

# Editorial

A pair of local announcements coming to this desk within the past week concerned linked problems in Lancaster farming — as well as farming everywhere in the United States.

The first of these announcements came from the Lancaster County Land Use Committee, composed chiefly of supervisors of local federal and state agencies directly or indirectly involved in land management within this area. The actual "leg-work", or on-the-spot mapping by the committee was conducted by W. Martin Muth, SCS work-unit-conservationist, who probably knows more about the soils, farming areas and land uses of this county than any other one man.

Through a massive random-sample measuring system the committee compiled their estimate of land uses within the county last spring and summer. They compared this with the acre-by-acre County Soil Survey completed by SCS in 1938 — and 1950 census figures on land use — tempering the statistical results with their knowledge of the area, its farmers, changes in farm practices, and urban development.

The end result — A valid estimate of approximately 15,000 acres, or four per cent of the county's farmlands, diverted from agriculture to other uses. This diversion covers a period of at least 1950-1958, and due to the correlation of the earlier Soil Survey with Census figures, an undetermined portion of the 1940's.

At the same time, the Farmers Home Administration's county supervisor, Richard W. Hoover, has announced an increase in his agency's investment limit in Lancaster County farms to \$40,000 for one farm-ownership loan. This increase was required by "changing economic conditions making it necessary for local farmers to make larger investments in farms and farming operations including such things as stable cleaners, pipeline milkers and bulk milk tanks."

It is obvious that some of this increase at least was required by the rising cost of land in Lancaster County. Reflecting a nationwide trend which has pushed farmland values into space faster and farther than the Soviet "Lunkak."

Which brings us — by way of the back pasture — to the primary linked problem. What to do about the increasing diversion of fertile farmland to non-agricultural uses? When less fertile areas would serve the interests of non-farm needs just as well, or better.

Lancaster County is the Garden Spot. It is one of the world's great limestone basins. It is threatened with total urbanization. This is not a light, casual or passing problem. It is growing. Spreading from the great metropolitan complex to the east and resulting in 15,000 acres of this country's fertility being diverted within the past few years.

The citizens of Lancaster County, and of Pennsylvania, must decide in the near future if they wish to permit their most fertile farmlands to be "developed" Un-

like the regular election of government officials, there is no recall in this matter. If the land is "developed", that's it. It is lost to farming.

Many U. S. counties already have taken steps to protect themselves from this loss by placing fertile areas in "farm zoning districts," according to Erling D. Solberg of the USDA Ag. Research Service.

He reports that Wisconsin, Michigan and Minnesota were among the first states to create zoned districts for forestry and recreation. Other states have followed their lead. California has created agricultural zoning districts where all non-farm activities, even food processing, are excluded. The result has been to save farm productivity and channel urban, suburban or industrial activities into land areas well suited for them, but

"One aim of agricultural zoning has been and should be to find alternative areas of less fertile soils that can be used satisfactorily for non-farm purpose, thus preserving the most fertile soils," Dr. Solberg says.

A recent survey by his agency shows that about 17 million acres of Classes I-IV land have been taken out of farm production within the past 15 years. Much of it has been the flattest, least erodible, most productive and most intensively farmed.

Dr. Solberg urges timely and appropriate action by local citizens to prevent loss of fertile lands, while adding healthy suburban-industrial growth.

He reports that four types of zoning regulations are available to interested areas. They are: "Use" laws that restrict the use to which land can be put. Building-tract regulations that set lower limits on the size of building lots or tracts; building-height regulations, and density-of-population laws to prevent either dangerous overcrowding or wasteful scattering of the suburban population.

For the individual farmer there is the decision of whether he wants to retain the power to hold his land available for speculation as a suburban development site, continue farming it himself, or pass it on to his children.

Agricultural zoning for Lancaster County would not only remove fertile lands from speculation, but would partially alleviate the pressure for higher and higher prices. This would automatically result in lower taxes for the future, since the land could only be taxed for its farm value and not for the "development" possibilities.

Zoning-power enabling acts for about half the nation's counties have been passed by state legislatures. Lancaster farmers might well consider the possibilities of using this method of preserving their way of life.

(Copies of Agricultural Information Bulletin No. 196, "The Why and How of Rural Zoning", are for sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Govt. Printing Office, Wash. 25, D.C. Price: 40 cents each.)

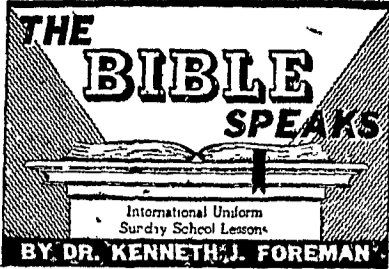
employees. Another 25% is the cost of export subsidies, school lunches and other surplus disposal programs.

During 1958 the government paid farmers more than \$1 billion as a part of the cost of taking land out of crops under the soil bank and other conservative programs. Yet farmers, on the smallest number of acres in cultivation in 40 years, produced 11 per cent larger crops than ever before.

Government holdings of farm surpluses. Mr. Eisenhower estimated, soon will reach \$9,000,000,000, another record high. The cost of handling and storing that surplus, he estimated, will be a billion dollars a year.

The president points out that such expenditures might be justified for a temporary period if they were leading to a sound solution of the farm problem. The farm situation, though, is getting worse instead of better.

**What Next?**  
The situation, Mr. Eisenhower emphasized, calls for prompt and forthright action. "We need, he said, new legislation. Congress can find



Bible Material: Luke 20 19-26.  
Devotional Reading: Romans 13 1-10.

