

TAPE ARC - 1, TC 1:00:00

CESAR CHAVEZ, interviewed by new reporter:

1:04:07 This is Cesar Chavez, who's the head of the National Farm Workers Association, and the head of this pilgrimage. How would you rate it so far?

1:04:15 CHAVEZ: Well the pilgrimage is uh, I think it's been a lot more successful than we expected it to be when we started. The support has been tremendous, we never expected to get this much support. We were looking for some support the Mexican-American community, but not to the extent that it's been given. It's really great, we have had tremendous support from the farm workers which is the one that we wanted to begin with. This is where we wanted to concentrate and it's been very rewarding.

1:04:48 Speaking of support, Mr. Chavez, the National Council of Churches has recently come out supporting your position. What do you think of that?

1:04:55 CHAVEZ: It means a great deal. It means uh, that, to us in Delano and to the farm workers it means that the Church now is taking a stand that, and because of that the whole country, if not the whole world will take notice. 1:05:09

CHUCK GARDINIER, march coordinator, interviewed by news reporter:

1:06:47 Well, I, we just have no way of knowing. But it seems rather strange that it happens at this point. It would appear that they could have let us know several days before anyway. 1:07:05

WILLIAM KIRCHER, AFL-CIO, interviewed by news reporter:

1:07:12 This is William Kircher, the Director of Organizations of the AFL-CIO from Washington, who joined the march yesterday. Mr. Kircher, what do you think of this apparent stalemate?

1:07:19 KIRCHER: Well it's kind of ridiculous. It's not really too much of a problem because fortunately for Modesto, we do have a good labor movement in this town and they'll be providing a hall. It's kind of interesting, I understand from some of the building tradesmen that uh, there was a good deal of labor union time donated to the building of this amphitheater which we now can't use. And I think it's really a bad mark against the city fathers that, uh, these marchers have had such wonderful reception in other towns, even mayors who have met them and marched with them, but in this one we find that certain public facilities are not available.

01:07:58

MERVYN DYMALLY, state assemblyman, Watts District, interviewed:

1:08:36 Why are you out here today to participate in this, Assemblyman Dymally?

1:08:39 DYMALLY: Well, I'm here to participate because I believe that these workers have a very just cause they are fighting for: better working conditions, minimum wages in the farm area.

1:08:50 Now your position is Industrial Relations in the Assembly,, that's your committee. Do you think this might be a good subject for your committee?

1:08:56 DYMALLY: Yes, collective bargaining for Farm Workers has been under study for quite some time but we've had a great deal of resistance from the farm interests, a result of which we haven't been able to get the bill out of committee. 1:09:07

CESAR CHAVEZ, interviewed by news reporter:

1:09:22 ...most of the people working for Di Giorgio now are strike breakers, and might presumably vote against the union.

1:09:28 CHAVEZ: Well, uh, these are some of the things that will be brought up tomorrow at the press conference. I will have an answer for that.

CESAR CHAVEZ, speaking at press conference:

1:10:01 CHAVEZ: We are pleased to learn of Di Giorgio's interest in solving the strike which they refer to as a mutually and satisfactory economic condition. We agree to democratic process of free elections to solve the labor dispute now in progress between the National Farm Workers Association and the DiGiorgio Corporation. Some weeks ago we proposed elections with the DiGiorgio Corporation, and we are happy now to see that they have accepted our proposal after many weeks of silence. [applause from crowd]

1:10:41 Do you think that if an election were held, if it were a fair election, that you would win it?

1:10:45 CHAVEZ: There's no question in mind that we'll win it if the workers uh, you know, are permitted to vote, the workers that are on strike now.

SPEAKER along march route:

1:11:21 ...people in Delano, and they've already started printing up the leaflets this morning for the boycott of Di Giorgio so we'll have about 50,000 leaflets in Delano for the boycott as soon as we get there. And the main foods we're going to stress is S & W Fine Foods, and Treesweet Juices. So the boycott, we won't wait till six o'clock, the boycott's on right now.

CESAR CHAVEZ, interviewed by news reporter:

1:12:05 ...Yesterday was the announcement from Schenley, what did you think of that?

