

## Farmers Union Protests Cuts In The Agriculture Budget

The farmers union protested cuts in the agriculture budget and urged subcommittees of the House and Senate Appropriations Committee to restore—and increase—funds in order to improve farm income. Appearances before the subcommittees were made recently by both NFU Legislative Director Reuben Johnson and Research Director Angus McDonald. Johnson told the subcommittees that "maximum levels (of price supports) that Congress has set are being ignored." He said these are 90 percent of parity for all major commodities, except wheat, which is 100 percent. Actual support levels, Johnson said, range from 46 percent for wheat to 83 percent for manufacturing milk. He said "\$5½ billion in gross farm income could be added if the needed funds were available. Numerous studies have indicat-

ed that each federal dollar cut from the farm program budget loses farmers \$2 in net return. On the other side, each federal dollar added to the farm program budget gains farmers approximately \$2 in net return.

McDonald noted that although the new budget recommends no cut for REA funds below the \$345 million suggested by the previous Administration, a survey shows that REA co-ops need at least \$600 million. McDonald proposed \$200,000 cut in funds for the Packers and Stockyards Administration, and urged that it be increased by about \$1 million. He praised P & SA Administrator Don Campbell for doing an excellent job "with extremely limited funds."

The proposed budget cuts for agriculture total \$177.5 million. The largest cut recommended was elimination of the \$100 mil-

lion ACP program. The Farmers Home Administration would be cut \$24 million for rural water and waste disposal grants, as well as another \$16 million in various rural renewal and housing programs (\$66 million of which would be a reduction in loans for very low income housing repair and rental housing loans). In all the recommendation represents a reduction of \$345 million below recommendations of the previous Administration.

In other testimony this week, the farmers union urged protection of farm workers under the National Labor Relations Act, extension of the Great Plains Conservation Program, and legislation to let potato growers establish research and promotion programs. NFU Legislative Director Reuben Johnson said Farmers Union, which supports commodity bargaining for farmers, in the same spirit supports bargaining for farm workers. NFU Research Director Angus McDonald said the Great Plains Conservation Program should be



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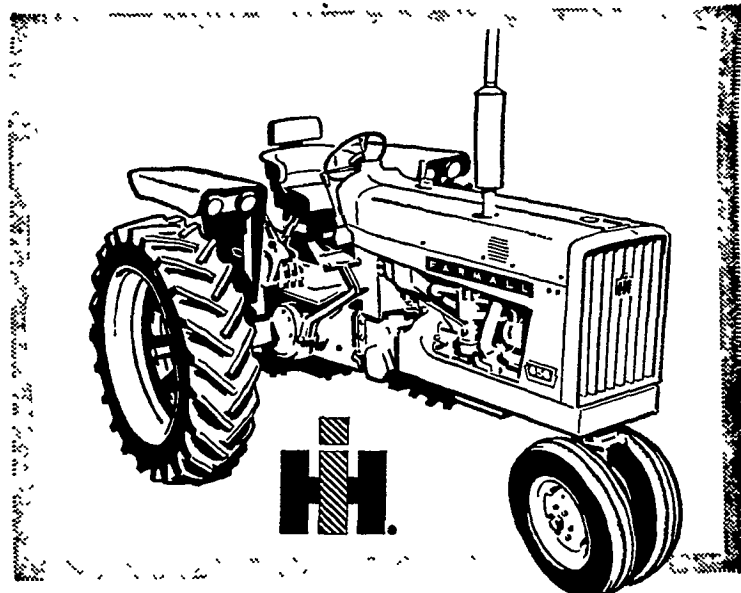
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continued to help farmers and ranchers conserve soil on the vast land areas of the Great Plains that are unsuitable for crop production. Utah-South Idaho Farmers Union President Roy L. Holman urged approval of HR 2777 and other bills to enable potato growers to finance a nationally coordinated research and promotion program to improve their competitive position and expand their markets.

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