

**OUR READERS WRITE,  
AND OTHER OPINIONS**

**Sowing hardship, reaping havoc**

The Senate has just passed the first major bill on immigration reform in 30 years, and America's farmers will be the worse for it. If the Immigration Reform and Control Act passes the House of Representatives in its present form, agricultural operations will be governed by rules that severely restrict their access to an essential labor force.

It is no secret that illegal immigration is a national problem - some 425,000 illegals slip across our borders each year. With unemployment at its present level, tempers run hot when illegals are found holding jobs in America.

To address this problem, provisions were written into the immigration bill that levy sanctions against employers who knowingly hire illegals. Such a sweeping approach may sound good on the surface, but it will hobble farmers who must rely on seasonal labor for economic survival.

There is no question that jobs can be had in agricultural labor for those who want them. A diligent worker can earn over \$50 for a day's work in the fields. I recall an instance in my own state of California where olive growers passed out leaflets in shopping plazas, advertising good pay for help during their harvest. Nevertheless, domestic workers refuse to take these jobs, considering them "too hard" or "beneath their dignity."

Farmers are thus faced with a dilemma: either hire the workers who are willing to perform these jobs, or let the season's crops rot in the fields. Most will choose the former, and they inevitably hire illegals in the process. Over 500,000 illegals now work in American agriculture - 20 percent of the total work force - and over half of California's agricultural laborers are illegals. Should these employer sanctions remain in the immigration bill, farmers will be punished for the "crime" of simply trying to earn a living.

Proponents of the immigration

bill say it addresses this problem by expanding the current H-2 program for temporary workers. However, the H-2 program requires farmers to provide housing for temporary workers, as well as transportation to and from the workers' country of origin. Moreover, the H-2 program forces temporary workers to stay with one employer, thereby making it difficult - if not impossible to move where new crops are ready for harvest.

This absence of an effective and workable guest worker program is not the only flaw in the bill. Farmers still have no recourse against agents of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, who can enter a farm unannounced and without producing a search warrant. Unlike other workplaces that require warrants for any inspection, the INS claims that farms are exempt because they are open fields. During harvest season, when the need for seasonal labor is at its peak, INS agents can and have closed farms on suspicion of employing illegals. Farmers in California have reported losses from these raids as high as \$100,000.

An amendment that I introduced to the immigration bill would have extended search warrant requirements to agricultural operations. In essence, the amendment would have guaranteed that farmers would receive the protection of the Fourth Amendment of the Constitution, granting citizens protection from unreasonable search and seizure. Nevertheless, the amendment fell short of passage by seven votes.

The House of Representatives is scheduled to begin its debate on the Immigration Reform and Control Act in September. Unless provisions are added that will provide farmers with a workable guest worker program and search warrant legislation, I sincerely hope that the bill is defeated.

Sen. S.I. Hayakawa  
R-California

**Devastating dairy blow**

The budget reconciliation measure passed by Congress August 18 is devastating to farmers and of no help to consumers.

Sure to be signed into law by President Reagan, the measure can reduce dairy farmers' income by one dollar a hundredweight within six months. The new bill, part of the administration's total effort to cut government spending, authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to assess all U.S. dairy farmers 50 cents a hundredweight on all the milk they produce beginning October 1st of this year.

The money, deducted from farmers' milkchecks, would be paid to the Federal Commodity Credit Corporation as an offset against the cost of the dairy price support program. Although the 50 cents deduction is at the discretion of the Secretary of Agriculture, Washington sources say there is little doubt that he will impose it.

If government purchases of butter, powder, and cheese are still estimated to be at or above 7.5 billion pounds of "milk equivalent" on a fiscal year basis (Oct. 1, 1982 through Sept. 30,

1983), by April 1, 1983 the Secretary can then impose a second 50 cents deduction - bringing the total deduction from farmers' milkchecks to one dollar a hundredweight as of next April's milk production.

Farmers have been willing to set

up a reasonable program that will involve us in sharing some of the costs of the price support program, but this sledgehammer approach is going to put thousands of good dairymen out of business. Milk supplies will drop and consumer prices will rise.

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**Farm Calendar**

**Saturday Sept. 11**  
Penn State Horticulture Show, continues tomorrow.  
Northeastern Breeders Assn. open house, Tunkhannock.  
**Monday, Sept. 13**  
Bellwood-Antis Farm Show, Blair County, continues through Thursday.  
Green Township Community Fair, Commodore, Indiana County, continues through Saturday.  
Poultry Servicemen meeting, 6:30 p.m., Holiday Inn, Lancaster,

speaker Dr. Robert Eckroade on flock profiling.  
Eastern District 8 officers dinner meeting, 7 p.m., Leola Family Restaurant.

