



OPINION

Talk About Horror Stories

In a recent advertisement, Mobil Oil severely criticized the EPA and the Clinton Administration for working to replace imported oil with renewable fuels like ethanol. They referred to ethanol as a "horror story that won't go away".

It's time to talk frankly about the horror stories created by "big oil". The largest transfer of wealth in the history of the United States is a result of the importation of crude oil. Since 1916 over \$123 billion dollars in federal subsidies, paid by the taxpayer, have been doled out to the oil industry, much of which has landed in Middle Eastern Countries, and Mobil Oil has always found a place at the trough. Why in 1993 alone, taxpayers shelled out over \$6 billion in oil industry subsidies. Now that's what we call a horror story!

The United States now imports nearly 50 percent of our oil needs, and that figure is expected to grow much higher by the turn of the century. Ethanol is the only domestically produced, clean burning, renewable liquid fuel this country has. We are not surprised that Mobil is upset about the advance of ethanol, after all it reduces the amount of imported crude oil they can process. In 1993, over \$10 billion were generated in the U.S. through the production of domestic ethanol. These dollars stay at home and bolster the economy of rural America.

Ethanol made from grain and other renewable resources is clean burning. Gasoline, which contains high levels of benzene (a known carcinogen), zylene (highly reactive in the formation of urban smog), and other toxic chemicals is being breathed in and handled by consumers every day. Pollution caused by the burning of this dirty gasoline causes millions of dollars annually in increased health care requirements for people living in major cities. What Mobil Oil fails to mention is that cleaner burning renewable fuels are not the culprit. In fact, if it were not for the need to replace dirty gasoline, this entire matter would be a moot point.

The Clinton Administration and the Federal Environmental Protection Agency have recognized the need to embark on a program to replace dirty, imported gasoline with cleaner burning renewable fuels like ethanol. Yet Mobil Oil seems to still be living in the dark ages, hoping against hope that renewable fuels like ethanol will fade away into oblivion and they can proceed, without restriction, until the last drop of oil is sucked from the earth. That's a horror story!

Recent estimates have concluded that the real cost of imported oil is in excess of \$70 a barrel. What the consumer pays at the pump and what we pay in taxes to protect shipping lanes and oil rich Middle Eastern countries is part of the "true cost" of that barrel of oil. The \$15 a barrel oil mentioned in the ad is typical of the exaggerations and misrepresentations created to deceive the American public.

We are surprised and disappointed that a company like Mobil Oil would be so intimidated by a small fledgling ethanol industry that they would spend investors' money to discredit it. In fact, we are surprised that a company like Mobil Oil, who does substantial business in rural America, would slap the face of their customers.

While most of us were taught to turn the other cheek, it's time that rural America slaps back by exercising its right to decide where to purchase their petroleum products. Losing the business of rural America... now that could be a real horror story! -- Guest editorial by Mike Bryan, National Corn Growers Assn.

Farm Calendar

Saturday, February 12

Northeastern Pa. Alternative Agricultural Enterprise Conference, Pittston Convention Center, Pittston, 9 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

Butler Co. Holstein Assoc. annual meeting, Garden Gate Restaurant, Prospect, 11:30 a.m.

Sunday, February 13

Pa. Game Bird Conference, Days Inn, State College, thru Feb. 15.

Monday, February 14

Happy Valentine's Day!

Pa. Nursery Conference, Hershey Convention Center, thru Feb. 16.

Poultry Management and Health

Seminar, Kreider's Restaurant, Manheim, noon.

Cumberland County vegetable meeting, Walnut Bottom Firehall, Walnut Bottom, 9 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Blair County Dairy-MAP, Memorial Park, Martinsburg, also Feb. 28.

Greene County Dairy Day, Fayette Fairgrounds, Uniontown, 10:30 a.m.

ABC District 1 meeting, Eastern Berks, Virginville Grange Hall, noon.

ABC District 3, Northern Dauphin/Northumberland,



NOW IS THE TIME

By John Schwartz
Lancaster County
Agricultural Agent

To Dispose Of Dead Animals

Recently the press covered a story on hundreds of dead ducks and geese found on a farm.

The ducks and geese died from the extreme cold weather we had recently. Instead of gathering up the dead fowl and disposing of them properly, the farmer left them lie on the ground.

As a result, neighbors filed a complaint and the farmer was arrested for cruelty to animals.

This could have been avoided by quick and proper dead animal disposal. Unfortunately this is not an isolated incidence. Our office receives several complaints every year about improper dead animal disposal.

Animals will die and occasionally we will experience a large death loss due to weather, fire, or mechanical failure. The key is to dispose of dead animals and birds quickly and in a satisfactory manner.

Berrysburg Community Center, 7 p.m.

ABC District 5, Southern Lancaster, Solanco Fairgrounds, 7 p.m.

ABC District 10, Fayette County Fairgrounds, 10:30 a.m.

ABC District 12, Cambria, Newberry Grange Hall, 7:30 p.m.

ABC District 15, Mercer Extension Office, 10 a.m.

ABC District 15, West Crawford, Vernon Control Hose Co., Meadville, 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, February 15

Corn Production Satellite Conference, Lancaster County Extension offices, call local extension for details.

Tri-County Vegetable Meeting, Penn State Fruit Lab, Biglerville, 9 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Solanco Young Farmers meeting, mycotoxins in feeds, Solanco High School, 7 p.m.

