

fications employed in both industries, from field workers to sugar mill and pineapple cannery workers. Both groups have been organized for twenty or more years and during that time have emerged from a quasi-colonial situation to full industrial citizenship with wages and fringe benefits comparable to those enjoyed by workers in nonagricultural industries.

Just over a year ago we signed a new agreement in the sugar industry which brings the present wage rate for the lowest classification to \$2.02 per hour. The comparable pineapple minimum is \$1.93. Average hourly earnings in sugar, taking into account the higher classifications, and including fringes, are in excess of \$3.000. Both industry groups have comprehensive medical plans, pensions, paid holidays and vacations, sick leave and severance pay. Hours of work have been reduced to 8 per day and 40 per week, with overtime thereafter.

While we recognize that there are significant differences between plantation workers in Hawaii and farm workers on the mainland, many of them migratory, we believe our experience entitles us to be heard with regard to the bill now before this Subcommittee.

We might add that our experience with the longshore industry on the West Coast, is also relevant to the problems facing this Subcommittee. When we started to organize longshoremen back in the early '30s, work was largely casual. There was a basic problem of organizing hiring and dispatch in such a way as to decasualize the work force and thus to insure both a decent living for the man and a stable labor supply for the industry. These objectives were accomplished by the jointly operated and maintained hiring halls which now exist in all West Coast ports.

The improvements in wages and conditions for the sugar and pineapple workers in Hawaii and for the longshoremen here on the Coast have been primarily the result of organization and we believe that the presently shocking conditions of mainland migratory agricultural workers will only be fully corrected by the pressure of self-organization. We agree with Secretary of Labor, W. Willard Wirtz, that,

"* * * The lesson of national experience is that in a highly organized and pluralistic society any group which lacks the means of collective action drops back to what eventually becomes an intolerable disadvantage."

This statement occurs in his recent report entitled "Year of Transition; Seasonal Farm Labor, 1965," p. 27.

Nevertheless, it is equally true that self-organization can be assisted, and the stubborn resistance to unionization on the part of most of the big growers can in part be overcome, by appropriate legislation. This is our experience. Our success here on the Coast in 1934, though primarily the result of the determination of the longshoremen themselves, was assisted by the adoption by Congress of Section 7 of the National Industrial Recovery Act, which was later expanded into the Wagner Act. Section 7 declared it to be national policy to further collective bargaining. The subsequent organization drive throughout California industry was in great measure facilitated by the Wagner Act.

Similarly, in Hawaii, our organizing efforts in sugar were in considerable measure assisted by representation elections conducted in the sugar milling industry by the NLRB.

The historic collective bargaining agreement recently worked out with the DiGiorgio Corporation is indication of major changes that are taking place in the area of labor relations on the farms, at least in California. But the agreement was reached only after a bitter strike and intervention by the Governor of California to set up arbitration machinery. We believe, and our experience demonstrates, that if the law provides reasonable procedures for the establishment and carrying on of collective bargaining, both parties, and the public generally, will benefit.

We are therefore strongly in support of H.R. 4769, which would extend NLRA coverage to include agricultural workers. The passage of this bill will not, in itself, overcome the disabilities suffered by farm workers, but we believe NLRA coverage is a necessary prerequisite to unionization if it is to be achieved without undue friction and dislocation.

POLICY STATEMENT OF GENERAL BOARD OF CHRISTIAN
SOCIAL CONCERNS OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

From a religious point of view, man is a tenant-steward of the soil because, ultimately, "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof." A responsible ethic requires accountability both to man and God for the use of the soil and for