

University of Mississippi

eGrove

---

Correspondence

Civil Rights Archive

---

1-23-1961

## H. L. Mitchell to Mr. Freeman, 23 January 1961

H. L. Mitchell

Follow this and additional works at: [https://egrove.olemiss.edu/civ\\_corresp](https://egrove.olemiss.edu/civ_corresp)



Part of the [United States History Commons](#)

---

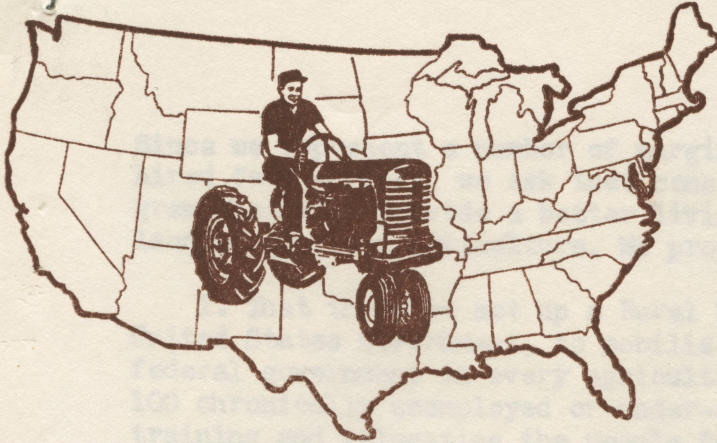
### Recommended Citation

Mitchell, H. L., "H. L. Mitchell to Mr. Freeman, 23 January 1961" (1961). *Correspondence*. 4.  
[https://egrove.olemiss.edu/civ\\_corresp/4](https://egrove.olemiss.edu/civ_corresp/4)

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Civil Rights Archive at eGrove. It has been accepted for inclusion in Correspondence by an authorized administrator of eGrove. For more information, please contact [egrove@olemiss.edu](mailto:egrove@olemiss.edu).



1961



**AGRICULTURAL AND  
ALLIED WORKERS UNION  
NO. 300**

DIVISION  
AMALGAMATED MEAT CUTTERS & BUTCHER WORKMEN  
OF N. A. • AFL-CIO

TELEPHONE FAIRFAX 4-7375 • P. O. BOX 6245  
MEMPHIS 11, TENNESSEE



H. L. MITCHELL, PRESIDENT  
A. E. COX, SECRETARY-TREASURER

For Release  
All Newspapers  
Monday, January 23, 1961

A proposal that the United States Government establish a "Rural Development Authority" to provide jobs, re-train and re-locate displaced farm families such as the group of sharecroppers facing eviction in the two west Tennessee counties, has been submitted to the new Secretary of Agriculture, Orville Freeman.

This proposal was submitted by H.L. Mitchell, President of the Agricultural and Allied Workers Union, a division of the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen of N.A. For the past 12 years, H.L. Mitchell was president of the National Agricultural Workers Union AFL-CIO in Washington. He has been stationed in Memphis for the past six months and his organization is a continuation of the union which started 25 years ago on the cotton plantations of eastern Arkansas.

The full text of the letter sent to the Secretary of Agriculture is as follows:

January 17, 1961

Dear Mr. Freeman:

We understand that you will be meeting with leaders of major farm organizations on January 26, to consider their suggestions to improve the agricultural programs. We are also advised that similar suggestions may be submitted by smaller farm organizations and that such ideas will also be given consideration.



Since we represent a number of marginal farmers, sharecroppers, tenants and hired farm workers, we ask that consideration be given to developing a program that will provide a better living for these people who are on the borderland of American agriculture. We propose the following:

1. That there be set up a Rural Development Authority as an agency of the United States Government, to mobilize the resources of local, state and federal government in every agricultural county where there are as many as 100 chronically unemployed or under-employed farm families, for the purpose of training and relocating the people for existing jobs on larger farms, in service trades and industries in nearby industrial towns and cities.

2. That the Rural Development Authority be authorized to provide funds for construction of plants and other facilities for small industries to be operated in rural counties, and thus make jobs at productive work available to those who have been or who are about to be displaced from the farms as a result of mechanization and technological improvements in American agriculture.

We are attaching to this letter a copy of a memorandum entitled "Sharecropper Evictions in Tennessee - A Challenge to the Kennedy Administration", in which we set forth in some detail the above and other suggestions for the benefit of the farm people we represent.

For your information, our organization was formerly known as the National Agricultural Workers Union AFL-CIO, with its headquarters in Washington. We are now a division of the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen of N.A. and are a continuation of the only organization in American agriculture which has sought to represent sharecroppers, tenants, small farmers and hired farm workers for the past 25 years.

We shall appreciate your consideration of our proposals.

Our best wishes for success in the task you are now assuming in serving the nation's largest industry - agriculture.

Sincerely yours,

H.L. Mitchell  
President