1:12:11 CHAVEZ: Well, yesterday we completed a uh, recognition agreement with Schenley, and of course we're very happy. Uh, at the time that the agreement was signed we asked if the other growers in the Delano area who are on strike would heed this, as they called for them to join, rather, to begin negotiations with both unions that have them under strike. Uh, we're very pleased with the uh, the recognition agreement, and we're going back within 30 days to begin negotiations for a full contract.

1:12:42 ...announcement from Di Giorgio marks the end of the dispute?

1:12:56 CHAVEZ: We don't have all of the information. I understand that a letter has been sent from the DiGiorgio Corporation to our office in Delano, and I'm expecting that letter to arrive. I've gotten pieces and bits of information from the press conference this morning, but not enough to allow me, or permit me to make a statement, uh to those things that they are proposing. I will be making a statement later on this evening, uh, at our meeting, at our rally in Hood, California which is about 5 miles from here.

1:13:33 CHAVEZ: This morning at ten o'clock the DiGiorgio Food Corporation held a press conference. Uh, they announced that they would not

recognize the Association and they would not bargain with us. So, que siga la huelga!

JIM DRAKE, interviewed by news reporter:

1:14:10 DRAKE: I'm coordinator of the boycott activities.

1:14:14 You're starting a boycott of DiGiorgio products immediately?

1:14:17 DRAKE: It'll start right now.

VARIOUS SPEAKERS ON STAGE, at rally:

1:15:30 CHAVEZ: Will you please remain standing. I'm going to call on the Reverend Chris Hartmire of the migrant ministry to say the invocation this evening. [Hartmire's face, no audio.]

1:16:20 CHAVEZ: Today, at ten o'clock in San Francisco, the DiGiorgio Corporation at a press conference, at which time they submitted a proposal to end the strike in Delano. And I'm going to make a statement regarding the proposal and then tomorrow morning at ten o'clock at the Sheraton - Palace Hotel I will have more information on their proposal. After meeting with our attorneys tomorrow morning I will then be prepared to answer and to give our views on their

proposal, uh, the, the press conference will take place at ten in the morning at the Sheraton - Palace Hotel in San Francisco. [repeated in Spanish]

1:17:53 CHAVEZ: However we feel that the corporation should not have a sole right to determine the conditions under which elections would take place.

VARIOUS MARCHERS speaking to news reporter:

1:18:02 After you see the governor, do you think you'll walk home?

1:18:07 YOUNG MAN, Hispanic: Well, we were planning not to walk back, if they say well, show 'em that we can still walk, we'll walk back.

1:18:16 WOMAN IN HAT: [In Spanish]

1:18:24 YOUNG MAN: She said she feels fine and happy to be going on the march and she's going all the way. 1:18:27

1:18:50 YOUNG MAN: We're continuing the march to Sacramento, cause this is only the first step, and uh, the strike is not over yet, it's one down, and uh, next it will be DiGiorgio. DiGiorgio is another food corporation, and one of the biggest in Delano. And Schenley was one of the 35 ranches that we have on the strike now.

1:19:09 But you have 34 more to go?

1:19:12 YOUNG MAN: About 34 more to go. After DiGiorgio the other ones will fall right into place. Those two are the biggest corporations and once they go down the other ones will follow.

1:19:19 Are you more optimistic now than you were before?

1:19:21 YOUNG MAN: Yeah, right now, yes, now we have a little hope now that Schenley gave up, and now we will hit a bit harder, inspiration, we're going harder now and everybody knows that this strike is going to be won.

1:19:37 We're talking to some of the workers who've come all the way from Delano the hard way on foot. Was it worth it?

1:19:41 BLACK MAN with sunglasses: Yes, sir, it was. Well, I feel good about it. I feel, I'm glad, I'm happy.

1:19:48 What would you say if they said you had to walk home.

1:19:50 BLACK MAN with sunglasses: I'd walk, I'd do that too. I'd make a start.

1:19:54 What are your personal reasons for participating in this march?

