

WASHINGTON REPORT

Congressman Edwin D. Eshleman
16th District—Pennsylvania



You have probably had the experience of trying to get some needed information only to be confronted with a run-around from the organization being contacted. It is not an experience which is particularly appealing and probably does not leave you in a very good frame of mind. It is a sad fact that one of the worst places to seek out an answer is within the governmental structure. My office daily receives pleas from people who desires help in getting the Federal Government to react to specific requests.

A large portion of my time is spent obtaining information or looking into problems within Federal agencies for constituents. Many people are surprised to learn how much of a Congressman's day must be devoted to what is commonly called casework. Primarily, casework involves attempting to get answers, hopefully the right answers, out of the massive adminis-

trate bureaucracy. The questions asked might deal in anything from Social Security to passports, but in each case someone has gotten in touch with me in hopes of receiving assistance in obtaining something of personal importance from the government.

It is natural to assume that a Congressman can immediately cut through the red tape and come up with some satisfactory responses. I am happy to report that with some persistence such a pattern can often result, but even for a Congressman pursuing casework can be a most frustrating job. Since a Member of Congress is supposed to wield some degree of influence within the national structure, I suppose that we do receive the cream of the service provided, but the cream sometimes runs pretty thin and I cannot help but think how difficult the situation is for the general public when they try to contact a

branch of their government. Within some agencies, it is almost impossible to make any headway at all.

As an example of an operation that causes some real frustration, let me point to one that seems to attempt to thwart me on every occasion—the Office of Education. After contacting this agency, I have often concluded that never have so many produced so little. And, a consideration of some note in this instance is that my committee in the House deals in all educational matters so that in a manner of speaking OE's fate is partially in my hands.

On a typical case involving education, I have learned to expect that no less than five telephone calls are necessary just to get pointed in the proper direction. Then several calls may be needed to finally get in touch with the person supposedly has possession of the facts. More often than not the facts finally accumulated leave much to be desired, but by the time this juncture is reached, you are almost ready to settle for anything. I suppose writing a letter might be a way around such turmoil, provided, of course that you do not really need an answer in a hurry.

I am told that the new team being installed in the education agency will eliminate some of these problems, and I hope this means that the general public as well as Congress will be the beneficiaries of better service from the Office of Education. There are some professional educators among those in the 16th District who I know would welcome the change.

As a final note, I might add that I am always happy to engage in casework for you, even if it involves education. I just thought that you might like to know that if my answer to your question is not always as prompt as it might be, it is highly possible that I am tangled up in some pretty stiff red tape.

LANCHESTER PONY CLUB
Lanchester Pony Club members have been busy as bees this month. You can see them up at their headquarters painting and trimming up in preparation for this busy spring schedule they have. The children have already turned in their posters announcing the Lanchester Pony Club Jr. Horseshow on May 3rd at Drumore, Pa. The winners were — Best overall poster — Pixie Waters, Best design—Wendall Lane, Most colorful—Marcy Maury and Most Original, Nancy Henkel.

They are also preparing for 4 of the members to appear on TV

on Channel 8 on April 30th. Next they are looking forward to the Regional Rally which will be held at headquarters on June 16 to 18 for C's, B's & A's and June 20th, to 22nd for D's. They finally end up the month of June 28th and 29th as host for the "A" Panel which everyone is interested in watching and gaining knowledge.



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