Senator Makes Announcement to New York Milkshed Leaders

New York, Oct. 13--Senator Herbert H. Lehman (D-Lib-NY) announced here this morning (Friday) that Secretary of Agriculture Charles F. Brannan has again assured him, in writing, that no change will be made in the federal-state milk marketing arrangements for the New York milkshed.

Lehman made the announcement in a conference with milkshed leaders and released an exchange of correspondence between himself and Secretary Brannan.

The New York senator had obtained Brannan's assurance in July that no change would be made but sought further clarification after dairy farmer representatives had advised him of continuing doubt and confusion concerning the issue.

The issue resulted from reports that an official of the Production and Marketing Administration, United States Department of Agriculture, had proposed changes on June 22 that would have necessitated reorganization of the New York milk market administrator's office.

In his letter to Senator Lehman, dated October 10, Secretary Brannan declared: "I assure you, as I assured you in our meeting of July 28, that I have no intention and never had any intention of seeking to change the Federal-State arrangement which has earned the respect and confidence of the New York Milk Producers and of the other elements in the New York dairy industry."

Brannan recalled that as governor, Senator Lehman had participated in negotiating the original Federal-State Agreement in 1938 between the New York State Commissioner of Agriculture and Markets and the Secretary of Agriculture, "laying down the broad principles of Federal-State cooperation in regulating the New York milk market."
"The agreement was sound when you negotiated and approved it and I believe it is sound now," he wrote. "I know how strongly you feel in behalf of the interests and welfare of the New York dairy industry and specifically of the New York milk producers. I hope you will reassure them that my interest in their well-being and in their continued confidence in the Federal-State Milk Marketing Agreement and in Federal Milk Marketing Order 27 is likewise deep. I therefore wish the dairy farmers of New York to know that I shall be, with you, vigilant in defense of their interest."

Brannan said that he and Senator Lehman were still studying the issue of the application to the office of the milk market administrator of a ruling by the Civil Service Commission. "I assure you, however," he added, "that the application of the ruling by the Civil Service Commission will not in any event be used by this department to impair the cooperative arrangement."

"I am pleased that Secretary Brannan has further and so definitely clarified this issue which has been of so much concern to our dairy farmers," Senator Lehman told the conference. "The federal-state agreement which was drawn and entered into while I was governor and which Mr. Brannan continues to approve is the basis upon which the market administrator's office was set up and upon which it is operated today. The secretary's letter will, I am sure, dispel any doubt which still exists in any minds in New York State."

-30-

Note to Editors: Enclosed herewith is the exchange of correspondence between Senator Lehman and Secretary Brannan.
October 7, 1950

Honorable Charles P. Brannan
Secretary of Agriculture
Department of Agriculture
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am enclosing for your information copy of a telegram I received from a group of representative dairymen in New York State. In recent days I have received a number of similar communications. I have also seen statements in the press indicating a continuing doubt and confusion concerning the Federal-State relationship and the present administrative procedures under Federal Milk Marketing Order No. 27.

I am sure that the questions raised and the doubts concerning your own attitude have no substance in fact. It was my impression that our last meeting on this subject resulted in a clear-cut agreement and full understanding that nothing was going to be done to disturb the present relationship and the present basic administrative arrangement inherent in the Federal-State agreement.

In any event, I would greatly appreciate it -- it would assist me in clarifying any remaining doubts -- if you would reaffirm your intentions in this matter. I am sure that such a reaffirmation would be very much appreciated by the farmers of New York State who would know then, as I know, of your great interest in and respect for their attitude in this matter.

Very sincerely yours,

signed/ Herbert H. Lehman

Enclosure
Hon. Herbert H. Lehman
United States Senator
820 Park Avenue
New York, N.Y.

My dear Senator Lehman:

I have at hand your letter of October 7 and the enclosures indicating that some confusion still exists concerning my intentions and purposes with regard to Federal Milk Marketing Order No. 27.

Personally, I believe this confusion is politically inspired to the detriment of producers. I am certain that our last meeting together resulted in a very clear understanding, both as to the facts and my intentions in regard to those facts, an understanding which I can only repeat again.

The method of administering the New York Milk Marketing Orders from their very inception has been by appointment of a marketing administrator, responsible to the Secretary of Agriculture and to the Commissioner of Agriculture and Markets for the State of New York. I am well aware of your prominent part in originally negotiating the Federal-State Agreement in 1938 between the State Commissioner of Agriculture and Markets and the Secretary of Agriculture, laying down the broad principles of Federal-State cooperation in regulating the New York milk market. The agreement was sound when you negotiated and approved it and I believe it is sound now.

I assure you, as I assured you in our meeting of July 28, that I have no intention and never had any intention of seeking to change the Federal-State arrangement which has earned the respect and confidence of the New York Milk Producers and of the other elements in the New York dairy industry.

I know how strongly you feel in behalf of the interests and welfare of the New York dairy industry and specifically of the New York milk producers. I hope you will reassure them that my interest in their well-being and in their continued confidence in the Federal-State Milk Marketing Agreement and in Federal Milk Marketing Order 27 is likewise deep. I, therefore, wish the dairy farmers of New York to know that I shall be, with you, vigilant in defense of their interest.

You will recall that a matter still at issue is the application to the office of the Milk Marketing Administrator of a ruling by the Civil Service Commission. You and I are still studying that matter. I assure you, however, that the application of the ruling by the Civil Service Commission will not in any event be used by this Department to impair the cooperative arrangement.

I hope this letter will eliminate any last vestige of confusion. You are, of course, free to pass on these assurances to your many farm friends in New York and to express to them my appreciation of their cooperation with the Department in the successful operation of Federal Milk Marketing Order No. 27. You know how deeply I appreciate your own interest in the Department and in the welfare of agriculture.

Yours very sincerely,

signed/ Charles F. Brannan
Secretary