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Military purchase of foreign trucks protested

By Craig Piechura
staff writer

The same federal government that approved \$400 million in new loan guarantees to Chrysler Corp. will spend \$300 million by 1985 on foreign-built, non-combat trucks to be used in Europe.

The purchase of the pick-up trucks, vans and maintenance trucks built by Volkswagen, Mercedes-Benz, British Leyland Ltd. and at least one Italian truck firm is described as a "cost-effective" move by an Army spokesman, and part of a reciprocal arrangement

with NATO allies who buy American-made trucks.

The move has brought an outcry from 30 U.S. congressmen, most from districts dependent on the auto industry. U.S. Congressman William Brodehead and Indiana Republican representative Elwood Hillis, co-founders of the congressional auto task force, are leading the attack by rounding up 28 co-signers for a protest letter to be sent to President Ronald Reagan.

If the trucks were bought in the United States, the Army would have to "ship it overseas along with small

parts and then store the parts somewhere, explained Army spokesman Lt. Col. Bill Highlander.

Highlander characterized the \$300 million truck order as an "amount extremely small" in overall military spending. He stressed that tactical vehicles — including jeeps, trucks, cargo carriers, and troop-carrying vehicles — are still bought from American firms.

IF \$3 MILLION is a drop in the bucket, says Brodehead, "that's why the bid is empty — too many drops have been taken out."

In a letter he sent to Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger May 15, Brodehead questioned whether this form of trade cooperation with our NATO allies serves the national interest.

"I understand this move — which will ultimately cost taxpayers over \$300 million — is being advertised as an effort to 'cooperate' with our European allies. But who is being asked to do the 'cooperating'? American workers, of whom one out of six depend on the auto industry for their jobs, are being asked."

The UAW's chief lobbyist in Washington, Stephen Schlosberg, told the

Wall Street Journal:

"I hope the Pentagon has made arrangements for Germany and Japan to supply the military with equipment the next war, because the U.S. industry isn't going to be around to help if they keep this up."

Responding to the criticism, Army purchasing official Col. Paul Goncz said the military plans to spend \$1.7 billion in fiscal year 1981-82 for combat and non-combat vehicles.

Further, it has been reported that any foreign firm bidding on lucrative combat truck contracts must agree to build the vehicles in the United States

if they win the bids, worth hundreds of millions of dollars.

EVEN IF there is a minor dollar savings by buying foreign-built trucks for European use, Brodehead said the expense of welfare, food stamps and unemployment compensation should offset it.

"If that \$300 million goes into the coffers of the (U.S.) auto industry, they're producing cars, they pay taxes and we get it back that way," Brodehead said. "The Department of Defense is strangling at a gnat and swallowing an elephant."

Tax issue orphaned

Who said they backed Proposal A?

By Craig Piechura
staff writer

It's a case of victory having many fathers and defeat being an orphan when you ask for reactions to the resounding defeat of Proposal A.

It's hard to find anyone who will admit to being a supporter of the measure supported by Governor William Milliken which failed by a 3-1 margin last Tuesday.

State Rep. Wilbur "Sandy" Brotherton, a Republican from Farmington who represents the 54th district, said he was sure for weeks that the proposal would fail because voters didn't feel it offered enough of a tax break.

"Ever since I began talking to people and getting their reaction to an informational flyer sent out I knew it was in

deep trouble," Brotherton said. The legislator said some of his constituents regarded the bill as a slight modification of the first tax plan supported by Milliken — "the same old thing warmed over."

Others, Brotherton said, were confused about the mechanics of returning revenue to local schools and unsure whether the savings in property taxes would offset an increase in the sales tax.

"Throwing out a few crumbs won't satisfy people who are already paying too much," Brotherton said.

THE SOLUTION, said Brotherton, isn't to cook up another complicated tax proposal to place on the ballot this fall. Better, he said, to save the \$3.5 million it costs to schedule a special election than watch another complicated

tax proposal fail.

"Frankly, what I'd like to see them do is incorporate a 50 percent reduction in property tax without any future increase in income tax or sales tax," Brotherton said.

Brotherton would also like to see a reduction in welfare benefits, with the savings returned in the form of property tax relief.

"As the economy picks up and the welfare rate declines additional money would be freed up and could be set aside for property tax relief on a phased-in basis," Brotherton said.

Lewis Schulman, superintendent of Farmington Schools, says there was neither mourning nor rejoicing at school board offices in wake of Proposal A's defeat.

The Farmington Board of Education

took a neutral stand on the ballot issue, Schulman points out.

"The reason we took a neutral position is we see a need for a change in the way property taxes are levied but most of the revenues in the district come from property taxes," Schulman said.

HE DOESN'T want to mention the name "Tisch," but Schulman says he's worried that the defeat of Proposal A will foster a new proposal that cuts even deeper into the school district's source of local revenue.

"Any kind of proposal lessening property tax revenues... any kind of proposal that detracts from our ability to secure revenues is dangerous."

Schulman is convinced the public can have it both ways — reducing property tax while maintaining school programs.



Godfrey Wanek gets his painting ready for display in the arts and crafts show to be held all day Wednesday in Tally Hall. Dozens of seniors from the Gathering Place will be showing their work.

