



OPINION

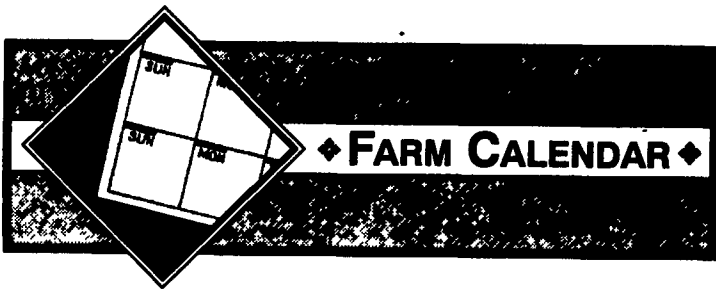
Property Rights And Personal Rights Interwoven

Many people in this country think that it is not wrong to take private property without paying just compensation. They obviously haven't read the US Constitution. The Fifth Amendment says that private property shall not be "taken for public use, without just compensation." All across the country private property rights are being trampled by government.

In cases where the government needs all of your property for a particular project that benefits the public, they are pretty good about coming forth with the money, though, there are sometimes problems over what constitutes just compensation. Mark Emery, director of communications for the New York Farm Bureau, says the problem comes when only part of your property is taken—those cases where the government diminishes all, or part of the value of your property in carrying out some aspect of the law.

It seems to us that if you own the property and a government body takes all or part of it, or the value of your property drops because of what the government is doing, they owe you. Endangered species and wetlands acts should be treated just the same as water treatment plants and roads.

For farmers property rights are sacred. No matter what public good the government needs to take property for, they must provide just compensation. Property rights and personal rights are so interwoven that we see no difference. Our country's founding fathers knew this. Let's hope today's government leaders know it also.



Saturday, May 13

Western Pa. Sheep and Club Lamb Sale, Mercer County 4-H Park, Mercer, 6 p.m.

Sunday, May 14
Mother's Day

Monday, May 15

Clean and Green information and dropoff meeting, Farm and Home Center, Lancaster, 7:30 p.m.

Clean and Green Educational Seminar, Manheim Township High School Auditorium, 8 p.m.-10 p.m.

Tuesday, May 16

Clean and Green Educational Seminar, Solanco High School Auditorium, 8 p.m.-10 p.m.

Lancaster County Honey Producers Association meeting, Lancaster Friends Meeting House, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, May 17

Lancaster Envirothon Contest, Lancaster Central Park.

Clean and Green Educational Seminar, Centerville Middle School Auditorium, 8 p.m.-10 p.m.

Thursday, May 18

Clean and Green Educational Seminar, Lancaster Mennonite High School Auditorium, 8 p.m.-10 p.m.

Twilight Pasture Walk, Octoraro Angus, Breezewood, 7 p.m.

Friday, May 19

Saturday, May 20

Butler Dairy Goat Show, Lawrence County Fairgrounds, New Castle, thru May 21.

Clinton County Herb and Craft Festival, Clinton County Fairgrounds, Mackeyville, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.

Alpaca Rendezvous, Bud and Gail Stewart's Rocky Run Alpaca Farm, Malvern, thru May 21.

Sunday, May 21

Annual Open Horse Show to benefit Erie County 4-H/Youth Development Program, Waterford Fairgrounds.

Maryland Two-Cylinder Club Antique Tractor Display, Route 27 and Twin Arch Rd., Airy, Md., 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Monday, May 22

Clean and Green Educational Seminar, Penn Manor High School Auditorium, 8 p.m.-10 p.m.

Clean and Green dropoff meeting, Strasburg Municipal Building, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Tuesday, May 23

Lancaster County Plastic Pesticide Container Recycling Program, Martin's Ag Service, 8:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m., also June 20, Aug. 22, and Sept. 19.

Lancaster County Plastic Pesticide Container Recycling Program, Henry B. Hoover Inc., Ephrata, 12:30 p.m.-3 p.m., also June 20 and Aug. 22.

Clean and Green Educational Seminar, Elizabethtown High School Auditorium, 8 p.m.-10 p.m.

Clean and Green dropoff meeting, 950 W. Fairway Dr., Manor Township, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

USDA NRCS Nutrient Management Computer Program Demonstration, Westmoreland County Extension, 1 p.m.-3 p.m.

Wednesday, May 24

Lancaster County Plastic Pesticide Container Recycling Program,

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Now Is The Time By John Schwartz

Lancaster County
Agricultural Agent

To Know Clean and Green Tax Savings

Tax reassessment notices have been sent to farmers this week. The notice you received this week gives you the new market value for your farm. It does not include the Clean and Green value. These will be mailed later.

Based on average figures, market value of farmland will be around \$4,000 per acre. The maximum value for Clean and Green farmland is \$1,220 per acre.

In Lancaster County, this means reducing the assessed value of your farm by approximately \$3,000 per acre. Your taxes are determined by multiplying your assessed value times the millage rate.

For example, if your new tax millage rate is 16 mills and Clean and Green lowers your assessment \$3,000 per acre, then your tax savings is \$48 per acre or \$4,800 on a 100-acre farm. This tax savings will be achieved regardless of the value assigned to buildings and your home.

To Sign Up For Clean And Green

Because of computer problems in the county assessment office, there has been a delay in mailing out the Act 319 or Clean and Green values to property owners of 10 acres or more.

