

April 3, 1961.

HONORABLE ROBERT KENNEDY  
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE U.S.  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

DEAR MR. ATTORNEY GENERAL:

I HOPE THAT CARLOS MC CORMICK DELIVERED YOU A SMALL GIFT THAT I BOUGHT FOR YOU DURING MY TRIP TO ARIZONA. I CERTAINLY HOPE THAT YOU AND THE REST OF THE KENNEDY FAMILY ARE IN THE VERY BEST OF HEALTH.

DURING MY VISIT TO THE RIO GRANDE VALLEY ONE OF THE STILL REMAINING FAITHFUL VIVA KENNEDY CLUB MEMBERS GAVE ME THIS CLIPPING. I AM FORWARDING IT TO YOU.

INSTEAD OF BEING GRATEFUL THAT THEIR MAN RECEIVED THEIR APPOINTMENT AND OF THANKING YOU, THEY TURN RIGHT AROUND AND CRITICIZE YOU PERSONALLY AND YOUR BROTHERS ADMINISTRATION GENERALLY.

WE RECEIVED THE SAME TYPE OF ANSWERS TO YOUR LETTERS & TELEGRAMS FOR SEVERAL DAYS AFTER THE APPOINTMENT WAS MADE, BUT BEING LOYAL TO YOU AND YOUR BROTHER THE PRESIDENT WE SWALLOWED OUR PRIDE. WE DID NOT CRITICIZE YOU. WE JUST HUNG OUR HEAD IN SHAME, STRODE TO OUR DARK CORNER AND HIBERNATED FOR A WHILE.

INCIDENTALLY THE WHOLE SOUTHER TIP OF TEXAS HAS A NEWSPAPER CHAIN CALLED THE "HOILES PAPERS" OR "FREEDOM PAPER". THEY HAVE BEEN OUR ENEMIES SINCE THEIR BEGINNING AND WILL BE YOURS AS LONG AS THEY ARE ABLE TO PRINT THEIR PAPERS. THEY WILL FOREVER BE THE ADMINISTRATIONS PERSECUTORS.

AS A POINT OF INFORMATION FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE HISTORY OF OUR STATE THE SPANISH WEEKLIES HAVE ALL COME OUT IN SUPPORT OF BLAKELY FOR THE U.S. SENATE RACE. I AM ENCLOSING A COPY OF THEIR LATEST. MIND YOU THEY ARE SWINGING AGAINST POOR GONZALES AND US. THE WORD HAS COME DOWN BLAKELY IS THE MAN THAT THEY WANT ELECTED, NOT GONZALES.

BOTH BLAKELY AND WILL WILSON HAVE CRITICIZED THE ADMINISTRATION'S SOCIALIZED (??????) PROGRAM. WE ARE STILL FOR IT ALTHOUGH WITH GARRZA'S CONTINUOUS SUPPORT OF BLAKELY WE DO FEEL THAT THERE IS A TIE IN AND GONZALES IS THROWN OUT TO THE WIND. AGAIN LET ME ASSURE YOU NOT TO TAKE THE STAR'S CRITICISM TOO HARD WE HAVE BEEN TAKING IF FOR OVER 8 YEARS.

I WILL KEEP YOU POSTED SINCE I BELIEVE I SHOULD KEEP YOU INFORMED FROM AN OBJECTIVE POINT AS TO THE TRUTH IN TEXAS.

RESPECTFULLY,

P.S. NOTE TOWER'S ANSWERS. BLAKELY WOULD HAVE ANSWERED THE SAME.

*Hector P. Garcia M.D.*  
HECTOR P. GARCIA M.D.

File  
Under  
Bob Kennedy

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Hector P. Garcia M.D.

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

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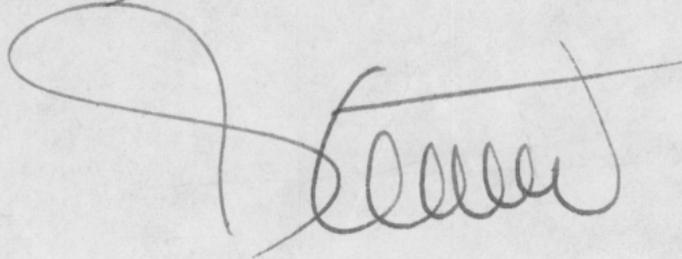
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TO:

D N Garcia

For your memory  
file.

