

Ramblections

In the Oval Office

BY DICK ANGLESTEIN

Back in the mid-70's, I had the opportunity to visit the White House on three occasions to accompany the U.S. Farm Family of the Year during their introductions to the President. It was during the hectic transitional period of our country and the visits involved three different presidents -- Nixon, Ford and Carter.

Here are a few impressions and memories from those visits:

Nixon -- Aloof and insincere.

Ford -- The most genuinely warm and outgoing.

Carter -- Hesitant and appeared overwhelmed by the office.

Only Ford used the Rose Garden to greet the Farm Family and added an additional personal touch of including other governmental leaders, such as the late Sen. Hubert Humphrey.

Both Nixon and Carter stayed in the safe confines of the Oval Office to greet and talk with the farm family and the atmosphere was much more formal and artificial.

During the Rose Garden session with Ford, I moved off away from the group to get a better angle for a photograph and happened to step around the roped-off area. Somewhere out of the shrubbery suddenly materialized a well-dressed young man with sun glasses and a receiver in his ear. He didn't say a word but firmly laid a hand on my shoulder and steered me back where I belonged.

Probably the most lasting impression of the visits is that of the White House Photo Press Corps. After the initial greeting in the Oval Office and brief discussion with the family, the president would have the large double doors opened and in would pour the TV, magazine and newspaper cameramen.

Well, I have seen half-starved cattle which were better behaved when they were first turned loose to the feed bunk. The stiff, solemn decorum of the Oval Office would suddenly be turned into a shambles.

These cameramen apparently had their own pecking order and seniority, elbows and rough language would control their jostling for front-row positions.

I can still recall one big, hardened North Dakota farmer, who just the week before had wrestled half-wild steers during branding and hadn't backed away one inch. But when the camera corps stampeded into the Oval Office, he automatically stepped back a pace in amazement.

The Farm Family during its stay in Washington had the use of a chauffeured stretch limousine, which was also used to take the family to the White House.

I can recall driving through the gate into the White House and a bunch of people flashing cameras through the windows. Boy, were they probably surprised when they got their film developed and found some unknowns in their photos rather than a world dignitary.

Another recollection is that of the luncheon given by the Secretary of Agriculture in his private dining room for the family. The food there was absolutely the worst.

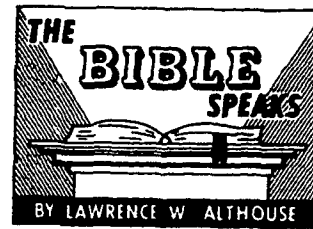
Highlight of the social portion of the visit was always the evening at either Kennedy Center, Ford's Theatre or Wolf Trap.

The Farm Family of the Year was selected through the Farmers Home Administration. Families who were FmHA borrowers and had done a good job of bettering their operations were selected on a state level and then competed for the national honor. They would then come to Washington for the visit with the President, USDA officials and sightseeing, accompanied by their state director and representatives of the host farm machinery company.

The program was started under the Republicans and then disbanded after Carter's first year because the Democrats didn't want to give an impression of collusion between the federal government and big business. It shows how even politics casts its shadow on something as harmless as honoring a farm family.

And one other observation. To get security clearance to the White House, all you need do is submit your Social Security number, under which all information must be filed.

And if I can get security clearance to be in the Oval Office, I would think most anyone can.



A BAD BARGAIN October 2, 1983

Background Scripture:
Jeremiah 2: 9-13; Romans 1:18 through 2:29.
Devotional Reading:
Romans 2:5-11

I've made my share of bad bargains over the years. Right now a tow car is towing away one of them.

The only reason my bad bargains haven't completely wrecked my outlook on life is that I know that all human beings have a tendency to make them. There was Esau, for example, trading away his valuable birthright for a bowl of pottage. And Judas, selling his soul for 30 pieces of silver. History is a chronicle of one bad bargain after another.

BROKEN CISTERNS

Bible history in particular records a lot of bad bargains. One of God's continuing complaints against the people of Israel was their habit of trading away their faith in the Lord for something else that was quite worthless. This is the very complaint which God made against them through the prophet Jeremiah:

For my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water. (2:13).

God is not really talking about water in this passage, but about the worship of other gods. Israel

has looked elsewhere for the help and security which only the Lord can give. They have made idols and then worshipped the work of their own hands.

Paul, writing to the Church at Rome, warns them against making the same kind of bad bargain.

Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man or birds or animals or reptiles. Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity...because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen. (1:22-25).

