

fore, we have no legal obligation to sit at the bargaining table, because the law does not give them the right to bargaining collectively."

And so the law itself helped create that strike situation, because the growers were using that as an excuse. They said, "We are not obligated." They said, "General Motors is obligated to sit at the bargaining table with you, but we are not, because if Congress wanted agricultural workers to have access to the process of collective bargaining, it would have been written into the law."

So this is why it must be written into the law, so that everyone will know they do have a legal obligation to bargain in good faith with their employees when they choose to have a union through which they hope to solve their problems.

The other question they said to me, "You know, we would be willing," a couple of these growers started out with a small plot and had worked on the land themselves, and they said, "If we worked out a decent wage here, how do we protect ourselves from the growers in Texas and the growers in Florida unless they do it?"

And that is exactly the argument we got from every employer when we went to the bargaining table back in the early 1930's.

They said, "If we give you a living wage, if we pay you overtime, if we give you vacation pay, how do we meet the competition if our competitor doesn't do it?"

And that is why you have to do it by law, so that every grower has equal obligations under a Federal law.

This is why the minimum wage is so crucial in this area.

This is one of the problems that we find in marginal industries. A marginal employer says, "I would like to give you more, but my competitor is running away from his obligation, so if we raise the minimum wage so that there is a floor under everybody's obligation, then no one can get an unfair competitive advantage by exploiting his workers below that level."

And so we spent most of the evening talking about minimum wages.

They said, "We are in favor of a minimum wage, that would protect us, and if everybody did it, then our attitude would be different."

That is why we say to the Congress, that only the Congress has the power and, therefore, the responsibility to deal with this problem by making it an obligation of all of these growers so that they all must meet their responsibilities.

Now, the third argument that these people who have a vested interest in the status quo are raising is the family-size farmer. Well, they know that we are not asking the Congress to apply collective bargaining to a family-sized farm where most of the work is done by the owner and his family, or where they may have one or two hired hands.

I worked on such a farm when I was a boy, and I want to say that the people who own those kinds of farms work pretty hard.

The kind of farms we are talking about in general are large industrial farms where absentee ownership, where the people who own them, the most strenuous thing they do is to clip their coupons at the end of the year. These are the kind of farms we are talking about, and we know when we talk about agricultural workers that they are concentrated in a small number of large farms.

Three percent of all the farms in the United States have a payroll of more than 50 percent of all the agricultural workers, and 6 percent