

part II

Mounting Resistance

Introduction

The consumption patterns of North American consumers and the interests of an oligopoly of agricultural firms are driving the agri-food system that increasingly relies upon migrant temporary labor to harvest the crops designed by large-scale agribusiness firms. The vertical integration of the food industry means that agribusiness owns everything from seed to plate. In post-Fordist agricultural production, consumer preferences deeply shape industry practices. This means that supply chains are particularly vulnerable to consumer boycotts, negative public relations, and other forms of social protest that hold big businesses culpable for worker exploitation. A brand, label, or chain tainted with negative associations is the worst nightmare for consumer-conscious companies, such as Yum! Brands, McDonald's, Mount Olive Pickle, and Washington apple growers. In Chapter 3, we examine the resistance movements of the United Farm Workers (UFW), the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC), and the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW), which reveal how strategies to resist exploitation, including boycotts, truth tours, and worker organizing are effective means of shifting industry practices in favor of workers' rights.

Table II.1: *Timeline of Mounting Resistance*

1955	American Federation of Labor (AFL) and Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) merge into the AFL-CIO after the more radical CIO (representing the majority of Mexican and immigrant union members) is purged of its "communist element."
September 1965	Filipino American members of the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee (AWOC) strike against Delano-area grape growers on September 8. César Chávez's National Farm Workers Association (NFWA) joins the walkouts on September 16, Mexican Independence Day, thus beginning the five-year Delano Grape Strike.
Spring-Summer 1966	A strike and boycott of the DiGiorgio Fruit Corporation results in UFW representation for workers.
July 29, 1970	Delano-area table grape growers sign their first contracts at the UFW's Forty Acres union hall.
June 1975	Agricultural Labor Relations Act of California is passed in response to UFW strikes and boycotts as well as mounting pressure from the supermarket industry; growers agree to a state law guaranteeing California farm workers the right to organize, vote in state-supervised secret-ballot elections, and bargain with their employers.
1986	Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) signs innovative three-way contracts with Campbell Soup and its growers in Ohio and Michigan, setting labor history. Union recognition is won, along with wage increases and benefits. The contract ends a nine-year battle with Campbell.
October 5, 1991	<i>Frente Indígena de Organizaciones Binacionales</i> /Binational Front of Indigenous Organizations (FIOB) founded in Los Angeles.
March 2001	Mexico's president Fox signs into law the 3x1 remittance program, modeled after the Federation of Zacatecan Clubs of Southern California and available to all 31 states; every remitted dollar through a hometown association is now matched by state and federal governments.
September 15, 2004	FLOC signs a contract with North Carolina Growers' Association to represent the Mexican H-2A visa holders working in the state.
2005	Calling for more grassroots organizing, SEIU, UFCW, UNITE-HERE, Teamsters, Laborers' International Union, and the UFW form the Change to Win Federation (CTW), which splits from the AFL-CIO over disagreements about the future of the labor movement. In 2009, UNITE-HERE returned to the AFL-CIO after organizing jurisdictional battles with SEIU.

2005	The Zapatistas issue the Sixth Declaration of the Lacandon Jungle and initiate the "Other Campaign," articulating a more directly anti-capitalist position and calling for sympathizers to join them in working for political and economic transformation.
March 8, 2006	Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) reaches agreement with Yum! Brands subsidiary Taco Bell to adopt the penny per pound pass-through program to increase wages of tomato harvesters in South Florida.
March 30, 2006	UFW reaches agreement with Global Horizons farm labor contractors to represent H-2A temporary visa workers. The agreement between Global Horizons and UFW stems from labor contractors' violations of Washington State labor laws.

Chapter 4 focuses on three recent strategies of organizing among Mexican workers—labor unions, new *mutualistas*, and the immigrant rights movement. Over the past 25 years the successes of labor unions serving Mexican immigrant workers has stemmed from the two surprisingly effective campaigns by Los Angeles Drywallers and Justice for Janitors (JJ). We examine how these campaigns ran counter to the AFL-CIO business-as-usual strategy of ignoring Mexican immigrant workers. The recent labor split that resulted in the Change to Win Federation (CTW) focuses on immigrant organizing and democratic reforms as a burgeoning source for a renewed labor activism. Mexican immigrants are not waiting for the AFL-CIO leadership structure to recognize their needs but rather are organizing in a new *mutualista* tradition by creating non-affiliated labor organizing strategies, day labor and worker centers, and hometown associations. This immigrant rights movement was thrust on the national stage in 2006 when popular protests in Los Angeles, Chicago, Denver, New York, El Paso, San Diego, and many other US cities demonstrated the emergence of undocumented workers from the shadows to demand recognition for the hard labor they provide. These popular mobilizations reject the criminalization, racialization, and marginalization that often shape the lives of Mexicans in contemporary US society.

