

merce Commission. We do not object to this and, indeed, consider such regulation desirable. We do, however, object to any change in the present practice which will place in the jurisdiction of the Interstate Commerce Commission the transportation future of farmers. Such action will add to the already difficult problem of transportation and marketing of farm products. Regulated transportation has done little to provide service to farmers in out-of-the-way and sparsely settled rural areas, and it has done nothing to furnish transportation of agricultural products from the farm to warehousing or storing areas. Yet, that industry has mounted a terrifying legislative campaign to restrict the farmer from serving himself through organization.

"This legislation is not necessary. In the report of Senator Lausche from the Senate Committee on Commerce, he recommends that S. 752 pass because:

"1. It is in conformance with, and implements, the National Transportation Policy, and

"2. Farmer cooperative transportation could undermine regulated transportation and has contributed to a decline of the common carrier system.

"Both these statements are false.

"There is no statistical evidence in the Record of Hearings before the Subcommittee on Service Transportation of the Commerce Committee, July 24, 25 and 26, 1967, to justify them. With the exception of opinion testimony by lobbyists for the transportation industry, all evidence is to the contrary.

"The Office of the Secretary of Transportation, charged with the responsibility of implementing the National Transportation Policy, recommended against amendment of 203(b)(5) and, in a letter to the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Commerce dated July 24, 1967, stated in part:

"The present exemption has permitted the agricultural cooperatives to conduct efficient and economic operations by allowing a limited amount of for-hire truck transportation.

"In sum, the Department is of the opinion that the present exemption is consistent with Congressional intent and that it has not been abused in any sense to the significant detriment of regulated carriers.

"(Section 203(b)(5) is a carefully drawn statute which properly recognizes that the needs of agriculture and those of the regulated for-hire industry must be carefully balanced if the public interest is to prevail."

"The representative of the United States Department of Agriculture who testified before the Senate committee in opposition to S-752 described a survey made by the Department clearly showing that growth in national trucking greatly exceeded cooperative trucking and pointed out that for the year 1966 cooperative trucking miles constituted less than one half of one percent of the estimated United States truck miles.

"The American Trucking Association annual report for 1966 reported that tonnage for that year was up 7 percent over 1965 and up 17.1 percent over 1964. Furthermore, the industry reported tonnage increases in nine of the major commodity classes—including agricultural commodities.

"Clearly, cooperative transportation is not a threat to the regulated industry. "S-752 is a result of a massive lobbying campaign by regulated carriers—a campaign that cannot be matched by farmers or their organizations; a campaign that has been successful in spite of the opposition of the governmental agencies charged with the balancing of the various interests involved, and with the expertise to do so—agencies such as the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Transportation and the Department of Defense.

"That campaign was successful in the Senate in spite of the overwhelming factual evidence that change in the present law is not necessary. I urge that you give this bill your careful consideration and that the interests of the farmers as articulated in the Agricultural Marketing Act are not sacrificed merely to eliminate this insubstantial competition to the American Trucking Association and to allow it to gain control over the distribution of agricultural products."

Very truly yours,

EVAN P. GHEEN, President.