

TAPE ARC-69, TC 02:00:00

ABC NEWS

02:04:08 MANUEL CHAVEZ: Let the groups here the opportunity to give their statement.

02:04:17 MANUEL CHAVEZ: This problem has come about uh, uh, not so much the issue of the date but the issue of the rich against the poor or the poor against the rich. Uh, our struggle in California is uh, in a different way but uh, similar to the struggle that uh, the minority groups have here in New York. Uh, as for uh, we have asked for help, the black Americans, the Puerta Ricans, and uh, the minority groups. Uh, there is more groups that uh, are sanctioning or backing our boycott uh, that are not, couldn't be present today uh, but they are giving us their full support in any way they can to uh, help uh, win this struggle in California. Uh, there are many targets as far as boycotting grapes naturally uh, in Canada and the United States uh, there are targets though that uh, chain stores, main chain stores...(unable to interpret)...A and B(unable to interpret). We have uh, boycott committees in 35 uh, to 40 of the main cities who are grape growers in California. Uh, we are going to make this target at the, at this time at uh the chain stores and uh, I'll ask the representatives, the leaders of the community to give their statement on the issue.

02:05:56 REPORTER: First of all how successful has been the boycott up to this point?

02:06:00 MANUEL CHAVEZ: Uh, New York or nationwide?

02:06:01 REPORTER: New York.

02:06:03 MANUEL CHAVEZ: In New York it has been uh, very effective, for awhile we had it stopped uh, almost 90% uh, for about two or three weeks until the union signed a 25 million dollar suit against them and they kind of backed down it but now we're pleading to the full minority groups and people to help us and it's uh, it's uh, it's been going good, not as good as we want it but I think that uh, after this week and next week it will be getting much better with the support we're gonna get.

02:06:32 REPORTER: Do you intend to picket?

02:06:35 MANUEL CHAVEZ: Uh, well we intend to do anything that, that's possible to stop the grapes from getting picked and distributing. As much as getting the community uh, involved to help us any way they can.

02:06:47 REPORTER: Is there any progress in the attempts to negotiate with the growers?

02:06:51 MANUEL CHAVEZ: Uh, there has been no progress in negotiating with the growers whatsoever. They refuse to talk to us, they refuse to uh, negotiate and uh, that's why we have turned to the boycott, because of uh, the, the laws that are to protect the farmworker which is the immigration law are not being enforced to where we can keep this fortress, foreign countries from coming and taking the business from the local farmworker.

02:07:23 REPORTER: When you.....AUDIO CUT

01:00:13 FRANK FITZSIMMONS: The best way that I could answer George Meaney, not from his remarks he made about this but in all his remarks that he's been making lately, that he's just a frustrated old man. He was frustrated on the pay board when he walked off of

it. He was frustrated on the elections of President of the United States. He is frustrated here because of his agreement and don't misunderstand me and please don't forget it. The agreement we had with Chavez was George Meaney's agreement and how at this late date unless, and I wouldn't even know, want to say that he got to that position of older people you know when their minds become a little inactive, I don't know what word you use, I'm sure you do, that he forgets.

AUDIO CUT

01:01:55 FRANK FITZSIMMONS:asked our membership (pause) through solicitation of workers regardless of the so called deluge of disgrace that was heaped upon us through the silent investigating committees. We had and always will have the welfare of the worker, the membership of our unions and as far as the farmworker is concerned being in the middle as far as Chavez and the farmworkers 'cuz I said the medium, the clergy, even Monsignor Higgins says to Walter Shea and (?) and I one night, "What do you want with the poor farmworkers union? Why don't you let the poor farmworkers union have these people?" Our position is just one, we feel that we can benefit the farmworkers as such more than what Chavez can and we've demonstrated that. Now, if the medium and those people would just mind their own business or take the actual facts such as a statement from the workers in the fields, such as the petitions requesting membership in our union, and take these on an equal basis and don't judge by, as my friend said here, every under, underdog you know relates to the farmworker. Don't worry about

Chavez walking around with that leather jacket on. Go out and take a look at his resources and where he gets it from. Go take the.....

AUDIO CUT

02:04:05 CESAR CHAVEZ:in Delano that the only way they can stop the strike and the boycott of grapes is to bargain in good faith with the farmworkers union and to, and to sign contracts with that union. As to, in regards to the rest of the conflict with the Teamsters that is not over by a longshot. We still have many fights with them and many problems. I think that this opens the door for.....

AUDIO CUT

02:04:37 CESAR CHAVEZ:city parks there are strikers in Lamont, in Delano, in Parleer, that's in, near Fresno, because of the violence against us, because the employers and their agents continue to shoot at our picket lines. And so we're now.....AUDIO CUT.....ending the picketing unless we can get the federal government, unless we can get the department of justice to come in and monitor the situation and do the investigating that we asked them to do so that those men that are shoo....AUDIO CUT.....arms are not taking away from those uh, growers and their agents. We're not going, we're not going back to the picket lines because we don't want to sacrifice anymore lives, and that means then we'll have to do, to do the uh, escalating of the grape boycott and sent the, those strikers into the cities.....

