



OPINION

Balance The National Budget

To us, it makes a lot of sense to balance the federal budget. The U.S. Senate is scheduled to vote on the issue in mid-to late-February, and the House will vote on an identical resolution in mid-to late-March. Currently, the Senate bill has 40 co-sponsors, and the House bill has 257 co-sponsors.

Farm Bureau's National Legislative Action Program (NLAP) coordinators are asking farmers to make request of members of Congress to support the measures. Richard Newpher, executive director of the American Farm Bureau in Washington, said they expect a close vote. President Clinton opposes the balanced budget amendment, so this adds extra opposition to the balanced budget resolutions.

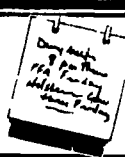
While this is not the perfect answer to the nation's budget problems, it can be an important step to start the government in the right direction. The last balanced federal budget occurred in 1969, nearly 25 years ago.

In the present proposals, the amendment would require that federal outlays be in balance with federal revenues unless three-fifths of the entire membership of the House and Senate vote for higher spending. A Presidential signature is not needed, but the amendment must be ratified by 38 state legislatures.

The national debt has increased 1,415 percent since 1960, 712 percent since 1975, 384 percent since 1980 and 142 percent since 1985. It took more than 200 years for the U.S. to accumulate its first trillion dollars in national debt. But at the current rate the nation will acquire the second trillion dollars of debt in the next five years. In 1993, interest payments on the national debt have been estimated at \$294 billion.

These efforts to balance the national budget certainly deserve the support of every (farm) taxpayer.

Farm Calendar



Saturday, January 22

Winter Grazing/Calving Workshop, Wye Research and Education Center, U. of Md. Montour Co. Dairy Day, St. Andrew's Church, Milton, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Sunday, January 23

Monday, January 24

Northeast Winter Dairy Management Seminar, Radisson Inn-North Country, West Lebanon, N.H., thru Jan. 25. Adams County Corn Clinic, York Springs Fire Hall, 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Northeast Pa. Maple Syrup Producer's Association annual meeting, Pleasant Valley Grange Hall, Honesdale, 10:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Mastitis meeting, Country Focht's Restaurant, Martinsburg, 2 p.m.

Tuesday, January 25

Street Tree/Shade Tree ID Workshop, Tyler Arboretum, repeats Jan. 26, Feb. 1., and Feb. 2. Franklin County Corn Clinic, Kauffman's Community Center, 9 a.m.-2:45 p.m. Sheep Educational Evening, Berks County Ag Center, 7:30 p.m. Herd Health Management Workshop, Butler Co. Community Center, Butler, 6:30 p.m.-9 p.m. also Feb. 3 and Feb. 8. ADC District 3 meeting, Solanco Fairgrounds, 11:45 a.m. Chester County Crops Day, Guthrieville Fire Hall, 9 a.m.

Wednesday, January 26

Woodland Owners Workshop, Montgomery County Extension office, Creamery. Northeast Winter Dairy Management Seminar, Holiday Inn-Turf, Albany, N.Y., thru Jan. 27.

Dairy-MAP, Lebanon Valley Ag Center, also Feb. 2.

Southeast Pa. Grazing Conference, Harvest Drive Restaurant, Intercourse, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

Capitol Region Greenhouse Meeting, Westgate Plaza and Esbenshade Greenhouse, Ephrata, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

Lebanon County Conservation District Erosion Control Workshop, Lebanon Valley Ag Center, 9 a.m.

Herd Health Management Workshop, Rostraver Grange, Belle Vernon, 6:30 p.m.-9 p.m.

York County Corn Clinic, 4-H Center, Bair Station, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Mount Joy Co-Op annual meeting, Country Table Restaurant, noon.

Lehigh and Northampton Counties Crop Day, UGI Auditorium, Bethlehem, 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m.

Poultry Composting Session, Franklin Co. Extension, Chambersburg, 7 p.m.-9 p.m.

Thursday, January 27

Bucks/Montgomery Crops Day, Family Heritage Restaurant, Franconia, 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m.

Sire Power Northeast Sales Division annual meeting, Hershey. Cumberland County Corn Clinic, Penn Township Fire Hall, Huntsdale, 8:30 p.m.-2:30 p.m.

Potter County Dairy-MAP, Northern Restaurant, Coudersport, also Feb. 3.

Lancaster/Chester Swine Producers banquet, Yoder's Restaurant, New Holland, 6:30 p.m.

York County Ag Recognition Banquet, Wisehaven Hall, 6 p.m.

Perry County Extension meeting, Perry Valley Grange Hall, 7 p.m.



NOW IS THE TIME

By John Schwartz
Lancaster County
Agricultural Agent

To Know Cow Health

According to Glenn Shirk, extension dairy agent, the nutrient content of milk and the market value of milk are determined in part by the amount of protein and fat milk contains.

The level of these components in milk also reflects the condition of the cow. High fat tests in early lactation is an indication that cows are not consuming sufficient energy, forcing them to mobilize body fat too rapidly. This may lead to fat deposits in the liver, followed by ketosis, off-feed problems, low production, and twisted stomachs.

Low fat tests may indicate acidosis and abnormal rumen function which results in poor appetites, low production, laminitis, and poor feed efficiency. When cows are extremely thin, fat tests and protein tests are depressed and fat tests may be close to or below protein test. This usually results in very poor reproductive performance.

To Pick Up Wheat And Barley Yields

Wheat and barley yields have been on a steady increase for the past 75 years in the United States. Many factors are responsible for

Friday, January 28

Northeast Winter Dairy Management Seminar, Sheraton Inn, Batavia, N.Y., thru Jan. 29.

