



Off the Sounding Board

By Sheila Miller, Editor

Should dairy producers move to New Zealand?

Politics is at best a confusing subject. But, we have to throw up our hands and plead total bewilderment at the way our government is playing games with the dairy industry.

It's no secret that food and other agricultural products are used as diplomatic tools at the whims of our 'leaders' — but this business about sending the wrong signals to foreign governments if we sell them certain foods is a lot of chicken litter.

It's evident that we're not the only ones in this state of bafflement. National Grange Master Edward Anderson recently wrote a letter to President Reagan asking for clarification of the Administration's position on trade relations. He wrote:

"Mr. President, we are confused. Why would butter sales to the Soviets send the wrong signal, when pipe laying equipment sales do not? . . . U.S. farmers should not continue to pay the cost of our East-West trade policy."

And, what about the Reagan Administration and USDA selling out to two little islands that, combined, are only as large as the state of Colorado — New Zealand.

First, let's look at USDA's unbelievable marketing strategy of giving New Zealand Dairy Board 220 million pounds of Commodity Credit Corporation-owned butter for \$155 million — 35 cents under what butter brokers were offering on the open market. It has been estimated that this shrewd business deal cost U.S. taxpayers \$77 million dollars.

Now, who's got their "signals crossed?"

As if New Zealand hadn't gotten the upper hand on our dairy exports with that contract, they continued to play their cards right and somehow convinced the Reagan Administration to grant them a one-year veto over future U.S. commercial butter exports and monopoly rights to all U.S. butter exports for the next 1½ years.

And, the little country didn't take long to throw its pint-sized weight around while Uncle Sam's dairy producers were still recoiling from the first blow.

In the September 11 Washington Newsletter, National Farmers Union announced "the New Zealand Dairy Board blocked an Egyptian effort to buy 26.5 million pounds of surplus butter from CCC stocks." Farmers' Union Milk Marketing Cooperative President Stewart G. Huber stated "Egyptian interest in buying U.S. butter clearly demonstrates how badly our butter is desired in the world market and how harmful the Section C provision is to U.S. interests and our dairy farms."

Farm organizations weren't the only ones puzzled by this U.S. giveaway. Congressman Tom Harkin (D-5th, Ia.), chairman of the House Agriculture subcommittee on Livestock, Dairy and Poultry was curious enough about the unorthodox dealings that he called a subcommittee hearing last Thursday to investigate the "highly irregular" matter.

Although Secretary of State Alexander Haig and Secretary of Agriculture John Block were invited to testify, they sent representatives Richard Smith (USDA) and Michael Calingaert (State).

According to Harkin's aide George Palmer, neither Smith or Calingaert had any "good answers" on why CCC butter was sold to only New Zealand; or why we didn't deal with the Soviets in the first place instead of New Zealand who'll squeeze the butter into oil for the Soviets or sell them an equal amount of domestic butter.

Palmer stated USDA expressed the opinion that New Zealand was the only country that showed interest in U.S. butter and that theirs was the best deal we could have gotten. To top it all off, our fearless leaders even had the crust to say they were satisfied with the butter deal.

So now that we've 'given' away our butter to New Zealand, along with our independent export privileges, we turn around and buy our cheese and butter back — not only from New Zealand, but from Finland, Austria, Norway and the European Economic Community. Didn't they tell us our domestic dairy supplies were already saturating the market?

In all his wisdom, Uncle Sam has already imported more than 90 million pounds of cheese since January — nearly 50 percent above last year's 7-month imports.

Our cheese imports from New Zealand amounted to 7.3 million pounds since January — an increase of 50 percent over last year. And, in July (the month of surprises), the U.S. imported 36,981 pounds of butter, an increase of 20 percent from a year earlier.

Confused? Join the club.

The Administration is dealing shady business capers under the table all the while futures of U.S. dairy producers are at stake. Add to that the 1981 Farm Bill and it seems that our dairy farmers just can't win with these politicians.

Farmers, and especially dairy producers, need to let elected leaders know which side their bread is buttered on. Either that or move to New Zealand where they seem to know how to make the most of the dairy market.

NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin

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To Be Aware of the Century Farm Program
The Century Farms Program is aimed at recognizing the efforts of Pennsylvania's farm families which have preserved the traditions and the rural heritage of the pioneer farm.

The program was initiated as part of the Nation's bicentennial observance in 1976, but is being continued for its value in promoting the ideals of the family farm and the importance of far-

ming to Pennsylvania's economy. To be eligible for certification as a Pennsylvania Century Farm, a farm must have been owned by the same family for the last 100 consecutive years, and a family member must currently reside on the land. In addition, the farm must consist of ten or more acres of the original holdings or gross at least \$1,000 a year from the sale of agricultural products.

We encourage you to participate in this program that is ad-

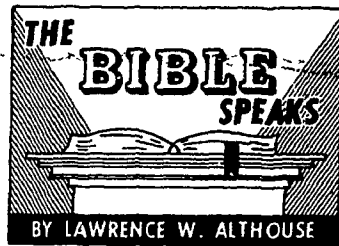
ministered by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture.

Applications are available at the County Extension Offices.

To Stop Fertilizing Trees and Shrubs

During this time of the year we should not be applying any fertilizer to rose bushes, trees and shrubs. The season's growing period is about over and the new growth should have a chance to harden before cold weather

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EVERYTHING IS BEAUTIFUL!
September 20, 1981

Background Scripture:

Ecclesiastes 3:1-15.

Devotional Reading:

Romans 2:1-10.

"Everything is beautiful!"

Well, of course, that statement sounds wonderful and I enjoy singing "Everything is beautiful..." but is that possible? Everything? Beautiful?

Maybe the preacher of Ecclesiastes meant to say "useful" instead of "beautiful". Or perhaps he should have qualified the declaration by saying, "Lots of things are beautiful."

But, no, the preacher said "Everything is beautiful," and I guess we have to assume that he meant to say exactly what he said.

Everything A Season

Of course, the preacher probably got his idea from God, because God can see what you and I cannot see. He knows what a thing or person can be or become. He knows the potential, while we see but the surface of most things and most creatures.

Furthermore, there is an inner design to his creation that makes it all fit together. Thus, Ecclesiastes can proclaim, "For everything there is a season and a time for every matter under heaven" (3:1). We can only judge a thing beautiful in the long run and it is the long run

that is so much a part of God's grand design. For example, we may not be much impressed when we first meet someone, but, in time, after we get to know them better, we may find there is something very beautiful about them. In our eyes there will seem to be a season of blooming and then we can begin to appreciate just a glimmer of what the preacher is saying: "He has made everything beautiful in its own time" (3:11).

Perhaps that is the key: "in its own time." We have to wait for the right season until the beauty appears in someone's life, but, because "time" itself is only a human perception, God sees the potential as part of the present. "That which is, already has been; that which is to be, already has been; and God seeks what has been driven away" (3:15)—[causes the past to be repented]. God sees me this day, not only as I appear right now, but as I have been, as I can be, and as I shall be—and thus he can see a beauty in me that you cannot, just as he can see a beauty in you I may not.

The Gift of Pleasure

So everything in this world and in our lives is part of a plan that unfolds to the seasons known only to God, and, because we are part of this divine order, we are beautiful and everything else is...if we take the long run view. And, in addition, it is part of the grand design of God's creation that life be a pleasure for his creatures: "it is God's gift to man that every one should eat and drink and take pleasure in all his toil" (3:13).

Lots of Christians need to write that verse on their doorposts: life is intended to give us pleasure! It is not something we steal or trick from a grim creation, but a beauty that God has placed there—from the very beginning.

Farm Calendar

Today, September 19

PA Jersey Sale, Guernsey Sales Pavilion, Lancaster, 12:30

Sunday, September 20

Gratz Fair until Sat.

World Fertilizer Conference, New York's Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, until Tuesday

Monday, September 21

PA All-American Dairy Show,

Farm Show Complex, continues until Friday

Reading Fair opens, cont. thru Sat.

Junior Dairy Show, 9 a.m., Farm Show Building

Williamsburg Farm Show, Williamsburg, until Thursday

All American Dairy Show, Harrisburg, until Friday

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HAY HAWS



"This is too simple and to the point, Morby. Have you forgotten that you work for the Department of Agriculture?"