

REACTION OF STATES WITH REFERENCE TO CONTRACTS FOR COMMERCIAL ARTICLES.

120. Adv. Council Meeting

Illinois: Recommends one concern for jewelry; for other articles, deal directly with various concerns. Specifications could be controlled and still not give exclusive permits.

Hawaii: Satisfied with present contract procedures but would like to see quality merchandise available to Future Farmers at reasonable cost.

Maryland: F.F.A. material available to states in East, Mid-west, West, and South.

California: We are primarily interested in having a good quality of Future Farmer article prepared and sold on a reasonably large scale to Future Farmers in the nation at a fair price. In the past we have noted the following weaknesses in our present system of limited contracts:

- (1) There has been a failure on the part of companies to properly advertise the commodity sold. In many cases a description of Future Farmer material for sale is not sent to local chapters. In no case, to our knowledge, do these concerns have men actively in the field promoting the sale of materials.
- (2) The cost of Future Farmer materials has on occasions seemed to us to be disproportionately high. For example, we can have Future Farmer judging ribbons printed in lots of 300 more cheaply than we can buy the same size and quality ribbon with equal printing from the concern handling Future Farmer badges and buttons. Also, we feel that the price charged for the F.F.A. flag is too high for the quality flag put out.
- (3) All of the companies holding single contracts for Future Farmer material are located in the eastern half of the United States, and this has at least a psychological effect of reducing the sale of materials on the west coast.
- (4) L. G. Balfour Company, after three years of urging on the part of the western states, carry Future Farmer materials in the branch offices in Los Angeles and San Francisco. However, reports that we have received indicate that they do not carry a very extensive store and in many cases have not even had pins available for sale.

We should like to recommend the following, in connection with L. G. Balfour Company, Attleboro, Massachusetts; Staunton Novelty Company, Staunton, Virginia; French-Bray Printing Company, Baltimore, Maryland; and St. Louis Button Company, St. Louis, Missouri:

- (1) That offices be established in eastern and in western United States authorized to sell the official supplies carried by these four concerns. In certain cases the western office may be a branch of the eastern office, but in this case, the western office should have a complete supply of materials to be sold. In at least one or two cases, we should like to see two entirely different concerns authorized to sell the same supplies.

(2) That the supplies to be sold be accurately defined as to quality.

(3) That we do not establish wide-open contracts at the present time.

Wisconsin: Satisfied with present contract procedures.

Texas: Limited contracts but wider distribution of jobbers and lower prices on articles. One firm for each region. The State Director states: contracts should be awarded to several concerns and should be located sectionally and should be wide open. Prices are too high on jewelry and and other articles.

Virginia: Present arrangement satisfactory.

Arkansas: F.F.A. articles should be manufactured by various concerns rather than one concern.

New Mexico: Limited contracts. Satisfied with present arrangement.

Florida: Satisfied with present arrangement.

North Carolina: Satisfied with present arrangement.

South Carolina: Present arrangement satisfactory, provided fair prices can be maintained.

Nebraska: Satisfied with present arrangement during the war period but would like to see more competition in the sale of articles at later date.

Wyoming: Satisfied with present arrangement.

West Virginia: Satisfied with present arrangement; however, believe St. Louis Button Company prices on buttons and ribbons slightly high when compared with prices for similar articles elsewhere.

Pennsylvania: Satisfied with present arrangement.

Mississippi: Would like to see prices lowered on uniforms and other equipment if possible. Contract awards to companies should be explained in detail at National Convention.

South Dakota: Prices on F.F.A. articles too high. Satisfied if reasonable prices can be obtained.

Arizona: Satisfied with present arrangement; however, west coast representatives should be allowed to bid on contracts and bids should be held rather low.

Iowa: The present policy of making contracts with official companies would seem to have important advantages including: (1) providing uniform articles of standard quality, (2) proper safeguarding in the use of the emblem, (3) lower prices due to larger quantities manufactured, (4) some financial income to the national organization, and (5) avoidance of commercialism in the sale and distribution of the articles. It may be that the F.F.A. organization is now sufficiently large that two or three official companies manufacture the same type of articles following identical specifications and located in several sections of the United States could be supported.