AUDIO CUT

01:05:47 LEONARD WOODCOCK: ...and it would seem to me that with the record that we've had in our nation of the assassination of illustrious men who have stood for the correction of our wrongs and

who have stood on behalf of popular causes, that it is absolutely without understanding that the federal government should drop the investigation that they did continue for some time. And the UAW would like to ask the Federal Bureau of Investigation involve itself immediately and directly in this investigation. We should not wait until after men are killed when we have as much evidence as is here available to which Mr. Cohen and Mr. Shears can speak if there are questions. But certainly it is the duty of the federal government to take all actions before such an appalling vent, event may take place.

01:06:57 JERRY COHEN: Originally when we were first contacted by the Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms division of IRS we were told that the man who was hired to do the murder was also an expert in the use of explosives, that it was very possible that he had in his possession 120 sticks of high powered dynamite, capps and cord and enough to blow up all our offices all over the state and they have uh, jurisdiction to investigate possession of illegal explosives. Now it seems to me that once they got that jurisdational hook until they pursue the investigation through to the end I don't think they had any right to drop it. Now what they told Mr. Shears subsequent to that, which we then found out later in December was that since this particular man had been picked up therefore the, the probability of the use of explosives was diminished and they didn't have jurisdiction anymore. I don't buy that argument and I think that uh, that uh, the whole question of why they closed the case has to be examined very closely.

AUDIO CUT

01:07:59 LEONARD WOODCOCK: As has been recorded by the media there have been local, state and federal investigations of a conspiracy to burn the records of the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee and also a contract for the killing of Cesar Chavez. Investigation by the Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms Bureau of the Treasury Department has been unaccountably terminated. United Farm Workers Organizing Committee has authorized an award of \$10,000 for the arrest and conviction of those involved. UAW CAP in California has authorized me to say that they are adding another \$10,000 to that award for such arrest and conviction and I'd like at this juncture to urge other organizations to make like amounts available as award money. AUDIO CUTquestions now, obviously maybe some that I can't answer but I'm sure that Mr. Shears or Mr. Cohen can.

01:09:27 PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR: Darryl Pedigot.

01:09:29 REPORTER: Darryl who?

01:09:30 PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR: Pedigo.

01:09:31 REPORTER: How do you spell that.

01:09:32 PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR: P-E-D-I-G-O

01:09:38 PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR: Good question.

01:09:39 REPORTER: Who was he?

01:09:40 PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR: Well he was the man in the Bakersfield area responsible for putting the thing together.

01:09:48 REPORTER: Where is he now?

01:09:50 PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR: I understand he's in custody on a narcotics violation and he's also uh, on an arson thing in the Fresno district court.

01:10:00 Q: Narcotics and arson?

01:10:03 A: Yes, narcotics and arson.

01:10:05 Q: Did you turn states evidence?

01:10:07 A: Well uh, no I was an independent narcotics investigator working through the state uh, at that time, at the early part of the investigation I uh, was not an informant as so to speak because I've never been involved in narcotics other than at the direction of state or some law enforcement agency.

01:10:26 Q: Is Pedigo uh, connected with the uh, farmers out there, the growers?

01:10:32 A: Yes. Yes he has been.

01:10:34 Q: What does he do normally?

01:10:37 A: Well uh, as best I can tell you just strictly narcotics. Narcotics and some real estate in Bakersfield area.

01:10:45 Q: Are there any charges pending against him on this arson?

01:10:51 A: On this what?

UNABLE TO HEAR RESPONSE

01:10:57 A: With regard to the Chavez records?

01:10:58 Q: Yes.

01:10:59 A: No, not as far as I know.

01:11:00 Q: Why do you think they approached you.....?

01:11:05 A: Well I was, worked with Richard uh, over the period of about a year trying to find out where his narcotics were coming from in the East L.A. area and where they were going to and uh, at various times it was Richard's bodyguard from time to time and so on and so fourth at the direction of the State Bureau of Narcotics.

01:11:25 Q: What sort of?

01:11:27 A: Well that's a kind of a strange question but uh, after the investigation was all over with they burnt my cover in court and uh, I guess I was just about the only person outside of ATF that knew the names of the Delano farmers involved and here I am walking around the street with this information and a lot a records, a lot a tapes, a lot a documents and I felt like that was, I was in pretty bad shape there with the Delano farmers knowing who I was and what I was doing and I felt that uh, by getting it, getting the information before the public it would be kind of useless for them to hit me or put out a contract on me.

01:12:08 Q: How many.....?

01:12:11 A: While I've had a lot of phone call threats but only one serious threat, that I consider to be serious anyway.

UNABLE TO HEAR QUESTION

01:12:20 A: What was the nature of that?

AUDIO CUT

01:12:24 A: I wouldn't have that information.

AUDIO CUT

01:12:39 JERRY COHEN: No that was the other guy. This guy is uh, standing trial for a murder right now.

