

13JAN94

The high velocity of the attack by Mr. Gore and several Congressmen on the wool and mohair incentive program gave good cause to consider whether to drop off the membership roles of the various livestock associations, or to at least take out an anonymous account.

A sketchy personal audit showed approximately 35 spring shearings and the same number of calf shippings, the dues to the Sheep and Goat Herder Association and the tab on the Cattleman's group originated from borrowed money. This evidence alone justifies the association. Any expense item the bankers of the 50s and 60s allowed came after an investigation that made the final figure thin enough to make a fiddleback spider's web look like a piece of twisted cable.

The Sheep and Goat Herders and the Cattlemen's Association had helped immediately to keep all of us in business. I just wanted to lay low until the heat in Washington settled down and blew over.

Dues for the sheep and goat herders are charged on the number of pounds of wool shipped, and the cattlemen charge by the number of head of cattle owned at the first of each year. So I decided before I resigned, or went underground, I'd see how giving a more detailed analysis of my donations worked.

With each check to the sheep and goat herders, I enclosed a graphic explanation of the corrals where the sheep were shorn and how much help was around to load the wool and take the ewes back to the pastures. If a sheep smothered down and died before she was sheared, I apologized.

For the hollow horn association, I asked them to cheer up and not worry about the drouth just because I'd had to sell more old cows than usual and hadn't been able to keep any replacement heifer calves in '93. I also enclosed an encouraging report of the score on the first-calf heifers and brought them up to date on the good rain in December.

The easiest outfit to face had nothing to do with business and traced back to the days the Big Boss raised registered horses. I dashed the association journal a note to cancel the subscription that expired 33 years ago. I further demanded the advertisement on page 31 of the November issue be corrected to include a full description of a breed of horses bearing the bunkhouse names of "Scrambled Brains" and "Big Disregard" going back to "Multi Pox" by "Deep Insanity".

"In 1962, or '63, I wrote, the Big Boss started a bronc tuner breaking five two-year olds bred by a great grandsire of the depicted stud. Going on to tell them that the only one who broke out gentle enough to be ridden for ranch work bucked an old kid off down on a big draw later on, and ran head-on into the six-strand barb wire fence on the railroad right-of-way." "His saddle looked like it'd fallen out of a speeding pickup and the cowboy walked like he'd taken the same spill" was the way the letter ended.

Quitting the woolie or the hollow horn group is too much of a loss. Both outfits have put up some mighty fierce scraps in Austin and Washington in our behalf.

Try as I might, the cowboy's name who lost his saddle to the railroad fence is forgotten. However, the last we heard of him he was making the best pumper Amoco Oil Company had in the state