

by absentee ownership is needed more than ever today and I would like to say on the side that Mr. Kyle who was to be with me today and could not make it for other reasons is presently drafting a similar piece of legislation for the State of Wisconsin and we think that it can hold constitutionally here as well as it has in North Dakota. A fair and workable law of this kind aimed in the takeover of the farm economy by absentee ownership is needed more than ever today. We believe that the Federal and State Governments should protect the rural economy, here when we say rural economy we are not talking about the interests of the farmer alone, we are talking about the small businessman, the cooperative and all the rest that go up the main street of our hamlets in medium size and major size towns and we think that workable laws can be drafted to protect and put reasonable controls over the intrusion of corporate interests into our farming economy.

Senator NELSON. Thank you very much, Mr. Anderson, for your fine statement. We appreciate your coming.

(The complete prepared statement submitted by Mr. Anderson follows:)

STATEMENT OF GLENN M. ANDERSON, GENERAL MANAGER, WISCONSIN ASSOCIATION
OF COOPERATIVES

Members of the Committee, my name is Glenn M. Anderson and I am General Manager of the Wisconsin Association of Cooperatives, which has its headquarters in Madison, Wisconsin. The Wisconsin Association of Cooperatives is an organization made up of 340 different cooperatives and mutual enterprises. These self-help, people-oriented companies represent over 225,000 families in the state of Wisconsin. The member cooperatives of WAC are providing a great variety of goods and services to patrons across the whole of Wisconsin. It is out of this wide range of interest and membership that we are here today to present our views on the problem of Corporate Farming.

A graphic illustration of the results of large-scale corporation farming came to my attention recently when a slight turn off a state trunk took me on a one block detour through a small rural community in East-Central Wisconsin.

The creamery, a landmark of community life for nearly three quarters of a century, stood on an abandoned, weed-choked lot. Two old milk hauling trucks were rusting in the side yard. A half block up the main street, even the repair garage had closed its doors. The general store had a sign, "Open at 2 P.M.," and a glance through the windows indicated that its stock of goods occupied less than half the space formerly in use.

Returning to the main highway, enroute to the larger city about a dozen miles away, I realized the reason why this hamlet had become virtually a ghost town. There were long stretches of highway with no sign of the conventional nest of farm buildings. The giant farm corporation, owned and operated for the profit of city owners, had taken over. The community and surrounding countryside was being destroyed, with as great a force as the Great Depression of the 1930's.

There is another illustration of the manner in which corporations are taking over right in Dane County, almost within the shadow of the capitol of the state of Wisconsin. A corporation, largely controlled by Chicago residents, who accumulated capital selling the farmer produced milk in the Chicago market, has been acquiring many farms in the Towns of Rutland and Dunkirk. The families who formerly operated these farms and contributed to the welfare of the surrounding communities have moved away, and town officials are concerned about the economic future of these areas. Already, reassessments of real property have resulted, largely from the changes in the farm units acquired by the corporation engaged in farming the area.

A veteran newspaper publisher in Wisconsin in his personal column has been expressing concern for a number of years over the tendency toward mergers of corporations in the country which has resulted in great conglomerate concentra-