



OPINION

American Agriculture Again Sacrificed On Altar Of World Government

Officials of our national government are at it again. In a pending international treaty, we are proposing to give up more of our national sovereignty in subjection to the powerful international environmental lobby. This time agriculture is being unfairly blamed for greenhouse gas emissions without any consideration of the industry's positive role in reducing the gases.

Potential legally binding limits on greenhouse gas emissions may come out of the second Conference of Parties of the United Nations' Framework Convention on Climate Change. This U.N. scientific panel is considering reports that blame agriculture for more than 20 percent of human-caused greenhouse gas emissions. Among the proposals are such things as fuel economy requirements; reduction or phaseout of diesel fuel use; limitations on production per acre for some crops; requirements for "plowless" soil preparation; mandatory fallowing of cropland; limits and restrictions on livestock production to reduce methane emissions; restrictions on fertilizer use; restrictions on timber harvesting, and restrictions on processing, manufacturing and transportation of food products.

To us, this looks like the naked agenda of our national enemies who want us to lose our most valuable resource—a world class agriculture able to out-produce and out-feed any other country in the world.

Unfortunately, these proposals ignore agriculture's positive role in reducing greenhouse gases by removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere through photosynthesis. It also disregards the most valuable function of modern agriculture—feeding a hungry world.

There is a lively debate among respected scientists about the human vs. natural sources of greenhouse gases and their effect on climate. But the climate change treaty is moving full speed ahead with the U.S. administration's enthusiastic support. A final agreement is scheduled to be completed in December of 1997, with ratification by individual countries beginning in 1998. If ratified by the U.S. Senate, the treaty will be binding on the United States and other developed countries and may be incorporated into U.S. law. Developing countries, however, will not have to comply.

Again the strength of American agriculture will be sacrificed on the altar of the powerful world government movement.



To Attend 1997 Farm Show
Next week marks the opening of the 1997 Pennsylvania State Farm Show.

The Farm Show will run from Jan. 11-16 at the Farm Show Complex in Harrisburg. Saturday, Jan. 11 is Governor's Day featuring livestock shows, egg judging, home economics demonstrations, and 4-H, FFA, and youth exhibits.

Sunday, Jan. 12 is Family Day with more livestock shows, hundreds of commodity and business exhibits and crafts. The theme on Monday, Jan. 13 is Agricultural

Machinery Costs, Berks County Ag Center, Leesport, 10 a.m.-noon.

York County Ag Land Preservation Board informational public meeting, County Annex Building, York, 10 a.m., also Jan. 22 at 1 p.m.

Friday, January 10

Saturday, January 11

Pa. State Farm Show, Farm Show Complex, Harrisburg, thru Jan. 16.

Md. Organic Food and Farming Association annual meeting, Md. Dept. of Ag headquarters, Annapolis, Md., 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Sunday, January 12

Monday, January 13

Virginia and West Virginia Horticultural Society's annual meetings, Hotel Roanoke and Conference Center, Roanoke, thru Jan. 15.

National Limousin Show and Sale, Denver, Colo., thru Jan. 15.

Tuesday, January 14

Vegetable Growers' Association of New Jersey 1997 Trade Show, Taj Mahal Hotel Casino, Atlantic City, N.J.

Frederick County Milkers' School, Mountain Gate Restaurant, Thurmont, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Wednesday, January 15

Vegetable Growers' Association of New Jersey 1997 Trade Show, Taj Mahal Hotel Casino, exhibit hours 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Thursday, January 16

Regional Vegetable Growers' Meeting (Carbon, Monroe, and Northampton counties), Kresgeville.

Good Nutrition Or Just Expensive Feeds meeting, All-American Restaurant, Milton.

Managing For Success Workshop, Theo's Restaurant, Franklin County, also Jan. 24.

Farming For The Long Run: Land and Rental Arrangements, Berks County extension office, Leesport, 10 a.m.-noon.

Friday, January 17

Centre/Clinton Crops Day, Logan Grange Hall, Pleasant Gap.
Farm Bureau Issue Update Meeting, Howard Johnson's,

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Heritage Days, Tuesday, Jan. 14 is Dairy Day, Wednesday, Jan. 15 is Youth Day, and the show ends with the sale of champions on Thursday, Jan. 16.

Food is always a highlight at the Farm Show. A large variety of Pennsylvania food products are on sale at the Food Court. Plan now to attend the largest indoor agricultural show.

To Look At New Technology
Technological changes are likely to have a profound impact on American agriculture, according to Dr. Gerald Cole, University of Delaware resource economist.

Cole said small family farms will have the hardest time surviving these pressures.

New technology is presumed to enhance productivity and increase output. While some technologies are scale neutral, others are likely to be adopted only by larger producers. This will continue the trend toward fewer but larger farms.

Thus, technology will be changing the size of the farm, cost of production, and skills needed in farming. Small farmers unable to adapt new technology may need to

consider securing a part-time job or work on a larger farm able to adapt new technologies.

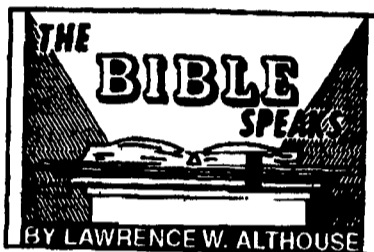
To Look At Effect Of Regulations

Dr. Gerald Cole, University of Delaware resource economist, said new and expanded regulations including the Coastal Zone Act, nutrient management, pesticide application records, and labor regulations are examples of increased record-keeping requirements being placed on farms that are likely to make it harder for small family farms to survive.

These regulations tend to create a greater disadvantage for smaller farmers.

