

For release at noon,
Friday, May 19, 1939.

R-292

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
Wage and Hour Division
Washington

STATEMENT BY ELMER F. ANDREWS, ADMINISTRATOR,
WAGE AND HOUR DIVISION, U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR,
ON AMENDMENTS RECOMMENDED BY HOUSE LABOR COMMITTEE

Administrator Elmer F. Andrews of the Wage and Hour Division, U. S. Department of Labor, today issued a statement categorically denying that any change was contemplated in the Fair Labor Standards Act which would extend its coverage to employees engaged in agriculture. Such a misapprehension had gained currency during discussions of the amendments which have been reported by the House Committee on Labor, of which Mrs. Mary T. Norton is chairman. These amendments are now pending before the House.

Mr. Andrews' statement follows:

"Lately there has been a great deal of talk about so-called 'Agricultural Amendments' to the Fair Labor Standards Act, now pending in Congress.

"The impression has been given that the wage and hour law covers agriculture and covers wage earners while they are employed in agriculture. This is not true. Agriculture is not covered by the Act. No wage earner while employed in agriculture is covered by the Act. Section 13 (a) reads: 'The provisions of 6 and 7 (which are the Sections setting minimum wages and maximum hours and which are the heart of the Act) shall not apply with respect to ... any employee employed in agriculture.'

"The impression has been given that the amendments recommended by the House Labor Committee cover agriculture. This is not true.

(1140)

"The impression has been given that the amendments cover employees while they are engaged in agriculture. This is not true.

"The exemption which I read a moment ago, Section 13 (a)(6), still stands untouched. If the amendments were enacted, no employee while he is engaged in agriculture would be covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act.

"It is important to have these facts clearly understood at this time. Farmers in certain localities have become alarmed. You may have heard reports that hired men and others engaged in farming operations have to be paid in compliance with the Act; that the wages have to be at least 25¢ an hour and that overtime would have to be paid for hours worked in excess of 44 a week. This is not true. Let me repeat again, no employee employed in agriculture is covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act."

#####