

# Magazine Charges 'Milk Monopoly'

in the May edition of the Progressive magazine charged four national dairy chains with helping "Monopoly in the Milkshed"

companies are Foremost Dairies, Jacksonville, Fla.; Borden Company, New York City; Beatrice Food Products, Chicago; and National Dairy Products, (Sealtest-Kraft), of New York City.

The article contended that the four dairy companies have been charged by the Federal Trade Commission (Anti-Merger) Act, which prohibits anti-competitive practices. The magazine said that the leaders, in their ceaseless cycle of growth, and merger, had record sales while farm prices declined and consumers have advanced the crisis in the dairy picture.

The article detailed account of practices in Illinois, Oklahoma, Texas, Kentucky, Wisconsin, Mississippi, the Mid-Atlantic and Central regions

1—In Louisville, Ky, New York City, Oklahoma City, Chicago, and Dayton, O., dairy manufacturers in almost every case received more money for processing milk than the farmer did for producing it.

2—The big New York City milk strike of '57—in which 9,000 mid-Atlantic region farmers resorted to milk-dumping, dynamiting, and gun-play—was prompted because farmers were getting only nine cents for a quart of milk while the housewife was paying 25 1/4 cents. The article charged the middlemen took 16 1/2 cents.

3—Florida has the highest retail milk prices in the nation because Borden's, Foremost, and Sealtest control 59 per cent of milk sales in Jack-

sonville, 60 per cent in Tampa and 36 per cent in Miami. The article further stated that farm surpluses were piling up in Florida because the price of milk was out of reach of many housewives.

4—The Big Four of the dairy industry today control 20 per cent of all fluid milk sales in the United States and have made more than a quarter of a billion dollars in profits after taxes since 1955—while farmers have been going broke.

5—Dairy "price wars,"—such as the one which affected Dallas, Texas, several years ago—have been driving local dairymen out of business. The article contended that Foremost Dairies was able to finance a price war in Dallas because of profits made in states such as Florida.

6—The big dairy chains favor supermarket chains with the "promotional allowances" which they do not give to "Mom and Pop" grocery stores.

The article cited the testimony of Fred Lambert, of the

Independent Processors of Missouri, taken before the Patman House Committee on Small Business, to the effect that "a conspiracy exists between chain stores and chain dairy companies"

Lambert said, "The large dairies are forcing the price of home-delivered milk up in order that housewives buy all their milk at chainstores where the milk of the large dairies is sold. There is a conspiracy between the large grocery chainstores to monopolize the distribution of milk . . . financed by the large dairies"

The article said that "the plight of the dairy farmer is

surpassed only by the death agonies of the small milk manufacturer. Twenty years ago he knew each farmer, who, in the early morning trucked his milk cans to his Main Street door, and he generally gave the farmer the best price he could and made a profit.

"Today, the small milk manufacturer is being bought out, sometimes forced out. The new proprietors are absentee landlords, running the dairy in Ashtabula or Gainesville from the corporate towers of New York and Chicago."

"They do not see the face of the dairy farmer when he brings his milk to market. (Turn to page 12)

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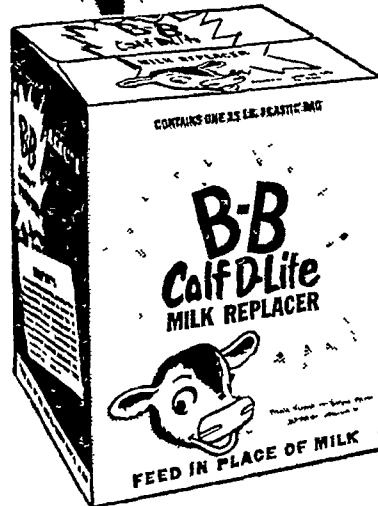
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