LIFE INSTEAD OF TRUTH

Actually, the complaint sounds quite similar to the one God made through the prophet Jeremiah, except that Paul carries it one step further and clarifies the meaning so no one can mistake it: "they...worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator..." Up to this point, you and I might feel justified in maintaining that idolatry is no longer a problem in our contemporary world. We no longer worship idols.

Yet, though we may no longer fashion gods with our own hands, we are not free of idolatry, for the real meaning of idolatry, as Paul makes clear, is that we end up worshipping and serving the creature rather than the Creator. And that is still a problem with us today, isn't it? We still worship and serve the creations of our own hands: our technology, our material possessions, our own licentiousness. We are still giving to dumb, dead things the veneration and loyalty that belongs to the Creator alone. That is a bad bargain that can never be a good one.

NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin

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To Prepare For Wheat Planting

Wheat is an important crop in many of our farming programs and the selection of good seed will result in a better crop next year. Due to a general infection of Scab and Powdery Mildew in our winter wheat last summer, growers should be extra careful this fall by planting clean seed. Certified seed would be free of these problems. If you are planning to use home-grown seed, then do an extra good job of cleaning and treating. Vitavax 200 is a recommended fungicide for seed treatment. The fly-free date is either after the first killing frost or in southeastern Pennsylvania, October 10.

Just a few reminders on planting wheat - it should not be planted in the same field more often than once every 5 years. This time period will reduce the fungus carryover in the soil. Plow the fields as early as you can, then disc and harrow to kill as many weeds as possible. It's also a good idea to harrow the field thoroughly the day of seeding.

To Treat Cattle Ectoparasites

With cold weather fast approaching, cattlemen need to begin thinking about treating for cattle lice, grubs, and barn itch.

Grub treatment should be made in late September or October. The greatest number of grub larvae will be killed if cattle are treated

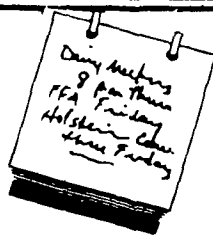
near the end of the fly season. After November migrating grub larvae are found close to the spinal cord where their death can produce problems. There are a variety of systemic pesticides that are safe, effective and approved for use on beef cattle and dairy heifers. They can be applied either as a spray, pour-on or spot treatment. In addition to grubs, the same single treatment will also control cattle lice and blood sucking intestinal worms. Some of the recommended insecticides for controlling insects and mites on cattle are Ectaban, Atroban, Permethrin and Ectrun. Follow label directions for correct use.

To Fertilize Alfalfa Stands

After the last cutting in alfalfa is removed, it is a good practice to topdress the field with a phosphorus-fertilizer. Many growers have been doing this for years with good results. The fall application permits time for the soil elements to reach the root zone of the plants and become available for next spring's growth. Well fertilized alfalfa fields will produce more top quality forage and will be able to withstand adversities much better. Also, after the removal of the first crop next spring, another application of fertilizer should be made. Research continues to show that a nitrogen application on established stands of alfalfa is not a good investment.

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Farm Calendar



Saturday, Oct. 1
Md. Polled Hereford Assn. sale, Frederick, Md. Fairgrounds. Show at 3 p.m.; sale at 6:30 p.m.

Sunday, Oct. 2
Semi-annual meeting, Pa. Arabian Horse Assn., Elks Country Club, Boalsburg.

Monday, Oct. 3
Pa. International Trade Conference, Hershey Philadelphia Hotel, continues tomorrow. Annual conference, Pa. Assn. of Conservation Districts, York, continues through Wednesday.

Tuesday, Oct. 4
Semi-annual meeting, Pa. Farm

Vacation Assn., Annville.

Wednesday, Oct. 5
Lancaster Conservation District meeting, 4 p.m., Farm and Home Center. Eastern National Livestock Show, Timonium, Md., continues through Saturday.

Annual meeting, Pa. Association of Farmer Cooperatives, Penn State. Christmas Tree Growers meeting, 7:30 p.m., Student Activities Center, Penn State Campus at Schuylkill Haven.

Dairymen, Inc., District 7, Centre Park Presbyterian Church, New Park, 7 p.m.

Thursday, Oct. 6
Dairy refund and 1984 wheat program meetings in York County; 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. at Airville Chanceford Presbyterian Church; 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. at 4-H Center at Barr; 7:30 - 9:30 p.m. at Room 105, Dover High School.

Friday, Oct. 7
State 4-H Horse Show, Farm Show Bldg., continues tomorrow.

Saturday, Oct. 8
International Trotting and Pacing Pony Sale, Farm Show Complex.

