

Anti-Chavez Pickets Boo Mrs. Robert Kennedy

SALINAS, Calif., Dec. 6 (UPI)—Nearly 3,000 Mexican-American farm workers held a candlelight mass tonight outside the jail where Cesar Chavez, director of the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee, is being held.

Meanwhile, about 200 counterdemonstrators in front of the jail shouted insults at the workers and at Mrs. Robert F. Kennedy, whose late husband was a longtime Chavez supporter.

Mrs. Kennedy joined the workers in a parking lot across the street from the Monterey County Jail, then went inside to visit Mr. Chavez, the organizer of a nationwide boycott against nonunion lettuce.

She was greeted by boos, curses and shouts of "Ethel go home" as she walked past the antiworker pickets, who identified themselves as members of the Citizens Committee for Agriculture.

Mrs. Kennedy talked with Mr. Chavez through a glass partition in the visitors' room for 15 minutes, then left the jail through a rear exit after sheriff's deputies urged her not to risk provoking an incident with the counterdemonstrators.

A local newspaper reporter said some of the counterdemonstrators were connected with produce growers in the Salinas Valley.

The anti-Chavez demonstrators carried placards reading "Chavez Flaunts the Law" and "Reds Lettuce Alone." They interrupted the mass several times by shouting, "Reds go home!"

Witnesses said Mrs. Kennedy appeared apprehensive when she and her bodyguard, Rafer Johnson, the former Olympic decathlon champion, passed in front of the anti-Chavez demonstrators before entering the jail.

While Mrs. Kennedy was in a confrontation.

side, a young woman carrying a red, white and black farm workers flag ran across the street onto the steps of the jail and waved the flag as workers cheered.

Mr. Chavez was jailed Friday for refusing to obey a court order that he end the lettuce boycott. He was given an indefinite sentence, and will remain in jail until he calls off the boycott or is freed on a writ of habeas corpus.

There was a tense moment when the woman was pulled to the ground by the counterdemonstrators and several farm workers started across the street to assist her. But other farm workers restrained their compatriots and the woman ran back across the street, avoiding kind to me.

"I'm prepared to pay the price for civil disobedience," Mr. Chavez said in a statement.

"I am still very committed and not bitter at all." He added that his jailers were "being very kind to me."