1:19:58 BLACK MAN, younger: Well, number one is that I'm a Negro, and I'm from down south, and I consider the Mexican - American cause and the Negro

cause very much of the same source, because there are discriminatory factors going on in America which include both races [CAM ROLL OFF]

ROBERT KENNEDY, at press conference:

1:21:02 R. KENNEDY: I found the hearing held yesterday of great interest. I think first we have to come clearly to the conclusion not just from the hearings that the committee has been holding, but from all the writings that have taken place over the last decade, that an ignored part of our population has been the Farm Workers. That the Farm Workers have suffered in our society over the last thirty years and that that situation has to be changed. [cheers] That's not just a question of California, it's not just a question of the western part of the United States. It's true in the southwestern part of the United States, and it's true in my own state and in the eastern part of the country. And we have to do something about it. And it's not just a question of wages. It's a question of housing. It's a question of education. It's a question of living conditions. It's a question, a basic question of hope for the future. And that's what this committee is dedicated to try to do something about. We're going to try to improve not just your lives, but more importantly the lives of your children. [cheers] 1:22:22

1:29:12 R. KENNEDY: Now let me just say one word of warning. This is not going to be done overnight. This is not going to be done because this subcommittee comes out and hold hearings. That you're going to expect five days from now, or a week from now, or two weeks from now, that these problems are going to disappear. Because that's not what's going to happen. We can go back

and we can study laws, and there's going to be suggestions and recommendations back and forth as to what need to be done. But it's not going to disappear overnight. And what's really going to be required together with what we do, and the efforts that we conscientiously make, and even amongst us there's going to be disagreements as to how we should approach some of these problems, but I say to you, so that you will understand completely and fully that we're not going to be able to remedy all of these problems immediately. In the last analysis, it's going to depend on you, and what you are willing to do, and your own perseverance, and your own courage and your own dedication. And the idea that you're going out and work, as I say, and I was impressed yesterday, not just for yourselves, not just to raise your own salaries, not just to have better housing, not just to have better working conditions for yourselves, but that you continue to make the kind of efforts, not only for yourselves but for your children, that I can assure you that the committee over which Senator Williams is chairman, who has spent so much time in making this possible, then we will also dedicate ourselves to working with you, to improve your lives, and improving, most importantly, the lives of your children. Thank you very much. [cheers]

VARIOUS SENATORS at press conference:

1:32:14 SEN. HARRISON WILLIAMS: ...that, uh, is here today, has been working for seven years trying to find the answers for better lives for people who work in agriculture and their kids. And we've done some good. I can promise you we're going to do a lot more. [cheers]

1:32:44 SEN. GEORGE MURPHY: Thank you very much. Some of you may know that one of the big camps in the Philippines was named for my cousin, - - Murphy. I have known about the problems of the California Farm Workers for many years...("Turn on the mike")...which mike?...

1:33:22 SEN. ROBERT KENNEDY: Well I am delighted to be here with my colleagues, Senator Williams, Senator Murphy...

MARTIN ZANINOVICH, Delano grower who spoke to subcommittee at hearing, to news reporter:

1:33:39 If by some amazing feat of logistics, an election could be held among the Farm Workers, could the growers live with a Farm Workers union?

1:33:47 ZANINOVICH: Uh, I imagine you can live with just about anything, although I'm sure you would see such a drastic change in agricultural economy that food prices would skyrocket. There is no question in my mind that it would be a tremendous uh, imp- it would have such a tremendous impact on agriculture it would change it almost completely.

1:34:12 Would it hurt it economically?

1:34:13 ZANINOVICH: Yes, it would hurt it economically. They would have to go to much bigger and larger units so that they could, uh, mechanize, and have other labor saving devices that small growers can not afford, and I think it would bring corporate farming around, just about as fast as anything you could do.

ROBERT KENNEDY, in crowd of news reporters:

1:35:32 You said it wouldn't be just higher wages, that there would have to be other things accomplished before the situation of the Farm Workers could be changed. What other things?

1:35:38 ROBERT KENNEDY: Well, the other areas, of course, is that they have lacked the same educational possibilities that so many of the rest of us have enjoyed. Housing hasn't been as good as the rest of society, the rest of our population. Uh, they haven't had the same medical care, so that the health of the farm worker, and particularly the migrant worker here in the United States requires action all across the board. 1:36:03

AL GREEN, to news reporter:

1:36:35 GREEN: ...they've been looking forward, I know, for 40 years. In my opinion this is one step forward that all of these agricultural workers has been praying for, not only looking forward but praying for. Trying to do something for their children who are going to come up working in the agricultural field. I certainly want to thank you for this opportunity.

