

The Truth About Meat Prices

Never has there been a clearer illustration than the present situation in the meat industry of how inflation destroys logical reasoning and sets group against group. With perfectly straight faces, so-called experts have charged that meat prices are too high—that consumers should even stop buying meat. As a spokesman for the meat industry put it in answering a columnist who made much of the fact that live market cattle have hit the highest point since the Korean War: "Why in blazes must that be reported as dire news? The real news is that cattlemen finally are back to where they were 20 years ago! How many other businesses and industries are selling products and services at 1952 prices?"

As far as the retail price of meat to the consumer is concerned, prices in the last 20 years have gone up less than 40 per cent while disposable income has in-

creased more than 100 per cent. Seldom do stories about the price rise take into account the increased cost of labor, sanitation, grading, pollution controls, transportation, refrigerator and so forth. In spite of these rising costs, consumers currently spend, on the average, five per cent of their income for meat. Twenty-five years ago, as a percentage of take-home pay, meat took six per cent of consumer income.

The story of meat prices is, if the truth can be recognized, a classic story of the efficiency of the free market. Facts show that over the years, U.S. consumers have had an abundant supply of meat at fair and reasonable prices—prices set by supply and demand in the marketplace. Making the meat industry an inflationary scapegoat will neither curb inflation nor help consumers. It will threaten the country with a meat shortage.

A Product of Freedom

Underlying the productiveness of American agriculture is the dedication of farmers to the principles of private ownership of land, private initiative, the right to a fair profit and the right of individual opportunity. The nation's largest farm organization, the American Farm Bureau Federation, representing more than two million farm families, is an articulate spokesman and indefatigable defender of these principles.

The Farm Bureau's interests are wide-ranging. They include advocacy of a reasoned approach to the use of agricultural chemicals and endeavors directed toward improving the marketing and bargaining position of farmers. It urges enactment, for example, of the National Agriculture Marketing and Bargaining Act of 1971. Its reason for supporting that Act is that, "A growing volume of farm production is now produced and marketed under advance contracts between farmers and handlers. This has led to a need for

legislation to require handlers of agricultural products to bargain in good faith with qualified agricultural associations. . . ." In advocating what it believes to be an improved marketing mechanism, the Farm Bureau's policies merely reflect a desire to strengthen a competitive free market in agriculture, a desire for ". . . equity in bargaining—not politically imposed compulsion."

There could be no American Farm Bureau Federation in the USSR or any other socialist or communist nation. It is a product of a system that sets the individual above the state. The backbone of this system is the private ownership of land as typified by the enterprises of millions of American farm families. The policies and measures advocated by the Farm Bureau have but one purpose, to help preserve the freedom, the responsibilities and the rights that are the heritage of every citizen and are instrumental in maintaining U.S. agricultural abundance.

School Year Ends

Very shortly, American life will undergo a characteristic seasonal alteration. The closing of school will mark its equinox just as surely as the passing of the sun across a fixed line separates Winter from Spring. With the closing of school, the trek of summer tourism will get underway—another awesome demonstration of U.S. mobility. The responsibility of summer jobs for students will do little to lessen the rush to enjoy the freedom of what remains of the wide open spaces. Incalculable numbers of boats, campers, autos and every con-

ceivable type of motorized vehicle will be on the move. Perhaps a sign of the times will be the increasing flood of bicycle excursionists.

As school vacation time approaches, so also will a test of how genuine is public concern for the environment. Now is the time to resolve to avoid littering—to respect the land and its wildlife. If each individual would carry this resolve with him through the summer, a giant step would have been taken toward preserving our planet as a fit place to live.

Needed—Old-Fashioned Initiative

America's energy resources, such as petroleum, are far from exhausted. But it is going to take a large dose of old-fashioned initiative and astronomical capital investment to make them available for man's use—and there is no dodging the fact that the energy-consuming public will be called upon to pay more for its gas, oil and electric energy.

A late report presented at a meeting of the American Petroleum Institute illustrates what it takes to meet today's energy needs so far as the petroleum and gas industry is concerned. The report dealt with the costs of drilling oil wells in the Rocky Mountain region and with a new technology of recovering increased production of oil from existing fields. The

cost of drilling an oil well in the Uinta Basin of Utah ranges from \$400,000 to \$2 million. The report noted that although drilling in this area is expensive, it is still economically feasible "by using good drilling practices, proper equipment, well-trained people and quality materials. . ." On recovering oil from older fields, the report describes a new method of injecting carbon dioxide to force more oil out of the ground. This technique will step up production in a Texas oil field by some 230 million barrels—at a cost estimated to be more than \$175 million.

What the public must understand is that not only would an energy shortage affect their daily lives, but to avoid it is going to cost money.

