

Consumers Testify At Milk Hearing

(continued from PAGE ONE)

Additionally, the court held that the board did not present data required by law to justify the price increase and ordered the board to develop and promulgate a uniform accounting system that meets the Milk Act's requirements.

The court, however, did not rescind the price hike in effect, and thus consumers have been forced to pay more than a million dollars extra in the Scranton-Wilkes-Barre area alone for milk under the illegal price order which went into effect in July, 1970.

Most supermarkets, which normally retail milk only in throwaway containers, are selling milk for 5 cents more, or \$1.20 a gallon. Home delivery is generally a few cents a gallon more.

CONSUMERS' INTEREST

Elaine Freeman, chairman of the Scranton Nutritional Workshop, a member of the Justice Department's Consumer Protect Council, and a member of the Pennsylvania Agriculture Department's Consumer Affairs Council, told the milk board that she was concerned about the spiraling cost of milk in the region. "Who is upholding the consumers' interest," she asked the board, "in the pricing of milk when this region is faced with the highest unemployment rate since 1959, and a per capita income not only below the Pennsylvania average, but below most of our neighboring states which enjoy a lower milk price and generally lower grocery prices."

"It appears that the Milk Marketing Board is protecting the wholesaler or big distributor rather than the farmer or more importantly the consumer," she charged, asking "who protects the consumer, and what should we as consumers do about lowering the price of milk?"

Suggesting a solution if nothing else worked, Mrs. Freeman asked the board if consumers cannot appeal to the milk marketing board to lower milk prices consistent with neighboring states must they unite in a massive boycott stress the point that the consumer cannot continue to sit back and allow the price of milk to reach such

Louden Hill Atty. Myers said in an interview Wednesday night that milk was the only commodity in which the price is regulated by the state, with the exception of liquor, which the state retails outright. He said the need for a milk marketing board dates back to depression days when farmers found it difficult to sell their milk at any price. "But in 1937," Atty. Myers added, "the Federal Government got into the act and passed legislation which guarantees 90 percent of the farmers a fair price for their milk," thus eliminating farmers from any benefits they might otherwise receive from the state milk board.

FARMERS

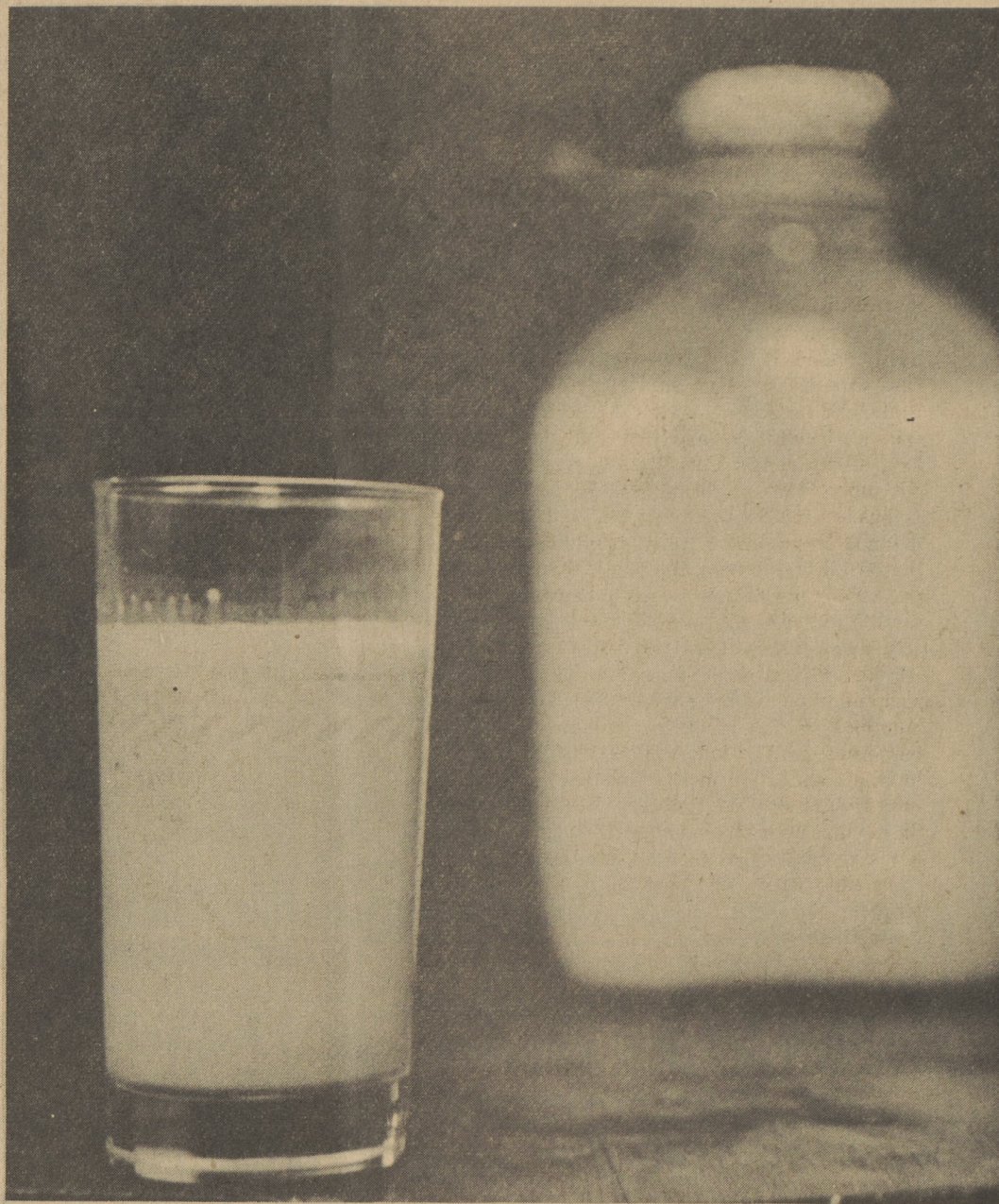
"Farmers are skeptical over the outcome of state control," Atty. Myers added, "but it's a simple fact that farmers are not helped by the state board."

