

Migrant labor  
(1960 folder)

# The Community Meets The Migrant Worker

Current  
Programs  
and  
Trends

(BULLETIN 221)

1960



INSTITUTE OF INDUSTRIAL  
RELATIONS LIBRARY

SEP 27 1961

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA  
BERKELEY

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

James P. Mitchell, Secretary

BUREAU OF LABOR STANDARDS

Arthur W. Motley, Director

Washington, D.C. print. off. 1960

**Cover photo: Fiesta held for Latin Americans, Maumee, Ohio, 1958.**

# **THE COMMUNITY MEETS THE MIGRANT WORKER**

## **Current Programs and Trends**

---

### **MIGRANTS AND THEIR FAMILIES NEED**

**Leadership and Community Understanding**

**Day Care**

**Schooling**

**Child Labor Protection**

**Health Services**

**Emergency Help**

**Homemaking Skills**

**Adequate Housing**

**Safe Transportation**

**Responsible Crew Leaders**

**Social Security**

**Adequate Incomes**

**Help in Settling Down**



## FOREWORD

THE Bureau of Labor Standards, in carrying out its activities to promote improvement in the living and working conditions of agricultural migrants and their families, has recognized the vital importance of community understanding and action in this program. The Bureau, therefore, has prepared this report of community programs in the hope it will be helpful to other communities facing similar situations.

It is addressed to agencies, organizations, committees and individuals concerned with developing programs for domestic agricultural migrants. It is prepared from secondary sources and makes no attempt to be exhaustive. It points out the chief needs of migrant workers and shows current trends in meeting these needs by citing examples of what is being done in some communities and to a limited extent telling how it is done. The purpose of the report is to present ideas that have worked well in a few places so that they may be picked up and improved upon in other places. The emphasis is on constructive measures that are in some measure meeting migrant workers' needs.

The report points up the increasing cooperation of public agencies and private groups. It shows how community interest and understanding have stimulated the concern of State and national groups and helped to bring about the development of some new and more far-reaching programs in the last half of the decade.

The Bureau gratefully acknowledges the information and assistance given by other bureaus in the Department of Labor, the staff of the President's Committee on Migratory Labor, and by other Federal agencies in the preparation of this report. It also wishes to express appreciation for the information received from State agencies, State migratory labor committees, national organizations, and individuals concerned with the programs discussed.

"The Community Meets the Migrant Worker—Current Programs and Trends" was prepared by Louise Q. Blodgett of the State Services Division under the general direction of Beatrice McConnell, Assistant Director of the Bureau of Labor Standards, U.S. Department of Labor.



## INTRODUCTION

WHO are these agricultural migrants? Why do they move about so much? Why do they need special programs? These are questions often asked.

There are an estimated 500,000 or more domestic migratory farm workers—about 100,000 families.<sup>1</sup> They include Negroes, Spanish-speaking Americans and native whites. Some have always been migrants as their parents were before them. Others were once tenant farmers or sharecroppers. A few owned their own farms which they had to sell when neighboring farms were mechanized and they couldn't compete. Most migrants have little education and no skills other than in farm work.

They move because they must. Migrants, to earn a living for themselves and their families, must go where and when their labor is needed. They must work and earn during the weeks in the year when the work, depending on weather and crops, is available for them. On many large highly specialized farms, machinery is used in planting and cultivating. An expanding population and higher living standards require the production of ever greater quantities of fruits and vegetables, in the harvesting of which large numbers of workers are needed.

Many migrants have long periods of unemployment, however, while on the road or waiting for crops to ripen or for stormy weather to be over. The average income of the domestic agricultural migrant in 1957 was \$859.<sup>2</sup> His income is low partly because of irregular employment and partly because farmworkers usually are not protected by minimum wage, unemployment compensation and other labor laws.

Migrant workers are probably the most underprivileged group of workers in the United States. Not really belonging to any community, the migrants have missed out on school, church, health, welfare, and recreation services available to those who are residents of a community. When they come to a community that is interested in them, cares about them and tries to do something for them, the community finds that the migrants have an unexpected number of needs, and that one need will not be satisfactorily served without something being done about the others.

For example, a community that tries to break the cycle by getting the children into school finds that they need health services and so do their parents. The little children need day care so the older ones will

---

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 60-62 for footnotes.

not be kept out of school to take care of them. A few migrants may desperately need medical care and welfare services. Some of the housing is found to be so unsanitary that health services are not much use unless housing is improved. So it is necessary to develop one program after another. Some communities are doing just that with very satisfying results as this report will show. But a community can't do everything alone.

Increasingly, State and national agencies both public and private have become involved.

## **MIGRANTS NEED LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNITY UNDERSTANDING**

**"MIGRANTS NOT ADMITTED."** Such signs have sometimes been posted on stores, eating places, and moving-picture houses in communities near migrant labor camps. Local people avoided the migrants when possible; they feared they were dirty, might spread disease, or steal. Townspeople locked their doors when the migrants were around and were relieved when they were gone.

Gradually, however, people in a good many communities have come to realize that this is not a true picture of the migrants; that they have an obligation to these workers, who are necessary to their economy and who help bring prosperity to their communities; and that they are people with the same human wants and needs as local residents.

**Trend: Communities are becoming more friendly toward the migrants and are organizing committees to help them get those community services which have been denied them as they moved from place to place.**

**Question: Does the old attitude prevail in your community or is the community reaching out to the migrants?**

All programs to serve the needs of migrant workers come about more readily if favorable community attitudes are created first. But how? How do you start? What are the first steps? Second steps? How do you get a continuing program, not just a "brush fire that dies away"? Who can give leadership in a place where little or nothing has been done?

## **CHURCH GROUPS OFTEN PROVIDE LEADERSHIP**

Church groups in many communities have been the first to show concern for migrants. As they have gone into the farm labor camps to serve the spiritual needs of the migrants, they have seen the need of day care for the children and education and recreation for all ages. They have organized volunteers and developed programs in a great many communities. So people often turn first to church groups for leadership in launching a program.

*A Migrant Ministry Program in Michigan.*—For example, here is how it worked in Holland, Mich. A member of the executive committee of the Holland Council of Church Women, in the fall of 1957, learned that 2,000 migrants would be coming into the area in July and August to pick blueberries. The committee invited the Director of the Michigan Mi-

grant Ministry to come to Holland to help plan a program for the migrants. A daytime program for children too young to go to the fields and "family nights" in the evenings were suggested. When the committee called for volunteers, 86 people responded. Next a public meeting was held for which the chamber of commerce provided an assembly room. The Blueberry Growers Association, the board of education, the county health department, the Home Demonstration Agent, Red Cross, Camp Fire Girls, Boy Scouts, the 4-H leaders, and interested individuals were invited to present ideas. The committee members then attended the Migrant Ministry School at Battle Creek and later held an institute in Holland to teach other volunteers what they had learned.

The result was that more than 80 residents of the community worked directly with the migrants throughout the season. The daytime program for children included wash-up time, play with toys, group games, crafts, sewing, reading, Bible stories, and hymn singing. In the evenings teams of volunteers visited the camps and set up thrift sales, ball games for the teenagers, circle games for children, visits to the cabins for older people, and at dusk a film, a hymn-sing, and a worship service.<sup>3</sup>

Such programs as the above awaken the people of the community to the migrant's need for friendship, concern, respect, and help. The migrants show appreciation and increasing self-respect. An opening wedge is made toward better community relations.

## THE MIGRANT MINISTRY

The Migrant Ministry of the National Council of Churches started its direct service to migrants in 1920 in three farm labor camps on the east coast. In 1959, it had nearly 500 seasonal staff workers in 34 States and over 8,200 volunteers. Services reached approximately 150,000 migrants.<sup>4</sup>

The Migrant Ministry has many types of programs in migrant labor camps and a fleet of harvester-station wagons with equipment for non-denominational religious services, games, books, film projectors, record players, etc., that go from camp to camp. It identifies needs of migrants, demonstrates ways of meeting needs and stimulates activity on the part of other groups—public and voluntary. In recent years an increasing number of other agencies, public and private, have begun in some communities to take over more of the responsibility for expanding and carrying on services. Where little or nothing is being done for migrants, a few people interested in developing a program often call on the Migrant Ministry to help them get started.

## CATHOLIC ORGANIZATIONS

Catholic organizations have for years been militant in working for legislation that will benefit migrant workers. Now the Bishops' Committee for the Spanish Speaking, Catholic colleges, National Councils of Catholic Men and Women and local priests have extensive programs

---

<sup>3</sup> See pp. 60-62 for footnotes.



for migrants in many communities. The programs are on a parish basis and under the direction of the pastor of each parish, although often supplemented by personnel from outside the parish. These programs for migrants, while primarily of a spiritual and religious nature, also include summer schools for migrant children, recreational activities, and health and welfare services to the families. A Bishops' Committee for Migrant Workers has now been organized with offices in Chicago.

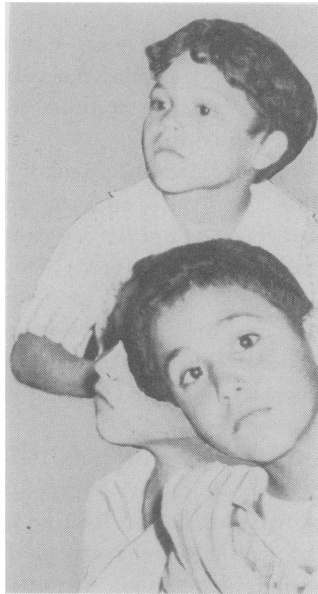
***Program of Council of Catholic Men and Women in Ohio.***—In Ohio for example, the Ohio Councils of Catholic Men and Women in cooperation with their pastors have developed an apostolate to migrants. The program is centered in the various parishes, each parish being responsible in the main for the care of migrants living within its boundaries.

Men and women of the parish are organized to teach in the camps. They supervise the distribution of clothing and food to those who are in need. They work with the parish priest to perform many services; for example, furnishing transportation to the health clinics, recruiting nurses, providing playground facilities for children, "selling" the community on the importance of accepting the migrant as a fellow citizen.

From June to October, five Spanish-speaking priests work full-time in the service of Ohio migrant workers and their families.<sup>5</sup>

**Trend: Churches are increasing their programs for migrants in labor camps.**

**Question: What are the church groups in your community doing for migrants?**



**They need a place to play.**

---

See pp. 60-62 for footnotes.

## COMMUNITY ACCEPTANCE OF MIGRANTS

Programs in the camps are serving a real need. But gradually church groups and others have come to realize that these programs are only one step in the right direction.

Migrants will still be second-class citizens until churches, schools, stores, health and welfare agencies, recreation centers—all community agencies, public and private—open doors to them. In some places, community committees are being broadened. Migrants are being welcomed in the community. Some of the signs of this are as follows:

**Weekend Centers** are being set up in some communities. The weekend center is usually in a downtown store-front building set up to welcome migrants when they come to town to shop and visit on Saturdays and Sundays. Toys, games, records, books, writing material, comfortable chairs, and magazines are all part of the program of friendship. Story hours and homemaking talks are held in some centers. There are nine such centers in Texas,<sup>6</sup> six in Arkansas,<sup>7</sup> one in Tennessee,<sup>8</sup> and other areas seem to be picking up on the idea.

**Fiestas** are providing a way of saying both "Welcome" and "Thank You" in some areas where Spanish-speaking migrants are working. They often include parades, dances, baseball games, contests, rides, and refreshments. All kinds of community groups contribute to their success. Hart, Mich. has had 11 annual fiestas. Maumee, Ohio, Caldwell and Twin Falls, Idaho, and Muscatine, Iowa also report fiestas.

**Speaking Spanish** is another way of making Spanish-speaking migrants feel welcome. In Montello, Wis., the storekeepers, farmers, professional people, etc., studied Spanish to improve relations between migrants and local people.

In Muscatine, Iowa, the Migrant Ministry distributes a *Welcome Sheet* listing churches, health resources, and recreation facilities. Some of the migrants are using the swimming pool and many of them go to the churches on Sunday. On Saturday evening the radio station broadcasts in *Spanish* a 15-minute news summary, including labor needs, and on Sunday morning a nondenominational church service. A *Sound Truck* is used Saturday afternoons when the migrants come to town to announce current events and play Spanish music.

**Building a Camp** for migrant Sioux Indian families was a 1958 project of a group of churches—Congregational, Methodist, Nazarene, Seventh Day Adventist, and Roman Catholic in Hemingford, Nebr. The church people were concerned about the conditions under which the Indians were living in tents by the railroad tracks. Now they have a labor camp built according to standards recom-

---

See pp. 60-62 for footnotes.

mended by the State Health Department. All these churches welcome the migrants to their services.

**Information on Community Services Available** is provided for migrants in Delaware. A leaflet given to migrants by the Delaware State Employment Service tells them of the free clinics provided by the State Board of Health, where to obtain welfare services, how to find out about the nearest school and the fact that local churches will welcome them to their services.

**"A Migrant Worker and Employer Guide"** published by the North Dakota Governor's Migratory Farm Labor Committee gives the migrants the names and addresses of the members of the Committee, the addresses of county health, welfare and school officials, information about the State Employment Service and Social Security offices. The section on "Community Life" says:

You and your family are a part of the community in which you have come to live and work. We want you to be a part of the community by participating in its organizations and activities in which you are most interested. We especially want you to become active in the church of your choice. If you have children, we encourage you to enroll them in school, Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, religious classes of instruction or any other activity for children and youth.

Other groups in the community, such as 4-H, Homemaker Clubs, Girl and Boy Scout organizations and Service Clubs are also available to you.

Attend and participate in county festivals, field days and any other events of your community.

**Trend: More migrants are being welcomed in the communities where they work.**

**Questions: Are migrants accepted in your community?**

**Are they welcome in stores, churches, schools, recreation areas, moving picture houses, etc.?**

## **NEW LEADERSHIP DEVELOPS IN LOCAL AND STATE COMMITTEES**

### **COMMUNITY COMMITTEES**

As community committees for migrants are developed and broadened to include representation of many public and private agencies, the person most interested in migrants or most familiar with community resources has assumed leadership. Often subcommittees are formed to achieve specific goals—as, for example, schooling or health services. But school facilities and health and welfare programs are geared to the resident population. Officials sometimes find it most difficult to extend community resources to include migrants and frequently turn to State agencies for help in overcoming the obstacles.

### **STATE COMMITTEES**

The concern of civic and religious groups and the gradual assumption of responsibility by State agencies to improve conditions for migrant

workers resulted in the formation of the first State migratory labor committees. Through committee action there was an exchange of information as to specific needs and programs were developed to meet some of them. Prior to 1954, State committees had been formed in only five States—Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. Since that time additional State committees have been established, bringing the present number to 28, as follows:

Arizona	Michigan	Rhode Island
Arkansas	Minnesota	South Carolina
Colorado	Nebraska	Tennessee
Delaware	New Jersey	Texas
Florida	New York	Virginia
Idaho	North Carolina	Washington
Illinois	North Dakota	West Virginia
Indiana	Ohio	Wisconsin
Maryland	Oregon	
Massachusetts	Pennsylvania	

*Types of State Committees.*—Some are interagency committees, others have representation of both public agencies and private organizations. A few are set up by law; most are appointed by governors of the respective States.\*

## RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL AND STATE COMMITTEES

The establishment of a State committee for migrants does not mean that there is no longer need for community committees which are essential in achieving the community acceptance of migrants that is basic to other programs. The community committee helps the State committee put programs into effect and vice versa. Both are providing leadership in achieving new goals for migrant labor.

**Trend:** In more and more States, State committees for migratory labor have been established.

**Questions:** Are community committees in you State interested in State action for migrants?

Have you a State migratory labor committee?

Have interested State agencies and organizations consulted the governor about the establishment of a State committee for migrant labor?

