



# Off the Sounding Board

By Sheila Miller, Editor



## Packing promises?

At a press conference held in Harrisburg on the eve of the announcement the Russian grain embargo had at long last come to an end, Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block commented, "It's all behind us now." But, is it really?

Lifting the embargo created a motley of emotions — almost as mixed as the closing prices on the markets that day.

Although most farmers will agree they are relieved to have Uncle Sam's thumb out of the pie, there is still concern about what will happen next.

A spokesman for a national farmers' organization went on record stating Uncle Sam has learned a hard lesson — grain embargoes don't work.

The big question now is how long will that lesson be remembered? If the Soviets show other acts of aggression, be it in Afghanistan or elsewhere, how long will it take Uncle Sam to forget about the 1980 embargo and once again use agricultural products as a punitive slap across the knuckles?

It has been estimated it will take the American farmers two to three years to recover from the effects of this embargo. On the other hand, the embargo has had little effect on Soviet grain supplies. What they lost in U.S. imports, they made up through increased trade with Argentina, Canada, and Australia.

To help 'cushion' the embargo's impact on the American farmer, Uncle Sam called on the Commodity Credit Corporation to step in and pick up the canceled grain and soybean contracts and adjust the grain reserve program to ease the price fall.

Other markets were found for wheat and feed grain exports intended for the

Soviets, offsetting the surplus expected from the embargo. But will those markets continue to buy more grain from U.S. farmers?

USDA has come out with figures that reveal wheat and grain supplies for this year as being more than adequate for both domestic needs and export. Wheat stocks as of June 1, they say, will exceed 900 million bushels — a 5 month supply. An even greater surprise is the 250 million bushels of feed grain just recently 'discovered' in stock.

Even as economists are crying "grain shortage" and livestock feeders have nightmares about feeding high-priced golden grain to hogs and cattle, Uncle Sam soothes their fears with a lullaby of ample supplies. Has he forgotten how quickly Mother Nature can turn ample into short?

One USDA prediction that promises to hold true is the strengthening of short-run grain prices. This promise will bring cheers from grain growers and groans from livestock and dairy producers. Just how strong that market will get will depend on good old supply and demand — that is, unless the Soviets decide to invade Poland.

Uncle Sam has promised if another embargo is invoked on exports to Russia, it would be across the commodity board, not just agriculture. But, let's be realistic.

Who makes the easiest whipping boy for another embargo lesson — a unified industry, like steel or coal, or a diverse, dissected agriculture? It's an easy guess who will find themselves in the corner, waiting once again for

the teacher's permission to move.

April 24 will be a day long remembered by the American farmer as the day the Reagan Administration lifted a heavy millstone from around their necks and allowed them to once again take part in a free enterprise system.

Hopefully, Uncle Sam will have learned the painful lesson that embargoes are ineffective in curtailing aggression in other nations and won't subject the American farmer to another economic ploy in foreign policy.

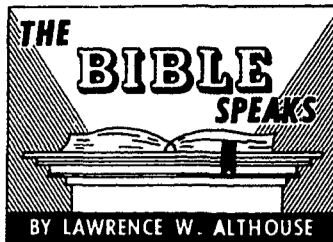
But, just in case, American farmers need to join forces for some real crop insurance by supporting legislators like U.S. Senator Roger Jepsen (R-Iowa) who has promised to propose an amendment in the 1981 Farm Bill that will make embargoes more difficult for future administrations to impose.

Reacting to the end of the grain embargo, Jepsen stated, "President Reagan has sent a message to the world, one which transcends all language, social, and economic differences, that this administration will keep its promises to the people and to the world."

"All the American farmer wants is a farm policy he can count on, and I hope we can have a success this growing season to make up for the burdens imposed on our farmers by government last season."

"We must make a pledge that never again will we allow one segment of our population to bear the burden of foreign policy."

That's one promise we all can applaud.



### A PICTURE OF GOD May 3, 1981

Background Scripture:  
Hebrews 1:1 through 2:9.

Devotional Reading:  
John 10:1-10.

A little girl was working industriously on a drawing. "What are you drawing?" asked her mother. "A picture of God," replied the little girl without looking up. "But nobody knows what God looks like?" her mother said. Still intent on her drawing, the little girl snapped: "Well they will when I'm finished!"

The little girl's attitude makes us chuckle, but when we encounter that same attitude in an adult, it comes through as ARROGANCE with a capital "A". Lots of people are sure that their picture of God is absolutely authentic. God is essentially what they say He is. Furthermore, they believe they have a unique understanding of the mind of God. And the bottom line is this: if they think they have the authentic understanding of God, you must have one that is inferior.

**Many & Various Ways**  
The Letter to the Hebrews begins with a reminder that "In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets" (1:1). "Many and various ways"...not just one way. Because God spoke

in many different ways through many different pictures, we have a varied picture and understanding of who and what He is.

There is an old story about a group of blind people who encountered an elephant. One felt his trunk and decided that an elephant is long and thin. Another grasped the elephant's leg and decided the elephant was thick and round. Still another grasped the elephant's ear and his impression of the elephant was quite different from the others. And the elephant — well, he was like what each person thought, but he was also much more!

