

Congressman Ridge Begins Campaign For Governor

EVERETT NEWSWANGER

Managing Editor

LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.)-Congressman Tom Ridge, Republican candidate for governor, started early for the 1994 elections by meeting with supporters on the Lancaster Court House steps Monday. While Ridge did not mention agriculture in his prepared speech, he told Lancaster Farming privately that he knows agriculture is Pennsylvania's number one industry, and he said that if you are

in agriculture, the profitability of your business is of highest priority.

"I know how important it is for government to work shoulder to shoulder with those who harvest the land and contribute to the quality of life, not only in rural communities but around Pennsylvania," Ridge said. "It would seem to me to be the highest priority to get the folks in Harrisburg to work with me to improve the relationship between state government and the ag community and the agribusi-

ness community.

"We need to work for research on a balanced environmental policy that seems to be tilted against the farmer and the ag community. I have always looked to the point that the stewards of our environment are those who rely on the environment for their livelihood. These are the men and women in agriculture.

"The whole notion that bureaucrats take to the farming communi-

ty that somehow they are adverse to the long term interest to preserve the environment, gets them (bureaucrats) off on the wrong foot. Nationally, I have tried to bring some balance on some wetlands legislation. We need wetlands, but we also need to understand that private property means more in this country than it does in any other nation in the world.

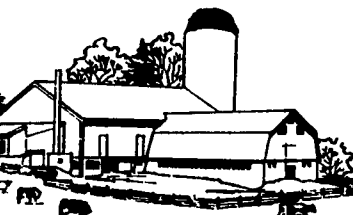
"Wetlands are an environmental issue, yes, but 80 to 85 percent of wetlands are on private property and the Constitution says there shall be no public taking of private

property unless there is just compensation. So the approach I bring to the issue of environment and agriculture is that we need an endless search to bring some balance to it," he said.

Ridge represents Erie and its surrounding communities in the U.S. House of Representatives. He was born in Pittsburgh Steel Valley community of Munhall in 1945. He is currently serving his sixth two-year term in the U. S. House but has announced he will not seek reelection to this post. Ridge and his wife Michele have two young children, Lesley, age 6 and Tommy, age 5.

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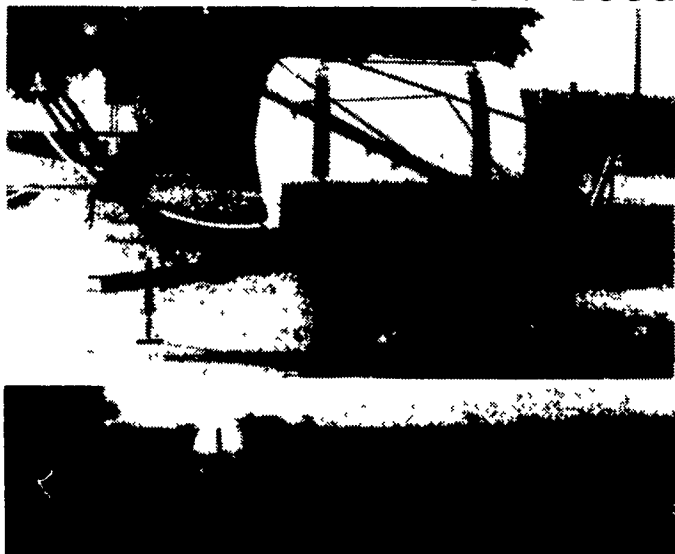
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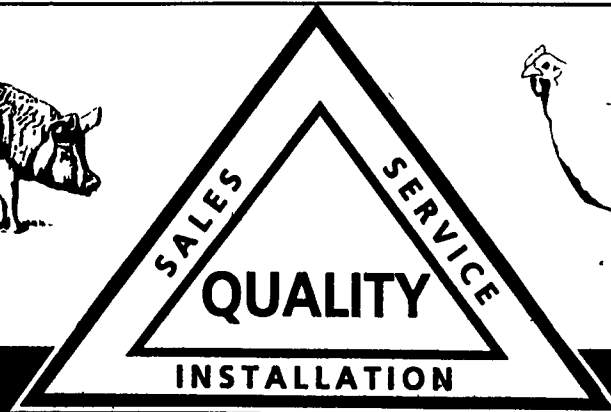
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