

TO THE GROWERS, OR FARMERS OF CRYSTAL CITY

Crystal City, Tex., Nov. 10, 1930.

On Friday night, November 7th, 1930, at the call of Rev. Charles Taylor, O. M. I., pastor of the Catholic church of Crystal City, over four hundred fifty Mexican workers, not counting women, girls or boys, gathered together to discuss certain labor conditions which have caused great discontent and actual suffering here.

All of those gathered together were citizens of Crystal, and almost all owners of property, or members of families owning property here.

After full explanation and free discussion, the following points were agreed:

First: That with as many laborers as we have here now, no outside laborers should be brought in without very special and extraordinary reason.

Second: That the one reasonable principle in relations with our fellow man is that we are servants of Almighty God and must not act as if we were Gods, ourselves, and may do as we like; but as subject to God's arrangement of things. This means that I must really respect, or consider my fellow man gifted, like myself, with intelligence and free will, made in the image and likeness of God.

In particular what payment I give my laborers must be determined, not simply by what I can get out of him, or get away with, but what my laborer needs to live. The contrary principle of "Might" is "Right", means, of course, in the long run, revolution, destruction, death. Accordingly, pay for work should provide for food, clothing, housing, some free time to perfect intelligence and worship God and the ability to have and raise a family.

Finally it was unanimously agreed that in the present conditions, \$2.00 a day, \$11.00 a week, \$45.00 a month, was sufficient to live decently, for laborers in Crystal City. Any pay that would be less than this, such as less than five cents per basket for cutting spinach is protested against as insufficient. On the other hand when five cents per basket for cutting spinach will not amount to \$2.00 a day, \$11 a week, etc., the price should be raised to make an average of \$2.00 a day, \$11.00 a week, etc.

Third: It was likewise agreed that if we want justice and consideration from others, we must be just, ourselves. All those present unanimously pledged themselves to give good quality work for just pay; also to exert themselves seriously to pay all debts,

whether to growers, contractors or merchants.

Fourth: It was also unanimously agreed that child labor, under twelve, is pre-judicial to the child, useless for the grower and indirectly, preventive of just and reasonable wage for grown-ups.

Fifth: It was also unanimously accepted that on account of deception practiced at times by contractors about wages, a sign should be placed where work is going on, stating how much is being paid there. Five cents a basket, or whatever the price exact.

Sixth: It was earnestly and enthusiastically agreed that growers ought to attend directly and not through a contractor, to the payment of the workers.

Seventh: It was finally agreed that baskets should be formally accepted or rejected on the field and not at the railroad station, which later practice has caused considerable loss at times, to the workers as well as to the grower.

Eighth: Before closing, the meeting formed a society, Catholic Worker's Union, to help the laborers in their difficulty according to their rights and obligations, as taught by the Catholic church.

All the Catholic laborers of Crystal City, present and representing some four thousand of Crystal City's population, thereupon became members. Five officers were elected and charged with the work of the society.

In the name of the workers of Crystal City, I submit the above proposition to you, in particular the following: which will depend for their success, chiefly upon your cooperation.

First: Not to bring in outside laborers without very special reason.

Second: To pay a living wage, \$2.00 a day, \$11.00 a week, \$45.00 a month or what would amount to same.

Third: Not to employ child labor under twelve.

Fourth: To let workers know the price to be paid them and in particular, since this is the point the workers are most interested and insistent about, to pay their wages directly and not through the contractors.

Fifth: To approve, or reject in the fields, work done.

About the first of December, a list will be published of the farmers or growers who have agreed to these proposals.

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