54—Lancaster Farming, Saturday, January 5, 1974



Energy is on everyone's mind these days. Of particular concern is the oil shortage.

One of the easiest places to put blame for the situation we are facing is on the collective shoulders of Congress And, in all honesty, part of the blame must fall on the 535 Representatives and Senators

But I thought in this column I would give you an illustration of what Congress is doing to meet the crisis head-on Sometimes this kind of thing goes unnoticed, and yet does show that there is a willingness on Capitol Hill to do everything in our power to make as much oil available as possible.

The Armed Forces have supplies of oil available in a place called the Elk Hills Oil Reserve in California. This is petroleum held back for use in defense emergency situations It is not only a supply that we know exists, but it is there right near the surface ready to be tapped.

Just before the Christmas recess, the House took action to see that the Elk Hills Reserve would be used to help us meet our current energy problems

We had before us something known as a Supplemental Appropriations bill, which is simply an appropriation to cover expenses that were not foreseen when the original appropriations were passed. What we did was refuse to pass that bull until it contained a section requiring the Armed Forces to use oil from their Elk Hills supply.

This action was taken by sending the legislation back to the Conference Committee with instructions to write in such a provision

The idea was not to have any civilian use made of the Elk Hills Reserve. Rather, the reasoning Farmers Urged to Watch Conservation On New Cropland

For the first time in many years farmers are free to produce as much as they can to satisfy the demand for food, according to State Conservationist Benny Martin of the Soil Conservation Service.

Martin said that in Pennsylvania about a quarter million additional acres will come into agriculture production in 1974, and farmers are expected to use present cropland more intensively to increase yields.

The State Conservationist asked farmers to use soil conservation practices on cropland

went that if the military used its own petroleum reservoir, it would lower the amount the Pentagon is purchasing out of the civilian oil supply The effect of this action would be felt all over the country including here on the East Coast

It was our opinion in the House that the oil supply for defense purposes would not be depleted to dangerous levels by tapping the Elk Hills reservoir We realized that adequate petroleum nust be available for the military should a world crisis develop.

But it was our additional opinion that when everyone is being asked to make sacrifices, the Pentagon should be required to dip into its reserves to meet its own needs.

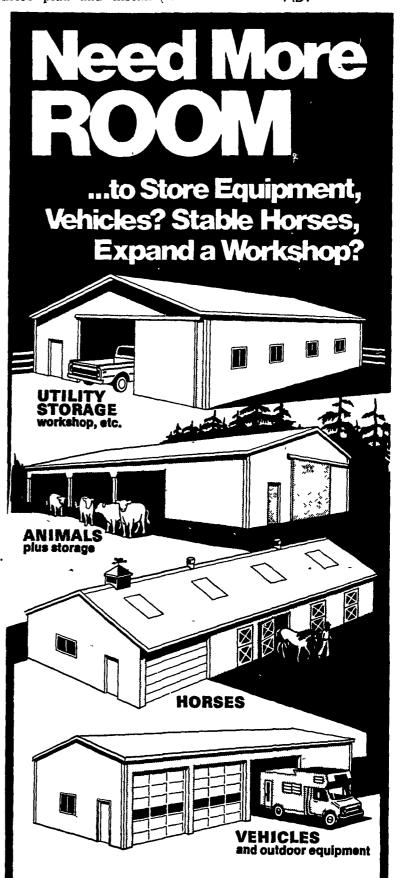
Obviously, since I had previously co-sponsored legislation to tap Elk Hills for defese purposes, I voted to send the bill back to the conference to add this new proposal. I don't think that in so voting there was any chance of our defenses being seriously crippled or jeopardized. The vote was simply to assure that all segments of our society share in coming to grips with the energy problem — the military being no exception.

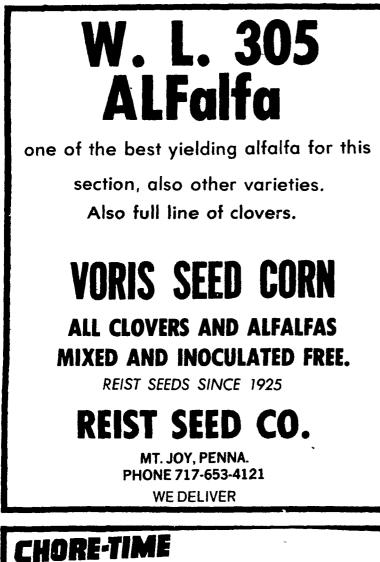
The hope is that this effort, combined with many others, including those being made by millions of Americans, will permit us to get through this winter with about 90 percent of the oil and gasoline we used last winter. that is being brought back into production. These practices, Martin said, will not only reduce soil erosion, but will increase production.

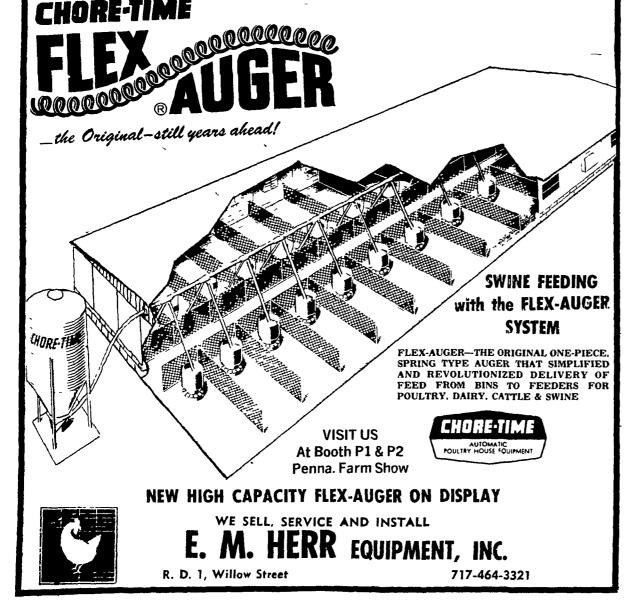
According to Martin, the Soil Conservation Service is giving "first priority" to helping farmers plan and install conservation measures. Soil Conservation Service technical help is available at all county offices on a first come, first serve basis, Martin added.

Farmers who plan to increase crop production should check their conservation plans to see which soils can be used more intensively. Some land, Martin said, can be used intensively without damage to the soil, if it is protected with conservation measures such as strip cropping and terraces.

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