

to affect the level and stability of farm income. Although farms in the future may be counted in thousands rather than millions, they will still be selling raw, undifferentiated products and be too numerous, diverse and scattered, in the absence of Government help, to control supplies in ways to influence significantly the general level of price.

That brings me to (b), enabling legislation to expand organization options. Available organizational devices, such as cooperatives and marketing orders as presently authorized, in many cases do not enable farmers to coordinate their individual production efforts, or to negotiate effectively with buyers. Increased flexibility and opportunity for group action are often needed. In responding to this need, the National Commission on Food Marketing concluded in 1966 that marketing orders and agreements should be authorized for any locally or regionally produced farm product. The idea of a new device, termed an "Agricultural Marketing Board," was also proposed.

Essentially an extension of a marketing order, such a board could be voted into effect by producers and could regulate production or marketing and negotiate prices. Besides an administrator representing the Secretary of Agriculture, each board would also include representatives of handlers and the public.

The Commission further believed specific legislation necessary "to protect the right of farmers to organize," that is, to prevent obstruction, boycott or intimidation in group activities of farmers to increase their bargaining power.

Other new devices which would facilitate joint efforts of farmers in production, in marketing, or in the acquisition and transfer of farm property, might be considered. Legislation could make it easier for cooperatives to gain a larger role in the total food and fiber sector of the economy, if this were deemed desirable.

Discussions along these lines are becoming more active. New organizational proposals are attempts to deal more effectively with the inherent instability of agricultural supplies, prices, and incomes and with the weak bargaining positions in which producers often find themselves. They are efforts to provide the farmer with institutional devices that would enable him to participate in group decisionmaking and perhaps accept some output restraints in order to gain, in return, greater influence over his future destiny and perhaps be able to recover or retain managerial independence which would otherwise be lost.

Now we will turn to the question of whether the family farm should be preserved. We must now face up to the question of whether it really makes any difference if the family farm, defined not only in terms of size, but also to include a reasonable degree of managerial independence, vanishes into history. To answer the question we will consider the family farm in four ways, in terms of morality, democracy, efficiency, and the economic organization of society.

Now, with respect to morality, I think I will summarize very briefly by saying that the case has been made that family farmers are more moral than other people. Yet the argument has been offered that there is essentially no difference between family farmers and other people. I think we cannot demonstrate whether people from family farms are more or less moral than other people, and we will need to look further to make the case for preserving the family farm.