



ED ESHLEMAN'S WASHINGTON REPORT

Watergate has made it fashionable to talk about morality in government during the past six months. In fact, since Watergate, some talk as if morality in government and politics is a new topic never before raised as a public issue in this country.

There was a poll released recently that showed parents to be very reluctant to have their children get involved in politics. Those results were said to be an outgrowth of the Watergate publicity. But political morality is not a new issue. It's something that has been with us for many years.

Perhaps a personal illustration will help to put the subject into its proper perspective. During the 12 years I served in the State Legislature - which was six to 18 years prior to any mention of Watergate - I visited our high schools talking to about 100 senior government classes. In everyone of those classes I asked the same question - "How many of you think politics is dirty?" In every one of those classes at least two-thirds of the students raised their hands to indicate that they thought politics was a dirty business.

That would launch me into a "sermonette" to the effect that they weren't born with that attitude. Obviously, these students had acquired their opinion from adults--parents, teachers and others - meaning that society, in general, regarded politics and politicians as morally suspicious.

Then, I would try to distinguish between the statements "politics is dirty" and "there are dirty politicians." There is no doubt that both major parties have had dirty politicians, and I would concede to the students that maybe even the percentage of corrupt people is higher in politics than in other professions because politicians are subjected to greater temptations.

But, the fact remains that it is not politics alone that has people go bad. There are "foul balls" in every job and profession in this country. And the significant thing is that we don't condemn everyone else in those jobs and professions when one of their number goes astray.

When a banker turns "sour," the public doesn't lose faith in its whole banking system - nor should it. If a doctor somewhere is sued for malpractice, people don't immediately lose faith in

Rail Shortages at Grain Elevators to be Monitored

Secretary of Agriculture Earl L. Butz said the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is setting up a monitoring system to identify areas with critical needs for rail equipment to move grain.

Troublespots will be reported to the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC), the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), and the Association of American Railroads.

Currently, nationwide information to determine areas of greatest need for rail cars is not available. As a result, an elevator with grain on the ground and more being delivered may not be receiving any cars while other elevators with less acute shipping problems are receiving cars. Given this data, government agencies and the Association of American Railroads can take steps that result in a more equitable distribution of cars among all grain shippers.

During the past year grain shippers have experienced a continuing shortage of rail equipment needed to move their commodities. This shortage is

their own family doctor -- nor should they.

The same kind of treatment should be accorded to those in government and politics. Just because some turn "sour" does not mean that the whole democratic system should be condemned. Condemn those who have dishonored a public trust, but don't lose faith in our governmental process.

It is important for all of us to distinguish the difference between saying all of politics is dirty and admitting there are some dirty politicians. There have been and will be politicians turn bad in both parties. But, public confidence in the democratic process must not be undermined. No matter how dirty the politician, it is that individual and not the system that's at fault. Politics is not dirty.

expected to continue during the period of heavy grain movement.

This month nearly all country grain elevator operators will receive a letter and a questionnaire from USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) asking them to supply data on the amount of grain presently awaiting rail shipment; grain on hand in the elevator and on the ground, if any; and anticipated receipts and shipments within the next two weeks. Reports by the

warehousemen are voluntary and to be submitted on a weekly basis only when car shortage problems exist. Data collected by the monitoring system will indicate areas and railroads with greatest need for additional equipment.

The information will be compiled by the Transportation and Warehouse Division of AMS. Problem areas will be categorized by state, by USDA crop reporting district, and by railroad. Summaries of the data will go to organizations with direct responsibility over rail equipment supply, including ICC, DOT, and the Association of American Railroads.

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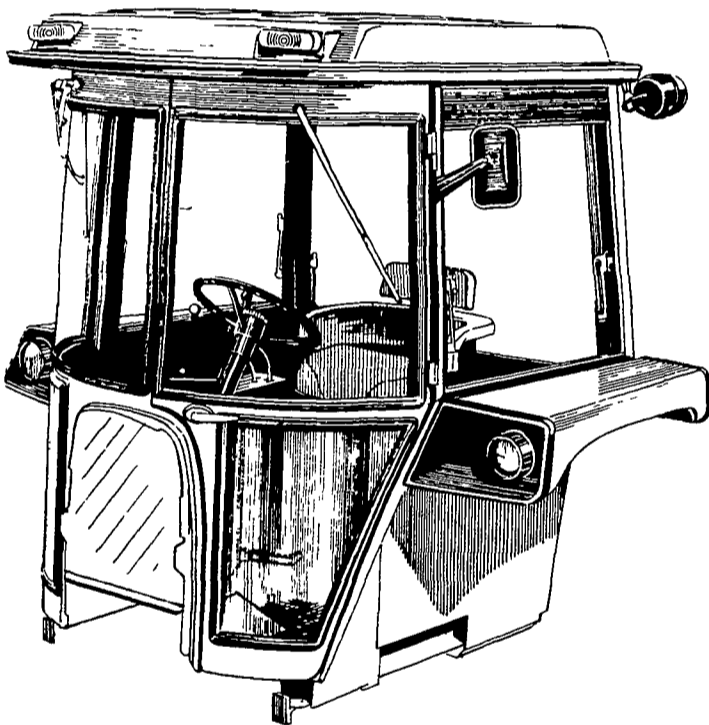
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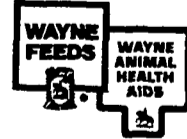
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