

# Cattlemen ask ban on meat imports

## Texas congressmen urged to lead

WASHINGTON AP—The Independent Cattlemen's Association urged the Texas congressional delegation Tuesday to lead the rest of the Congress in taking necessary steps to assist livestock producers. The group is seeking a ban on imports of all red meats until the operation of supply and demand can provide a reasonable return on meat producers' investments. Representatives of the group met Monday with officials of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and attended a luncheon Tuesday with the Texas congressional delegation. Summarizing the group's goals, spokesman Tim Van Dohlen said the cattlemen want the Commodity

Credit Corp. to purchase increased amounts of cows, calves, hogs, sheep and other red meat animals. It also wants a revitalized emergency loan program, administered by the Farmers' Home Administration. The group said the current program "is not working because of qualification requirements." Van Dohlen said the cattlemen want the Congress to reassume authority for functions that have been delegated to various government agencies, whose rules, he said, "have been contrary to the legislative intent and best interests of the American People." "The Independent Cattlemen's

Association is asking the Texas congressional delegation to take the lead in the Congress to take whatever steps are necessary to save the livestock producer and the agricultural industry while protecting the consumer," the cattlemen said in a statement. "Congress should look closely at the purchasing policies for the USDA school food program and the

Armed Forces to assure that domestic and not imported red meats are used," the statement said. Reagan Brown, special assistant to Texas Gov. Dolph Briscoe, attended the Tuesday luncheon and warned the delegation that "Texas dairymen and cattlemen are going broke in wholesale numbers due to increased production costs." "Many farmers and ranchers are

disillusioned and feel that their best interests are not being considered," he said. "Many are clamoring for new organizations to represent them." "State legislatures and Congress are being called upon to do something. The impatience becomes belligerent as many cattle and dairy farmers face total bankruptcy," he warned.

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# Illness indicated in Franco, Spain

MADRID AP—Gen. Francisco Franco turns 82 Wednesday, still in control of Spain after a near-fatal illness six months ago forced him to surrender power temporarily for the first time in 35 years. But there is growing uncertainty about the country's future. As usual, the general is expected to mark his birthday quietly with his family in Madrid. The lack of fanfare as "El Caudillo" starts his 83rd year has done little, however, to stem the uneasiness. His remarkable recovery appears to have brought a corresponding decline in the nation's health. "The economic and social crisis surrounding us could be the worst in the last 30 years," said a Spanish news magazine a few days ago. The comment is considered outspoken and remarkable in the face of Franco's contention that everything is nailed down tight for a transition of power. But political sources both in and out of the government say the fact that Franco grabbed power back from Prince Juan Carlos de Borbon after giving it to him at the height of the illness last summer causes concern over the future. Coupled with economic problems that experts say will take Spain into recession with the rest of Europe, political unrest could present the aging leader with the toughest year since he came to power after the 1936-39 civil war. There is growing expectation that there will be political liberalization in Spain and the Basque guerrillas have not given up their campaign for an autonomous region in the north.

Top government officials say Franco is recovered fully from the thrombophlebitis, or blood clotting, in his leg that nearly killed him. The same illness hospitalized former President Richard M. Nixon.

# Primaries for Bentsen still debated

HOUSTON (AP) — Sen. Lloyd Bentsen Jr., D-Tex., said Monday he will decide early next year whether to enter the Democratic presidential primaries in 1976. "It will be a tough decision but there is no front-runner in the race," Bentsen said. "I think the race is wide open and there will be no shortage of candidates." Bentsen discussed his presidential ambitions during a news conference following a speech at the National League of Cities convention. "Surveys show I'm not well known nationally but am well known in the party structure because I've made a lot of speeches," he said. "I'm getting so many invitations to speak, now that I can't accept them all, but I have not made a decision on 1976." Bentsen has served both in the Senate and the House and was asked which he preferred. "There is a lot to say for a six-year term," he said. "What about a four-year term, such as the presidency?" "Well, that is a thought," Bentsen said with a laugh.



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