

would also disrupt the domestic supply of wholesome milk and dairy products which has been made available to American consumers.

For these reasons, the National Milk Producers Federation is opposed to enactment of H.R. 4769 and urges that the bill not be approved by your Subcommittee. We respectfully request that this statement be made a part of the record of hearings by your Subcommittee on this matter.

Sincerely,

E. M. NORTON, *Secretary.*

STATEMENT OF THE FREDERICK COUNTY FRUIT GROWERS' ASSOCIATION, INC.

The Frederick County Fruit Growers' Association, Inc. represents 160 fruit growers in the Northern Shenandoah Valley of Virginia and West Virginia. The growers will produce approximately 8 to 10 million bushels of apples in a normal crop year and will employ about 5,000 workers to harvest the crop.

The Frederick County Fruit Growers' Association, Inc. is composed of growers who are included in the 3% who would be affected by HR 4769, as Secretary Wirtz puts it, and the 97% whom the Secretary apparently thinks would not be affected.

We would take exception to the Secretary's opinion that only 3% of the farms would be affected and we take exception to his use of the average farm worker's wage being "today some place between \$1,100.00 and \$1,500.00 a year."

On April 18, 1967, Mr. John Francis Foy, Regional Administrator, Region III, Department of Labor, sent a telegram to the Virginia State Farm Placement Supervisor in which one complete sentence read: "Growers Winchester area should be informed that available Supply of workers for apple picking has increasingly tightened." (Complete telegram attached for the record.) Let us assume that the growers who would be affected by HR 4769 are unionized and the union controls the already tight supply of apple pickers. Is it not sensible then to suppose that the 97% whom it has been argued would not be affected by this bill would not have any labor with which to pick their apple crop? Now can it be said that any apple growers will not be affected by HR 4769?

When the Secretary states that the average farm worker's income is some place between \$1,100. and \$1,500. per year, depending on which of several measures is used, he leaves the subject immediately and does not explain how he arrives at those figures. Neither does he quote his source of information. If the Secretary includes in his averages all farm workers, part time as well as full time—then, of course, his averages would be low. For example, an average worker picking apples in 1966, the last normal crop year in Virginia, for the ten (10) week picking season earned \$1.517 per hour. If he worked 48 hours each week, he would have earned \$728.16. If this was the only farm labor he performed, his "farm worker's income" would fall considerably below even Mr. Wirtz' extremely low figures. We doubt that any thoughtful man would throw away a tasty, juicy Red Delicious for the reason that the person who picked it was underpaid. Representative members of this Association who would fall into the class which would be directly affected by HR 4769 report that the average year-round farm worker's income, exclusive of supervisors, for 1966 was:

Grower A—averaged \$1.35 per hour for 48 weeks at 48 hours per week or \$3,110.00 per year.

Grower B—averaged \$1.25 per hour for 48 weeks at 48 hours per week or \$2,903.00 per year.

And it must be remembered that the 1966 apple crop for each of these organizations and all the rest of the members of this Association was only 25% of normal.

The secretary rather naively suggests that the burden of absorbing all the risks and costs which are subject to the "whims of nature" are being borne by those who work in the fields. The worker has invested nothing until he steps on the field and begins to invest his energy. The farmer has bought and leased the land, cleared and tilled the soil, planted his trees, sprayed, pruned and nursed the trees for years, bought the tools and machinery, erected quarters for harvest labor and prayed that when the trees mature, he will not feel a freeze, witness a drought, see a blight, or fail to get labor to harvest what crop he might have. Will he now have to add one more prayer? After the money is spent and after all the risks are taken—then and only then does the harvest worker enter the picture.