In Chapter 5, we chart the effects of backlash and retrenchment on the Mexican immigrant community residing in the US and consider the changes that came with the implementation of the 1986 IRCA and the expansion of the H-2 program into three new temporary worker visa classes—H-2A, H-2B, and H-1B (see Chapter 5, p. 94–96). Neoliberals

have orchestrated what Hall (1988) calls the “great moving right show” toward laissez-faire economics, minimal government, and social conservatism. The ascendancy of the Radical Right in the US was ushered in by the 1980 presidential election of Ronald Reagan, who earlier prided himself on consuming table grapes in press conferences at the height of the labor battles between California growers and the UFW. Reagan’s transformation from well-intentioned Hollywood liberal and labor leader (as former president of the Screen Actors Guild) to ultraconservative big business champion and subtle hate-monger of minorities set the stage for the political scene in California and nationwide. As a result of Reaganism—a specific political expression of US neoliberalism—the limited gains of the civil rights era have been under constant threat of rollback. The last 25 years of political backlash and retrenchment are strongly felt by low-income minority communities.

Chapter Three

Farmworker Civil Rights Movement / *El Movimiento Campesino*

The struggle in the fields for farmworker civil rights invokes images familiar to many: the black eagle flag of the United Farm Workers (UFW), its charismatic leaders César Chávez and Dolores Huerta, and its philosophy of non-violent resistance. During the civil rights era, the UFW became the symbol for Mexican Americans who collectively struggled to relinquish their second-class citizenship. The UFW trade journal, *El Malcriado* describes the vision of the labor/civil rights movement as follows:

The only way that poor farmworkers can ever beat the rich growers, and to make the rich ranchers pay good wages, is if all farmworkers get together in one big union. That is why the National Farm Workers Association ... and AWOC [Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee] joined together into one big union. We are now stronger than ever. The union now has thousands of members in California, Texas, Florida, Arkansas, Michigan, Oregon, and other states. And we are a union for all farmworkers, for Whites and Negroes, for Mexicans, and Puerto Ricans, and Filipinos. The growers have already tried to play off one group against another, to keep us divided and weak. But now we are gaining unity through our union, a union just for farmworkers, where farmworkers elect their leaders, where the leaders are also farmworkers. (UFW 1966, 12–13)

Designed from its inception as an interracial coalition of agricultural workers, the UFW viewed growers as the target for their ire, rather than racial groups that it claimed growers pitted against them. Yet, in the same issue of *El Malcriado* as the quote above, a full-page advertisement entitled

"Rotten Deals in Tomatoes: Government Gives Away Our Jobs" noticeably restricts the expansive definition of who was welcomed by the UFW:

Over 6,000 Mexican Braceros will start work in California's labor harvest this week. That means more people competing for fewer jobs. It means lower wages for all. And it is possible that this crime against the farmworkers will get bigger. Growers want 13,000 more braceros for tomato[e]s and 25,000 for other crops.

The Bracero Program was ENDED by Congress two years ago.... The growers pay lousy wages, refuse to sign a contract, and turn local workers away. THEN they scream for Braceros. They know they can pay Braceros less, since \$1 in US money equals \$12 in Mexican money. The Bracero Program is just one more weapon which the growers use to beat us down and keep us poor. (UFW 1966, 18)

The ad goes on to explain that the competing labor union for farmworkers, the Teamsters, supports a temporary worker program because of its sweetheart dealings with growers.

Clearly the UFW did not consider Braceros as "workers" — or at the very least not "our workers"; they are characterized in the ad as simply a weapon in the growers' arsenal. The organized labor divide between Mexican Americans and Mexican immigrants, as Chicano historian David Gutierrez (1995) aptly notes, highlights that common ancestry is a tenuous link when labor, border, citizenship, and assimilation pressures are all operating. The UFW's actions represent some of the most positive successes for Mexicans residing in the US and some of the worst ways in which the Mexican-origin population is divided by excluding immigrant workers. As the UFW came to seriously consider the challenges offered by fellow Mexican American organizations, its organizing strategy eventually shifted to an organizing *sin fronteras* (without borders) approach.

