

Energy and Food Production

The direct correlation between food and energy has been well-demonstrated in the Midwest. Reports tell of crops threatened because of lack of propane gas to operate crop-drying equipment. Railroads that must haul crops have been threatened with fuel shortages. The whole food-producing chain, from farm to consumer, is inextricably linked to energy. Farm tractors, trucks and other equipment must have oil and gas, and processors must have electric energy.

The entire chain of food production and

distribution is only as strong as the energy supply that keeps it running. Going back to the days of hand tilling of the land would be as cataclysmic as a nuclear attack. The only difference is that it would take a little longer for tens of millions of people to die of starvation. And still we hear of proposed moratoriums on nuclear power plants and the halting of energy development of all sorts. The proverbial visitor from Mars, witnessing such a spectacle, could only conclude that a nation behaving in such a manner had taken leave of its senses.

Good Place to Live

We've come a long way from the dark days of child labor and owing one's soul "to the company store." Now the work scene is one of pension plans, insurance, paid vacations and an occasional holiday. Such fringe benefits have doubled in the past decade. The Chamber of Commerce of the U.S. says benefits are up, from an average of (\$1,254 per employee in 1961 to \$2,544 in 1971). The quality of these benefits has been simultaneously upgraded, with better

medical coverage and earlier retirement and earlier retirement dates as just two examples.

Modern society in the United States offers a wide spectrum of benefits which were unheard of in the past and still are but nebulous dreams in some parts of the world. When everything is said and done, history will record that the U.S.—faults and all—is still a prime spot in which to live, work and raise a family.

Gift of Life

In the past, when the call has gone out for emergency blood donations, people have been generous in rolling up their sleeves to help. However, as the American Red Cross has said, this country "bleeds a little everyday," and not just in times of emergency.

Representative Edward I. Koch of New York has emphasized the need for the public to think of blood supplies on a day-to-day basis, rather than as an emergency item, when he introduced a bill in the U.S. House of Representatives to allow a \$25 tax deduction per unit as an incentive for people to donate more frequently. He pointed out that during the December,

1972, holiday period, areas from Los Angeles to New York were hit by blood shortages. Representative Koch said the problem exists because only a small portion of the public—three percent—voluntarily donate blood on a regular basis. If donations can be increased by one percent, the blood shortage would be eliminated, he said.

Blood is the most precious contribution an individual can make to society, for it is the basis of life itself. Three pints will not suffice when four are needed. So if you are between 18 and 66 years of age and in good health, consider giving a little of yourself so someone else may live.

Grassroots Opinions

ALTOONA, PA., MIRROR Under-utilization of employee time' is a polite way of saying someone is not carrying his load. It was the term used by the New York State Controller in a report itemizing flagrant abuses by some state employees. The truck crew which averages only a half-day's work for a full day's pay, the building inspector who actually works only two thirds of the time and the meter reader who reads only half as many meters as he could if he worked—mentioned in the controller's report—have their counterparts in many jobs. Any worker who doesn't feel an honest sense of accomplishment in his work has lost something more valuable than his paycheck." xxx

TEMPE, ARIZ. NEWS "Some consumers can't be helped, no matter how hard Congress tries to protect them, says Rep. Sidney R. Yates of Illinois. One of the more famous wits in Congress, he tells the story about the man who went to the Better Business Bureau for help after he had been swindled out of his savings. 'Why didn't you come here before you made your investment?' the Bureau official asked. 'You know, I almost did,' the man replied, 'but I was afraid you would tell me not to do it.'" xxx

OKABENA, MINN. PRESS "Here are some thoughts on food prices by Secretary of Agriculture Earl Butz. 'It's not the farmer who sets the price of beef... with a perishable commodity like food, where you either have to sell it or you smell it, you have got to move it through the retail

counters. The price is set in the retail counter and you can't get much more on the short run, when the demand explodes like it has. It still takes 24 months to get a two-year-old steer. And I don't know any way to shorten the process.'" xxx

PULASKI, N.Y., DEMOCRAT "It has been said that the American people are more skeptical than they used to be. I certainly hope so! Americans are noted for naivete, which has made them victims of far too much devious dealing by politicians, fast talking peddlers and smooth deliverers of the 'gospel truth' that they really don't know the 'truth' when they see it... truth being relative anyway, depending on which way you look at a subject. It behooves us all to be skeptical." xxx

MENDOTA, ILL., REPORTER AND SUN-BULLETIN "Getting out this paper is no picnic. If we print jokes, people will say we are silly. If we don't they say we are too serious. If we clip things from other papers, we are too lazy to write our own material, if we don't we are stuck on our own stuff! If we stick too close to the job all day, we ought to be out hunting up news. If we do go out and hustle, we ought to be on the job in the office. If we don't print contributions, we don't appreciate true genius, if we do, the paper is filled with junk. If we make a change in a fellow writer's work, we are too critical, and if we don't we are asleep. Now, likely as not, someone will say we swiped this from some other paper. WE DID!"

