

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON

December 15, 1960

File

MEMORANDUM

To: The Secretary
Via: Mr. Wallace

From: Albert L. McDermott *ALM*

Attached is a copy of a letter which Senator Keating has been using to respond to what he terms "the many letters he has received in response to the Edward R. Murrow documentary television program on the problems of migratory farm workers." The Senator states that he has "received a great many highly favorable letters" commenting on the stand which you took during the course of the program.

Senator Keating has asked that an amendment which he introduced last year designed to afford domestic workers at least equal terms and conditions as are given to foreign workers, be revised so that he can introduce such a provision in bill form in the next session. I have transmitted this request to the Solicitor for action.

Attachment

LL-2
PE-4-2 (McDermott)

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

December, 1960

Dear Friend:

Thank you very much for your recent letter in which you urge that the Congress enact legislation to assist our nation's migrant farm laborers.

I share your deep concern about the serious problems that confront this vital group of workers. As a member of the Congress, I have long supported measures which would improve conditions of migrant farm workers in terms of their wages, education, housing and general welfare.

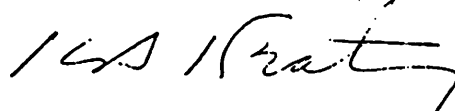
Last year, I sponsored a bill in the Senate to give the Secretary of Labor the authority to register all migratory labor farm crew leaders. I feel that such legislation would effectively permit the Federal Government to see to it that crew leaders do not unjustly exploit the workers who depend upon them so greatly for their livelihood.

As you may know, part of the problem affecting migratory farm workers in this Country relates to the annual influx of Mexican farm workers. Several years ago, Congress passed a public law to provide standards for the employment, transportation and housing of Mexicans coming into the United States for seasonal agricultural employment. This law comes up for renewal very shortly. When it was debated briefly in the Senate last year, I offered an amendment to have the standards in this law apply also to American migratory farm workers -- many of whom are treated far worse than Mexican farm workers employed in the United States. No action was taken at that time.

Next year, this law will be fully debated by the Congress. At this time, I am certain that attention will be focused upon the problems of both American and Mexican migrant farm workers. You may be certain that in the course of this debate I shall continue to devote my full efforts to assisting America's migrant farm workers and their families.

I appreciate your taking the time to write to me. I regret that because I have received many letters like yours I have had to prepare a printed reply. At the same time, it is extremely gratifying to know that so many people in our State want Congress to do something about the unhappy plight of our nation's migrant farm workers.

Very sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "K B Keating".

Kenneth B. Keating

K:rq

James Mitchell

Box 132

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Migratory Labor [Nov-Dec. 15]