If you are waiting for these values before you decide to sign up for Clean and Green, you may want to rethink your decision.

June 1, 1995 is the filing deadline for 1996 tax year. If your application is received after June 1, your tax savings will be for the 1997 tax year and you will pay taxes at the higher assessment value in 1996.

One important thing to remember is Act 319 is an assessment law that determines how much real estate taxes you must pay. It allows the county to establish a different value for your farm by assessing your land based on its income producing ability.

You do not need to know your Clean and Green values for your farm before you sign up. There will be reduction in appraised value for farmland.

The question is, "Can I accept the split-off provisions and rollback tax in return for the lower tax assessment?" If yes, then sign up now, well ahead of the June 1 deadline.

Remember, property owners with less than 10 acres will have to secure an Act 319 application themselves. They will not automatically be receiving one. Applications are available at meetings and the extension office.

If you have any questions, attend one of the Clean and Green meetings scheduled in the county

or call the Lancaster County Cooperative Extension office at (717) 394-6851.

To Control Birds In Corn Fields

Each spring after corn is planted, several growers experience problems with birds eating the corn seed or birds pulling up corn plants as they emerge to eat the corn seed.

Many birds may cause the problem. However, crows, starlings, and wild geese are most often the biggest offenders. They may attack corn starting the day it is planted and will continue to find corn rows a good place to eat until the sprouts are over 3 inches tall.

The total amount of damage is very minimal. However, a field which has attracted birds may suffer almost complete annihilation.

There are no registered chemicals which may be applied to seeds to prevent this. Using any product which is not labeled for bird control to control birds is illegal under

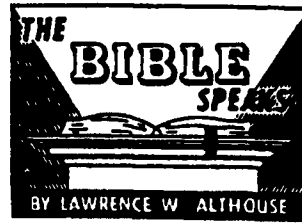
federal pesticide laws.

According to Dr. Greg Roth, Penn State agronomist, planting the seed slightly deeper and ensuring good seed furrow closure may help limit the problem. Crows in particular seem to be able to locate fields where corn sprouts are easy to pull up.

Roth suggests that scattering water soaked grain near problem areas to serve as an alternative feed source may help to limit the problem.

He also suggests that the use of black plastic flags made of three mil plastic measuring two feet by three feet attached to a four foot lath have on some occasions been successful in discouraging geese feeding. The flags should be distributed about one flag per acre where geese have been a problem and about one flag per five acres where geese have not been a problem.

Feather Prof.'s Footnote: "The quality of a person's life is in direct proportion to their commitment to excellence."



THE ACID TEST
May 14, 1995

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Background Scripture:
II Corinthians 5
Devotional Reading:
I John 4:7-21

Recently I saw on television an evangelist who assured his followers that a particular project of the group had brought "great joy to God's heart." I remember thinking that he was a lot more certain about God's "joy" than I would be on that particular project.

The victory that the preacher was celebrating was over an advantage that his group had gained over another. The victory obviously widened the breach between the two groups and greatly increased their hostility. Without getting into the controversy itself, let me say simply that the ground of contention was the subject of prayer in the public schools.

Although I personally identified with neither of the two groups, I found it difficult to think that this controversy, however resolved, brought joy to God. The end result of the controversy is that the two groups are even more widely polarized and each judges the other quite harshly. Both were equally quite certain that they were fighting this battle for God.

DOOM & GLOOM MORE FUN

Just because a project or movement is labeled "Christian," doesn't mean that it necessarily is of God. But there is an acid test we can often apply. Paul told the church at Corinth, "All this is from God who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation" (5:8). The first part, of course, we know: God was in Christ reconciling himself to us. But that's not the end of the matter. For not only did Jesus have this ministry of reconciliation, but we too. In fact, with Christ no longer physically present with us, God's ministry of reconciliation in the world today is pretty much our responsibility.

Like Jonah, many of us are not happy with a ministry of reconciliation. We would rather emphasize the differences that divide us. Jonah didn't want the people of Nineveh to hear his prophecies and repent; he wanted to condemn them. Condemnation does seem more enjoyable. Maybe that's why so much of our time is spent elevating the things that alienate us from others. Doom and gloom (for the other guy) is more fun than proclaiming love and forgiveness.

OUR BEST SUBJECT

But Paul says, "In Christ God was reconciling the world (notice, the "world," not just the "good guys") to himself, not counting their trespasses against them..." (5:19). But doesn't God realize that counting and proclaiming the trespasses of others is what we enjoy and do the best.

This is the all-too-human point of view that often distorts the true nature of the gospel, the good-guys vs. the bad guys (or the righteous and the unrighteous, the saved and the unsaved). Human beings have a genius for dividing what God created to be undivided. But Paul calls us to something else: "From now on, therefore, we read no one from a human point of view..." (5:16).

Let's get this straight: God doesn't entrust to us the task of defending Him or guarding the portals of Heaven to keep the riff-raff out. He doesn't charge us with the duty of being a spiritual police force; still less a righteous thought-control constabulary. What he charges us with is the message of reconciliation, bringing people together, not dividing them apart.

So, although we might prefer to be warriors of God's praetorian guard, what He really wants us to be is "ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us."

The acid test, then, for discerning if something is Christian or not: does it reconcile or does it alienate?

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