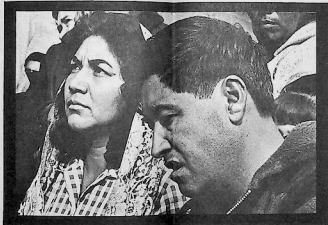
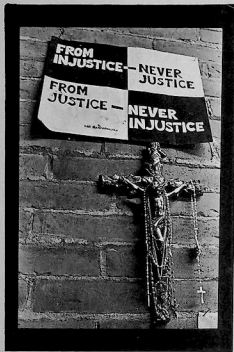


The fast...

It was a personal fast of penance, and hope. It symbolized a recommitment and rededication to the principles of non-violence and brotherhood on which the Union was founded. For 25 days, Cesar Chavez, director of the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee, fasted and prayed. He lived and slept at the Union's 40 acres of land near Delano, where the national headquarters of the Union are being built. Farm workers from all over California came to be with him, to pledge their loyalty to the Cause, to pray with him at the daily masses.

Midway through the fast, Chavez was ordered to appear in Kern County Courthouse to answer charges by Giunarra Corporation that he and the Union had violated a court injunction restricting the strike. But the judge postponed the trial because Chavez was so weak from fasting. In a show of solidarity, over 1,000 farm workers went with Cesar to the Bakersfield court to stand trial with him. It was their Union, as well as their leader, that was on trial.

Chavez's fast ended on March 10. He had lost 40 pounds and become so weak that he could barely walk. But the fast strengthened the Union and united the workers around the basic principle of non-violence in continuing this struggle until justice is achieved.



Philip Veracruz and Julio Hernandez help Cesar Chavez to walk to the mass. Lupe Murguia Nava, carrying the cross, and Fr. Mark Day lead the procession.



Helen and Cesar Chavez pray during the last week of the fast.

Left: Workers from all over California came to Delano to be with Chavez during his fast...from Parlier and Porterville, from Hollister and Hanford, from Livingston and Lamont. Many slept in tents or in their cars. Women served meals and coffee to the encamped workers.

Right: Chavez and Union members attended daily masses during the fast. The new co-op garage and gas station are in the background of the temporary altar.

