

EDITORIAL COMMENTS By DIETER KRIEG, EDITOR



Joy to the world?

Now that most of us have stopped singing "Joy to the World" and a brand new year is just around the corner, we can take a few minutes and reflect on developments which may well have profound effects on our lives.

Undoubtedly the most significant development on the world scene is President Carter's recognition of communist China. It's a move which at best can be viewed as a desperate attempt to improve American business. At worst, it's treason.

While the recognition of the communist giant isn't so bad in itself - we're all hoping that it will advance the cause of freedom and peace - the dumping of the Nationalist Chinese on Taiwan is absolutely deplorable.

President Carter, who during his campaign vowed he would never do what he has now done (unfairly abandoning Taiwan) has leveled this country's credibility to that of the Soviets and some of the worst tyrants that have ruled on Earth.

The abandonment of Taiwan is not only a kick in the pants for that

country, it represents the selling out of America's trustworthiness. Many Americans have long ago found out that Jimmy Carter's words are shamefully worthless. Now the world will have that impression of an entire country.

In abandoning Taiwan, Jimmy Carter has also abandoned the hopes of both free and enslaved peoples around the world. Much of the world's population has looked up to America for decade after decade. Sending Taiwan adrift, and towards the very likely possibility of being absorbed by the communists of mainland China, gives people little reason to respect a country which is supposed to be the greatest in the world and a champion of human rights.

The recognition of communist China I can understand. The abandonment of Taiwan is a crime. We - no, not we - Jimmy Carter has sold our integrity and signaled the world, especially Taiwan, that he couldn't really care less about human rights.

We can only hope that the change of leadership on mainland China represents fresh ideas and a chance for freedom for the nearly billion people that inhabit that vast land. Nevertheless, it's difficult to understand why Jimmy Carter is convinced we have to dump Taiwan in order to have official recognition of the communist government on the mainland.

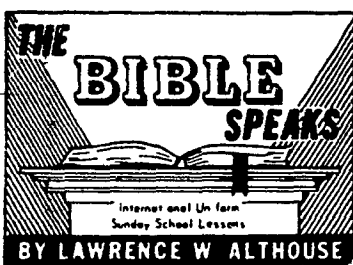
While several reasons are being cited for the recognition of communist China, among them being possible leverage against the other communist giant - the Soviet Union - trade and dollars are probably the single most important reason. If China will pay for what it buys from us, then the United States can probably have a big dollar harvest over there. It would be a significant plus for America's trade balance and help float the sinking American dollar.

Now, how about agricultural trade. Taiwan has been a good trading

partner and it's a land which needs and buys agricultural products from other countries. It's understood that the communist government on the mainland would like to have some of the products of our free enterprise system - both goods and technology. We'll probably sell them some farm products, but not anywhere near the potential. The Chinese will prefer to raise their own food, and nobody can blame them for that. Greater chances of trade undoubtedly exist for farm machinery and technology. That's what they need to improve their own methods.

So with the likelihood of more American farm equipment going overseas, and agricultural exports probably not increasing all that much, where does that leave the American farmer who is already complaining about the high costs of machinery?

The recognition of communist China wasn't wisely negotiated. I hope time proves me wrong.



NOW, AFTER THE PARTY
Lesson for December 31

Background Scripture:
Luke 2:21-38
Devotional Reading:
Isaiah 9:2-7

By the time you read this column, the birthday party for Jesus Christ will already be over for many people. They will be "back to work" and "back to normal," with only the Christmas bills and a few decorations as a continuing reminder of the celebration.

Actually, that's pretty much the way it was at the first Christmas. Remember, only a few shepherds in the fields of Bethlehem celebrated the Messiah's birth. The rest of the community, let alone the rest of the world, wasn't even aware that there was anything to celebrate.

Later, when the shepherds were back at work with their sheep, when the morning star had faded into the eastern sky, Mary and Joseph took their newborn child to the temple according to custom. Certain rituals needed to be performed before they returned to Nazareth.

Back To Normal?

Perhaps for them too it seemed that the party was over. The angelic voices were gone, the shepherds had returned to their flocks, and they were about to return to their home in Galilee. But at the temple in

Jerusalem they met two senior citizens, two aged "nobodys" who would make it clear to Joseph and Mary that though the party was over, the celebration would continue and no one need ever go home in the same spirit in which he came.

Now Depart In Piece...