NOW IS THE TIME . . .

By Max Smith
Lancaster County Agent



To Be Careful With Weed Spray Containers

The problem of weed control faces most gardeners and farmers. In many cases a herbicide can be used to kill the weeds; however this is a practice needing very careful attention and the close following of the regulations. Sprayers or containers in which any of the 2, 4-D weed killers were used last season may still contain enough of the herbicide to injure susceptible plants this season. It is suggested that equipment used for weed killing be marked so others will not use this equipment to spray normal flowers and vegetables. It is very difficult to get the 2, 4-D materials out of equipment (household ammonia and hot water can be used) and in many cases the next crop is injured. We have been consulted in cases where the equipment was used last fall to spray weeds and now used to spray vegetables, flowers, or tobacco beds with serious results. Be careful with weed killer equipment at all times.

To Provide Salt and Minerals

All livestock should have free access to salt and minerals at all times; the amounts needed will vary between different animals and this is the reason that free choice should be provided in addition to mixing into the grain ration. Some recent research with dairy cattle reveals that some animals will not consume enough for their own good on a free choice basis; therefore it is suggested that the major

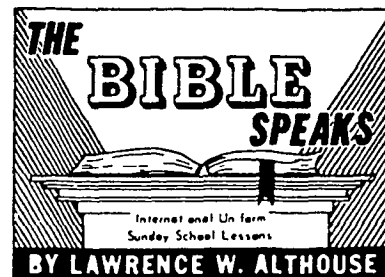
minerals such as calcium and phosphorus be mixed into the ration of dairy cattle based upon a forage test of the roughages. Liberal salt consumption will aid in the secretion of digestive juice and increase water consumption.

To Keep Shields and Guards in Place

During the rush of the planting and harvest season some farmers may forget about the importance of keeping protective guards and shields in place. In most cases the manufacturer has constructed the shields to keep the operator out of dangerous places. When these shields are removed then any human is exposed to this added danger. All farmers are urged to stress the importance of machinery safety to their family and their hired help. Too much speed with the machinery and too much rush on the part of the operator are other causes of serious accidents. We urge all farm equipment operators to take time to be safe and keep protective shields in their places.

To Provide Ample Ventilation

Extremely hot weather may arrive at any time and all livestock producers are urged to try and keep their animals as comfortable as possible. Livestock suffer from hot weather and high humidity the same as human beings. Shade is very important to protect animals from the hot sun; if they are confined in a building, then cross ventilation or electric fans to keep air moving is important.



TEACH NOW, REAP LATER

Lesson for May 21, 1972

Background Scripture: Matthew 28: 9, 20, 1 Timothy 4: 6, 16, 2 Timothy 2: 1, 2
Devotional Reading: 2 Timothy 3: 14 through 4: 2

A man condemned to die in the electric chair approached his last minutes on earth with a crowd of newspaper reporters, photographers, and officials. Did he have any final statement to make? Looking at the throng surrounding him, he said "If I had been shown so much attention when I was a boy, I would not be here today!"



Rev. Althouse

One cannot help wondering how many men and women like him might have had a different life had they encountered more attention and concern at an earlier stage of life. The churches have a great commission to "teach" all men everywhere, but to many congregations respond to that command only when people seek out the church and even then they may fail to do so.

"Teach these things . . ."

Whenever we perform a baptism in our church, the congregation is asked to promise to "accept the responsibility of assisting these parents in fulfillment of the baptismal vows, and undertake to provide facilities

and opportunities for Christian nurture and fellowship. . . ." Something of this sort is probably asked for in most rituals of baptism. Yet, how seriously do we take that charge?

After a hard day's work, a mechanic was observed playing baseball with his son. "Bill, aren't you tired?" asked his friend. "Sure, I'm tired," the mechanic answered. "Well, what are you doing that for?" his friend asked. "Oh," sighed the mechanic, "I'd rather have a backache now than a heartache later on."

Perhaps too many of us settle for the "heartache later on." Teaching the Christian faith often seems "too much trouble" to many of us. If our church has a church school program it may only be because a few dedicated people are willing to carry on week after week a thankless task. Choirs are feted at banquets, trustees and deacons are honored, and finance committee members wield great power, but church school teachers are almost anonymous in many churches.

Entrust to faithful men

The writer of 2 Timothy stressed the importance of the teaching ministry "what you have heard from me before many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also" (2: 2). Today, it would seem appropriate to change "faithful men" to "faithful women," for in many churches, teaching is regarded as a woman's job. No wonder our youth get such a strange idea about the importance and relevance of their church school experience.

Many of us would do well to reconsider the imperative to "teach these things" for, difficult as this task may be, the fruits we will reap later for Christ and the Church are innumerable.

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