

The Council of Churches in Southern California  
1411 West Olympic Boulevard - Suite 501  
Los Angeles 90015  
386-8130  
Miss Rasmussen

April 6, 1966

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Asking the constituent denominations "to send delegations to Sacramento" on Easter weekend to join the culminating arrival of the Delano grape marchers, the Executive Committee of the Council of Churches in Southern California today called the march "a symbol of the many years of humiliation and suffering" of the farm workers, but also "of the new courage" and the "farm workers' continuing hope in the democratic process "

Dr. Forrest C. Weir, the Council's chief executive, said that "this statement was made both in the context of Holy Week in which the theme of suffering anywhere is lifted to divine concern, and in the awareness of the new and hopeful conversations beginning between employers and their workers Our hope, naturally, is for the increase of reconciliation, and to that end our staff in the California Migrant Ministry will continue their efforts "

The complete statement adopted today follows

"The farm workers of Delano are approaching the end of their three hundred mile pilgrimage to Sacramento Their march is a symbol of many years of humiliation and suffering, it is also symbolic of new courage and of the farm workers' continuing hope in the democratic process as they lay their cause on the conscience of the Governor and the people of this State. The pilgrimage is religious in tone and dignified in execution.

"In this week of our Lord's anguish and crucifixion it is most appropriate for Christians to identify with the sufferings of their brother farm workers and to join them in their pilgrimage We, the Executive Committee of the Council of Churches in Southern California, urge our constituent denominations to send delegations to

MORE

Sacramento this weekend to join the workers, representatives of national denominational and interdenominational bodies and the thousands of friends of farm workers who will be gathered there. We also urge the Governor of our State to acknowledge the significance of the farm labor movement and the seriousness of this social crisis in agriculture by meeting with the delegation upon their arrival in Sacramento."

# # # # #

# National & Area Denominational Leaders

- 1 Rev. ~~Vern~~ Vern Rossman - Disciples Church - Indianapolis, Ind.
- 2 Rev. Ira A. Paternosta - " " " " " "
- 3 Rev. Ralph T. Palmer - " " " " " "
- 4 Rev. D. Schubert Frye - United Presbyterian USA - New York  
(Also representing Dr. Kenneth Neigh  
Dr. Bryant George

Rev. Louis Mitchell - American Baptist - Valley Forge  
 5. Rev. Arthur

5. Rev. B. Noel Shelan - Meth. Bd. of Christian Social  
 Concerns - So. California & Arizona

6. Mrs. Vincent Coletta - President - United Church  
 Women - So. Calif. & Nevada

? Bill Hervey  
 PIC Arthur Kent  
 Powell (Also representing National United Ch. Women)  
 Ernie Hoffman  
 Chip & Mrs. Hartman  
 Mrs. Campbell pres - (P)

7. Has been here but had to leave - Rev. Arthur  
 Kent - Meth. Bd. of Christian Social  
 Concerns - So. Cal. & Arizona

Lee Wipple - Ch. of Brethren Elgin, Ill.

SERVICE OF WORSHIP  
EASTER SUNDAY

Invitation to worship: (The minister)

Confession of sin (Together)            O Lord, holy and righteous God,  
we acknowledge before thee that we do not fear thee and that we do not  
love thee above all things. We do not delight in prayer, nor take pleasure  
in thy Word. We do not really love our neighbor; we lack the conscience  
that should accompany our Christian calling. Our hearts are divided,  
crossed by doubts and guilty desires. We accuse ourselves before thee, O  
God, we implore thee, whose nature and whose name is love, to forgive  
us, and in forgiving, to heal us so that in our lives something will  
finally be changed. AMEN

Words of Assurance: (The minister)

The Gloria Patri (Together)

The reading of the scriptures (a collection for Easter)

Hymn: Were You There When They Crucified My Lord? (Together)

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?  
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?  
Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble;  
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Were you there when they nailed Him to the tree? .....

Were you there when they pierced him in the side? .....

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb? .....

Were you there on that resurrection morn?.....

The Easter Message: Suffering for freedom. (The minister)

Hymn: Jesus Christ is risen today!

