



## EDITORIAL COMMENTS

BY DIETER KRIEG, EDITOR

### Diet books and pure bunk

Farmers already know this — and have for a long time — but some of their city cousins don't, and the following may serve as a bit of ammunition for them to use the next time they confront someone who is afraid to eat a good wholesome meal.

Dr. Michael DeBakey, the famed heart surgeon, supplies the welcome information and we cheer him for it.

DeBakey says steaks, eggs, bread, and potatoes are "good old fashioned foods" which are not going to fill us with cholesterol and kill us with coronaries." He was featured in a NATIONAL STAR newspaper story headlined "Go Ahead, Eat That Steak — It's Okay Says Top Heart Doctor."

We reprint a portion of his remarks in the next few paragraphs.

"There's nothing wrong with a person having an egg breakfast every

morning," and there's nothing wrong with regular steak dinners. Eat nothing to excess — moderation is the key to a healthy diet.

"These restricted fad diets that tell people not to eat this or that or you will die of a heart attack are just pure bunk. From a medical point of view, we don't believe diet plays a particularly big role in heart attacks. I suspect that a lot of these fad diets that are filling up books are being written only for commercial reasons."

As acknowledged earlier, farmers already know this. But farmers sometimes don't carry the authoritative clout which a doctor has, and with this in mind, it might be well for farmers to grasp DeBakey's statements and shoot this info directly at those who are terrified at the sight of a good steak and temping eggs.

### Questionable information

The validity of USDA's market reports and similar projects have often been questioned. Farmers themselves admit from time to time that they have little faith in them and that they don't really feel like cooperating with USDA surveys — claiming that their production and intentions are none of the government's business.

USDA's effort in trying to portray Australia's meat industry really came into question at my desk in recent weeks because a USDA report and those from an Australian friend don't agree.

The USDA release, received here last month, states: "Australian cattle prices slumped sharply at country auctions in late November and could ease further in weeks ahead. Low prices are attributed to an early curtailment of shipments to the U.S., which halted imports in excess of the voluntary restraint level on Nov. 17 (1975). This resulted in an earlier than usual closing of Australian packing plants, which normally close for a period of time at the end of the shipping year."

My friend's letter, dated Nov. 15,

1975, reads, in part: "Cattle prices have improved considerable the last two months, but even now would not be up to the cost of production." A second letter, dated January 2, 1976, stated: "Cattle prices have about doubled in the last six months but would hardly cover the costs of production even yet."

Interested and active in the cattle business for a number of years here in Pennsylvania and more recently in the "Land Down Under" which he now makes his home, my Australian friend also reported that "The news about the increased quota for Australian meat this year to the U.S. has been joyful news to cattlemen here. A recent report from the Australian Meat Board says they have signed a contract with four shipping lines at a much better rate than last year.

One thing the USDA report and news from my friend agree on is that there's very little profit in the Australian cattle industry. In Queensland, for example, 20 per cent of all cattlemen supposedly had an income of less than \$2,000 last year — which includes several hundred families, my correspondent wrote.

### Earl Butz's PR effort

When U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, Earl Butz, stopped in York a week ago to address the 13th Annual Agribusiness Seminar - sponsored jointly by the York County Extension Service and the York Chamber of Commerce - he was talking to the wrong crowd. He himself admitted that because the "meat" of his talk was really not much more than a public relations effort

There's nothing wrong with that. The talk was obviously entertaining, as frequent outbursts of laughter

proved. While not revealing much of anything new regarding farm policies, he did present an educational talk. Educational to whom?

Farmers probably already knew most everything which Butz referred to in his half-hour presentation. (See text of his speech elsewhere in this issue.) But some members of the Chamber of Commerce may not have been so well informed when it comes to agriculture and agribusiness. And it's a good bet that consumers aren't

**THE BIBLE SPEAKS**  
 BY LAWRENCE W. ALTHOUSE  
**"SOMETHING GREATER!"**  
 Lesson for February 1, 1976



**NOW IS THE TIME...**

Max Smith  
 County Agr. Agent  
 Telephone 191-6851

**Background Scripture:** Matthew 11 through 12.

**Devotional Reading:** 2 Corinthians 4:1-6.

The Hebrew faith current in the time of Jesus was a magnificent and impressive religious system. A considerable number of Roman soldiers stationed in Palestine were favorably impressed and drawn to this spiritual approach.

"What is lawful?"

Yet, it was a flawed system and the flaw lay, not in the truths it embodied, but in the way that these truths were implemented in the lives of some of its most fanatic adherents. For all of its brilliance, for all of its power and majesty, there was something that had gone wrong in it, something attributable to human failure.

The flaw was the legalism that had been allowed to corrupt and distort the essential meaning of the faith. The legalism had begun as an attempt to make the faith practical in the lives of the worshippers. But in time, the legalistic perspective had become a monster that threatened to swallow the truths that had given rise to the laws.

In Matthew 12 we find a simple illustration. Jesus and his disciples are journeying through some grainfields one sabbath day. Hungry, the disciples began to pluck some of the ears of grain.

