



Lancaster Farming

EDITORIAL COMMENTS

BY DIETER KRIEG, EDITOR

Challenging cooperatives

The federal government — including primarily the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and White House personnel — is out to kill farmer cooperatives. That's the word we receive here by way of letters, other publications and personal contacts.

As is true for many, if not most farmers and farm leaders, this is an issue which irritates me more than a field full of thistles — which might be an appropriate analogy considering some of the legislation that's coming out of Washington.

Farmer cooperatives are being charged with "inflating consumer prices through monopoly power." The Federal Trade Commission (FTC), which is meddling in everything from toilet bowls to test tubes, is making this outrageous charge. The agency has indeed done a commendable job in many areas, and it is needed in our every-day living, but here's a perfect example of how it is grabbing a victim by using false accusations.

If such an accusation is true of any group, then I recommend the charge be aimed at unions. Aren't they inflating everyone's cost each and every time they go on strike and squeeze more money out of their employer in return for less work? And farmers haven't forgotten George Meany's trick at the docks, I'm sure. Wasn't he manipulating prices downwards for consumers and upwards (higher pay) for his men? And what about the fact that practically every union in the country is either affiliated with the Teamsters or the AFL-CIO? In other words we have two large, omnipotent labor organizations which twist anyone's arm at will. Has anyone ever heard of a proposal to bust the AFL-CIO into smaller units,

as we have reports of splitting General Motors, other corporations, and now farmer cooperatives?

Unions have tried for legislation which would exclude non-union members from jobs — thereby forcing an individual to join or be out of work. They have contributed millions of dollars to politicians in return for votes which would support this sort of viciousness. That's where the FTC should focus its attention. One example is the "common situs" bill.

According to the Associated Press, Senator Harrison Williams (D-N.J.), Senate sponsor of the "common situs" picketing bill, received \$15,000 from unions while the bill was on his desk. The AP also reports that \$100,000 went to 78 congressmen while they were pushing the bill through the House. Thank God that President Ford had enough sense to veto this bill which would have eliminated any non-union members from construction jobs.

Lest anyone — farmer or non-farmer — misinterpret this, let me add to this attack on unions that it is not aimed at the membership as a whole. Just the bad apples, and most of them are on top of the heap. We can find them everywhere.

I believe it's time for farmers to meet this challenge head-on. Cooperatives have done a lot of good for the farmer. They can continue to serve agriculture if they're not wiped out. It seems to me that their big challenge now should be the organization of a massive, nationwide effort to bring the true identity and purpose of farmer cooperatives before the public and those government officials who want to deny them the right to live.

Be heard where it counts

It's been less than two years since I was employed on a farm full-time. I mention this to establish a bond between myself and readers, because the subject of this commentary might otherwise be brushed aside too easily. My words will hopefully take on more meaning if you, the readers, know that I'm not the so-called city-slicker with a fancy college education. Well, I do have a college education — but my degree is in dairy production and I've spent all but the past 21 months of my working years on farms.

So what?

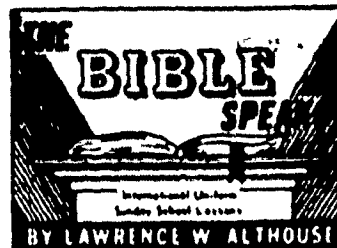
For one thing, I can say now that the grass isn't always greener on the other side of the fence. I can admit that some of my opinions of other kinds of work and other businesses weren't accurate when I was still on the farm. Things often look easier than they really are — but most of us

have a tendency to not believe it until we find out for ourselves.

I must confess that I've had my share of laughter over city folks who think cows bite and heifers are "male cows." And when it comes to complaining, I've done by share — like thinking 15 cents for a newspaper is "highway robbery."

Too often, I believe, farmers give up before they attempt to explain their problem to "outsiders." Their excuse usually is "what's the use — they don't understand, they don't know anything anyway, they're against us." And if an attempt is made, it usually falls short because of a lack of understanding and patience. I've been guilty of it myself and have heard others make the mistake as well.

But, reverse the situation for a moment. Come into a newspaper's production room, for example. You wouldn't comprehend everything within a half hour — yet chances are



"BUT I SAY TO YOU.."

Lesson for January 4, 1976

Background Scripture: Matthew 5:1 through 6:18
Devotional Reading: Romans 8:1-8.

Jesus probably never spoke words more provocative than when on the Sermon of the Mount he said, "You have heard it was said... But I say to you..." We are so familiar with these words that they make little impression upon us. What we have to realize is that with these words Jesus stirred terrible opposition to himself. Many of those who heard these words were enraged.

The old law

For one thing, Jesus seemed to be casting doubt on the authority of their scriptures. Jesus was placing his own teachings above the authority of the Old Testament. In other words, Jesus was saying that there were teachings in the Old Testament scriptures that were no longer binding upon the people.

