

adapt itself to passing the costs increased along to the consumer. Government figures proudly proclaim that the cost of living index for food is down.

Mechanization, say the proponents of this bill, will rescue the farmer faced with the problem of paying higher wages. This does not recognize that mechanization costs are high. The smaller farmer can't afford to buy machinery and he could be forced out of business if mechanization is the major factor. A machine has almost revolutionized the harvesting of cannery tomatoes in one area. Machines are being experimented with for peaches and apples, cucumbers, lettuce, and other crops but they generally are not in use because they are not yet perfected. Serious labor problems confront every grower except in cannery tomatoes today. The American housewife, for example, can forget strawberries indefinitely if she's waiting for a lower price due to machine harvesting.

At best, the farm labor situation today is a series of contradictions, no one of which can be improved by the labor union through the unionizing of workers. It is argued by proponents of this bill that the average migrant farm worker gets no more than 150 days maximum work per year, and therefore can't earn a "decent living". Unionizing has no bearing on the number of days a migrant works. What has bearing are weather changes, lengths of harvests, the desire to earn money, the worker's own abilities or tastes in working crops, capabilities and adaptabilities, and the ability to shift to better employment as offered.

In respect to wages: researchers consistently learn that the supply of farm workers is not dependent on wages; they report many influences on where the worker works, at what, and for how long. The best workers will locate the best harvests and will receive premium wages while others confine their work weeks to four or five days—a self-established wage limit. Time and money goals are popular with farm laborers, adding to the aggravation of work force shortages.

It is this organization's experience that peak harvest migrant labor cannot be managed, that farm labor can not adjust to the administrative limitation demanded by a labor union.

This organization points out that if this bill becomes law the agricultural employer is disadvantaged by general industry. Before a union could force collective bargaining on a GM, for example, there must be an election and some evidence of majority will. Under H.R. 4769 the union could force farm labor bargaining and lawfully enter agreements which would require membership in the union as a condition of employment.

When Subsection (f) was added to Section 8 of the NLRA, the Congress specifically provided that nothing in that amendment "shall be construed as authorizing the execution or application of agreements requiring membership in a labor organization as a condition of employment in any State or Territory in which such execution or application is prohibited by State or Territorial law". The bill presently under consideration doesn't contain such a provision. It appears to this organization that by this bill farmers would be deprived of the protection which the Congress felt was necessary and desirable at the time that Section (8f) was added.

The bill may have the effect of eliminating the effects of the mandate with respect to the construction and building industries.

Through the years the Congress has recognized the difference between agriculture and industry. Today as in the Thirties the farm segment is most depressed in our economy. Labor has advanced but agriculture is still depressed. An auto factory can shut down without depriving the consumer greatly. Shut down agriculture and we have a famine. The farmer can quit, if pressed too far. If he is pushed to a point of no return economically he can fold just like New York's Herald-Journal-Tribune. He is in a terminal position: the processor either passes his losses on to the consumer or back to the farmer. The farmer has no place to go except that he can stop raising fruits and vegetables and shift to crops that will keep him alive financially.

No labor union can deliver a work force in agriculture that can improve the present heterogeneous makeup of workers. Some work fast, some slow; some work every waking hour, some quit after four days because they have earned a time or money goal; some are males, some females; some of the best are boys; some are drifters; some have families to carry along; some are unemployable in industry; ethnic backgrounds range from the Mexican to the American Indian.

In conclusion, the National Council of Agricultural Employers is not opposed to farm workers belonging to labor unions or any other organization. The Council is opposed unqualifiedly to farm workers being forced to belong to a union in order to obtain work. We fail to see how the unionizing of the farm worker will assist