

OPINION

A bite in the hand

We've seen and heard a lot of trumped up charges lately. Charges that dairymen who participate in the whole herd buyout program will rake in large profits at the expense of tax payers. Often one segment of agriculture is pitted against another segment. Political motives or ignorance of facts about farming seem to invade these reports. Sensationalism prevails. Therefore for the sake of our city and urban friends— even our farm and agri-business friends— let's calmly pull together a sympathetic farmer's view of the situation.

First let's look in on a farmer who has milked cows for 30 years. He as raised his family on the farm and put his heart into the humanitarian effort to produce food for a hungry world. He's honest in the site of all his neighbors. A community leader. In addition, this farmer is extremely sensitive to the problem of over production and the cost to government under the price support programs for milk and milk products. He feels sorry for the young farmers who can't go into farming or continue in farming because of this surplus. He takes a part-time job off the farm rather than increase his herd size because he doesn't want to be part of the problem.

When the government offered to buy out his whole herd to take out surplus production this farmer accepted the offer at a reasonable bid. He reasoned that since it cost the government \$17 per hundred lbs. to store milk products, the reduced cost to government would amount to \$120 thousand per year over the five year program. That would amount to over a half-million dollar tax payer savings from his farm alone. In addition, since our farm friend chose to go out of business in the last buyout period, all the milk he produces from now until the cows go out the

farm lane will be taxed at the rate of 40 cents per hundred lb. to support the program. That will give another \$4 thousand to the government to support his own payment. And since the income from the program will be taxable and no production costs will be subtracted, IRS will take right back a sizeable chunk of the buyout payment.

Of course our farmer gave up his right to have a herd dispersal sale and the recognition and income that comes from such an event. And should he need to sell his farm in the next five years, the deed restrictions that prohibit the production of milk will likely reduce the value of the property by an amount equal to the payment he received.

When you look at the overall situation, the US Government will be paying 14,000 farmers \$1.8 billion to slaughter or export their dairy cattle and to stay out of dairying for five years. This will prevent 12.3 billion lbs. of milk, produced annually by these herds from ever entering the U.S. market and save the government about \$10.5 billion in the purchase of surplus dairy products over the five-year program.

About 38% of the total cost will be paid by dairymen who continue to produce milk. These assessments will total about \$684 million. Taxable income can be expected to return about \$360 million to the government. So the dairymen will be contributing about 1 billion dollars of the \$1.8 billion total. The government's share will be about \$800 million. In addition, to help prevent undue depression of the beef market the government is required to purchase an extra 400 million pounds of red meat during the next five years. This purchase will likely cost another \$800 million. Therefore the combined net total cost to the government from the

NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin
Lancaster County Agriculture Agent



To Practice Strict Sanitation

Once again we are stressing bio-security for all types of farms. Farmers are continually faced with disease problems: LT, AI and VVND in poultry, pseudorabies in hogs, Johnes in dairy and others. Yes, right not we have an alert in AI (Avian Influenza) in northern Lancaster County, an LT (Laryngotracheitis) flock, and VVND (Velogenic Viscerotropic Newcastle Disease) in pet birds.

We urge livestock and poultry producers to make every effort to prevent the spread of these contagious diseases. Many of these infections are brought home by the owner or with the purchase of a new animal. Infections can be spread very easily from farm to farm.

In this part of the country where the density of poultry and livestock is so great, producers should be alert to the possibility of

spreading diseases. When returning from another farm, different clothes and footwear should be used. Never spread dead birds in the fields because stray dogs, cats, flies and wild birds can spread the infection from those birds to your neighbors farm. We urge every producer to give attention to the prevention of diseases through good management and the use of good sanitation practices.

To Clean Pastures Before Turning Animals On Them

A careful check of pastures before turning cows into them can be time well spent. Trash, broken glass, and wire may produce serious udder and foot injuries. So, move or bury the debris.

Nails sticking through boards may produce serious puncture wounds in feet. Old farm implements should be hauled away; cows seem unable to resist stepping through old discs or harrows, often with disastrous results.

Fertilizer and fertilizer bags are deadly; especially those containing nitrates. Cows will eagerly kill themselves eating it.

In spite of laws, we still have a few people who will pitch a bagful of junk out of their cows while they drive along our highways. A walk through your pasture fields before turning your cows out, is time very well spent.

To Understand Persistent Weed Problems

Just how persistent do we have to be in order to control weed problems? Well, the answer to this question comes from weed scientists who ran germination tests on weed seeds which had been buried

for up to 50 years. They report that 29% of Johnsongrass seed germinated after being buried for 3½ years; morning glory 74% after 5 years; pigweed 66% after 40 years and dock 52% after 50 years. They further reported that 51 of 107 species tested still had live seeds after 20 years.

The reason these seeds remain in the soil for such a long period without sprouting is apparently related to environmental conditions. According to weed experts, some seeds need just the right combination of moisture, temperature, and nutrients before they will germinate. This explains why we may suddenly be faced with a weed problem we thought was cured several years ago.

To Manage Poultry House Equipment

General management of poultry house equipment is important in maintaining a comfortable environment for chickens and turkeys. Defective equipment should be repaired or replaced promptly, especially if it is involved with the delivery of feed or water to the birds.

