

Was it worth it?

BY DICK ANGLESTEIN

Some 209 years and 100 days ago, a bunch of farmers unofficially founded this nation.

They laid down their hoes and pitchforks, picked up their muskets and faced the most professional and highly trained army in the world near Concord, Mass.

What prompted these normally peaceful farmers to leave their fields and risk being permanently planted in those fields? In one word -- INDEPENDENCE.

I wonder what those farmers who prized their independence above personal safety and well-being would say today about the dependent state of some phases of agriculture.

I wonder if some of them might say: "Was it all worth it?"

In the spirit of these fiercely independent New England farmers who "gave them ball for ball, from behind each fence and barn-yard wall," I think it is long past the time that farming -- the last true bastion of independence in this dependent, big-brother society -- begins a soul-searching reassessment of itself and gets back to some of the old-fashioned principles and ideals that motivated some of their forebearers to risk everything.

Enough is enough concerning government subsidization and bailouts -- not only in ag but in everything. How far must quasi-governmental welfare programs be extended to shore up ag or any kind of business that doesn't hold up its own end of responsibility.

It is not only government subsidization but it

is good farmers helping to keep the bad in business. Everyone of us knows a farmer or two who hasn't accepted his or her share of the responsibility to change with the times and help their own continued existence. The good got to get the bad off their backs or both will end up going under.

Every farmer has the right to succeed if success is deserved. But at the same time each of us has the same right to fail if failure is all that we earn. It's when the danger of failure is removed or watered down that everything gets out of kilter. The danger of failure is what motivates us all the harder to succeed. If that danger doesn't exist, then the prime motivation doesn't exist either.

Farmers have this strange contrasting quirk in their makeup. Most are among the first to adopt new mechanical technology, but some also are among the last to adapt to change in methods or thinking.

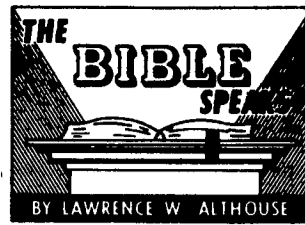
Farmers got to move more into the forefront of grabbing the bull by the horns and helping to solve some of their own problems. In addition to economics, here are a few areas of need:

EROSION -- A better job got to be done or some laws are going to come along with real teeth in them to "encourage" reluctant farmers to comply.

ENVIRONMENT -- How much manure and chemicals can the soil take? It makes no sense at all to have two sets of rules about things like depositing human or animal wastes into the soil. Septic tanks are not permitted when human population densities reach a certain level. Should the land continue to be used as an "ag septic tank" in some areas for mountains of wastes from heavy densities of animals?

WATER -- The future of Northeastern agriculture lies in water. No section of this country is blessed with a better network of streams and rivers. Ag must make certain that it gets its share of that water and at the same time must do more to make certain that water is pure and useable.

COOPERATION -- Let's quit this needless bickering in ag. Let's get together and start solving some of our problems as a cohesive, united farming force. If we don't, others are going to force solutions upon ag. And, the price to be paid if that happens will be a lot higher than if the ag community assumes a greater role in make the decisions and deciding its own future.



POWER FAILURE!

July 8, 1984

Background Scripture:
1 Kings 11:26 through 14:31.
Devotional Reading:
1 Kings 12:1-11.

Prince Rehoboam stood to inherit the fabulous power of his father, King Solomon. Under Solomon's reign the nation had grown rich and powerful. In his day, no monarch was likely so powerful as Solomon. What a legacy to pass on to his son, Rehoboam!

Rehoboam was not unaware of this tremendous power that had fallen to him. When, upon the death of Solomon, a great assembly is called, he comes to the leaders of Israel, not with conciliation, but with a crude display of arrogance. To their plea for him to lighten the load that Solomon had fixed upon them, Rehoboam replied with words almost unbelievably arrogant!... "whereas my father laid on you a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke." Just to make sure they got the drift, he goes on to say, "My father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions" (12:11)!

TO YOUR TENTS!

Obviously Rehoboam and his young advisors believed he had the power to carry out his threats. His father Solomon, had taught him well the use of political and military power. He was quite

certain that, if he talked tough, the tribal representatives would be too cowed to resist him.

