



## Off the Sounding Board

By Sheila Miller, Editor

### How about being cooperative?

Cooperative.

Webster defines this word as: working or acting together willingly for a common purpose or benefit; a jointly owned means of production or distribution of goods or services operated by the consumers for their mutual benefit.

Such a simple idea for this multi-syllabled word — people working together toward a common goal that will benefit all.

Since October has been designated national Cooperative Month, it's only fitting to comment on what cooperation has done for agriculture and rural areas.

For starters, life in the country would not be as easy for many folks without the energy cooperative, the Rural Electric Association. This teaming of efforts made it possible for electricity to become available at reasonable cost to people living on farms and in rural areas in the early part of this century.

Then, take the various bull studs throughout the country that bring the tops in genetics to 'everyday' farmers' barns for an affordable price. These co-ops have helped lead the way in production capabilities of dairy and beef herds throughout the U.S., and have saved countless farmers' lives with the elimination of bulls on every cattle farm.

Marketing and consumer co-ops have helped farmers and others sell their produce and livestock for better prices, and have given bargaining powers to individual farmers that would be perhaps unattainable to them when dealing alone.

Being part of a cooperative effort is nothing new for farmers. Ever since the time the Indians showed the inexperienced pilgrims how to use fish to fertilize corn, there has been a sense of cooperation in U.S. agriculture. Pioneers on ventures to the untamed West would not have survived in many cases without the pooling together of labor and supplies to build homes, barns and cultivate their crops.

There is still a great deal of

cooperation on U.S. farms today. Concerned people work together for various legislative actions that will safeguard agricultural land for generations to come.

And, when misfortune strikes a neighbor, friends and relatives still team together to rebuild, whether it's the moral fiber of the family or a structure razed by fire.

And when it comes to lending a guiding hand to a young upstart in the business, farmers are sure in luck. For starters, there's the Cooperative Extension Service, a gold mine of information on just about a zillion subjects, and the Federal Land Bank 'rives' out a slightly lesser amount in finance funds — the former without and the latter with fee.

Where old-timers in other businesses guard their trade secrets like hawks, seasoned farmers delight in sharing what they know with young farmers through 4-H and FFA clubs, along with Young Farmers organizations. After all their 'educating' is shared, farmers usually get a good chuckle as young proteges attempt to emulate their 'teachers' — with skills still rough around the edges, unpolished by years of experience.

Cooperation goes hand in hand with the farm family way of life. Brothers and sisters pitching in to get the chores done, parents working side by side to make ends meet. It's that pride in their work and in each other that keeps them going strong in spite of all the rough times and long hours.

And, as a wise person said at a time when no one noticed who was speaking, "There are few, if any, jobs in which ability alone is sufficient. Needed also are loyalty, sincerity, enthusiasm, and cooperation."

That is just as true in farming as in any other career.

And, although there will always be differences of opinion in and outside of the farm community, the spirit cooperation will help to sustain agricultural friends and neighbors for generations to come.

## NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin

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### To Inspect Heating Systems

With colder weather just around the corner, many types of heating units will come into use. In order to prevent the potential for fires and other problems, we suggest that all chimneys and flues be checked for cracks and places where sparks can escape.

In this part of the country tobacco sheds have stoves to provide comfort for the winter job

of stripping tobacco. Many of these have been in operation for years and may need some attention. The mortar around pipes and between bricks may have fallen out; in many cases a repointing job with mortar will make the system much safer.

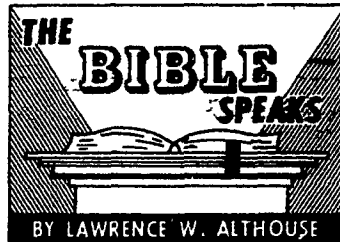
Don't take chances on a faulty system; it could start a major barn fire or the fumes could cause suffocation.

### To Practice

#### Good Public Relations

Farmers should be concerned about their image in the community. In most cases it's very good, and also the majority of non-farm people in the rural areas respect and needs and problems of the farmer. The image can be improved by getting better

(Turn to Page A12)



### THE INNER HUNGER

October 18, 1981

#### Background Scripture:

Micah 6

#### Devotional Reading:

Jeremiah 9:7-11.