In his three-year fight with the milk marketing board while representing Louden Hill, Atty. Myers charged that there was still no uniform system of accounting, even though the Pennsylvania Legislature stipulated that such was a must back in 1968.

"Even if the board's accounting system were a good one," Mr. Sandfort charges, "it's hard to see how the board could use it to justify the price increase. How can you justify a September 1970 hike from data starting in September 1971—a whole year later?"

"The board should have admitted it was wrong when Commonwealth Court ruled last February, and rescinded the increase until it could come up with the actual costs in the dairy industry as required by the Milk Marketing Act," Mr. Sandfort added. "Instead, the board has stalled for over 10 months, overcharging Scranton-Wilkes-Barre consumers over a million dollars in unwarranted high milk prices."

Among others who testified during the Scranton hearing were Bernice Rabin, chairman of a Luzerne County citizens group known as FED-UP; William F. Matson of the Pennsylvania League for Consumer Protection; Agnes Peoples of the Wilkes-Barre Rights Organization; and Kenneth



"I am prepared to lower the price of milk to 96 cents a gallon in my 28 retail outlets within the hour."

unrealistic proportions?" She further suggested "more active participation of consumer advocates on the Milk Marketing Board, or in setting changes in the milk laws; the use of returnable bottles to be used in all stores and supermarkets throughout Pennsylvania, and reasonable milk pricing compatible with neighboring states."

30 OR 40 CENTS MORE

Acting as counsel for Mrs. Freeman during the hearing was Scranton Atty. John E. V. Pieski, who earlier told the Agriculture Department's Consumers Affairs Council that milk pricing needed reform. In a prepared statement Mr. Pieski said, "The Pennsylvania farmer receives no more for his milk than in states bordering Pennsylvania, but yet the consumer pays 30 cents or 40 cents more per gallon in Pennsylvania than in neighboring states. 'For example,' he continued, 'one company sells milk in Pennsylvania at \$1.32 per gallon but the same company, getting the milk from the same farms, sells it in Ohio for 89 cents a gallon.'

"We must abolish price setting to consumers," he contended, "allowing free competitive prices in the market place, while at the same time protecting the farmer as we do the laborer in a factory and the small milk dealer."

"The consumer advocate said that at one time there were over 30 states that controlled consumer milk prices but today there are less than 10. 'Consumers,' he maintained, 'can enjoy much lower milk prices and have the freedom of choice of purchasing their milk if the board would allow efficient milk dealers to pass on their savings to consumers. It is a known fact that consumers use more milk when prices are lower.'

Retailer Mr. Sandfort has been a long-time advocate of a lower consumer milk price. He said Thursday that he had the benefit of accounting records from his 82 outlets in New Jersey which indicated that with a lower milk price his volume would increase to more than offset the difference in price, thus benefiting

Cannon of the Luzerne County Office of Economic Opportunity.

