

Your Future May Depend on HB 1056. Support It.

Pennsylvania farmers won a major battle in the May primary election when the state's voters approved a constitutional amendment to allow preferential tax treatment for farmland. The measure won overwhelming approval in all areas of the state - urban and suburban as well as rural.

The passage of the amendment is a tribute to the hard work of farm organizations, environmental groups and ordinary citizens throughout the Commonwealth. All that work, though, will be in vain unless a strong farm tax law is enacted by the legislature.

HB 1056 is such a law. Francis Kennedy, chairman of the House Agriculture Committee and himself a farmer, is the architect of HB 1056, and has scheduled public hearings to gauge popular opinion on the bill. In last week's issue of this newspaper, we reported on the first of those hearings.

Real estate brokers and home builders, we said, are opposed to the bill. At the first public meeting in Harrisburg, they voiced their vigorous objections to HB 1056. If Kennedy's committee were to heed the wishes of these special interest groups, there would be no effective tax protection for farmers, and agriculture, particularly in this southeastern corner of the state, would be in danger of disappearing in the next few decades.

Opponents of the bill say it will cause a shortage of land for homes, and it will cause higher taxes for homeowners and businesses. They say also that if the HB 1056 is enacted into law the farmer will not be carrying his full share of the tax burden. These critics have a lot of money, and they have a lot of clout in Harrisburg. Their charges must be answered.

Actually, the short-term effect of the bill could be to increase the farmer's tax bill in areas around metropolitan regions. The intent of the bill is to have farmland taxed on the basis of its value as farmland, rather than on the basis of its speculative value. There are farms in Lancaster County with assessed valuations below their actual value as units of agricultural production.

Any reassessment, and a reassessment is coming, would have to take that factor into account. But without the protection of a farm tax bill, reassessment would result

in tax valuations based on a farm's speculative value for its potential use as a housing development, motel site or amusement park. That could push the farmers' tax bills soaring. It could push the farmer off the land.

Herbert Packer, Jr., executive vice-president of the Pennsylvania Builders Association, told Francis Kennedy's committee that industry, commerce and homeowners would have to shoulder an unfair portion of the tax burden if farmers were given a break. The fact is that farmers have been subsidizing a considerable portion of local economies for decades.

Why is there such a thing as a real estate tax? It exists to pay for property related services such as roads, fire and police protection, and the costs of local governments. It exists also to pay for educational systems, a facet of real estate taxation that is coming under heavy fire and which may disappear in the years ahead.

If a farmer stays on his land for many years, his needs for property related services are fairly constant. Naturally, the costs for these services keep going up along with everything else. In heavily populated areas, though, these costs don't just reflect increases in salaries and materials. If a township doubles in population, its bill for government services will certainly more than double. It will, in fact, skyrocket.

More people mean more roads, more policemen, more government. More people mean sewer and water systems. More people create the need for more schools.

Should a farmer be forced to pay higher taxes simply because he farms in an area where people keep moving in? Should he be made to subsidize the local economy simply because he has a bigger chunk of land than anyone else? Should he be forced off that land by outrageous taxes? We think not. No, the farmers share of the tax burden should be based on the fair value of his farmland, not its speculative value. Anything else would be unfair.

The next public hearing for HB 1056 is scheduled for August 1, beginning at 9:30 a.m. in the auditorium at Millersville State College. If you care about the future of farming in this state, we hope you'll be there.

REW

Recipe of Love

Here's a recipe of love, designed by the Boys' Clubs of America and used daily by their Royal Oak, Michigan chapter. It is simple and, if followed closely, will yield a happy, well-adjusted individual able to take his place as a responsible citizen upon reaching manhood. It is flexible enough to adapt to most communities. The Royal Oak version follows.

Take one boy with a "special" problem, i.e., deafness, mental retardation, paralysis or emotional disturbance. Add one compassionate staff member to act as his personal counselor. Stir in a heaping teaspoon of understanding. Be careful not to accidentally add pity; this boy will be expected to follow the normal rules and measure up to average expectations. It is important to find the boy's particular interests and stir in a large amount of it, for this will keep him excited about the program. Blend these ingredients well and pour into the relaxed, educational atmosphere of a Boys' Club. While the

ingredients are working together to create a better individual, the associate director of the Club will have time for a weekly consultation with the boy's parents and to evaluate the boy's progress.

The mixture will take several years and—as in the other 1,000 Boys' Clubs across the U.S. serving approximately one million boys in programs of self-improvement, guidance and recreation—it will yield a healthy, well-rounded individual, eager to take his place in, and contribute to, the well-being of society. This recipe has been in existence for 112 years. Try it sometime in your own community. You'll like the results.

POND CREEK, OKLA., HERALD. "It will cost more to pay the interest on the national debt in 1974 than it cost to run the government in all the years from 1789 to 1913—\$24.6 billion interest in 1974 against \$24 billion spent through the first 123 years of our government."

