

**CIRCLE MEETS**  
The Blanche Meekins Circle met Friday night, January 6, at 7:30 with Mrs. Louis Howell. The meeting was called to order by the president by all singing "Jesus Calls Me." The roll was called and the minutes of the last meeting read and approved. After a short business discussion Mrs. Preston Nixon had charge of the devotional and Mrs. Joseph Rogerson had charge of the program. Subject "Master of the Waking World," with Mrs. Rogerson and Mrs. John Newby Winslow taking part. "Lead On O King Eternal" was sung. The meeting dismissed with prayer by Mrs. Louis Howell. Delicious refreshments were served by the hostess.

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## Billion Dollar Flood Is CD's Biggest Test In Disaster Work

Floods sweeping through the northeast United States in the dying hours of Hurricane Diane caused what one official described as "one of the biggest and toughest rehabilitation jobs since Noah."

With damage unofficially estimated at more than a billion dollars, the floods were probably the costliest natural disaster in American history. More than a billion dollars in Federal aid and loans have been made available to the six hard-hit states, including some \$100 million in direct aid for rebuilding public facilities.

Besides the more than 200 lives lost, industrial and agricultural production was crippled. Tobacco crop damage in the Connecticut Valley alone was estimated at \$500,000, and other crop damage was so bad it is still uncalculated.

Transportation and communication arteries were erased. For example, the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad lost a four-span, double-track, steel girder bridge—piers and all—when a creek rose 30 feet in 15 minutes.

**THE REAL STORY**, however, is not in figures, but the way all government agencies—Federal, state and local—worked together under the coordination of the Federal Civil Defense Administration to provide flood relief and repair. Co-operating actively was the Red Cross.

Under a Presidential declaration of "total war" on the flood, the Federal government did as ruthless a job of slashing its own red tape as the rivers had done in devastation.

For instance, the estimated damage to public works alone in Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania was about five times the entire amount in the FCDA disaster fund. Yet, a constant flow of work orders went out from the very beginning, with questions of "where the money is coming from" a secondary matter.

Such priceless flood-protection items as flexible pipe and pumps, generators and medical equipment were loaded in quantity from FCDA warehouses, where they had been stockpiled against a deep-made "rainy day."

Although FCDA is prevented by law from using disaster relief funds to make permanent repairs, it will contribute toward new construction when it is cheaper than repairs to the old. There is no estimate as yet on what the final bill to FCDA will be under this program.

**HOWEVER, FCDA DISASTER** funds in the eastern flood were supplemented when the Army

Corps of Engineers used \$40 million of its own appropriation for permanent flood control to carry out emergency repairs and clearance of water lines, sewers, bridges, streets, schools, dams and dikes.

Funds contributed toward permanent repairs to highways and bridges will come from the Bureau of Public Roads.

Surplus foods warehoused near the flooded areas were tremendously valuable in emergency feeding. In Pennsylvania, for example, 22,000 flood victims were fed by the Agricultural Marketing Service.

The surplus foods were made more valuable by the fact that so many contaminated foods and drugs had to be destroyed. In Connecticut some \$10 million worth of such material was destroyed, and in Massachusetts \$6 million worth. But such prompt action prevented any serious outbreak of disease.

**FARMERS COUNTED** heavy crop losses, but the Farmers Home Administration has acted as a financial backstop with a large number of low-interest loans to get the farms back in production again.

In the first critical days of flood relief, trained local civil defense volunteers worked alongside police, firemen and the Red Cross in rescue work, property protection and emergency care. These organized, grass-roots "good neighbors" found as Federal Civil Defense Administrator Val Peterson has pointed out, that they had "to deal with the same problem, whether a house was devastated by a flood or a bomb."

In such a vast undertaking and with so many agencies involved, coordination of disaster operations is vital to prevent overlapping and confusion. Since January 16, 1953, Peterson had that job.

In some 90 "major" calamities since that time, FCDA has worked out a smooth procedure for getting its disaster specialists at FCDA regional offices on the scene in a hurry to lend aid and evaluate the amount of outside help needed. It is this information which the President relies on in deciding whether it should be declared a "major disaster" and given disaster funds.

## News Report From Washington

**French And Communism—Effect On Foreign Aid—Another Big Four Meet? Johnson And Eisenhower—**

Washington—The results of the latest French election, which gave the Communists a greater number of seats in the National Assembly than they have had in years, did not surprise American diplomats in Paris.

The extent to which the Reds would gain was not known but it had been predicted that Communism was on the rise in France and this advice was passed on to Washington before the voting took place on the first of the year.

The results show that Russia's new foreign policy smiles and the new spirit of Geneva, notably, are helping the Communist parties in western European countries outside the Russian sphere of absolute control. What effect Communist gains will have in West Germany or Italy or in other countries, is yet to be seen.

But the Communist gains came after it had appeared that Communism was on the wane in France and constitute a great moral victory for the Communists, who now will not miss the opportunity to give the impression that the Communist party is the coming party, that Communism is on the rise.

Another effect of the election is to cast a cloud of doubt over U. S. policy concerning France. Congress is already doubtful about the value of an aid program to this thoroughly weak and disorganized and very unpredictable country. The President has suggested that Congress set up an aid program to last ten years, and that Congress give such an assurance to our allies.

