

**DID YOU EVER SEE A TREE AFTER A FOREST FIRE**

# Letters To The Editor

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Dear Editor,

I have come to appreciate the legislative comment your newspaper carries to keep farmers informed on happenings in Harrisburg. I look for excellent legislative information from your reporters and editorial staff. The latest commentator on legislative proceedings, however, is out of place, misinformed, and guilty of clearly partisan leanings.

County Agent Tom Jurchak is sworn to neutrality on farm issues in the political arena by virtue of his employment with the Extension Service. On the subject of the Milk Security Fund he stepped a bit up on a grandstand to promote the Farmers Association, and therefore, violated the impartiality we rightfully expect of him. Additionally, his assessment of what happen-

ed is distorted and misleading to your readers.

In Mr Jurchak's July 12 Lancaster Farming column he states "The PFA worked the two cent amendment to the bill - that's true, they did. He says the other groups failed to support the PFA - also true, and apparently a pity to the County Agent's way of thinking."

In beginning his account with that organization, clearly outlining PFA policy, Mr Jurchak implies correctness, motherhood, and apple pie. When the Administration, Secretary Hallowell, six major dairy cooperatives, the State Grange, and the Pennsylvania Farmers Union failed to agree with Camp Hill thinking, Jurchak implies all were wrong. I must tell your readers that Mr Jurchak is wrong.

The simple fact is that while all other groups were supporting the version of a Milk Security Fund that could pass, PFA could think of nothing except talking tough for a two cent amendment. There was simply little support for such major surgery, and they lost the battle everywhere it was fought.

The amendment died in the full Senate and it died in the House Agriculture Committee, almost for lack of a second to the motion. Even after the second came, only those two members voted to amend.

It was not until the bill came for a vote in the full House that PFA finally gave up its tinkering tendency, and supported the bill. After all other organizations worked hard to keep the bill on track, PFA decided in the final hour to join the effort.

Even Lancaster Farming carried a (June 28) editorial titled "Fight over pennies later", which stated it was more important to get a fund for farmers-NOW- than to quibble over pennies and jeopardize the fund. All those groups supporting SB 1011 knew the deduction rate could be changed later, in

the Milk Marketing Board, and many believed a two cent amendment would kill the bill in this session of the legislature. Sponsors of the bill stated publicly they could not support major amendments, like a 2 cent contribution rate.

It's clear to me that Mr Jurchak started his editorial with the wrong group. If he wishes to be a legislative commentator he'll simply have to learn to start with the majority position, and then mention those off somewhere else, dancing to other drummers.

The inaccurate impression Mr Jurchak leaves with your readers is not the real problem though. It is that he used your paper to editorialize his support for the Farm Bureau. Stating that the PFA failure in this matter is a "rarity for them", alone puts him in an obviously partisan position. That statement is not one of an impartial observer, and certainly is an improper one from a "neutral" County Agent.

Please understand I am in no way criticizing your newspaper. You accept and print Mr. Jurchak's column in good faith, without acting as censor. He should have censored himself.

Farmers and other rural residents in the state deserve better than this from their Extension Service personnel. Hopefully Mr. Jurchak will come to better understand his function; and hopefully your readers will not be misled on the subject of the Milk Security Fund or which groups really caused it to become law.

Leonard Zemaitis  
 Administrative Director  
 Pennsylvania Farmers Union

**Eastern Berks  
 4-H Dairy Club**

**prepares for fair**

NEW BERLINVILLE — Members of the Eastern Berks 4-H Dairy Club met July 11, at the home of Lee and Richard Savidge, in Mertztown.

A cleanup schedule was filled out for the Kutztown fair and a clipping demonstration was given.

Registration cards were filled out for all of the animals to be taken to the fairs.

After the meeting was over, Janice Savidge of Mertztown gave an enjoyable performance with her "cow", Mooshine.

The next meeting will be held August 5 at the Kutztown fair.

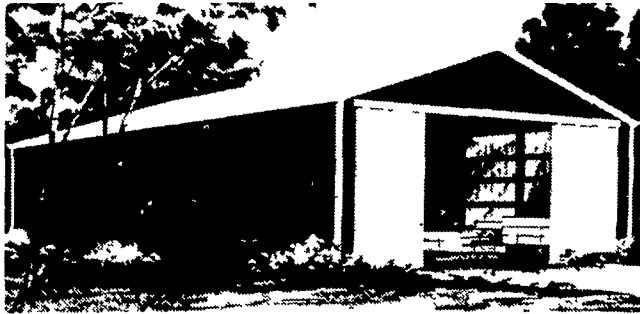
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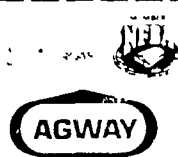
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