## LEADERSHIP IN CITIZEN ORGANIZATIONS

There are many citizen organizations, State and national, giving leadership in work for migrants. For example, the National Child

---

\*Further information about State migratory labor committees may be obtained from the Bureau of Labor Standards, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington 25, D.C.



Labor Committee has helped by getting funds from foundations for demonstration projects for migrants. The committee, along with other organizations such as the National Consumers League, works to improve legislation. The National Council on Agricultural Life and Labor is a clearing-house for private organizations, many of which are concerned with programs for migrants. The National Advisory Committee on Farm Labor brings together and presents factual information to stimulate public interest and helps social action groups make progress in improving the economic condition and status of farmworkers. The Council of State Governments sponsors regional conferences where State officials and others concerned with migratory labor problems compare notes on progress and methods by which it was achieved.

**Trend: More and more citizen groups with similar interests are working together to solve problems and develop legislative programs.**

**Question: Are you a member of a citizen organization working to improve conditions for migrant labor?**

## **THE PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE ON MIGRATORY LABOR**

In August 1954 the President appointed a Committee on Migratory Labor, made up of the Secretaries of Labor; Agriculture; Interior; Health, Education, and Welfare; and the Administrator of Housing and Home Finance Agency.

The President's Committee, through its constituent agencies and in cooperation with the States and with private, religious, and civic organizations, seeks solutions to those problems which are of primary concern to the migrant and his family.

The Committee has a secretariat financed through funds made available to the Labor Department for migrant labor functions. It has established a Working Group, consisting of senior staff assistants from the constituent agencies of the member departments. This group functions as a planning, coordinating, and reviewing body for the Committee.

Subcommittees of the Working Group have been established in numerous areas of special interest. These have developed standards in special fields such as regulation of labor camps, crew leaders, and transportation. Other committees are working on such problems as mechanization, education, financing of health services, guide to the responsibility of workers living in camps, and disaster programs for migratory farmworkers.

## **MIGRANT CHILDREN NEED DAY CARE AND OTHER CHILD WELFARE SERVICES**

What to do with the young children while migrant mothers work long hours in the fields has always been a problem. Some children are taken to the fields or locked in cars standing in the blazing sun. Babies are sometimes laid on the ground where they are subject to the hazards of dust, insects, snakes, and moving vehicles. Some children play on the irrigation ditch banks and have been known to fall in the water and drown. Others are left at camp under the supervision of a person too sick to work. Often older children stay home from school or from work in the fields to look after younger ones.

In any area where there is a considerable number of migrant families the need for a day-care center soon becomes obvious. Such a center not only provides much-needed care and protection for the children while their mothers work but also becomes a focal point through which other welfare and health services can be provided for these underprivileged children and their families. Surplus foods can be obtained and



Day-Care Center, St. Michaels, Maryland.

through the daily program of meals, rest periods, games, and free play, the children improve in health and in getting along with one another.

### **MIGRANT MINISTRY PROVIDES SOME DAY-CARE CENTERS**

Forty years ago the Migrant Ministry, in its first programs in farm labor camps, provided day care for young children. In later years they have had an expert in day care on its national staff who has given training and supervision to local staff. The Migrant Ministry is still operating day-care centers. In 1958 they operated 17 in 10 different States. Other agencies sometimes provide day care but it is not easy for an inexperienced group to set up and operate a good day-care center. In most States there are standards which must be observed. In over half the States, State public welfare agencies offer consultation services on day care and issue licenses for the operation of day-care centers.

### **GROUP DAY-CARE IS A CHILD WELFARE SERVICE**

Child welfare services are provided by State and local public welfare agencies. Group day care for children for whom public welfare agencies assume responsibility is an accepted child welfare service. There are no residence requirements for child welfare services.

Under Title V, Part 3 of the Social Security Act, Federal child welfare services funds are made available to State public welfare agencies for the purpose of "establishing, extending and strengthening their State and local child welfare services." These funds are provided through the Children's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Under policies for the administration of the program, these funds may be used for "costs of foster family or group day care, including the operation of day-care centers for children for whom the public welfare agency assumes responsibility by providing or purchasing services and care."<sup>9</sup> This policy makes it possible for State public welfare agencies to use these funds to operate day-care centers or pay for their operation by others. Federal grants are not earmarked for specific child welfare services. State plans for use of the funds are developed jointly by the State agency and the Children's Bureau.

### **NEW YORK WAS THE FIRST STATE TO USE PUBLIC FUNDS FOR DAY-CARE CENTERS FOR MIGRANTS**

In New York State a chain of day-care centers, some of which were started by the Migrant Ministry years ago, have been operated in recent years by the New York State Growers and Processors Association under contract with the Department of Agriculture and Markets. In 1958 the State Department of Social Welfare issued licenses for the operation of 11 day-care centers for migrants in New York. The expenses for the operation of these centers were borne 75 percent by the Department of Agriculture and Markets, 20 percent by the growers and 5 percent by the

---

<sup>9</sup> See pp. 60-62 for footnotes.

migrants.<sup>10</sup> But other States did not pick up on this plan of financing day-care centers.

## **A NEW APPROACH WAS MADE IN PENNSYLVANIA**

In the early 1950's the Pennsylvania Citizens' Committee for Migrant Labor was much concerned about the plight of migrant children in Pennsylvania. A representative of the National Child Labor Committee was working with the Chairman of this Citizens' Committee to improve conditions for migrants. They saw great need for a day-care center for migrant children in Potter County where many migrant families had recently come. They turned to representatives of the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare and its Division of Child Welfare Services for help.

## **DEMONSTRATION DAY-CARE CENTER IN POTTER COUNTY**

It was finally decided in 1954 that the resources of the Department of Public Welfare would be used for a demonstration day-care center in Potter County, Pa. It was financed mainly by public welfare funds with a contribution from the Pennsylvania Citizens' Committee for Migratory Labor. The Department of Public Welfare and the Governor's Committee for Migrant Labor, which meanwhile had been appointed, were made jointly responsible for the operation of the center the first year.

Voluntary organizations contributed toys and equipment and collected clothes for thrift sales. The American Friends Service Committee helped to staff the center. District nurses and a doctor from the State Department of Health vaccinated the children and gave shots for diphtheria and whooping cough. Neighbors frequently brought vegetables and ice cream for the children. It was a real community project.<sup>11</sup>

## **SERVICES ARE EXPANDED**

In 1956 responsibility for operation of the Potter County Day-Care Center was transferred to the Child Development Department of the College of Home Economics of Pennsylvania State University. The Department of Public Welfare paid for the operation on a per diem per child basis.

By 1956 the State and county health departments made available all facilities at their command. There were health conferences, immunizations and treatment for skin diseases, measles, pneumonia, diarrhea, and dysentery. Needed hospitalization was arranged for two children. The children in the center were given priority on medical services and then the examinations were extended to their older and younger brothers and sisters and finally to infants and children at camps in other areas of the State.

In 1956 too, a child welfare caseworker was provided for the migrants. She recruited the children for the day-care center and helped the parents understand its value. The Migrant Ministry referred many cases to her.

---

<sup>10</sup> See pp. 60-62 for footnotes.



She helped lone teenagers, pregnant mothers, a migrant whose twin babies had died while he was away, a young worker having epileptic seizures, and a mentally disturbed 17-year-old girl who moved from camp to camp armed with a knife.<sup>12</sup>

## **MORE DAY-CARE CENTERS AND SERVICES**

From November 1957 to April 1958 the Pennsylvania Governor's Committee and its Subcommittee on Migrant Child Welfare held biweekly meetings to develop plans for extending the day-care program to other communities. Community planning meetings were held with citizens and public officials concerned in two counties. By 1958 there were four day-care centers, one financed and operated by the Welfare Department, two financed by the Welfare Department and operated by the Pennsylvania State University on a "purchase of service" agreement, and one financed and operated by the Mennonites. In 1958 there were five social workers connected with the State's migrant program. Foster home care, which is considered more desirable for infants than group care, was provided for nine babies in seven homes. Public aid was brought into the picture when social workers found mothers ill, without money and the children unfed; or again a father whose earnings were inadequate to care for his eight children.<sup>13</sup>

## **RESULTS OF INTERAGENCY AND CITIZEN COOPERATION**

What happened in Pennsylvania is an illustration of how a program to serve a group of children in one area led not only to day-care centers in other areas but also to health and welfare services for migrants of all ages. Through the Governor's Committee on Migrant Labor and its subcommittees, progress has also been made in solving other problems, such as schooling, housing, transportation, and regulation of crew leaders.

## **APPROACHING PUBLIC WELFARE AGENCIES ON DAY CARE**

In approaching public welfare agencies for help in establishing day-care centers for migrants, it is well to find out first how these agencies are operated in your State. In some States the local agencies have most of the responsibility for developing and operating programs; in other States it is the State agency that has the responsibility. Although group day care is a child welfare service, many public welfare agencies have concentrated their efforts on other child welfare services and may never have financed or operated a group day-care program. Also the services of State and local agencies are primarily geared to the needs of the local population, and welfare officials may not be fully aware of the needs of migrant children or prepared to finance services. But in several States public welfare agencies are now giving help in day care for migrants.

---

See pp. 60-62 for footnotes.

## OTHER STATES USING PUBLIC WELFARE FUNDS FOR FINANCING DAY-CARE CENTERS

*Ohio.*—In Lucas County, Ohio, the Curtice day-care center operated by the Lucas County Child Welfare Board was financed by public welfare funds<sup>14</sup> in 1957, 1958, and 1959.

*Iowa.*—In 1959 in Muscatine, Iowa, the State Department of Public Welfare met half the expense of a day-care center for migrants, the community the other half.

*Maryland.*—In 1959 the Maryland State Department of Public Welfare helped finance a day-care center operated by the Migrant Ministry in Somerset County on a per child per diem basis. This represented nearly half the total cost, the balance being paid by the Council of Churches.

*Virginia.*—In 1959 the Migrant Ministry was reimbursed by the State Department of Public Welfare on a per capita per diem basis for part of the cost of operating two day-care centers, one in Cheriton and one in Accomac, Va.

**Trend:** Public welfare funds are beginning to be used to support day-care programs for migrant children.

**Questions:** Are day-care centers provided for the children of migrants in your area?

Is there broad community representation on your local committee?

Does your committee use the consultation and assistance available in your State and local public welfare agencies?

Does your State committee have a subcommittee on child welfare services?

Has your committee conferred with the child welfare representative of the United States Children's Bureau in your region? \*

## MIGRANT CHILDREN NEED SCHOOLING

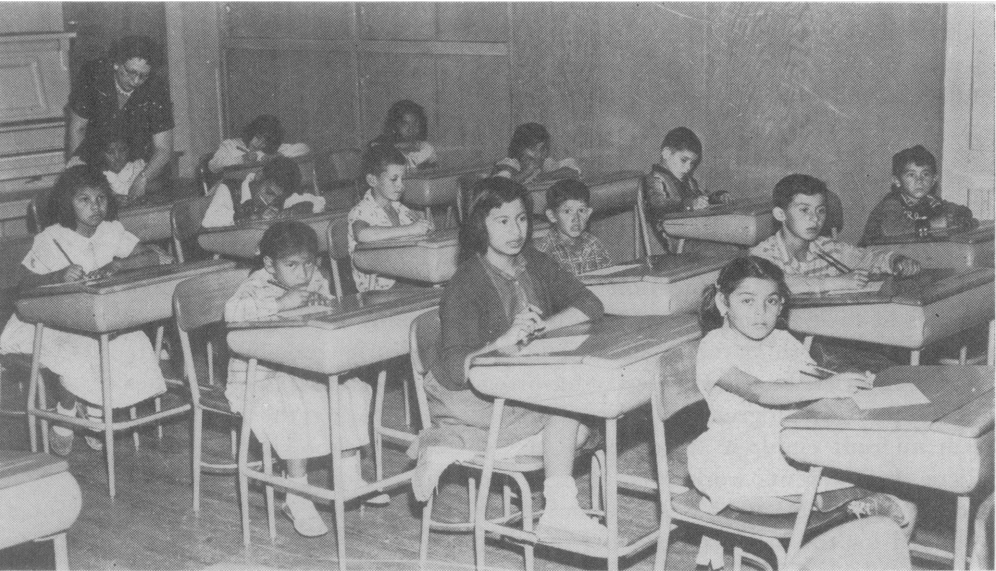
Migrant children generally enter home-base schools late and leave early. They get no schooling while traveling from place to place. When they arrive at their destination they may find schools closed for crop vacations. Where schools are open, migrant children often find they are not welcome. Soon they are behind other children in school achievement—increasingly so as they get older. Studies show most are retarded from 1 to 5 years.

---

\* The Children's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare has nine regional offices whose child welfare staff consults with representatives of State welfare departments on plans for extending and strengthening their child welfare services.

## **FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT AMENDED TO PROHIBIT EMPLOYMENT DURING SCHOOL HOURS**

When the Fair Labor Standards Act was amended in 1950, it became illegal for children under 16 to be employed in agriculture while schools were in session. This provided an added reason for admitting them to school—but still comparatively few communities sought out the children or welcomed them if they appeared. As the new amendment began to be enforced there were many complaints that children who were not allowed to work were being refused admittance at school.



**A school away from home.**  
Courtesy Bay City Times, Bay City, Mich.

## **SERIES OF CONFERENCES CALL ATTENTION OF SCHOOL OFFICIALS TO THE LAW AND THE NEED FOR COMMUNITIES TO OPEN SCHOOL DOORS TO MIGRANT CHILDREN**

In 1952 the U.S. Office of Education held regional conferences with the chief State school officers to stimulate nationwide interest of school officials in the education of the children of migrants. Since then education of migrant children has been discussed at many community, State, regional and national conferences and congressional hearings. These conferences have brought out the obstacles and made many recommendations for ways in which communities and States could overcome them.

## **SOME COMMUNITIES OVERCAME OBSTACLES AND PROVIDED SCHOOLING FOR THE CHILDREN OF MIGRANTS WITHOUT HELP FROM THE STATE**

In the early 1950's a small proportion of the communities that had migrants managed to solve the problem for themselves. Under the

leadership of a few interested people in a community, resistance of local parents to having their children associate with migrant children was overcome. The resistance of school officials to having the school program disrupted by children who attend for a few days, weeks, or months was superseded by a sense of responsibility for these children who so much needed schooling. The children were sought out, given the necessary immunizations, and somehow the space, teachers and other facilities were found and financed. Teachers adapted curricula as best they could. Examples of such communities are Hollandale, Minn.; Morgan County, Colo; Hoopeston, Ill.; King Ferry, N.Y., and many communities in California where the migrants were often California's own children. In the mid-fifties, however, a large proportion of communities in many States still failed to seek out the migrant children. Some admitted those who came to school; others rejected them.

### **EDUCATION PROJECTS OF STATEWIDE SIGNIFICANCE IN RECENT YEARS**

In the last few years there has been a trend for more broadly based efforts. Many State education departments have advised local school officials of their responsibility for providing schooling for migrants. For example, in North Carolina all elementary school principals in the State have been briefed on the necessity for providing adequate school facilities and teachers for migrant children of school age. During the fall school term migrant children are expected to attend the schools in the areas where their parents work even though the time is short. For the past three years in September additional teachers and buildings have been obtained for the increased number of school-age children in the Hendersonville area. Four additional teachers were obtained in 1958 for a period of 4 months. The North Carolina schools use the school transfer record for migrant children which has proved to be helpful.

Of course, the fact that a State education department advises local school officials of their responsibility for the education of migrant children does not necessarily mean that they get into school in all communities. Citizen interest and support and continuing effort on the part of school officials in seeking out the children is required.

**Trend:** In the last few years there has been a growing interest on the part of school officials and others to provide schooling for migrants and to see that the children get into school.

