

BY CURT HARLER, EDITOR



Lancaster Farming says...

Beware the ordinance

Within the last month several more nails were driven into the coffin containing the image of the farmer as the independent businessman, doing his own thing, bothering no one and being bothered by no one.

In Lebanon County alone, three current cases point out how easy it is for a farmer to lose his right to farm, even if he is hurting nobody else.

First, there's Kenneth Grumbine. Today there's a holding pond that directs its water straight at his barn. The project was built with the approval of township officials who OK'd a subdivision plan without even making an on-site inspection.

Then there's Harvey Krall, fighting to keep a grain bin where he built it. The bin was put up 80 feet from the road before he was aware that his township's new zoning regulations prohibited building within 100 feet of an existing road.

Krall's land was zoned light industrial even though it has been farmed for decades. As a result, his

farm does not fall under the same regulations as farms which are included in his township's agricultural zones, and any building has to be done in accordance with the industrial-type regulations.

Krall's bin is not hurting anything or anyone. It's located next to his buildings. He owns the property across the road and on either side of the silo. The township, if it wanted to widen the road, would have to tear down his other buildings which are legal because of a grandfather clause in the law.

Next we find Herold Brandt, fighting to stop an airport zoning ordinance—and losing the battle to arguments of "What harm can it do his operation?"

In fact, all of these farm families are losing their battles.

It might be well to determine why.

For the most part, farmers voice sympathy for their afflicted friends but sit back, make no move to help,

make no waves. They seem to forget they will be next.

Legal counsel, usually obtained on a limited budget, often lacks the expertise in farm law that is found in corporate, maritime or other specialized legal fields.

Farmers flounder in a bureaucratic mish-mash of laws passed by ill-advised county or township officials who have neither background nor training in the specialized areas under their power.

By not keeping abreast of current legislation and political affairs, farmers hand over to such people their right to be a part of the decision making process.

As a result, farmers find themselves victims of poorly drafted ordinances, laws written without the farmer in mind.

Then they discover the hardest fact of all: once a farmer is entangled in a legal battle, it's too late to do anything about a lousy law. The battle must be fought under the

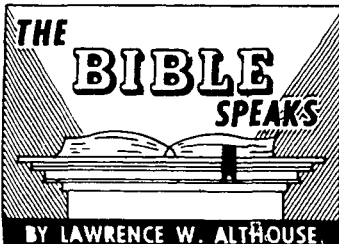
other guy's rules.

Farmers long have prided themselves on their independence, patriotism and religious ideals. They sit around like lone ducks, passive, waiting to be devoured by houses, industry and government officials who haven't the common sense to think about where they might get their next meal.

Just because farm leaders, farm organizations and the farm press always recite the litany of praise on how important farmers are (and they are important), doesn't mean the rest of the world feels that way.

Each farmer in every county should set aside one evening a month to attend township meetings. Farm groups should have special committees whose responsibility would be to attend county sessions.

It'd be a real eye-opener for any grower who hasn't attended such meetings. And 12 nights a year are a lot less hassle than 12 weeks or months spent in a losing court battle.



A MAN LIKE THAT

Lesson for June 1, 1980

Background Scripture:
2 Kings 18 through 20;
2 Chronicles 29 through 32.
Devotional Reading:
Jeremiah 16:10-15.

The Honor Roll of kings of Israel and Judah in the Old Testament is very brief. Of all the kings who occupied these two Hebrew thrones, few are remembered by Old Testament writers with any admiration or approval.

Among this elite group was King Hezekiah (715-687 BC), the twelfth king of Judah, son and successor of Ahaz and father of Manasseh. The writer of 2 Kings remembers Hezekiah with a fondness that is almost unequalled in the history of Israel:

He trusted in the Lord the

God of Israel; so that there was none like him among all the kings of Judah after him, nor among those who were before him. (2 Kings 18:5).