That's the way it is with God, too. He has revealed himself in many and various ways, all of which give us some kind of picture of his nature. But he is much more than all of those pictures. He is much more than all the names by which people call him: the Adonai of Judaism, the Allah of Islam, the Krishna and the Shiva of Hinduism, the Sirvana and/or Nirvana of Bhuddism, and the Father of Jesus Christ. Even the word "God" is but an inadequate representation of the reality it purports to designate.

**Spoken By A Son**  
The Christian claim is, not that other religious traditions are in error nor that their deity is something less than ours, but that in Jesus Christ we get the very best picture of God that human nature is able to perceive. As the writer of Hebrews puts it, "but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son" who "reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of his nature" (1:2,3). The human mind can never embrace that all there is to know about and experience of the Divine Reality but as much as we can absorb, that understanding is revealed in Jesus Christ. For to encounter him, is to come face to face with a picture of God.

## Farm Calendar

**Saturday, May 2**  
Penn State Dairy Exposition, University Park.  
Adams County Fruitgrowers' Apple Blossom Festival, South Mountain Fairgrounds, Arendtsville. Continues tomorrow.  
Eastern Limousin Breeders show, 10 a.m., sale at 7 p.m., State Fairgrounds, Columbus, Ohio.  
Delaware Valley College of Agriculture's A-Day, Doylestown. Concludes Monday.  
Egg day, Lebanon Valley Mall, noon to 4 p.m., Lebanon.

**Sunday, May 3**  
PA International Trade Conference, Hershey, Continues Tuesday.  
**Monday, May 4**  
PA Farm Equipment Mfgs. meeting, 5:30 p.m., Sunnyside Rest., Carlisle.  
Lancaster beekeeper twilight meeting, 6:30 p.m., Kauffman's Orchard, Rt 340, two miles east of Bird-in-Hand.  
**Tuesday, May 5**  
Franklin County Conservation District meeting, 7:30 p.m.,

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## NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin

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**To Control Johnsongrass**  
A weed that is showing its ugly head the last several years is Johnsongrass. One of the good times to help eliminate Johnsongrass from a field is in the spring before it is planted to corn. However, the corn planting should be delayed until after May 20 in order to do much good. If you work Eradicane into the soil with several discings, it will prevent Johnsongrass from growing. If it is done early in the spring, the material will not be effective because the Johnsongrass is not far enough along. Fields in winter grain can be treated after grain harvest. Wait until the grass grows

several feet high and then spray with materials such as Roundup. If you don't stop Johnsongrass now, it will take over a field in a few years.

### To Use Pest Control on Corn

Planting the 1981 corn crop is just about ready to get underway. There are many important practices to planting a corn crop, but one that should not be overlooked is the application of an insecticide in the row at planting time to control corn rootworm. Fields that have been in corn for a number of years are more likely to carry the rootworm infestation.

It is very important to apply the

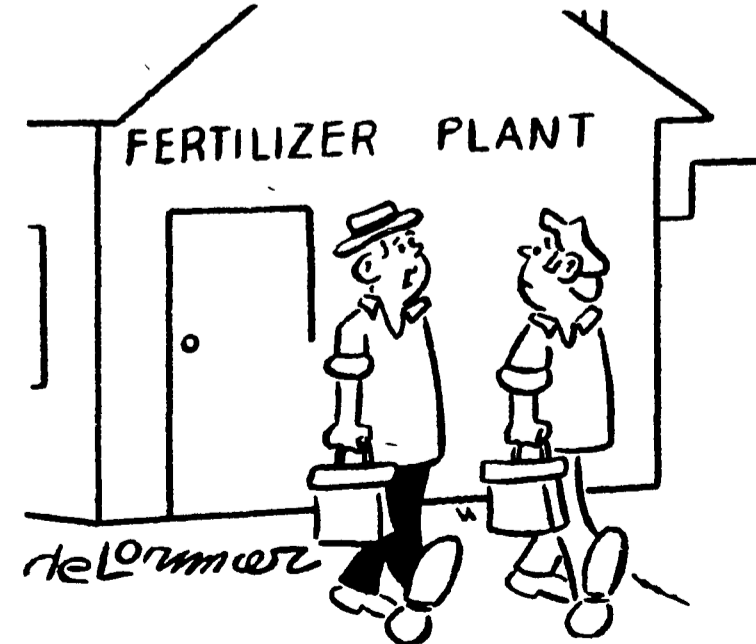
right material at the proper time. Check the 1981 Agronomy Guide for detailed information. If you do not have a copy, give us a call or drop us a card and we will send you a copy. Be sure to follow the label instructions for application rates.

### To Think Ryelage

Many farmers plant rye as a forage crop for their cattle. Our dairy agent, Glenn Shirk, reminds us that rye can provide a lot of much needed high-quality forage - if it is handled properly. For top quality feed value, rye should be cut around the boot stage of maturity, and wilted before ensiling. After this stage, feed value

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## HAY HAWS



When I first started here about a year ago, everyone called me Shorty. But then — and it's probably just a coincidence — I started to grow all of a sudden and added more than four inches since that time