MINUTES OF THE MEETING AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE MONTANA STATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

February 1, 1985

The meeting of the Agriculture Committee was called to order by Chairman Schultz on February 1, 1985 at 3:00 p.m. in room 317 of the State Capitol.

<u>ROLL CALL</u>: All members were present with the exception of Representative Ellerd and Representative Keller who were excused by the Chairman.

CONSIDERATION OF HJR 15: Representative Schye, District #18, sponsor of the bill, stated that he is a farmer and makes his living that way. This bill is just an alternative to make a better profit off the land.

<u>PROPONENTS</u>: David Oien, who is a farmer and beet producer from Conrad, testified that as imput costs and social costs increase more farmers will be looking for a better way to get a profit. He acknowledged that it is time to start looking for logical alternatives.

Milo Todd from Bozeman stated he is a dairy farmer and a share crop farmer and he thinks the MSU Experiment Station could be a great asset to help put nutrients back into the soil. He further stated that the soil becomes dependable on the chemical fertilizer when used all the time. He stated he is convinced that we can raise quality crops with good yields at a lower initial cost to the farmer with less use of chemicals. Through research and development, the farmer and consumer will both be better off, with a cost decrease to the farmer and a better quality food product for the consumer. His testimony is attached as Exhibit A and Exhibit B.

Terry Murphy, representing the Montana Farmers Union, stated they favor adoption of HJR 15. He recited the policy that was adopted at MFU's 1984 convention in Billings saying "The Montana Farmers Union strongly encourages the Montana Agricultural Experiment Station to initiate a comprehensive research program in lowchemical sustainable agriculture." He also said that there are a lot of farmers who are doing their own experiments to better their land. (Exhibit C is attached hereto) HOUSE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE February 1, 1985 Page 2

Alice Berner testifed in support of HJR 15. She said that they use substantial agricultural practices. Their involvment in alternative ag. practices have been on a trial and error basis. She also stated that they would be glad to provide acreage for experiments and research in the use of sustainable agriculture using non-chemical methods or a combination of chemical and non-chemical methods. She then read the testimony of a neighbor who couldn't be here. It is attached as Exhibit D.

Russ Salsbury, who is from Chouteau County, stated he is concerned about the increase of land damage. He went looking for some help at the County Extension Service and got no information that was practicable. He thinks this bill would be a vital step to make some information available.

Jeanne Charter, from Shepard, testified in support of HJR 15 and thinks this bill will also help livestock.

Jim Welsh, Dean of the Agriculture Department at MSU, stated that at the Agricultural Experiment Station the bottom line is to get the cost of production down. It is apparent that agriculture is undergoing some tremendous upheavals at the present time. However, it is unlikely that the more traditional approaches to agricultural production will be decreased or eliminated in the foreseeable future. His testimony is attached as Exhibit E.

Barbara Hogie stated she supports HJR 15.

There were no further proponents and no opponents to HJR 15.

Representative Schye closed the testimony saying that we need all the help we can get and would like to see this bill passed out of committee.

DISCUSSION ON HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 15: Representative Cody asked Mr. Welsh if they requested 5.8 million dollars, how much more are you going to put into research. Mr. Welsh said he was not prepared to put that into figures. Representative Cody again asked Mr. Welsh when the use of chemicals was brought about. Mr. Welsh replied it was about WW II. HOUSE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE February 1, 1985 Page 3

Representative Bachini asked Mr. Welsh if he sees a big threat to our soil in the future. Mr. Welsh stated that strong suggestions and some data show that it would have some affect.

There being no further questions, the hearing on HJR 15 was closed.

Representative Holliday assumed the chair for HJR 17.

CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 17: Representative Schultz, sponsor of the bill, said he thinks this bill should get passed out of the House and on its way. He handed out Exhibit A to the committee.

PROPONENTS: Jo Brunner, representing the Montana CattleFeeders, Montana Cattlemen, and the Montana Grange, stated they support HJR 17.

There were no further proponents and there were no opponents present.

Representative Schultz closed the testimony on HJR 17.