Agricultural labor organization and strikes for recognition and protection of rights can be seen as early victories of Mexicans residing in the US.¹ Mexican migrant workers organized in spite of countless attempts at marginalization and at relegating those of Mexican ancestry to the dustbins of, at best, second-class citizenship if not total exclusion. Early, persistent attempts at organizing for better wages and working conditions, coalition building with other racialized groups, and overcoming frequent rebukes from organized labor and Wobblies (Industrial Workers of the World communist organizers) stand as a testament to the tenacity of those most often viewed as "unorganizable."

If the UFW organized at the most distant margins of organized labor, it is more than a little ironic that the AFL-CIO (American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations) today most often uses "immigrant rights = labor rights = civil rights" as their rallying cry since it historically viewed labor rights as belonging only to White male citizens, even during the time of the initial UFW successes. The UFW itself was not immune from exclusionary practices in the beginning. We will discuss the 180-degree turn of the UFW and its willingness to organize and represent the Braceros of today as symbolized by the Global Horizons contract, which allows it to provide a grievance procedure and collective bargaining agent for temporary H-2A workers (primarily Thai immigrants; Global Horizons brings workers to the US from all over the globe, including Mexico).

In the Midwest, the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) was initially inspired by the UFW but has moved beyond the union's shadow to register landmark contracts and organizing that most often goes unnoticed or underappreciated. FLOC's negotiation of a third-party contract with Campbell Soup and Midwest tomato growers is in many ways novel as a collective bargaining strategy. Its recent boycott of Mount Olive Pickle Company in North Carolina (subsequently expanding to the North Carolina Growers' Association) and the resultant multi-party contract that represents H-2A temporary visa workers established the precedent for the UFW's contract with Global Horizons.

In the swamps of South Florida's Everglades, some of the most important organizing efforts are not union-affiliated but grassroots in origin and global in reception. Applying the lessons learned from the power of consumer boycotts, grassroots organizing, and building a broad base of church and student support, the recent campaigns and truth tours against Taco Bell and McDonald's by the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) are testaments to the power of resistance movements as the motors of progressive social change.

UFW, Global Horizons, and H-2A Workers

Against seemingly insurmountable odds, the UFW has come to represent the larger struggle of the racialized and economically marginalized Mexican American population. Nowhere were Mexican Americans more marginalized than in the fields as migrant workers. Every time the UFW registered a win against wealthy White growers, the "*si se puede*" or "yes we can" rally cry, or *grito*, was a call to all Mexican American activists who saw

their struggles as intertwined with the farmworker struggle. The institutional legacies of the UFW's struggle in the fields and a recent campaign represent a major attempt at addressing the previous limitations of the union in the contemporary era of global capital, transnational temporary workforces, and Global Horizons. The UFW's role in this turnaround is represented in a little-known contract engineered in 2006 with Global Horizons, a labor contractor that works with growers and other companies to bring in a pool of laborers under the various temporary visa work programs administered by the US government.

In 2004 Global Horizons brought agricultural workers from Thailand to Washington State under the H-2A program (see Chapter 5, p. 94–96) to harvest the apple crop. According to the UFW, work conditions the following year were terrible:

According to the WA Dept of Health, these [167 Thai] workers were forced to live in outrageously crowded, unsanitary conditions — with only 21 beds for 45 people at one location, no cooking facilities at multiple locations, and workers were forced to wash their clothes in trash cans. Additionally, some of the Thai workers were told by officials that they weren't receiving pay stubs and that money deducted from their paychecks to be sent back home never arrived.²

The UFW had been committed to organizing apple workers in Washington for over 20 years but had had little success. When growers began to use a third-party labor contractor, Global Horizons, the UFW monitored its actions, using as precedent FLOC's negotiation for union representation of H-2A workers employed by the North Carolina Growers' Association. FLOC's initial focus was on the Mount Olive Pickle Company and its exploitative treatment of H-2A workers from Mexico, but the campaign spread when it became clear that a third-party contract with Mount Olive — which was not the direct employer of labor because its pickles are grown by contracted growers — would not follow the earlier pattern the union had established with Campbell Soup in Ohio. Therefore, the focus spread to the North Carolina Growers' Association, allowing for a much more expansive representation system across particular crops or industries. According to the UFW's website, "The United Farm Workers of America and Global Horizons signed the first nationwide union contract protecting agricultural guest workers. Global Horizons is one of America's largest suppliers of imported foreign farmworkers, operating in dozens of

states" (UFW 2006). Rather than securing a contract with a grower association, the UFW targeted the labor contractor and was successful due to the clearly horrendous conditions that Global Horizons created in the employment of H-2A workers.

