

From Where We Stand . . .

Crisis In The Countryside

This is the battlecry of the conservationist as the nation prepares to observe Soil Stewardship Week — May 15-22. We are pleased to print the following statement of Soil Conservation Service administrator D. A. Williams as he describes the crisis in the countryside.

Today, there is indeed a "crisis in the countryside" — or rather, two crises. One is the continued wastage of the land through erosion and improper use. The other is the result of man's partial success. This is the crisis of complacency about conservation.

Why this complacency? Perhaps it is because the need for increased conservation measures does not immediately strike the eye. The supermarkets are full — today. The dust may not be blowing — today. And so we concern ourselves with the big headlines — wars, space, missiles, murders!

These are serious matters indeed. But, we lose more of our land every year to silent erosion than we have ever lost, or shall ever lose, to a foreign foe. Where is the battle cry for this?

What happens to the eroding lands in Missouri and Montana affects us more directly than our landing on the moon. Where are the pleaders for this? And — no matter what weapons of the future we develop — the most modern army in the world still travels on its stomach, still depends on the bountiful earth we take for granted.

Do not misunderstand me. Our activities around the world, and out of it, are very necessary. But I will firmly believe to the end of my life that there is no work more important, now or for the future, than conserving and enriching our own land, the basis for our life, our living, our national wealth.

Yet, we lose each year, through erosion and other forms of preventable damage, about 500,000 acres of formerly productive land. The bulldozer and the buldozer take another one and one-third million acres of the best land every 365 days for highways, factories, housing and so on. Our rivers continue to flood and destroy homes and hopes. Our water supply runs short, becomes polluted, erodes the land. And, as much of our land disappears, our population and that of the world increases.

Yes, our supermarkets are still full. Our time has not run out. But, quite literally, the sins of our forefathers are being visited upon us. We cannot afford to be wasteful in the future, if we desire our children's children to inherit an

affluent America. We must plan more intensively, farm more wisely, care more urgently. And we must make sure the city man understands that what happens in rural America affects him immediately and profoundly.

We call our land "God's country," and it is. Let us clearly acknowledge it is our job to keep it that way. Farmers and ranchers, as the chief soil stewards, have the heaviest responsibility. They, of all people, know the conservation job is far from done. Thirty percent of our land is being properly treated. What about the other 70 percent?

As we acknowledge Soil Stewardship Week, let us indeed thank God for this country, and for the thousands of dedicated people working to keep it rich and bountiful — especially the officials and cooperators of our 3,000 soil and water conservation districts. And then — let us get off our knees and go back to work.

★ ★ ★ ★ Frost Bites County Growers

Not worms, but frost, rewarded the early-bird crop farmers in the area this year. With low temperature readings ranging from 33 at Safe Harbor to 26 at Mount Joy on Tuesday night, a spectacular late-and-hard freeze nipped strawberry, sweet corn, tomato, and tobacco plants, and fruit trees in the county.

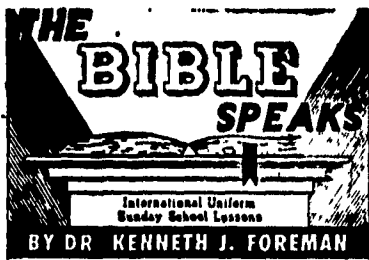
Early estimates of damage were spectacular in what was labeled as the worst frost in local history. One grower reportedly lost 35,000 early tomato plants; another crop farmer reported 20 percent of his strawberry plants with blossoms would not be producing early berries this year.

Spotty damage on tobacco seedbeds was also reported. According to Henry Engle at the PSU Southeastern Research Farm, plants under plastic arches were nipped, but he felt the plants would grow out satisfactorily.

The effectiveness of irrigation as a means of protecting tender plants from crippling cold by wrapping them in coats of ice was impressive. At the Amos H. Funk farm, Millersville, there is an alarm bell which rings when outside temperatures drop to 34 degrees. At 33 degrees Funk turns on his sprinkler systems. This irrigation-freezing process undoubtedly saved many plants at Funk's, and helped minimize his losses.

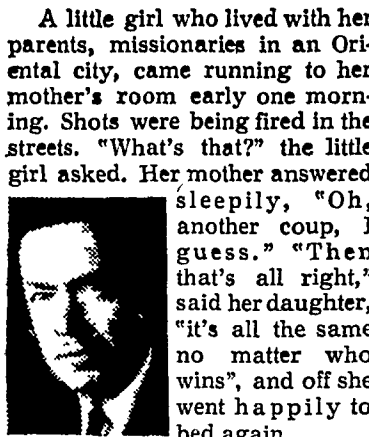
As more and more growers install irrigation systems this new method of protecting plants from late spring frosts may be an added bonus.