J. Lin Huber, milk marketing board chairman, who presided at the Scranton hearing last week, has been under fire recently from Gov. Milton Shapp for administration practices which the governor has called "negligent and inefficient."

In addressing members of the rural electric cooperative last November, Gov. Shapp said, "I have not made a secret of my unhappiness with the Public Utility Commission. Frankly, the time has come in this state to put an end to the outmoded agencies of government which for too long have been the defenders of the industries they are supposed to regulate, instead of being the protectors of the consumer."

Gov. Shapp added that "the time was ripe for abolition of old boards and commissions such as the PUC and the Milk Marketing Board and creation of a new Department of Consumer Affairs which would be empowered to act in behalf of the people and not in behalf of the special interests."

Likewise, Pennsylvania Agriculture Secretary James McHale has advocated abolishing the milk control board, over which he has no jurisdiction. In a news conference recently in Scranton's Holiday Inn, the secretary said that Pennsylvania consumers are paying at least \$80 million a year more for milk than the national average. He attributed the high price to chain stores "pinning down milk cooperatives and dealers." He added that chain stores are making about 40 cents on a gallon of milk.

The remaining deep dark secret, of course, is what milk dealers and supermarkets really make in profit on milk in retail operations. The milk marketing board is evidently in the dark about such data as anyone else. Some consumer advocates, however, say retailers are making almost 40 cents a gallon in profits, but hide such earnings in complicated accounting procedures.

At any rate, the milk board will reconvene

"Who is upholding the consumers' interest in the pricing of milk when this region is faced with the highest unemployment rate since 1959 . . . ?"

the consumer. He said he had filed a case in the New Jersey Supreme Court in 1966 to force the New Jersey Milk Board to permit a price roll back to 87 cents a gallon from \$1.08, during which he still made a profit even considering he was shipping Pennsylvania milk to New Jersey for marketing. In winning the New Jersey Supreme Court case, the court ruled in favor of Mr. Sandfort's Garden State Farms operation, and lowered the price to his requested 87 cents a gallon. He said that he was now doing the same thing, that is transporting Pennsylvania milk, purchased by Louden Hill under federal standards, to New Jersey where he was retailing it for 96 a gallon and making a "reasonable" profit. He maintains stiffly that in New Jersey his volume increased for 14 consecutive months after the price roll back, thus permitting him to make more money in the long run.

its Scranton hearing again in January, during which consumer advocates are expected to again stack the deck in favor of lower milk prices.



Good Luck

A big wonderful round of New Year's greetings from us . . . to you.

Racing Is Topic of New Books

A new book called *Drag Racing* by Julie Morgan is now available at the children's annex of the Back Mountain Memorial Library. The photographs were taken by Hank Morgan and Ernest Baxter. Cars have a strong appeal for most young people and driver's license can be a badge of importance. Many youthful drivers care about more than just sitting behind the wheel. How are cars put together? How fast can they be made to go? Drag racing, growing to be one of today's most popular sports, is proof of this interest.

Some cars are raced along an oval track, or over a difficult course. Drag racing is set up as a contest of speed between two cars at a time, along a straight quarter-mile runway. The thousands of entries in these races mean that there must be many different categories of cars. They range from the top speed, totally rebuilt professional vehicles to cars driven in off the road with very few changes in their motors or bodies.

Professionals and amateurs mingle together in this sport. Speed, plus the abilities of the car and its driver, are what concerns them and the large crowd cheering them on.

attached in front for steering and a rubber tanklike tread in back. This tread grips the snow and propels the vehicle across the sculptured white landscapes, many of which were formerly seen only by those on snowshoes or skis.

With fiberglass bodies and light, two-cylinder engines of from 10 to 75 horsepower, these compact machines usually travel 15 to 40 miles per hour, and the average cost is about \$1,000.

A racing vehicle can increase its speed up to about 90 mph and is usually bought for about \$1,800, although snowmobiles with engines modified for the racing track can cost over \$4,000. The snowmobile speed record is 114.5 mph.

Riding in a snowmobile has been described as a cross between skiing and bobsledding. Operating the machine is very simple, and the basics can be learned in minutes, even by children.

Whipping through the snow on these sleds has become the fastest-growing sport in North America. In 1960, there were only about 300 vehicles in the country; now there are over a million being operated in the United States and Canada.