CESAR CHAVEZ, to news reporter:

1:37:18 CHAVEZ: ...the citizen, whether he's the farm worker, whether he's involved, engaged in another occupation, we feel that everyone must share in this struggle, and we feel the only way it's going to be solved is when everyone shares in the, uh, bringing about through legislation, increasing this work (garbled) so we can rid ourselves of problems that have been with us since the beginning of agriculture in California.

1:37:51 Mr. Chavez, what does it mean for the Farm Workers to have the Senate Subcommittee here, looking at the problems first hand?

1:37:58 CHAVEZ: I think it means an awful lot. This is the first time that I know of that a senate or a congressional committee has come to an area where the Farm Workers are on strike. We've had many investigations in the past, but none have, to my recollection, have come to the site or to the strike zone, as this has done. So I think it is very significant to the workers themselves, that there is at least some recognition of these problems. And generally uh, they're enthusiastic, they know that a lot of work lies ahead of them, but, they're happy that the committee has come to Delano.

1:38:34 What are your plans for the immediate future?

1:38:36 CHAVEZ: Well, uh, we are going to continue this strike until such time as we are able to solve it by negotiating with the growers. I think that uh, it's going to take some time still, but the workers are now organized in such a way that they can be out on strike for a long period to come. I think that uh, we're, in this

case, in the strike here in Delano, we're in the same boat that the, um, industrial worker was, maybe 40 or 50 years ago before they were covered under federal laws to protect them and to bring about an orderly process of deciding strikes. So this is the, one of the reasons the strike has lasted this long, and perhaps why it should, is going to have to last some more time.

AL GREEN, to news reporter:

1:40:03 We're talking with Al Green, director of the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee, AWOC, this is an organization of the AFL - CIO. Mr. Green what does it mean to you and to the workers to have the senate committee here and in the valley, looking first hand at the problem?

1:40:16 GREEN: I've been waiting 40 years for this. This is the greatest thing that could ever happen for the agricultural workers. They've been classified as second class citizens ever since I've been in California, in this valley, for 40 years. I'm sure after the senate investigation committee leaves here that they will become first class citizens with the right at least to sit down with their employers and negotiate a contract.

CESAR CHAVEZ, to news reporter:

1:41:02 CHAVEZ: We're plan to be at the state capitol in Sacramento on Easter seeking support from the entire community in the state, knowing full well that this is not a problem with the Farm Workers exclusively, but in fact this is a problem of society in general. These workers have been excluded from the protection of the federal laws for too long, and the only ones we can blame are the community.

GEORGE MURPHY, to news reporter:

1:41:35 As a union man uh, what do you think about unionizing farm workers?

1:41:36 SEN. MURPHY: Well, I think this is a problem that is not as simple as it sounds. There are people that have been attempting to do this to my knowledge for the last 25 years. As a matter of fact, if you ask my how I feel generally about the principle of collective bargaining, I think that under the proper circumstances, when the workers want a union, they want a bargaining agent, and it's put together properly, and under good circumstances, I'm entirely for it.

MARTIN ZANINOVICH, Delano grower, to news reporter:

1:42:10 ZANINOVICH: ...and I think that they're out here to try to drum up a little sympathy for those blows (??) again.

1:42:24 We asked Mr. Zaninovich if he thinks the hearings were rigged.

1:42:29 ZANINOVICH: Uh, no, I wouldn't say that, I would just stay that there seems to be more witnesses appearing on the labor side than there are on the growers side, whether that's been rigged or not, I don't know.

ROBERT KENNEDY, in crowd of reporters:

1:42:52 Would you say there are parallels in the problems in civil rights and the problems with the Farm Workers?

1:42:58 ROBERT KENNEDY: Well, I think there are parallels in the fact that a certain part of our population was ignored, discriminated against, namely the Negro, here in the United States for many, many years in both the south and the north. I think that it's also quite clear that the farm worker had been ignored by our society, so I think the situation needs to be taken to rectify that situation. I recognize also, that the farm owner also has his problems, and a contract, or arrangement has to be made between them so that, uh, indiscriminate activity of a particular individual could put all of them out of business. And I hope that the legislation that we will finally pass in congress will protect them to the maximum degree possible.