Best wishes,





THE FOREIGN SERVICE  
OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

*F. G.*

American Consulate General,  
Port of Spain, Trinidad,  
April 10, 1961.

Dear Dr. Garcia:

Thank you very much for sending me copies of your letters of March 19 and March 20 to the Chief Minister of Antigua and the Premier of Jamaica, respectively. It was pleasant to have these reminders of our recent association and the successful events to which they referred.

I have wondered from time to time whether you had a sufficient record of the signing ceremony, and in particular whether you had a photograph taken while Mr. Whitney was speaking. The photograph in question was, I think, one of the better ones, showing the entire table and all of those who signed the Agreement.

If you do not have this particular picture, I would be pleased to get a copy and send it to you.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ed Moline".

Edwin G. Moline  
American Consul General

Dr. Hector P. Garcia,  
3024 Morgan Avenue,  
Corpus Christi, Texas.

File

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

APR 18 1961

Hector P. Garcia, M. D.  
American G. I. Forum of the U. S.  
3024 Morgan Avenue  
Corpus Christi, Texas

Dear Dr. ~~Garcia~~ *Hector*

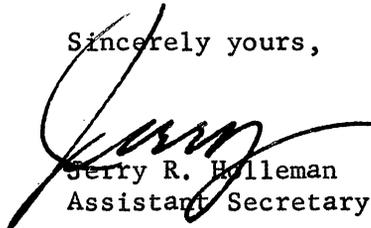
I appreciate your letter of April 4 commenting on the Administration's recommendation with respect to P. L. 78.

In reading your comments, I do not think we are in too much disagreement on the overall objectives. Certainly if the reforms needed to actually protect U. S. workers are not enacted, then no extension of the program should be supported.

That the proposed reforms will be really meaningful in helping our local workers is perhaps revealed best by the enclosed paper describing the wage amendment proposed by the Administration. The enclosed table presents a dollars and cents picture of its effect in key states.

I am also enclosing a copy of the full Administration position as presented to the House Agriculture Committee. I hope that examining the full position may enable you to come closer to agreement that, if the Administration position does not completely solve the entire problem, it at least will constitute a major step in that direction.

Sincerely yours,



Jerry R. Holleman  
Assistant Secretary of Labor

Enclosures

Administration Program for Revision of the Mexican Labor Program  
(H. R. 6032 introduced by Congressman Merwin Good)

THE WAGE AMENDMENT

Section 505 of H. R. 6032 would require employers who wish to employ foreign Mexican workers and are offering less than average wages to:

1. Bring their wages, in yearly steps of not more than 10 cents an hour, up to the state or national farm wage average, whichever average is lower, and
2. Attempt to recruit domestic farm workers at the increased wage before employing Mexican workers.

(Employers would in no case be required by the amendment to raise their wage offers by more than 10 cents per hour in any one year or to raise their wage offers to more than the lesser of the state average farm wage or the national average. (Where the wage offer thus determined is less than the wage already prevailing in the area for the activity, the prevailing wage must, of course, be offered and paid.)

The reasons for the amendment are as follows:

1. It is necessary in order to fulfill the congressional intent, expressed when P. L. 78 was first enacted, that Mexicans not be used where their employment would adversely affect the wages of U. S. farm workers. Despite vigorous efforts of the Department of Labor, it is now clear that adverse effects have been substantial in many areas.
2. Farm wages in activities and areas using braceros have lagged materially behind farm wages generally. In some cases wages have actually declined in the face of labor shortages met by use of braceros. In many areas the wage offered has remained at 50 cents per hour, unchanged for almost ten years. In this respect, the Mexican Labor Program seems clearly to have adversely affected wages of U. S. workers. It seems also to have created unfair competition for farmers in the great majority of areas where farm wages have risen more normally in response to labor stringencies, often to \$1 per hour or more.
3. The only visible solution to these adverse effects, if P. L. 78 is to be continued, is to assure that Mexican labor availability is made dependent upon upward wage adjustments of the type that would occur if foreign workers were not used.

4. The rate at which such adjustments in wage levels are required should be decided by the Congress rather than by the Executive.
5. The formula proposed would simply cause wages in these activities to keep pace with farm wages generally. No employer willing to offer average wages could be deprived of needed braceros by this amendment.