None Like Him

In a time when the U.S. Presidential campaign is heating up to a nominating convention pitch, some of us may be tempted to wish that a man like Hezekiah were to appear on the national scene today. How great it would be to find someone of whom we could say, "there was none like him among all the Presidents of the USA after him, nor among those who were before him."

Of course, we'd like a man like that for President — but would we vote for him? Would we, really?

I'm not so sure. King Hezekiah was a deeply spiritual man who was instrumental in reforming the religious practices of this nation. In a never-ending effort to "keep up with the times" and their enemies, the people of Judah had allowed their religious life to wander far from its roots. The temple worship had fallen on hard times. The people probably felt they were too sophisticated for that. The morals and ethics

of the people seemed to be more in harmony with those of their enemies and pagan neighbors. In the midst of all this, Hezekiah came, calling them to return to their religious heritage.

Not Since Solomon

And the people responded, so that for the reign of Hezekiah, at least, there was a reformation in the faith of Judah. And the writer of 2 Chronicles would write of these days: "So there was great joy in Jerusalem, for since the time of Solomon, the son of David, king of Israel, there had been nothing like this in

Jerusalem" (2 Chronicles 30:26).

But is that the kind of leadership we want? Are we sure we want someone who is deeply spiritual, someone who honestly seeks the will of God (not the will of the special interests and lobbyists) in plotting the nation's course? Would we support a pious President or would we join those who mock a public figure who takes seriously his religious faith?

Each of us must answer those questions for ourselves, but I strongly suspect the "wheeler-dealer" would win in a landslide.



NOW IS THE TIME

By Max Smith Lancaster County Agricultural Agent
Phone 394-6851

Diazinon will give protection.

TO MANAGE FARM PONDS

A nice farm pond is a great asset to any property. Many farms have ponds but too many of them are neglected. A pond needs attention the same as any other area on the farm. If we want that half-acre of ground, that is covered with water, to produce a crop of fish, or provide recreation and fire protection, we need to give it some attention.

This time of the year the problem with algae and weeds is very common. Many hours of pleasant

swimming, boating, or fishing are ruined because of the mass of algae or weeds. Numerous chemicals can be used to control these plants but first, a permit should be obtained from the Pennsylvania Fish Commission. Application blanks for this permit are available from any Extension Office, or from the local Pennsylvania Fish Commission patrolman. A good pond requires management.

TO KEEP

PESTICIDE RECORDS

This is not the first time I have suggested the importance of keeping accurate records of the

pesticide treatment on livestock and crops. Record blanks are available from our Extension Office for this purpose. These records may not be important as long as all products are properly used, and there are no findings of excess residues.

However, if a certain food or feed product is found to carry excessive spray materials, then the records may be your major defense. We have known instances where the farmer had to rely on his records to prove that he used the materials properly. Without written records, your verbal statements will not hold up. In the first place, be sure to use all materials according to the label. Secondly, keep an accurate record of the date, amount, and on what the materials were used. Don't ignore the importance of good records.

TO PROTECT YOUR OWN

Livestock and poultry diseases continue to be a threat to many local farmers. I still feel that in too many cases the farmer brings the infection home to his own animals. Are you careful about the footwear

worn when attending the public stock yards or sales barns? Most of these places are an outlet for animals with some infection; the chances of picking up these organisms on your boots or shoes are very great. Even though the public places are often disinfected, there is still danger of infection. We urge farmers to be very careful with their sanitary habits. The same is true when using public trucks to transport animals; be sure they are clean and well disinfected. Don't be guilty of bringing home infection to your own animals.

Farm Calendar

Saturday, May 31

Farm emergency seminar;
9:30 a.m., Halifax High School

Cecil County Breeders Fair,
Fair Hill, Maryland

Sunday, June 1

IT'S DAIRY MONTH!
Tribute to Glenn Ellenberger, Ag Hall,
Allentown Fair Grounds.

(Turn to Page A15)

RURAL ROUTE



By Tom Armstrong