

To Control Or Not Control

To control or not to control is likely to remain a question for quite some time when it comes to managing the gyrations of the economy of the United States. So far, neither the Administration or Congress seems willing to commit themselves totally to either course.

On the one hand, we could have wage and price controls rigidly applied across the board. But if such a massive system were ever instituted along the lines of the Office of Price Administration of World War II fame, there would have to be strict rationing of practically every consumer item from gasoline and tires to pork chops and bowling balls. How else would demand be kept from overwhelming available supply? There would also have to be rigid control of raw material prices and the supplies used by every business and industry.

The army of controllers and economic supervisors required to implement such a massive undertaking is almost beyond comprehension in a supposedly peacetime economy, who would willingly submit to the kind of regimentation that thoroughgoing wage and price control combined with rationing would necessitate -- certainly not labor, business and industry or the consumer. What politician expecting ever to be elected again would institute such a system?

The other extreme alternative is, of course, to return totally to the free market with prices determined by available supply set off against consumer demand. Prices left to seek their own level would meet consumer resistance if they rose too high. Lessening demand would then stabilize or lower prices.

The problem seems to be that, whereas the middle-of-the-road approach works in many areas, it does not work very well when it comes to wage and price controls. The nation has been following a middle-of-the-road course in this regard for the last two-and-a-half years. There have been on-and-off controls, partial control of wages and prices, temporary freezes and no rationing, at least so far. The Nixon Administration in August, 1971 responded to public pressure against price increases by imposing a price freeze and establishing selective wage and price controls without rationing. At the time of this uproar, consumer prices were rising at a rate of about 4 percent a year.

In the early months of 1974 after Phases I, II, III and IV and a series of freezes and controls, prices were rising at an annual rate of almost 9 percent -- hardly a success story. And now the Administration has asked Congress to allow most economic controls to expire at the end of April with the exception of petroleum and health care.

The logic of retaining control over these two is murky. Just how any real restriction of oil prices would help increase supply and alleviate the oil shortage is a mystery. In the case of medicine, the rising cost of medical care is likely to gain added impetus if Congress provides additional funds for new health benefits. Price control here, combined with new federally-financed health care benefits, will not increase the supply of doctors,

hospitals or the availability of health services.

Consider the impact of controls on the food industry. The on-again-off-again price controls and freezes have not helped consumers in the nation's supermarkets. The president of the Grocery Manufacturers of America, representing an industry that produces most of the products sold through grocery stores throughout the U. S., has urged a return to the free market and labeled price controls for the food industry as worse than a failure.

Although food-processing companies have been under strict control ever since the Phase I price freeze of August 15, 1971, food prices have risen to record levels right along with the general progress of inflation. Specifically, this industry spokesman states that price controls have hurt consumers in three ways. In the first place, they have created an ever-increasing number of shortages. Under the price freeze of last summer, meat producers, for example, simply withheld their product from the market until they could sell it for enough to cover their cost of production. In the second place, by squeezing small food processors out of business, economic controls have lessened competition in the marketplace. Finally, the threat of arbitrary and capricious controls that could jeopardize a company's solvency encouraged many to raise prices by the maximum allowable amount before they really had to.

There seems little question that one of these days some long-range, coherent economic thinking will have to be done by the executive, legislative and administrative agencies of government if there is to be anything but chaos in the marketplace. Continuing massive federal budget deficits add fuel to the fires of inflation, and the expectation that price increases will persist helps perpetuate the inflation that people fear.

Wage settlements are higher, price increases are accepted and government spending goes on at an excessive rate to keep the ball rolling. The people of the United States, as well as government and business, have certain definite choices to make. The nation can move in the direction of a free economy with controlled government spending and relatively stable prices or toward excessive government spending, inflation and a controlled economy. This may be an oversimplification -- but the basic choice is there and only the American people can ultimately make it.

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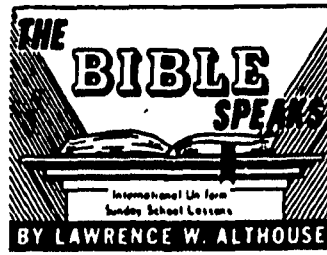
The American Red Cross urges fishermen to learn water survival skills, look before casting, listen to weather forecasts... carry a first aid kit and know how to use it!

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"I hope the day will soon come when we will learn that there is no oil in Washington, D-C, and that if the petroleum supplies we need are going to be produced, they will be produced by free enterprise, not by government decree" -- U. S. Senator William E. Brock.

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"Beauty without grace is the hook without the bait." -- Ralph Waldo Emerson.



A FAITH FOR ALL SEASONS

Lesson for April 14, 1974

Background Scripture: Genesis 12:1-3; Deuteronomy 26:5-9; Joshua 24:1-28; Acts 11:19-26, 13 through 14.
Devotional Reading: Luke 24:1-7

In a sermon once, with tongue in cheek, I proposed that we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus at Christmas and the birth of Jesus at Easter.

There was, however, some "method in my madness." I was objecting to our tendency to relegate both of these great events to mere holidays. For the most part, once a year we drag out the manger and celebrate the Incarnation. The celebration lasts but a few days, if that. It is not mentioned again for another twelve months although the Incarnation of God in Jesus Christ is one of the salient facts of the Christian religion.

