

Let's Go to Market

Living costs are going up. It's no secret. But the reason living costs are going up is probably understood by relatively few people.

In the confusion on the subject, farmers are taking far more than their share of the blame, in large part because of rising food costs which hit everyone's pocketbook.

But farmers shouldn't accept the criticism without hitting back. They ought to point out how other costs are rising faster. This is particularly true of wages, which account for more than half the cost of most products and services.

These rising wage costs, which figure prominently in the sale, packaging and distribution of food products, are even a major factor in high food costs. Farmers know there's a wide and growing spread between the price they receive for products and the price of products on the grocery shelf. Farmers know also that the prices they pay for materials and equipment are rising fast, generally faster than the prices received for products.

It's these trends toward costs that rise faster than income that keeps weeding out more and more farmers and concentrating agriculture into fewer and fewer hands. Only the more efficient farm operations survive from year to year.

Fortunately, Southeastern Pennsylvania farmers have good soil; they have a well developed tradition of efficient farm operation; their survival rate, relatively speaking, has been high.

But they, like farmers everywhere, are constantly under pressure to become bigger and more efficient; to specialize and concentrate in the areas of their greatest efficiency.

While farming in Southeastern Pennsylvania has been disrupted far less than in many other areas by the agricultural revolution, the trend toward fewer and smaller farms has been unmistakable.

The trends basically mean that fewer persons with more efficient operations are producing more food each year to meet local, national and even international food needs. The farmer and the farm community need to be recognized and appreciated for these achievements.

Other segments of the economy which have not improved and expanded their output to benefit society at a comparable rate, those segments which cannot claim, as does farming, that they serve more people better each year on a smaller proportion of the gross national product, these are the groups which ought to be criticized. These are the real inflation producers. These are the groups which detract from the progress being made by American agriculture.

It's high time that the American farmer in particular and American agriculture in general be recognized for what it is, the leader in the race against national and world poverty, the forerunner in improving living standards for everyone.

To retain for themselves a share of the higher standard of living they have made possible for others, it almost certainly will become necessary for farmers to take on a new aggressiveness in the market place.

The individual and the farm community will have to protect and promote farm products in the market; they will have to make sure the consumer knows and understands the superiority of his product. The farmer will have to make sure that he, his farming

operation and his products are not subjected to excessive and unfair criticism.

He will have to make absolutely certain that the American public and its consumer-oriented leaders understand that his products are becoming better while requiring an increasingly smaller share of the buyer's money.

The farmer has always stayed close to home and minded the farm. It's because he has minded his own business so well that his numbers and, therefore, political influence has declined. In the future, it will be necessary, as never before, to get out in the marketplace to compete and advance farming's best interests.

The sentiments in this editorial are well illustrated in another light by an article in a recent edition of Meat Board Reports. The article in full is as follows:

The Plumber's Inflation or My Cake and Eat It, Too

Got both bemused and irritated the other day as our plumber whacked away at basement pipes. He knows we're in the food-meat business. Idle conversation led to "high price of food these days. What's a working man to do? What happened to three pounds for a dollar hamburger? Why does food cost so much? Those farmers doing pretty good aren't they?"

Tried to explain to our old pal — a bright guy — what inflation does across the board. Seemed to understand, until we tried to explain how he spends a lower percentage of higher wages on food now than he ever did. He didn't buy that.

We tried to explain livestock-meat prices at farm-ranch, packer, retail level. Didn't swallow that either.

As homeowner was cleaning up repair area after his departure, we wondered what plumber's charge would be. Bill came yesterday.

Know what? Costs 45 per cent more to fix a pipe than five years ago. So we checked other maintenance bills along with statistical data from various sources.

Know what? Your roof reshingling will go 40.3 per cent higher than 1964; get furnace fixed and look at 44.3 per cent upward jolt (and, by the way, our plumbing bill should have run "only" 40.2 per cent over earlier period!).

Now that kids are a little older and don't trust Dad with the clippers, that 33 per cent increase in haircuts takes a bite, too.

There's a happy note, though. Our stat tables turned up real bargain. It'll only cost 23.5 per cent more than in 1964 to get the old clunker's valves ground, or replace muffler when it goes in next week.

Real problem blaming other fellow for inflation is sheerest kind of hypocrisy. There's a whole scoreboard of "culprits," not least of whom is the man on the street whose demand for higher wages (increases of more than 100 per cent have been made in some industries) becomes a cause.

We think it's time for schools at all levels, from primary through college, plus adult night schools, service clubs, others to launch classes in the simple economics of the free enterprise system (call it capitalism if you prefer) to explain market action and reaction, to explain prices, to explain wages, product costs, manufacturing, retailing.