Jesus Christ is risen today, Al-le-lu-ia  
Our triumphant holy day, Al-le-lu-ia  
Who did once, upon the cross, Al-le-lu-ia  
Suffer to redeem our loss, Al-le-lu-ia!

Hymns of praise then let us sing.....  
Unto Christ our heavenly King.....  
Who endured the cross and grave....  
Sinners to redeem and save....

Sing we to our God above....  
Praise eternal as his love....  
Praise him, all ye heavenly host,.....  
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.....

Benediction (The minister)

4-13-12-113-C

April 4, 1910

Mr. Cesar E. Chavez  
c/o Dr. Wayne C. Hartmire  
1411 West Olympic Blvd., Suite 501  
Los Angeles, Calif.

The National Executive Committee of United Church Women wishes to express to you and those who march our strong support of the pilgrimage from Delano to Sacramento. Your march will bring nearer the day of dignity and justice not only for the grape workers in California but for farm workers everywhere. We express our gratitude to all on the pilgrimage, and to you for your leadership. As church women we pledge to continue working toward the elimination of those conditions which make this march necessary.

Edna Sinclair, President  
United Church Women

cc/Dr. Wayne C. Hartmire  
Mrs. Charles E. Smith  
Mrs. Vincent Colatta  
M. Shannon  
E. Sinclair



# national council of the churches of christ in the u s a

475 RIVERSIDE DRIVE

new york, n y 10027

bishop reuben h mueller, president

r h edwin espy, general secretary

April 1, 1966

## Statement ~~ON~~ Delano Grape Workers Strike

by Arthur S. Flemming, First Vice President, National Council of Churches  
In the absence from the country of Bishop Reuben H Mueller, President of  
the National Council of Churches who is in Vietnam this Easter season  
visiting the American troops, the following statement is issued

The National Council of Churches responds affirmatively to the pleas for basic human rights and justice which arise today from the agricultural fields of California as represented in the strike of the Delano grape pickers and in the pilgrimage to Sacramento

The issues at stake in this struggle are issues upon which the National Council of Churches has a clear and firm position. For many years the Council has been on record in support of the right of all workers to organize and to bargain collectively with their employers. [Our General Board has specifically called for the extension to farm workers of the rights and privileges accorded to other workers under the National Labor Relations Act]

Wage rates for farm workers in California, although admittedly better than those paid in many other parts of the country, are still deplorably low in comparison with the wages of other workers in the economy and in relation to the costs of living today. [In view of the reluctance of employers to grant voluntary wage increases, it is our conviction that organization and collective bargaining are essential to the winning of justice, with dignity, by agricultural workers]

[Since we understand these to be the central issues, the National Council of Churches welcomes the initiative taken by the workers who have formed the National Farm Workers Association and those who have joined the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee. We declare our support of the objectives for which the strike is being conducted: fair wages, union recognition and collective bargaining]

[We hope and believe that this strike, small in scope but vast in significance, may be the turning point from frustration to victory in the long-thwarted efforts of farm workers and their friends to secure modification of the National Labor Relations Act to make them eligible for orderly collective bargaining processes under the auspices of the National Labor Relations Board. We pledge our efforts to that end]

We commend the courage and vigor of those churchmen and church groups of all faiths on the scene in California who have forthrightly and often at considerable cost identified themselves with the cause of the striking workers. We particularly congratulate the California Migrant Ministry and the state Councils of Churches in California for their strong stand.

We declare our intention to support the continuing efforts of a peaceful and non-violent nature of the workers in the Delano struggle and in similar efforts throughout the nation. We call upon our member communions, through their national, state and local constituencies to consider prayerfully their responsibilities in the light of this situation, and to extend all possible aid and support.

[We reaffirm our intention to join with our brethren in the other faiths in continuing efforts with growers, grower organizations and others in the agricultural industry, (in this particular instance especially the distilling industries), seeking a clear recognition of the plight of seasonal farm workers and their families and searching for solutions which are economically sound and just to all parties involved in the agricultural industry.

4-13-12-113-0

April 4, 1966

Mr. Cesar E. Chavez  
c/o Dr. Wayne C. Hartmire  
1411 West Olympic Blvd.  
Suite 501, Los Angeles, Calif.