The effect of the amendment. In the states where the wages offered by farmers using Mexican labor have continued to advance as would be expected in a normal labor market, the effects of the amendment will be negligible. Thus in States like California and Wisconsin, where the prevailing wage rates for employers authorized to use Mexicans are already above the national average farm wage rate of 97 cents per hour in many areas, this amendment would require no revision upward of the wage level.

The amendment's effects will be felt most in those states and areas in which wages have been most severely affected by the Mexican program. Thus in areas where wages in the activities employing Mexicans have failed to increase during the last eight or ten years, a significant increase would be necessary in order to "catch up" with the average state wage. In order to avoid wage increases so sharp as to be unnecessarily disruptive in such states, the amendment specifically limits the amount of wage increase required in any one year to 10 cents per hour.

A table presenting in more detail the effect of the amendment on wages in each of the states employing Mexicans at an hourly wage rate is attached.

#### Questions and answers

1. This proposal would "set minimum wages" and should be handled in a minimum wage bill, not in the Mexican Labor Program.

Answer: This amendment does not require any farmer to pay any minimum wage. It lays no requirement of any kind on the approximately 3.7 million American farmers who do not use Mexican workers. For the 50,000 that have employed Mexican workers, this amendment poses a choice: They can continue to use Mexican workers if they are willing to step their wages up to the farm wage average for the state (or for the nation, if lower) or, if they do not wish to pay average wages, they can take whatever other measures are necessary to recruit and retain U. S. workers. This proposal seeks to make certain that Mexican workers do not depress farm wages, and consequently should be handled as part of the Mexican Labor Program legislation.

2. This amendment would set up a wage escalator system that would drive wages upward out of sight.

Answer: In the first place this can hardly happen in the two-year period for which the extension of this law is requested. One reason for limiting the extension to two years is to evaluate the effects of this as well as the other proposed amendments.

More fundamentally, however, the users of Mexican workers are such a small minority of the farmers in this nation that what happens to wages paid by those employers can hardly have a substantial effect upon the national farm wage average. By making clear that the amendment will not require raising of wages above the national farm wage average, the amendment has effectively prevented any spiraling upward of wages which might otherwise have occurred through operation of this amendment.

3. This would break up the piece rate payment incentive system that is the essential to agriculture.

Answer: The amendment would not require or lead to abandonment of piece rate incentive systems. In cases where piece rate earnings have failed to increase commensurately with average farm wages in the state, however, these piece rate earnings would need to be adjusted upward.

Attachment

4/61

Proposed Wage Standards for Mexican Labor Program  
Indicators of Impact

State 2/	Average hourly rate without room and board USDA - 1960	Hourly wage rates paid U. S. workers in activities in which Mexicans are employed		
		Under present law 1/		Under proposed amendment
1	2	Lowest rate for employers authorized to use Mexicans	Most common rate for employers authorized to use Mexicans	Lowest rate for employers authorized to use Mexicans in 1963 3/
		3	4	5
Arizona	\$ .97	\$ .70	\$ .70	\$ .90
Arkansas	.73	.35	.50	.70
California	1.23	.75	1.00	.95
Colorado	1.09	.65	.75	.85
Illinois	1.10	.75	.75	.95
Indiana	1.06	.75	.80	.95
Kansas	1.12	.85	.85	.97*
Kentucky	.82	.50	.50	.70
Michigan	1.07	.75	.85 & 1.00	.95
Minnesota	1.10	.75	.75	.95
Missouri	.99	.50	.50	.70
Nebraska	1.10	.85	.85	.97*
Nevada	1.24	.75	.75	.95
New Mexico	.85	.60	.60	.80
Tennessee	.63	.50	.50	.63
Texas	.78	.40	.50	.70
Utah	1.19	.75	.75	.95
Wisconsin	1.09	.80	1.00	.97*

1/ Based upon U. S. Department of Labor surveys to determine the prevailing wage.

2/ The states in which Mexican nationals are employed at hourly wage rates.

3/ Rates for 1963 are shown here because, with a two-year extension of the program, that is the year in which Congress would be reviewing the program.

\* Ninety-seven cents was the average hourly farm wage rate for the nation in 1960. In 1963, the pertinent figure (the average for 1962) will, of course, be different, probably somewhat higher. Between 1959 and 1960, the average hourly farm wage rate rose two cents per hour.