

Controls Can Backfire

The November 1970 issue of Top Op magazine carries an article entitled, "Pesticide Bans . . . Backfire Coming?"

The article outlines numerous examples of how bans on the use of chemicals have caused major problems in countries throughout the world.

Top Op reports that in 1950 Ceylon "had over two million cases of malaria. Following a mosquito-eradication program with DDT, cases dropped to only 17 in 1963. The following year Ceylon stopped using DDT . . . and malaria cases began building: 150 in 1964, 308 in 1965, 499 in 1966. Then, in 1968, it exploded again: over one million cases. Ceylon is back to DDT use."

Moth in New Jersey

In a case much closer to home, Top Op reports that New Jersey "rarely had trouble with the gypsy moth while DDT was used. Now the moth population has exploded. Thousands of acres of New Jersey forests have been devastated by the gypsy moth caterpillar. Once magnificent oaks now stand stark and dead against the sky.

"Two years ago, New Jersey oaks had already suffered 65 per cent mortality in caterpillar-infested areas, and 116,693 trees had been killed. Last year mortality jumped to 143 per cent, with 257,112 dead oaks. Currently mortality is an alarming 38 per cent, and 686,881 trees have been destroyed. State officials expect over a million caterpillar-killed trees in 1971, and the moth is now a serious problem in 250,000 acres.

"We're trying to control the moth with Sevin," says one state official. "But it's just not as effective as the DDT we used before."

Moth in Pa.

The article goes on to note that the moth is on the increase in Pennsylvania and that 10,000 acres of forest came under attack in one area in this state in the past year.

Federal officials recently added Lancaster, Chester, Lebanon and Dauphin Counties to the list of "regulated" gypsy moth counties, indicating the gypsy moth is becoming a serious problem in these areas.

The federal action to place local counties in "regulation," however, does mean an effort to control the moth. It merely means that the federal government will use quarantine procedures "to prevent the artificial spread of gypsy moths from infested areas to uninfested areas.

Moth Well Established

But the moth is already established in all of Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island and most of New Hampshire, Vermont, Maine and New Jersey, and the eastern portions of New York and Pennsylvania. Surveys show it is spreading into Maryland, Delaware and Virginia.

It would certainly appear that the U.S. is closing the barn door too late on the gypsy moth. The moth is already well established in the nation's biggest metropolitan areas, and we see no reason to expect that it will not soon be carried through normal travel and commerce to all parts of the country.

How serious is the gypsy moth? There apparently is no precise way of saying at the moment.

But it would appear that the destruction already of many tens of thousands of acres of oak trees should be cause for alarm.

The question of values should begin to arise.

If we lose even a few acres of forest to fires, we hear public outcries about the damage to the ecology and the possible damage from erosion, etc., that can occur because of the defoliated land.

Trees killed by gypsy moth also leave the ground barren and subject to the ravages of nature. Particularly in populated areas such as New Jersey and Southeastern Pennsylvania, loss of these important trees can greatly increase not only erosion but also the threat of flooding.

Has the battle with forest fires been waged and largely won only to give up forests to the moth?

What has happened? Doesn't anyone remember what happened to the Chestnut tree and the economic loss that occurred when that tree was wiped out by the blight?

Does ecology mean giving up beautiful forests to rapacious moths?

Time for Concern

We suggest that many more persons should begin to get concerned about the gypsy moth in 1971. If the moth's destruction continues to accelerate, as it has in recent years, we should certainly begin to see some signs of action long before 1972 — if trees are to be a part of the beautiful environment that is talked about so much these days.

Like the malaria outbreak in Ceylon in 1968, the present gypsy moth outbreak in the Northeast stems from the ban of DDT, a so-called persistent pesticide, which has been replaced by Sevin, which has a shorter life. But, unlike DDT, which was used in selective areas wherever the gypsy moth began to build up large numbers, Sevin has not been effective in stopping the spread of the moth.

No Easy Solution

What is the solution? Go back to DDT? Launch a massive attack with Sevin? Let the moth work its will? Breed natural moth enemies? We don't know. Maybe the best that can be hoped is that valuable lessons are learned from the case of the gypsy moth.

We like the conclusion of the Top Op article: "In short, many of the restrictions on persistent pesticides have backfired on the world. You see it first in forests, or urban areas, or countries like Sweden, because restrictions were first applied here. But you can expect more problems in agriculture. Even with all the pesticides of the 1960's, the U.S. still loses some \$15 billion a year in agricultural production to insects, weeds, fungi and rodents . . . equal to 33 per cent of our total agricultural output. That loss is almost certain to jump, now that many of these pesticides are being restricted. The great need is to get this side of the story into the open."

Restrained Control

Actually, our own position on pesticides restrictions has been milder.

