

Dairymen Offer New Donations

By Morton Mintz
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The largest of the dairy industry's three political committees says it is prepared to contribute up to \$1.5 million to House and Senate candidates this year if that should be necessary to restrict imports of dairy products.

Associated Milk Producers, Inc., of San Antonio, made the disclosure 30 days after pleading guilty to larding out hundreds of thousands of dollars in corporate cash to curry favor with both Democratic and Republican politicians in the past three elections. U.S. District Court Chief Judge George L. Hart Jr. fined AMPI the maximum allowable, \$35,000.

By an almost unanimous voice vote yesterday in Minneapolis, delegates to a weekend meeting of AMPI approved a plan to try to recover contributions made illegally.

AMPI's political arm, called C-TAPE, had cash on hand of \$1,654,895 as of Aug. 15, according to reports filed with government supervisors of the election-financing disclosure law that became effective after the illegal contributions were made. This year alone, C-TAPE's volunteer supporters have contributed \$388,292, or \$1,711 per day.

The first definite indication as to what C-TAPE may do with the money came Friday night, when AMPI President John E. Butterbrodt told reporters that the political committee is prepared to give \$1.5 million to combat dairy imports in the wake of what he termed "the most hostile year the dairy industry has seen."

In a phone interview yesterday in Minneapolis, Phil Porter, an aide to Butterbrodt, said that a law now on the

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books empowers the U.S. Tariff Commission to impose duties on imports equivalent to subsidies granted for the products by the governments of exporting countries.

Contending that the commission improperly is failing to impose countervailing duties on dairy imports, the National Milk Producers Federation has sued the agency, Porter said.

Asked if the intention of C-TAPE is to try to procure new legislation in even the suit fails, Porter told a reporter, "You said it better than I can."

Porter also said it was his personal opinion that the other two large milk cooperatives' committees share the same goal.

These committees are SPACE, operated by Dairymen, Inc. of Louisville, and ADEPT, the arm of Mid-America Dairymen, Inc., of Springfield, Mo.

Together, C-TAPE, SPACE and ADEPT had \$2,340,775 in cash on hand, an increase of \$156,993 since May 31, according to reports filed this month.

The Washington Post reported on June 16 that since election day in 1972, the three committees had contributed at least \$100 to each of 82 sitting U.S. senators and representatives, for a total of \$213,300.

The total included \$50,000 to five Democrats on the House Agriculture Dairy Subcommittee, \$15,970 to three of the remaining 15 Democrats on the full committee, and \$5,750 to two of the 16 Republicans.

In the Senate, four Democrats on the Agriculture subcommittee together got \$36,850, while one of the four Republicans got \$15,600.

All told, the dairymen between Nov. 7, 1972, and May

31, 1974, had contributed \$102,450 in gifts of at least \$500 each to members of the congressional subcommittees immediately concerned with dairy prices and marketing, plus \$21,720 to other members of the full Agriculture committees.

The new reports increase the total number of recipients to 85—almost one out of every six legislators—but do not substantially affect the dollar amounts. This indicates that the bulk of the spending is likely to occur next month. Newly reported contributions include: Rep. William J. Scherle (R-Iowa), a member of the House Appropriations agriculture subcommittee who had gotten \$2,000 after the November, 1972, election, \$1,000 more; Rep. Robert D. Price (R-Tex.), who had gotten \$3,500, \$200, more; Rep. William Clay (D-Mo.), \$5,000; Rep. John B. Breaux (D-La.), who had gotten \$1,600, \$1,500 more; and Rep. John W. Davis (D-Ga.), \$1,500.

The gifts to Breaux and Davis were made by SPACE through newly established state units called committees for political action. One is in Virginia. In the District of Columbia, SPACE has given \$5,000 to a new unit called PACE.

The contributions at issue in the District Court case totaling \$280,900 were illegal because they came from AMPI's corporate treasury, not from funds contributed to C-TAPE by AMPI's 40,000 members.

The recipients of the illegal gifts included President Nixon, Sen. Hubert H. Humphrey (D-Minn.), Sen. Edmund S. Muskie (D-Maine), Sen. James Abourezk (D-S.D.), Rep. Wilbur D. Mills (D-Ark.), former Rep. Page Belcher (R-Okla.) and former Rep. Patrick J. Hillings (R-Calif.).

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