**Questions:** What is your community doing to get migrant children into school?

Does your State school attendance law clearly require children of migrants to attend school?

How is the school attendance law being enforced in your area?



**Do you have a committee for migrants that finds out when the migrants are coming, where they will be located, and how many school-age children there will be in your area?**

**Is your committee working with local school and health officials and private agencies on such problems as community acceptance of the children; providing school clothes and necessary immunizations; preparing local children to welcome the migrants; providing necessary school facilities?**

## **PROGRESS IN 1959 IN TWO STATES**

### **OREGON MAKES A "STUDY OF SEASONAL WORKERS' CHILDREN IN OREGON SCHOOLS" AND GETS AN APPROPRIATION TO DO A MORE ADEQUATE JOB FOR THEM**

The purpose of the Oregon study was to find out how many children of seasonal workers actually were in school and how adequately they were being educated.

The State Department of Education made the study in cooperation with the Governor's Interagency Committee on Migratory Labor and an Interim Committee of the Legislature concerned with migrant problems. The school records of 1,287 children enrolled in nine counties in the 1957-58 school year were studied. County and district superintendents, principals, teachers, school nurses, welfare workers, attendance officers, summer school-camp directors, members of school boards, farmers, orchardists and growers were interviewed.

The usual problems of overcrowding were reported. In some schools gymnasiums and basements had been converted into classrooms. Six districts employed nine extra teachers for 2 to 2½ months. Usually the children were assimilated in regular classes.

The study included information on the number of years the children were retarded. It showed that 26 percent were at grade level; 33 percent were retarded 1 year; the rest were retarded 2 to 6 years; only 27 children who were 6 years retarded stayed in school. The largest percentage of children attending were in the 6-8-year group. Attendance dropped off rather sharply after 11 years of age.

In 64 percent of the school districts, attendance officers or principals made a special effort to get the children into school; in other districts they did not "beat the bushes" but all pupils who voluntarily attended were accepted in school. The report showed an estimated 2,450 children of school age in the State during the harvest season and concluded that only slightly more than half were in school.<sup>15</sup>

---

See pp. 60-62 for footnotes.

That the people of Oregon were not satisfied with what was being done for the education of children of seasonal workers is attested to by action of the 1959 legislature; \$50,000 was appropriated for this purpose for the biennium beginning July 1, 1959. Part of the money was for a pilot summer school program. The State Board of Education was authorized to contract with school districts and State institutions of higher learning for this purpose. Also the Board was authorized to employ a "Migrant Children Education Administrator" to evaluate the pilot program and to make a census of the total number of migrant children in the State, the number attending regular schools, and the number in the pilot program. It provided that the Administrator should make a report to the Board before November 1, 1960, that would include recommendations as to the establishment of a permanent program for the education of migrant children. It created an "Advisory Committee on Migrant Children Education" to advise the Board and the Migrant Children Education Administrator on the pilot program and the permanent program.

In July 1959, Oregon began to operate pilot summer schools in two areas with its new appropriation.

## **OHIO SOLVES THE SCHOOL TAX PROBLEM AND EXPANDS SUMMER SCHOOL PROGRAM**

In Ohio the school census on which school taxes were based was taken in mid-October after most of the migrants had left. This created serious problems for some school officials who had been enrolling the children of migrants in the spring and fall. Most of the children were retarded and needed special attention.

Ohio made a two-pronged attack on the problem: (1) a survey in the nine counties where migrant labor was employed and (2) a demonstration summer school in Ottawa County.

The survey had been proposed by the Subcommittee on Education of the Governor's Committee on Migrant Labor. The State Department of Education with the cooperation of administrators and teachers in nine counties obtained information on 580 children enrolled in 56 schools—the enrollment per school, days in attendance, their age and grade placement, and extent of retardation and language handicap. After the survey the Subcommittee on Education held meetings in northwestern Ohio to which they invited employers, church workers, and school people to discuss what should be done.

Meanwhile, the Consumers' League of Ohio had been exploring the possibility of a summer school. The League found that the Ottawa County Board of Education would conduct such a school if a way could be found to finance it. The League referred the request for funds to the Elizabeth S. Magee Foundation, which, with the assistance of the Ohio Council of Church Women, financed the school for 2 years. Reports of the project show that the children had the same range of learning ability

as a comparable group in an average public school, that they were retarded from 1 to 6 years because of irregularity in school attendance and language difficulty, that they gained educationally, socially and physically while at summer school. The report pointed out the need for more summer schools.<sup>16</sup>

The next step was to use the survey on enrollment in regular schools and the report showing the need for more summer schools to get support for legislation to do two things: (1) to reimburse local boards of education for extra expenses incurred for migrants during spring and fall; and (2) to allow for use of State funds for summer schools. The Governor supported this legislative proposal and the inclusion in the budget of \$175,000 for the biennium. No opposition was encountered either from the legislators or the finance chairman in the House and Senate. The law was amended and the appropriation was obtained in 1959.

**Trend: State education departments are helping communities provide education for children of migrants.**

**Questions: Do you have a State Committee for Migrants that supports your State Education Department in overcoming obstacles to the education of migrant children? In many States the Governor of the State has appointed such a committee. Have you tried to organize a group to discuss such a Committee with the Governor of your State?**

## **SUMMER SCHOOLS FOR CHILDREN OF MIGRANTS**

There has apparently been a growing awareness that, even if migrant children attend regular schools in most places where their parents work, there will be gaps in their schooling because of time lost while traveling, and because some communities still reject them or close schools for crop vacations while the migrants are there. An increasing number of summer schools are being set up to help close those gaps.

In addition to the summer schools in Ohio and Oregon there are also summer schools for migrant children in Colorado, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Minnesota, and perhaps other States.

## **THE COLORADO PILOT SCHOOLS**

The first pilot school in Colorado was a local project in Wiggins in 1955. Then in 1957 a 3-year "research in action" program was started by the Colorado Department of Education and the U.S. Office of Education. The U.S. Office of Education financed the research and the State department of education the "pilot schools." These are summer schools operated by local school districts. There were four in 1958 and five in 1959. Before the schools open each year, workshops for the teachers are

---

See pp. 60-62 for footnotes.

held at the Adams State College of Colorado. The pilot schools aim to offer school opportunity to a maximum number of migrant children; to provide suitable curricula; to contribute to the health, health habits, and character growth of the children; to interest them in attending school, and encourage their parents to enroll them.

There were 359 children enrolled in the pilot schools in 1958. The reports indicate that the children who attended made good progress in the use of the English language, in reading, arithmetic, music and arts. They gained in self-discipline and in ability to get along with others. Growth-weight charts showed above-normal gains. The individual reports reflect happy children.<sup>17</sup>

This pilot program is not yet completed. The Colorado Department of Education has issued interesting reports of the project with valuable statistical information and human interest stories.

## **NEW YORK STATE EXPANDS SUMMER SCHOOL PROGRAM**

In 1956 and 1957 the New York State Department of Education financed, and local school officials operated, pilot summer schools in two communities with a special appropriation of \$10,000 a year. New York has 35,000 migrants with 4,000 to 5,000 children.

The report of the State Education Department in describing the purposes and objectives says:

In visualizing the entire program, it may be said that the purpose of the pilot summer schools for the children of migrant workers is to change what many consider to be a liability into an asset; to use our zeal for a better Nation by investing in its future through better educational opportunities for our migrant population; to unselfishly build for our migrant workers and their children the opportunities, rewards and respect that they and their services deserve; to better understand these children and secure information useful to local schools in providing more appropriate education for these and similarly underprivileged children during the regular school year.

The New York State child labor law prohibited employment in agriculture of minors under 14 years of age outside school hours and during school vacations. The report states:

The statistics in the tables at the end of the report indicate that attendance was only a few percentage points below a normal expectancy for a regular school year, even though attendance was voluntary.

The program was adapted to the needs of the group and of individuals in the group. The children and parents were reported to be well satisfied with the program. Teachers in the regular schools who had some of the children before and again after they had attended summer school were most enthusiastic about the results.<sup>18</sup>

In 1958, the New York State education law was amended to provide for reimbursement of local school districts that operated summer schools under specified conditions. The 1958 appropriation was for \$10,000 which still provided for only two schools.

---

<sup>17</sup> See pp. 60-62 for footnotes.

In 1959, an appropriation of \$40,000 was made for the summer school program, and summer schools for migrants were operated in five communities. All the money was not used and Education Department officials in New York State hope to expand the program in 1960.

The 1959 report says the purpose of the summer school program for the younger migrant children was to provide a general education program specifically designed to bring them nearer to actual age-grade level in basic subjects and also to facilitate the process of integration with the regular school classes in the fall term.<sup>19</sup>

In New York State a census of migrant children is taken each year and all children from 7 to 16 years of age are required to attend school. Local school districts receive State aid for migrants, on the same basis as for other children.

### **PENNSYLVANIA HAS DEMONSTRATION SUMMER SCHOOL**

Since 1955, Pennsylvania has had a summer school for migrants in Potter County operated by Pennsylvania State University. Sponsored by the Governor's Committee on Migratory Labor, the school has been financed by private funds, mainly through the National Child Labor Committee, private foundations, and the Committee on Civil Rights of the United Steelworkers of America. Seventy-one children attended in 1958.<sup>20</sup>

Efforts have been made in Pennsylvania to have this summer school and others that are needed financed by the State, but the legislature in 1959 turned down a bill to provide State funds for summer schools. However, in 1959 a State law was passed in Pennsylvania providing for reimbursement to local school districts of an extra \$1 per migrant child per day, not exceeding 40 days for each such child in attendance during the regular school term.

### **NEW JERSEY HAS SUMMER SCHOOLS FOR MIGRANTS**

Three summer schools were supported by a legislative appropriation in the budget of the Bureau of Migrant Labor in the Department of Labor and Industry in 1959. They were financed and sponsored by the Bureau with the State Department of Education assisting in the operation of the school program. At a hearing held before the Special Subcommittee on Migratory Labor of the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare in Trenton, N.J., on November 30, 1959, the Governor and representatives of several Government agencies and private groups expressed approval. The vice president of the New Jersey Farm Bureau said:

We commend the New Jersey Migrant Labor Board for its pioneering efforts in establishing three summer schools for migrant children.

In New Jersey for several years there has been a law prohibiting employment in agriculture for children under 12 years of age outside school hours and during school vacation.

---

See pp. 60-62 for footnotes.

In the past year special emphasis has been given to vocational training. Two experimental projects have been developed with Foundation funds, one in Florida with a group of teenage boys where they are learning skills in motor mechanics. The other experiment is in New Jersey, where 80 migrant boys and girls for the third summer have been building two model cabins, repairing an old car, planning meals, making skirts and dresses, cooking and serving supper for the whole group, and repairing screen doors on the cabins where they live for the summer. Last year many of the parents asked to be included, and it became an educational project in homemaking and family living. Two exceptionally skillful teachers, one in industrial arts and the other in home economics, directed the project. The head of the Division of Vocational Education of the State Department of Education served as consultant, and under his direction a guide for school teachers is being prepared, thereby extending the influence of the project far beyond the 80 children immediately involved.<sup>21</sup>

### **MICHIGAN EXPERIMENTS WITH SUMMER SCHOOLS**

The Detroit Council of Catholic Women is sponsoring summer schools for migrant children in southern Michigan. Six of the schools are staffed by Marygrove College, Detroit, and the seventh by Siena Heights College, Adrian, Mich. These schools have been operating for several years. In the summer of 1959 there were 440 children enrolled.<sup>22</sup>

A demonstration school in Bay County, Mich., financed mainly by the National Child Labor Committee in 1956 and 1957, was not continued in 1958.<sup>23</sup> Requests for funds to carry on the program were made to the State legislature but money was not granted.

### **MINNESOTA HAS SUMMER BOARDING SCHOOLS FOR MIGRANT CHILDREN**

For many years the Crookston Diocese of the Catholic Church has provided boarding schools for the children of migrants in Moorhead and Crookston, Minn. In these parochial schools, rooms and gymnasiums are transformed into dormitories and the children live at the schools from Monday through Friday.<sup>24</sup>

**Trend: Summer schools for migrants are increasing.**

**Questions: Is there any interest in summer schools for children of migrants in your State?**

**Have you explored the possibilities with your State education departments, universities, the U.S. Office of Education, and private foundations?**

---

See pp. 60-62 for footnotes.

## UNIVERSITY COOPERATION IN EDUCATION OF MIGRANT CHILDREN

The preceding pages mention the cooperation of universities in summer school programs in Colorado, Michigan, and Pennsylvania.

In at least two State universities, in cooperation with State education departments, school administrators and classroom teachers have also developed materials to help teachers who have migrant children in their classrooms during the regular school year.

"Working with Migrant Children in Our Schools" issued by *Florida State University*, Tallahassee, Fla, says in the foreword:

This booklet is both a report of work accomplished by a group of teachers, principals and supervisors in an extension class situation and a handbook for other teachers engaged in teaching children enrolled in schools serving both resident and migrant populations.

We brought to this work a wealth of experience, most of us having taught in this area a number of years. If the reader is inclined to place a high trust in experience, he may be assured that our cumulated experience exceeds three hundred years.

In addition to the contributions made by each of us, we drew freely upon the work of our fellow teachers in the Glades area and enlisted their aid in testing new ideas as they were developed.

"Nomads of the Classroom—Special Helps for Migrant Children in Arizona Classrooms" is a report of a workshop at *Arizona State College*, Tempe, Ariz. In addition to chapters on curricula it has a section on "Hi-lights in Teaching the Bi-lingual Child," a bibliography and a listing of films used in teaching.

Since many migrant children who are in Florida and Arizona during the winter move to other States the following months, these materials should be especially useful to the teachers of these children.

**Trend: Some State universities have developed material to help teachers of migrant children.**

**Question: Have teachers of migrant children in your area seen these studies?**

## RESEARCH PROJECTS OF UNIVERSITIES ON EDUCATION OF MIGRANT CHILDREN

Research projects in three universities concerned with the education of migrant children are supported by funds provided through the Office of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

*Southern Illinois University* is studying the effect of farm labor performed by nonresidents on the education of their children and how this interference could be lessened.

*The University of Wisconsin* is studying how to design and test a feasible system of providing education for the children of migrants outside of their home communities. On January 20, 1960, the Wisconsin legislature passed a joint resolution which affirmed that the State of Wisconsin

intended to meet its responsibilities for helping to create, develop, and maintain an effective educational program during regular school periods and during the summer for the children of migrant workers in the State.

*Western Michigan University* has completed a study to clarify the educational patterns of migrant children in two localities in Van Buren County. The final report entitled "A Study of Migrant Education—Survey Findings in Van Buren County, Michigan 1957" can be purchased from Western Michigan University Press, Kalamazoo, Mich., 50 cents a copy.

**Trend:** Some universities are working on educational problems of the children of migrants.

**Question:** What are universities in your area doing to find ways of improving education programs for migrants?

## **THE CHILDREN OF MIGRANTS NEED BETTER CHILD LABOR PROTECTION**

Agriculture is the only "big business" in the Nation today that employs large numbers of children. Children have long been and still are a substantial segment of the labor force that cultivates and harvests the crops. In July 1957 an estimated 457,000 children, 10 to 15 years old, did paid agricultural work. Of these, more than half were children 10 to 13 years of age. Just how many of these children are migrants is not known.

In 1959 the Farm Placement Service of the United States Employment Service issued work schedules for 6,780 groups under the Annual Worker Plan. Of the individuals in these groups 140,701 were over 16 years of age; 25,120 or 15.1 percent of the total were under 16, not all of whom were workers.

