

# Metropolitan Council

of the UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA in the LOWER MAINLAND of BRITISH COLUMBIA  
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April 7, 1970

## What It Was Like

About 3,000 of us started out at the City Hall in Vancouver at 7:00 a.m. April 3<sup>rd</sup> and headed down Kingsway to Central Park - the first check-point. We were then directed to New Westminster and found a check-point just short of the Pattullo Bridge. So far so good! Then across the bridge and up a long hill into Whalley - agony on the legs - then a long walk through Whalley to the corner of the King George and 99 Highways - a check-point!

Surprise! We had come 20 miles - only 13 miles to go to Langley and it was 1:00 p.m. Nice warm but overcast day. Might get sunburn! But what a long, hard grind and how many hills before Langley! The last mile took me about one hour - arrived Langley at 6:30 p.m.

Of the 3,000 there seemed to be only about 50 over 30 years of age - and did we old ones feel it! The blisters which had started at New Westminster were bulging so I could barely walk.

Took a hotel room with John Shaver and John Cashore (all of us walking for the United Church). The Clerk was very skeptical about letting us have a room - we looked so bad.

By Saturday morning, with a bit of first aid to the feet, felt a little better. Switched from boots to running shoes. Teaming rain! Started at 7:30 a.m. - reached the first check-point (only seven miles) about 11:00 a.m.! Bought 10 feet of plastic and made a cape (soaked to the skin anyway). Started for the second check-point - reached it at 2:30 p.m. (Only six miles). Going too slow! But my feet are so sore I can't move any faster. At this check-point we are told that the Walk Committee in conjunction with the RCMP says it's too dangerous to continue the walk for that day! Some have already gone through Clearbrook and (are) heading for Chilliwack. The rest are given lunch at Clearbrook and (are) bussed to Sardis. I go with them thereby losing 19 miles.

But call on Wes Bray in Chilliwack and he invites me home for bath, dinner and dry clothes! I will always remember what that felt like! Stay in hotel again - get good rest

and doctor the feet. Dry clothes at the Laundromat.

Ready for the final push! Begin the walk Sunday morning at Sardis at 6:14 a.m. Now John Smithson (Executive-Director, Council of Christians and Jews), John Shaver, John Cashore and I are marching! A good pace (painful to the feet only when you think about it - so kept singing everything we could remember).

Pass first check-point at 8:30 a.m. Reach lunch break at 1:00 p.m. Still keeping up the good pace, about 3 to 4 miles per hour.

Later in the afternoon we all break off into our own pace (bad mistake for me - I need someone to pace myself with). Drenching rain - watch out for the buses or trucks because the draft will take your hat off. I am slowing down badly - doing about 2 miles per hour.

Really worried about my right foot. Make the check-point just before Hope. 4 miles out! 6:00 p.m. getting dark - feet bad. Call it quits. Lose 4 miles! Ride into Hope - get first aid on both feet.

Assemble John Smithson (in his car) and John Cashore and rive home.

Hot bath and bed. Wow!

Monday - both feet in Epsom Salts - 4 times on Monday.

Tuesday (today) feet much better - can walk not badly!

So, how many miles did I walk?  $100 - 23 = 77$  miles.

Your pledge was 10 cents per mile.

Please make your cheque payable to me so I can turn the money over to the Indian-Eskimo Association. If you would like a tax-deductible receipt please let me know.

Thanks for your support - it was what kept me going!

Yours sincerely,

"Gordon"

Rev. D. Gordon Laird

Reverend M John V Shaver Research and Development Officer  
Reverend D Gordon Laird Administrative Management Office

