

*At farmer co-op meeting*

# Senator urges agriculture to tell its story

FOLLYWOOD BEACH, Fla. — Senator Mark Andrews last Wednesday urged the agricultural community to start telling its story.

Speaking at the 52nd annual meeting of the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives, Andrews said the farm organizations during the last 30 years have done more to confuse than inform Congress. "The only way to sell a farm program," he asserted, "is to show that the U.S. economy needs a sound farm program."

The veteran legislator said that the Dutch enjoy extremely high price support levels because their people realize that if farmers aren't doing well, the rest of the economy will suffer. He noted the nation does better when farmers get an adequate return on their investment. "This is the story all of us must get across," he said.

Andrews added if cooperatives and others can help the public realize how important it is to protect and encourage the U.S. food production system then we can move into a new era of agricultural productivity in the world.

Turning to energy matters, Andrews said that Congress must work on

energy supply protection for agriculture. As part of this issue, he said, the Department of Energy must recognize that cooperatives now supply 45 percent of all farm fuel.

Andrews also noted that federal regulatory inequities penalized cooperative suppliers some \$400 million in additional energy costs during 1980. We need action now, he asserted, to correct cooperative crude oil access and cost disparity problems.

Commenting on Reagan Administration appointments, Andrews said he was impressed with Secretary of Agriculture Designate John Block during Senate confirmation hearings. The North Dakota Senator commented that Block was a "hands-on" farmer who has the potential to be an excellent Secretary of Agriculture.

Congressman Ed Jones, chairman of the House Conservation and Credit Subcommittee, discussed mandates resulting from changes made in the Farm Credit Act. He said there were two separate messages for the Farm Credit System.

First, said Jones, is the mandate for cooperative export financing. He noted the mandate is an ambitious one, both for farmer

cooperatives and the Banks for Cooperatives. "International trade is a fast-paced, high risk proposition," said the Farm Credit policymaker. Many people, including the Congress, will be following progress in this area very closely.

Jones added opponents of the export authority will be waiting for the first slip-up in order to start whittling away at the mandate. "Congressional supporters such as myself," he cautioned, "will be exercising our oversight responsibility to help ensure no major mishaps occur."

The Tennessee legislator said the other mandate he sees from the recently enacted Farm Credit Amendments is what he calls the "extra-mile mandate." Jones stated that as long as tax benefits and other advantages are granted to elements of the Farm Credit System, he personally feels the system has an extra-mile obligation to its member/borrowers.

"The young farmer program, the 10 year loan, the increased lending limits on real estate, and liberalized participation authority with Farmers Home Administration and commercial banks are the

extra-mile mandates," said Jones.

"They can make a great difference in what the system means to American agriculture and how the system will be received when it next enters the political arena."

Jones urged the system to adopt and embrace the extra-mile mandate, and

(Turn to Page C25)



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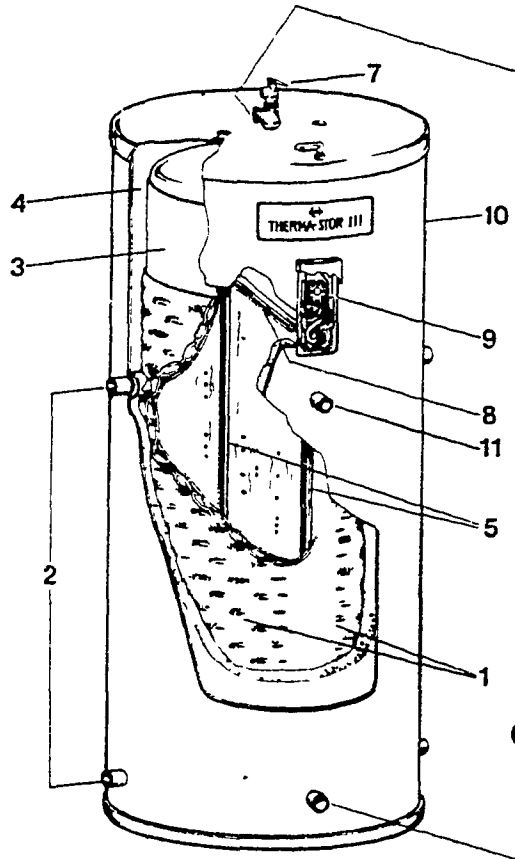
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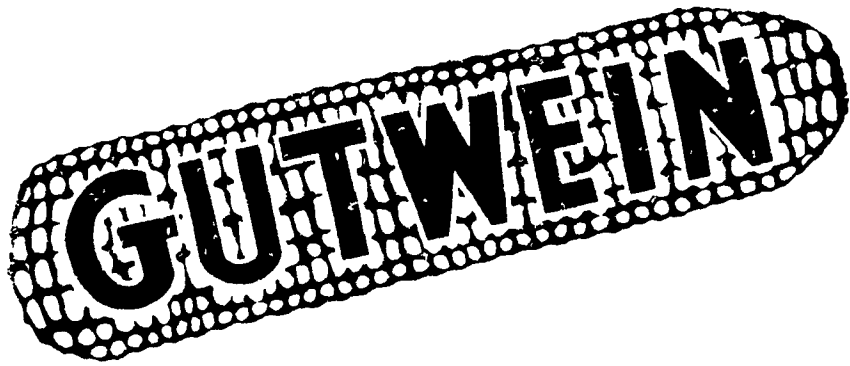
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