DISCUSSION ON HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 17: Representative Cody stated that this piece of legislation would also affect her and her business.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

DISPOSITION OF HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 17: Representative Jenkins moved a DO PASS. A voice vote showed that HJR 17 PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

DISPOSITION OF HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 15: Representative Rapp-Svrcek moved to DO PASS HJR 15. A second was received by Representative Jenkins. A voice vote showed that HJR 15 PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

ADJOURN: There being no further business before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

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DAILY ROLL CALL

Agriculture COMMITTEE

49th LEGISLATIVE SESSION -- 1985

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Date <u>2-1-85</u>

NAME	PRESENT	ABSENT	EXCUSEI
James Schultz, Chairman	T		
Gay Holliday, V-Chairman	L F		
Bob Bachini			
Dorothy Cody	L T		
Duane Compton	\sim		
Gerry Devlin	X		
Robert Ellerd			X
Orval Ellison	X		
Harry Fritz	X		
Ramona Howe	X		
Loren Jenkins	X		
Vernon Keller			X
Francis Koehnke	Υ Γ		
John Patterson	X		
Bing_Poff	Υ		
Paul Rapp-Svrcek	L T		
Gary Spaeth	X		
Dean Switzer	X		

Please attach to minutes.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT

Pebruary 1 19.55

 SPEAKER

 MR.
 AGRICULTURE

 We, your committee on
 AGRICULTURE

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 ROUSE JOINT RESOLUTION
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 MONTANA AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION TO DEVELOP
 RESEARCH ON SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

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STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT

February 1 19 35.

MR. SPEAKER	
We, your committee on AGRICULTURE	
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STATE PUB. CO. Helena, Mont. REPRESENTATIVE SCHULTZ,

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Chairman.

February 1, 1985

HAR 15

Milo J. Todd 24427 Norris Road Bozeman, Montana 59715

I am primarily a Dairy Fermer. I still live on and farm the place where I was born. We still farm the land my Grandfather homesteaded. We share crop an additional 490 acres of irrigated ground 6 miles away.

We milk approximately 70 cows and have a small band of sheep (about 75 head) on the home place of 300 acres.

My youngest son (1983 graduate of M.S.U. in Agriculture Science) and his wife are working into the overall farming operation and plan to continue this family farm.

After graduating from M.S.U. in 1954 I returned home to the family dairy and farm. As chemical fertilizers became more available I began using a limited amount of them. It was easy to run through the fields with the fertilizer applicator. I began to notice it required more and more fertilizer every year to get the same yields as the year before. I also noticed more weeds in the crops and that the angle worms were gone.

Approximately 10 years ago I stopped using commercial fertilizers, over a process of time, on the home place. I started using crop rotation, collecting spreading all the manure from the dairy herd, using some surfactants for better irrigation, etc. Through the years the organic matter content of the soil has improved. The angle worms are back, the yields have been good. Last year we harvested 133 bushels of 404/bu. oats off of 30 acres.

The homestead place and the share cropped land is too far from the dairy to haul manure. We have been trying some roatation of crops on this ground, however we are limited as to crop selection. Barley and wheat or wheat and barley. This is where the University Experiment Station could be of great help through more research toward crops that can be grown in our short season (irrigated and dryland) and also to help put nutrients back into the soil through crop rotation

I believe the M.S.U. Experiment Station could be a great asset to

the farming industry of the State of Montana by doing more research on lower chemical use; nitrogen fixing crops; crop rotation; organic matter in soil relative to yield; micro-crganisms and their place in the soil. Less chemical dependence on fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides and insecticides.

I have come to believe that chemical fertilizers kill micro-organisms activity in the soil. Without micro-organism activity there is less break down of organic matter. This lowers the productivity of the soil and leads to chemical dependence.

Cn ground that has had heavy applicattion of chemicals for several years it is not feasible nor profitable to quit using the chemicals "cold turkey". A few years ago I tried completely quitting chemical application in 1 year on one place. I hardly produced enough crop to pay for the seed and harvesting. Here again, this is why we need some more applicable research data available in this area.