The National Executive Committee of United Church Women wishes to express to you and those who march our strong support of the pilgrimage from Delano to Sacramento. Your march will bring nearer the day of dignity and justice not only for the grape workers in California but for farm workers everywhere. We express our gratitude to all on the pilgrimage, and to you for your leadership. As church women we pledge to continue working toward the elimination of those conditions which make this march necessary.

Edna Sinclair, President  
United Church Women

cc/Dr. Wayne C. Hartmire ✓  
Mrs. Charles E. Smith  
Mrs. Vincent Coletta  
M. Shannon  
E. Sinclair



April 1, 1966

National Farm Workers Association  
P O. Box 894  
Delano, California

Dear Friend

The pilgrims of the Delano Grape Strike are approaching Sacramento. In every community they have been met with warmth and hospitality from the farm worker community and the citizens of every city.

The pilgrimage which is being offered in the spirit of penitence with tremendous personal sacrifice of each striker brings to the Capitol of our State the personal message of each farm worker that the time has come for all who seek justice to join and support the pilgrimage in the search for equality.

As Director of the National Farm Workers Association, and on behalf of all farm workers, I wish to extend a special call to you, your organization and other friends of rights thinking to join the pilgrimage in its last week and offer your presence on this pilgrimage as your personal sacrifice to assist the farm workers in their cause.

In keeping with the religious aspect of the pilgrimage and the lenten tradition which is embodied, we would appreciate having only identifying signs or placards that do not have a specific slogan.

Thanking you for your cooperation, I am,

Sincerely yours,

Cesar E. Chavez  
VIVA LA HUELGA - VIVA LA CAUSA

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SCHEDULE OF  
PEREGRINACION - DELANO A SACRAMENTO

Sunday	April 3	Stockton (Rally - San Joaquin & Washington Streets) Assembly point - Washington Square - Same Address
Monday	April 4th	Stockton - Rest day (No marching, no rally)
Tuesday	April 5	Lodi or Acampo
Wednesday	April 6	Thornton
Thursday	April 7	Aldrete Labor Camp - near Courtland on Russel Road. Rally - 6 30 p.m.
Friday,	April 8	Freeport Sports Center - Freeport Good Friday - Stations of the cross on pilgrimage route Rally - 7 00
Saturday	April 9	8 30 a.m. Leave Freeport 4 00 p.m. Arrive Our Lady of Grace School - West Sacramento Linden Rd. and Jefferson Boulevard. 5 00 Dinner 7 00 Rally - Bonfire
Sunday	April 10	a.m. 9 00 Easter Services - Our lady of Grace School 11 00 Procession leaves for Capitol  1 45 p.m Rally at State Capitol 3-45 Capitol for Church - Benediction Candle Procession 7th and T Streets, Light of Eternal Flame Benediction by Bishop 4-00 Fiesta at Southside Park

\* See map on reverse side

( If unable to locate Pilgrimage contact local Police Dept. or Highway Patrol.)

VIVA + LUEIGA

ILWU HALL

Broderick

State Capitol

40  
W SACRAMENTO  
CONDUE

Lady  
Cathedral  
Chapel  
Tst  
11th St

S RIVER Rd

LINDEN Rd

OUR LADY  
OF GRACE  
School

JEFFERSON Blvd

RIVER

South Side  
Park

Freeport

flood

COURTland

HUNTERE LATER  
CAMP

Rd-71  
WAINUT GROVE

Rd-78

Rd-73  
odi

stockton

DOMESTIC SERVICE	
Check the class of service desired otherwise this message will be sent as a fast telegram	
TELEGRAM	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
DAY LETTER	<input type="checkbox"/>
NIGHT LETTER	<input type="checkbox"/>

# WESTERN UNION TELEGRAM

1207 (4 52)

INTERNATIONAL SERVICE	
Check the class of service desired otherwise the message will be sent at the full rate	
FULL RATE	<input type="checkbox"/>
LETTER TELEGRAM	<input type="checkbox"/>
SHORE SHIP	<input type="checkbox"/>

THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CENTRAL SERVICES

Room 1050  
Ext 2556

Date April 5, 1966 Authorized Signature Bryant George/

From Room 1151 of  The General Council  
 The Board of National Missions  
 The Commission  
 Other (designate) \_\_\_\_\_

Charge to (Department) Div. of Church Strategy and Development

Send the following message subject to the terms on back hereof which are hereby agreed to

**SAME TELEGRAM TO THE FOLLOWING:**

Dr. Bernard Montgomery  
2431 H Street  
Sacramento, California

Dr. Roe Johnston  
Lakeside Presby. Church  
19th & Eucalyptus  
San Francisco, California

Dr. Henry Kuisenga  
First Presby. Church  
72 Kensington Rd.  
San Anselmo, California

Dr. Neigh and Dr. Ramage will be represented at the pilgrimage in Sacramento by Dr. Shubert Frye. This telegram is to invite you to join Dr. Frye in this pilgrimage to witness to our belief in collective bargaining for all American workers, good wages and the ability to pull oneself up by one's own efforts.

Bryant George

cc: Dr. Edwin Espy  
Rev. Wayne Hartzire ✓

*h*

DOMESTIC SERVICE	
Check the class of service desired otherwise this message will be sent as a fast telegram	
TELEGRAM	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
DAY LETTER	<input type="checkbox"/>
NIGHT LETTER	<input type="checkbox"/>

# WESTERN UNION TELEGRAM

1207 (4 00)

INTERNATIONAL SERVICE	
Check the class of service desired otherwise the message will be sent at the full rate	
FULL RATE	<input type="checkbox"/>
LETTER TELEGRAM	<input type="checkbox"/>
SHORE SHIP	<input type="checkbox"/>

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 Other (designate) \_\_\_\_\_

Charge to (Department) Division of Church Strategy & Development

Send the following message subject to the terms on back hereof which are hereby agreed to

Rev. Edwin Espy  
Room 804 - NCC  
475 Riverside Drive  
New York, N.Y.

Dr. Kenneth Naigh and Dr. David Ramage will be represented at Sacramento by Dr. Stubert Frye. We are also asking members of our Board and National Missions Field Staff in California to participate in the pilgrimage.

cc: Rev. Wayne Hartaire ✓

Bryant George

/ln

SOME COMMENTS ON THE CHURCH'S INVOLVEMENT  
IN THE DELANO GRAPE STRIKE

By The Rev Wayne C Hartmire, Jr

The Migrant Ministry has been working with seasonal farm workers (migrant and settled) in California for over two decades. Our people know, first-hand, the poverty and humiliation which is part of their daily existence. The 1963 Welfare Study Commission makes this comment: "One occupational group is so deeply locked in poverty that it is set off from all others. The median income of others (seasonal occupational groups) is two to three times that of the farm laborer, whose median income is \$1,940.00." Income and daily wages could be argued for days. But if you spend some time in the San Joaquin Valley it is obvious who is poor and outside. Farm workers and their kids tend to live in inadequate housing on the "undesirable" side of the freeway or the railroad tracks. They are the ones who wait at the county hospital for medical care and at county offices for welfare assistance--not because they enjoy the treatment they receive from public officials, but because they are driven to seek help by their low family income.

Along with low family income and the wrong side of the tracks goes low status in the community. Farm workers and their kids are looked down on by most middle class citizens as "inferior", "lazy", "dirty", "dangerous". They are discriminated against (for reasons of class and/or color) by too many institutions. They tend to be estranged from the mainline Protestant denominations and their local congregations.

The foregoing analysis is assumed by the Migrant Ministry staff. Anyone who doubts it is free to go along with us and observe first-hand the life situation of seasonal farm workers in this Golden State of ours.

The farm workers' situation is unjust and results in untold human suffering. The situation has been with us for a long time. Despite the efforts of the Migrant Ministry, the churches in the main have been silent about the suffering and the injustice. Farm workers tend to look on our churches as part of the middle class power order that intentionally keeps them weak and poor and denies hope to their children. They openly joke about our declarations of brotherhood and love. It is hard for a man who is down, with your foot on his neck, to hear your words about God's love for him. Our deeds make our words a lie and are an enormous barrier to proclaiming the Christian Gospel.

