

In Arizona 5,600, nearly 17,000 in California, just a handful, 17, in New Mexico, and nearly 20,000 in Texas. So you see that this problem is not quite so simple as to say that they commute largely on a semi-annual basis.

Mr. TRIGGS. Your statement is quite correct. The elimination of daily commuting would certainly change the situation. I suppose in that case most of them would commute just twice a year instead of daily.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you very much, Mr. Triggs, for your patience.

Our next witness is Mr. Richard O'Connell, the Secretary of the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives.

STATEMENT OF RICHARD O'CONNELL, SECRETARY, NATIONAL COUNCIL OF FARMER COOPERATIVES

Mr. O'CONNELL. I have a brief statement, and I won't keep you from your strawberries romanoff.

Mr. THOMPSON. I am going to have a Michigan product, cherries jubilee.

Mr. O'CONNELL. I wish you would, the crop is very large.

I am Richard T. O'Connell, Secretary of the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives. The national council is a nationwide federation of farmers' business associations engaged in the marketing of agricultural commodities or the purchasing of farm production supplies, or both, and of State cooperative councils. The organizations making up the council are owned and controlled by farmers as the marketing and purchasing departments of their farm business operations.

As we understood H.R. 4769, it will extend the provisions of the National Labor Relations Act to agricultural employees. We further understand that if this measure is enacted into law that a farmer may be forced to bargain with labor organization whether or not the status of a labor organization has been determined by the wishes of the majority of his employees; that employees continued under employment will be required to become union members on the seventh day of employment if they are to hold their jobs; that a farmer will be required to go to the union hiring hall and give preferences to the workers referred by the union and quite probably under the qualifications determined by the labor organization; and there may be established a seniority system for workers employed as agricultural laborers.

From the standpoint of an organization representing farmer cooperatives, we fail to understand the reasoning behind the so-called protection of the National Labor Relations Act. Basically, labor unions and farmers cooperatives have similar goals—the increasing of the bagaining power and improved income for their members through joint action.

Farmers who belong to farmer cooperatives do so voluntarily. There is no organization from the "top down" in a farmer cooperative, which we believe possible for covered industries under the National Labor Relations Act. Farmer cooperatives are owned and controlled by farmer members. They join or withdraw on a voluntary basis, depending on the economic benefit they derive and their belief in the type of operation.