The plight of farmworkers today is much the same as it was during the Bracero Program. The undocumented status of a large number of farmworkers leaves them at an extreme disadvantage *vis-à-vis* growers, since the threat of deportation is very real and is at times carried out. Capitalist-labor relations can best be described as coercive, and the state's role has been particularly one-sided. As much as growers bemoan state interventionism in the form of portable toilets and clean drinking water in the fields, the contemporary reality is that state intrusion into agricultural class relations most often results in favor of growers. The abolition of *el cortito* (short-handled hoe) due to legal action (Murray 1982), the requirement of employer verification of citizenship status, explicit rules regulating pesticide application procedures, and the short-lived successes of the Agricultural Labor Relations Board (ALRB) of California are often cited as examples of worker victories.

In spite of these gains, the arduous nature of manual labor and meager pay for Mexican migratory workers has not been significantly altered by legal protections. Due to lack of state enforcement, growers disregard many laws that are intended to protect workers. The California ALRB is now firmly in the hands of those pursuing growers' interests, thanks to Republican governors Deukmejian, Wilson, and Schwarzenegger. Piecemeal gains in the interests of workers have had very little impact on

United Farm Workers (UFW)

The farmworkers' movement was more than simply a collective bargaining agent. The union's formation and its activities became part of a larger civil rights movement for Chicanos,⁴ but it probably had its largest impact on subsequent movements. It was not until the rise of the UFW that farmworkers were able to call a union their own and see tangible results from organizing, boycotting, and strike efforts. In terms of public consciousness, the UFW succeeded by bringing the plight of migrant farmworkers into the everyday lives and conversations of the US citizenry. With their boycott of California table grape growers and supermarket chains, the march to Sacramento, and Chávez's hunger strike, the UFW became part of a much larger movement for social justice.

the capitalist agricultural labor process, so picking grapes, strawberries, and oranges in 1948 is not so different from picking those same crops in 2008. The labor struggles beyond factory farms will be discussed in the next chapter with an eye to how those efforts are improving the quality of work and life for Mexican laborers.³

Against All Odds: FLOC⁵

When the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) was formed in 1967, it appeared that founder Baldemar Velásquez would ride the tide of farmworker organizing that was sweeping the nation and create in effect a sister union to the California-based UFW for Midwestern farm laborers. Conditions for farmworkers in the Midwest were markedly difficult from the very onset, but FLOC always seemed to secure the most innovative labor contracts under some of the most seemingly impossible circumstances. The first weapon at FLOC's disposal was the strike. In Northwest Ohio, migrant farmworkers are recruited primarily to pick tomatoes and cucumbers (for pickles). The first wave of strikes in 1968 quickly led to contracts with 33 growers who worried that their perishable tomato crop would wither on the vines without the labor to pick it. But those contracts were fleeting as growers switched to less labor-intensive crops and mounted a successful anti-FLOC media campaign in the ensuing years. Some of their criticisms reflected the very real contradictory position into which growers were forced between the food processors they supplied and the workers calling for better wages. Growers "claimed that their own ability to provide wages, housing, and other benefits were governed by the prices paid by the large food-processing corporations" (Barger and Reza 1994, 58).

Not deterred but definitely delayed by supplier and processor tactics, FLOC reorganized efforts and eventually mounted their second tactic, a consumer boycott against the beneficiaries of the area's cheap tomatoes and pickles: Campbell Soup (who owned Vlasic Pickles), Libby, Heinz, and Dean Foods. The food processors quickly passed the buck on labor relations to growers. Because they did not directly employ the migrants, the standard corporate line was that they could not interfere in collective bargaining agreements. Skillfully, FLOC pointed to the mechanization of the tomato harvest, the requirement that growers who supplied tomatoes must use the company-owned seedlings, and the contract arrangement at the beginning of each growing cycle that predetermined costs and crop

yield returns as evidence that food processor decisions had a direct impact on labor relations between growers and migrants. As a result, the first third-party contract in labor history (including growers, workers, and Campbell Soup) was signed in 1985. This occurred at a time when agricultural labor was exempt from National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) and minimum wage protections. The third-party contract states that a mutually recognized commission would arbitrate labor-relations matters and that Campbell recognized the freedom of association of tomato and cucumber growers in Ohio and Michigan that would "specifically participate in representation proceedings and collective bargaining" with FLOC (Barger and Reza 1994, 79).

The boycott of Campbell Soup, the main beneficiary of tomatoes grown by Midwest growers, began in 1979 and included informational pickets, strikes that closed down production, church group vigils, a well-coordinated consumer boycott, and a hunger strike led by Velásquez. The first major boycott waged by FLOC, Campbell Soup (tomatoes) eventually involved over 1 million consumers and support for picketing workers primarily from local church groups and some of American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) and Communication Workers of America (CWA) locals.

