Grayson Urged to Support Farm Price Exemption

Farm cooperative leader Kenneth D. Naden asked Price Commission Chairman C. Jackson Grayson to clarify for consumers why farm prices are exempt from controls.

"We urge you to explain again," said Naden, executive vice president of the National Council of Farm Cooperatives, "that farm prices are exempt for the sound reason they are subject to severe price competition."

This competition, Naden asserted, subjects farm prices to a form of control that's far more effective and beneficial to consumers than that imposed in any other sector of the economy, or by government.

Naden's letter was in response to remarks made by Grayson recently. In them, Grayson labeled Secretary of Agriculture Butz's support of higher farm prices as being "damaging to the stabilization program."

The farm co-op leader contrasted higher food prices with higher utility prices recently approved by the Price Commission. He said farmers couldn't understand why support for higher food prices is considered a sin, but support for higher utility prices is not, when both could be justified by rising costs and better consumer service.

Naden said that farmers hope Grayson will repeat his admonition that consumers can't "get something for nothing" in either better utility service or wholesome, safe food.

Recent cyclical highs in cattle prices were also covered by Naden. He said farmers don't consider an unplanned increase in live cattle prices, back up to a level of 20 years ago, to be a "catch up."

"This rise," asserted Naden, "is not at all comparable to the planned year-after-year escalation of wage rates and industrial prices, based upon substantial market power." The fact that current live cattle prices are now nearer a fair level, he said, should not distort consumers' judgement about the benefits of the system that produced it.

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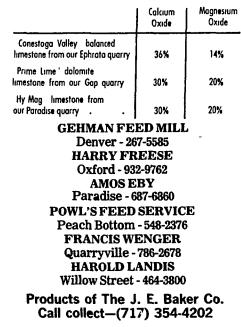
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