NOW IS THE TIME . . .

Max Smith
County Agr. Agent
Telephone 394-6851



TO CONTROL GROUNDHOGS

Many farmers face the problem of controlling groundhogs in their crop land. In spite of less waste land and less cover for wildlife in the county, there seems to be an increasing number of groundhogs. For sportsmen they are fair game and many enjoy hunting them; however, there is always risk with hunters on the land during the summer months when livestock and people are out in the fields. Methods of control might start with the use of gas cartridges to be put into the holes to exterminate them, these are available locally at reasonable prices. Trapping is another method of control but many times not successful. Control is desired on many farms because of the holes posing a possible threat to broken legs on animals or broken wheels or axles on farm equipment.

TO KEEP CURRENT ON OSHA REGULATIONS

Farmers who employ outside help should keep informed about the changing regulations. This program termed the Occupational Safety and Health Act concerns the health and safety of farm employees. Fruit producers have a new set of regulations to go into action on July 13 concerning the use of sprays and the reentry periods after spray applications. These are changed from the original regulations that

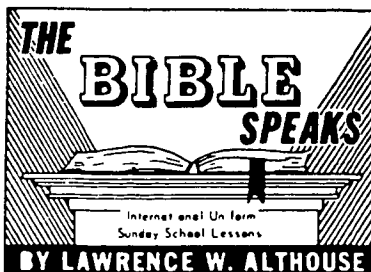
were suspended about the middle of June. All farm employers must exhibit the poster stating their cooperation with the OSHA program relating to the health and safety of farm workers. Posters are available at our Extension Office if needed.

TO HARVEST VALUABLE STRAW

The small grain crop is being harvested in this part of the country and needless to say, straw is a very scarce crop on most farms. Producers are urged to harvest the straw because if not needed on the farm, it has been moving at very favorable prices. On most livestock and dairy farms straw has been used on a limited basis because of the high buying price. The new crop should help to relieve this situation and every pound should be harvested. After using it as bedding in the barn, it can still be returned to the soil to help maintain organic matter content.

TO CHECK DOGS FOR TICKS

Dogs that roam fields and woody areas with their owners should be checked regularly for wood ticks; ticks await their victims on low-growing shrubs and tall grass. They attach to dogs and humans as well as other animals. On dogs they are often found around the neck, between his toes, between his legs, and in and around his ears. Use a forceps to remove ticks with a steady pull, do not yank or jerk them out because their mouthparts will be left in the skin and cause infection. Youngsters should also be checked for ticks after being in wooded areas; they are often found around the ears and hairline. The big danger of ticks is they may be carriers of Rocky Mountain Fever.



SPOILED GIFT

Lesson for July 15, 1973

Background Scripture Exodus 20:14
Matthew 5:27-32, John 8:3-11, Romans 1:24-32, 1 Corinthians 6:13b-20, Ephesians 5:21-23
Devotional Reading Ephesians 5:1-10

Have you ever noticed Jesus' talent for bursting our little balloons of pride and self-satisfaction? He has a knack for converting our great moral victories into occasions of doubt and suspicion of guilt.



Rev. Althouse

But, instead of the expected "pat on the back," Jesus replied with: "you lack one thing . . ."

The precious gift

No one can really take pride in his observance of the commandments if he really understands them as Jesus did. For example, one need not commit murder to violate the sixth commandment. One may destroy or profane God's gift of human life with anger and bitterness as well as with physical violence.

The same is true with the seventh commandment: "You shall not commit adultery." It too is intended to protect one of God's precious gifts: human sexual nature. Like all his gifts, it is intended to enrich and elevate life. He expects us, therefore, to use

that gift according to these purposes. When we do, our lives are enriched and blessed. When, however, we use this gift for other purposes, we not only displease God, but we also hurt ourselves and others. The precious gift then becomes the spoiled gift. It is difficult to imagine how Jesus could have improved upon this commandment. What more could he ask then that people abstain from adultery and fornication? Yet, this is where Jesus once again displays his talent for bursting our balloons.

The inner fact

"But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matthew 5:28). The seventh commandment had led some to concentrate too much emphasis on the physical act of sexual immorality. Jesus, however, was just as concerned with the inner fact of lust. The real problem, he knew, was the reality of impure thoughts and attitudes that precede the immoral acts.

When he defines it in this way, who can escape his accusation? We may feel pretty smug because we have never violated the letter of the law, but when we consider the spirit of the law, there is no room left for smugness. Who is there among us who has never allowed lust to play with our thoughts?

Just as hate can destroy the hater from within, so lust is a poison let loose within us, spoiling our values and attitudes, giving us a very immature and selfish understanding of God's great gift. It makes a curse of what was intended to be a blessing.

In short, it spoils the gift!