In all seriousness, Mr. Meany, when we look at the public prints and we read about milk dumping because the milk grower is not satisfied with the price of his product and the beef cattle farmers withholding beef from the market and in the wheat market we no longer look to the leverage of the Commodity Credit Corporation to establish prices, the American housewife probably faces an ever-growing cost in the farm items in her market basket.

Now, I am anticipating the testimony we are going to get from the NAM and every other management-based witness before this committee on this legislation, I think you and I can get to some kind of Latin term in order to offset that type of testimony.

I think we will have to show that the effect upon the market basket of this particular legislation would be de minimis. I know that is an unfair term to throw at a plumber but I happen to know this plumber knows a little bit of Latin. I would like to pursue with you the kind of questioning that would show that this would not be a serious and inflationary bill were it to be passed tomorrow insofar as the total overall effect on the market basket would be concerned.

If, in fact, 6 percent of the farms that account for 76 percent of the wage bill, as you say, and of this fewer than 2 million worked longer than 25 days and only about 650,000 were employed for more than 150 days, and we talk in terms of an average wage of 95 cents to $1.18 for those who worked in the South, if we got this up to the minimum wage, how much total dollar cost would it possibly add to the actual cost of farm production here in the country?

If the housewife had to pay the whole thing and would not spread through the whole consumer market, how much would it possibly cost?

Mr. MEANY. In terms of your gross national product or something like that, it would be very small, I would say.

Mr. CAREY. All right.

Now, are we not in effect paying a lot of this cost in some other way? When the farmer does not pay the living wage, I am talking about the Bank of America, the corporate farmer does not pay the living wage, who does pay for the maintenance of income for the family and the individual and the children in these families when they are not on the farm and receiving direct cash payments? Somebody is paying them or they are starving.

Isn't it true that it is a combination?

We found out in Mississippi many of these families are below the minimum level of maintenance in terms of food; they actually are at or near the starvation level; is this not right?

Mr. MEANY. I think you will find out many of them are on relief at the same time they are working; they have to be in order to live.

Mr. CAREY. It might be that the big consumer of farm products today is paying this in terms of income maintenance for the Welfare Department; is that correct?

Mr. MEANY. That is possible.

Mr. CAREY. Instead of paying it to the food supermarket, we are probably be paying it somewhere to the welfare system with a lack of truly American kind of payments and cash to the man who produced the food we are eating. Isn't it true that if we could add to the family income of the farmworker he would be less inclined to desert the farm