

unionization could have on farmers' incomes. The farmer is uniquely vulnerable to strikes and labor disputes. Most businesses involved in a strike or labor dispute can close down their operations and sit out a considerable period of negotiations before starting up again. While such businesses may suffer some losses from a strike or labor dispute they are not usually disastrously affected.

The situation in agriculture is strikingly different. Farm operations cannot be halted because of a labor dispute. The harvest of crops, and other farming operations, must be undertaken on a timely basis. If they are interrupted, especially at harvest time, because of a labor dispute, farmers can not only lose their income for the year, but also lose overhead costs and direct expenditures which have been invested in bringing the crop to the harvest stage. Thus if unions could acquire control of the farm labor supply, and could acquire ability to undertake an effective strike, then farmers would be helpless to resist their demands even though they might be arbitrary and unreasonable.

It is said that NLRB might establish jurisdictional standards that would exclude many farmers from the jurisdiction of NLRB. But it is not clear that this would represent in practice an actual exclusion. If the larger farmers in the community are subject to the Act, and if labor unions are able to establish what is contemplated in the bill, that is, pre-season contracting and hiring hall arrangements, it seems most unlikely that other farmers could avoid being pulled into any conflict and settlement pattern that might develop.

The current economic picture of the farmer is also involved. I need not labor the fact that returns on farmers' labor and investment are comparatively low. Farmers are currently caught in a squeeze as farm costs steadily rise more rapidly than farm revenues. The result has been that increasing numbers of farmers are leaving agriculture for more profitable employment elsewhere. For the State of Mississippi this is reflected in the following data excerpted from page 7 of Volume 1, Part 33 of the 1964 Census of Agriculture.

Number of farms in Mississippi

1930 -----	312, 663	1950 -----	251, 383
1935 -----	311, 683	1954 -----	215, 915
1940 -----	291, 092	1959 -----	138, 142
1945 -----	263, 528	1964 -----	109, 141

Any increase in costs to farmers resulting from placing in the hands of unions the coercive economic power provided in H.R. 4769 would still further narrow the already narrow margin between revenues and costs, and force many farmers into bankruptcy.

Those that would survive would be the larger farmers who were able to acquire the capital to mechanize their operations and enlarge their holdings.

It is irrelevant to assert that this is likely to occur anyhow. This may be so in the long run. But the rate at which farms are mechanized and consolidated into larger units—and therefore the number of people, both farmers and farm workers, who would be adversely affected at any one time—would be accelerated by the enactment of H.R. 4769.

Unionization is supported by some as a matter of conviction and principle, as an answer to the problems of all segments of workers, as a right that every group of workers should have.

I do not concur with the idea that unionism is a concept that should be uniformly applicable in all circumstances, irrespective of the impact on those directly involved.

In the case of agriculture, I would submit that unionism would be harmful to farmers and harmful to workers. It wouldn't do anybody any good.

I therefore respectfully recommend to the Committee that H.R. 4769 not be approved.