

The case for the bottle bill

Time is running out. The current Session of the Pennsylvania General Assembly is still wrestling with the Reusable Container Act, better known as the Bottle Bill. Since 1971, attempts have been made to pass a returnable beverage container law in Pennsylvania. The Throwaway Lobby has succeeded in keeping all attempts buried in Committee.

The latest efforts, Senate Bill 191 and House Bill 479 have fared no better than prior attempts. Thousands of dollars have been spent, in various ways, to keep the bills bogged down in Committee.

Probably, the second most defeating force has been public apathy. Ask anyone how they feel about litter and you will get a hearty "Let's clean it up!"...yet, it does not stir the emotions and cause action. Few people have written to their legislators urging passage. Hundreds of glass workers, bottlers, retail food merchants and other union people have taken the time to write to their legislators opposing a Bottle Bill.

The most active efforts for passage have come from the Pennsylvania Farmers' Association. Nearly 40 of their 54 county units have dramatized the need for a returnable beverage container law in Pennsylvania by holding news conferences and by litter pickups on farms and along rural roads.

Pennsylvania Farmer Magazine conducted a survey to determine just how severe the problem is in the rural communities. A whopping 79 percent of farmers interviewed indicated some form of equipment damage and more than 34 percent said they had livestock injury from discarded cans and bottles. The survey projections reflected a total loss on farms in Pennsylvania of more than \$37.5 million each year.

Carelessly discarded cans and bottles have serious economic impact on farmers. Major losses fall into four categories. They are:

TIME: More than 48 percent of farmers indicated that they find it necessary to pick up cans and bottles **BEFORE** they begin field work. Picking up along roadsides is as necessary as clearing farm fields. Some farmers have indicated that they no longer plant nor harvest within several feet of the field's edge.

DAMAGE: Cans and bottles which are missed during the pre-entry scanning of fields can cause serious and expensive damage to farm machinery. Tire damage is a common occurrence. Rear tractor tires cost between \$600 and \$1,500, depending on size. Harvest equipment gets clogged. Many repairs cannot be made immediately, causing expensive "down time". This can be doubly costly when a crop is at its optimum ripeness or when bad weather is forecast.

CONTAMINATION: Cans and bottles if not discovered, can be swept along with the harvested crop. Modern farm equipment has metal detectors, but they are useless for glass and aluminum.

Contamination of a wagon load of fodder, feed or product which is intended for human consumption can be costly.

LIVESTOCK INJURY OR DEATH. Undetected slivers of glass or metal can find its way into feed bunkers and are ingested by livestock. Seldom does such material pass harmlessly through an animal. Cuts in the mouth, throat and stomach are difficult to detect, and usually are not known until the animal is seriously and irrevocably ill. Additionally, cuts on soft tissue around hooves, is becoming more common when cows are pastured near public roads.

Veterinarian bills are an integral part of livestock farming, but the cost of paying for someone else's carelessness is becoming an increased source of aggravation to farmers.

Another issue which impacts on agriculture is the increasing need for land for sanitary landfills—most of which are located in rural areas. According to Department of Environmental Resources Secretary Nicholas DeBenedictis, "Southeastern Pennsylvania is in a crisis situation". Within the next three years, existing landfills will be at capacity. A *Philadelphia Inquirer* article (April 11, 1985) indicated that counties contiguous to Philadelphia are "Scrambling to develop alternative plans to dispose of their trash".

Any alternative plan should include a Returnable Beverage Container Law which would potentially save Pennsylvania \$22.8 million annually. Additional savings would be realized as this element of litter would diminish the need for construction and

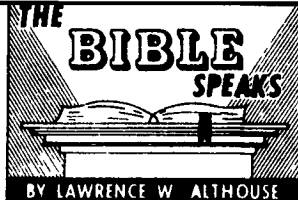
operation costs of additional sanitary landfills.

Lastly, opponents of a Returnable Beverage Container law have come out strongly in favor of a "litter tax". The tax, assessed on all consumers at the time of beverage purchase, would be distributed among municipalities to help defray the cost of anti-litter efforts and clean up. While at first glance it seems like a reasonable way to help combat the litter problem, it does nothing to create an incentive NOT to litter. A five-cent deposit on all beverage containers would encourage the return of those containers.

At present there are nine states that have passed a Returnable Deposit Law. Without exception, Governors of those states have indicated high success rates. Governor Cuomo of New York said, "Unfortunately, the effects of our Returnable Container Law have not been reported with consistent accuracy... the law already has been a remarkable success".

In addition to laudatory praise for the returnable beverage container law in each state, most governors indicated that contrary to opponents' charges and predictions, new jobs were created, beverage prices did not substantially change, recycling centers are doing well and implementation of the new law did not create unsurmountable problems.

The Farmers' View is a column that is compiled by the Public Relations Division of the Pennsylvania Farmers' Association (PFA). It expresses the views of PFA's policy positions on key issues as adopted by the organization's 23,313 family members.



