

Fast For Justice - Statement By State & National Religious Leaders
– May 25, 1972

*Phoenix, Arizona
May 25, 1972*

We have come to Phoenix to be with Cesar Chavez during his fast for justice. We come in a spirit of humility because Cesar's sacrifice challenges our own limited response to the pain of the world.

What we have witnessed here is the power of love in the lives of the poorest workers in America. We have seen the love that Cesar Chavez has for his people and we have seen the love that farm workers have for Cesar and for their union. We are more than ever convinced that no amount of political and economic power can stop the non-violent efforts of the United Farm Workers. We intend to support those efforts.

We ask our brothers and sisters in the churches and synagogues of Arizona to consider carefully the content of the recently enacted farm labor bill (House Bill 2134). Viewed from our vantage point it is grossly unjust and should be repealed. We are worried that it will become a model for other states. We are convinced that a body blow to the farm workers union in Arizona is an attack on the aspirations of all farm workers in our nation.

We do not seek strife or polarization in the religious community. But our common Biblical faith demands that we express our concern for the injustice in agriculture, both the threat of the large corporations against the small growers and especially the suffering and deprivation of the workers and their families. After years of hard experience we conclude that farm workers must apply economic pressure on their employers if they are ever to attain justice. The boycott is their most important non-violent method. It is a simple way for each person to help farm workers. We urge all concerned men and women to refrain from eating or buying head (iceberg) lettuce unless it is clearly marked with the United Farm Workers Black Eagle Label.

We have witnessed the strength of Cesar Chavez' spirit, but we are worried about his physical health. We ask all people of good will to pray for him during his fast and for his continuing quest for justice for all farm workers.

Signed

Salvador Alvarez, Div. For Spanish Speaking, U.S. Catholic Conference, San Jose, Ca.
The Rev. Eugene J. Boyle, Natl. Federation of Priests Councils, Chicago, Ill.
The Rev. Francis Colborn, Los Angeles Priests' Committee to Aid Farm Workers

The Rev. Richard Cook, National Farm Worker Ministry, Keene, Ca.

Statement by State & National Religious Leaders

Page two

Phoenix, Arizona

The Rev. Kenneth Dahlstrom, Lutheran Church in America, Los Angeles, Ca.

The Rev. Ben Fraticelli, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), No. Calif.-No. Nevada

The Rev. John Gallagher, Episcopal Diocese of California, San Francisco, Ca. [Oakland]

Phyllis Gifford, Intercontinental Mission, Church Women United, Grand Rapids, MI.

Ruth Gilbert, Board of Missions, United Methodist Church, New York City

Peirce Hammond, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of Friends (Quakers), Philadelphia, Pa.

The Rev. Wayne (Chris) Hartmire, National Farm Worker Ministry, Los Angeles, Ca.

David Hernandez, National Farm Worker Ministry, Dayton, Ohio

Pat Hoffman, National Farm Worker Ministry, Los Angeles, Ca.

Jim Holland, San Francisco, Ca.

Kay Holland, San Francisco, Ca.

The Rev. Wesley Hotchkiss, United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, New York City

Mellis Keller, American Friends Service Committee, Pasadena, Ca.

The Rev. Eugene Lichty, Church of the Brethren, Phoenix, Arizona

The Rev. Raymond G. Manker, First Unitarian Church, Phoenix, Arizona

The Rev. Howard G. Matson, Unitarian-Universalist, Berkeley, Ca.

The Rev. Joseph Melton, Catholic Priest, Delano, Ca.

Sue Miner, National Farm Worker Ministry, Los Angeles, Ca.

Constance Myer, Bd. Of Missions, United Methodist Church, New York City

The Rev. Led Nieto, Natl. Division, Bd. of Missions, United Methodist church, Austin, Tx.

The Rev. Wm. J. O'Donnell, Parish Priest, Roman Catholic, Oakland, Ca.

Lynne Reade, United Presbyterian Church, USA, Whittier, Ca.

The Rev. John Romero, Padres, National Secretary, Los Angeles, Ca.

Edwin A. Sanders, Pacific Yearly Meeting of Friends, Pasadena, Ca.

The Rev. Jerry Schaffer, Hunger Coalition of Ohio, Cincinnati, Ohio

The Rev. Wm. E. Scholes, National Council of Churches, USA, Denver, Colo.

Paul Sedillo, Division for Spanish Speaking, U.S. Catholic Conference, Washington, D.C.

The Rev. Dennis Short, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) So. Calif.-So. Nevada, Los Angeles

Dr. John Sinclair, Commission on Ecumenical Mission & Relations, New York City

Nomi Smith, Church Women United, Tucson, Arizona

The Rev. John Stevens, The Episcopal Church, New York City

Dr. Paul A. Stauffer, Natl. Division, Bd. of Missions, United Presbyterian Church, USA, NYC

Dr. Luther Tyson, Board of Social concerns, United Methodist Church, Wash. D.C.

The Rev. August H. Vandenbosche, National Council of Churches, USA, Miami, Fla.

Sister Dorothy Vigil, O.P., National Conference of Las Hermanas, Houston, Texas

The Rev. Michael Walsh, Phoenix Central Christian church, Phoenix, Arizona

The Rev. Philip H. Young, Bd. of National Missions, United Presbyterian Church, NYC

The Rev. Jack Zoellner, Lutheran Church in America, Phoenix, Arizona