I believe that the increased and careless use of chemical fertilizer, herbicides, pesticides and insecticides is a contributing factor in our nations health problems today, such as cancer, heart attacks, strokes, etc.

Fainally, I am convinced that we can raise quality crops with good yields at a lower initial cost to the farmer with less use of chemicals. Through research and development, the farmer and consumer will both be better off, with a cost decrease to the farmer and a better quality food product for the consumer.

Respectfully submitted,

Milo J. Told

Milo J. Todd

tewardship means caring and protectir

By SALLY HILANDER Farm & Ranch Editor

BELGRADE - Dairyman Milo Todd figures he's the steward of his land, not the owner.

"It still belongs to the Lord. It's our responsibility but it's not ours to do with whatever we want."

That belief is bound to influence how Todd cares for the 300-acre farm near Belgrade that's been in his family for four generations.

Chemical fertilizers that deplete and harden the soil aren't part of his scheme: He is in transition from chemical to organic farming.

"I've lived here all my life. Dad was born just over the hill there," Todd said quietly during a recent interview in the farmhouse in which he was born. "I want this place to go to one of our boys.

Todd is no dewey-eyed idealist. He understands the hard economic realities of farming today and is avid

student of the subject. He truly believes farmers can work into organic farming without losing their shirts or their yields.

He's also worried about erosion, loss of soil productivity caused by chemicals and the high costs of fertilizers and farm equipment.

Todd also believes the day is coming when the public will demand its produce be grown organically.

"The more I read about sustainable agriculture, the more I think we're just beginning to scratch the surface on what's in our soil and how we can use it to our best ability," Todd remarked.

And the more he reads about petrochemical and urea fertilizers, chemical herbicides and pesticides, the less he likes them. "I think they're causing a lot of our health problems today...cancer, heart attacks...There are a lot of unknowns with chemicals.

"I think it (agriculture) is just a legalized dumping ground for the petroleum companies.'

Milo Todd and his wife, Carol, first brought chemicals to Jerlay Farms about 25 years ago, when phosphorous and nitrogen fertilizers were state of the art and the negative effects of long-term chemical use weren't known.

But that was then.

About 15 years later, the Todds stopped using commercial fertilizers on the hay, oats and barley crops they rotate to feed their herd of about 67 Holsteins plus 75 head of Suffolk and Polypay sheep belonging to their youngest son, Jeff, and his wife, $\mathbf{EEE}/1/m$

(The young couple will take over the farm when Milo and Carol retire.)

Weaning the family place from chemical fertilizers apparently hasn't hurt. Thirty acres of oat fields produced 4,000 bushels weighing 40 pounds each - "a tremendous yield," Todd said.

The earthworms are back on the garden plot now and Todd views that as a barometer of soil health. "Commercial fertilizers kill micro-organism activity. Without it, there's no breakdown of organic matter and I think we're gradually Losing our productability of this ground.

In addition to the 300-acre home place, the Todds

Farmer wants to wean land from 'chemical dependence'

Exhibit B

HJR 15-2-1-85

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either lease or "sharecrop" another 650 acres in three separate locations nearby.

Herbicides are still in use, but a good surfactant permits the Todds to use less than the recommended amount of 2,4d or MCPA to control weeds. Todd said he hopes one day to abandon the herbicides by switching to microbacterial-action fertilizers. Todd is currently devouring literature from the

various manufacturers of "natural" fertilizers.

Pesticides have not been used on the dairy or on any of the 950 acres in 10 years, Todd said.

Todd has not succeeded in stopping chemical fertilizer use - yet - on the land he leases or sharecrops. The

areage includes about 160 acres of dryland on which he rotates wheat, barley and summer fallow; the rest is tillable pasture.

"Five or six years ago, I got gung ho and was going to about in half."

He likened the attempt at weaning the land from artificial fertilizers to denying an alcoholic liquor. "When I stopped using it, the ground was looking for it."

But Todd believes he can eventually stop using the chemical fertilizers he finds objectionable. His plan? Proper rotation and the use of microbial fertilizer.