FINDING YOUR PLEROMA
September 1, 1985

Background Scripture:
Colossians 1 through 2.

Devotional Reading:
Colossians 1:21-29

Do you ever feel that you may be missing out on something in life? Perhaps there is something specific that has — and maybe always will — eluded your grasp. Or it may simply be a gnawing feeling that there is "something more" to life and you don't know what it is. It might be physical, material, intellectual, artistic, aesthetic, spiritual — or maybe something else, indefinable.

There are times when I may say to my wife, Valere: "I'm hungry for something — but I don't know what." So it may be that, quite beyond the physical appetite, we are all "hungry for something," yet "don't know what." Our stomachs may be full, but there is a vague sense of an empty corner that cries out for filling.

THE PLEROMA

People often attempt to fill this emptiness with things that cram our stomachs and overload our lives — yet still leave us feeling less than full. Food, power, fast cars, drink, sex, possessions, success, gadgets, perfectionism — yes, even religion — may leave us feeling that there must be *something more*.

I have said "even religion" because religion may not always

be spiritual. Religion may simply be the means we use to enable ourselves to live as we wish: following our rules, holding on to our prejudices and ascribing this lifestyle to divine inspiration. But our religion may not bring us the spiritual *pleroma* we are seeking and without which we feel incomplete and empty.

But what is *pleroma*?

Pleroma is a Greek word which is not easily translated into English because there is no one English term that catches its meaning. As it is used in the New Testament, *pleroma* can mean "that which fills," "the sum total," "completion," "the completing." In the English translations it is generally rendered as "fullness." Thus, in Colossians 1:19, Paul says of Christ, "For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell." And in 2:9 he says again: "For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily — which J.B. Phillips renders: "Yet it is in him that God gives a full and complete expression of himself in bodily form." All that we need to know and can know of God is revealed in the person of Jesus Christ.

FULLNESS OF LIFE

Having said this twice, Paul uses *pleroma* in a different context: "and you have come to fullness of life in him" (2:10). The Jerusalem Bible uses the term "fulfillment," the New English Bible uses "completion," and once again Phillips helps us with: "your own completeness is realized in him." That "something more" of which we are dimly aware, that "emptiness" that never seems otherwise filled, that incompleteness we feel but cannot define, finds its *pleroma*, its fulfillment, its completion in Jesus Christ. As the King James Version says it, "And ye are complete in him."

on the highway and simply do not realize how slow they do travel.

Proper identification and warning is real important. Let's keep alert this busy fall season both on the highway and in the fields.

To Control Johnsongrass

This sorghum-like grass is a problem on many fields in this part of the state. There are cases where nothing is being done to control this weed; for those I would remind you that Johnsongrass is listed as a noxious weed in Pennsylvania. In corn there is little that can be done at this time of year; it requires

(Turn to Page A12)

NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin

Lancaster County Agriculture Agent
Phone 717-394-6851

To Mow or Not To Mow Alfalfa

The annual question comes up, should I mow alfalfa the first part of September or not. According to crop authorities it is not just a simple yes or no question. If you have left one of your cuttings go into full bloom, then you do not need to be concerned; however, if you have not, then do not cut the first two weeks of September.

The reason for this is, it's the period when the plants are storing food in developing rhizomes for next year's growth. To disturb this development will result in less rhizomes and less growth next year. The final cutting can be made in late September or early October.

The application of a phosphate-

potash fertilizer this fall is a good practice. Use your soil test results as a guide on rates of application. On stands that have been established this spring, from which one or two cuttings have already been made, it's best to allow it to stand; this will give a little better winter protection.

To Be Extra Safe During This Busy Season

We are entering one of the busiest and most hazardous times of the year...silo filling and corn picking time. Blend into that time wheat and barley planting and the last cutting of alfalfa. This means a lot of farm machinery will be on our highways during semi-dark or dark hours.

Slow moving vehicles such as farm equipment traveling on

highways present a real traffic hazard. The motorist must recognize that a tractor traveling at 10 to 15 miles per hour is almost standing still compared to a 55 mph car. Most highway drivers have never driven a farm machine

Farm Calendar

Saturday, August 31
Juniata County Fair, Port Royal; continues through Sept. 7.

Sunday, September 1
Spartansburg Community Fair, Spartansburg; continues through Sept. 7.

Monday, September 2
Cambria County Fair, Ebensburg; continues through Sept. 7.

Ox Hill Fair, Home; continues through Sept. 7.

Waterford Community Fair, Waterford; continues through Sept. 7.

West Alexander Fair, West Alexander; continues through Sept. 7.

Wednesday, September 4
Lancaster Conservation District monthly board meeting, 7:30 p.m., Farm and Home Center
Grain Marketing meeting, York County 4-H Center, 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Luzerne County Fair, Dallas; continues through Sept. 8.
District 19 ADA/DC meeting, Mifflinburg Community Park, 7 p.m.

Thursday, September 5
Grain Marketing Meeting, Ship

(Turn to Page A12)

