



Get out of ag

BY DICK ANGLESTEIN

A large manila envelope arrived in the mail the other day. At first, it looked like dozens of others that come weekly.

But then the return address caught my eye. The Department of Defense? Ag newspapers generally don't get much mail from the Defense Department. Denim and khaki don't blend very well.

I could have done without this piece of mail very easily, too.

The envelope contained a fancy report entitled: "The World Grain Economy and Climate Change to the Year 2000: Implications for Policy." It's Part III of another of those bureaucratic think-tank studies first begun way back in 1976 following the scare headlines about the world cooling down and the possible effect on farming.

In addition to questioning the overall worth of the study, which isn't much more than 50 pages of Washington D.C. jargon, I take strong objection to who did the study and why.

It was done by the National Defense University -- part of the Department of Defense.

President of this "university" is a lieutenant general in the Air Force (ours naturally).

Even the postage to mail out the report is paid by the Department of the Army.

Other cooperating groups and agencies included the USDA, Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Institute for the Future, of Menlo Park, Calif..

To any of these groups and particularly Ag Sec. Block, I'd like to pose a couple of questions:

Why is such a study about our possible future capability to produce food done by the Defense Department?

And, why is the bottom line of this study about the possible use of food as a weapon to shape future international policy?

Also, I'd like to know if these fancy futurists with the \$2.00 words like "scenarios" and "methodology" are ever going to learn the bitter lesson of using food as a weapon.

Each time food has been used as a political weapon American farmers have paid and paid dearly.

How many grain embargoes must backfire for the lesson to sink into the thick skulls of our national leaders?

Two paragraphs from the foreword of the study by Lt. Gen. John S. Putsay, USAF, president of the National Defense University, should stick in the craw of every farmer in the country:

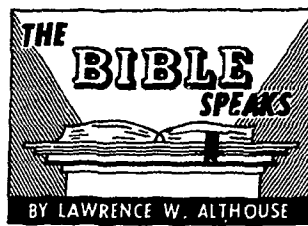
"Another development (of earlier parts of the study), not totally unexpected, has been the relevance of study results to U.S. national policymaking. The study team anticipated that the research, although highly technical in its early stages, would ultimately have implications for national security. The team was pleased to note the Carter administration's responses to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan took cognizance of the conclusions of draft copies of the reports sent to high-level policymakers in key agencies. NDU is equally pleased that a draft of this concluding report is being integrated into the report of the Reagan administration's Global Issues Working Group.

"The role of U.S. "food power" in U.S. policies remains unresolved, and this report is helpful to the continuing discussion. A major conclusion of the study is that the United States can consider its proper role in the world food situation for the rest of the century without great fear that major climatic changes will significantly upset the calculations. This study provides the scientific base which enables planners to have at least some degree of confidence that their plans will not be undermined by climatic change."

In plain English, the report and the National Defense University is not only taking credit for helping to bring about the Afghanistan grain embargo, but says that climate changes should not have much effect on using the same tactic in the future.

I have only one comment, actually two, for General Putsay and the Defense Department: Get out of agriculture.

And, stay out.



MORE THAN A SURVIVOR
August 28, 1983

Background Scripture: Esther.
Devotional Reading: Psalms 31: 19-24.

"I'm a survivor" has become an increasingly universal creed. It is based on a conviction that, no matter what may come upon us, the most important thing is for us to find some way to survive the experience. It may mean compromising one's principles, submitting to humiliation, and even participating in some form of evil or debasing activity - so long as it enables us to survive.

Eyed in the cold light of reason and morality, it must be evident to us that, although being a "survivor" is greatly to be desired, it is something that should not be bought at the price of our own damnation. The problem is that when we are confronted by this choice - between surviving and maintaining our integrity - reason and morality are often clouded by our instinct towards self-preservation.

IN THE KING'S PALACE

The story of Esther - or Hadassah - is a shining example for all of us who are tempted to choose survivorship over discipleship. Esther, as Queen to the powerful King Ahasuerus of

Persia, must have assumed that she at least would be safe from the anti-semitic plots of Haman. She was shocked when she learned of his terrible plots against the Jews, yet she realized that there was nothing she could do, for it was forbidden for even a queen to attempt to interfere in the rule of her husband.

