

● **Recommendation**
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gible for state inheritance tax exemption on the land

The report was given to the governor at a luncheon meeting at the Penn Harris Motor Inn, and the governor in turn congratulated the committee, commenting

"The wise preservation of our agriculture land is indeed a necessity for the health and well-

being of all Pennsylvanians, and I am certain this report will receive every consideration in formulating future land policies in the Commonwealth"

The report presented some arresting statistics. It said

"Nearly one-half of Pennsylvania's farm land has gone out of food production since the turn of the century. This includes 420,000 acres of some of Pennsylvania's best agricultural land

which has been converted to non-agricultural uses in the past 10 years; an average of 115 acres of agricultural land, including 99 acres of cropland, has been transferred to other uses each day. This pattern has been accelerating and is likely to continue.

"Pennsylvania, with its 28.8 million acres of land, appears to have enough acreage to satisfy any future needs. A closer look reveals that this will not be the case at the present rate of land conversion. About 30 per cent of

total land, or 8 million acres, is currently being farmed. Urbanization has claimed 8 per cent, or 2.4 million acres, and forest land covers 62 per cent, or 17 million acres

"This would seem to indicate that 92 per cent of the state remains rural and potentially agricultural. This is far from the truth . . ."

The study committee proposed restrictions on public improvements in an agricultural use area when low cost is a motivating factor in site selection. It also

proposed curbing acquisition of agricultural use land through eminent domain, or public condemnation proceedings.

Other recommendations included:

—Encourage individuals voluntarily to use their land resources wisely.

—Strengthen Pennsylvania's agricultural economy.

—Develop a strong program for informing the public of the continuing necessity of planning all land use.

Christmas

As shepherds watched in wonder and awe . . .
while Wise Men followed a sacred Star . . .
there in a Manger an Infant lay, born to bring
messages of comfort and joy, of "Peace on Earth,
Good Will toward Men." In this gladsome season,
when we celebrate anew the marvels of the
first Christmas, we reflect reverently upon
the meaning and Miracle of Bethlehem.

With our friends and neighbors, we share the quiet
contentment and high happiness of this holy Day,
and we gratefully take the opportunity to put
aside the routine of everyday business and to send,
to one and all, our warmest holiday wishes.

Merry Christmas!

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