In fiscal 1959 the Wage and Hour and Public Contracts Divisions' investigators found 4,389 children illegally employed during school hours on 1,749 farms:

764 or 17 percent were 9 years of age or under

2,352 or 54 percent were 10–13 years of age

1,273 or 29 percent were 14 or 15 years old

Of these 4,389 children found illegally employed in fiscal 1959, 39 percent were migrants.<sup>25</sup>

### **LEGAL PROTECTIONS**

Under State child labor laws children employed in agriculture have less protection than in any other occupation except domestic service. Within the continental United States, State laws specifically prohibit employment in agriculture during school hours in only 13 States—California, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, New

See pp. 60–62 for footnotes.



Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Utah, and Virginia. However, in some of these States the minimum age for employment during school hours is 14 or 15 rather than 16 years of age.

In 15 other States the general minimum age for employment during school hours might be interpreted to cover agriculture. Only six States provide a minimum age for employment in agriculture outside school hours and during school vacations—California, Connecticut, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, and Utah—and the minimum age established in these States varies from 10 to 14 years of age. In 1960 Wisconsin established by regulation a 12-year minimum age for employment in cherry orchards, market gardening, gardening conducted or controlled by canning companies, and the culture of sugar beets and cranberries.

In 19 States, child labor laws provide no minimum age for work in agriculture, either during or outside school hours.

The Fair Labor Standards Act, commonly known as the Wage and Hour Law, prohibits employment in agriculture only during school hours. A primary purpose of the law is to get the children out of the fields so that work will not keep them from attending school.

### **CROP VACATIONS CAUSE LOSS OF SCHOOLING FOR MIGRANT CHILDREN**

Lack of a minimum age for employment in agriculture outside school hours in the Federal law and in most State laws makes crop vacations feasible during the regular school year and causes much absence from summer schools.

As the children of migrants go with their parents from one crop peak to another they may find schools closed for crop vacations in many of the areas where their parents work. While the number of days schools are in session is determined by State laws, the opening and closing dates of school sessions are usually determined locally. Many local school administrators close schools during crop peaks. There are crop vacations in Arkansas, California, Colorado, Florida, Idaho, Louisiana, Maine, Mississippi, Missouri, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, and possibly in other States. In some of these States only a few communities have crop vacations, in other States many communities do. While local children make up days lost by crop vacations, migrant children go on to other areas where a crop vacation may be just beginning. Some of the children thus lose their opportunity to attend school. The crop vacation therefore partially defeats the purpose of the minimum age set by Federal law for children employed in agriculture.

### **LACK OF CHILD LABOR LAWS CAUSES ABSENCE FROM SUMMER SCHOOLS**

Summer schools for children of migrants are set up to offset time lost in regular schools but employment in agriculture competes with summer school if such employment is not prohibited by law. The following are

quotations from reports of summer school programs for migrant children in States where child labor laws do not protect children from employment in agriculture:

"During the last week of July, they began to work in potatoes and the attendance dropped sharply. It is not hard to understand how parents would take their children out of school when their earnings may mean the difference between enough food and clothing and a scarcity of these later on." (1956 report of summer school in Bay County, Mich.)

"The sharpest decrease in attendance occurred on Monday, July 22d when most of the beans were ready for the first picking." ("Who Will be Responsible," 1957 report of summer school in Potter County, Pa.)

"A sharp decrease in the attendance of older children occurred when the pickles were ready to harvest." (1958 report of summer school in Ottawa County, Ohio.)

"Enrollment was less than anticipated \* \* \* some of the children we had expected back were seen going to the fields to work." (1958 report of summer school in Fort Lupton, Colo.)

"Attendance, except in isolated cases, was very unsteady, especially among the older children. \* \* \* As the picking progressed older boys and girls went to work." ("The Teacher Says," 1959 report of school in Palisade, Colo.)

"The 43 percent of absences because of work is of vital interest to a society that is earnestly seeking to bring these children and educational opportunity together. Are these children legitimately in the fields? \* \* \* Should the schools cooperate with the employment practices officials to eliminate this child labor? How many other children are in the fields instead of in school? Would knowing these facts help to develop an enrollment-attendance program that will be effective?" ("Now We Go Too"—A Summary Report of the 1958 Colorado Pilot Schools for Children of Migratory Farm Labor Families.)

**Trend: Efforts of communities to provide schooling for the children of migrants are not being reinforced by improvements in child labor laws.**

**Questions: Does your State child labor law set a minimum age for employment of children in agriculture during school hours? Outside school hours?**

**Have you discussed the possibility of improving your State child labor law with your State labor commissioner and others?**

**Are crop vacations in your community curtailing school opportunities for migrant children?**

**Are you reporting cases where you know children under 16 are employed during school hours to the nearest office of the Wage and Hour and Public Contracts Divisions of the U.S. Department of Labor?**

## **MIGRANTS NEED HEALTH SERVICES**

Migrants have the same health problems as other people in their socioeconomic group. Some have physical defects such as nutritional anemia, intestinal parasites and diarrhea, skin diseases and dental defects. Crowded and unsanitary living conditions sometimes contribute to the spread of communicable diseases such as tuberculosis and venereal diseases, occasionally polio, diphtheria, and whooping cough. Some migrant women have babies without seeing a doctor and with little knowledge of how to take proper care of themselves or their babies. Many migrants need education in health and nutrition.<sup>26</sup>

Migrants usually work in rural counties and sometimes in remote areas where the services of doctors and public health nurses are least readily available. They often "feel poorly" without knowing where to seek help. Since the earnings of migrants are low, they often lack money to pay for health and medical care. Hence communities will want to know the extent to which public resources can be made available.

## **PUBLIC RESOURCES FOR HEALTH SERVICES**

Public health services are provided by State and county departments of health and local public health agencies. There are no residence requirements for public health services. In mobilizing health services for migrants, communities often call on State and local health agencies for their "preventive health services" such as prenatal and child-health clinics, health education, and services for the control of communicable and chronic diseases. Only as health agencies are made aware of the needs of migrants are services provided. Like other State and community agencies, public health agencies gear their services primarily to residents. Counties that have few residents may have small staffs in relation to the number of migrants and their need for services. Some counties have no local public health agency.

## **GETTING COOPERATION OF PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCIES**

Local health departments can sometimes provide or arrange for services for migrants. Rural counties that do not have health departments sometimes have a public health nurse through whom people can call on their State departments of health for services not provided locally. Where there are no public health workers, people will need to call directly on their State health departments.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>26</sup> See pp. 60-62 for footnotes.



**Clinic, New York City.**  
Children's Bureau photo by Esther Bubley

## **PUBLIC RESOURCES FOR MEDICAL CARE**

State and local public welfare agencies provide medical care for people who cannot afford to pay. In almost all States where migrants are employed in considerable numbers, there are residence requirements for medical care other than that which is available under public health services.

## **COMMUNITY HEALTH PROGRAMS**

Programs to provide community health services for migrants are often initiated by church groups or other agencies having a first-hand knowledge of their health needs. Most community programs utilize both public and private resources in setting up health programs for migrants.

**Maricopa County, Ariz.**—The Director of the Migrant Ministry used to dream of a mobile clinic for migrants. He knew that the migrants were so far away from health facilities that mothers often had their babies without seeing a doctor and that some babies died unnecessarily. He

had seen crippled children without proper care. He was distressed at the lack of followup care for four children who had been badly burned when a tub of boiling water had spilled onto a sleeping group.

He discussed these problems and his hopes for a mobile clinic with the Maricopa Migrant Committee made up of educators, health and welfare officials, ministers and housewives. One of the ministers interested his Kiwanis Club in the project and the club raised \$1,500 to finance the building of a trailer. A local trailer builder agreed to build the mobile unit and county health department officials advised on its planning and equipment. A church youth fellowship from Phoenix held a big outdoor Easter sunrise service and gave the offering of several hundred dollars for equipping the mobile clinic. The Mennonites offered to send a full-time nurse to Maricopa County. Local doctors and nurses offered their services. As is the case in many communities where health services are newly organized, some migrants had to be persuaded to use them, but the mobile clinic became a going concern in 1959.

**Guadalupe Clinic, Saginaw, Mich.**—For several years the Guadalupe Clinic operated by Sisters of the Holy Ghost and supported by Catholic Charities has been serving a Spanish-speaking group largely composed of recent migrants to Michigan but available to other needy persons who fail to meet residence requirements for welfare aid. During the 1958 season the clinic was operated four afternoons a week with resident staff of all three of the Saginaw hospitals assisting. On a typical afternoon about 35 or 40 persons are seen for general medical care, immunizations and prenatal and postnatal care.<sup>28</sup>

**Freeborn County, Minn.**—In Maple Island, near Hollandale, Minn., St. Mary's Catholic Church and the Guild of Our Lady of Guadalupe led in developing a community program for migrants which included health services. During a recent season, 49 mothers were enrolled in evening classes in maternal and child care. Local physicians and two county nurses participated in three clinics in which 204 women and children were examined. Hospitals and druggists provided needed medication.

Classes in child care, food preparation and hygienic practices have been offered in Freeborn County for several years through the combined efforts of the local medical society, the county nursing service and volunteers. The State Health Department has provided leaflets on child care and dietetics in both Spanish and English.

In 1959 the State Department of Health at the request of the Minnesota State Employment Service provided a tuberculin testing service for migrant workers in Freeborn County. The Health Department emphasized the need for clearance with the local medical group and county welfare board in order to have assurance of adequate followup services.<sup>29</sup>

---

See pp. 60-62 for footnotes.

## THREAT OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASE BRINGS HEALTH SERVICES

Some State and local health departments are induced to provide special health programs for migrants because of the threat of communicable diseases. For example, *New Jersey* has been conducting a venereal disease control program for years. Other health services are now provided in connection with their summer school program. *Delaware*, *Maryland*, and *Virginia* developed a cooperative program to find and treat venereal disease and tuberculosis among migrants, issuing a health record to the individuals as they were contacted to prevent needless duplication of services. The same record was also used in other east coast States during the 1959 crop season. A case of polio near *Muscatine, Iowa*, led to the assignment of a nurse to the area to assure that migrants received polio immunizations. Other health services were introduced later.

## DISASTER AND HUNGER BRING HEALTH SERVICES

**Collier County, Fla.**—In 1957 crops had thrice been wiped out by freezes and heavy rains. In late December several hungry migrants approached the editor of the *Immokalee Weekly*, who investigated and found more than 60 families in dire need of food and warm clothing. He telegraphed the Governor, who sent the Red Cross to investigate and, on January 2, 1958, Collier County was declared a disaster area. The story reached TV and radio. Food and clothing poured in and were distributed by a local committee on migrants. Surplus foods were made available. There was infant diarrhea, malnutrition and illness. Two cases of paratyphoid started a vigorous campaign of immunizations, for which physicians were assigned by the State Health Department to the County. Clinics and health education were provided. A grant from the Governor and the Cabinet to supplement the budget of the County Health Department was used for a "Baby WPA." It provided jobs for migrants who removed truckloads of garbage and rubbish, dug ditches and improved housing under supervision of health and sanitation officials.<sup>30</sup>

When freezes came again in 1960 in Collier County, the community quickly organized services to prevent suffering and hardship among migrants.

**Fresno County, Calif.**—Back in 1949 a long period of unemployment for the migrants had resulted in hardships, malnutrition and misery. Following national publicity on the death of 28 infants the Governor asked the State Department of Health to call together the public agencies to set up an emergency program. The United States Public Health Service was called in to make a study of causes of infant diarrhea. The nine regular public health nurses in the area were assigned to organizing camp health committees and immunizations were given.

<sup>30</sup> See pp. 60-62 for footnotes.

Nurses then located expectant mothers, crippled children and others needing medical care. Growers financed the building of health centers. With the help of a grant from the Rosenberg Foundation, medical care was provided and prenatal and well-baby clinics were set up. The program was so successful that after the Foundation grants expired the local health department carried on. The other public agencies in Fresno County also set up programs for migrants—welfare, home demonstration, 4-H, and vocational rehabilitation programs.<sup>31</sup> Fresno County, Calif., has been outstanding for its comprehensive programs for migrants. Some other counties in California also provide health services.

## STATE-WIDE HEALTH SERVICES FOR MIGRANTS

The *New York State* Interdepartmental Committee on Farm and Food Processing Labor in the outline of its 1958 program for migrants reports that public health services are provided for migrants by regular and seasonal staffs of the district offices of the State Department of Health, county health departments, and by public health nurses and other health personnel in counties without full-time health departments. Public health nurses visit camps on a regular schedule to provide counseling on health problems, bedside nursing assistance, and home-nursing demonstrations. Well-child clinics, prenatal clinics and immunization clinics are provided as needed. Health educators were assigned in three districts in the 1958 season to help migrants in farm labor camps “understand and apply basic principles of protecting and improving personal health.”<sup>32</sup>

How *Pennsylvania* health officials started, expanded and extended their health services for both children and adults between 1954 and 1958 is described in the day-care section of this report. Fairly comprehensive health services are now provided in all Pennsylvania counties that have a sizable influx of migrants.

**Trend:** Health services are slowly reaching more migrants.

**Questions:** Do you have a community committee exploring the health needs of migrants?—Possible resources include public health nurses or other staff of local or State health departments, local physicians, hospital administrators, school nurses, welfare workers, representatives of church groups or other agencies working directly with migrants.

Is your community committee making progress in getting public health nursing services, maternal and child health clinics, immunizations, nutrition and health education to migrants?

Are you trying to interest private groups in providing or financing services that cannot be provided by public agencies?

---

<sup>31</sup> See pp. 60-62 for footnotes.

**Is your State committee on migrants concerned with  
extending health services to migrants?**

**SPECIAL HEALTH PROJECTS**

Special project grants by the Children's Bureau to the Florida State Board of Health and the Colorado Department of Health, respectively, have helped to support local migrant health projects. The primary objectives of the *Palm Beach County, Fla.*, project are "(1) to develop public health techniques which are adaptable to the social and cultural patterns of the migrant and (2) to demonstrate the effectiveness of a multidisciplinary approach." This is a 5-year project initiated in 1956, building on a year's research. Public health physicians, nurses, nutritionists, medical social workers and health educators have worked together in the project. Resident physicians have been involved in the family clinics held at night in a major migrant center.<sup>26</sup>

The *Colorado* project emphasizes a community organization approach to migrant health problems. More than 20 State and local public and voluntary groups, including growers' organizations, church groups, public health and public welfare organizations, local physicians, schools and others have cooperated in the local migrant program. Starting with a look at their community through a migrant's eyes, these organizations have helped not only in extending health services to migrant families but also in setting up a summer school program, opening up community recreation facilities to migrants, improving migrant housing, and encouraging other activities to make the community a better place for migrants to live in, involving the migrants themselves in planning and carrying out some of these activities.

A cooperative project with *Texas* and *Michigan* participating was supported during the 1958 crop season by the U.S. Public Health Service. The objectives were to explore the problems of communities in providing health services to migrants in their home base and temporary work areas and to develop techniques for dealing with these problems. A special clinic was set up in Laredo, Texas, and all members of migrant crews going to Michigan were invited to come in for a health checkup and a health record to carry with them. Migrants requiring specific treatment were referred to private physicians in Laredo or to the indigent medical clinic. A report to be published during 1960 will indicate not only what happened, but people's opinions about the project and its operation and their suggestions for future activities.

**RESEARCH ON HEALTH NEEDS**

At the Stanford Medical Center, Stanford University, Palo Alto, Calif., a study of the health needs of agricultural migrants is being made.

The National Institutes of Health finances studies by universities of the health needs of migrants.<sup>33</sup>

---

See pp. 60-62 for footnotes.



Some foundations, as for example the Rosenberg Foundation, have been concerned with the health needs of migrants.

**Trend:** Research projects to determine health needs and techniques for dealing with them have been initiated.

**Question:** Has your State committee explored the possibility of interesting foundations, universities, and the National Institutes of Health in research on the health needs of domestic agricultural migrants?