In this context, the Migrant Ministry urges the church to declare by word and deed that farm workers are important people, loved by God and deserving of the respect of men. That message will come through, only as Christians stand with farm workers and act on their behalf. The suffering of farm workers is important to God, Christians should be with them in their suffering. Exploitation of farm workers is important to God, Christians should stand with them and fight that exploitation. And this should be done, not just for the sake of farm workers, but for our own sake and for the sake of growers and other middle class churchmen. We make a hell of our own existence by the way we humiliate our brothers. If the Church will not challenge us at this point, who will?

If farm workers are important people, because they are men and also because they make a significant contribution to an important industry, then they should be re-

cognized as such. When they have grievances, they should be listened to. When their wages are being determined they should sit as equals in the decision-making process. Agricultural employers are organized, powerful and affluent in comparison with their workers. If their workers are to express themselves and receive a fair hearing (i.e., "sit as equals") they must be organized, have independent strength and select their own representatives. It is fundamental to the democratic way of life and essential to justice that workers organize and balance (or check) the power of their employers so that negotiated agreements can be worked out that will serve both parties. Simone Weil in her book Waiting for God puts it this way: "When two human beings (or groups of human beings) have to settle something and neither has the power to impose anything on the other, they have to come to an understanding. Then justice is consulted, for justice alone has the power to make two wills coincide. But when there is a strong and a weak, there is no need to unite their wills. There is only one will, that of the strong. The weak obeys."

Farm workers in Delano are asking for the right to express their grievances through organizations of their own. Their employers are powerful enough to ignore, unilaterally, their request. Instead of bargaining with workers, many of whom have served them faithfully for years, employers are turning their backs on these workers and recruiting outsiders to work in the fields. This is a fundamental injustice. Christians should be willing to say by word and deed: "The workers are important people who should be dealt with as equals." That is what the Migrant Ministry and other churchmen are trying to say by their presence in Delano. So long as growers refuse to recognize independently organized workers then Christians must continue to help the workers be strong and press their employers to bargain. If we are unwilling to do this, then what do we mean when we say to farm workers: "God loves you and his love establishes with finality your worth as a man among men."

Much is said about taking sides. But the Church has been willing to take sides before when justice was at stake. Selma, Alabama and Proposition 13 are only two examples. The cause of the farm workers is just. They have been exploited by us all. They are fighting for dignity for themselves and new opportunity for their children. They are not better people or wiser people, but the quality of their struggle gives them "a righteousness not their own." Christians need to be with them and support their efforts.

This is not to say that Churchmen should be against growers as persons. Rather we must be against an unjust farm labor system and for constructive social change, remembering that there are human beings of worth (and with failings) on both sides.

There is no relevant middle ground on a moral issue that is as clear as the farm workers fight for opportunity and self-respect. Silence and neutrality inevitably become the allies of the established, unjust way of doing things. In his letter from a Birmingham jail Martin Luther King comments on his disappointment with white moderates: "I have almost reached the regrettable conclusion that the Negro's greatest stumbling block in the stride toward freedom (is) the white moderate who is more devoted to 'order' than to justice, who prefers a negative peace which is the absence of tension to a positive peace which is the presence of justice, who constantly says 'I agree with you in the goal you seek, but I can't agree

with your methods of direct action' Shallow understanding from people of good will is more frustrating than absolute misunderstanding from people of ill will

We will have to repent in this generation not merely for the vitriolic words and actions of the bad people but for the appalling silence of the good people We must come to see that human progress never rolls in on wheels of inevitability It comes through the tireless efforts and persistent work of men willing to be coworkers with God, and without this hard work, time itself becomes an ally of the forces of social stagnation "

The Delano grape strike is not primarily a civil rights battle But the issue of human worth is as central in Delano as it was in Selma The basic question remains will men be treated as men - on and off the job - or will man's inhumanity to man continue to cheat men of self-respect and stifle the hopes of children?

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Prepared by  
Wayne C Hartmire, Jr., Director  
California Migrant Ministry  
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