



Off the Sounding Board

By Sheila Miller, Editor

Room for one more?

Farmers in America have realized the need to band together for self-preservation from the time daring ships carried the first settlers to this great agricultural nation.

Pioneer farmers joined forces — first to ensure a fair price for their shiploads of tobacco and furs sent to England, and later to secure a viable return for their labors from inhabitants of population centers like Boston and Philadelphia.

Over the years, many farm groups have emerged — some have vanished from the scene while others have become well entrenched in the American agricultural world. The services of organizations such as the Grange and American Farm Bureau Federation have been recognized and utilized by farmers for years.

Along with these two veteran farm groups, many smaller, newer factions have sprung up — such as the National Farmers Organization which is holding its national convention this week, American Agricultural Movement, Farmers Union, and others. With so many to choose from, farmers can find a representative to meet their political needs, whether they're leaning to the left, right, or somewhere in between.

And, if the farmers don't find these groups, the groups try to find the farmers. Membership drives scour the ag community in an effort to bolster numbers. The larger the force behind their lobbying efforts, the greater credence given to an organization when it comes to influencing politicians, not to mention the financial backing provided by membership dues.

With all the farm organizations around, it seems hard to believe there can be room for still another. But, a new organization is being formed. Its name — the American Farmers Association.

This organization is not to be confused with American Farm Bureau or the states' Farmers Associations, even though its broad doctrine seems to be overlapping the purposes of these long established farm representatives.

According to AFA founder George J. Arden, The American Farmers Association was formed to meet the serious need among farmers for expert financial planning assistance and to offer farmers many important economic benefits never before available to them. "AFA recognizes that farmers comprise a vital professional group in this country and it is devoted to their financial betterment."

How does AFA plan to accomplish this goal? They say they'll be offering a number of specialized services.

"AFA's service arm, Farmers Planning Service Corp., consists of a nationwide net-

work of financial and estate planning experts who provide in-depth advice in such diverse areas as estate conservation, buy and sell agreements, liquidity of assets, wills, property, incorporation, compensation, employee benefits, retirement plans, tax planning and life and health insurance."

This fledgling farm group also plans to maintain a permanent lobby in Washington, D.C. "for the advocacy of agricultural interests and to serve as a legislative watchdog." Low-cost group and individual insurance plans, special economic and tax seminars, and a variety of consumer programs — such as discounts on the purchase of farm equipment, special leasing programs, and discounted prices on tires, autos, and major appliances — are in the planning, too.

Notice any overlap in efforts already provided by our established, recognized farm representatives?

Helping in the financial end of this group's service to farmers will be its president, Paul Douglass, whose credentials include being the author of the book, Guide to Planning the Farm Estate.

Also on board with AFA are several other well-known people: former Secretary of the Treasury Honorable William E. Simon; Congressman Eugene J. Keogh, the original sponsor of the Self-Employed Retirement Act (HR-10/Keogh Act); former U.S. Senator Eugene J. McCarthy; former California governor Edmund G. 'Pat' Brown; and Lionel Steinberg, president of the California Board of Food and Agriculture. This impressive list of advisors, says AFA, includes "prominent people who are actively involved in the agricultural industry."

Pointing out that farmers don't have the time to devote to the details and demands of their profession, or the time to learn all they need to know about financial planning, Arden announces that "by joining AFA, farmers can save time by relying on experts who can help them to create and update an effective financial plan to enhance economic growth now and maintain a sound course in the future."

AFA, with headquarters in Arden's hometown of Yorktowne Heights, New York, sounds too much like a duplication of effort of our present organizations, without the track-record to go with them.

Splinter groups and special factions should fill a need not already being met. Otherwise it will only tend to fragment the farm effort which has fallen prey to the forces of "divide and conquer" all too often.

There is a limit to the number of organizations farmers can support.

NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin

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To Be Careful When Cleaning Manure Pits

Many manure pits will be emptied at this time of year. It's an opportunity to clean out the pit before cold weather arrives.

When this volume of manure is agitated, there is great danger of toxic and explosive gases being released. Every precaution should be taken.