## **MIGRANTS SOMETIMES NEED EMERGENCY HELP**

Migrants sometimes get seriously hurt in transportation accidents, in accidents that occur around camp or at work and occasionally in fights with one another. Sometimes they have illnesses that become critical or they are in need of operations that can be put off no longer. In such cases they need medical and sometimes hospital care.

There are times when some migrants may have long periods of unemployment, when crops have not matured as expected or have been wiped out by storms or freezes and they need money to buy food to tide them over until jobs open up. Occasionally they get stranded en route from one job to another and though they may have prospects of jobs ahead they lack money for repairs to cars or gasoline to keep going. Thus they have temporary emergency needs that must somehow be served.

### **PUBLIC AID MAY BE DENIED TO MIGRANTS**

Public assistance is provided by State and local public welfare agencies but migrants are usually ineligible for such aid because of residence requirements. Under the Social Security Act, Federal grants-in-aid are made to the States to help them in providing assistance and other services to the needy aged, dependent children, the needy blind and the permanently and totally disabled. The Federal Government discourages residence requirements in State laws but only New York, Rhode Island, and Hawaii have no residence requirements for all federally aided programs.<sup>34</sup> While occasionally a migrant might need aid under one of the federally aided programs, most of their needs for medical and hospital care or for subsistence between jobs would come under the heading of "general assistance" which is provided entirely from State and local funds.<sup>35</sup>

### **NEW YORK STATE HAS RECORDS ON PUBLIC AID FOR MIGRANTS**

New York has a sizable number of migrants and no residence requirements for public aid of any type. The State Department of Social

---

See pp. 60-62 for footnotes.

Welfare reimburses local social welfare agencies for public aid, including costs of medical care, provided for needy migrants. The 1958 Report of New York State Interdepartmental Committee on Farm and Food Processing Labor<sup>32</sup> has the following item:

**Summary of Welfare Costs for Migrants—1957.**—In 1957, out of 43,000 seasonal migrant workers who came to New York State, 512, or 1.1% of this migrant group, became in need of some form of public assistance or care, chiefly emergency hospital or medical care. Hospital care accounted for \$79,000; medical care for \$10,000; burial, \$3,000; and the remainder, \$6,000, was spent for various types of emergency services (Home relief, county home and institutional care, transportation, aid to dependent children, aid to disabled, and child welfare). The total cost of public assistance and care for these migrant state charges was \$98,000. The total population in New York State as of July 1, 1957 was 16½ million. Out of this 16½ million persons in New York State, 439,000 persons of the general population received some form of public assistance or care. The percentage of population in receipt of public assistance in 1957 was 2.67%. The percentage of migrant population, at peak, in receipt of public assistance, was 1.19%.

The New York State Department of Labor estimates that this seasonal migrant group earned over \$25 million in wages, 85 percent of which was left in the community where the money was earned.

The New York State Canners and Freezers Association reported that fruit and vegetable growers received approximately \$42.5 million for their products from the canners and freezers for the year 1957.

Unfortunately, in other States where migrants are also important to the economy there has not been the full acceptance of responsibility for helping needy migrants. Other than in New York State residence requirements for emergency aid and medical care are extremely complex and in many States vary between local jurisdictions. Migrants generally do not qualify.

## **HOW MEDICAL AND HOSPITAL NEEDS ARE SERVED ELSEWHERE**

In a few States as, for example, in Florida and Pennsylvania, hospital care is provided for indigents whether or not they are residents. In many States hospitals take care of critical emergency needs for migrants, make an attempt to collect from the migrants themselves, from the growers or growers' associations or from the migrant's "home State." They may collect in part, but more often the hospitals are left with unpaid bills.<sup>36</sup> A few public welfare agencies may relax residence requirements for medical care of maternity cases and for contagious diseases. Private welfare and church groups interested in migrants sometimes arrange for medical and hospital care.<sup>37</sup>

## **HOW OTHER EMERGENCY NEEDS ARE MET**

Some local welfare agencies or relief officials have emergency funds that may be used for dire needs of transients for short periods of time. Under residence laws, funds are often made available for returning migrants to

---

<sup>32</sup> See pp. 60-62 for footnotes.

their "home State." Sometimes ailing or needy migrants are returned but some may not meet residence requirements anywhere. Often a migrant needs to get to a place where he can expect to find a job.

Recently the Travelers Aid, a private organization serving people on the move, realized that many persons needing their assistance are those traveling by car. In some gasoline stations they have posted a "Memo to: PEOPLE GOING PLACES from TRAVELERS AID" which gives a brief description of their services. Thus they sometimes reach stranded migrants. In Delaware a representative of the Travelers Aid is a member of the Delaware Committee for Migratory Labor.

In response to a questionnaire sent out to various agencies in Louisiana, the Travelers Aid, the Volunteers of America, and the Salvation Army all replied that they were helping to serve the emergency needs of agricultural migrants. The Volunteers of America in Baton Rouge reported that they provided shelter for some migrants and had treated 23 babies for malnutrition and 50 others for diseases for which they needed medical attention.

**Trend:** Many emergency needs of migrants still go unserved because of residence requirements.

**Questions:** How do the residence requirements in your community affect a migrant who is sick or in financial need?

Is a public welfare official on your local committee?  
On your State committee?

Is your committee trying to eliminate residence requirements in State and local regulations governing public aid?

## **MIGRANTS NEED TO LEARN HOMEMAKING SKILLS**

Migrants generally move from one ill-equipped cabin to another. Most cabins lack facilities for order and cleanliness. They have no closets, no cupboards, no bureau drawers. A large proportion have no running water or sanitary facilities. Some cabins never were screened and in others the screening once supplied is gone.

It is difficult for migrant mothers to feed their families adequately. They often have little or no knowledge of what foods are necessary for a balanced diet. Cooking arrangements are usually primitive. Often the camps are far from a good food store, yet most cabins have no refrigerators for perishable foods. No wonder some migrant children suffer from malnutrition and related ailments. Under such difficult conditions migrants obviously need help.

## THE CALIFORNIA EXTENSION SERVICE MAKES A GOOD START

Publicity about the deaths of several migrant children in the fertile San Joaquin Valley mentioned in the chapter on health services sparked the first comprehensive program to improve homemaking practices of migrants. The Governor of California called a meeting of State agencies to see how they could improve conditions for migrants. The Extension Service decided that the best way of helping was to make its home economics program available to migrants in simplified form. Surplus foods were provided by the local welfare department. When the migrants came to pick up supplies Extension Service agents taught them how to prepare the foods. Then the Extension Service workers made calls at the camps and formed small groups of homemakers in the camps and fringe communities. They asked the migrants what else they wanted to learn. Most migrants said they needed places to put things and wanted to learn how to make children's clothes so their children would look better. Out of boxes and orange crates they made cupboards and closets to store food and clothes. They made clothes, rugs and bedspreads. There was an Achievement Day when the migrants themselves showed and talked about the articles they had made. They were taught nutrition and money management. The program for adults led into 4-H Club programs and demonstrations of the work of both mothers and daughters. Most of the work was done in months that the migrants were least busy. As a long-term program the Extension Service asked each county to develop a permanent program in one labor camp and one fringe area.<sup>38</sup> The California Extension Service now has continuing programs in several counties.

## MANITOWOC COUNTY, WIS., CARRIES ON

Reports of a homemaking project for over 400 sugar beet and cannery workers in Manitowoc County, Wis., show the migrants engaged in an amazing number of activities for better homemaking, better citizenship, and better community relations. The Manitowoc County project started in 1958 with the National Consumers Committee For Research and Education, Inc., providing half the funds and the University of Wisconsin's Agricultural Extension Service the other half. The Governor's Commission on Human Rights laid the groundwork for the project when a representative of the Commission interviewed employers, enlisted the interest of the county agricultural agent and got the approval of the county agricultural committee. A county advisory committee was formed representing over 20 local groups—health and welfare agencies, church and civic groups, employers and migratory workers. The county agricultural agent served as chairman. All committee members and the agencies they represented wanted to help, which probably accounts for the variety of activities. The goal was to work WITH the migrants, not FOR them.

---

<sup>38</sup> See pp. 60-62 for footnotes.

The migrants were represented on the advisory committee and all its subcommittees.

The key person in the program was the assistant home demonstration agent for migrant workers who coordinated the work of participating groups and trained the volunteers to assist the professional staff of the Agricultural Extension Service. Service clubs provided bats, balls, radios, record players, books and magazines. The chamber of commerce negotiated for sewing machines which the Singer Sewing Machine Co. provided at reduced rates.

The homemaking activities were similar to those in the California project—making chests of drawers, washstands, cupboards, etc., from crates and boxes; making and repairing clothes; repairing and painting cabins. One employer was so pleased with improvements in the cabins that he substituted gas stoves for kerosene burners throughout the camp.

There was instruction on nutrition and cooking and there were health movies. A cooperative activity between townspeople and the Spanish-speaking migrants was the planting of vegetable and flower gardens, and shade trees. Some migrants wanted to can the vegetables they had grown and were taught how to do this. They also preserved the berries the children picked and the ripe fruit given them by the growers.

In four of the camps the Catholic women held missions conducted by a missionary priest. The United Church Women conducted a weekly evening program for adults and an afternoon program for children. A few migrant children went regularly to the Girl Scout Day Camp. Another Girl Scout troop provided dolls, material and sewing boxes for sewing classes in the camp. The women from one of the migrant camps prepared and served a Mexican dinner for a meeting of the local Home Economics Association.<sup>39</sup>

In 1959 local community groups and the University of Wisconsin underwrote the program. The Secretary of the National Consumers Committee for Research and Education, Inc., in 1959 reported:

The Manitowoc County migrant program gave the Agricultural Extension Service an opportunity in Wisconsin to carry out the Congressional mandate of serving all people in the County who request their assistance. The inarticulate migrant farm-worker seldom asks for assistance, but in Manitowoc County he has found a channel of communication.<sup>40</sup>

Will these programs in California and Wisconsin to improve the home-making practices of migrants start a trend for similar programs in other States? Such programs not only aid the migrant families to make the best of their scanty resources but are also an effective means of building community understanding and good community relationships.

## LESS COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMS

There are counties in Arizona, Florida, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Washington where one or more of the following activities is going on—home demonstration agents are helping

<sup>39</sup> See pp. 60-62 for footnotes.

migrants to learn how to use surplus foods, to provide more nutritious meals, to preserve foods; to learn sewing, mending and sometimes how to make simple garments; or studying situations to see how the program can be useful. The 4-H Club work is reaching some migrant children in California, Florida, and Oregon.

**Trend: Programs to teach migrants homemaking skills are gradually being started.**

**Questions: What opportunity is provided for migrants in your area to learn homemaking skills?**

**Is the Home Demonstration work of the State Extension Service reaching the migrant farmworkers in your State?**

## **MIGRANTS NEED ADEQUATE HOUSING**

Migrant housing varies greatly in all parts of the country; some is good, some poor. Campsites are often poorly chosen and improperly drained. Housing may consist of cheaply built wooden shacks, sometimes a long row building of wooden or cinder block construction divided into single units; hot in summer and cold in spring and fall. Doors and windows are often unscreened; grounds unkept; garbage and trash piled high; privies often poorly constructed and dirty; sanitation facilities nonexistent; the only source of drinking water a faucet or a pump, usually at the end of a row of houses, sometimes a running stream or spring.

Happily such camps are slowly disappearing. Growers with improved housing are justly proud of it, and the migrants respond to good housing by taking better care of it and of the campgrounds.

### **FACTORS WHICH HAVE BROUGHT ABOUT SOME IMPROVEMENTS**

Citizen concern and publicity about some of the dilapidated and unsanitary housing has led to some improvements in housing. Farm Placement officials, in their direct contacts with growers and in work with State and local advisory committees, have stressed the fact that better housing attracts and holds better workers. This has encouraged growers to provide and maintain better farm labor camps. Housing studies and the formulation by States of voluntary codes have had some good effects. But it is now generally recognized that statewide improvements in farm labor housing come only with a good State labor camp code that is well enforced.

### **STATES HAVING FARM LABOR CAMP CODES**

Twenty-two States as of February 1960 have laws or regulations that apply to all labor camps or specifically to camps for migrant agricultural

workers.\* They are Arizona, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maryland, Minnesota, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

Does that mean that all the farm labor housing in these States is good? The answer is "No." First of all the regulations range from very limited ones in some States to comprehensive ones in other States. Secondly, there is also a wide range in the effectiveness of enforcement. Some States do little or nothing about enforcement, while a few have a fairly adequate enforcement program. But in no State is the housing all good. New camps are set up each year by people who apparently have never heard of labor camp standards. Eternal vigilance on the part of citizens and enforcement officials is necessary

### **GETTING A LABOR CAMP CODE IS THE FIRST GOAL**

Some States have had labor camp codes for 10 or 15 years or longer. Many have gradually improved their codes. Laws enacted in 1959 provided more specific authority to regulate labor camps in three States—Oregon, Florida, and Connecticut. In 1959 Maryland issued a new labor camp code effective February 1960. Washington strengthened its labor camp code, and Oregon adopted new regulations to supplement its 1959 law.

### **HOW MARYLAND GOT A LABOR CAMP CODE**

In the early 1950's there was a growing awareness in Maryland of some of the poor housing and the need for a code. The Migrant Ministry and other citizen groups and representatives of State and Federal agencies having occasion to visit the camps began to ask the Director of the Department of Health if he couldn't do something about the poor housing provided by some growers. There was newspaper publicity with pictures and descriptions of bad housing and unsanitary conditions.

In 1957 the Maryland State Department of Health made a study of housing in 134 camps. The introduction to the report says:

This study is a direct outgrowth of increasing concern on the part of various official and non-official agencies, and religious and civic groups which have been involved in seeking a solution to a major social, economic and health problem. The President's Committee on Migratory Labor, Council of State Governments, State Department of Labor and Industry, State Department of Employment Security, State Department of Public Welfare, State Department of Education, Maryland State Police, The Council of Churches of Maryland and Delaware, and the Maryland State Department of Health are a few of the agencies and groups that are interested in the problem.

The report goes on to show the high percentage of camps that had unprotected and unapproved water supply, unapproved sewage disposal, unsound construction with insufficient doors, windows, and screens, un-

---

\*A report comparing the provisions of State labor camp codes may be obtained from the Bureau of Labor Standards, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington 25, D.C.

sanitary toilet and washroom facilities, unsafe food storage, inadequate insect and rodent control, etc.<sup>41</sup>

Next a preliminary draft of a housing code was prepared by the State Department of Health for review and discussion by growers, State officials and others concerned. The draft was distributed to all camp owners.

Meanwhile the same groups that were concerned about housing were also pressing for the creation of a Governor's Committee for Migratory Labor. A joint legislative resolution for the appointment of such a committee was passed and signed by the Governor but the committee was not appointed. The same resolution was passed again the next year and the new Governor in May 1959 appointed a State Committee for Migratory Labor.

The Governor's Committee visited some of the camps, felt that housing regulations were needed, and agreed to support the enactment of a code. A revised draft of the code for further discussion was issued in July. Public hearings were held in different parts of the State. The code was issued and became effective February 1, 1960.

**Trend: Labor camp codes are being developed in an increasing number of States.**

**Questions: Do you have a migrant labor camp code in your State?**

**If not: Have you seen the migrant labor camps in your area?**

**Have you talked with people who have seen the camps such as religious groups working in the camps, Farm Placement officials and others?**

**Have you helped to get a widely representative delegation of citizens together to see your State Commissioners of Health and Labor about making a study of existing housing? (The Bureau of Employment Security or other agency in a State that has made a study might be helpful in advising on forms and techniques for making a survey of housing.)**

**Do you have a copy of "Suggested Language for Regulation of Agricultural Labor Camps"? A copy may be obtained from the President's Committee on Migratory Labor, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington 25, D.C.**

## **ENFORCEMENT OF LABOR CAMP CODES**

Citizens concerned with agricultural migrants are apt to think that their work on housing is done when their State has issued a mandatory code. Actually very little improvement in housing will take place unless the code is enforced.

