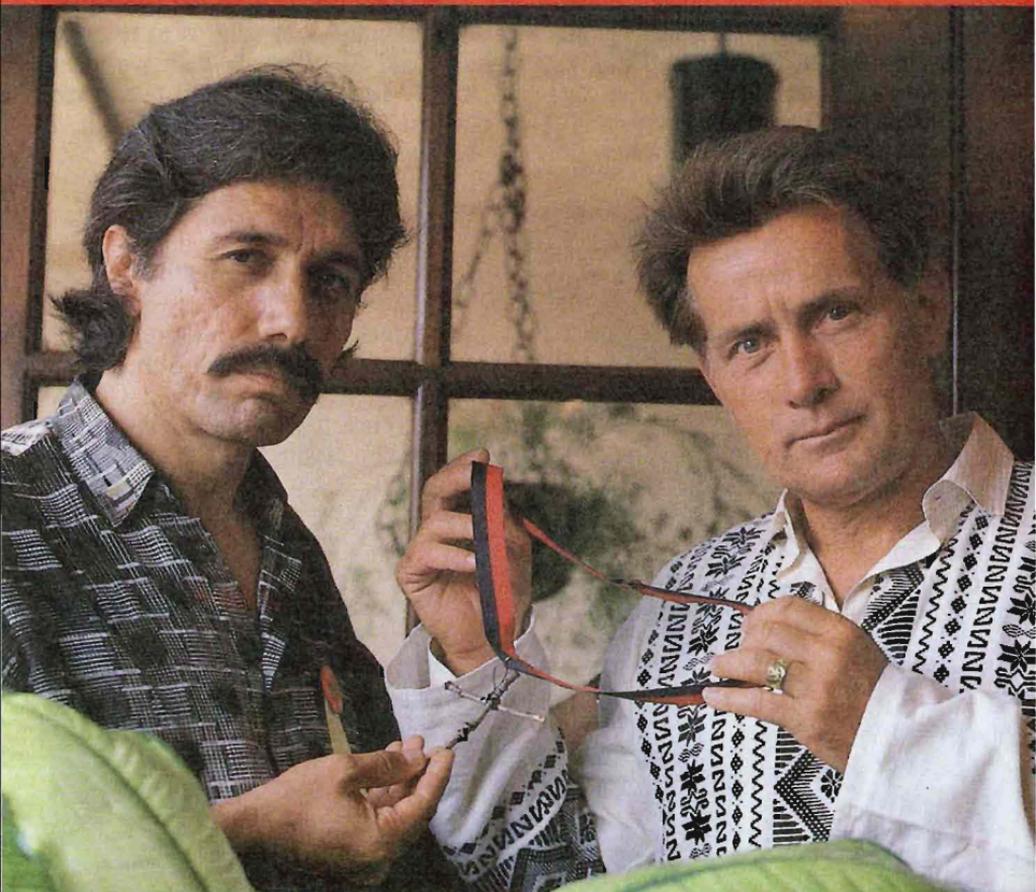
In the face of clear and convincing danger posed to farm workers by such chemicals as Gastoxin, both growers and CDFA continue to use the guinea-pig approach in determining re-entry and similar safety regulations.



Gathered in the home of Maria Arevalos (left) are six of 16 workers at Golden Gem Almonds in Delano who had to be treated (three hospitalized) after being poisoned by Gastoxin, a fumigant used in the packinghouse where they work. Pictured above are, left to right, Arevalos, Guadalupe Tecua, Maria Garibal, Felicitas Avila, Marta Chavarin, and Raquel Bravo.

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