## In Two Worlds

Lesson for February 1, 1959

ONE WAY the enemies of Jesus tried to ruin him without going to the extreme of violence, was to try to make him ridiculous, to show him up as a teacher without answers, a sage without wisdom. So they asked him one day a question they could not have dared to answer themselves. Since Palestine was an occupied country at the time, it was a very hot question indeed: "Is it right to pay taxes to Rome?"

"Yes" would mean the man who answered Dr. Foreman was a traitor to his people; "No" would get a man into jail.



### The Face on the Money

Jesus' answer was not all Yes nor all No. As he had done before, he put the question right back to the questioners. First he asked to see a denarius. The very name of the coin was Roman; it would be about what a workman in those days would make in a day. Of course the only money the Romans would accept for taxes would be Roman money. Like all hard money, this piece had a picture on it, and some words in Latin around the edge of it. JESUS forced the priests' spies to admit that the picture was of His Majesty the Emperor, then Tiberius Caesar; and the Latin words also referred to him. In short, the whole thing was Roman. They would be reminded that the Romans came to Palestine in the first place by the Jews' request; that they had brought peace to the torn land; that the roads and public safety were maintained by the Romans... all with tax money. Some of the tax denarius would stay right in the province. The face on the money spoke for itself. The Imperial Government had a right to lay a tax. "Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar," Jesus said; but added in the same breath—"and to God what belongs to God."

### Two Worlds

Ever since that moment when his followers and critics of Jesus had trouble figuring out what Jesus meant. One thing seems clear enough. For a moment, he was shutting the door on those who tried to look silly. Without saying a word, he called them to the fact that they owed something, and owed something; and perhaps hinted they were behind with their money on both accounts. However, looking beneath the surface, he brilliantly simple answer saw a truth which is just for America as it is of a province of the Roman Empire. Every man, woman, and child realizes it or not, is a citizen of two worlds. One is the human world around him, as in America of us owe America a great debt. We can appreciate our country more if we stop to think that people would like to move than to any other country on the globe. Our country has a great debt to our loyal support.

The other world is the Kingdom of God. It is visible always ("it cometh observation"), but it is more important, and infinitely more important, than any human wealth. If we owe our country much, we owe the Kingdom of God yet more.

### Many Problems

It is not easy to say, in fact, just where the line is of this earth and the Kingdom of Heaven begins. People say the two worlds as distinct people say they overlap. It is sure: if they overlap, then in us, for we are citizens of two worlds. This raises many problems, especially where the two worlds overlap. Suppose the State says it is wrong which I know is right? Suppose the State commands me to do something I am quite sure God forbids? I should be a good citizen. I should be a good citizen and a good citizen? One thing is sure: if I try to be a citizen of two worlds only, I shall find myself sometimes fighting against God's world only, I shall be different to my human brothers and sisters. Only by loving both worlds and man can I be a good citizen of both worlds.

(Based on outlines copied from the Division of Christian Education, National Council of the Churches in the U. S. A. Religious Community Press Service.)

## '58 Net Farm Income Up 20%

Mainly due to higher prices for cattle and hogs, prices received by farmers in 1958 averaged more than five per cent above 1957, according to the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service.

First estimates, indicate a 10 per cent gain in cash receipts over 1957, and a gain of about 20 per cent in realized net farm income.

However, with record crops harvested and increased mar-

no fault with the President's demand for action.

Congress has adopted many of the recommendations made by Secretary Benson and backed by the President. It has, however, refused to go as far and as fast as this Administration would have liked.

Most crops were supported at 90% of parity when Mr. Eisenhower became President in 1953. Congress has agreed to a lowering of support on most of those to 75% of parity, and to 60% and 65% for others.

"We still need," the President told Congress, "greater freedom for our farmers to manage their own farms and greater freedom for markets to reflect the wishes of producers and consumers." By that he means fewer production controls and lower price supports.

The responsibility rests on Congress either to accept the President's farm recommendations, or develop some program that would begin to make some sense to both farmers and consumers.

keting of hogs, prices of products declined last year and in mid-December averaged only slightly above year earlier.

Farm cost rates are still to have continued their trend, averaging some 10 per cent higher for the year.

The report further states that with improved prices some products in 1958 had a 11 per cent increase in output, farm income sharply increased last year despite increased costs.

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## THIS WEEK

—In Washington  
With Clin. Benson  
Like To Cut Costs

President Eisenhower is on sound ground when he complains that farm programs now in effect are too costly and, in addition, ineffective in controlling either prices or production.

The new Congress, when it settles down to tackling the sticky problem of farm surpluses, will have no difficulty in agreeing with the President on both counts. It isn't, however, likely to agree with him on what should be done about it.

In support of his contention that farm program costs are too high, Mr. Eisenhower reminded Congress that the U. S. Department of Agriculture this fiscal year will spend more than \$5,000,000,000 (b) "for the support of

farm prices on a very few farm products."

There would be less quarrel with that huge sum if it were resulting in prices generally fair to both producers and consumers. It could be justified if it showed a reasonable promise of bringing production into balance with market demand.

**\$2,000 Per Farm**  
The Department of Agriculture is spending at the rate of more than \$7,000,000,000 a year. That figure, on the basis of 3,500,000 farms, at some \$2,000 a year per farm.

By no means all of that goes to farmers. About 25% goes to operating expenses, including salaries to the more than 80,000 USDA em-