But if the results of this program are to be the same as the results of the billions of dollars we have lavished on France—where Communism is gaining—it would seem that there may be a better and cheaper approach, and a more realistic one. In short, Congress is likely to buck any program of guaranteeing unreliable countries a program of four billion dollars a

year in total foreign aid for ten years.

If the President gets approval of this program, and long term guarantee, it will surprise many observers, and will come only after bitter opposition by a growing group which is of the opinion that U. S. dollars can do more for peace and defense in the U. S. than in the hands of unpredictable abroad. Aid for dependable allies will no doubt continue, but for some the issue is certainly clouded with doubt.

There is talk, again, in Washington about another Big Four meeting—at the highest level—before Mr. Eisenhower completes his first term of office. If such a conference comes to pass, it will have to be held this year. Mr. Eisenhower's term of office expires next January.

It may be possible that the State Department and the President himself would agree to another top-level conference. The President is not unaware of the fact that critics claim he should not have pledged this country against the use of nuclear weapons first, in the future. This, critics say, removed the last restraints on the Russians, and committed the U. S. to a fixed policy and not a flexible one.

Moreover, it is agreed that aggression by the Communists could warrant the use of nuclear weapons in the future, under some circumstances, and that the Reds ought to be kept guessing, anyhow, regardless of our inward determinations.

If there is another Big Four meeting, the President might adopt a tougher line with the Reds. He is being accused of the same thing all U. S. Presidents have been accused of in the last two decades—of being too soft on the Communists.

The extent of farm relief, from this session of the 84th Congress, will depend, to a very large part, on the cooperation of two Texas-born men. One is Majority Senate Leader Lyndon Johnson and the other is President Eisenhower.

The President has new plans for farm relief, which is an admission of the failure of the flexible supports system, to a degree at least. Johnson has old plans for farm relief—a bill which has passed the House and which restores ninety per cent parity price supports.

Ike and Johnson can work together to get some relief into sign-

able law, or they can have a political jockeying contest and no new farm relief program will emerge. They are under pressure from their party partisans and farmers. On

their course of action hangs the well-being of millions of U. S. farmers, and, to some extent, the fate of the two major parties in the 1956 election.

Every victory of science reveals more clearly a divine design in nature, a remarkable conformity in all things, from the infinitesimal to the infinite. —David Hume



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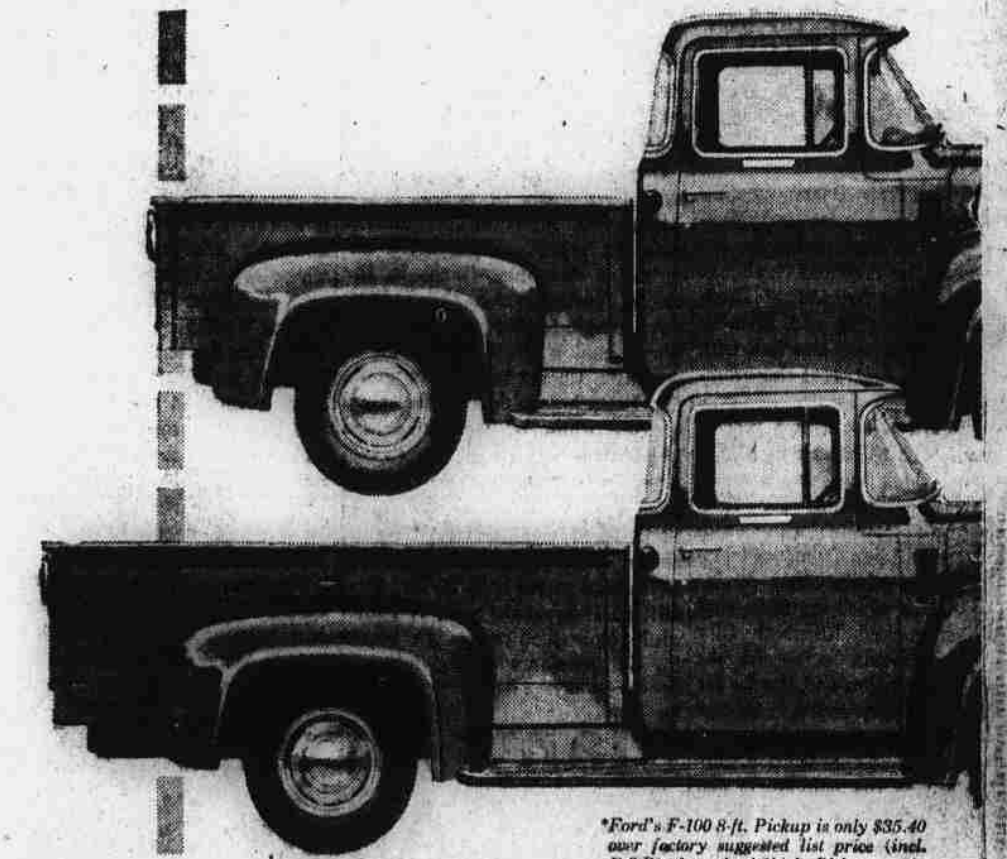


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