There were two perspectives on this little incident. First, the disciples were "Hungry." In fact, they must have been famished to turn to the grain for nourishment. Secondly, working on the sabbath was against the Jewish law and surely plucking grain would be considered work!

That they might accuse him

Although the heart of the Jewish faith called for compassion upon those in need - the hungry, the thirsty, the sick, the widowed, etc. - still the Pharisees chose to focus on the legal, rather than the humanitarian perspective. To them, it was more important that work was illegal than that men were hungry.

How often today we find that religious people still choose to focus upon the legalistic or ritualistic perspective and ignore the simple needs of their fellowmen. We still seem more concerned to ask whether something is "lawful" than whether it is "needful."

**To Recognize the Value of Lime**

Those who try to farm, garden, or keep lawns without due attention to lime requirements are not making efficient use of all materials. The story of soil testing, to learn of the needs of the soil, is an old story, but still needs more attention on some farms or properties. I've heard farmers say they lime every two years in order to keep their soil in good condition; however, if no lime is needed, they are wasting money and lime. On the other hand, if lime is needed and not applied, then fertilizers cannot be utilized to the highest degree. Proper liming and soil acidity makes better use of commercial and organic fertilizers. Don't forget the value of lime this year.

**To Handle Livestock Waste as Fertilizer**

At the recent Cattle Feeder's Day it was pointed out that all types of livestock and poultry manures are a valuable source of fertilizer for farm crops and should be managed as such. With the high livestock and poultry population in this part of the country there are tons of waste produced that can greatly reduce the amount of commercial fertilizer needed; that is, if the material is handled and stored properly. Protection from the weather is very important, if it is to be stored. The holding of the liquid part of the manure preserves much of the fertilizer content. Don't pile it back of the barn and forget about it, because this is wasting fertilizer on one hand, and requiring the producer to buy more fertilizer at a future date.

**To Improve Management**  
 It appears that both beef cattle and swine producers may be facing a period of

So it was when Jesus healed the man with a withered hand on the sabbath. The pharisees were little concerned with the man's need, but were hung-up on the question: "Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath?" (12:10). Their real motivation shone through: "... so that they might accuse him."

Our religious systems, doctrines, and liturgies may be very impressive, but as Jesus said: "Something greater... is here" (12:6). And that "something greater" cannot help but always lead us closer to the needs of our fellowmen.

lower market prices; this has happened before and should not be disastrous to the good manager. When production costs remain high and market values drop, then the producer will have to check his management to plug every loop-hole of possible losses. We refer to parasite control on livestock, both inside and outside. Stomach worms and body lice continue to feed on too many animals in this area and will cut down on gains and feed efficiency. The control of rodents such as rats and mice should be on the management list; don't feed them along with your livestock, if you want to make any profit. Doing things that should be done, and done on time, will help keep up the bank account.

### Farm Calendar

- Feb. 2**  
 Beef Cattle Management Seminar at Schuylkill's Penn State campus. Meeting starts at 7:30 p.m. and will feature David Kantner, county agent, as speaker.
- Land use meeting, at the Lancaster Farm and Home Center, 7:30 p.m.
- Twin Valley Adult Farmers meet at the High School for arc welding class, 7:30 p.m.
- Manheim Young Farmer's meeting at the high school. Subject: manure handling.
- Feb. 3**  
 DHIA workshop for Lebanon County, in the Municipal Building, Lebanon, from 1-7 p.m.
- State Fruit Growers Meetings, Sheraton Inn, Gettysburg, lasts through the 5th.
- Ephrata Young Farmers meet at 7:45, topic is alfalfa management.
- Feb. 4**  
 Crops Day for Adams County, at the Gettysburg National Bank.
- DHIA workshop at the Farm and Home Center, 1:30 and 7:30 p.m.; and at 12:30 at the Quarryville Fire Hall.
- District 5 of Inter-State Milk Producers hold meeting at Meadow Hills at noon.
- Feb. 5**  
 4-H beef and lamb banquet at the Lancaster Farm and Home Center, 6:30 p.m.
- DHIA workshop at the Lancaster Farm and Home Center, 9:30 a.m.
- Feb. 7**  
 Ephrata Area Young Farmers Banquet at the Mt. Airy Fire Hall, 6:45 p.m.

aware of the numerous facts Butz presented.

At least one radio station in the area taped Butz's speech and presented it to the public in its entirety. At least one TV station was present at the meeting, and the speech did receive some coverage in York newspapers.

So, while Butz's speech may not have amounted to a whole lot more than entertainment to farmers themselves, his message did get out to the public where it's needed as

much as anywhere, if not more so. As Butz stated in his message, he has a PR job to do. I agree with that - and if his message enlightened a few housewives in this area, then his coming to York was very worthwhile.

American agriculture needs more recognition among the George - Meany's and Mrs. Butterworth's. The responsibility of this undertaking lies not only on an agriculture secretary, but on our news media and each individual farmer as well. It's a big job which everyone should share in.