

## WASHINGTON REPORT

Congressman Edwin D. Eshleman

18th District—Pennsylvania



During this month the U.S. House of Representatives acted on the farm program. I voted against the Agriculture Act of 1970. I am convinced that the legislation is very little if better than the present unsatisfactory law dealing with our farms. The House simply voted extension of the old federal handout approach to agriculture, and I cannot support that kind of farm policy.

What Pennsylvania farmers need—in fact, I think, what all farmers need—is an agricultural plan more in tune with free market economics. The farmer should be permitted to get a fair price for quality goods in the marketplace. Today far too much of this country's agricultural income is in the form of and dependent on federal subsidies.

### Straw-Cob Feed Found Needing Supplements

Straw and ground corn cobs treated with sodium and potassium hydroxide in lamb rations increased gains, a University of Nebraska scientist reported recently at Penn State.

Dr. Terry Klopfenstein, associate professor for beef nutrition, said lambs fed rations containing untreated straw showed no gain, while lambs fed rations containing treated straw gained 32 ounces per day.

In the corn cob experiment, lambs with untreated cobs in their ration gained two ounces per day while the lambs getting treated cobs gained five ounces

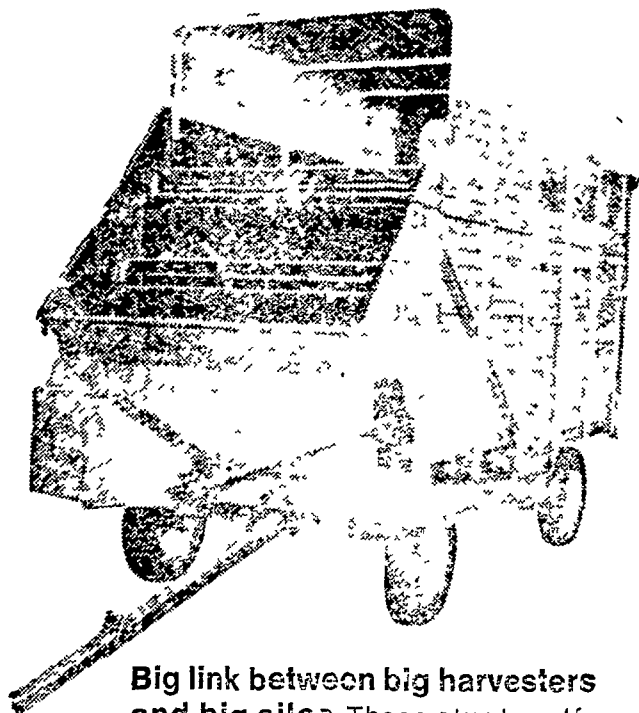
During floor debate on the farm bill, I favored an amendment to limit farm subsidy payments to \$20,000 per farm. Had this measure been adopted, there would have been an estimated saving to American taxpayers of over \$400 million. Some of the basic unfairness of our present agricultural handout approach would have been corrected. For example, a number of corporate farms receive better than a million dollars in farm subsidy payments yearly, while many small farmers are unable to earn an adequate livelihood even with subsidy payments. This kind of disparity would have been partially corrected.

Eventually the \$20,000 limitation was rejected in favor of a \$55,000 ceiling annually. Although this is an improvement over the present system of unlimited payments, it does not adequately deal with the serious inequities that exist in agriculture.

Even the \$20,000 ceiling, while an adequate reform for this year, should have been a beginning not an end. Our farm policy should be attempting to completely phase out the subsidy system, perhaps at a rate of 20% per year.

With subsidies now totalling nearly \$4 billion per year, the first year saving under a 20% plan would amount to \$800 million. There would be millions of dollars freed for use in other matters which concern farmers and the rest of the Nation.

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These are reasons why I could not in good conscience support the farm bill. The bill represents a heavy cost for the taxpayer. It continues an ineffectual program for the average farmer. Finally, it renews a \$4 billion handout priority that the nation cannot afford and that much of agriculture does not want.

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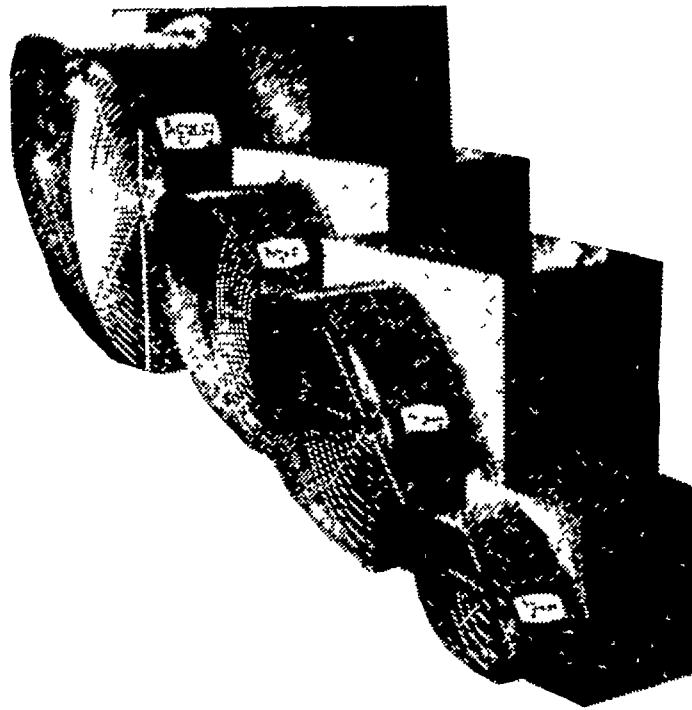
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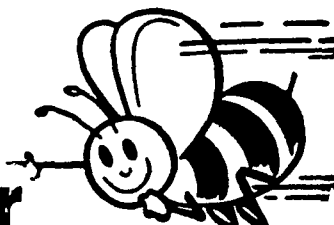
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