WITNESS STATEMENT

	LURLI	BILL	No. HTR 15	
ADDRESS	M STAIL	<u>Sama Date</u>	91-00	_
WHOM DO YOU REPRESENT_	Martons	Stanara L	Muron	
SUPPORT	OPPOSE	A	MEND	_

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PLEASE LEAVE PREPARED STATEMENT WITH SECRETARY.

Comments:

Montana Farmers IInin Favors adoption of HJR 15. Policy adopted at HFU'S 1984 convention in Billing states " the provide Friender In on strongly and our ages comprehensive avantance : savan ha for Themical

Exhibit D

Big Sandy, Montana January 31, 1985

Agriculture Committee House of Representatives Helena, Montana Attention: Jim Schultz, Chairman

Dear Committee Members:

Having been raised on farms, and actively engaged in organic farming since 1973, we are very much in favor of House Joint Resolution #15.

Several years ago, a college student from Bozeman came to our farm and asked if he might examine our crops. On his return, he asked what kind of fertilizers and sprays we were using. When we told him we were organic farmers, he exclaimed "That's why I found hady bugs and other beneficial insects here, and not on other farms I have checked." He seemed to think that our Agricultural College had a lot to learn on this subject, and should do further studies in this area.

Some of our neighbors with fields just across the femce from ours have been bothered with diseases, mainly Wheat Streak Mosaic. Cur fields next to theirs had none.

We have tried to interest County Agents in our program, and get them to help us with information and indepth studies. So far we have gotten no more than a cold shoulder.

For these reasons, we strongly urge you to support this resolution.

Respectfully yours, *Elistric* Elisworth & Lois Butler Box 66 Big Sandy, Montana 59520

MSU'S ROLE IN CREATING A SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

Exmilit E 1.JR 15 2-1-85

Dr. James R. Welsh Dean of Agriculture Montana State University

Presented at Montana Sustainable Agriculture Conference October 13, 1984

Montana State University has a rich tradition of participation in the national land grant system. As a land grant university, MSU serves the needs of Montana's agricultural community in education, research and cooperative extension. Approximately 1,000 undergraduate and graduate students are enrolled in agriculture. The Montana Agricultural Experiment Station carries out a research program of approximately eleven million dollars annually at the campus located main station and the seven research centers around the state. A statewide network of county extension offices and specialists disseminates information on agriculture and related topics. The main mission of the Experiment Station program is to address the needs of the agricultural community in Montana, in the region, and nationally. As a member of the land grant system, MSU has unique opportunities to participate with other public institutions and industry in appropriate research and education programs.

MSU has conducted teaching and research programs related to sustainable agriculture for many years. The following examples illustrate this type of activity:

Plant breeding and genetics -- MSU conducts an 1. extremely strong plant breeding and genetics program. The Montana Agricultural Experiment Station and USDA-Agricultural Research Service form a highly productive research team. Major thrusts include the development of new genetic information and the release of new cultivars in several crop Production problems addressed by the plant breeding species. and genetics research programs include disease resistance, insect resistance, winter hardiness, drought tolerance, and improved end product characteristics. Each of these program goals requires the identification and screening of desirable genes for improved plant performance. The incorporation of genetic improvement is highly desirable both from an economic and an environmental standpoint. It is important to remember that plant breeding programs are an ongoing effort, since both the host and pest are dynamic biological organisms capable of inherited change.

1

MSU also carries on strong plant breeding and genetics training programs for undergraduate and graduate students. A broad spectrum of courses in such areas as genetics, plant breeding, plant pathology, statistics and entomology are incorporated into the course of study for these students. Recent additions to our staff bring in expertise in genetic engineering and biotechnology. Strong emphasis will be placed on training students to use these tools in applied plant breeding programs. Many of our former students now occupy positions of prominence in plant breeding and plant

Utilization of organic matter to stabilize and 2. improve plant performance -- MSU plays a strong role in the wise use and management of organic matter. Research areas include high residue cropping systems, annual legumes as alternate sources of nitrogen, the use of crop residues in water management including snow trapping, and the relationship of flexible cropping systems to the control of saline seep. Farming methods are headed for dramatic changes and the Montana Agricultural Experiment Station will continue to be a leader in the development of cropping systems information leading to the wise use of crop residues. The development of a reduced tillage is spreading rapidly across the Great Plains. Montana producers are in the initial stages of evaluating this procedure. Additional information on the problems and possibilities of reduced tillage practices must be developed in the near future.

