

Farm organizations support better roads, property rights

CAMP HILL — The Pennsylvania State Council of Farm Organizations resolved Monday to support better roads for farmers

In addition they voted a number of resolutions supportive of individual property rights.

The Council is comprised of members of almost all farm groups and interests in Pennsylvania

Citing the deteriorating condition of Pennsylvania highways, the group decided to support the current HB 2103

That bill allows vehicles to engage in local pickup and delivery of agricultural commodities and to use secondary roads regardless of posted weight limits

Members pointed out many trucks involved in hauling goods to and from farms today weigh over 30,000 pounds

They noted many of these secondary roads are 'pancake roads' or roads without proper foundation

The measure was adopted in support of the food processing industry which said it feels the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation's demand for a bonding agreement or discontinuation of use of roads is not fair

PennDOT has asked roads be posted up to a 15 ton limit

In addition, the resolution called for the Commonwealth to maintain secondary roads within a 10 mile radius of processors' plants to accommodate the maximum truck weight limits

Members resolved to support and endorse any bills which would provide a more equitable workmans compensation system both for agricultural employers and employees in general

The members passed resolutions stating in different ways their support of personal property rights

They resolved to oppose



Robert Delano, left, President of the American Farm Bureau Federation met with Eugene Gayman and Donald Parke at the Council of Farm Organization meeting. Gayman is president of CFO, and president of Pennsylvania Farmers Association Parke is CFO vice president, and executive director of PennAg Industries Association.

the use of Wilderness Areas

The much-discussed resolution was born out of the controversy in the Warren, McKean and Elk County area where the government has proposed to take 36,000 acres of privately held land for a Wilderness Area

Much of the land is in timber holdings The resolution drew strong support from the Christmas Tree Growers Association which opposed any chunk in the armour of such a resolution

One point of debate was whether or not to support multiple use of such lands or to support other appropriate land use

Both ideas were felt by the Christmas Tree growers to leave the door open to government taking of ag land

The members took a

strong stand against government taking of farm land

They re-affirmed a resolution supporting legislation to prohibit use of prime farm land for highways and certain disposal purposes unless a committee with knowledge of land use determines there is no feasible alternative

They added a resolution stating that if such land is not utilized in the originally intended purpose within 10 years, that the original owner shall be entitled to re-acquire the property

Rather than tie down a fee schedule for re-acquiring the land they left their statement broad

Two alternatives considered were using the original price to re-acquire the land and paying a fair market price

They continued to oppose dog racing in the Commonwealth The resolution was adopted to protect the harness racing funds which support agricultural research

In addition, the members approved several changes in the by-laws of the Council

Among them were increasing the numbers of members on the executive board to allow wider representation of the many member farm groups

The fiscal year was changed, and several other modifications were made in

the by-laws to conform to present needs.

Speaker at the evening banquet was Robert Delano, the new president of the American Farm Bureau Federation.

Members also were given an update on preservation of agricultural land Speakers included Millersville farmer Amos Funk, Ken Greider, Executive Director of the State Association of Township Supervisors, State Representative Noah Wenger, and Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Chet Heim — CH

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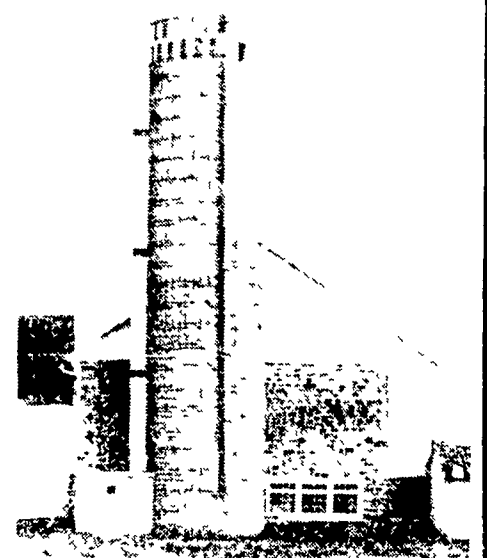
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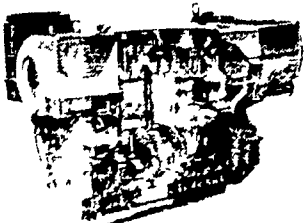
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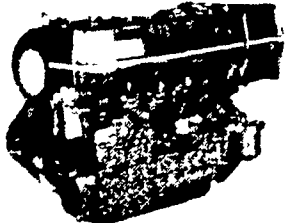
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