NOW IS THE TIME . . .

**Max Smith
County Agr. Agent
Telephone 394-6851**

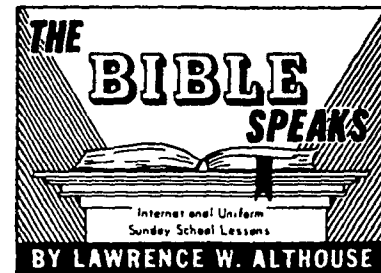


To Beware Of Weed Killers
The control of weeds confronts every gardener and every farmer. The use of herbicides to kill weeds is a very common practice, but in many cases there is more damage done to other crops and plants than to the weeds. All weed-kill chemicals are restricted as to the particular weed upon which it should be used; also, the amount and time of application is very important. We urge all growers to read the label and directions very carefully and follow them accurately. The danger from drift of the spray or the vapors following spraying should be considered. In most home flower and vegetable gardens, and especially in built-up communities — chemical weed sprays must be handled very carefully.

To Place Fertilizer Properly
The spring planting season is at hand and many pounds of fertilizer will be used. Growers are reminded that any inorganic fertilizer containing either nitrogen or potash may burn both seeds and plant roots. The fertilizer should be kept away by working into the soil before planting. In the case of plants, the fertilizer should be placed several inches deeper than the roots or to the side of the plants. Also, complete fertilizers will burn plant leaves when applied during wet or most conditions.

To Condition Pleasure Horses
Riding horses or ponies need a chance to get into good condition before they are expected to give strenuous performance. A horse's physical condition may be poor due to low energy ration during the winter or to parasite infection. Foot trimming may be needed before being ridden; a long ride on a horse needing foot trimming could result in lameness and severe inflammation of the feet and legs. Grain rations may be increased if the horse has been wintered on a roughage program. Horses that are in good condition should be worked slowly and carefully, until they are accustomed to more exercise and longer, faster ride.

To Vote In Land Use Tax Referendum
The May 15 Primary Election should be drawing the interest of all farmers and other citizens interested in open space and in good agriculture. Farmers should take the leadership in getting the details of this referendum to the people. Extension Agents are not in a position to tell local people how to vote, but we are interested in getting folks well informed and in having a large percentage of the citizens to vote on May 15. Land values are not being set by agriculture; food is vital to life. Open space benefits the entire community. Active participation is needed.



FOR THE WRONG REASONS
Lesson for April 15, 1973

Background Scripture: Zechariah 9:9-10; John 18:33-37; Philippians 2:5-11; Revelation 19:11-16
Devotional Reading: Psalms 93

The Oberammergau Passion Play begins somewhat deceptively.

First, there is a brief Prologue by the chorus and then two silent tableaux scenes. Following these, however, there bursts forth the dramatic scene, the Palm Sunday procession.

I must confess it caught me off-guard. Suddenly, there is on the vast stage a great crowd of several hundred people shouting and waving palm branches in a great celebration of the entrance of Jesus to the Holy City.

Though I have seen many paintings and depictions of this Palm Sunday scene, still the enactment on the stage caught me somewhat unprepared, as if, in a sense, I was experiencing its drama and impact for the first time. I could actually feel the excitement generated by the great throng of people and I could hardly resist being caught up in their joyous mood of celebration.

The beginning, not the ending

Yet, as this great scene unfolded before my eyes, I also had a feeling of irony, for I could not help but remember that this great celebration was the beginning of the Passion of Jesus, not the end.

ing, that after this celebration there would come the heartbreak of Christ's final week. In the midst of this joyous occasion there was the nagging knowledge that Palm Sunday was being celebrated for the wrong reasons.

Palm Sunday, thus, always comes to us with this same paradox. It is one of the most popular days in the church year, always among the top three Sundays in attendance. It is, in many churches, the most exciting of all special days. Yet, at the same time, the excitement of this day is mixed with the sobering realization that the first Palm Sunday was not what it appeared to be. It was a victory march that really wasn't a "victory march." People were happy about something or someone that latter discouraged them.

"Are you the King of the Jews?"

One of the "wrong reasons" for which the people celebrated that day was their false impression of who and what Jesus really was. They welcomed him that day as a king, but the king they thought they were welcoming was not the kind Jesus intended to be. They were so intent on what they wanted from God's Messiah, that they did not stop to find out what kind of Messiah Jesus proposed to be.

"Are you king of the Jews?" Pilate wanted to know. How could Jesus answer that question? Certainly he was King of Israel, but his kingdom was not of this world. He would not mobilize the world's armies, but the hearts of men. His power would not be that of the sword and chariot, but the force of love. He would convert his enemies, not kill them. He would conquer with a cross.

If we, like those first Palm Sunday crowds, will understand that we can stop celebrating for the wrong reasons and make this celebration it should have become.

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