Franklin County Fruit Growers annual meeting, 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

York County Ag Land Preservation Board, Pleasant Acres Complex, 7 p.m.

EAYFA monthly meeting, gardening, Ephrata High School, 7:30 p.m.

N.E. Fruit Growers meeting, Ramada Inn, Chinchilla, 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Southcentral Pa. Holstein Assoc. district election and show meeting, Western Sizzlin', Harrisburg, 10:30 a.m.

Grazing Conference With Sonny Golden, Bart Fire Co., Gettysburg, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Atlantic Dairy Day, Alwine Civic Center, 10:30 a.m.

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Farmers may send the animals to a rendering facility or bury, incinerate, or compost them.

Be a good neighbor and farmer and dispose of your dead animals properly.

To Attend A Satellite Conference

More and more county extension offices and farmers are purchasing satellite dishes.

This technology is generating many exciting educational programs from the land grant universities. From undergraduate courses in marketing, animal science and agricultural economics to seminars on dairy nutrition, corn production and swine husbandry to programs on outlook and conservation farming, the satellite is brining the world into our meeting rooms.

We now have access to the agricultural leaders across the United States. If you are looking for the latest information and seeing outstanding demonstrations that would be hard to duplicate locally, than plan to participate in a satellite conference.

The many farmers who have attended a conference have been pleased with the quality of the pre-

sentations and the excellent information presented.

To Look At Farm Numbers

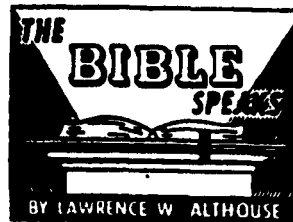
According to United States Department of Agriculture projections, the number of U.S. farms will likely decline by only 15,000 per year in the next decade compared with the rate of over 100,000 annually a few decades ago.

States west of the Mississippi River will experience little change in farm numbers. Southern and northeastern states will lose farms the fastest — one to two percent a year.

These regions have the greatest imbalance between older and younger farmers.

Farm consolidation will continue at a moderate rate and decline less than one percent a year in the Corn Belt and Lake States regions. The coming decade will see a slow evolution toward fewer, larger commercial farms with closer ties to agribusinesses and a growing number of small, part-time, and specialty farms.

Feather Prof's Footnote: "In the end, the only people who fail are those who do not try."



HOW'S YOUR PERCEPTION?
February 13, 1994

Background Scripture:

Luke 20: 1-19

Devotional Reading:

Matthew 21:23-27,38-46

I find wryly amusing Luke's restrained observation that the scribes and pharisees "perceived that he had told this parable against them" (20:19).

The "parable" — actually more an allegory — refers to the so-called "Parable of the Vineyard." Luke 20:9-18. The reason I find Luke's comment amusing is that it doesn't take a Bible scholar or even a trained mind to perceive that the scribes and pharisees are, without any doubt, the targets of the parable.

Some of Jesus' parables are difficult to understand, but not this one. The "owner" of the vineyard is obviously God. The rebellious "tenants" are the religious leaders of Israel and the "servants" represent the Old Testament prophets. The "beloved son" or "heir" is Jesus Christ and when he is "killed", the reference is to the crucifixion of Christ. When Luke says, "He will come and destroy those tenants," he is speaking of judgement and the advent of the kingdom of God. The "others" to which he will give the vineyard then are presumably the Christians of the early church.

"THEY PERCEIVED"

One wonders why the scribes and pharisees waited until the end of the parable, before they protested: "God forbid!" Didn't they perceive that this story was a condemnation of them and all that they represented? How could they stand there and permit him to draw such an unflattering — if accurate — picture of themselves?

But if the scribes and pharisees were slow to perceive the meaning of this parable, so, perhaps, are we. When Jesus uttered these words, he was obviously thinking of the scribes and pharisees. But

when we read this parable today, he speaks to a new, if somewhat similar, audience. God is still the owner of the vineyard, the Lord of the universe. The servants are still prophetic voices whom God sends to his tenants and the beloved son is still our Lord Jesus Christ. The coming of the owner to "destroy those tenants" is still the coming of God's kingdom to which, in one form or another, Christians still subscribe today.

THE "TENANTS" TODAY

All the elements in the parable have remained the same, except two. The first of these is the "tenants", for today they are us, those of us who have embraced Christianity's heritage of almost 2,000 years. We are the ones today who live and work in the owner's vineyard, God's creation. Is it possible that some of the original tenants' arrogant rebelliousness is evident in us? Could we be the ones who, blessed with the heritage of the Old and New Testaments, nevertheless remain resistant and hostile to God's messengers? And could it be that, even while professing the Christ in our churches, in our daily lives we reject God's Son and crucify again and again? Further, is the coming of God's kingdom thus a potential danger rather than a blessing for those of us who think we're among God's chosen?

That leaves the "others" to whom the owner will give the vineyard. I'm not sure who they represent. Perhaps these are people who follow Christ without benefit of Christian clergy or churches. I'm not concerned about the "others", but about us, the "tenants" in the "vineyard", those of us who with centuries of Christian history behind us still may not be getting the message.

That's my perception. What's yours?

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Lancaster Farming, Inc.

A Shuman Enterprise

Robert G. Campbell General Manager

Everett R. Newswanger Managing Editor

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