

Chavez Speaks to Press on Farm Workers Struggles

by Leslie Zeldin

Cesar Chavez, president of the United Farm Workers of America, AFL-CIO (UFW), toured North Carolina on September 11, to promote the primary boycott of iceberg lettuce, table grapes and Gallo wines.

Speaking to the press at the Greensboro Labor Hall, Chavez explained the UFW's battle against the International Brotherhood of Teamsters Union, and answered questions on various issues concerning labor.

Chavez started with a brief statement admitting he knew very little about North Carolina and had come to "acquaint the people with the boycott and the issues."

Barely given a chance to finish, a representative from the National Congress of Labor Committees and two representatives from the U.S. Labor party, emerged from the audience to challenge and hassle Chavez.

But Cesar remained calm and cool, demonstrating his genuine commitment to non-violence, and proceeded with the press conference, challenging his opposers and answering questions from his supporters and the press.

He explained that "the food that comes to your table is

there because someone was exploited to get it there." That's what UFW deals with; men, women, and children who are exploited in the fields.

Chavez told the small audience that there is no secondary boycott in North Carolina, only a primary boycott. (A secondary boycott would be boycotting the stores that sell non-union lettuce, grapes, and Gallo wines. A primary boycott is boycotting only the products.)

Chavez was asked by one reporter, to explain the struggle against the Teamsters Union.

Cesar and the UFW launched the California grape strike in 1965 against many wine and table grape growers in the Southwest who tried to destroy the union.

By 1970, due to the support of millions of people across the country, who boycotted grapes and wines and gave money, the UFW had negotiated contracts with practically all the grape growers in the Southwest. These contracts, for the first time in this nation's history, gained fair wages, safer working conditions, job security and medical care and retirement benefits for farm workers.

Following this victory, the UFW tried to organize the Southwestern lettuce fields and the Florida orange groves.

They won contracts in Florida but not with the California lettuce growers.

Then in the spring of 1973, when the original grape contracts expired and were due to be renewed, the lettuce and grape growers conspired to destroy the UFW and refused to negotiate or hold elections.

Instead, the growers signed contracts with the Teamsters union without consulting the workers.

The workers went on strike demanding they have a say in which union represent them. In August of 1973 the strike climaxed when two strikers were killed on the picket line by police and Teamster goons brought in to harass the picketers.

The farm workers then went to the cities to organize the boycott of lettuce, table grapes, and Gallo wines.

Because Chavez has taken the strike to the cities, the growers have brought up uneducated Mexicans, who have no immigration papers, to work in the fields. These "illegals" number over 200 now.

Appearing in Charlotte, Greensboro, Chapel Hill, Raleigh, and Durham, Chavez encouraged people to support the boycott and thus help put an end to the exploitation of farm workers.



Cesar Chavez, president of the United Farm Workers of America. photo by Liz Wheaton, Greensboro Sun

Rape Prevention at UNC-G

by Adele Payne

Frederic Storaska, author of to-be-published *How To Say No To a Rapist...and Survive* and co-founder of the National Organization for the Prevention of Rape and Assault, NOPRA, recently shared his concerns with a capacity crowd on UNC-G's campus.

Storaska dispelled many misconceptions in his almost three hour discussion, the first being the idea that he intended to talk on how to prevent rape. Rather, Storaska chose to speak for the problem of proper action of a woman in an instance where rape and or assault seems imminent, placing less emphasis on the particulars of what to do than the generalities of "what to do in case what you do doesn't work."

The lecture which accompanied so admirable a statement of purpose, was so liberally laced with humor that this reviewer found it initially somewhat offensive. As it turned out, however, his comic character was not without a worthy purpose.

Every joke, which due to its amusing aspects was difficult to forget, involved a principle due to its importance one would do well to remember.

Statements such as, "One-Man-Can't-Rape-One-Woman: Pencil-in-the-Moving-Coke-Bottle Theory" attest to both his sincerity and sensitivity.

"A woman should never feel guilty about having been raped, even if she was

'teasing' (a word which functions as a semantic attempt of society to blame women for men's weaknesses)

There were numerous "folk-rape-prevention-techniques," heretofore accepted by the general public as being valid, which Storaska labelled "almost-never-helpful" and "next-to-always-harmful", to the woman if employed:

A) The Car-Keys-In-Purse Technique fails because small implements, even though sharp, are difficult to find and even if found, and used, are rarely capable of incapacitating an attacker. Thus one would succeed only in angering your attacker and incurring a retaliatory assault as well as being raped.

B) Screaming may call attention to your predicament but many people may hear you and not make a move to help you. Such is all too often the case.

C) Struggling is also liable to get you beaten up and, even more importantly, often such reaction on your part will act as an aphrodisiac and speed up, by as many as four minutes, the erection that will allow further action on his part.

D) Studying the Martial Arts is very find if one has studied them for a long enough time with a high enough degree of dedication. Unfortunately to presuppose that many women are able to take the time involved for this

is unrealistic.

In place of these and other such immediate reactions, Storaska suggests as an alternative going along with the rapist until a chance to react safely is presented, unless one perceives immediately that one is in defense of one's life.

He also encourages the victim to attempt to communicate with her attacker (not so surprising a suggestion in light of the fact that 35% of all rapes occur in a dating situation, making the potential rapist thereby not only quite clearly a human being but a seemingly likeable one as well)

If communication fails, one must do something weird and or repulsive. This will shock him out of what he's immediately doing and turn him off to the idea of doing anything further.

Continual stress was placed on the position of the

imaginative mind as an effective weapon against the rapist. For this very reason, a woman need not struggle so hard to remain standing in a rape-attempt situation, for once on the ground it is his strength (dependant on leverage) which is diminished, not hers.

He advocated only two physically forceful tactics and these involved attacks on the testicle area of the groin, chosen for their accessibility and the fact that handling of them is a normal part of the sex act and thus any movement towards touching them would result in a generalized shock of the man's entire system, thus allowing for the woman's escape.

Additional suggestions included the unorthodox one of: If your car stops on the highway - leave the lights on, the doors open, tie the horn down and go hide in the woods

off the shoulder with a blanket and flashlight. This enables one to wait not just until anyone comes by but until someone trustworthy shows up.

Storaska has met with difficulty in getting his lecture series into colleges. Many administrators feel that they will lose women students if their parents hear of the lectures and assume that the school is unsafe for their daughters.

I for one, am thankful UNC-G does not follow such wretched reasoning. It was indeed a most worthwhile evening and I only regret that an evening so spent is so necessary.

Information, advise and help on rapes and assaults can be obtained by writing: NOPRA, 866 UN Plaza, N.Y., N.Y., or by calling 212-371-3664.