---

See pp. 60-62 for footnotes.



The testimony of the Director of the Division of Environmental Sanitation of the Minnesota Department of Health before the Special Subcommittee on Migratory Labor of the U.S. Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare on October 1, 1959 shows how little can be done in the way of enforcement without money and staff. The essence of what he said was:

Regulations have had the force of law since 1952 but his department had had no facilities for enforcement. County governments had "made little use of the regulations."

In 1957, at the request of the Bureau of Employment Security, State Health Department engineers inspected 19 camps, found 110 violations and concluded that migrant labor camps were "in serious need of improvement." In July 1958, the position of camp sanitarian was established in the State Health Department with duties divided between children's camps, industrial camps and migrant labor camps. In 1958 the camp sanitarian had been able to inspect 56 migrant labor camps in 15 counties and found 417 violations. In 1959 he inspected 118 camps in 14 counties and found 729 violations.

These inspections covered about 20 percent of the camps. A written report of each inspection was sent to the camp owner citing violations by regulation number and making recommendations for compliance. Only one reply was received.

The testimony concluded with the statement that "It is apparent that the Minnesota Department of Health is unable with its present staff to provide complete administration of a program of sanitation of migrant labor camps. \* \* \* To be most effective, compliance with regulations should be a condition for placement of labor but this would require inspections of all camps each year."<sup>42</sup>

## ENFORCEMENT IN WISCONSIN

What can be done to improve farm labor camps when the enforcing agency has adequate funds for staff and citizen support for enforcement, was described at the hearing held by the same U.S. committee in Madison on September 30, 1959.

The Sanitary Engineer of the Wisconsin State Board of Health described his program for enforcement of the Wisconsin labor camp code. What he said in brief was:

In 1951 the code in Wisconsin had been amended to provide required registration and certification of migrant labor camps. Funds were provided to hire personnel to carry out the inspection and certification program. As a result, 400 camps were registered in 1952.

The Board attempts to inspect every migrant labor camp each year. All camps which meet or exceed minimum standards are issued certificates and allowed to advertise as certified camps. Camp owners not meeting minimum standards are notified at the time of inspection and again by a written report of improvements needed.

---

See pp. 60-62 for footnotes.

In conjunction with the inspections, meetings were held with groups of growers. Some were cooperative but for the most part their attitude was one of indifference. The Wisconsin Canner's Association cooperated in getting their members to comply with the code.

Amendments to the law effective in 1958 provided penalties for late registrations, issuance of certificates for one year for camps in compliance; issuance of conditional permits with a timetable for corrections for those not in compliance; and authority to close camps that were not maintained in accordance with the regulations or failed to show progress in meeting terms of conditional permits.

The Sanitary Engineer in closing said: "We feel the minimum standards being enforced in Wisconsin are reasonable and complete. \* \* \* The Board is satisfied with the present law and feels that it is entirely adequate to improve the sanitary conditions of all existing migrant labor camps to the level where they will meet the minimum established standards by 1961."<sup>43</sup>

**Trend: Some States are improving enforcement techniques.**

**Questions: Have you found out how the labor camp code is enforced in your State?**

**Does the enforcement agency have staff to inspect all farm labor housing?**

**Does it have the authority to license camps; to set a time limit for expiration of temporary licenses; to close camps that do not comply with the labor camp code?**

**Are State and local committees in your State giving their backing and support for a good enforcement program?**

## **RECRUITMENT REGULATIONS AND MIGRANT HOUSING**

Federal regulations on housing of migrant agricultural workers, both for those brought in under contract with Mexico and those domestic workers recruited for interstate employment by the State Farm Placement Offices, have materially helped to improve the housing for all migratory workers.

Recruitment of farm labor is the primary responsibility of the Farm Placement Service in the public employment offices. Growers place orders for seasonal workers with local Farm Placement officials. If they are unable to recruit enough workers locally to fill orders received from the farmers, they turn first to nearby area offices and then to their State Employment Service to recruit workers from other parts of their own State.

If a sufficient number of workers to fill farm labor needs cannot be

---

See pp. 60-62 for footnotes.

obtained within the State, the State Employment Service then turns to the U.S. Employment Service for clearance on getting workers from other States.

In order that the tax-supported public employment offices would not be used for undercutting prevailing wages, working conditions, housing and transportation practices, the Secretary of Labor issued regulations which became effective December 20, 1959. One of these regulations pertains to housing.

Prior to clearance for interstate recruitment of domestic agricultural workers the State Employment Service must give assurance "that housing and facilities (1) are available; (2) are hygienic and adequate to the climatic conditions of the area of employment; (3) are reasonably calculated to accommodate available domestic agricultural workers; and (4) conform to the requirements of the applicable State, county or local housing and sanitary codes or, in the absence of such applicable codes, have been determined by the State agency to be such as will not endanger the lives, health or safety of the workers. In making such determinations the State agency shall give full consideration to the applicable recommendations of the President's Committee on Migratory Labor with respect to housing and related facilities."

The Employment Service in administering this regulation will have no problem in States that have a reasonably good code and a procedure for certifying camps in compliance.

In States which have no codes the Employment Service plans to seek the help of State agencies such as the State department of health, State department of labor and the State fire marshal to find out whether existing housing conditions endanger the health or safety of workers. It is hoped that application of these interstate recruitment regulations may induce States that have no codes to enact and enforce their own.

## MIGRANTS NEED SAFE TRANSPORTATION

On September 25, 1954, the driver of a truckload of migrants from Hidalgo County, Tex., en route to another point in the State stopped to make a left-hand turn. The truck was struck from the rear with such force that it landed on a railroad track 90 feet away. The driver saw an engine approaching and "gunned" the motor, which plunged the truck into a 9-foot ditch, injuring 13 migrants, one seriously.<sup>44</sup>

On June 6, 1957, in Fayetteville, N. C., a flat-bed truck loaded with 36 migrants—men, women, and children—en route to pick beans pulled into the path of a potato-laden tractor trailer. Fifteen persons were injured, 21 were killed.<sup>45</sup> These are just two of many accidents. One traffic accident involving a truckload of migrants may result in many injuries and deaths.

---

See pp. 60-62 for footnotes.

Official investigation of transportation accidents to farmworkers has revealed such contributing factors as dangerous overcrowding and faulty mechanical equipment of trucks, unqualified drivers, and driver exhaustion.

## **REGULATION BEFORE 1956**

Only California, Connecticut, New York, Oregon, and West Virginia had laws or regulations setting safety standards for vehicles used to transport farmworkers prior to 1956. The laws and regulations in these States had become effective in the forties and since then some have been strengthened. But no progress had been made in the regulation of transportation in other States.

## **FEDERAL REGULATION OF VEHICLES TRANSPORTING MIGRANTS**

The transportation of animals and merchandise across State lines in trucks had long been regulated by the Interstate Commerce Commission, but before 1956 the interstate transportation of people in trucks had not been regulated. The President's Committee on Migratory Labor and many national organizations interested in migrants advocated amendments to the Interstate Commerce Act to cover vehicles transporting migrants.

In August 1956 the Congress amended the Interstate Commerce Act to give the Interstate Commerce Commission authority to regulate vehicles other than common carriers transporting migrants across a State line and for a total distance of over 75 miles. With the authority given by this amendment, the Commission in 1957 issued regulations pertaining to driver qualifications, mechanical equipment of vehicles, conditions for the comfort and safety of passengers, and rest stops. Flyers issued by the President's Committee on Migratory Labor outlining the regulations in simple language were widely distributed to growers and crew leaders by the Farm Placement Service and other groups. In 1958 and 1959 Interstate Commerce Commission officials with the cooperation of the several State Employment Services held clinics in the home-base areas of migrants to ensure that crew leaders who were planning to transport migrants out of Florida and Texas understood the regulations.

In the late summer of 1959 the regulations were amended to give the Interstate Commerce Commission authority to remove from operation any truck found to be unsafe. Crew leaders working in northern States were contacted and advised to put their trucks in safe condition before starting south. Inspections were made in some areas and "Out of Service" stickers were placed on trucks found to be unsafe. The regulations provided a penalty for removal of stickers before repairs had been made.

## STATE REGULATION OF TRANSPORTATION SINCE 1956

*Pennsylvania* with the support of its active Governor's Committee on Migratory Labor issued regulations in 1958 regarding the use of trucks and noncommercial buses transporting migrants. The regulations have the formal approval of the State Industrial Board and have the force and effect of law.

Both *California* and *Oregon* strengthened their transportation laws in 1959.

In *Colorado* there had been great concern about unsafe transportation. An overloaded half-ton truck carrying 54 migrants from Texas en route to the Wyoming sugar beet fields reached the outskirts of Agate, Colo., on May 8, 1955. The driver suddenly applied the brakes—he did not remember why—and the truck turned over twice and threw the workers on the road. The injured were rushed 80 miles to a Denver hospital and later an injured baby died.

This spurred a group of Colorado growers and processors in 1956 to adopt a "voluntary code" which had some good effect as far as safety of Colorado vehicles was concerned. However, in 1957 an overloaded truck was being driven through the State in a storm. Twenty-six people were packed in the 8 by 12 ft. bed of the truck. When it finally stopped a baby was found suffocated. After that the Governor of Colorado ordered the State police to stop overcrowded trucks.

In April 1957, Colorado issued mandatory comprehensive "Safety Rules for Agricultural Workers Traveling by Motor Vehicle."

In *North Carolina* in 1959 at the request of the Assistant Commissioner of Motor Vehicles and the Director of the Enforcement Division of the State Highway Patrol who were serving as advisors to the Governor's Committee on Migratory Labor, the Institute of Government of the University of North Carolina made a study of the transportation problem. The problems on a national, regional, and local level are discussed in the report; existing laws and regulations are compared and evaluated; and several alternative forms of legislative action are suggested for consideration.<sup>46</sup>

**Trend:** There is an increasing interest and some progress in regulations for the safe transportation of migrants.

**Questions:** Does your State have laws or regulations governing the transportation of migrant workers?

Does your State committee have a subcommittee working on transportation problems?

Do you have a copy of "Suggested Regulations—Transportation of Agricultural Workers by Motor Vehicle"?\*

---

See pp. 60–62 for footnotes.

\*This may be obtained from the President's Committee on Migratory Labor, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington 25, D.C.

# **MIGRANTS NEED RESPONSIBLE CREW LEADERS**

The Bureau of Employment Security of the U.S. Department of Labor estimates that in 1959 there were about 8,000 migratory crew leaders with 200,000 individual crew members moving from State to State to work on seasonal agricultural crops.

The crew leader\* generally recruits the migrants, plans where they will go for work, and transports them in his truck. He frequently acts as interpreter, advances funds, and is often the person who pays them for their work, which is usually on a piecework basis. Workers often turn to their crew leader for advice on where to buy food and what to do if they are sick or in trouble. The crew leader needs to know the laws that protect farm workers and the services available to them in the places where they live and work. He has many responsibilities to the growers as well as to the members of his crew. In short he needs to be an intelligent and reliable sort of person. Many crew leaders themselves have been migrant workers and have become crew leaders because of their ability to work hard, to save enough money to buy a truck, and to get along well with people.

## **SOME CREW LEADERS ADOPT SHARP PRACTICES**

Out of some 8,000 crew leaders it is perhaps inevitable that some will take advantage of the crew members if they can. When a crew is many miles from home its members have little recourse even if they know they are being cheated by the crew leader. Often they have no way of knowing. For example, sometimes a grower or growers' association pays a crew leader on a per capita basis for the travel expenses of his crew and the crew leader collects also from the members of the crew. Or the grower may pay a crew leader to use his truck to transport workers to the fields each day and the crew leader may charge each worker an additional fee. A crew leader sometimes pays migrants by the basket and collects by the pound from the grower or canner, thus making an extra profit for himself on each basket. He may tell his crew where to buy food and collect a percentage from the store owner, who marks up the prices to cover what he pays the crew leader. Crew leaders have been known to sell liquor and conduct gambling games in the camps.

## **REGULATION OF FARM LABOR CONTRACTORS AND CREW LEADERS**

Some States have laws or regulations designed to protect migrants from unscrupulous crew leaders and farm labor contractors. These laws also help protect responsible crew leaders from the competition of the irresponsible ones and growers from having to deal with them.

---

\*In some sections called labor contractor.

Eight States have laws or regulations applying specifically to farm labor contractors and crew leaders. The laws of *California*, *Oregon*, *Texas*, and *Washington* expressly cover labor contractors or crew leaders who for a fee recruit farm workers. Under these laws the contractors are required to obtain licenses, to comply with certain requirements as to records, to refrain from engaging in certain undesirable practices and usually to file a bond.

*New York* requires any person who brings into the State 10 or more migrant workers to register with the Industrial Commission. Employers are prohibited from using the services of labor contractors or crew leaders who are not registered. The Commission may revoke, suspend or refuse to renew the registration for various reasons, including violation of labor or penal laws, or giving false information to workers as to terms, conditions or existence of employment. The law also requires all those registering to keep records and to submit to the Commissioner data on wages, housing, working conditions, and other information. These data must also be given to the worker.

Regulations relating to *New Jersey* migratory camps include provisions requiring farm labor contractors and crew leaders to get annual certificates of registration. *Pennsylvania* regulations require registration of, and place certain duties and responsibilities upon, crew leaders who directly or indirectly recruit migratory workers.

Because of the interstate nature of the problem the President's Committee on Migratory Labor has recommended Federal legislation to provide for registration of crew leaders in interstate agricultural employment.

**Trend: Laws in a few States regulate the practices of crew leaders and labor contractors.**

**Question: What attention is being given in your State to crew-leader practices that exploit the migrants?**

## **MIGRANTS NEED SOCIAL SECURITY**

Two serious truck accidents in 1957 in which 31 migrants and crew leaders were killed dramatized the importance of old-age and survivors insurance for migrant workers. The families of 14 of these 31 persons received lump sums for burial and survivors benefits. The 14 were covered by old-age and survivors insurance and the Social Security Administration paid monthly benefits to the surviving widows and children to partially replace earnings of the heads of families who were killed.

The inclusion of some seasonal agricultural workers under the provisions of the Social Security Act was a major breakthrough in the legislative barrier that has deprived migratory workers of the protections accorded to most other workers.

## COVERAGE UNDER THE LAW

In 1954 coverage was extended to large numbers of seasonal agricultural workers for the first time. In 1956 two changes were made in the law. A farmworker was covered by social security if he was paid \$150 in cash from any one employer or if he worked for an employer for 20 or more days during the year on a time rather than a piece-rate basis. The 1956 amendments placed more responsibility on the crew leader of migrants. Generally if the crew leader supplies and pays the farmworkers he is considered the employer unless there is a written agreement to the contrary.

Many migrants did not realize the value of the law to them. They thought they might not live long enough to get the old-age retirement benefits paid to insured workers—men at 65, women at 62. But these accidents made some of them very much aware of the value of the lump sum for burial expenses and of the survivors benefits. Through this program the survivors began to have a regular monthly income, probably for the first time in their lives.

## SPREADING UNDERSTANDING OF THE LAW

The two big problems were: (1) to spread understanding of the law and get migrants to realize the meaning and value of the law to them; and (2) to get growers and crew leaders to keep adequate payroll records and make the required tax returns.

Leaflets explaining the law were distributed to crew leaders and migrant workers; a motion picture, "Something for Tomorrow," was shown in migrant labor camps and moving-picture houses to thousands of workers; an illustrated reader, "Bill Davis Gets a Social Security Card," has been used in education programs for migrants; and 500,000 copies of a colored cartoon book, "Smash Up At Big Rock," have been distributed.