Church Service At Trucksville

Worship services at the Trucksville United Methodist Church will be held Jan. at 9:30 and 10:50 a.m. The Rev. Dr. Laurence T. Beers, pastor, will speak on the subject: "GOD'S KINGDOM—HOW NEAR?" in his series from the Gospel of Matthew. Each service will conclude with the traditional Methodist Covenant Service for the beginning of a New Year. Church will be held Jan. 2 at 9:30 and 10:50 a.m. The Rev. Dr. Laurence T. Beers, pastor, will speak on the subject: "GOD'S KINGDOM—HOW NEAR?" in his series from the Gospel of Matthew. Each service will conclude with the traditional Methodist Covenant Service for the beginning of a New Year.

Jones Aids in Crew Recovery

Navy Petty Officer Third Class Edward A. Jones Jr., son of Mr. and Mrs. Edward A. Jones Sr. of 79 Oak Drive, RD 4, Dallas, has returned to San Diego aboard the destroyer USS Henry W. Tucker, following a six month deployment off the coast of Vietnam.

While deployed, his ship supported allied forces in the Gulf of Tonkin, and helped to recover the crews and debris of two downed strike aircraft.

He attended Wilkes-Barre Business College.

Completes Training

Marine Pfc. William G. Youells, son of Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Youells, 34 Carverton Road, Trucksville, has completed specialized training in Aviation Electronics at Marine Corps Air Station, Cherry Point, N.C.

He is a 1970 graduate of Dallas Senior High School, Dallas.

For The Record

Congress Votes is issued every week that Congress is in session. It covers all votes of record and reports the position taken on each measure by the elected official whose name appears below.

Daniel J. Flood
11th Congressional District, Pennsylvania
Week ending Thursday, December 16, 1971

The legislative business of the first session of the 92nd Congress was concluded on Friday. The work of the second session will begin on January 18, 1972, and accordingly the next issue of Congress Votes will be dated January 20th.

The Economic Stabilization Act amendments of 1971 (H.R. 11309) authorize the President to control the level of prices, rents, and wages until April 30, 1973. Before passage (see below) there were three record teller votes on amendments to H.R. 11309.

Whether to require the retroactive payment of wage increases for which contracts existed prior to Aug. 15, 1971 and where funds have been provided to cover such increases. Ayes 209. Noes 151. Agreed to, Dec. 10.

MR. FLOOD VOTED NO.

Whether to make public selected information received in justification of wage or price increases. Ayes 73. Noes 275. Rejected, Dec. 10.

MR. FLOOD VOTED NO.

Whether to allow the President to designate which private pension and welfare plans are subject to controls. Ayes 170. Noes 184. Present 1. Rejected.

MR. FLOOD DID NOT VOTE.

Whether to pass H.R. 11309. Yeas 325. Nays 33. Passed, Dec. 10.

MR. FLOOD VOTED YEA.

Whether to agree to H.R. 11341, a bill authorizing a federal base payment of \$173 million to the District of Columbia in fiscal 1972 and \$178 million in fiscal 1973. Yeas 242. Nays 93. Agreed to, Dec. 10.

MR. FLOOD VOTED YEA.

Whether to pass H.R. 11628 which authorizes \$70 million for construction grants to hospitals in the District of Columbia. Yeas 160. Nays 200. Rejected, Dec. 13.

MR. FLOOD VOTED YEA.

Whether to agree to the Conference Report on H.R. 10367, the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. Yeas 307. Nays 60. Agreed to, Dec. 14.

MR. FLOOD VOTED YEA.

Whether to agree to the Conference Report on H.R. 11731, providing funds for the Dept. of Defense in fiscal 1972. Yeas 292. Nays 39. Present 1. Agreed to, Dec. 15.

MR. FLOOD VOTED YEA.

Whether to agree to the Conference Report on H.R. 11932, providing funds for District of Columbia operations. Yeas 260. Nays 79. Agreed to.

MR. FLOOD VOTED YEA.

Whether to agree to the Conference Report on H.R. 6065, which provides an added 13 weeks of benefits to the unemployed in those states with a high jobless rate. Yeas 194. Nays 149. Agreed to, Dec. 15.

MR. FLOOD VOTED YEA.

Whether to pass H.J. Res. 1005 which provides funds until Mar. 15, 1972 for those agencies whose appropriations for fiscal 1972 have not been approved by Congress. The measure includes \$3.0 billion for foreign aid. Yeas 234. Nays 86. Passed, Dec. 15.

MR. FLOOD VOTED YEA.

Ambulance Log

NOXEN

Dec. 22—Helen Rhode was taken from Wilkes-Barre General Hospital to Carpenter's Nursing Home. Crew: Earl Crispell and Roger Boston.

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