

(The information requested follows:)

Recently enacted legislation could not have had any appreciable overall effect on consumer prices because the cost of most of these benefits has been borne by the Federal Government rather than the growers. In this category are the Migrant Health Act and the provisions of the Economic Opportunity Act relating to education, children's day care, housing and sanitation for seasonal farm workers.

The impact of minimum wage coverage on food prices has been negligible because only about 400,000 workers are covered, and the large farms on which these workers are employed tend to be in the areas where the going wage is equal to or above the statutory minimum of \$1.00 an hour.

The Crew Leader Registration Act may conceivably in rare instances have had the effect of raising prices or reducing growers' profits slightly because crew leaders had to charge more for their services to cover the cost of insurance. There is no evidence that this has happened however.

Mr. CAREY. It seems to be my experience, and I have just made a limited study of this from food reports and food economists who seem to always be available to the housewife in terms of giving her a continuing commentary on prices day by day. I don't think that I can recall any time in the last decade, for instance, when you could get Texas grapefruit at three for a quarter for the large ones, and yet those are available on the New York market today. To me, the citrus market seems to bring in better fruit at lower prices than ever before; is that correct?

Mr. POTTER. That is correct, because you have a great abundance of citrus fruit this year. I think Florida alone is going to produce about a third more citrus than they did a year ago; terrific increase.

Mr. CAREY. We have then been able to cope with the effect of the reform legislation that we directed toward the foreign-worker group and the migratory-worker group which has been passing the last few Congresses.

Mr. POTTER. I think the big increase in your food basket comes from the meat end of it.

Mr. CAREY. I am glad you bring that up.

I hope you didn't get the impression in my talking to Mr. Meany that I am particularly concerned about this area of price increase. It is true that the meatgrower and wheatgrower and the dairy farmers are not users of mass labor groups; is this not true?

Mr. POTTER. Not like the fruit and vegetable growers. If I remember correctly, the Consumer Price Index shows that retail prices increased in 1966 over 1965 by 2 percent for both processed and fresh market fruits and vegetables.

Mr. CAREY. So, the passage of this act would not have any effect or only a minimal effect on dairy products, meat, and the basic items in the food basket; is that correct?

Mr. POTTER. Probably not. Very little labor is needed to produce meat and grain for bread. Production of milk, fruits and vegetables requires more labor than meat and grain.

Mr. CAREY. Little effect on grains, little effect on milk—little effect on bread, in other words—little effect on vegetables?

Mr. POTTER. This is very difficult for me to answer, sir.

Mr. CAREY. I hope we can get the answer because we are going to be bombarded with arguments that the price of bread is going to go up; the price of meat is going to go up, and the price of milk is going to go up, for the poor family as well as the moderate-income family, if we pass this bill. I think we need the answers here if we are going to determine whether this is a fallacy or a fact.