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## WASHINGTON REPORT Congressman Edwin D. Eshleman

16th District—Pennsylvania



From my first month as your Congressman back in 1967 right up to the present, I have been an advocate of Federal-State tax-sharing. I believe that local and state governments are better equipped than the Federal Government to recognize and determine priority areas for public action. Through tax-sharing, Federal money could be made available to meet pressing problems at the State and local levels.

But, basic to any plan of this type is the ability of State and local officials to effectively define problems and administer solutions.

Although tax-sharing has been popular with many Congressmen, particularly Republicans, no comprehensive plan of this type has been enacted. There have been, however, several block grant programs passed for specific purposes, and block grants function

in a manner similar to that proposed, and block grants function in a manner similar to that proposed in tax-sharing legislation. Therefore, we can assume that a look at how these block grant programs are working might provide some idea of the possible success of tax-sharing plans.

I must frankly admit to being disturbed by the failure of the states to properly utilize the block grant approach in several instances. Specifically, I feel the administration in the states of the Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 has failed to provide much encouragement that officials at that level can determine priorities.

The states have used the block-grant money in the Safe Streets Act primarily to build a new layer of bureaucracy. It is extremely doubtful that additional bureaucrats add up to better crime fighting. When funds have been distributed, a per capita basis often has been used that ignores the concentration of crime in urban areas and favors rural and suburban sections where crime is at a minimum. For instance, Mayor Tate, of Philadelphia, claims that only 7 percent of the total planning grant received by Pennsylvania went to his city. Philadelphia accounts for 25 percent of the major crimes in the Commonwealth.

The implementation of the Safe Streets Act in the states does not serve as a good omen for tax-sharing plans in the future. The basic element of effective definition and administration by the officials in charge has not seemed to emerge. Serious doubts have arisen about further distribution of Federal funds in a like manner.

In the first newsletter I distributed in the 16th District I made the following statement about tax-sharing:

"With a new source of ever-increasing revenue — with no strings attached — the states will be better able to meet contemporary problems such as crime, urban renewal, welfare and education. They would no longer have to look to Washington to settle problems that they fully recognize but theretofore could do nothing about for want of funds. The rebirth in the ability of the states to handle their own problems would serve to return the Federal-State scheme to its proper perspective and balance." My fundamental belief still rests along those lines, but the experience with the Safe Streets Act hardly inspires greater enthusiasm. I would hope that the mistakes will be corrected, or it is almost certain that some other means for decentralizing government money will have to be formulated.

### Sheep Show

One of the very best sheep shows and sales will be held in the Farm Show Building at Harrisburg on July 11 and 12. This is the Keystone Ram and Ewe Show and will attract some of the best sheep from the eastern part of the country. Local breeders are urged to consider this show and sale to buy a new ram or to increase the number of good ewes in their flocks. All breeds will be represented and only the best in each class will be permitted through the sale. The Show and Sale Manager is Mr. Milton Morgan of Lancaster and he will be glad to furnish additional details. Show catalogs are available and we regard this event as one of the top sheep activities of the summer.

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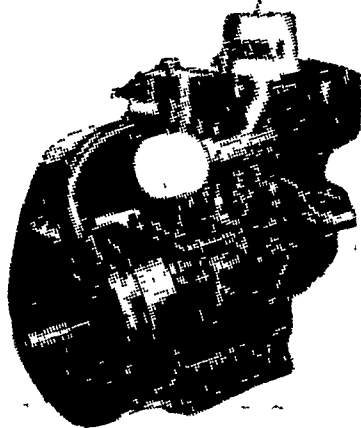
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