Senator NELSON. Our last witness today is Mr. Albert Ebers, master of the Nebraska Grange.

The committee welcomes you here today, Mr. Ebers, and we appreciate your taking time to come and testify.

STATEMENT OF ALBERT J. EBERS, MASTER, NEBRASKA GRANGE, SEWARD, NEBR.

Mr. EBERS. Senator Nelson, it certainly is a privilege to be here and I'm honored to be here.

U.S. Senator Garylord Nelson and members of the Monopoly Subcommittee of the Senate Select Committee on Small Business, my name is Albert J. Ebers, master of the Nebraska State Grange, Route 3, Seward, Nebr.

I read with great interest of the work this committee has already done on the effect of large corporate farms upon the family-type agriculture of our Nation.

The Grange rejects the idea that bigness is the ultimate answer to agriculture's problems, and is both desirable and inevitable.

The Grange favors retaining the family-type agriculture. By that we mean farming units using modern technology, that furnish full-time employment to the family and possibly a few hired men, and that places the major reliance of management and financial risks upon the operator.

Since my livelihood comes from the production of eggs, I would like to speak of bigness in the poultry industry.

An economic study of the broiler industry by the Packers and Stockyards Administration is my principal source of information.

It only took 10 years for the broiler industry to go from 3 to 98 percent integrated. The typical integrated broiler producing-marketing firm or corporation has its own hatchery, feed mill, and processing plant, as well as contract broiler growers.

Senator NELSON. May I interrupt a moment. Do I understand you to say that in 10 years the broiler industry went from 3 to 98 percent integrated? Do you mean the integrated operations now produce 98 percent of the broilers?

Mr. EBERS. That's right.

Broiler farms in the United States declined by one-third from 1954 to 1964. Production per farm tripled, now more than 50,000 birds per year.

Senator NELSON. This is the average per farm?

Mr. EBERS. Yes; that's the average per farmer grower.

Processing or slaughtering firms merged at the rate of 41 percent in the 4 years 1960 to 1964.

The latest figures I have seen, show 25 firms produce over 50 percent of all the broilers produced in the United States.

Senator NELSON. Are these mostly feed firms?

Mr. EBERS. There are quite a few but I couldn't tell you exactly.

A producer or grower cannot grow broilers without first having a contract with a processor.

There is no market at the grower level.

These summary statements of the broiler industry are given to show that it is reasonable to project that it will not be very many years when