

To Washington with a manure spreader

LANCASTER — Two western Iowa farmers, making their way to the nation's capitol on a farm tractor pulling a manure spreader, stopped briefly in front of the Lancaster County Courthouse Tuesday morning. There they spoke with County Commissioners, reporters, and well-wishers. Pennsylvania Farmers Union assisted the two in their trek across the state.

Peter Brent, 44, and Tony Bos, 49, two life-long farmers, have been forced out of business by depressed markets and changing government policies. They left their homes in early April intent on sharing their distress on current government policies with other farmers, small businesspeople and unemployed workers along the way, before delivering their message in Washington.

Brent was forced to declare bankruptcy when Farmers Home Administration refused to refinance his loan. "We are not

radicals, nor are we sloppy, inefficient farmers," they've informed well-wishers along the way. "We've both been just ordinary hard-working farmers all our lives. But what was done to us shouldn't be allowed to happen in America. We're angry, we're frustrated, we want to raise the consciousness of other Americans to the injustice," the pair has said along the way. They want to report the extent of farm disaster through mid-America.

Bos, whose farm mortgage was foreclosed by Production Credit, was told that his lender was going "to sell you out, right down to your shorts!"

Brent and Bos are determined to deliver their message to Congress and the White House in graphic form. On their manure spreader is perched a White outHouse and next to it is an easy chair holding a barrel on which is printed the following greeting.

"If your debts are free and clear,

you can stand right up and cheer; But if like us you've lost your rear, throw your shorts right up in here."

Some of the pair's expenses are being covered by church, labor,

and farmer coalitions who have been trying to get recent government farm policies improved and interest rates lowered. The two have been meeting with leaders of these groups at each of their stops.

They plan to arrive in Washington on May 9.

When they arrive in Washington they will meet with legislators from their state and hope to be able to speak with President Regan.

Horse imports from Italy restricted

WASHINGTON, D.C. — U.S. Department of Agriculture officials have again imposed restrictions on the importation of horses from Italy because of contagious equine metritis, a venereal disease of horses.

John K. Atwell, deputy administrator of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, said Italian officials reported finding the disease in three mares. Test results on these mares were

confirmed March 28.

USDA had removed Italy from the list of countries affected by the disease Dec. 9, 1982, based on information that indicated that the disease did not exist in Italy.

Atwell said the restrictions will affect only mares and stallions of breeding age. To be eligible for entry into the United States, animals over two years of age must undergo specific prophylactic treatments and tests

in the country of origin, at USDA import quarantine stations and on premises specifically designated for state quarantine.

Since discovery of this bacterial disease in 1977, the United States has imposed restrictions on horse imports from 11 countries. They are Australia, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Ireland, Italy, Japan, West Germany, France, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

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