

We question whether we would want such an arrangement among farmers and their cooperatives as organized labor wants for farmworkers—the mandatory requirement of belonging to an organization.

We believe the voluntary route to encourage farmers to become members of the cooperative, because of the real merits of this type of action, and much more difficult, I might add.

The records show that this has been reasonably successful. The latest estimate by the Bureau of the Census indicates there are an estimated 3.1 million farmers (1964) and 60 percent of the farmers hold 7.1 million memberships in farmer cooperatives (1965). And I don't believe the error will be over 3 percent when comparing the two different years.

The average farmer belongs to at least two cooperatives, voluntarily and with no other encouragement than an opportunity for economic betterment.

Farmers, in organizing their cooperative, expect and receive encouragement from the Federal Government in carrying out their activities. We believe labor organizations should have the same encouragement. But we question the "protection" of agricultural laborers when recent history has shown the inability of labor unions to organize many farmworkers on a voluntary basis.

Most people join organizations for selfish reasons—to improve their economic position. The lack of success of labor unions to organize farmworkers in previous attempts indicates that workers themselves are not overwhelmingly enthusiastic about organizing into a union.

It is our contention that those who believe that the agricultural laborers are an unfortunate group and need improvement, and if the agricultural workers themselves believe the same, then there certainly is a sufficient stimulus to entice the workers to join an organization for their economic betterment. We support this approach if they so wish to move in this direction.

We see serious repercussions in agriculture if the exemption to the National Labor Relations Act is removed. Agricultural operations and industrial operations are not identical. When a strike occurs in industry, machines can be stopped by shutting off the power, the fires can be banked in a steel mill and the doors closed leaving only requirements for minimum maintenance. There is an adverse affect on management and labor in these situations, sales and profits decline, wages are stopped and there is economic difficulty for the worker. But rather rarely is there deterioration of capital and its earning power.

Now let us look at agriculture.

When a farmer plants his crop, or has an orchard, which takes 3 to 7 years to come into full production, no switch, no banking of fires, no reduced sales, no drawing money from strike funds, will occur.

What you will have is complete collapse of the farmer's operation, if a strike occurs at a time when harvesting must be done.

Harvesting is not something like a steam shovel for which the power can be shut off, and with a minimum amount of maintenance until the strike is over, be started up again and continue at the same level of efficiency as when the strike began.

Frequently, 2 to 3 days' delay in the harvesting of a crop will either reduce the quality of the crop, thus reducing the income of the farmer, or it will be completely destroyed.