After the party's over, the same is true of Easter, except that this celebration lasts an even shorter period of time. One brief morning and the Easter faith is tucked away for another year as if its season had come and gone. Actually, however, the Easter faith is never out of season. The resurrection faith is a faith for all seasons.

In early Christianity the church began to observe the first day of the week as its day of worship. Since Christ was resurrected on Sunday, each Sunday of every week would serve as a celebration of his victory over death and the grave. Every Sunday, in effect, would be an Easter, for the resurrection faith was at the very heart of the good news of Jesus Christ. It is only when the party is over and the celebration is ended that we can begin to appreciate the importance of the resurrection faith.

A promise and a purpose
Preaching in the synagogue at Pisidian Antioch (present-day Turkey), Paul helped his listeners to understand that the resurrection of Jesus Christ was not an isolated act of God. It was, in fact, he said, a part of the whole continuity of God's promise and purpose that began with Abraham. In a few brief sentences he recounted the whole sweep of Hebrew history, showing how God again and again made and fulfilled his promises. The people of Israel had been a people who lived by God's promises.

The death of Jesus, a seeming tragic event, was actually part of God's purpose and tied to his promises given to the patriarchs and the people of Israel. The whole history of Israel was an object lesson in God overcoming man at his worst. Then, at Easter, God scored the decisive victory that wrote "Amen" to his promises.

The resurrection faith is more than one man's dramatic victory over death, far more than a seasonal

NOW IS THE TIME...



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TO PLOW DOWN COVER CROPS

Weather conditions during the past two weeks has been favorable for the rapid growth of winter grains and most cover crops. Crops like winter rye grow very fast this time of the year and in some cases will be getting too tall for the best cover crop value. The real value of most cover crops is the fibrous root system and not the amount of top growth. Wet weather has prevented the plowing of these crops to date. The danger is that the crop may get too tall and the ground get too dry and hard and makes it difficult to get the cover crop mixed with the soil and rapid decomposition. With rank growth it might be best to give the area a thorough disking before plowing. Too much growth plowed down late in the spring may prevent good water movement from the subsoil late in the season.

TO DO MINIMUM TILLAGE

Many farmers in this part of the country work down their soil too fine for the average farm crops. We are aware of the desire to have the soil fine and smooth; however, in our clay-type soils this might mean puddling of the water and the formation of heavy crusts. The planting of corn in rough-appearing fields (minimum tillage) is giving good results and reduces the amount of expense in getting the ground ready. No-till planting is the extreme of minimum tillage and is gaining in popularity. However, careful planning and timing is also needed to do the no-till planting at the proper time of soil condition.

TO MAKE PLANS FOR HAY-CROP SILAGE

The 1974 hay crop is growing and the method of harvesting could determine the true feeding value of these forage crops. Weather continues to be a vital factor in good hay-making and when the crop is cut in the proper stage of maturity (early) weather conditions are often very unfavorable. This promotes the idea of making most or all of the first cutting of alfalfa or clover into low-moisture silage or haylage. There is little doubt that more feed nutrients will be harvested if made into silage than trying to make it into hay with poor weather conditions. Most herds of dairy or beef cattle can utilize the hay-crop silage since the supply of corn silage could be getting low.

TO CONTINUE FEEDING DRY MATTER

Within the next few weeks many herds and flocks will go to pasture; the lush grass is nourished by all animals and the reduction of barn chores is welcomed by producers. However, careful management is needed in order to prevent digestive trouble and bloating; this is especially true with pastures containing legumes such as clover or alfalfa. The feeding of dry matter such as hay, silage, or straw each morning before going to pasture is strongly recommended. Also, many producers have continued to provide free choice hay while on pasture for the first several weeks; this material slows down the passing of the lush forage through the digestive tract of the animal thus permitting more time for the digestive juices to extract feed nutrients.

Farm Calendar

Tuesday, April 16

7:45 p.m. - Ephrata Adult Farmer monthly meeting, Ephrata Senior High School "Futures Market and Hedging-Management Too"

Wednesday, April 17

9:30 a.m. - Cattleman's Fiesta Field Day with tour of Rio Vista beef and dairy program, sponsored by American Breeder's Service.

7:00 p.m. - PVATA Regional meeting, Shillington Motor Inn.

Thursday, April 18

7:30 p.m. - meeting for those interested in starting a 4-H Goat Club in Lancaster County, Farm and Home Center.

Friday, April 19

7:00 p.m. - PEMA meeting, Colonial Motor Lodge, Denver, Dave Hefler, speaker.

Saturday, April 20

8:00 p.m. - Pomona Grange No. 71 meeting, Fulton Grange Hall, Oakryn.

8:30 p.m. - Square dance with caller Jack Hartzel from Bloomsburg, Expo fairgrounds, South of Lebanon on Rocketry Rd., sponsored by Expo band.

Sunday, April 21

2:00 p.m. - Limousin Beef Cattle organization meeting, farm of Keystone Limousin, Newville.

Editor's Quote Book

We are not to expect to be translated from despotism to liberty in a featherbed

—Thomas Jefferson

celebration. It is a promise of eternal life both before and after death. It is the hope by which we live. It is the perspective by which we view the world and its events. It is a faith that has relevance for our everyday existence as well as our ultimate aspirations.

It is a faith for all seasons.