Once more God seemed to make a strange selection of personnel. Just as he surprises us by selecting a group of shepherds as the sole celebrants of his Son's birth, so now he chooses two unlikely people to make manifest the enduring significance of that celebra-

tion. Though all Israel looked for a warrior-Messiah, the aged Simeon looked at the infant Jesus and suddenly in his heart knew that in this child God had kept his ancient promise to both Israel and the whole world.

The world was still full of corruption, sin, brutality, misery and injustice, but Simeon could let go of life still celebrating the love of God, though the party seemed to be over. And isn't that true for us too? Another Christmas celebration has come and gone and the world still seems to lie in darkness. Still, if the celebration of

Christ's birth means anything to us at all, isn't it the same reality that found expression in Simeon's confession of faith? Now that the party is over, let us take the celebration with us, knowing with Simeon that we can "depart in peace," our own eyes having seen the salvation that God has prepared for us and all men who will receive it!

To fracture an old saying, isn't the proof of the party in the way we go home from it? In other words: if the party is worth anything at all, won't it "go with us" in some way - even if just for a while?



NOW IS THE TIME

By Max Smith, Lancaster County Agricultural Agent
Phone 394-6851

Structures that are wet from condensation will soon rot and have to be replaced. We suggest some attention be given, if the problem exists.

TO PRODUCE QUALITY MILK

Dairying is the major farm enterprise in this part of the country. With a greater population there should be increased milk consumption. All dairymen should be certain they are producing a quality product. Milk flavor is a very important thing if we are to get more folks to drink milk. Dairymen should be certain that feed odors, such as silage, do not end up in the consumer's milk. Silage should be fed to the milking herd after the milking

period; when fed 2 to 3 hours prior to the milking time, silage-flavored milk can be expected. A top quality product should be the goal of every producer.

TO ENFORCE FARM POND SAFETY

When farm ponds become covered with ice they are a very attractive winter-time sport scene. Ice skating is a popular sport and ponds will provide great outdoor recreation when properly supervised. We urge pond owners to have rescue equipment at the pond. Wooden ladders, wooden boards, ropes, or other lightweight items that will distribute weight are suggested. Due to the ice-cold water rescue must be

quick at this time of the year. In checking the strength of ice keep in mind that usually ice that is 2 to 3 inches thick will support an average person. With a group of skaters ice should be from 3 to 4 inches thick. Spring-fed ponds will not freeze as fast as those fed from other sources. Also, the end of the pond where the water enters may be the last to freeze and have the thinnest ice. Ice skaters be careful; that water is very cold.

TO BE CAREFUL WITH SALT ABRASIVES

Slippery roads, walks, and steps will be a common hazard in the next few

months. Many folks use salt too freely in cutting the ice; it may get the job done but also, may injure nearby turf or shrubbery. I'd suggest the use of sand, sawdust, or any granulated fertilizer. These materials will make the surface more safe without possible injury to vegetation.

In areas without any vegetation salt will give good results. Along our main highways there is some evidence that the constant use of salt is inflicting injury to nearby trees and shrubs. Don't let this happen to your favorite tree, shrub, or the turf lining your walks.

TO BEWARE OF CONDENSATION

When extra moisture develops on walls or ceilings it's a sign of too much moisture and too little ventilation. This often occurs during cold weather in both homes and livestock buildings. Extra insulation will often help to prevent the warm air from contacting cold surfaces. On windows it could mean the need for storm sash, or from excess moisture in the home.

RURAL ROUTE

By Tom Armstrong



Farm Calendar

Tuesday, Jan. 2
Ephrata Area Young Farmers officers and committee meeting, 7:45 p.m. at Ephrata Jr. High School.

Wednesday, Jan. 3
Hunterdon County (N.J.) Board of Agriculture meeting at the Extension Center, Flemington, 8 p.m.
Lancaster County Conservation District directors meeting, 7:30 p.m. at the Farm and Home Center.
Lancaster County corn and tobacco show at the Farm and Home Center, 10 a.m.
Farm income tax meetings, Chambersburg Holiday Inn, southside, intersection of Route 316 and I-81.

Thursday, Jan. 4
Fifth Annual Mid-Atlantic No-Till Conference, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Host Farm Resort, east of Lancaster on Route 30.
Area income tax meeting, 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Lancaster Farm and Home Center.

Workshops for estate planning professionals, Embers Restaurant, Carlisle, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Southeastern Pennsylvania Nursery meeting, Westover Inn and Golf Club, S. Schuylkill Ave., Jeffersonville, 1 p.m.

Friday, Jan. 5
Farm income tax meeting, Collegeville Inn, Route 422, east of Route 29.
Donkey basketball at Garden Spot High School, 7:30 p.m. FFA program.