

National Labor Relations Board coverage is needed by the farm worker because only a totally blind person could avoid seeing the plight of the American farm worker.

He is underpaid, with no sense of security; few have permanent homes and their future in retirement is based on the bleak welfare roles of states, counties and cities.

The farm worker has for the most part, bad working conditions, with absolutely no job security. He must endure the exploitation of his children too, sharing with them the same dismal past, present and future.

If he is granted the guarantees of the National Labor Relations Board, much of what we have seen concerning his plight can disappear. But right now the farm worker is faced with unfair labor practices, violence when he protests, from scabs and police, plus his political exploitation by ambitious men.

Without the protection of the NLRB, the farm worker has no chance to organize into an effective negotiating unit.

The Trade Union story of America is a broad story of success. It is the story of a better and a more dynamic society, a society which strangely enough has forgotten the working men, women and children on the farm.

We tell the world daily of our great food supplies, our surpluses and our monumental gifts of food and fibre the world over. It seems ironic, indeed, that the agricultural worker supplying this magnificent beneficent to mankind, is the one who must suffer the most.

The International Brotherhood of Teamsters urges the adoption of H.R. 4769. But, further, we look on it only as one piece of legislation badly needed. We must continue to fight for our agricultural workers, and to remove them from the roles of second class citizens, denied by every law in every political subdivision in this country of ours.

This extension of the National Labor Relations Act, to extend to farm workers needed protection, is adequate, basic and belated.

Thank you Mr. Chairman and members of the committee.

STATEMENT BY NATIONAL CONSUMERS LEAGUE

The National Consumers League has for over half a century concerned itself with the problems of the migratory agricultural worker, and welcomes the opportunity to express its views to this Committee. Organized in 1899 to articulate consumer concern with respect to the conditions under which consumer goods and services are produced, the League began its study of the problems of agricultural workers with an investigation of field and cannery workers in New Jersey as long ago as 1906. For over 60 years now the League has campaigned for better working conditions for this most discriminated against segment of American workers. Some progress has undoubtedly been achieved, but the unhappy fact is that in 1967 most farm workers are still denied a share in most of the social reforms which have been extended to industrial workers in our economy. It is long past the time when agricultural workers should be elevated to full participation in the benefits of our working community. The League, therefore, strongly endorses the bill before you to bring agricultural workers and employers under the provisions of the National Labor Relations Act, so that organizing of farm labor and collective bargaining can be conducted in the fair and orderly manner which experience has demonstrated can be beneficial to all segments of our economy.

The absence of orderly collective bargaining procedures has resulted in disorders and strife in the Rio Grande Valley and earlier in California that are reminiscent of the early chaotic days of labor history in this country. Once again workers have been beaten and jailed and harassed as they have attempted to organize to obtain for themselves the right long enjoyed by most other workers to improve their working conditions. The rules of jungle warfare again resulted in brutalities and chaos that could have been avoided under the more civilized restraints of legal recognition and rational procedures of our enlightened industrial economy. Nobody gains from such happenings—neither the worker, nor the grower, nor the consumer. And this kind of undesirable occurrence will only be repeated, over and over again, unless the Congress takes steps to bring industrial democracy to the farm by extending the right of collective bargaining to farm workers. Unless you act soon, the farms will be turned into battle-