

No. 8739

RESOLUTION CONCERNING FARMWORKERS AND THE GRAPE BOYCOTT

REFERRED by the General Assembly to the General Board for objective and equitable research, discussion and action. This assembly, as others, affirmed the rights of farmworkers to self-determination. The referral was requested for a more informed implementation of such continuing support.

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WHEREAS, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has demonstrated its concern for migrant and seasonal farmworkers in the United States through participation in ecumenical projects and programs; and

WHEREAS, farmworkers in California under the leadership of Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers of America (UFW), were successful in achieving historic legislative protections under the California Agricultural Labor Relations Act (CALRA) enacted in 1975; and

WHEREAS, CALRA established the right of farmworkers to bargain collectively, established a board to enforce free and fair union representation elections among workers, and provided a process to halt unfair labor practices; and

WHEREAS, strong enforcement of CALRA enabled farmworkers to gain 140 contracts representing over 90 per cent California's estimated 100,000 vineyard workers, an achievement that led to an end of the UFW's ten year grape boycott; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) supported the grape boycott in Resolution 7555; and

WHEREAS, since 1980 funding for and enforcement of CALRA has been drastically reduced and there is only one remaining contract covering less than three per cent of vineyard workers; and

WHEREAS, pesticide poisoning has become one of the most serious problems threatening the safety and health of California grape workers and their families, leading farmworkers to make this issue a major emphasis in their present campaign for improved work conditions and protections; and

WHEREAS, the United Farm Workers of America has called for a new boycott of grapes to be maintained until:

- farmworkers are guaranteed fair and free elections;
- contracts are negotiated in good faith;
- grape growers stop using life-threatening pesticides (the most dangerous identified as Parathion, Phosdrin, Captan, Methyl Bromide and Dinoseb),

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in Louisville, Kentucky, October 16-21, 1987, endorse the farmworker's grape boycott and encourage all members, congregations, regions, units and institutions of the church to cease the purchase and use of California table grapes and to study the issues involved.

Division of Homeland Ministries

The General Board recommends that the General Assembly ADOPT
Resolution No. 8739.
(Debate time 12 minutes)
