

Farm Migrants Losing Food Stamps

By Jack Anderson

Great streams of migrant farm laborers flow through the nation, skirting the metropolitan areas and cutting through the fields.

Caught up in the flow are thousands of faceless men and women and their anonymous children who move with the harvests, stopping only long enough to pick a crop and to earn enough to subsist until the next stop.

These are the people who help make America the best fed nation in history, yet they themselves are often undernourished. They subsist largely on a diet of starches and water.

Agricultural areas plead for their services when there is picking to be done, then pressure them to move on lest they run up the welfare bill and burden the schools with their children. Many migrant workers are too poor to afford even the government stamps to buy cut-price food.

But under the new Agriculture Department regulations, even those who can afford food stamps can no longer qualify for them. Congress has specified that food stamp recipients must live in family groups. This was written into the regulations to bar food stamps from hippies who drift around the country and band together in communes.

But, the same regulations that make hippie communes ineligible for food stamp bene-

fits also bar migrant worker camps. An estimated one million migrant workers, among the nation's most needed people, will now be dropped from the food stamp program.

Rep. Rooney

Rep. Fred Rooney, (D-Pa.) justly blasted the insurance companies the other day over unnecessary credit card insurance premiums. But the congressman may have missed an even better target.

A law enacted this year makes it impossible for a citizen who loses (or has stolen) a credit card to be held liable for more than \$50. If he reports the theft to the credit card company in time, he cannot be held liable for a cent.

The insurance companies are continuing to nick policyholders for small premiums on their homeowners' policies for insurance against major credit card liability.

But there is another outfit, the Credit Card Service Bureau, that is devoted almost entirely to helping credit card holders out of jams if their cards are lost or stolen. Despite the new law, this firm is continuing to bombard the public with hokey scare talk promoting its services.

Thousands of Washington-area residents, for example, have just received a thick packet of propaganda from this company. It is enclosed in a yellow envelope which bears in bold letters, the word "WARNING!"

Inside, the addressee finds a

letter which contains an account of "true-to-life experience." This is supposed to illustrate why he needs to spend \$10 for a year's membership in the Credit Card Service Bureau.

The "true-to-life experience" is headlined "Stark Terror Overtook Me—And I Panicked." It bears the byline of a Robert L. Hammette, who tells of his horror at finding his wallet full of credit cards missing after a night on the town with his wife.

Hammette says that when his wallet was found, it contained nine credit cards he didn't know he had, suggesting that if he had tried to notify the companies of his lost cards, he would have missed nine of them and left himself open to \$450 liability.

The letter is signed by John Ferry, president of CCSB, who refers to Mr. Hammette's "moving account of his near-brush with disaster." He explains how CCSB will handle all necessary notifications in the event a member loses his cards.

When we spoke to Mr. Ferry, however, he acknowledged that Mr. Hammette's "near-brush disaster" never occurred. He said the fictitious story was based on accounts of credit card problems that CCSB had heard from its customers.

Further, he identified Hammette as a member of the company's advertising staff. Asked if he thought Ham-

mette's story would convey the false impression that it really happened, he said, "You may have a point," but asserted, "I think it's a good piece of advertising."

He was questioned about the need for his company's services in view of the new law. "We're not charging an outrageous sum of money for the little bit of service that we offer," he said.

He also said, "I've got to wear two hats. We don't want to get in the bad graces of the card companies." Why he was asked, "We might want them to help promote our service."

FBI Snooping—The FBI has been keeping tabs on the private life of Speaker Carl Albert. We have reported in past columns that Albert's name was picked up by the FBI bug planted in lobbyist Fred Black's hotel suite. Agents checked out all the references made to Albert, although he wasn't the subject of the FBI investigation. Now G-men are quietly running down rumors about the Speaker's personal life.

Bilking Police—It takes a bold contractor to bilk the police. Yet this is exactly what is happening across the country. Rep. John Monagan, (D-Conn.) has dug up evidence that private contractors are squeezing excess profits out of the police. Corporations charge all they can get, for example, for radio car equipment!