We often hear politicians speak with great fondness about preserving small family farms. However, many times they pass new laws that hurt many small farmers because they cannot keep up with the additional cost of compiling with the regulations. Many times these regulations will hasten the demise of farm businesses that are already marginal, according to Cole.

Feather Prof.'s Footnote: "Do more than exist. Live!"



LESSOR OR GREATER?
January 5, 1997

Background Scripture:
Mark 1:1-15; Luke 7:18-30
Devotional Reading:
Matthew 11:7-17

I had always more or less assumed that, after the execution of John the Baptist, most of his disciples turned to following Jesus. This was based on the fact that at least two of his disciples did follow Jesus (Jn. 1:37).

I was surprised, then, to learn that, for at least the first century of Christianity, some of his followers of John the Baptist were a contemporary and probably a competing movement. This explains why all four of the gospel writers include the story of Jesus' baptism by John. They are at pains to show that John and Jesus were not competitors, but that the Baptist's role was one of preparation for the coming of Jesus.

Luke tells us they were kin through their mothers (Lk. 1:26-80). Matthew indicates that John recognized the importance of Jesus, saying "I need to be baptized by you and do you come to me" (Mt. 3:14). John also indicates John's recognition of Jesus: "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (Jn. 1:29). Luke and Matthew tell us he recognized his role as secondary to that of Christ: "I baptize you with water; but he who is mightier than I is coming..." (Lk. 3:16, Mt. 3:11).

HIGH PRAISE

All four gospels tell us that Jesus' baptism was accompanied by an affirming revelation from heaven. In Mark only, the Baptist saw it, while in the other three it is the voice of God, "Thou art my beloved Son; with thee I am well pleased" (Mark 1:11; Mat. 4:17; Lk. 3:22; Jn. 1:32,33).

The New Testament picture of John the Baptist is one of high praise. He is identified as God's "messenger" of whom Isaiah the

prophet wrote, one "who shall prepare the way" for the Messiah (Mark 1:2b).

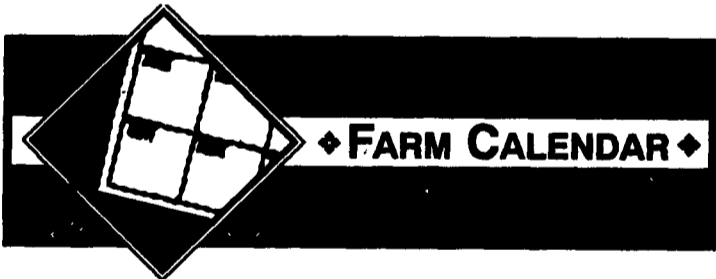
Then Jesus utters his seemingly paradoxical pronouncement: "I tell you, among those born of women none is greater than John; yet he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he" (Lk. 7:28). Is this a skillful put down of John? Or is Jesus here saying something of highest importance to his followers? The man who is a prophet, and even more than a prophet — the messenger sent by God to proclaim the Christ — is still less than the lowest person in the kingdom of God?

WATER vs HOLY SPIRIT

I think the key to understanding this enigmatic statement is in the Baptist's own words, "I baptize you with water; but he who is mightier than I is coming... he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit" (Lk. 3:16). The ministry of John the Baptist is a vital one in God's purpose, but the difference between the Baptist and the Christ is like the difference between water and the power of the Holy Spirit. John calls the people to repent, but repentance is only the preparation for that which is to come: the power of the Holy Spirit. And, when John in a moment of doubt sends two of his disciples to Jesus, asking, "Are you he who is to come, or shall we look for another?" Jesus replies, not with argument or doctrine, but with evidences of God's power in his ministry: "the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear..." (Lk. 7:22).

We can see this in our own lives. All of us need to repent, but repentance by itself is like the water that washes us but cannot keep us clean. We need power to live the life of a forgiven penitent.

That is what John did not have and what you and I can have today, if we want it.



◆ FARM CALENDAR ◆

Saturday, January 4

Economics, Solanco High School, 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, January 5

Eastern Pa. Turf Conference and Trade Show, Valley Forge Convention Center, King of Prussia, thru Jan. 9.

Monday, January 6

Regional Tomato Growers' meeting, Thompson's Dairy Bar, Lackawanna County, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Tulpehocken Adult Young Farmer business letter writing meeting, Tulpehocken High School, 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, January 7

Penn State Dairy Days, Bucks/Montgomery County, Family Heritage Restaurant, 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m.

Franklin County Extension Dairy Day, Kauffman's Community Center, Chambersburg, 9 a.m.
Tri-County Council For Southern Maryland and Southern Maryland Agricultural Commission meeting, Southern Maryland Regional Library, Charlotte Hall, Md., 7 p.m.

Lancaster County Tobacco Show, Farm and Home Center, 9:30 a.m.

Solanco Young Farmers Association meeting, Dairy Feeding

Economics, Solanco High School, 7:30 p.m.

Eastern Pa. Turf Conference and Trade Show, Valley Forge Convention Center, King of Prussia, thru Jan. 9.

Wednesday, January 8

Chester County Dairy Days, East Brandywine Fire Hall, Guthrieville.

Vegetable Technology Conference, Mt. Airy Fire Hall, Maryland, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

Frederick County Walk-A-Bout, Larry and Judy Riggs, hosts, 10 a.m.-noon.

1997 Horticultural Show, Rochester, N.Y., thru Jan. 9.

Thursday, January 9

Berks County Dairy Day, Berks County Agricultural Center, Leesport, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Stepping Ahead With Hoof Health, Yoder's Family Restaurant, Hartleton.

Schuylkill County Dairy Day, Penn State Schuylkill Campus, Pottsville, 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Mercer County Dairy Day, Mercer Cooperative Extension Center, 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m.

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