

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MARCH 16, 1954

file

JAMES C. HAGERTY, PRESS SECRETARY TO THE PRESIDENT

O.F.

124-C

THE WHITE HOUSE

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT
ON SIGNING H.J.RES. 355

On signing this legislation, I wish to dispel any misconceptions which may exist regarding its purpose. The basic purpose is to enable this Government to give Mexican migrant labor the protection of our laws. #

Whenever United States employment is at such a level that Mexican workers are needed to supplement the United States labor force, and whenever they can be spared temporarily from Mexico, we of course welcome their valuable assistance to our farming community if they will cross the border legally. The problem of adequate control and protection of Mexican workers in the United States has in recent years been the subject of searching analysis by the Governments of the United States and Mexico, working both independently and together.

The two Governments, after more than four months of careful study and friendly negotiation - conducted in an atmosphere of mutual respect worthy of two sovereign neighbors - announced on March 10 that they had concluded a renewed and improved Migrant Labor Agreement. While neither Government assumes that this Agreement will prove to be the final answer to the whole complex problem, it provides necessary means for moving forward to more complete solutions.

Unforeseeable future developments may some day lead the two Governments to determine that formal agreement on this subject is no longer desirable but that appropriate action by each within its own jurisdiction is still essential. Authority has existed for a number of years for the Attorney General to admit Mexican farm workers under whatever conditions he alone may establish, but because of the wording of applicable legislation there has not been adequate authority for United States governmental measures for protection and placement of the workers at any time there should not be an agreement with Mexico. The present law is precautionary in that it removes this disability and enables the Secretary of Labor to perform these functions of protecting and placing migrant workers which are so important to both United States and Mexican interests, at any time these services may be required.

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WHCF

Box 634

OF 124-C Migratory Labor (1)

G.E.

126-J
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MAR 22 1954
CENTRAL FILES

March 19, 1954

Dear Mr. Brewer:

This is to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of March fifth. While your interest in writing is appreciated, the President on March sixteenth, after most careful consideration and on the recommendation of the heads of the appropriate Departments and Agencies of the Government, approved the bill to which you refer.

Wetback Labor
H

Sincerely,

THOMAS E. STEPHENS
Secretary to the President

Mr. Guy R. Brewer ^x
110-43 - 166th Street
Jamaica
New York

mbh

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**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE
ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE**

JAMAICA, N. Y. BRANCH

x 6F124-A-2

M E M O

TO: Hon. Sherman D. Adams //

FROM: Legislation Comm. Jamaica Br. NAACP

I think that the within is important enough to rate being included among that very small percentage which you pass on to the President. I hope that you agree.

3/6



JAMAICA BRANCH
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT
OF COLORED PEOPLE

ack'd
3/19/54
mbh

March 5, 1954

PRESIDENT

FLORENCE V. LUCAS, ATTY.
146-34 LAKEWOOD AVENUE
JAMAICA, NEW YORK
JAMAICA 6-0184

Hon. Dwight D. Eisenhower
President of the United States
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President:

FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT

DR. JUDGE THOMPSON
114-65 175TH PLACE
ST. ALBANS, NEW YORK
JAMAICA 3-7653

The New York Times of March 4th quotes Senator William F. Knowland as informing the U. S. Senate that the proposed legislation permitting the U.S. Government to bring "wetback" labor into the country despite the opposition of our friendly neighbor, the Republic of Mexico, had your support.

SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT

REV. BASIE McCANN
145-07 106 AVENUE
JAMAICA, NEW YORK

It is sincerely hoped that Senator Knowland was in error and that you will veto this unfortunate piece of legislation which might have been defeated had not your name been used to bolster its chances.

THIRD VICE-PRESIDENT

REV. J. DAVID KELLY
114-28 172 STREET
JAMAICA, NEW YORK
OLYMPIA 8-0175

The Dixiecrat mentality we can understand, but the Republican mentality passeth all understanding. Here we have the Secretary of State down at Caracas pressing for solidarity among the nations of the Americas at the same time your Administration is administering a gratuitous insult to a proud and sovereign nation having influence at this conference. The most asinine feature of such boners is that after committing them you will squander hundreds of millions of dollars, extracted from our hard pressed taxpayers, in loans and gifts to latin American nations in an attempt to repair the damage done by such stupid legislation as this. How stupid can we get ?

SECRETARY

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On the other hand, even if you dont give a damn about inter American relations how about the depressing effect that will be felt by thousands of American citizens, both white and non white in our southwestern states by government importation of this depressed class of labor. There is no need for a rehash of the old hokum about this vast labor force being needed for seasonal work because of the lack of American workers and that they will return to Mexico as soon as the agricultural season passes. There is plenty of American labor available at American price standards which is just what the southern planters DON'T want and it is common knowledge that a large percentage of these laborers never return to Mexico.

Be courageous Mr. President and veto this unfortunate bill.

Respectfully,

Guy R. Brewer
Guy R. Brewer

WHCF - GF

Box 968

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