Many private and public agencies cooperated in this immense effort to inform migrant workers. The Farm Placement Service distributed materials and helped social security representatives explain coverage provisions to crew leaders. The Migrant Ministry of the National Council of Churches estimate that in their work with migrants they have given help to more than 50,000 workers in understanding the law. Catholic and Lutheran groups have also been active in many areas.

The Social Security Administration has just printed a booklet for migrants in which they can record the employer's name and address, the dates they have worked, and cash they were paid. Attached to the booklet is a postcard which the migrant may send to the Social Security Administration requesting a statement of the amount of earnings recorded in his old-age and survivors insurance account. This has just come off the press and should be available for use in the summer of 1960.



## **PAYROLL RECORDKEEPING A PROBLEM**

Before the extension of old-age and survivors insurance to farmworkers, many growers, labor contractors, and crew leaders had not kept individual payroll records. When coverage was extended crew leaders often devised their own systems of recordkeeping. Some were quite adequate, others not. Sometimes when migrant workers put in claims, it was found that wages paid them had not been reported by the crew leader. Accurate payroll records and reporting are necessary to make sure that migrants who are entitled to credits get them.

## **PROGRESS IS BEING MADE—MUCH REMAINS TO BE DONE**

Officials in the Bureau of Old-Age and Survivors Insurance say that progress is being made. They estimate that hundreds of migrants are now receiving benefits; thousands are receiving credits. But many thousands who should be receiving credits probably are not. They still need encouragement and help (1) in getting their social security cards, (2) in finding out whether employers are reporting and paying the social security tax on their wages, and (3) in checking with the social security office to see if all their earnings are being reported. If the Bureau of Old-Age and Survivors Insurance finds out that a worker's wages have not been reported, it will investigate to determine the amount of additional wages the worker should have credited to his account.

## **HELPFUL ACTION TAKEN BY STATES**

In 1958 *New York State* added to its crew leader registration law a requirement that a statement of wages earned and legal deductions made be given to migrants with every payment of wages.

In 1960 *Colorado* also enacted a law requiring labor contractors and crew leaders to give wage and withholding statements to migrant workers.

Any law that requires crew leaders to register and to keep individual payroll records will, of course, help the Social Security Administration gain a greater degree of compliance than in the past and increase the number of migrants who may qualify for benefits.

**Trend:** The number of migrants who are likely to have some regular income for themselves and their families in their old age, or in case of death or disability of the chief wage earner, is increasing.

**Questions:** What is being done in your community to ensure that migrants and employers understand the old-age and survivors insurance provisions of the Social Security Act?

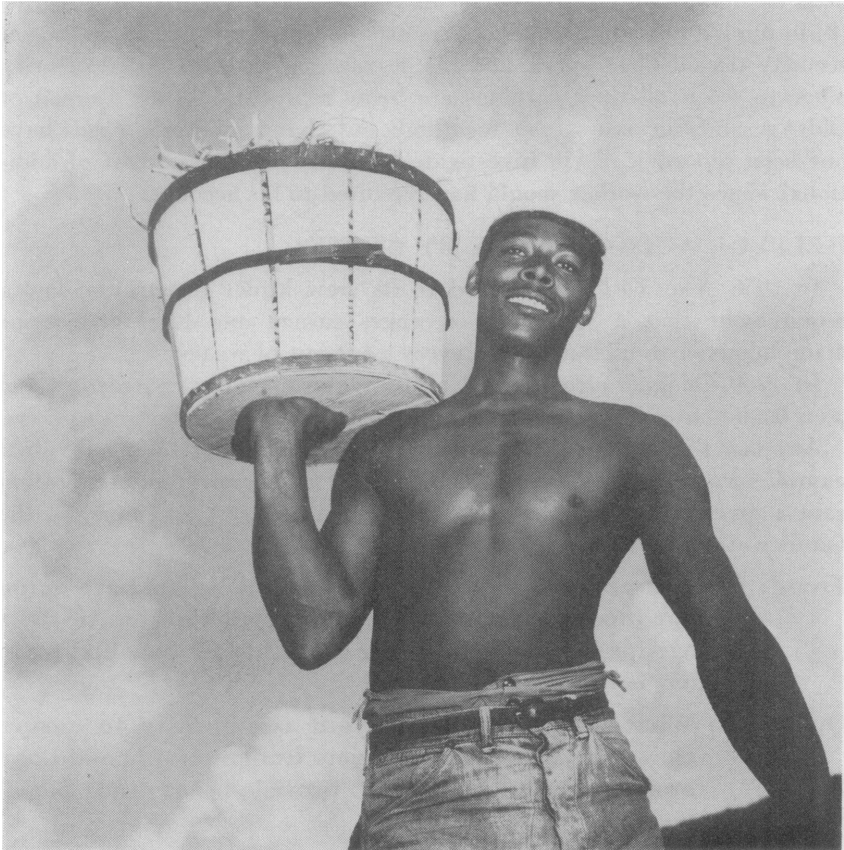
Are crew leaders and other employers of migrants being required to keep payroll records?

## MIGRANTS NEED ADEQUATE INCOMES

The need for regular employment, more days of work, and a better income is perhaps the most important of all needs of migrants. During 1957 migrant farmworkers earned an average of \$859, of which \$745 came from farmwork. The average number of days employed was 131. Average hourly earnings was 73 cents.<sup>47</sup>

The gap in 1957 between earnings of migrant agricultural workers and workers in other occupations is significant—in laundries workers averaged \$1.09 an hour; in retail trades \$1.65; in manufacturing \$2.07; in construction \$2.96.<sup>48</sup>

While migrants' earnings are sometimes supplemented by free housing and other benefits, they are reduced by transportation costs, cost of subsistence between jobs, and by weather conditions that sometimes wipe out expected job opportunities.



Migrants need regular employment, better incomes.

---

See pp. 60-62 for footnotes.

## **FACTORS ADVERSELY AFFECTING INCOMES**

In addition to time lost because migrants must travel between jobs, because crops may not mature in accordance with job schedules, because processing of a large proportion of fresh fruits and vegetables makes for a shortening of the harvest season, migrants are further disadvantaged by exclusion from laws that protect most other workers.

## **MINIMUM WAGE LAWS**

Agricultural workers have practically no protection under minimum wage laws. They are specifically excluded from the wage and hour provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act. Only seven States\*—California, Colorado, Kansas, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wisconsin—and the District of Columbia have laws that are broad enough to cover agriculture. With one exception these laws apply only to women and minors. They do not set minimum wage rates, but instead provide for the setting up of wage boards to determine fair minimum wage rates for specific industries. After public hearings on these rates, the administrator issues a minimum wage order which sets the minimum wage rates for the industry. Only in Wisconsin has such an order been issued. The Wisconsin order, revised in 1960, sets 75 cents an hour in agriculture for a workweek of less than 45 hours, and \$15.75 with board and lodging, or \$21.75 with board only for a week of 45 or more hours. In 1960 a California wage board was appointed to recommend a minimum wage rate for women and minors employed in agriculture but no wage order has yet been issued.

In February 1959, the Secretary of Labor directed that a special study be made to determine the desirability and feasibility of extending Federal minimum wage protection to agricultural workers. The results of the study were reported in May 1960 and showed that a minimum wage for hired farmworkers was both desirable and feasible. It also showed that to be effective such a minimum need apply only to a relatively small percentage of farm employers who hire a substantial portion of the hired farm help in the United States.

## **UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION INSURANCE**

Up to 1959 the unemployment insurance laws of all jurisdictions, except the District of Columbia, an urban community, exempted agricultural workers. In 1959 North Dakota amended its law so that it applies to occupations not previously covered, including agriculture, if employers elect coverage and pay a 7-percent premium.

## **WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION LAWS**

Farmwork has a high accident rate. U.S. Department of Labor reports that during 1959 a total of 13,800 workers were killed on the job in all industries throughout the country. Of these workers, approxi-

---

\*Data on State laws are given only for continental United States throughout this chapter.

mately 3,400 or about one-fourth were engaged in farmwork. More deaths occurred to workers employed in agriculture than in any other major industrial category.

Only the workmen's compensation laws of California, Connecticut, Ohio, and Vermont cover agricultural workers in the same manner as other workers. In California and Ohio, the laws are compulsory. In Connecticut and Vermont the employer may elect *not* to come under the act. The New Jersey law is broad enough to apply to agricultural workers but expressly provides that farmers are not required to carry insurance. The Massachusetts law provides compulsory coverage for non-seasonal workers and elective coverage for seasonal workers. Nine other States cover agricultural workers in specific occupations, usually those operating certain machinery, but some of these laws are elective. Thus, relatively few agricultural migrants are covered by workmen's compensation.

## **LABOR RELATIONS**

Of the 11 State labor relations acts in effect which recognize the right of employees to organize and bargain collectively, only those of Kansas and Wisconsin appear to be broad enough to cover agricultural workers. The remaining nine laws specifically exempt agricultural workers from coverage.

The Federal Labor-Management Relations (Taft-Hartley) Act specifically exempts agricultural workers.

## **IMPORTATION OF FOREIGN WORKERS UNDER PUBLIC LAW 78**

A program that may have some adverse effects on the employment opportunities and incomes of domestic agricultural workers is the importation of foreign contract labor under Public Law 78. This was a World War II program to overcome wartime farm labor shortages. The program has been continued since the war. There were nearly half a million foreign contract workers in 1958. These workers have some guarantees as to wages, housing, and transportation which domestic workers do not have. A committee, appointed by the Secretary of Labor in March 1958 to examine the Mexican farm labor importation program, reported in October 1959 that the importation of Mexican workers had adverse effects on the employment opportunities and earnings of some domestic workers.

## **FACTORS HAVING A FAVORABLE EFFECT ON INCOMES**

*The Annual Worker Plan Helps Stabilize Employment.*—While many factors operate against adequate incomes for migratory workers, the efforts of the Farm Placement Service of the Bureau of Employment Security, U.S. Department of Labor, and affiliated State agencies to develop an annual worker plan for as many crews of workers as possible,

are factors on the favorable side. Under this plan crews are scheduled from jobs in one area to jobs in another, thus providing as much continuity of employment as possible. Crews are routed in accordance with orders received through the interstate clearance system of the United States Employment Service. Employers give dates when they need workers, rates of pay offered and other information. If, because of weather conditions, crops are not ready for harvesting, the Farm Placement Service attempts to find interim jobs for the crews. The Annual Worker Plan tends to stabilize employment and increase earnings of migrants.

In 1959 under this plan there were 6,780 groups of workers; of these 140,701 were over 16 years of age. There were 25,120 under 16, not all of whom were workers.

The Farm Placement Service also gives labor information to so-called "free-wheelers," and schedules as many as possible for jobs, thus helping to stabilize their work and to keep the labor market in a particular area from being flooded.

### **MECHANIZATION REDUCES LABOR DEMAND, UPGRADES SOME JOBS**

During the last few years there has been a gradual increase in the use of machines for cultivating and harvesting the crops, but it often takes several years of experimentation for perfecting a farm machine. The Employment Security Review for February 1960 says: "It is likely that 1959 may have marked a year of major breakthrough in farm machine design and farmer acceptance of new and improved machines." The number and capacity of the machines have led to sharp reductions in demands for seasonal labor in some areas and, since the machines need trained operators and service people, to an upgrading in types of jobs offered.

There are machines that dig potatoes, carry them on belts and deposit them in trucks; for prunes, there is a boom shaker combined with a canvas catching frame that protects the quality of the prunes. For walnuts and almonds there are shakers, gatherers, and huller-cleaners. Virtually all sugar beets are now harvested by machines. In 1958 machines harvested two-thirds of the snap beans picked for processing in New York State. Machines have become larger, less subject to breakdown, and able to perform more satisfactorily over a wide range of crop, soil and weather conditions. Mechanical cotton-pickers harvested half the 1959 crop in the delta area of Mississippi where a few years ago machines were considered impracticable. There are also other technological developments that decrease the need for hand workers as, for example, the use of monogerm seed for sugar beets which permits machine thinning, and the use of airplanes for spreading insecticides.

The monthly average number of persons engaged in farmwork, including farm operators, family workers and hired workers, was under seven and one-half million in 1959 compared with ten million a decade ago.

Changes are coming gradually. Hand laborers will be needed for years to come but possibly in somewhat decreasing numbers. Only as machines are perfected and as it becomes more profitable for growers to use machines will the need for migrants decrease.

**Trend:** Exclusion of agricultural workers from labor laws has an adverse effect on incomes of migrants. Technological changes may reduce demand for seasonal labor but help to upgrade jobs for some migrants.

**Questions:** What action is being taken in your State toward coverage of agricultural workers under minimum wage laws? labor relations laws? unemployment compensation? workmen's compensation? What effect is mechanization having on jobs for migrants in your area?

## **SOME MIGRANTS NEED HELP TO SETTLE DOWN**

With the gradual increase of mechanization and other technological developments there will undoubtedly be some areas where fewer hand-workers will be needed. Even though the increasing population will require more fruits and vegetables, food and fiber, the number of seasonal workers required to cultivate and harvest crops is likely to be gradually decreasing. How will these workers with no skills except in farm jobs, with comparatively little education and citizenship training, find other jobs and become useful citizens of a community? How will people in communities where there are no jobs available be kept from swelling the migrant stream?

Some organizations that have been working closely with migrants have observed the technological trends and have been developing programs to help migrants to understand the rights and duties of citizenship and in some cases to prepare them for other jobs.

### **PROJECT OF FRESNO COUNTY RURAL HEALTH AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE AND THE ROSENBERG FOUNDATION**

For 9 years the Fresno County Rural Health and Education Committee, with help from the Rosenberg Foundation, has carried on projects to provide better health, education, and home demonstration services to migrants.

In January 1959 they launched "A Pilot Project for Upgrading of Migratory and Seasonal Agricultural Workers." They planned for a 6-month study of the problem on which to base a 5-year research and action program. During the initial phases of the study they found that migrants had been settling down in fringe area slums that completely

encircled the city of Fresno, as well as in rural slums spotted here and there throughout the county. Many camps had been torn down. Where camps still existed, many of the migrants stayed on during periods when there were no jobs. Most of the workers were no longer migrants. More than 85 percent of those interviewed had lived in Fresno County over 2 years. So the report of the 6-month study is entitled "A Preliminary Report of a Study of Farm Laborers in Fresno County—From January 1, 1959 to July 1, 1959."

The report explains that farm laborers in Fresno County fall into three general groups:

1. Those living with their families in rural-urban fringe areas who offer real promise in terms of being helped to upgrade their circumstances.
2. Men separated from their families and living alone in flophouses who do farm labor as a last resort.
3. A comparatively small number who live year-round on some ranches in fairly permanent housing and seem to have less problems than the other groups.

The study further reports that the use of labor contractors has greatly increased in Fresno County. Most growers preferred to have day workers brought in by contractors rather than have large-scale camp labor. Contractors and laborers reported that few laborers were covered by social security, because of failure of contractors to send in the payroll tax.

Families were large and much of the housing in the fringe areas was substandard with inadequate space, household equipment and sanitation. Housing was characterized by a lack of water and indoor plumbing—there were no codes governing buildings or water. There was a lack of community services, much lawlessness and considerable underemployment.