A certain nationally notorious and outspoken atheist is often reviled for her abrasive denial of God. What God really thinks about her is something that, as far as I'm concerned, is best left to God and the woman herself. As I see it, the greatest danger in our society is not from those who deny God's existence, but from those who affirm it but don't agree with or like what God expects of us.

There are many, many people both in church and outside it who believe in God, but who have never let that belief deter them from a way of living that is contrary to what God requests of his believers. Believing in God is not all that difficult, but, what is difficult, is letting that belief direct the way we live in this world.

#### WHAT PLEASES GOD?

Part of our problem is that, when we personally respond to the reality of God, we want to do it our way. It's like buying a birthday present for someone, not because we know they'll like it but because we like it. The history of the religions of the world is the history of people giving God presents he never asked for and does not really want.

For many of us, responding to our belief in God means following rituals, building institutions and buildings, and adopting lifestyles that are not really important to God. We are sometimes lavish in our giving to God, but what God really may want from us is often ignored. That is precisely the concern that Micah is addressing:

"With what shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before God on high?"

Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old?

Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousand rivers of oil?" (Micah 6:6,7).

Those were the things the people of Israel were giving to God, but they weren't the things God wanted from them. What he wanted was something they didn't want to give: "He has showed you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice; and to love kindness and walk humbly with your God?" (6:8).

**MEN WITH WICKED SCALES**

Burnt offerings, thousands of rams, and rivers of sacrificial oil—none of that really mattered to God. What mattered was that the same people who brought burnt offerings were the same people who cheated and lied so that they could "get ahead." The corruption of their society which they tried to cover-up with religious respectability was the reason that God would bring judgement upon them. "You shall eat but not be satisfied, and there shall be hunger in your inward parts" (6:14).

When people withhold from God what he really wants—justice, kindness, humility—there is an inner hunger within us that can never be filled with either religious respectability or self-indulgent materialism.

## OUR READERS WRITE, AND OTHER OPINIONS

### Let's get gov't out

I always turn to page A10 first each week when I receive Lancaster Farming to read the editorial which I enjoy because the information there is so basic and sound.

My first exception was the editorial of October 3, 1981 where you are advocating and supporting House Bill 1483 regarding the state taking over water management.

In theory, it sounds great, but we have had over fifty years of government trying to regulate our affairs which accounts for the mess we are in today.

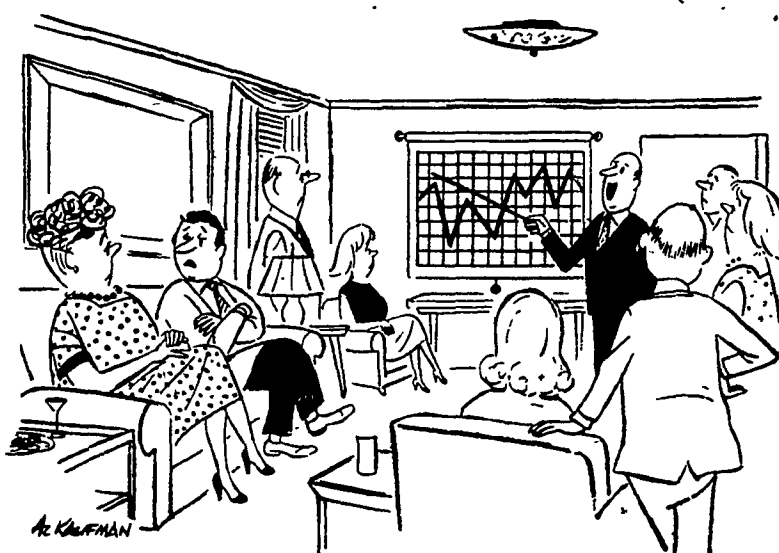
For example - Social Security was alright in theory, but then every succeeding group of politicians wanted to do something for their constituency back home. And so they turned it into a welfare program and you now see the mess they have made of Social Security.

So, please, let's get government out of our affairs as much as possible and follow the advice of Abraham Lincoln.

Loren L. Eves  
Millville, Pa.

(Turn to Page A12)

## HAY HAWS



"All I asked him was, 'How are things down at the dairy co-op?'"