

Report on Tractorcade to Washington, D.C.

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By Mr. and Mrs. Edward Scheufler

The tractorcade left Topeka on Jan. 19. From the time we left, to the day we reached Fredrick, Md., 16 days later, we didn't drive on dry roads. The only full day of sunshine was the day we reached Fredrick, 40 miles north of Washington D. C. We were snowed in in Greenville, Ill., 50 miles east of St. Louis, for 2 days. We received hospitality plus from the residents, and repayed them by plowing out all of the parking lots in town.

The worst experience was being caught in a blizzard in the Cumberland Mts. about 100 miles from Washington. There were approximately 850 vehicles in a caravan that was about 30 miles long. All of these were trying to get thru the mountains in 10 inches of snow and 40 mph winds.

We spent 2 weeks in D. C. attending meeting and hearings. We sat in on 2 days of hearings by the House Agriculture Committee. They listened to testimony by A.A.M. members. There were many meeting set up with USDA officials, Census Bureau, different consumer groups and lots of lobbying of congressmen and senators.

We had doubts that taking tractors to D. C. was the way to go, especially after we got started. But, after the first day of tractors in town, we knew it was the only way to go. It is said that Congress doesn't act, it reacts, and that's the truth. It was vital to have a visible sign that we were in town. And, Boy! were we visible!

Contrary to some news reports, we had the sympathy of most of the residents. We found that most consumers were prepared to pay more for their food and they were in sympathy with farmers. They could understand that you can't make a living in 1979 with a 1948 income. And that's what the nations farmers are expected to do by the present administration. We might add, the damage to the Mall where the tractors are parked, was grossly exaggerated.

There is a changing attitude in the capitol. We felt that the farmer is beginning to be heard and some politicians are even listening. Our trip was

for 5 weeks. We couldn't have gone without all of the support and prayers from concerned people back home. By helping all of the farmers to get to D.C. they also helped themselves. Our thanks go to all of you.