

BY CURT HARLER, EDITOR



Lancaster Farming says...

A change of mind or heart?

President Ronald Reagan had either a change of mind or heart last week when he declined to lift the grain embargo against the Soviet Union.

Despite repeated pledges during the campaign to end the embargo, and pleas from Ag Secretary John Block to keep his promise, Reagan bowed to the wishes of the State Department. The embargo will continue for the foreseeable future, the President said.

Two groups will benefit, and neither includes farmers.

First is the consumer bloc. Keeping grain from going overseas keeps domestic supplies heavy. That, in turn, keeps consumer prices down.

Indeed, there is strong evidence that without the grain embargo domestic supplies would be depleted before the new corn crop hits the market this fall. Last year's poor crop coupled with already low reserves means the system might not be able to withstand another short crop without severe price pressure on domestic markets.

The second group to benefit will be speculators who play the grain

market. Many speculators have pulled their heads into their shells fearing Russia will invade Poland. That certainly would end any hope of resumed grain sales.

Reagan's move takes a lot of the guesswork out of speculators' moves. Without any hope of resumed sales, they stay safely out of the market and farm prices remain low.

John Block should be congratulated on his stand against his boss. No national group favors continuation of the embargo. Except for the initial shock, the embargo has had little effect on Russia—its troops still are in Afghanistan.

American farmers, meantime, have lost markets to other nations. Farmers languish under low prices

while high-technology firms still sell to Russia. Should Russia invade Poland, far more drastic steps than a grain embargo will be required, since there already is an embargo.

Is Reagan's decision a change of mind influenced by the State Department, or a change of heart against farmers?

Reconsider prompt milk payment

The Pennsylvania Milk Security Fund is in trouble. Only 31 of 120 dealers are in the Fund. The others have opted out.

Co-ops, responsible for many recent assessments on dairy producers, all voted themselves out of the Fund.

At present the kitty is only a few dollars over \$73,000, barely enough to cover the \$50,000 annual operating costs.

A meeting last Wednesday brought forth loads of suggestions ranging from increased funding to all bonding and no funding.

Lancaster Farming once again

would like to push for prompt payment by buyers for all milk sold in Pennsylvania.

The intent of the lawmakers, as voiced last year, was eventually to work toward prompt payment by dealers and co-ops for milk.

No longer would farmers wait three to six weeks for checks, giving the dealer free interest for that period and exposing farmers to financial ruin. They'd be paid in 10 days and their potential risk in case of failure would be cut by four-fifths.

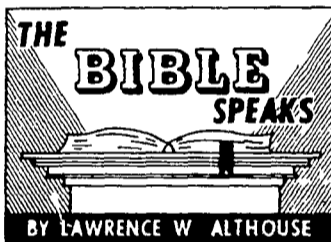
If a bank or bonding firm won't handle a dairy, surely the farmer can't afford to lend interest-free money against poor security.

The problems of milk price can be worked out by paying the past month's blend plus a correction when the Order figures final blend.

Interest is too high, farmers too far out on financial limbs, to expect anything less than prompt payment for services or goods.

Prompt payment will cut the bureaucracy needed to get dairy producers' security, end farmers' roles as unpaid bankers, treat dealers and co-ops equally, and slash the cost of bonds.

It reaches to the heart of farmers' needs for security rather than treating 55-day old symptoms.



BY LAWRENCE W. ALTHOUSE

IN THE REAL WORLD

February 15, 1981

Background Scripture: Matthew 16 through 17
Devotional Reading: Isaiah 58:5-12

We've never really known what to do with some of

Jesus' teachings. They are easy for us to recite, but many of them just don't fit into what you and I think of as "the real world." For some people, these conflicts are troubling. Others explain them away, suggesting that they were not meant to be applied in this life. Others of us avoid the problem by never thinking about it.

A case in point is Jesus' concept of success. The conflict is a very sharp disagreement as to what constitutes success and failure. After Peter confessed him as the Christ of Caesarea Philippi, Matthew tells us: "From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to

Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised" (Matthew 16:21). Peter responded the way most of us would have: "Peter began to rebuke him, saying 'God forbid, Lord! This shall never happen to you'" (16:22).

Saving and Losing

Who would quarrel with Simon Peter? After all, he was telling it like it really is. What Jesus was describing was nothing less than a losing game-plan. Think what it would do to the Master's image: everyone would mark him as a "loser," and you can't

achieve anything in this world that is worthwhile unless you're a "winner." We may not always know what "winning" is, but suffering at the hands of one's enemies and being killed by them is definitely not "winning." Not in the real world anyway.

And so, Christianity has often chosen the world's standards of "winning" and "losing" because it has had to live in the real world, instead of the world of "pie-in-the-sky-sometime!" For example, a "successful" man in our congregation is the one who has achieved a certain degree of material and/or professional

position. The unsuccessful person is one who may never get anywhere economically or socially. "Success" in the ministry is to become a bishop or serve a very large and influential church. The "unsuccessful" pastor is a clergyperson who has spent his or her whole life with small rural churches.