Most of all to explain how the profit system creates growth, permits better living standards (for an increasingly larger per cent of the population), something many sincerely dedicated anti-establishment young people have never really been given the opportunity to understand.

Even well educated citizens don't understand the difference between net and gross profits, cost of research-development, distribution. People should understand.

Otherwise, it's another decade of price boycotting, mostly aimed at the biggest bargain in the U. S., food.



NOW IS THE TIME . . .

By Max Smith
Lancaster County Agent

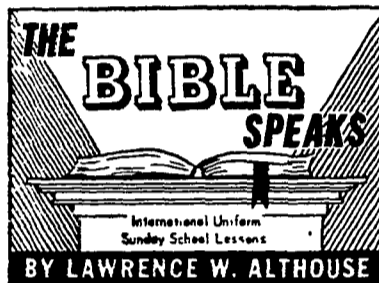
To Be Alert For Weevil

Alfalfa growers are in business now, for the crop is growing rapidly. With the favorable moisture conditions the first cutting should be high yielding. Insect authorities do not expect a heavy weevil infestation on the first crop but all growers should make frequent inspections from now until cutting time. If 75 per cent of the plants are being eaten, then the field should be either sprayed or harvested, depending upon the stage of maturity. For established stands the first crop may be cut in the bud stage, but for first-year stands about 25 per cent of the plants should show blossoms. If weevil are present at the time of

the first cutting, then the stubble should be sprayed immediately after removal of the forage.

To Plant Corn Carefully

Corn planting time is at hand and many acres of this major crop will go into the ground in the next few weeks. Growers are urged to plan each step of the planting schedule carefully in order to get the proper stand with the correct amount of fertilizer at the right place (not with the seed), and include plans to control both the insects and the weeds. Corn growing practices are changing but the importance of a good crop de- (Continued on Page 5)



A NEW MAN

Lesson for May 3, 1970

Background Scripture Acts 9:1-31; 11:19-30; Galatians 1:11-17.

Devotional Reading Philippians 3:4-11.

In his letters, the Apostle Paul told the people in his churches that Christ had the power to make a person a "new man." If anyone should have known that, Paul was the man. When Paul was converted to Christ and began to preach and teach of his experience, the word spread quickly among the churches and there was much fear and trembling, for Paul (as Saul) had been a persecutor of the church. Was it possible that he was really changed? Was he really a new man?



Rev. Althouse

One difference
In one way he was still the same man. He was still a intense person who never did anything half-heartedly. He was still extremely intelligent and a well-educated man. He still retained his proud Jewish background, his knowledge of the Hebrew tongue (something most Jews could not claim), his Greek culture, his Roman citizenship, and his cosmopolitan ways.

Only one thing had really changed, but it was the most important thing of all. Though he was still a deeply religious man who had a deep desire to please God, the focus of this religion had changed completely. No longer was his loyalty to the law, but to Jesus Christ.

This one important exception made all the difference in his life. His intensity was now directed into a constructive channel. His whole-hearted dedication had found a worthy cause. His education, his background of diverse cultures and his knowledge were now to be put to use for the church. In a sense he was the same person with the same high qualifications.

Yet, in another sense, he was a new man. His whole life before had been based upon the

law, his desire to win God's approval by his own merit and accomplishment. Now, however, where the law had stood, there was love. He had experienced the love of Christ and knew now that one can never earn the love of God; it is freely given as a gift.

So the church had peace

Was he the same man? Perhaps we can put it most simply by saying that the "equipment" was the same, but the energizing force that powered that equipment was completely new. It is the force that empowers us that determines whether we are "new persons" or not. "If anyone is in Christ he is a new being" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Consider what God had accomplished in the conversion of this man Saul. He raised up someone to take the place of Stephen — he gained an apostle. He enlisted Saul's talents for the Kingdom instead of against it — he lost an enemy. He ended persecution against the church — he protected his church. In short, we might say that God brought to nought the evil intentions of men and accomplished his will.

It is important to note that it was God's will to end the persecution of his people. Even though he had used it to accomplish his will, to begin the mission of the church, it was not his desire to see the disciples suffer needlessly.

Three who helped

It must not be overlooked that God had help with Saul. There was first of all Stephen whose courageous and gracious witness must have made a deep impression upon Saul (even if it did not have an immediate positive effect).

There was also Ananias, the fearful but obedient man of Damascus, whose faithful witness to Saul signalled the beginning of a new life for the man of Tarsus.

Finally, there was Barnabas who believed that men could change and become new persons and was willing to risk his own safety to claim a new recruit for the ranks of the Kingdom.

Perhaps you can assist in God making someone a new man!

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