

Frankly, we wish that NLRA coverage would bring about the automatic unionization of agricultural workers. Unfortunately, it does not.

Unions will still have to show that they have at least 30 percent of the workers signed to authorization cards to get an election. They still must campaign under established rules. They still must win the elections. The employer may still file challenges and exceptions. The case can still drag through the NLRB and the courts. Additional elections can still be ordered. And so on.

If NLRA coverage means automatic unionization, then we are at a loss to explain why the southern poultry industry is not fully organized despite our union's tremendous efforts. Or why the southern textile industry is not organized. Or, for that matter, why every NLRA-covered enterprise—and that includes most firms in the United States—is not under a union contract.

"ENSLAVEMENT" MYTH

Still another myth is the one about "union enslavement." This story allows that farmworkers are somehow very happy with their employers and working conditions. They do not need or want a union.

If this is the case, we would assume that growers would welcome NLRA coverage of farmworkers. What better way could the satisfaction of workers be shown than by their demonstrating it in a secret ballot, Government-conducted election?

The fact is, Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of the committee, that these arguments are nonsense. There is no reason why the NLRA should not cover farmworkers, as it does other workers.

NLRA COVERAGE BENEFITS FOR MANAGEMENT

Despite the fear and complaints of the growers, the fact also is that NLRA coverage is actually a good thing for farm employers. Here is why:

1. It will limit strikes, boycotts, and other forms of warfare. What the farm employer needs more than anything else is the absence of labor-management chaos. He needs a peaceful, routine way of settling these basic problems.

2. It will help to end the almost feudal practices of agricultural labor-management relations, which have given growers a tremendous public black eye. This poor image has hurt growers in other areas which are much more basic to their interests than farm labor wages and conditions such as agricultural price policy.

3. It will provide a means for truly deciding whether or not a group of workers want a union, and if so, which union. It will take the employer out of the middle position if each of two unions seeks to bargain for his employees.

4. It will make possible a rational, human, labor-management relations policy instead of the crazy, fear-driven policies which agricultural employers are currently following. Growers currently are the prisoners of their fears. It is difficult for them to plan long-range, effective policies.