

ganize into labor unions and bargain collectively and responsibly with employers under the provisions of the NLRA. The law functions in other areas of labor-management relations, but is unavailable to agricultural workers.

This concern has led the General Board of the National Council of Churches repeatedly to insist that the provisions of NLRA and other public policies established to regulate relationships between employers and employees to establish justice and to protect all the parties involved should be extended to include agricultural wage workers.

This has found expression in action of the General Board of the National Council of Churches in 1951, again in 1958, in 1960, and most recently in December of 1966. On December 3, 1966, the General Board of the National Council of Churches stated:

Several aspects of the seasonal farm labor problem require legislative action at federal and/or state levels followed—and I think I would like to underline this sentence—by conscientious administration and enforcement of the laws. Local congregations, denominations, and the Councils of Churches, acting within the framework of their respective doctrines and policies, should press vigorously for the enactment and implementation of legislation on state and national levels along the lines set forth in the following list of legislative goals.

The first listed is as follows:

Inclusion of farm workers under the provisions of the National Labor Relations Act and accessibility to the services of the National Labor Relations Board.

Add to these similar, and perhaps even stronger statements by six of the major Protestant denominations quite apart from the National Council position. They have been issued by:

The American Baptist Convention;
The Methodist Church;
The United Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.;
United Lutheran Church;
United Christian Missionary Society of the Disciples of Christ;
The United Church of Christ.

I understand, also, these statements are in your hands.

There are several practical as well as ethical factors which undergird our position on this issue:

(1) The "industrial farm" is a reality and is rapidly increasing in size and scope. It possesses all the essential characteristics of an industrial operation including separation of the functions of ownership, management, and labor, and year-round operations requiring a more permanent labor supply. In keeping with its increasingly industrial character, the agricultural industry must swiftly come to the point of maturity in labor-management relations where it is ready to deal with its labor under the same conditions as other industries.

(2) In certain instances unnecessary social conflict has occurred in recent years as farmworkers have attempted to organize and achieve recognition as collective-bargaining units. Such conflict has resulted in hardship on both the grower-farmer and the worker. In larger measure this has come about because there was no legal means of controlling, directing, and policing the relationship between the parties in conflict. Strikes have occurred, are occurring, and will occur again. Unnecessary conflict is often, and regrettably, a characteristic of such episodes when there are no legal channels for either the grower or the worker. Thus everyone suffers.