Potter County Holstein Association annual meeting, 8 p.m.

Franklin County Extension annual meeting, Kauffman Community Center, 7 p.m.

Berks County Crops Day, Berks County Ag Center, 9 a.m.-2:45 p.m.

Producer Egg Quality Assurance meeting, Lancaster Farm and Home Center, noon.

Pork Producers Seminar, Shamokin Dam Fire Co., 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m.

Saturday, January 29

Mercer County Dairy Day. Equine Nutrition Program, Hilltop Farm, Calora, Md.

NOFA-NJ Winter Conference, New Horizons For New Jersey Organic Ag, Rutgers University, 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.

Huntingdon Co. Holstein Club annual meeting, Warriors Mark Fire Hall, 7 p.m.

Sunday, January 30

Monday, January 31

National Mastitis Council annual meeting, Hyatt Orlando, Orlando, Fla., thru Feb. 2.

Jefferson/Clearfield Dairy/Crops Day, Ramada Inn, DuBois, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

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the improvement in yields. Improvements in production management includes better fertility, better pest control, better planting methods, and improved varieties.

Plant breeders are continually improving varieties of wheat and barley. Growers should be taking advantage of new varieties. These new varieties are usually resistant to an additional disease or insect while having a higher yield potential.

The College of Agricultural Sciences at Penn State screens many of the new varieties and reports their performance each year. The 1993 winter wheat and barley performance reports are available from your local Penn State Cooperative Extension office.

To Attend Winter Meetings

The winter farm meeting season has started.

There are many excellent meetings being held over the next sev-

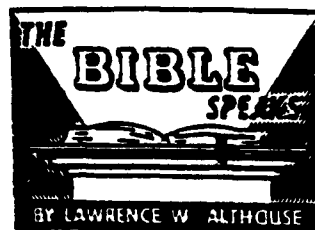
eral months. This is your opportunity to learn the latest information on production, marketing, and government regulations.

This information will be helpful as you implement plans to keep your farm competitive. Also, this is the best time to pick up your pesticide recertification credits you will need to maintain your pesticide applicators licence.

Mark your calendars now for the meetings you want to attend. Come out this winter and see the latest products and equipment, learn about nutrient management, water issues, crop and livestock management, pathogen reduction in animal products, etc.

Farmers' willingness to participate in continuing education programs such as winter meetings is what has kept American agriculture strong and competitive.

Feather Prof's Footnote: "Life does not require us to be the biggest or the best, it only asks that we try."



ON SETTING YOUR FACE
January 23, 1994

Background Scripture:

Luke 9:51 - 10:2

Devotional Reading:

Matthew 8:18-22; 9:38; 10:1-15

"When the days drew near for Him to be received up, He set His face to go to Jerusalem" (Luke 9:51).

Setting one's face is thought to have been a popular Semitic allusion to an act of deliberate resolution. The opposite of setting "his face to go to Jerusalem" would be of him to have meandered his way there. One does not go to Jerusalem by chance or luck; it takes an almost fierce resolve.

Why? Because a showdown awaited him there. Unlike his previous visits there, he knew that this time going to Jerusalem could cost him his life. To avoid Jerusalem would mean failing in his mission. His desire was not for martyrdom, but for faithfulness to the task God had given him — even if it meant sacrifice in Jerusalem. So he had to make this commitment in the very depths of his own being. Yet, it still showed in his face.

A DELIBERATE RESOLVE

Along the way to Jerusalem, Jesus showed his followers exactly what discipleship means: setting one's face to go to Jerusalem, making a deliberate resolve that will not yield to anything or anyone that would sway us from our course. I am certain that Jesus, if he was human as we are — and he was, had to reset his face to go to Jerusalem every day on his way there, if not more often. We may be able to nail down to a specific time and place when we make our first resolve to follow Jesus, but, for most of us, it means remaking that resolve on a pretty regular basis, because along the way there are Samaritan villages that would tempt us from going on. Our own "village of the Samaritans" is any thing or persons that tempts us to sidetrack our discipleship.

When I moved from Pennsylvania to Texas, one of the features of church life down here that was a little difficult to get used to was

the Southern Methodist custom of making an Invitation to Christian Discipleship at the close of each service. This is an invitation for people to publicly declare their discipleship as well as, more frequently, an opportunity for people to decide to join the local congregation. In my northeastern pastorate the invitation to join the church always followed a time of preparation in which prospective members were helped to understand the step they were proposing to make. I have come to the point where I appreciate both the pluses and minutes of both these practices.

INVITATION TO DISCIPLESHIP

But, regardless of which approach you use, I regret the popular assumption that being a Christian is synonymous with joining a church. It is not. The essence of being a Christian is the discipleship by which we follow Jesus. That discipleship usually involves being a member of a local congregation, but it is much less demanding to be a member of a church than it is to be a disciple of Christ. That also means that it is considerably easier to be a United Methodist, a Baptist, a Roman Catholic, or a Pentecostal than it is to be a Christian. If we teach Christian discipleship, we will more than likely get good church members in the bargain.

But I'm not at all sure that most of us want to be disciples of Jesus. For discipleship means setting our faces to go with him not to church, but to Jerusalem. It means counting the cost before we make the commitment: "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head". It means that Jesus claims our highest loyalty: "Leave the dead to bury the dead". It means focussing our life on that discipleship: "No one puts his hand to the plow and looks back..."

Maybe that is why "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few".

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