One of the main reasons for including cucumber workers was the further debasing of workers' rights. Many pickle growers employed sharecropping as the main mode of cucumber picking to skirt income tax, child labor laws, minimum wage requirements, and any employee benefits. In addition, the risks were displaced to the sharecropper whose eventual pay depended on the particular yield. What do tomatoes and pickles have to do with each other? The answer is related both to the horizontal integration of large food-processing conglomerates and the migrant stream that brings Mexican farmworkers to Indiana, Ohio, Michigan, and Illinois. Companies that rely on tomatoes for soup, juice, and catsup are the same companies, or subsidiaries of these companies, that control the pickle market. Additionally, the Midwest migrant stream is usually sequenced so that workers move north in the spring or early summer to pick cucumbers when they are still small and fresh and then move on to the tomato harvest. Aware of both factors, FLOC's organizing base started with tomato workers, but on any given week a tomato worker may also be a cucumber picker, or truck crop harvester, or blueberry picker.

A consumer boycott and strike of H.J. Heinz resulted in a three-year,

third-party contract signed in June 1987. In November 1991, after a successful organizing campaign in the migrants' home bases of Texas and Florida, FLOC represented workers entered into a contract with Dean Foods, and thus the vast majority of the Midwest pickle market was producing union-harvested pickles. But there is a major drawback to the third-party contracts. "The ad hoc and voluntary understanding depends primarily on the parties' good will and acceptance of the document as a binding contract. Workers have no legal protection when they organize or seek to bargain collectively, nor are there any mechanisms for government protection or enforcement of contract terms except for the possibility of civil litigation for breach of contract" (Edid 1994, 59).

Interestingly, the national AFL-CIO has provided absolutely no financial support to FLOC even though FLOC is affiliated to it and did not break ranks when the Change To Win (CTW) left (see below). For its most recent organizing campaign of North Carolina's temporary visa holders or H-2A workers, FLOC was on its own. The Mount Olive pickle boycott began as an extension of strategies deployed by FLOC in Ohio and Michigan. A right-to-work state, North Carolina has a very long history of squelching labor discontent and busting unions. Undeterred, FLOC utilized the previous strategies of consumer boycotts, picket lines, and church group support to force the Mount Olive Pickle Company into negotiations. The local, community-friendly image that Mount Olive portrayed was recast by FLOC as a crisis within the family farm—not growers vs. workers per se, but growers and workers vs. agribusiness. What was different in the North Carolina organizing attempt was the temporary status of the migrant farmworkers. Mount Olive was following a trend of other North Carolina agricultural producers by increasingly employing temporary visa holders under the auspices of the H-2A program, thus hiring Mexican migrants for short-term contracts.

In the early 1990s, Florida's US Sugar, Montana shepherders, and the New England Apple Council were the main employers of H-2A temporary agricultural workers. Most growers complained that the program was too cumbersome, due to the several requirements they must adhere to when employing H-2A workers, that is, respecting prevailing wages and providing code-compliant housing, at-cost meals, and worker's compensation insurance. Most agricultural employers preferred the less bureaucratic option—employing undocumented workers. But in North Carolina, the H-2A program was the most recent attempt at solving a perennial labor

shortage problem as first African American sharecroppers then Caribbean immigrants left the fields for better options. Currently, though no data are published or publicly available, FLOC reports that the vast majority of North Carolina's H-2A workers are Mexican migrants. It was this immigration law context that further complicated FLOC negotiations with the Mount Olive Pickle Company.

There are no legal provisions protecting temporary visa holders' right to organize. Yet the shared status as temporary workers proved to be a major bonus to FLOC as the H-2A workers' shared social situations meant that FLOC could spread its net more widely to encompass all employers of H-2A labor in North Carolina. The breakthrough happened on September 16, 2004. The third-party contract includes Mount Olive Pickle Company (processor), FLOC (union), and the North Carolina Growers' Association (growers), which is used by a plethora of growers to minimize expenses and jointly apply to the US Department of Labor for workers. The FLOC agreement includes tobacco workers, pickle workers, and all other industries whose growers are affiliated with the North Carolina Growers' Association. FLOC's most important duties are to register grievances in the recruitment center in Monterrey, Mexico, and maintain seniority lists for returnees. FLOC has successfully documented worker abuses, recouped lost wages, and provided a collective voice for North Carolina's more than 10,000 H-2A workers. All of FLOC's activities have been performed by an extremely small, dedicated, and chronically underpaid or voluntary staff. The dangers associated with challenging the *enganchadores* system were made apparent when FLOC organizer and compliance officer, Santiago Rafael Cruz, was murdered in the Monterrey office on April 9, 2007. FLOC workers' activities and sacrifices are a testament to the power of the few to take on the most powerful.