If there are animals above the pits, maximum ventilation should be provided. When the pit is empty

or partially empty, no one should enter the pit without a respirator or gas mask. There may be dangerous gases present. Also, no smoking or open flames should be nearby.

These pits are the modern way to store manure, but they do present a hazard to both man and animal.

To Control Livestock Parasites
The fall of the year is a good time to eliminate parasites from all types of livestock. Even our local animals can be infested with either

internal or external parasites.

There have been a number of feeder cattle shipped into the county over the past few months. In the case of beef calves or lightweight cattle, they're often infested with stomach worms. For maximum feed efficiency and good production, these parasites must be controlled.

Your local veterinarian can be of great assistance in determining worm infestation. Don't try to manage a livestock operation that

THE BIBLE SPEAKS

BY LAWRENCE W. ALTHOUSE

BORN AGAIN . . . TO LOVE

November 29, 1981

Background Scripture:

1 John 4.

Devotional Reading:

1 Timothy 6: 11-21.

There is a lot of controversy about what it means to be "born again," a term that seems to be but one more way that followers of Jesus Christ separate themselves from one another — and from him! The term, of course, comes from John 3:3 and the story about Nicodemus. Jesus tells the pharisee that one must be "born anew" (or "born from above") if he is to see the kingdom of God.

What does this term mean? What is John trying to say to us by including it in his gospel? Unfortunately, Christians cannot agree on their answers. But, if we read all of John's gospel and his epistles as well, it becomes apparent that the purpose of the "new birth," as well as the evidence for it, is love.

Love and Know God

John follows the story of Nicodemus with the well-known assurance that "God so love the world that he gave his only son. . ." And throughout his gospel and epistles he stresses over and over that, as Christ has loved us, so we must love one another. "New birth" is mentioned but a few

times in the fourth gospel, whereas love is its theme. But in John's first epistle, he brings the two concepts together: "Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and he who loves is born of God and knows God" (1 John 4:7). In other words, whatever else the "new birth" entails, the mark of it, the purpose of it, is to love one another.

As Christians we may like each other, at best, or tolerate each other and discipline our combative and hostile impulses. But "love one another"? Is it possible, Lord? Is that what you really want from us? And if it is, can we do it?

Isn't that what Jesus was all about? To show us — not just tell us — to demonstrate to us that it is not beyond our human capacity to love one another the same way that Christ loved us. "In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his son to be the expiation of our sins" (4:10). The love that took Jesus to his cross was a gift that was given him by God. And that same gift can be given to us, if we really want it.

God and Our Brother

What blocks the gift of love, is our hate. For hate is not just something that happens in us, not just a feeling that takes us over, but it is something that we hold onto because we enjoy it. Hate is not a disease against which there is no defense, but the serpent we invite into our lives and hold onto. So, "If any one says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen" (4:20). If we continue to hate it is because we choose to hate rather than love.

All of us are called by God to be "born anew" and the purpose of that rebirth is to love.

Farm Calendar

Tuesday, December 1
NPPC 1981 Profit Symposium, Des Moines, Hyatt House, Des Moines, Iowa

National Farmers Organization National Convention, Indianapolis, Indiana.

Thursday, December 3
Grain marketing workshop, begins at 9 a.m., continues tomorrow, Sheraton Inn, Dover, Del.

Saturday, December 5
15th Nat'l Young Farmer Educational Institute, Hershey, continues through December 9

HAY HAWS



"Yes, our group's farm-safety insurance policy does cover falling off the barn all right, but not hitting the ground."

includes a parasite infection.

To Review Farm Records
Farm records are a very important part of modern farming. They're not only needed for tax purposes, but more importantly for farm planning. Since we are nearing the end of the cropping season and the end of the calendar year, it is a real good time to take a hard and detailed look at the past year's enterprises.

You'll find that time spent in analyzing farm records, and in

planning the future based on these records, will be very worthwhile. Major decisions are hard to make but are important in today's farming. We hope that good farm records can contribute in these decisions.

To Request a Dairy Heifer Management Circular

Dairy heifers represent a dairy producer's future herd, says Lancaster Dairy Agent Glenn Shirk. They represent the future

(Turn to Page A12)