Undergraduate student training and graduate research programs play a vital part of the MSU mission in agronomy. A broad spectrum of basic and applied courses is incorporated into these training activities. The students are presented with research problems in the field as well as the laboratory to reinforce the practical nature of this problem area. Some students work for, or conduct research on, one of the research centers around the state during their academic careers.

3. Biological control of weeds and insects -- Weeds represent one of the most serious economic threats to Montana agriculture today. This is particularly true in rangelands where conventional control practices are often not applicable. We have assembled an outstanding tream of weed scientists to deal with ecology, chemical control, biological control and physiology. The 1983 legislature appropriated an additional \$90,000 annually to reinforce the activities of this scientific team.

2

MSU has mounted an intensive effort to utilize biological control methods for perennial noxious weeds such as spotted knapweed, leafy spurge and Canada thistle. We are cooperating extensively with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and USDA-ARS in this activity. Our scientists have traveled abroad to review overseas laboratories and collect potential insects and diseases which may be valuable in attacking our major weed problems. As a result of MSU research several insects have been released to attack spotted knapweed and leafy spurge. Investigations are also under way to evaluate potential disease control mechanisms for spotted knapweed and Canada thistle. The USDA Rangeland Insect Laboratory located on the MSU campus has been successful in releasing a seed head weevil to combat In addition, they have been instrumental in musk thistle. developing a parasite which is effective in combatting grasshopper populations.

Student training in weed research and biological control is being strengthened on the campus. Entomology is being reformed into a department in the College of Agriculture. Entomology course work is being updated and reinforced and we anticipate a strong graduate training program to emerge in the near future.

A major improvement in agriculture research and teaching programs has recently been achieved. The 1983 legislature appropriated \$5.3 million for a new controlled environment teaching and research laboratory. Construction will start in the spring of 1985. This state-of-the-art facility will strongly reinforce programs in weed research, plant breeding and genetics, range, soils, entomology, plant pathology and other areas important to plant agriculture. The facility will include isolation and quarantine research areas important to biological control activities.

Montana State University will continue to conduct a balanced program in research and teaching relative to modern agriculture. The wise use of appropriate chemicals will play an important role in agricultural production systems of Montana in the foreseeable future. However, an appropriate blend of disciplines will be imperative. A classic example is provided by our weed research and teaching program. As previously indicated, we have an extremely strong biological weed control component. However, we also have the additional components of weed physiology and weed ecology and chemical use. The weed research program utilizes a totally integrated approach to the problem with the clear understanding that a single solution will not resolve all of the problems. We feel strongly that our students should have a broad based training leading to a realistic and honest knowledge base for their future activities in agricultural fields.

It is apparent that agriculture is undergoing some tremendous upheavals at the present time. Economic constraints will likely force some, if not a major, restructuring of U. S. agriculture. Sustainable agricultural principles will be a significant component of the new U. S. production system provided that they are accompanied by appropriate economic returns. However, it is unlikely that the more traditional approaches to agricultural production will be decreased or eliminated in the foreseeable future. Montana State University will play a vital and important role in providing a well balanced research and education program for the people of the state, as well as the region and the nation. It is our pleasure to participate with you in this conference.