Publisher/poet finds inspiration behind the wheel



MINDY SAUNDERS/staff photographer

By Jackie Klein
staff writer

SITTING BEHIND HIS oversized desk, dressed in a traditional three-piece suit, Ron Brasch looks like a successful magazine publisher.

But behind this image is another face — the face of an accomplished poet in what Brasch terms "a sensitive world far beyond business."

Brasch, 34, of Farmington Hills owns Communicate Marketing, Inc., a Southfield advertising agency. He recently published an updated edition of "Relocation Guide for Metropolitan Detroit."

A graduate of the University of Michigan with a master's degree in business administration, Brasch was editor of the university's inter-arts magazine and won eight prizes for fiction, essays and poetry. In 1970, he won the prestigious Hopwood Award for major poetry.

"Professors and graduate students in literature and writing said it was hereby for a business major to even be allowed to compete," Brasch recalled. "They had apoplexy when I'd win."

"THE ACTUAL art of writing and crafting a poem can be very depressing. It's an intense introversion in which my being is inhabited by others. I don't believe in writing about my own experiences."

"One mark of a quality writer is the ability to project into a situation or person. Walt Whitman once said, 'I do not ask the wounded man how he feels. I become him.'"

Writing marketing copy, on the other hand, can be extremely exhilarating, Brasch said. The idea



Jackie Klein

that your words and ideas move people to act and buy an expensive product is professionally satisfying, Brasch said.

Brasch's nine-year-old marketing agency specializes in brochures, magazines, newsletters and other publications for such clients as American Motors and Dayton-Hudson.

In 1979, he founded and published the relocation guide. The updated version features information on apartments, condominiums and new-home developments in 54 communities.

WHILE BRASCH is enthused about the publication and said sales are up because of corporate transfers, he's deeply absorbed in his poetry.

"I get bored driving a car so I dash off a few lines when I'm traveling," he said. "I get some of my best ideas en route. My favorite theme is 'the country called America.' I also write about eternal life and relationships."

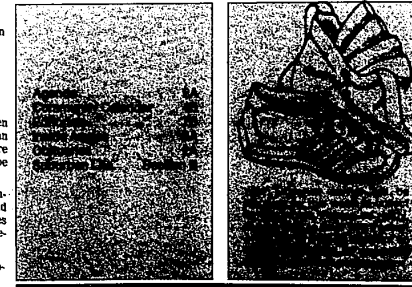
"I write poetry simply because I must purge myself of thoughts and emotions. When my father died, I wrote poems reflecting my love for him and the tremendous disappointment we often feel. Things just don't work out the way we plan them. It's tragic."

An excerpt from "The Promised Land," a poem Brasch wrote after his father's death, follows:

"We try to take hold of our lives
To pick our mates, the right horses at the track
To catch colds only on convenient weeks
It never works out."

"It's nice to be recognized as a thoughtful poet or an accomplished copywriter," Brasch said. "But for me the fulfillment is satisfying myself. Truly the song comes back most to the singer."

what's inside



Fleeing gunman theory inconclusive

Pictures of a fleeing gunman taken by a Southfield man in St. Peter's Square seconds after Pope John Paul II was shot have been developed and turned over to police in Rome.

Lowell Newton, editorial director at WXYZ-TV, took the photographs while he was on vacation in Italy. Newton said the pictures show the back of a man at the scene who was carrying a gun and who fled in a hurry. The man is not Mehmet Ali Agca, the Turkish nationalist charged in the attempted assassination of the pope.

Newton said he recognizes the light-colored pants and black leather jacket of the suspect from the photographs. "Because of the stride when he was running away, unfortunately the gun is

in front of his body (in the photographs)," Newton said.

While admitting the photographs are inconclusive, Newton said they show "a very slight right profile of him and I'm told experts can gauge height and weight by that."

Newton said his suspicions were confirmed when police in Rome admitted the possibility of a second gunman.

Negatives of Newton's film, he said, are in the hands of Italian police, who are investigating the case. Newton has two prints taken by a Polaroid of a contact print. He declined to allow this newspaper to reproduce the photographs. Copies of the print were shown last week on WXYZ-TV.

Slides taken at the same time by a friend of Newton, Michael Johnson, did

Teen charged in holdup of 6

A 17-year-old resident of the Sunset Trailer Park was arraigned Thursday on five counts of armed robbery for his alleged involvement in the robbery of six employees of Blakey's Ranch House Restaurant after the restaurant closed on Mother's Day.

The suspect, Kevin R. Osen, 17, was ordered held on \$50,000 cash bond set by 47th District Court Judge Margaret Schaeffer. No date has been set yet for Osen's preliminary exam in district court on the five armed robbery charges and five counts of using a fire-

arm in commission of a felony.

A total of \$174 was reported stolen from the employees after the gunman was told the restaurant receipts were locked in a safe that couldn't be opened.

Det. Sgt. Albert Havner of the Farmington Hills Police Department said two out of three restaurant employees identified Osen as the assailant in a series of mug shots.

Osen filed a petition for a court-appointed lawyer.