Mordecai, her adopted father and leader of the Jewish exiles, sent a message which startled her from her complacency. "Think not that in the king's palace you will escape any more than all the other Jews." The king's palace, although it had seemed safe and secure to Esther, was no place to hide. For, even if she should escape physical harm from Haman, she would not escape the deep stain of guilt for having failed to speak for her people. "For if you keep silence at such a time as this," warned Mordecai's messengers, "relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another quarter, but you and your father's house will perish. And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

HOLD A FAST

Mordecai's words were able to penetrate Esther's survivorship defenses. She knew that she had to at least try to save her people. She also realized that she needed help beyond herself and so she asked for spiritual support: "hold a fast on my behalf... I and my maids will also fast as you do." At last she saw things clearly and she made the response that guaranteed that she would be more than a survivor: "... I will go to the king, though it is against the law; and if I perish, I perish."

Only thus did she become a survivor in the truest sense of the term.

NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin

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To Be Alert For Silo Gas

The dry weather and heat stress has really affected the corn growth. Much of the corn did not develop ears, and stalk size was reduced to about one-half of normal size. This condition increases the danger of poisonous gases - known to farmers as "silo gas". We urge our farmers to discuss this hazard with their employees and all family members. These gases can develop from one day to 14 days after the silo is filled. Most of these gases have a chlorine-laundry bleach odor and irritate the eyes and respiratory system. Some are yellow, some brown and some colorless. Don't take any chances - warn all your people of the danger of silo gas.

Never enter a partly filled silo without running the blower for at least 15-20 minutes. These gases are heavier than air and will come down the chute and into the barn. Be very careful around recently filled silos this year.

To Prepare For Local Fairs

We are rapidly approaching the time for local fairs. These times should be happy events - but once in a while they are not because planning was not done ahead of time. This is the time to take necessary precautions to help prevent the possibility of your taking diseases to the fair with your poultry or animals or bringing infection home to your farm.

Many fairs require health charts and specific tests or vaccinations for animals and poultry. Be sure to read the health regulations carefully. And, it doesn't hurt to be more strict than what the regulations may require. Animals

or poultry with any form of communicable ailment should be left at home.

When animals or poultry leave the fair and go home, it's important to have a place where you can isolate them and observe them closely for a period of time before returning them to their herd mates. If in doubt, consult your veterinarian for advice.

To Apply For Gasoline Tax Refund

I would like to remind our farmers that applications for the Pennsylvania Liquid Fuel Tax Refund should be filed before September 30.

Farmers may apply for an 11 cent per gallon refund on all liquid fuels used in non-licensed tractors when used off the highway for agricultural purposes, or non-licensed power farm machinery used for actual farm work. This includes fuel used in all auxiliary engines or balers, elevators and other stationary equipment.

The liquid fuel tax is for all farm production fuel used between July 1, 1983 and June 30, 1983.

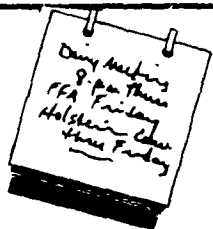
The people who have not already received applications should apply by writing: Board of Finance and Revenue, Room 409, Finance Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120 or by calling 717-787-3365.

Remember, applications received after September 30 will not be honored; they must be filed on time. The time to do it is now.

Keep in mind - this is not money the State is giving you - it's money you already paid, you are just applying to get it back. It may not seem like much but 11 cents per gallon on 5,000 gallons is \$550.00.

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Farm Calendar



Saturday, Aug. 27
NW Holstein Breeders Sale at Crawford Fair.
4-H District Horst Show, Kersey.

Forestry Safety Field Day, Fairgrounds, Smethport.
Horse Exercise Clinic, Journey's End Farm, Glemore, continues tomorrow.

SE District Horse Show, Montgomery Co. 4-H Center, Lansdale.

Flemington, N.J. Agricultural Fair, continues through Sept. 3.

Sunday, Aug. 28
Pa. Flying Farmers, landing

before noon at Rostgravers, visit home of Tom and Esther Cox, near Pittsburgh.

Monday, Aug. 29
South Central District 4-H Dairy Show, Farm Show Complex.

Dairymen, Inc., District 14, 7 p.m., Harvest Drive Restaurant, Gordonville.
Elizabethtown Fair opens, continues through Saturday.

Tuesday, Aug. 30
Allentown Fair, continues through Labor Day.

Wednesday, Aug. 31
Pa. Classic Ayrshire Sale, Guernsey Sales Barn,

Lancaster.

Thursday, Sept. 1
Schuylkill County Extension vegetable growers meeting, 6 p.m., Labenberg Brothers Farm, Zion Grove.

Conservation tillage tour in Lancaster County for Ephrata and Solanco Young Farmers, 8 a.m., Ephrata Junior High, 2 p.m. Solanco High School.

Saturday, Sept. 3
4-H District Dairy Show, Meadville Fairgrounds.

Ram Lamb Performance Sale, 12:30 p.m., State College.

Otis