Real And Unreal

Yet, this is so different from Jesus' own statement of values: "For whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it" (16:25). What Jesus is saying to us is that in the real world, the world where values are determined by

God instead of his creatures, what appears to be "winning" may actually be "losing," and what smells of defeat may, in fact, be victory. The apparent "loser" may be the real "winner" as God judges.

The fact is, that which we think of as the real world may be only a distorted reflection and our ideas of "success" and "failure" may be equally out of focus. And the key to real success may be nothing less than the largely untried concept of our Lord: "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

NOW IS THE TIME

By Max Smith,
Lancaster County
Agricultural Agent
Phone 717-394-6801



TO EVALUATE CORN GROWING PRACTICES

In recent years many farmers have been growing corn on the same ground year after year. This has been a common practice in the mid-west for many years. Now, there is some research being done that could raise a question about this practice. One piece of work showed that by changing the variety of hybrid corn from year to year will increase yields. Some other work reflects the use of crop rotations and the greater use of legumes in the rotation. This might not meet the desire of some corn growers to inject another crop in the rotation, but might be the best thing to do in the long run. Fertilizer prices are soaring and the

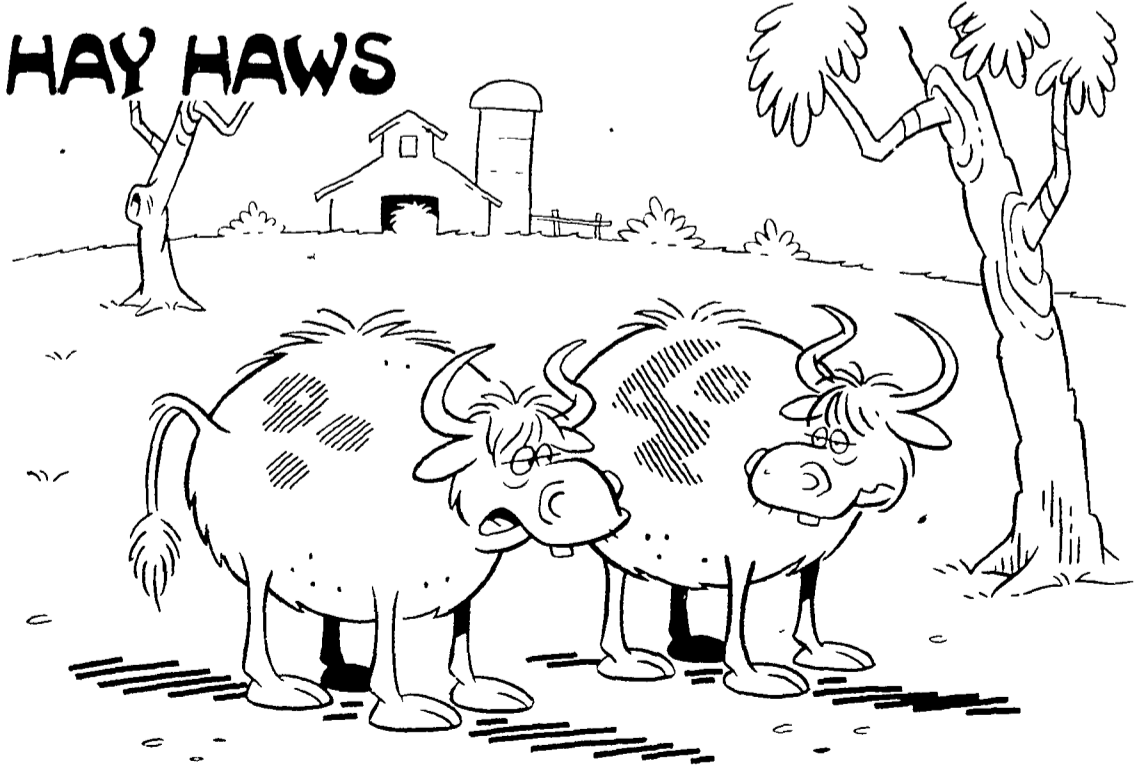
presence of a legume sod prior to corn will add 125 pounds of nitrogen per acre from a good alfalfa sod, and 40 pounds from a red clover sod. This could reduce the fertilizer bill and still give increased yields. Even though corn will be in strong demand in the next few years, some of these findings might make it more profitable.

TO INVEST IN A RESPIRATOR

No doubt you have noticed this suggestion in various pieces of farm press. However, it is still a good gesture to reduce health hazards. Under modern farming practices the farmer is exposed to more dusts, gases, and chemicals than a generation ago. In order to

(Turn to Page A28)

HAY HAWS



"Beautiful surroundings, good feed, vitamins, top vet care...ever occur to you there might be a catch?"