resemble farming of the 1960's. The public was duped into believing that farming is a rough and troubled business staffed by independent yeomen farmers with the help of their "hired man." In truth, however, farming is big business, grossing more than $3.8 billion in California alone, controlled by large industrial enterprises who's success depends on their very size.

This is the real structure of agriculture:

First, between 1940 and 1960 the total number of farms fell from 6.4 million to 3.5 million—a decline of more than 45 percent.[1] While the absolute number of farms were declining, the size of farms were increasing. With a 5 percent rise in farm land, the average size of farms increased from 175 acres in 1940 to 303 acres in 1959—an increase of more than 73 percent.[2] Farms with more than 500 acres (9 percent of all farms) accounted for 61 percent of land in farms during 1959.[3] This situation led one student of agriculture to remark that "it would be hard to drive farmers out of farming faster than present economic conditions have been doing for years."[4]

Second, although the 19,979 large-scale farms which marketed $100,000 or more farm products represented only four-fifths of one percent of the 2.4 million commercial farms, they accounted for one-sixth of all commercial farm products sold during 1959, and employed more than 20 percent of all hired farm workers. Moreover, thirty-two percent of all farm products sold in that year were marketed by only three percent of all farms classified as Class I commercial enterprises with sales of $40,000 or more. These farms employed 35 percent of all hired farm labor.[5]

Third, and most important, roughly half the farms in the nation employ no farmworkers, but rather rely on family labor. Another thirty percent of the farms spend less than $500.00 a year on hired labor. Only six percent of all farms have a wage bill of over $2,500.00 a year.[6] In other words, the real impact of collective bargaining would fall on the top 12.9 percent of American corporate farms which paid 70.7 percent of the total farm wage bill in 1959.[7]

Fourth, according to one source, "concentration of land ownership has grown along with its rising cost until today the nation's 100,000 biggest farms control about one-fourth of all our farmland resources. For many years now, about one-third of all farm land has been bought by purchasers who are not farmers."[8]

Gentlemen, we are talking about the cream of American agriculture. We are discussing enterprises that reap millions of dollars in profits from the land. We are examining business enterprises representing billions of dollars in invested capital, managed by some of the best equipped technicians in our society. We are *not* talking about the small family farm with its one or two hired hands.

When this is realized, the supposed distinctions between industry and agriculture diminish. Enterprises in both sectors are characterized by their similarities, not their differences. Both are huge corporate organizations, both employ vast numbers of workers and both are immensely profitable.

Labor costs are just one of many production costs to the industrial farm as well as to other large businesses. Yet, this labor component is the one factor that separates industry from agriculture. The industrial concern, more often than not, will be required to bargain with his employes over the terms and conditions of employment or will be forced to match terms negotiated elsewhere. However, the industrial farm is under no obligation to bargain, because its employes are denied bargaining rights. Consequently, large commercial farms pay much less for their labor than do other industrial concerns.

Added to this legal advantage were two subsidies—one direct and the other indirect. Most corporate farms profit handsomely from crop subsidies that remove much of the risk from their operations. Other corporate farms received an indirect labor subsidy for the fourteen years that Public Law 78 was on the law books. However, these giants of farming did not have to pay the dues of legal responsibility to their employes that industrial concerns have done since 1935.

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1 U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour and Public Contracts Division, *Hired Farm Workers*, Submitted to the Congress January 1966, p. 6.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 8.

3 *Ibid.*

4 Austin P. Morris, S.J., "Agricultural Labor and National Labor Legislation," *California Law Review*, vol. 54, No. 5 (December 1966), p. 1980.

5 U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour and Public Contracts Division, *Op. Cit.*, p. 9.

6 U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Employment Security, *Farm Labor Market Developments* (August 1964), p. 9.

7 Austin P. Morris, S.J., *Op. Cit.*, p. 1983.

8 National Advisory Committee on Farm Labor, *Poverty on the Land*, Washington, D.C. (May 1964), pp. 49–50.