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Coups Lesson for May 15, 1966

Background Scripture: II Kings 11 through 12; II Chronicles 22 through 24.
Devotional Reading: Isaiah 26: 1-9.



Dr. Foreman. Coups is the modern name for what used to be called a palace revolution and also a revolt, a sudden military strike intended to put the reigning administration out of power (by imprisonment or death) and install new men in their place. Our Bible assignment this week tells of a successful coup organized by a priest, a coup that really was worthwhile, one that lasted at least a century longer than most coups do.

WHY THEY DID IT

Athaliah, the queen in residence, was definitely a "bad egg". She began her public career by killing all her grandchildren. This was even worse than Athaliah's own coup was wicked-sounds. Athaliah was not a Hebrew, but a foreigner — a daughter of the unscrupulous and unspeakable Jezebel. The throne of the kingdom of Judah belonged by popular will and the providence of God to the family of David. By killing off her grandchildren, Athaliah thought she would have "established" her claim to the throne. And so she would, if she had really killed all the children. But there was one small baby she did not know about (she was not the kind of grandmother who keeps up with all her family). This baby, named Joash, or Jehoash, was hidden in a bedroom belonging to the high priest. There he stayed for seven years, unknown to all but a trust-

ed very few. The whole nation accepted Athaliah because they thought they had no choice. Her irresponsible tyranny went on for seven years, while the good priest Jehoiada (incidentally, he was of royal family connections also) bided his time.

HOW THEY DID IT

The big coup came off on a Sabbath. The high priest managed it down to the last detail. You can read those details for yourself in the Bible. Essentially the plan called for tripling the number of soldiers on duty at what we would call "church time", introducing the boy king to the army men, (and what a thrill it must have been to see a real live lawful king, even a child, after seven years of Athaliah!) and hailing the young heir to the throne as King of Judah. Athaliah was a little late getting to the temple court, and saw that something had happened. Then when she heard the shouting "Long live the King!", she turned on the high priest. "Treason!" she screamed. But she was (no doubt) no matter who pointing her finger at the high priest and the boy king, whereas she should have been pointing at herself. Anyway, in a few minutes the soldiers carried out their orders, and "the wicked old witch was dead."

THINKING ABOUT COUPS

So the people were as happy over this coup as they had been unhappy over Athaliah's. All this gives us something to think about, in our world where coups of one sort or another are being pulled all the time, — Santo Domingo, Cuba, Jakarta, Korea, Congo, Moscow, to name a few in recent months. The Bible gives us some hints of how to look at these things. Some coups, rebellions, political shake-ups, are good, some are bad. Few are wholly bad, few wholly good. Athaliah's own coup was wicked-sounds. The coup that killed her was unselfish since the high priest ran a good deal of risk and could get nothing personal by the event. Force, even violence is in itself not good nor bad. Whether it is a blessing or a curse depends on who uses the force, and how, and why.

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ATTEND THE CHURCH OF YOUR CHOICE SUNDAY

A Lancaster County farmer, having seen the format of new car advertisements decided to list his cow for sale in the same way. "One Holstein cow, base price \$100. Accessories: udder, \$75.00; two-tone color, \$30.00; four split hooves \$10.00 each, extra stomach \$35.00 dual hoins (optional), \$5.00 each. Total price, \$290.

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Soil Stewardship Week May 15-22



Now Is The Time . . .

By Max Smith, Lancaster County Agent

To Delay Alfalfa Harvest After Spraying
Alfalfa growers who spray their first cutting with one of the insecticides to control weevils, are urged to recognize the proper time between spraying and harvest. This time is necessary to permit the insecticide to break down sufficiently and eliminate the danger of any residue. The waiting period ranges from 7 to 21 days depending upon the material used.

To Remove Strawberry Blossoms
New plantings of strawberries will need some attention this spring in addition to the control of weeds. All flower stalks should be removed, preferably before blossoms appear. If these are allowed to develop, the vigor of the plant is decreased and runner production is retarded. To get a maximum yield next spring from a new planting, the effort should be to get a maximum number of strong runner plants as early this season as possible.

To Recognize Stage Of Maturity

One of the most important items in the harvest of quality forage crops is to cut the material at the proper stage of maturity. Most grass crops will decrease in feed value as they near maturity. All grasses are best at heading time, small grains at early flowering or dough stage (except rye — heading time); legumes in the bud to early blossom stage.

Mature forage crops might be easier to cure but have lost too much feed value.

To Clip Pastures
Most pasture grasses and many weeds will be going to seed in the next two weeks; to get the maximum amount of grazing from this area we suggest that it be clipped several times during the summer, starting this month. New growth

(Continued on Page 8)



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