Since you and I accept the authority of Christ, we probably don't have any trouble with his statement of "But I say to you..." Yet, at the same time, we might be highly offended if someone were to acknowledge that they do not follow and accept certain Old Testament teachings. Some people take the stance that: if the Bible says so, we must do it! Yet, the Bible said "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth," and Jesus was clearly indicating that this teaching was not for the Christian.

Obviously, just because something is in the Bible doesn't mean that we ought always to be obedient to it. There are some things advocated in some parts of the Bible that other sections decry. To say, "The Bible says..." is not enough, for sometimes it will also say something quite contrary.

Secondly, Jesus was demonstrating that violence could not be sanctioned by the Bible. If one wants to, he can always find a passage of scripture that will indicate the most brutal kinds of violence. There are many Old Testament passages that not only permit violence, but actually encourage it. But Jesus makes it very clear that his teaching will not acknowledge any reason for violence at all. To every passage that encourages violence, Jesus answers: "But I say to you..." Jesus' teaching is higher by far

than any law or rule. Those who would justify violence with an Old Testament scripture passage, would do well to turn to the Sermon on the Mount instead.

To Evaluate Farm Accounts

Farm records are a necessity these days for many reasons; however, the real value of good farm accounts is to plan ahead for the future. When records reveal success or failure in a certain enterprise, they should be used to drop or expand that particular part of the farming business. This requires time in the office to evaluate the various income and expense items and to make major decisions regarding the coming year. Since we are at that point between two years, it is suggested that farmers take the time to go over their records with their accountant, or with members of their family, in order to place efforts in the proper place. Don't be too busy with outside work and daily chores, and neglect the important part of good decision making.

To Order Supplies Early

The law of supply and demand is still very much in the agricultural picture and producers are urged to decide what seeds and materials will be needed

Thirdly, Jesus makes it clear that the essence of the good News is a spirit, rather than a law or any set of laws. Matthew finds interesting parallels between Jesus and Moses, the great law giver. actually, in his eyes, Jesus is the new Moses, the new lawgiver for Israel.

Yet, the Good News is not about laws - old or new - but about the "higher law" as taught and demonstrated by Jesus. Actually, it is not a law at all, but a spirit. The spirit of the law goes far beyond any rules and regulations. As Moses stood on Mount Sinai and received the tablets of stone, so Jesus is, in the Sermon of the Mount, delivering the new law that is written, not upon stone, but upon human hearts.

Despite all that Jesus says concerning legalism in the Sermon on the Mount, still many, many Christians continue in a legalistic approach to religion that still causes Jesus to say to us: "But I say to you..."

Where do most farmers turn when they want to complain? From what I've seen, it's the pages of farm magazines, the farmer down the road, and the equipment dealer's sales room. They're all practically useless efforts because they aren't directed to the mass media, congressmen, your non-farm neighbors, and your local governing bodies.

Give them a try — patiently and cordially — and be heard where it counts.



NOW IS THE TIME...

Max Smith
County Agr. Agent
Telephone 391-6851

next spring and place orders as soon as possible. We have in mind grass and legume seeds, lime and fertilizer, new machinery, fruit trees, or other major purchases. Dealers will also appreciate knowing the needs of their regular customers in order to do a good job in the community; in some instances discounts may be available for early ordering. The big advantage is to get the quality and variety of the supplies needed. To wait until next spring might result in accepting what is available.

To Be Careful When Dealing With Strangers

Again we would like to caution all home-owners and farmers of the risk of dealing with strangers who have "bargains" to sell. Experience has shown that many of these deals turn out to be costly and disappointing. When the seller is not around to guarantee his product, and cannot be located, the buyer is left "holding the bag." We suggest that purchases be made with reputable people and concerns who are always available to make adjustments and continue to give service year after year. The traveling salesman from another area is usually very aggressive and is interested in "selling for cash at a reduced rate; local folks are cautioned about this type of transaction and urged to investigate the dependability of the concern before making any monetary payment.

Farm Calendar

January 5-9

Pa. Farm Show in Harrisburg. For complete schedule see the third section of this edition.

Tuesday, Jan. 6

Pa. Guernsey Breeder's meeting at the Schindler's Restaurant - Camp Hill 10:00 a.m.

Tuesday, Jan. 13

Ephrata Young Farmers meeting at the Ephrata High School 7:30 p.m. Dairy management meeting.

Dairy Milking School at the Lancaster Farm and Home Center 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Continues through the 14th.

you have printers' products all over your home. We wouldn't expect you to understand it all. Likewise, the fellows in town have your products all over their home, but when did they ever have the opportunity to have your work explained to them?

Granted, we've had farm-city weeks and similar events, but we need more. Much more. What's needed is better understanding, education, and service. Might we tailor our fairs and the Farm Show to be more educational and appealing to consumers?