Fighting Goliath with Pennies, Students, and Faith: The Coalition of Immokalee Workers⁶

In the heart of South Florida's Everglades, a small farming community has taken on international significance in demonstrating the power of a small and determined group of farmworkers to force concessions from one of the giants of the fast-food industry—the less recognized Yum! Brands. The Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) was founded in 1993 when workers began to meet to discuss the shared labor conditions in the tomato fields that surround the largest farmworker community in Florida. The

US Census calculates that 71 per cent of Immokalee's nearly 20,000 residents are Latino. Almost 60 per cent self-identify as Mexican, but the CIW calculates the breakdown as 50 per cent Mexican, 30 per cent Guatemalan, 10 per cent Haitian, and 10 per cent other ethnicities.⁷ The discrepancy is related to the undocumented status of many of the farmworkers and the fear of deportation. The Guatemalan population has learned what many Central American and South American immigrants have realized: it's better to say to government officials that one is from Mexico as the deportation and return trip distance is reduced and significantly less complicated.

The Census 2000 data on Immokalee reveal an abysmal situation. The rate of housing rentals (62.2 per cent), educational attainment (76 per cent have not earned a high-school diploma and only 2.5 per cent have a college education), per capita median income (\$8,576), and individuals below the poverty line (39.8 per cent) all point to a community with seemingly few resources to take on a multinational corporation like Taco Bell's parent Yum! Brands, but that is exactly what the residents of Immokalee have done. "Immokalee, Fla., is home to the Six L's Packing Company, Inc., where predominately immigrant farmworkers are paid from 35 to 45 cents for every 32-pound bucket of tomatoes they pick. They are paid about \$7,500 annually. They don't have health insurance, sick leave, paid holidays or vacations, or a pension" (Critzon 2004, 618).

The initial campaign was very small and had no intention of solving every social problem in Immokalee. Rather, the demand was for one penny per pound of tomatoes picked. The logic was that a wealthy corporation could easily afford one cent per pound more to bring workers out of dire poverty to at least a minimum, though not a living, wage. "The workers wish for Taco Bell to pay 1 cent more for each pound of tomatoes they buy from the Six L's. This would nearly double the farmworkers' annual pay to about \$14,000 and would cost the consumer about one-fourth of a penny more for a Chulupa" (Critzon 2004, 619). CIW's campaign involved church congregations, students, truth tours, skillful use of Internet communications, a hunger strike on the steps of the corporate headquarters, and the framing of workers' demands in human rights terms. On March 8, 2005, Yum! Brands agreed to the penny per pound proposal, and the Immokalee area growers (Six L's, Pacific, Collier, Nobles, and Gargiulo) agreed to pass that along to workers' wages.

Of course, this success is limited as it means that Immokalee workers are now making poverty-level wages and still have no benefits. However,

the incremental improvement from farmworker wages and living conditions to working-poor wages and conditions is a step in the right direction. Further, the victory in the Taco Bell campaign is precedent-setting because the corporation has taken responsibility for the wages of subcontracted workers down its supply chain. The CIW has reorganized its efforts and energies by taking on McDonald's, Burger King, Whole Foods grocery stores, and the Bon Appétit foodservice company. In cooperation with the Presbyterian Church (USA), Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Center for Human Rights, National Economic and Social Rights Initiative, and Student/Farmworker Alliance Interfaith Action, the CIW founded the Alliance for Fair Food,⁸ a broad-based coalition of food advocates, religious organizations, unions, faith-based organizations, community groups, student/youth groups, and human rights organizations (e.g., Food First, Pax Cristi, AFL-CIO, CTW, United Students Against Sweatshops, and Amnesty International).

One of the CIW's tools is the truth tour, first used to challenge Taco Bell and now McDonald's and Burger King. Building on coalitions with congregations and university student activists, truth tours are designed to personalize the working and living conditions in Immokalee while juxtaposing the farmworkers' poverty status to the opulent displays of wealth by owners of the fast-food industry. The one penny per pound campaign is designed as a first stage in making visible the obscured supply chain that links fast-food consumers to the exploitation of farmworkers.