AUDIO CUT

01:12:51 LEONARD WOODCOCK: Well if I don't personally do it than someone representing me and the UAW will. We'll endeavor to do that today.

AUDIO CUT

01:13:55 CORETTA KING: We are grateful to brother Cesar Chavez who exemplifies the true spirit of love, of truth, of justice and who comes to us at this time in our history to challenge us and to remind us that this spirit and this spirit alone will be the force that will bring us to the community of justice with peace and brotherhood.

01:14:46 CESAR CHAVEZ: We're setting up what we call the Dr. Martin Luther King Farmworker Fund. And this funds principle activity's going to be that of teaching to work nonviolently for social change.

AUDIO CUT

01:15:10 CESAR CHAVEZ: But many of our friends thought that the boycott would never be, never be won. It was certainly won. And that victory then gave our movement something to be proud of and happy, not only the victory but see we're able to prove that non violence, in fact it does work. And so, we're committed to the ideal that non violence is really truly a tremendous force for change.

AUDIO CUT

01:15:53 DOROTHY DAY: ...I'd like to say are St. Francis of Assisi and St. Benedict who believed in work and prayer and when we talk about the boycotting of lettuce and the boycotting of grapes as we did in the past, we thought well here is our small chance to participate in poverty by depriving ourselves of this uh, little luxury which of course is no longer a luxury here in America with our abundant crops. And so that everyone who is doing without grapes, who is going ahead and participating in the boycott we're certainly participating in a way in the teaching of St. Francis, the need for voluntary poverty in order to share the poverty of the poor.

AUDIO CUT

01:18:04 CESAR CHAVEZ:to give themselves to the whole ideal of justice. And we started out from Calexico, California and drove all day reached Tucson, Arizona that evening for a program.....AUDIO CUT.....it has to be an awakening of the American conscience as it was for the grape boycott. And so we set out on this long journey, and I have to tell you that those of us who live in California and Arizona are very accustomed to warm weather and we know very well how to handle 110, 115, even 120 degree weather on the picket line, in many cases without even wearing a hat. But it's quite a different story when we came into Chicago we caught up with a snowstorm, we're totally unprepared for the cold weather and I have to tell you that my brothers and sisters who were on the trip first time across country were so delight, delighted and so happy to see the whiteness of the snow, but that only lasted for a few hours after the cold set in they began to have different thoughts about snow. But.....AUDIO CUT.....the one thing still remains and it is that the people of the, of this country know and they've never forgotten and they will never forget and they can tell the difference between justice and injustice. And that it's because of this that we are able to move forward in trying to liberate the American farmworker. We came into New York last night and we had the same kind of reception that we've had all along the way. This morning we had a press conference (pause), with the approval of the executive board of the Farmworkers Union and with the workers....AUDIO CUT....it always amazes us how people, how difficult it is for the average person to grasp the idea of nonviolence and how we're met constantly with

remarks by people who tell us why do you think, why do you think we have this tremendous wave and increase of violence in our country? We respond there really isn't that much violence in the country that there wasn't there before. That the real difference is that now we can see it. Before we had to read about it as much before than we had to wait several days before we could read about it now it's instant and you can see a picture of it. But that for some strange reason violence makes news. But the millions and millions of nonviolent action taking place in this world every minute of our lives do not attract the same kind of news. Because you see, if a man and a woman get into a fight and one kills another, it is known and reported and that is news. But if a man and woman get into a fight and they settle their differences nonviolently who cares? And so....AUDIO CUT....I came to a bottomless pit but we were so naive then that we didn't take that advice. We went right ahead and we began to ask the people not to eat lettuce, not to eat grapes. And so after 58 and a half months...AUDIO CUT....and it isn't us, we're not saying that but it's been said throughout the ages and Christ's message is very plain and very direct. And then it took several centuries for a saint like Ghandi to come and say, Christ's message is not only applicable today but Christ's message really can work and he went on in India to demonstrate.....

AUDIO CUT

01:23:22 CESAR CHAVEZ: ...here. You will eat food that has come to that table at the expense of men, women and children who sacrifice themselves to get that food at, in that table for you and for me, for the whole country and for part of the world. You see there's a

great irony here where there's men, women and children who sacrifice everything that they have, who are asked to travel the length and the width of this country, who are asked to, not to request housing but to live wherever they can under trees and tents, under bridges, riverbanks, who are asked to travel as much as 2,000 miles without a guarantee of a job where they're going to, who are then brought to work and are paid a pittance for their labors, who are exploited in many, many ways. These men, women and children who plant and cultivate and harvest the greatest abundance of food that this world's ever seen, right in this country. These same men, women and children who sacrifice everything that they have to produce this amount of food, find out after they've gone through all of their sacrifices to feed me and you and the rest of the country and part of the world, that after they've gone through all those sacrifices they have little or no food left for themselves. And that's the greatest, possibly the greatest shame that we have.....

AUDIO CUT

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