The study provided the background information from which to develop a program to improve conditions.<sup>49</sup>

## **AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE HELPS SETTLE MIGRANTS**

Typical of the projects of the American Friends Service Committee for helping migrants to settle in a community was one in Teviston, Tulare County, Calif. Teviston was a tract of 183 acres sold by a speculator mostly to Negro farmworkers. The holdings were sold without surveys and many tensions developed over boundary lines. The owners were suspicious of Government people, outsiders and each other. The houses were shacks without electricity or plumbing. People had to bring water from a distance of 2½ miles. Water was the greatest need. With endless patience the representative of the American Friends Service Committee helped these farmworkers to organize an Improvement Association, get a petition drawn up, have their own representatives speak at a hearing held by the county board of supervisors, get loans from banks, float a small bond issue and raise taxes. As a result in December 1959

---

<sup>49</sup> See pp. 60-62 for footnotes.

they finally got a deep-water pump that would bring fresh running water into the houses of Teviston.

Meanwhile county agencies became aware of the existence of Teviston. The county health office sent its TB mobile unit for chest examinations, the county library its bookmobile. The people of Teviston were tackling other problems and learning the rights and responsibilities of citizens.<sup>50</sup>

## EARNINGS OPPORTUNITIES FORUMS FOR MIGRANTS

Earnings Opportunities Forums for Migrants provide another approach to helping migrants settle down which is being sponsored by the President's Committee on Migratory Labor. The method was developed by the Women's Bureau from a similar program devised for older workers.

The premise is that as mechanization increases fewer migrants will be needed. Many of them, therefore, will need preparation for other kinds of employment and for responsible community living. Communities will need to mobilize resources to help migrants find and qualify for jobs and to meet their health, education, and welfare needs. Belle Glade, Fla., a home base area for many east coast migrants, was the place chosen for a pilot project of this kind.

State and local government agencies were consulted to get assurance of their support for the project. Migrant Ministry officials—national, State and local—offered their cooperation. The support of local civic groups was enlisted. Government agencies, church and civic groups formed a project committee, and chose as its chairman a resident of Belle Glade who was also chairman of the State Migrant Ministry Committee. Subcommittees were set up and project activities are under way.

Teachers and health workers are interviewing migrants who want to settle down. Employment service officials and civic groups are exploring job openings. Courses are envisaged for such occupations as domestic service and waitress work, laundry and dry cleaning, cooking and sewing, shoe repairing, farm mechanics, construction work, dairying, and others as needed. There will be several months of preparation before the forum actually takes place. Meanwhile the migrants who are being interviewed will be given counseling and guidance, health, welfare, and educational services as needed and doubtless some will actually get other jobs and be able to tell about their new experiences when the forum is held.

The project is still in its early stages. It is hoped that techniques developed in Belle Glade will be found useful elsewhere. A similar project is being considered in San Antonio, Texas. Information about Earnings Opportunities Forums for Migrants may be obtained from the President's Committee on Migratory Labor, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington 25, D.C.

---

See pp. 60-62 for footnotes.



## MIGRANT CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION PROJECT

This is a 3-year project to help migrants exercise their rights and assume their responsibilities as citizens. It is an action research project sponsored by the Migrant Ministry and made possible by the Emil Schwarzhaupt Foundation. It is operating in three communities—South Chicago, Ill; Sodus, Mich; and Weslaco, Tex. The idea is to find ways for the migrants to practice citizenship, develop indigenous leadership, and to work with residents of the communities.

In the South Chicago area, in cooperation with the OASI office, leaders among the migrants are spreading information about old-age and survivors insurance to other migrants. In the Sodus, Mich., area, with the cooperation of the Migrant Ministry and an American Friends Service Committee work camp, a community center has been built to be used for citizenship and educational activities for the migrants. In Weslaco, Tex., the plan is to relate migrants to the community so that some may be able to settle down in this home base area.

This project will be completed in late 1960.

## RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

One of the reasons why people have joined the migrant streams is because no jobs were available where they were living. The objective of the Rural Development Program is to develop community resources, new industries and business concerns in rural counties in order to provide a better balanced economy that will no longer be solely dependent on agriculture. Thus, new job opportunities are opened up in these counties.

The program was launched by a committee of representatives of Federal agencies who obtained State and local cooperation. There are now some 200 counties involved. Among projects completed are a milk processing plant in southern Mississippi, hardwood industries in eastern Maine, Wisconsin and other States, construction of new manufacturing plants in several States, tourist industry promotion in Michigan and a vegetable packing plant in North Carolina.

In four States which have active Rural Development Committees the Employment Service is carrying on Experimental Rural Area Programs which include a household survey, the taking of job applications, counseling interviews, testing, and job referrals.

As technological developments in agriculture decrease the need for large numbers of migrants, Rural Development Programs in home base areas may open up new jobs for some of them.\*

**Trend: Migrants are beginning to settle down in some areas. In a few communities public and private agencies are initiating programs to help them with citizenship and job problems.**

---

\* For further information write the Editor, *Rural Development Program News*, Office of Information, Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D.C.

**Questions: How has mechanization affected the need for migrants in your area?**

**To what extent and where are migrants settling down in your community?**

**What is being done to extend community services to areas where migrants are settling down?**

**To what extent are migrants who are settling down underemployed and what is your community doing about this problem?**

## **CONCLUSION**

The following trends shown in the various chapters of this report indicate to some extent where we now stand and where we should be going:

### **Trends**

- Communities are becoming friendly toward the migrants and are organizing committees to help them get those community services which have been denied them as they moved from place to place.
- Churches are increasing their programs for migrants in labor camps.
- More migrants are being welcomed in the communities where they work.
- In more and more States, State committees for migratory labor have been established.
- More and more citizen groups with similar interests are working together to solve problems and develop legislative programs.
- Public welfare funds are beginning to be used to support day-care programs for migrant children.
- In the last few years there has been a growing interest on the part of school officials and others to provide schooling for migrants and to see that the children get into school.
- State education departments are helping communities to provide education for children of migrants.
- Summer schools for migrants are increasing.
- Some State universities have developed material to help teachers of migrant children.
- Some universities are working on educational problems of the children of migrants.
- Efforts of communities to provide schooling for the children of migrants are not being reinforced by improvements in child labor laws.
- Health services are slowly reaching more migrants.
- Research projects to determine health needs and techniques for dealing with them have been initiated.
- Many emergency needs of migrants still go unserved because of residence requirements.
- Programs to teach migrants homemaking skills are gradually being started.
- Labor camp codes are being developed in an increasing number of States.

- Some States are improving enforcement techniques.
- There is an increasing interest and some progress in regulations for the safe transportation of migrants.
- Laws in a few States regulate the practices of crew leaders and labor contractors.
- The number of migrants who are likely to have some regular income for themselves and their families in their old age, or in case of death or disability of chief wage earner, is increasing.
- Exclusion of agricultural workers from labor laws has an adverse effect on incomes of migrants. Technological changes may reduce demand for seasonal labor but help to upgrade jobs for some migrants.
- Migrants are beginning to settle down in some areas. In a few communities public and private agencies are initiating programs to help them with citizenship and job problems.

Real progress has been made in the last decade in improving conditions for migrants although it is still spotty and much remains to be done. Citizen groups are continuing and expanding their interest and broadening their activities. Government agencies—local, State and Federal—are assuming more responsibility in adapting services and programs to reach migrants. Agencies of government, citizen and grower groups are working together on many problems. As conditions under which migrants live and work are improved, the migrants become more self-respecting, less isolated, and more responsible.

## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> *The Hired Farm Working Force of 1957*, Bulletin 208, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C., June 1959, p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33.

<sup>3</sup> *How Volunteers Are Helping in the Migrant Problem* by Louisa R. Shotwell. Reprinted from *Concern*, August–September 1959 by the Migrant Ministry, National Council of Churches, New York.

<sup>4</sup> *The Migrant Ministry of the National Council of Churches*, Migrant Ministry, National Council of Churches, New York, January 1960, p. 1, also *Migrant Ministry* 1957–1958, New York, 1958.

<sup>5</sup> *Report on Domestic Migratory Labor in Ohio*, Ohio Governor's Committee on Migrant Labor, Columbus, 1958, p. 9.

<sup>6</sup> *Texas Harvester*, Migrant Ministry, Texas Council of Churches, Austin, October 1959.

<sup>7</sup> *Arkansas Annual Report*, Migrant Ministry, Arkansas Council of Churches, Little Rock, 1958.

<sup>8</sup> *Farm Labor Newsletter*, Bureau of Employment Security, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, D.C., May 16, 1958, p. 2.

<sup>9</sup> *Handbook for Child Welfare Services*, Children's Bureau, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington, D.C., 1955, Sec. 3001.

<sup>10</sup> *Report of the New York State Joint Legislative Committee on Migrant Labor*, Legislative Document No. 28, August 1959, Albany, p. 26.

<sup>11</sup> *The American Child*, "From Dream to Reality," Vol. XXXVI, No. 4, November 1954.

<sup>12</sup> *Migrant Child Care Center, Ulysses, Potter County, Pa.*, Pennsylvania Department of Welfare, Bureau of Children's Services, Harrisburg, 1956.

<sup>13</sup> *Report on Migrant Child Care Services in Pennsylvania*, Bureau of Family and Child Welfare, Pennsylvania Department of Welfare, Harrisburg, 1958, pp. 1–3.

<sup>14</sup> *The Curtice Day-Care Center for the Children of Migrant Workers*, Lucas County Child Welfare Board, Lucas County, Ohio, 1957.

<sup>15</sup> *Study of Seasonal Workers' Children in Oregon Schools*, done in cooperation with the Governor's Interagency Committee on Migratory Labor, Oregon State Department of Education, Salem, January 1959.

<sup>16</sup> *Meeting the Educational Needs of the School-Age Children of Migrant Farm Workers in Ohio*, Ohio Governor's Committee on Migrant Labor, Education Subcommittee, Columbus, January 1958. Also *Report on the Ottawa County Summer School for Migrant Children*, by Betty C. Fall, Curtice, Ohio, Allen Township School, 1958.

<sup>17</sup> *Now We Go—Too!* A Summary Report of the 1958 Colorado Pilot Schools for Children of Migratory Farm Labor Families, Colorado State Department of Education, Denver, 1958.

<sup>18</sup> *A Report on the State Education Department Pilot Project Summer School Education of Migrant Children*, The University of the State of New York, State Education Department, Albany, September 1957.

<sup>19</sup> *Report of the 1958 Summer School Program for Children of Migrant Parents*, The University of the State of New York, State Education Department, Albany, January 1959.

<sup>20</sup> *School for Migrant Children*, Department of Education, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pa., 1958.

<sup>21</sup> *An Experiment in Homemaking with the Children of Migrant Farm Workers*, Migrant Ministry, National Council of Churches, New York, 1957.

<sup>22</sup> *Regional Reports to the National Council of Catholic Women*, National Council of Catholic Women, Washington, D.C., 1959.

<sup>23</sup> *Will You Make a School?* by Lazelle D. Alway, Pub. No. 421, National Child Labor Committee, New York City, May 1957, p. 17. See also *Bay County School for Migrant Children*, Bay County Board of Education, Bay City, Mich., 1956.

<sup>24</sup> *Farm Placement 1957*, Employment Security Exchange No. 7, Section II Migrant Workers 6d, Minnesota, Bureau of Employment Security, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, D.C., p. 85.

<sup>25</sup> *Child Labor Today*, Wage and Hour and Public Contracts Divisions, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, D.C., 1959, pp. 3–4, 13.

## Footnotes—Continued

- <sup>26</sup> *Migrant Project 1959*, Palm Beach County Health Department, West Palm Beach, Fla., July 1959.
- <sup>27</sup> *Using Your Community's Health Resources*, Rural Resource Leaflet No. 5, Committee for Rural Development Program, Publications Office, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C.
- <sup>28</sup> *Texas-Michigan Health Service Migrant Project*, Third Interim Report, Public Health Service, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington, D.C., October 1958, p. 12.
- <sup>29</sup> *Report of Tuberculin Test—Chest X-ray Survey at Hollandale, Freeborn County, June 22-25*, Division of Disease Prevention and Control, Minnesota Department of Health, Minneapolis, 1959.
- <sup>30</sup> *Florida Health Notes*, "The Immokalee Story," by Dr. Wilson T. Sowder and Dr. Joseph Laurence, October 1958, summarized in "A Migrant Labor Crisis in Immokalee," *Public Health Reports*, Vol. 74, No. 1, Public Health Service, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington, D.C., January 1959, pp. 77-80.
- <sup>31</sup> *The Citizen's Role in Community Planning for Group Work Services to Migrants*, The San Joaquin Valley Health Project, by Florence Wyckoff, The National Consumers' Committee for Research and Education, Inc., Cleveland, Ohio, 1958.
- <sup>32</sup> *Outline of the New York Farm Food Processing Labor Program*, New York State Interdepartmental Committee on Farm and Food Processing, Albany, N.Y., June 1958, pp. 7-8.
- <sup>33</sup> *Program Directions in Migrant Labor of the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Fiscal Year 1960*, Office of Program Analysis, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington, D.C., June 1959, p. 8.
- <sup>34</sup> *The Tyranny of Residence Laws* by Robert A. Forsythe, an address at the Biennial Round Table Conference of the American Public Welfare Association, Washington, D.C., U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, December 4, 1959.
- <sup>35</sup> *Characteristics of General Assistance in the United States*, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington, D.C., November 30, 1959, p. 1.
- <sup>36</sup> *Public Health Reports*, Vol. 74, No. 8, "Financing Health Services for Migrant Farmworkers and Their Families," Public Health Service, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington, D.C., August 1959, p. 685.
- <sup>37</sup> *Characteristics of General Assistance in the United States*, op. cit., p. 33.
- <sup>38</sup> *Report of Meeting of Youth Serving Organizations with Subcommittee on Children of Agricultural Migrants of the Interdepartmental Committee on Children and Youth and the President's Committee on Migratory Labor*, Bureau of Labor Standards, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, D.C., February 1956, pp. 4-5.
- <sup>39</sup> *Homemaking for Our Migrant Families*, National Consumers' Committee for Research and Education, Inc., Cleveland, Ohio, April 1959.
- <sup>40</sup> *Manitowac Carries On*, National Consumers' Committee for Research and Education, Inc., Cleveland, Ohio, November 1959, p. 2.
- <sup>41</sup> *The Housing Problem of the Migrant Worker in Maryland*, Bureau of Environmental Hygiene, Maryland State Department of Health, Baltimore, 1959.
- <sup>42</sup> *Statement of F. L. Woodward*, Director, Division of Environmental Sanitation, Minnesota Department of Health before Special Subcommittee on Migratory Labor of the U.S. Senate, St. Paul, Minn., October 1, 1959.
- <sup>43</sup> *Statement of Charles Guy*, Safety Engineer, Wisconsin State Board of Health, before Special Subcommittee on Migratory Labor of the U.S. Senate, Madison, Wis., September 30, 1959.
- <sup>44</sup> *Transportation of Migrant Labor in Texas*, No. 54-4, Texas Legislative Council, Austin, December 1956, p. 1.
- <sup>45</sup> *Motor Carrier Investigation Report No. 19*, Interstate Commerce Commission, Washington, D.C., July 10, 1957, pp. 6-7.
- <sup>46</sup> *Regulation of Migrant Farm Worker Transportation in North Carolina*, Robert Montgomery, Jr., Institute of Government, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 1959.
- <sup>47</sup> *Hired Farm Working Force of 1957*, op. cit., p. 33.
- <sup>48</sup> *Farm Labor Fact Book*, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, D.C., 1959, p. 190.

## Footnotes—Continued

<sup>49</sup> *A Preliminary Report on a Study of Farm Laborers in Fresno County from January 1, 1959 to July 1, 1959* by William C. Beatty, Jr., Patricia Pickford, and Thomas M. Brigham, Fresno County Rural Health and Education Committee, Fresno, Calif. 1959. (A Rosenberg Foundation Project)

<sup>50</sup> *Report on Agricultural Labor Project*, American Friends Service Committee Philadelphia, Pa., October 1956.