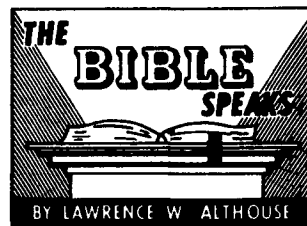
Rusty and bent cages will allow some birds to escape and may trap or injure other birds. It can also cause an increase in cracked egg shells. All sharp edges on the poultry equipment must be removed to avoid injuries. Rusty and decaying feed bins are another problem; they allow moisture to get to the feed, resulting in mold and sick birds.

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herd buyout and the purchase of red meat will be approximately \$1.6 billion.

Here's the bottom line. The difference between the government's \$10.5 billion reduction in surplus dairy products purchase and the \$1.6 billion net cost of the herd buy out and red meat purchases is \$8.9 billion. That's an \$8.9 billion saving of taxpayer money.

To save taxpayer money is not as sensational as to spend it. But once again we find our farm friend has completed his life in dairying just like he lived it. Caring for a hungry world. Caring for his neighbors both rural and urban. And concerned that he not be a part of the surplus problem. As for sensational charges, we would call it just another case of a bit to hand that feeds.



OF AND YET BEYOND US

April 20, 1986

Background Scripture: Luke 1:5-56; 2:21-40.
Devotional Reading: Luke 1:8-17.

When I was a seminary student, I found it relatively easy to speak and speculate about both God and Christ. Furthermore, it was never difficult to distinguish between the Father and the Son.

But, when it came to the study of the Holy Spirit, nothing ever seemed easy or clear-cut. It was like putting together a jigsaw puzzle and finding that lots of the pieces wouldn't fit. Furthermore, it was obvious — and somewhat of a relief — to me that every one of

my fellow students seemed to have the same difficulty. And, to tell the truth, it didn't seem our professors were that much more successful, either.

"COME UPON YOU"

To be sure, in my theology textbook there was a chapter on "The Person and Role of the Holy Spirit." But this seemed the most contrived and unconvincing chapter in the whole book, an attempt to make logical and clear dimension that defies explanation, simplification and systematization.

In time, I decided that, instead of concerning myself with the theology of the Holy Spirit, I would focus on the experience of the Holy Spirit. One may not be able to rationalize and systematize that experience, but that does not mean we cannot gain some understanding and appreciation of this dimension of our spiritual lives.

In the first two chapters of Luke there are three important experiences of the Holy Spirit. In the first of these, Mary is assured that "The Holy Spirit will come upon you" (1:35). Although Mary could not understand how it could be that she was to bear a child — let alone that he would be the Christ — she was assured that this would be accomplished by God's power: the Holy Spirit. So, sometimes, the experiences of the Holy Spirit is the experience of divine power that, although it flows through us, comes from beyond us.

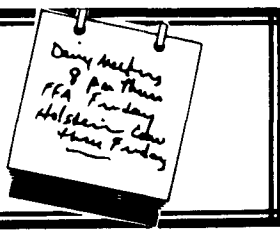
SPIRIT-FILLED

The second experience is that of Elizabeth being "filled with the Holy Spirit" and discerning that her cousin Mary was to bear the long-awaited Messiah. And the third experience is similar: Simon is "inspired by the Spirit" and recognizes the newborn baby as the Christ (2:23-32). The experience in both these incidents is an understanding, a revelation, that also comes from beyond.

One thing characterizes each of these three people: they were receptive to God's Spirit. If we are receptive to the Spirit, we too can receive divine power and understanding from beyond ourselves.

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Farm Calendar



Saturday, April 19
National Milking Shorthorn Convention Sale, 12:30 p.m., Guernsey Sales Pavilion.
Goat Seminar, 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., Berks County Agricultural Center.
Sheep Shearing School, NJ Dorset Breeder's Association, The Perry Farm, Route 523 and Edgewood Road, Reading Township, \$12 registration required. Call 201-534-2376.
National Commodity Marketing Symposium, Chicago.

Little International Livestock Expo, Ag Arena.

Sunday, April 20
Luzerne County 4-H Horse Show, Lehman Fairgrounds.
Plain and Fancy Egg Ranch 20th Anniversary Celebration, 6 p.m., Treadway Resort.

Monday, April 21
Pa. State Grange Legislative Day, Mechanicsburg Holiday Inn, 1 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Grange Week Celebration, Holiday

Inn, 5401 Carlisle Pike; workshops - 1 to 5 p.m., dinner, 6 p.m.

Adams County Beekeepers, Penn State Fruit Research Lab, Biglerville, 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, April 22
PFA Annual Legislative Conference, noon, Penn Harris Motor Inn.
Spring Homemaker's Day, Stanton Grange, 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., \$8. Call 782-6181 for reservations.
National Ayrshire Convention,

continues through April 25.

Wednesday, April 23
York County Spring Homemaker's Day, St. Matthews Lutheran Church, 839 W. Market St., York, 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
York County Beekeeper's Meeting, 7 p.m., Extension Office Meeting Room.

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