



EDITORIAL COMMENTS

BY DIETER KRIEG, EDITOR

Defending what we've got

Earlier this year a dairyman turned to me to say, "Most farmers come to each other's aid in times of tragedy, but why can't they band together for the sake of higher prices?"

He was referring to a concept whereby all farmers join together in one bargaining organization which would see to it that all commodity prices would be so compatible to one another that every rancher and farmer would receive his "fair" share.

The answer to his question, to my way of thinking, is quite simple

First of all, American farmers are a people who believe in themselves and in free enterprise with the least amount of control as possible. Like most any person who is in business for himself, the farmer will think about his own situation first, then his own particular group, and finally farmers collectively. Apparently farmers as a whole have never felt strong enough about forming an all-inclusive marketing organization.

Most likely they also realize that such an organization isn't really fitting to the motivation of making a living (and a profit) in the way they choose.

Unilateral control by a gigantic farmer fraternity wouldn't be far off from the likes of unilateral governmental control. Farmers resent the latter, and I'm convinced they feel the same way about the former. It just

wouldn't fit into our free enterprise way of doing business.

Furthermore, it's human nature to go for a few more cows if the price of milk is right, or an extra bunch of hogs if bacon is in demand. Farmers appreciate the freedom to have that choice.

Most farmers wouldn't want to wait for "the green light" from some organization or government agency to tell them whether or not they can expand. They want to determine that themselves. Besides, who knows better than the individual farmer himself how marketing and production trends best fit into his own operation?

In theory a proposal to band together for higher prices may sound good. And having prices inter-related so that none is favored even sounds ideal. But it would, in my opinion, be so complicated and complex that it just wouldn't work.

Specific marketing situations exist, such as export demands, and weather has always had an impact on prices. Who would want to figure these factors and many more in a formula which would set prices to everyone's satisfaction?

Frankly, I don't think it can be done - for a variety of reasons - the weakest of which is not the fact that we'll always have complainers, no matter what this group or that group does.

Evaluating farm situation

It's been reported that farm income has doubled in less than ten years and that U.S. farm exports stand at a record \$22 billion for this past fiscal year. That's about triple of what it was in the late 1960's.

Whether these figures are really significant to an individual farmer is debatable. It depends on what branch of agriculture you're in. The majority of farmers in this part of the country, however, feel that they've been relatively well off for the past several years.

Two years ago busloads of dairymen went to Washington to protest about low milk prices and high production costs. Earlier that year the cattlemen were experiencing a squeeze the likes of which they hadn't seen before. And things haven't improved all that much for the men who put the meat on our tables. A year ago the grain farmers were hopping mad about the grain embargo. Approximately two years ago Midwestern farmers were shooting calves to call attention to their financial plight.

Such occurrences and others have been all but forgotten. There's not much said anymore, and calves aren't being shot. Possibly this is a fairly

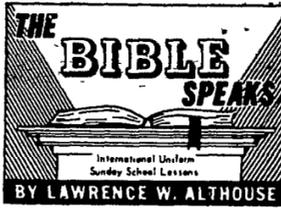
good yardstick for measuring the situation down on the farm.

I believe that the unrest among various groups of farmers in the past spoke for itself. Likewise, it's my opinion that the relative tranquility we've seen for two years or so speaks for itself.

Our agricultural economy will hopefully remain stable.

A number of concerns are being voiced, however, especially now just prior to the elections.

It's remembered that AFL-CIO president George Meany had an awful lot to do with the grain embargo last year. Therefore it's important to consider what sort of relation there is between him and the candidates. Do



THE WINNER'S CIRCLE

Lesson for October 31, 1976

Background Scripture:

Romans 8:18-39

Devotional Reading:

Psalms 90:13-17

During the past week I have been watching some of the Summer Olympics in Montreal. In event after event I have seen the first, second, and third-place winners stand in triumph in the winner's circle to receive the plaudits of the crowds.

From time to time the television announcer makes a passing reference to the athletes who held those distinctions four years ago, but it is quite apparent that, for the most part, the names are quickly forgotten except in official record books and those for whom the Olympics is not just a sport. Even by the time you read this column two months later many, if not most people will have forgotten those who were victorious in these games.

More than conquerors

Of course there are a few exceptions. There is hardly an Olympics that the name of Jessie Owens is not remembered, or Pavo Nurmi, or some other Olympics "immortal." These men and women not only won the events in some distant year, but for some special reason they are remembered and revered long after their performances have been eclipsed by new records. They not only were winners "once upon a time," they are still victors today in a sense, for that is how they are remembered.

This may help us to understand what Paul means in Romans when he speaks of being "more than conquerors" (8:37). At first it may seem that there is nothing higher than one who has been victorious. Yet, as I have indicated in athletics, many victors are not long remembered. The same is true in politics, in business, and other areas of human endeavor, particularly in warfare.

Thus, it is not enough to be a winner unless one can somehow remain a winner. To step into the winner's circle once in some contest



NOW IS THE TIME...

Max Smith
County Agr. Agent
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To Be Alert For Hunters

The small game hunting season opens this Saturday at 9:00 a.m. I would like to offer these suggestions to all hunters who will be hunting on farms. In the first place, ask the farmer permission if you want to hunt on his land. Most landowners permit reasonable hunting, when asked. This is a small courtesy in return for a pleasant day in the field, yet too few people follow this rule. Also, if you go through gates, be sure to close them, and, after lunch pick-up your paper and cans so you leave the area the way you found it. Another thing, stay out of corn fields not yet picked or soybean fields not harvested.

Keep a safe distance from buildings and livestock while hunting and be sure to respect the property of

others as you would expect others to respect yours.

To Handle Soybeans Properly

With the soybean acreage that we now have, many farmers may use their own seed for 1977 planting. Just remember that soybean seed is a very perishable commodity and must be handled with care. No matter how you handle soybeans for seed, you should always handle them gently.

Some things to remember when handling soybeans. Do not heat dry soybean seed at air temperature above 110 degrees Fahrenheit (43 degrees Celsius). This will affect germination. Also, never drop soybean seed from heights that will break the seed coat. Soybeans dropped from 10 feet into a bin can cause as much as a

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Farm Calendar

Monday, Nov. 1

Manheim Young Farmers meeting, 7:30 p.m. "Preventive Animal Health."

Tuesday, Nov. 2

National Peanut Eat Contest, Elephants vs. Donkeys.

Hunterdon County, N.J. Soil Conservation District board of directors meets, 7:30 p.m. at the Extension Center.

Wednesday, Nov. 3

Poultry waste symposium, today and tomorrow at Penn State. County agents have details.

Monthly board meeting of the Lancaster County Conservation District, Farm and Home Center, Lancaster.

State Young Farmers Convention today and tomorrow at the Sheraton Inn, Altoona.

Lewistown Grange meeting, 8 p.m. at the social Executive committee of the Hunterdon County, N.J. board of agriculture

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we want Meany and his labor unions to have even more say in agriculture than he has now? I would hope not.

One thing is certain. U.S. agriculture has the potential (and demonstrated proof of it) that it can easily produce enough food for its

own people and millions more around the world. We've got everything it takes to produce.

Farmers should continue to be able to exercise their right to produce in the best way they know how with a minimum amount of restrictions. And they deserve to make a fair profit

RURAL ROUTE

By Tom Armstrong