Franklin Conservation District meeting, 7:30 p.m., County Administration Bldg., Chambersburg.

**Tuesday, Sept. 14**  
Albion Area Fair, Erie County, continues through Saturday.  
Greenfield Twp. Community Fair, Claysburg, Blair County, continues through Saturday.  
PennAg convention, Holiday Inn, Harrisburg, continues through Thursday.

Nematour demonstration, Tom Olyer farm, Blue Ribbon Road, Gettysburg, 4 p.m.

**Wednesday, Sept. 15**  
Berlin Brothers Valley Community Fair, Berlin, continues through Saturday.

Cameron County Fair, Emporium, continues through Tuesday.  
Solanco Fair, Quarryville, continues through Friday.

Sinking Valley Community Farm Show, Skelp, Blair County, continues through Saturday.

**Thursday, Sept. 16**  
Oley Valley Community Fair, Berks County, continues through Saturday.

North East Community Fair, Erie County, continues through Saturday.

Williamsburg Community Fair, Blair County, continues through Monday.

Anne Arundel County Fair, Sandy Point State Park, Annapolis, Md., continues through Sunday.  
Charles County Fair, La Plata, Md., continues through Sunday.

Lancaster County goat meeting, 7:30 p.m., Lancaster Laboratories, Rt. 23.

**Friday, Sept. 17**  
Blue Valley Farm Show, Penn Argyl, Northampton County, continues through Sunday.

Pa. Ag Foods Expo, Keystone Race Track, Bensalem, continues through Sunday.

**Old-fashioned farming**

In the July 24 issue of Lancaster Farming, Jerry Webb's "Farm Talk" column entitled "All Eggs in One Basket" was a pleasure to read. Ten years ago English farm writers were pointing out much of what he said.

H.G.C. Sexton, in an article "Turning Back to Mixed Farming" (Country Life, July 1, 1971) wrote:

"However, amid the break-downs, the mixed farmer continues the even tenor of his ways, untouched by such unnecessary evils as soil collapse and the prevalence of crop disease and weeds. Crop rotations are the rule, and farmyard manure is returned to the fields. The grazing stock for mixed farming is always present.

"All difficulties of specialized farming have derived from advice based on dissection of the profit from each farm department. And on abandonment of all the lower profit sections, irrespective of their possible place, in their value to the soil as well as in crop health.

"Sheep were the first to be laughed off the farming scene... (now the) former advocates of those land-plundering methods have the effrontery to tell us that sheep carry an unseen profit in healthier and heavier crops. Likewise, it is now said, a grass ley as a corn break works wonders in

soil structure..." ("Corn" is the English term for cereal grains.)

Being in my mid-seventies, I of course hold to the old ways. Back in the 1920s, a farmer's competence with animals was judged on getting maximum production on the minimum feed. Robert Cizik, president and chief executive officer of Texas' giant Cooper Industries, in a speech before the New York Society of Security Analysts on May 3, 1982 hit the nail on the head:

"The inflation that marked the last five to eight years in America produced an extraordinary operating environment - one that had an unusual amount of focus on prices..."

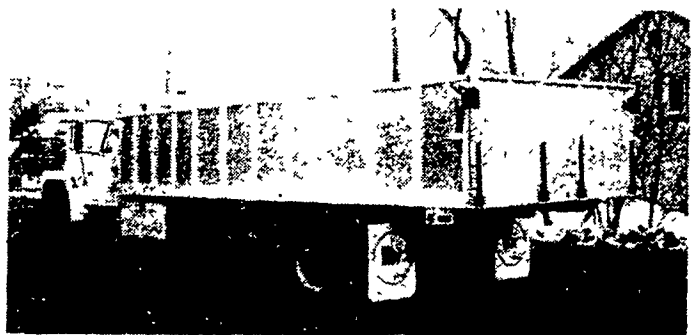
"But now we are moving into a different climate - a climate where the rate of inflation is diminishing - where emphasis in business will shift from the price side to the cost side - where a great deal of money will be made in a few fundamental areas, such as purchasing and labor productivity..."

What is profitable for industry is usually profitable for farming. Seeing how much expensive feed you can put into a dairy cow to produce more pounds of milk for a glutted market does not make sense in my old-fashioned mind.

Anne C. Holst  
East Greenwich, R.I.



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