What a surprise it must have been, then, when ten of the tribes defied him and his threats: "What portion have we in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse. To your tents, O Israel! Look now to your own house, David" (12:16b)! Having suffered under David's powerful son, Solomon, the people of the ten northern tribes had no intentions of suffering under his grandchild, Rehoboam. "So Israel departed to their tents."

Still Rehoboam, blinded by the arrogance of power, failed to grasp what had happened. Incredibly, he selected Adoram, the hated taskmaster over the slave labor forces, to represent him to the rebel tribes. Once again he was blinded by his own arrogance, but this time he could hardly fail to understand what the northern tribes did to Adoram: "all Israel stoned him to death with stones." Still trusting in what he believed to be the power of his inheritance, Rehoboam collected an army of 180,000 hand-picked troops to bring the ten tribes into line.

SO THEY HEARKENED

But Rehoboam had failed to reckon with a power greater than his own. Raising up a prophet, Shemaiah, God sent him to the troops with orders not to fight against the people of Israel who were their kinsman. And the writer of 1 Kings tells us: "So they hearkened to the word of the Lord, and went home again, according to the word of the Lord" (12:24). The division between Israel and Judah was now final and complete.

Rehoboam had trusted in the wrong kind of power. It was the kind of power that ultimately would have to fail.

Farm Calendar



Saturday, July 7

Pa. Charolais Association Field Day, Bratton Charolais Farm, McVeytown, 9 a.m. - Jr. Heifer and steer show.

York County Conservation Society membership picnic, 11 a.m. - 6 p.m., Indian Steps Museum, Airville.

Sunday, July 8

Pa. Association of Farmer Cooperatives Summer Institute, Huntingdon, continues through Wednesday.

Monday, July 9

Sire Power Twilight meeting, Dinald Michelitsch farm, Port Allegany.

Bradford 4-H Camp.

Tuesday, July 10

Bradford County New England dairy tour, continues through Friday.

USDA crop yield report due.

Semi-Annual meeting, Milk Marketing, Inc., Fawcett Center, Ohio State University.

Wednesday, July 11

Pa. Ayrshire Breeders Firecracker Sale, Carlisle Fairgrounds.

Pa. Rural Electric Association Summer Meeting, Sheraton Inn, West Middlesex.

Thursday, July 12

Annual Meeting, Pa. Game Breeders Association, Nittany Lion Inn, State College.

Friday, July 13

Keystone Ram & Ewe Sale, Carlisle Fairgrounds, continues tomorrow.

Lycoming County Fair, continues through next Saturday.

Saturday, July 14

Pa. Angus Breeders Show, Centre Hall.

Pa. State Beekeepers Association summer picnic, Indian Trail Park.

Dairy Goat field day, 1-4 p.m., Fischer's Windy Hill Goat Dairy, Manheim.

NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin

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To Control Erosion

We have been blessed with timely rains this spring and early summer but, some of these rains have been very heavy and created considerable run-off. It emphasizes the need for terraces, contours and strips to control these large amounts of water.

The use of diversion ditches and sodded waterways above the area to be protected should be considered.

When surface water is not controlled around the premises we also have the added danger of surface water entering our well

water supplies; this may contaminate it and make it unfit for human consumption. We need to be concerned with controlling these large amounts of water on the land and around farm buildings.

Another important item -- if flooding occurs, use your camera to take pictures of the damage so you can identify the extent of the damage if a claim is submitted.

To Be Aware Of Feeding New Grain

The barley harvest is nearly completed and some farmers may be considering using this new grain in their feeding program. The

feeding of new grains to livestock is possible, under very careful management. If fed in too large amounts, digestive disorders such as bloating and scouring may occur. We suggest that the grain be allowed to go through a two week curing period before being fed. Then it should be included into the grain ration at a slow rate -- 10 to 20%.

Barley is a popular livestock feed and is a good substitute for corn. In a week or two wheat will be ready and may also be fed with care. Again, it should be allowed

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OUR READERS WRITE, AND OTHER OPINIONS

PFA clarification

Dear Editor,
Agriculture got a good boost in the passage and signing of the 1984-85 fiscal budget, including \$2.65 million toward payment to dairymen because of dealer defaults and the lack of funds in the Milk Security Fund to cover these claims.

These funds along with the monies in the Milk Security Fund will give dairymen the opportunity to recover much of their claims made against the fund. This is especially good news for Scheps Cheese shippers, who suffered the

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Otis

