

So, one of the things we want as much as possible is to upgrade, so when there is an opening for a crewleader or tractor driver or mechanic, we comb the crews to find out if there is anybody there that can do that type of work. This is one of the reasons why we feel so strongly about the unionization of the farmworkers.

We found working in CSO (Community Service Organization) for many years that there was no other way that the Spanish-speaking people or minority people of the State were going to take their place in society was through a labor union because even with all of our work that we did on welfare programs and the civil rights program, this was not going to do it. They need the opportunity and they need the money in their pocket to educate their children and bring them up to standards of other people, and the only way to do this is trying to get a better wage for them.

Mr. THOMPSON. How far does a grape picker travel in a season normally? Do they migrate to any extent from the south to the north? For instance, from southern California to the Napa Valley?

Mrs. HUERTA. Well, there has been a lot of migration. I do believe that unionization is going to curtail the migration considerably but at present there is a flow of migration intrastate, and you also have the interstate and also international migration; people that come up from Mexico.

In the grape industry, a worker in the table grapes will get about 9 months' employment; in the wine grapes, he gets only 5 months' employment. So, he must do some interstate migration during the time he is laid off.

Mr. THOMPSON. When his grape-working season is over does he normally go to other crops?

Mrs. HUERTA. Yes. What most workers do in our area is that they don't go very far; they just go to orange picking and then there is some cotton chopping and things like that.

I have one experience I would like to relate. The people that were working at Schenley were all laid off after the grape pruning season ended; then they started plum thinning in Arvin, which is only about 45 miles from Delano. So, we were able to send 50 of the workers that were working at Schenley on to thin plums. They had never done this before. DiGiorgio had never recruited people from the area; they always went as far as Mexico to get their workers. So, this an interesting, to see how we will be able to stabilize the work force and give the worker fuller employment.

I guess I don't need to tell you a worker would much rather go out and work than he would like to stay on the relief roll. He has to try to keep himself some kind of stipend for existence. We foresee that more extended work seasons will happen as we get more people into contracts.

Furthermore, unionization will bring about a better planning of the crops by the growers. The grape industry has not been paying off too well in the past few years because they have had massive overproduction.

Well, since the union has come in, and, of course, this affects us adversely right now but in the future it will be all right; they have started to pull out some of the grape vines and are going into other crops. This is better for the worker also because it gives him fuller employment at all times of the year instead of having to depend on that one crop. We see a trend in this direction.