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EALLOIT HJR 2 - 1-30

Wednesday, January 30, 1985 — 4



MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The Big Sky Country

REPRESENTATIVE JAMES M. SCHULTZ

HOUSE DISTRICT 30

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HOME ADDRESS 1210 SEVENTH AVENUE NORTH LEWISTOWN, MONTANA 59457 HOME PHONE: (406) 538-3355 HELENA PHONE: (406) 443-0281

> ments for detailed record-keeping on farm and Friday it is relaxing strict requireing to pressure from Congress, the Internal Revenue Service announced WASHINGTON (AP) - Respond business use of motor ve-

specified amount of business use give most taxpayers the choice of without records. Under the changes: keeping detailed The changes, which will spelled out in detail next week, nicles. records of their will g

without keeping records. A tax de-duction would be allowed for the 80 who receive more than 70 percent of percent use. This rule is for farmers ness and 20 percent for personal use used 80 percent of the time for busi-Farmers may claim a truck is

> larming. their non-investment income from

e-use

record

rule

• Farm cars may be treated as used 70 percent of the time for busi who drives his car to pick up seed. ness if they are used to make several deliver eggs to a customer and the business stops during a day. This might cover, for example, a farmer

ness hours employer's premises during non-busi-ness hours is exempt from the record-keeping rules. in a trade or business and kept on the A car or truck used 100 percent is exempt from

use is prohibited and the value of the ees to use business vehicles for com muting (such as a telephone lineman policeman) requirements if other persona Businesses that require employ will be exempt from

> commuting use most of the time for calling on cus workers' income. A business whose vehicle is used S included Ħ the

requirements by logging only per-sonal use. Or, if the vehicle is a car, the company may avoid records by treating 70 percent of the use as busi-ness. In the case of a truck, the firm and avoid records. could treat 80 percent as business use tomers, making deliveries, visiting job sites and the like may meet IRS

Rep. Ron Marlenee, R-Mont., called the IRS announcement "poten-

ments is to abolish them altogether. lhe ially good news." However, he said "Any change is going to be an im best way to change the require

is necessary," Marlenee said. provement, but a significant change ł

About time IRS is reigned in

Bureaucrats delight in their rule-making power and one agency that seems to take delight in using rules to make life miserable for people is the Internal Revenue Service.

Last year our son took a parttime job washing dishes for about six weeks. He knew when he got the job that he wouldn't be working long so he asked that his employer not to withhold federal taxes. Some months later he received a letter from the IRS. It included a pamphlet titled "Reduction in Paperwork Act." We read the cover letter first and then turned to the forms. It was as bad, if not worse, than filing an itemized tax return, all to prove that he



didn't have to have taxes withheld from his paycheck. So much for reduction in paper work.

With that experience in mind, and a couple of others, it came as no surprise earlier this month when the IRS announced its new rules regarding record keeping for business use of vehicles.

The IRS rule requires on-the-road business people to keep "adequate contemporaneous records" of mileage in order to take a tax write-off for cars or trucks used in the course of their work. This means that these people have to maintain some sort of log or journal with individual entries specifying names, dates, mileage, business purposes and times the vehicle was used.

Just like that, the IRS created a mountain of paperwork for salesmen, firms that deliver goods, farmers and ranchers. The record-keeping required to satisfy the IRS is absolutely unbelievable.

Mad taxpayers swamped Congress with protests and it appears that the IRS also got the message. Last week it proposed modifications to its rule. We won't go into all of the details but the IRS's change of heart greatly simplifies record-keeping and some cases gives people a choice of keeping a dam log or taking a standard deduction for business use of a vehicle.

That's a good start. But as far as we're con cerned it's time the IRS quit treating all taxpayer as though they are liars and cheats.

VISITORS' REGISTER

HOUSE_AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE					
BILL NO. <u>HJR 15 and 17</u>	DATEFebruary	1, 1985			
SPONSOR Rep. Schye and Rep.	Schultz				
NAME (please print)	RESIDENCE	SUPPORT	OPPOSE		
Kerry Nhappy	GY, Fall 3	X			
GRO. OCHENSKI	HECENA	K/			
James Ruelsh	Boyaman	15 1			
Ame C. May	Winistow	X			
Norman A. Frankland	Victor	\times			
Jeanne Charter	Shephul	×			
ALAN C KAND KIL	Missourt (HJG15)	X			
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IF YOU CARE TO WRITE COMMENTS, ASK SECRETARY FOR WITNESS STATEMENT FORM.

PLEASE LEAVE PREPARED STATEMENT WITH SECRETARY.

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