The CIW has a particular flare for the dramatic, first by targeting the fast-food chain that supplies US citizens with Mexican fast food, highlighting the fact that the Mexican workers who provided the tomatoes for Taco Bell's tacos were not paid enough to order from the 99-cent menu. They have also targeted a brand that is part of a much larger conglomerate, the largest restaurant corporation in the world, which includes Pizza Hut, Long John Silvers, KFC, and A&W. Consolidated and owned by the Pepsi Corporation, PepsiCo spun off its fast-food industries under the Yum! Brands but still has the controlling interest in the publicly traded corporation. The food purchaser, Unified Foodservice Purchasing Co-op (UFPC), while portraying itself as an independent cooperative, supplies all of the Yum! restaurant lines. "Taco Bell currently purchases all the fresh tomatoes for its corporate-owned and franchise restaurants (about 40 million pounds annually) through UFPC. In Florida, UFPC obtains its fresh tomatoes through a single broker who purchases directly from five or six different growers" (Oxfam 2004, 29).

Different from other labor campaigns, the boycott of Taco Bell was most prominently organized and carried out by university students at their college campuses and surrounding communities. The most successful boycott occurred on the University of California Los Angeles campus where students forced the termination of Taco Bell's contract at the student union. Boycotts were less directly organized by CIW staffers as their outreach was often limited to the truth tours that galvanized support for the cause. A multi-pronged, diffuse set of tactics led to the eventual pressure on Taco Bell to take corporate responsibility for enacting the penny per pound pass-through. Negotiations were aided by visible support from various individuals such as Ethel Kennedy, United Nations High Commissioner on Human Rights; former president of Ireland Mary Robinson and former US president Jimmy Carter; members of the music group Rage Against the Machine; actor Martin Sheen; *Fast Food Nation* author Eric Schlosser; and the Progressive and Hispanic Congressional Caucuses.

Another unique aspect of the CIW campaign is their framing the plight of Immokalee's farmworkers as first and foremost a human rights issue. Growers in Florida have a very long legacy of harsh mistreatment of workers. At their most extreme, they rely on labor conditions that meet both the common sense and legal definitions of slavery. The sugar industry in Florida was notorious for trapping foreign workers into debt peonage where any wages earned were retained by companies such as US Sugar to cover housing, boarding, or transportation costs. Well into the twenty-first century, slavery is still alive and well in Florida, according to the CIW website:

In 2002, three Florida-based agricultural employers convicted in federal court on slavery, extortion, and weapons charges were sentenced to a total of nearly 35 years in prison and the forfeiture of \$3 million in assets. The men, who employed over 700 farmworkers, threatened workers with death if they were to try to leave, and pistol-whipped and assaulted—at gunpoint—passenger van service drivers who gave rides to farmworkers leaving the area.⁹

The CIW anti-slavery campaign consists of a legal arm, which investigates cases and provides legal assistance to the enslaved, and a human rights arm called the "Freedom Network Training Institute on Human Trafficking," which trains state and federal law enforcement and social service personnel in the Southeastern US to recognize and assist enslaved people. It also includes a public information arm that holds corporations

like Taco Bell publicly accountable for unjustly profiting from suppliers that utilize slave labor.

The CIW operates with other Mexican immigrant-led organizations such as Centro Comunitario Juan Diego (Chicago), Centro de Trabajadores Agrícolas (El Paso), La Mujer Obrera (El Paso), and the North Carolina Farmworkers Project and is affiliated with the Poverty Scholars Program of the Poverty Initiative at Union Theological Seminary (New York). They join in the effort to re-ignite Dr. Martin Luther King's Poor People's Campaign to raise up generations of religious and community leaders dedicated to building a movement to end poverty led by the poor, as a social force united and organized across color lines. In the process, they work with poor people's organizations across the country that use the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to demand rights to food, housing, health, education, communication, and a living-wage job. In contrast to organizations that advocate for poor people, that work to ameliorate conditions of poverty, or that organize only among one racial or ethnic group, this is an emerging effort to unite the poor of every race, religion, community, and occupation so as to build and lead a broader and more powerful movement to end poverty altogether.

Conclusion

One cannot underestimate the inspirational effect of the UFW and FLOC in making another world both conceivable and achievable. The CIW's campaign against Taco Bell, its annual truth tours, and the significant church and university student support for the cause have resulted in a major labor victory for an organization that is not union-affiliated. FLOC's utilization of third-party contracts similarly relied upon church groups for publicizing workplace conditions and leading boycotts to publicize the supply chains that rely upon exploited Mexican immigrant labor to turn tomatoes into Campbell's soup and cucumbers into Mount Olive pickles. In Washington, the deleterious working conditions facing Thai immigrants allowed the UFW, in collaboration with state agencies, to end the exploitative working conditions fostered by labor contractor Global Horizons. After years of unsuccessful organizing in the Washington apple industry, the result was UFW representation of the state's H-2A temporary visa workers.

