Although giant farm monopolies do not pose an immediate threat to our area, there is movement in that direction and a very definite trend toward bigness, partly because farmers are led to believe this is the ultimate answer to agriculture's problems. It is also partly due to fear in order to protect themselves for the years ahead.

There is no doubt in my mind that the traditional family farm has grown in size from the 80-acre unit to approximately 250 acres or more, and rightly so. Mechanization and technological advances have brought this about.

This increased size of the family unit has already posed a serious problem for small business in farming communities, a point I'm sure we all are well aware of.

The threat that lies ahead, however, is far greater. As farm units become even larger, fewer and fewer individual farm families will be financially able to purchase these units and will be forced to leave the community. Buffalo County, for example, has fewer people today than 20 years ago.

As an auctioneer, I have "sold out" many of these farm families. Last year alone we conducted nearly 100 farm auctions. Nearly 50 percent of the farms on which sales were held will never again operate as self-sustaining units.

You might ask, "Are you complaining about good business?" The truth of the matter is that to a certain degree, we are selling ourselves out of business. These people who are leaving the community will probably never do any business with me or any other businessman in the community again, and they are not being replaced.

In view of the serious problem facing small business and rural America today, I propose to the committee that, one, more liberal financing must be made available in order to keep the family farm purchaser on the farm.

This is what is going to keep the big corporations out. Very few loaning institutions, including banks, insurance companies, or the Federal Land Bank will loan more than 50 to 60 percent of their appraised value of the farm real estate. Only a minimum of farm operators can acquire a farm loan under these conditions.

How many city homes could be sold if the buyer could borrow only 50 to 60 percent of its value?

The only liberal financing available is through FHA for buyers who qualify, and I understand that their funds for farm loans has been drastically reduced.

Two, large conglomerate corporations and other nonfarm interests who purchase land used for agricultural purposes should be required to reside in the area in which the purchase was made. This would discourage large-scale buying and buying for speculative purposes.

Three, agricultural advisers must stop putting all emphasis on efficiency and concentrate on methods of marketing farm products at a price that will allow the producer to compete with industry in the labor market.

Four, more emphasis must be put on self-employment by colleges and universities training our young men. It is reported, and I believe I read this in Reader's Digest not too long ago, that less than 10 percent of the young men graduating plan to be self-employed. Practically all are interested in employment with a large corporation.