

11-8-1961

## Letters between Robert M. Koch and Mose S. Shaw

Robert M. Koch

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MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY AND UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE COOPERATING

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WORK  
IN AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS  
STATE COLLEGE, MISSISSIPPI

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

November 22, 1961

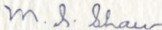
Mr. Robert M. Koch, President  
National Limestone Institute, Inc.  
210 H Street, N. W.  
Washington 1, D. C.

Dear Mr. Koch:

Thank you for your letter enclosing a press release by the Honorable Harold D. Cooley, Chairman of the House Committee on Agriculture, and your remarks concerning the National Farm Bureau.

Now I want to state very frankly that I do not have any fuss with the Grange but I do think, and I think I know, that the Farmers Union is way over on the left, and I don't like their philosophy a darn bit. And neither do I like what you have to say about the National Farm Bureau -- one of the great agricultural organizations of the Nation.

Yours very truly,



M. S. Shaw  
Director

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Columbus, Ind.

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# NATIONAL LIMESTONE INSTITUTE INC.

210 H Street, N.W.

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November 8, 1961

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## TO PERSONS INTERESTED IN AGRICULTURE:

From time to time items come to our attention which we believe that those of you who are on our mailing list would appreciate receiving. Enclosed is a press release by the Honorable Harold D. Cooley, Chairman of the House Committee on Agriculture, which presents some facts that it seems to me relatively few in the Nation have access to.

I have recently returned from a series of trips by car which have taken me into 18 states. During these travels I have been privileged to talk with a rather broad cross-section from Deans of the Colleges of Agriculture to farmers in county ASCS offices. These contacts once again confirmed my observations of recent years that the American Farm Bureau leadership is either completely out of touch with their rank and file members or is deliberately attempting to misrepresent them. The plight of the American farmer and the complex efforts to do something constructive about it have been badly distorted by some well-meaning but uninformed people. I am sure many farmers, as well as those outside of agriculture, can't help being more confused because the Farm Bureau policies are at such variance with those of the National Grange and the Farmers Union. It is almost incredible that major farm leaders contribute to this gross distortion and thus make it exceedingly difficult for those at the National, State and local levels, who are attempting to do their best, not only for the American farmer but for the Nation as a whole.

Sincerely yours,

  
Robert M. Koch  
President

Enclosure:

Reprint of Press Release

# House of Representatives, U. S.

## Committee on Agriculture

Washington, D. C.

(For AMS of Tuesday, November 7, 1961)

### STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE HAROLD D. COOLEY OF NORTH CAROLINA, CHAIRMAN, THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

The bitter assaults by Mr. Charles B. Shuman, President of the American Farm Bureau Federation, upon current farm supply and price stabilization programs of our Government, are careless of fact and irresponsible. They are anti-farmer. Mr. Shuman is undermining efforts of farmers throughout the Nation, including Farm Bureau members, to achieve an equitable position with workers in other areas of our free enterprise economy.

It is time to set the record straight. I hope the news media of the country will examine the facts and inform the people, independently from any statement either Mr. Shuman or I may make.

Mr. Shuman states: "The feed grain program is a gigantic billion-dollar bust! It is the most costly failure in the long history of attempts to fix prices and control production of farm crops by legislation." But what are the facts?

The first year of the operation of this feed grains program, after eight years of declining farm prices and deepening farm depression, will (1) bring a \$1,000,000,000 boost in the Nation's farm income, (2) halt the staggering build-up of farm surpluses experienced under previous programs supported by Mr. Shuman, and (3) assure consumers continued benefits of abundance at fair prices. Moreover, the revival of rural purchasing power will build markets for our labor and industry in the cities. The whole economy will benefit.

I do not know for what interests Mr. Shuman speaks. He certainly does not speak for the farmers throughout the country, including Farm Bureau members, who visit and write to me.

He gives the Nation the false impression by his statements, that the Government has squandered a billion dollars on a feed grains supply and price stabilization program when actually, and he knows this as well as anyone, this program is being financed primarily, not by dollars out of the treasury, but by corn and other feed grains piled up in Government bins, already paid for by the Government under unwise programs that had Mr. Shuman's blessing. We simply are expending otherwise useless grains instead of dollars to bring about production reductions and thus to relieve the depression in the farm economy.

However, I am pleased that Mr. Shuman suddenly has become concerned about costs. The farm programs of the past eight years, prior of last January, were developed largely in his image, on a philosophy of unlimited farm production and low prices for farmers. During these eight recent years the Department of Agriculture spent more money than in all the previous 90-years combined, since the Department was founded, through wars and depressions. And, despite these expenditures, and programs which were more to Mr. Shuman's liking, net farm income in these eight years (1953-60) was about \$25 billion less than in the previous eight years (1945-52).

I cannot understand why Mr. Shuman, as President of a great farm organization, becomes vexed and almost hysterical when farm income is improved.

The American Farm Bureau Federation is indeed a great organization. Under the leadership of the late Edward A. O'Neal of Alabama, as its President, and Earl Smith of Illinois, this organization brought unity to agriculture and contributed immeasurably to the Government farm programs that brought agriculture out of the Great Depression and through the war and post-war years, in the greatest era of prosperity (1941-1952) farmers ever have known.

Why is Mr. Shuman now using the prestige of this organization, built up by such men as O'Neal of Alabama and Smith of Illinois, to destroy what they accomplished for the farmers of America?

Why is Mr. Shuman confusing the people of this country and creating prejudice against farmers and their efforts to attain some equity in the economy of the Nation?

Why isn't he using the power of this great farm organization to tell the truth about agriculture to the American people?

Why isn't he telling the Nation that our farmers have made us the best fed people on the face of the earth -- that their efficiency has underpinned the development of the world's greatest industrial system?

Why isn't he telling the consumers of the country that, because of this efficiency, Americans now pay a much smaller part of their income for food and fiber than any other people anywhere? Why is he not informing the people of the great accomplishments of the farmers of America, of their contribution to the health and strength of the Nation?

Why doesn't he mention now and then that in America one farm worker feeds 25 persons, while half of Russia's total work force is engaged in agriculture and still cannot meet the communists' needs for food and fiber? Why isn't he, on behalf of our farmers, assuring this country that the communists may rival the United States in space explorations, and perhaps in some other undertakings, but that behind the iron and bamboo curtains they cannot begin to match the miracles of production on the farms of America?

Why is he not telling the American people that, despite this phenomenal contribution to our wellbeing and power as a Nation, our farmers are the poorest rewarded workers in our whole free enterprise economy, that for their labors they receive less than one-third the income of workers in our factories -- that a farmer must work three and one-half times longer than a factory worker, to buy a coat, a pair of shoes, and all the things his family needs?

To tell the truth about agriculture would seem to me to be the duty of the head of a great farm organization.

It is true that all the reduction in surpluses we had hoped for this year will not be accomplished. This is because the per-acre yields of corn increased substantially this year, due to grower skills and ideal weather. Mr. Shuman has seized upon this to condemn the program.

But he does not mention that a continuation of the full-production, low-price program, which he supported for 1960 and prior years, would have added at least 760,000,000 bushels of feed grains to the surpluses from the current marketing year. And he does not mention that under the Feed Grains Program of 1961 we shall reduce the surplus by the equivalent of 175,000,000 bushels of corn, and that the net savings of this program to taxpayers over the next few years will exceed \$500,000,000, in savings on storage, interest and handling costs.