We believe many changes toward controlled pesticides usage have been favorable and that there is still room for improvement in pesticides and their usage. But there should be restraint in the move toward controls. Misguided controls can be as harmful as no controls.

While unrestrained use of DDT undoubtedly caused some harm to the environment, the other extreme, an immediate and total ban of DDT, may prove equally harmful to the environment.

Reason would dictate, we believe, that particular pesticides should be completely banned only after better alternatives have been found or after it is certain the particular pesticide is no longer needed. This was not the procedure with the gypsy moth and DDT.

Hasty and unsound action on pesticides, can take us backward — with crop losses for farmers and higher costs for consumers. And a poorer environment for everyone.



NOW IS THE TIME . . .

By Max Smith
Lancaster County Age

To Prune Fruit Trees

The pruning of fruit trees need not wait until spring and it is suggested that fruit producers and home orchardists spread the labor load by pruning during the late winter. Our fruit specialist recommends that we prune the apple and pear trees first because they are more hardy; plums and sour cherries are next in order, with the peach and sweet cherry trees being left until warmer weather arrives in March. Careful pruning controls the size and shape of the tree and permits improved color to the fruit.

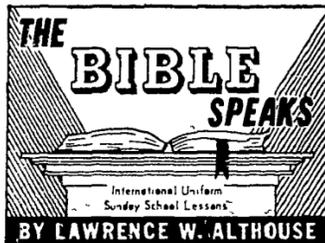
To Order Lime And Fertilizer

The start of the 1971 growing season is about a month away and all farmers and gardeners should be giving some attention to their lime and fertilizer needs. No doubt some farmers have already accepted or applied

these materials to their fields. According to the local press, some of these elements are blamed for getting into our local streams. If fertilizer is to be stored in bags, it should be kept dry and away from dirt or concrete floors.

To Plan Your Estate

This is one obligation that every person should perform as soon as they have any possessions or holdings. I'm afraid that far too many of us put estate planning, including the making of a will, off until it may be too late. With more complicated regulations and larger holdings, this task may become more difficult and present the need for assistance. We suggest attending our forthcoming Estate Planning Meeting on March 4 in the Farm and Home Center, Lancaster.



WHAT IS HUMILITY?

Lesson for February 14, 1971

Background Scripture: Luke 14:7-11; 18:9-14.

Jesus's parable about the places of honor at a banquet reminded me of an experience I had a number of years ago. We were living in the suburbs of New York City at the time. A seminary classmate and his wife came to visit us and had but one request: they wanted to be in the audience for one of Jack Paar's Tonight shows.

In order to get there early enough to get good seats, I proposed taking a "short-cut" into the city to beat the traffic. Like so many best-laid plans of mice and men, this one went astray and we got to the studio just as the doors were closing. When we got inside it was obvious that there were no more seats available except for a front row reserved for V.I.P.'s.

The last were first. My heart sank, but just then, the usher beckoned to us, leading us down to the front row of seats. I couldn't believe it: these were the best possible seats, just a few yards away from the performers. As we sat down, the crowd, knowing as we did that these seats are reserved for dignitaries, began to buzz excitedly with "I wonder who they are?"

Apparently the performers were just as confused for they too smiled and nodded at us. Mr. Hugh Downs came by our seats and chatted with us for a few minutes. Mr. Paar's guests on the show would from time to time direct their attention to us as if we were the sole audience and later, when Elsa Maxwell brought some food on stage, she brought some over to us, setting the stu-

dio audience to buzzing once again.

Often I have wondered why that usher did what he did with us that night. Perhaps he was one of God's angels sent to demonstrate anew that God often makes "the last" to be "first." My own best efforts to be "first" had ended in near disaster and it was only an act of grace that literally propelled us forward.

Humility and truth.

From time to time we must be thus humbled before we learn to be truly humble. We must learn that we cannot make it through life on our own wit and righteousness. In fact, in addition to the fact that we cannot achieve moral perfection, God does not require it of us as a prerequisite to answering our prayers. CREATIVE PRAYER, The only demand God does make of us is humility, not perfection.

Often, then, the channel of grace is closed to us, not because we are sinners, but because we are not humble and, worst of all, we may not even know that we are not humble.

Inverted pride

So what is humility? St. Vincent de Paul says, "The reason why God is so great a lover of humility, is because he is the great Lover of Truth." St. Theresa puts it even more simply: ". . . it has always seemed to me that humility is simply truth." What God wants of us, then, is not modest lies or self-mutilation, but the truth. He wants us to be honest about ourselves. E. Herman says: "At least one-half of what we call humility, especially the habit of self-accusation and self-abasement which passes for a deep sense of sin, is the fruit of self-obsession."

Self-abasement may often be no more than an inverted pride. What God wants of us is simply the truth. It is both bad enough and good enough without distortion.

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