As agribusiness develops "factories in the field" in every region of the US (and increasingly in Canada and Southern Mexico), the large-scale demand for short-term labor leads to a rise in the usage of the H-2A

temporary visa program as well as a larger proportion of immigrant workers without papers filling the bottom rungs of the agricultural ladder. Rather than moving up the ladder, most Mexican immigrants find employment options beyond agriculture as their sole means of economic mobility. As capitalist firms vertically integrate their supply chains, the agri-food system is defined by increased monopolization, increased labor exploitation, and minimal safeguards for workers. Since they work as temporary visa holders in a continuation of the Bracero Program, workers face many of the same restrictions (their bonding to particular employers, lack of voice in working and living conditions, and lack of enforcement of worker rights) in the H-2A program.

The allies of organized labor and grassroots organizations are fighting along with immigrant workers for their rights along several dimensions. Seniority hiring lists, worker grievance procedures, enforcement of wage and working conditions, and increased wages are central outcomes of a broader community organizing model that links workers to one another and puts them in charge of their union and/or organization. The most successful campaign to increase workers' wages with the penny-pass-through agreement was organized by a non-union affiliated organization by and for immigrants. These trends toward grassroots organizing and non-union affiliated labor organizing by Mexican immigrants are the topics of the next chapter.

Notes

1. The history of both farm labor organizing and Saul Alinsky's Community Service Organizations are two important precursors to the UFW that merit attention beyond the scope of this chapter. The history of Mexican farm labor organizing includes impressive gains, including the 1903 victory of the Japanese-Mexican Labor Association in Oxnard, the El Monte Berry strike of 1933 that led to the first collectively bargained wage gains, the union win of better wages and working conditions against the cantaloupe growers of California's Imperial Valley, and the organizing of the pecan shellers' union in Texas. It also includes repression—the treatment of the Wobblies (International Workers of the World) as subversives, repression of the Wheatland riot by the National Guard, and various local police efforts at ending strikes. The 1938 pecan shellers' strike with the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing, and Allied Workers of America (UCAPAWA) was crucial but led to the disintegration of UCAPAWA and an important lesson in labor history as it coincided

with the red-baiting practices of the McCarthy era, the consolidation of the AFL and CIO, the presence of the Communist Party in US labor politics, and the difficulty of sustaining a multi-racial union in Jim Crow segregationist times.

The drive for union representation of migrant farmworkers was always ancillary to the industrial labor movement. Fringe unions, such as the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, attempted to organize in the fields under the leadership of Ernesto Galarza and the National Farm Labor Union (NFLU). Recruitment was limited strictly to US citizens and was based on US labor laws, so many immigrant workers were automatically excluded from joining the ranks. In 1959, the AFL-CIO finally took an active interest in organizing farm workers and funded the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee (AWOC). Unfortunately, AWOC seemed to be designed, according to Ernesto Galarza (1970), to replace the NFLU, and the union infighting assured its eventual failure in recruiting workers and improving conditions.

Several factors contributed to the failure of Mexican agricultural worker unionization before the mid-twentieth century. Besides the prevalent racism of organized labor and American society at the time, a lack of commitment by the labor movement, unjust labor laws that excluded farmworkers from protections, and a vicious state/corporate agricultural industry alliance all thwarted the unionization of Mexican farmworkers (Sanchez 1993; Gutierrez 1995; Mooney and Majka 1995; Guerin-Gonzales 1996). On top of the latter obstacles, key to the lack of success was the un-organic nature of these organizing drives (Ganz 2000; Mooney and Majka 1995, 130).

2. See UFW's Global Horizons-UFW Chronology, http://www.ufw.org/_page.php?menu=organizing&inc=keycampaign/globalhorizons/GHchron.htm.
3. Mize sought employment in the agricultural fields of Fresno County in 1997 that allowed him to understand contemporary working conditions first-hand.
4. Chicano is a term of group identification that was adopted during the Mexican American civil rights movement of the 1960s.
5. This section on FLOC benefited greatly from Mize's supervision of an undergraduate student's paper written for Cornell's Latino Studies Program Farmworkers course taught by Professor Ray Craib. Thanks to Erin ImHof for her efforts in documenting FLOC's experiences with H-2A worker organizing.
6. This section benefited greatly from Mize's supervision of an exemplary American Studies honors thesis written by Kristyn Walker.
7. See <http://www.ciw-online.org>.
8. See <http://www.allianceforfairfood.org>.
9. See <http://www.ciw-online.org>.