- Idaho: Satisfied with present arrangement under present conditions. Prices should be lowered if possible.
- Connecticut: Limited contracts. Satisfied with present arrangement.
- New York: Limited contracts and bids should be submitted often enough that a company will not feel that it has a monopoly on the article.
- Oregon: Banners, emblems, and ribbons should be obtainable at a branch office in each region. Sub-contracts given by companies designated by the National Organization would increase sales in each region.
- Minnesota: Satisfied with present arrangement. Prices of materials used in F.F.A. articles should be in keeping with prices of these same materials used for other purposes.
- Kansas: Limited contracts. Satisfied with present arrangements.
- Colorado: Prices should be lowered on all items.
- Massachusetts: Wide open contracts where articles meet certain definite specifications recommended by the National Organization. Where impossible to control quality, then limited contracts are favored.
- Nevada: Limited contracts.
- Alabama: We do not feel that we have enough information to have positive convictions on whether or not the National Association should let exclusive contracts with companies manufacturing F.F.A. supplies such as jewelry, banners, caps, uniforms, etc. The problem of quality in materials is involved as well as price. It could be that if the purchase of this material were thrown wide open, and states and chapters bought from any company, the price paid could and probably would be more than where a company had an exclusive contract even when the rebate given the National Organization is considered. If a large number of individual companies manufactured these articles, it naturally would reduce the volume that any one company could manufacture and thereby raise the per capita cost. The only way whereby companies under those circumstances could compete in price with a company which has been manufacturing under exclusive contract would be to lower the quality of the goods sold. Then, too, it may be that the National Organization under the present budgeting plan may need the royalties now being received from the various companies to whom the exclusive contract is given.
- Kentucky: Quality of material, in some instances, not worth what it is costing. It would be to the advantage of Future Farmers to have more than one concern manufacture F.F.A. articles.
- Delaware: Satisfied with present arrangement but particularly interested in good quality at a reasonable price.
- Oregon: Recommend definite specifications as to quality of equipment and let each company sell as it pleases. Want good quality. Do not favor National Organization making profit.

- Rhode Island: No Future Farmer organization; however, gave opinion. Contracts should be competitive, copyrights and patents should be used to protect the company, and good quality should be sold.
- Missouri: Recommend that one company make all items so there will be uniformity of quality. The company should have to obtain contracts through competitive bidding. There should be several distributing points throughout the United States in order to speed up delivery.
- Ohio: No recommendations.
- Vermont: Satisfied with present plan.
- Arkansas: Exclusive contracts should be given in cases of jewelry and other items requiring expensive dies and metals. Supplies such as printed materials, banners, caps, etc., should be contracted with the states.
- West Virginia: Satisfied with present arrangement.
- South Carolina: Satisfied with present arrangement.
- New Jersey: Limited contracts.

March 15 "Kansas Future Farmer"

NEEDED FFA CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

Attention State FFA Advisers and Regional Representatives on the National Advisory Council.

With a complete revision of the national FFA constitution at the 15th national convention it would seem somewhat irrelevant to propose another change in our national constitution at this early date. However, change is one thing the world is full of, and we propose to offer a suggested change in the national FFA constitution that we think is needed and a change that would safeguard the best interests of the National Organization.

Prior to the 15th National FFA Convention there existed a gentleman's agreement that advance information would be furnished all state associations relative to proposed changes in the national FFA constitution. This agreement was completely ignored at the 15th National FFA Convention, and much of the time of the House of Delegates was spent in a revision of the National FFA constitution. War emergency was the excuse offered for the flagrant violation of the "gentleman's agreement." In previous issues of the Kansas FFA Newsletter we reported on how certain old timers at the 15th National FFA Convention pumped their blood pressure up to High C when they found the "gentleman's agreement" abrogated - all to no avail.

The 15th National FFA Convention is water under the bridge. We are interested in the future welfare of the Future Farmers of America. The proposed needed national FFA constitutional change is not original with the writer, but was suggested by W. A. Ross, formerly National Executive Secretary of the FFA, and now Consultant Public Service Occupations (whatever that is). If you will study Article X in the present national FFA constitution you will observe that there is nothing to prevent offering proposed amendments to the National Board of Trustees at the Kansas City meeting, which always occurs just prior to the National Convention. The National Board of Trustees might live up to the "gentleman's agreement" and send all the proposed constitutional changes to the states for review in advance of a given national convention, and then have one or more amendments or by-laws proposed at the Kansas City meeting of the Board of Trustees and these may go into effect if recommended by the National Board of Trustees and passed by a 2/3 majority of the delegates present. THIS EVIDENT WEAKNESS CAN BE CORRECTED BY ADOPTING THE FOLLOWING CLAUSE: "All proposed changes in the national FFA constitution must be submitted to the National Board of Trustees at least 90 days prior to the convention at which they are to be considered." Such a provision would give time to properly notify States, and would avoid a repetition of the experience in FFA constitutional revision experienced at the 15th National Convention.

Amend Article IV, Section E, Item 5, by inserting the word "agriculture"
immediately following the word "his" in line 1 of this Item.

This will be submitted from
Texas as an amendment to the
constitution.

Adv. Council Meeting

September 15, 1942

N O T E

Sent to: Dr. Spanton

Sent by: D. M. Clements

The National Advisory Council and the State Advisers of the Future Farmers of America authorized Mr. S. M. Jackson and me to get a report from the States with reference to their feelings concerning their contracts for commercial articles. Mr. Jackson has contacted all the States and the report is herewith submitted for your consideration.

It may be well to present this report at the meeting of the National Advisory Council in Kansas City this year, as well as before the meeting of the State supervisors.

DMC:D