

Corporate Farms Termed Threat To American Way

By CHARLES BOND
(Reprinted from The Northampton County News)

The trend toward corporate farms is the biggest threat today to agriculture, Commissioner of Agriculture L. Y. (Stag) Ballentine told a farmers night group at Ahoskie Rotary Club recently.

He ventured further that the trend to consolidate and merge and create monopolies is the worst threat to our way of life.

He said there are five million farms in the United States, of which three million are subsistence farms producing only about 10 per cent of the total production. About 100,000 are corporate farms and produce 26 per cent of the total production. The other 1.9 million farms are the more substantial family type farms and produce the other 64 per cent of the total production.

He said there is going to be more curtailment and it behooves, landlords, and tenants to do a better job of living at home. He cited these figures:

Of North Carolina farm families 16 per cent raise no vegetables, 40 per cent have no cows, 17 per cent have no laying hens, 62 per cent have no beef cattle, and 48 per cent have no swine.

Agriculture, he said, needs to consider a program of distribution and build the soil to produce more economically. And he added American agriculture is entitled to the kind of support that will support farmers' prices at 90 per cent of parity.

"If you bring the agricultural income up to the level of the minimum industrial wage, you will see the biggest upsurge in business in Ahoskie, Murfreesboro and other towns that you will have seen in many moons."

Mr. Ballentine, a member of the agricultural policy committee of the U. S. Chamber of Commerce, has recently had opportunity to visit and confer with agricultural people all over the United States and he says candidly "Agriculture is in a bad way."

He thinks part of it is due to lack of understanding and that getting together of town and farm folk such as at the Rotary farmers night might enhance the understanding of the other's problems.

"Of course," he said, "12-cent hogs are a serious problem for those who grow hogs. All farm prices are serious when they don't represent the cost plus a fair profit."

The 22 million farmers make up 13 per cent of the population of the United States down from 25 per cent of the population in 1929. The farmers in 1929 were doing as much business as in 1954.

Mr. Ballentine said there are some who say farmers must be doing all right because farm land is so high, and if they aren't, why don't they get up and leave? Non-agricultural dollars, he said, control the price of land, and a farmer just doesn't get up and leave the land because he is in an economic squeeze.

He also referred to a published statement that since agriculture represents only 4 per cent of the total production, this country could get along without agriculture. But Ballentine said the American farmers produce 65 per cent of the domestic raw materials in industry, and are making some of the finest citizens as they have in years gone by.

But Ballentine said he can't see why all the people are not concerned that the agricultural economy stays in line as the stress that agriculture gets in economically is a forerunner of serious problems in other segments of the economy. Agriculture can build or sustain the overall buying power. The problem is enabling the American farmer to produce and market efficiently and effectively agricultural commodities sufficient to satisfy the trade, domestic and foreign, and enable the farmer to share commensurately with other economic segments.

He said the seven billion dollar value of agriculture surpluses actually is only a 90-day supply and that the surplus is being handled in such a confused way and with so much of it in such few commodities that they are being allowed to tear down the whole price and economic structure of agriculture. If everyone was on the \$2,000 income level, there would be needed \$800,000,000 more in the food basket.

Ballentine cited the 11 per cent production increase asked of farmers in 1942 and a 10 per cent overall increase (14 per cent on field crops) in 1948. "You just can't cut that off like water," he said.

"You will recall that the steel and automobile industries closed down and took all production away when there was an over-production in manpower. That cost more than the agricultural surpluses will cost in several generations."

"It's hard to make the molasses

To Grow Quality Seed Takes Top Grade Farming



U.S.D.A. Photo
Careful field inspections made frequently during growing season enable growers to take needed steps to insure profitable seed crop.

What are the earmarks of a successful seed producer?

A fairly large percentage of farmers who attempt to grow certified field seed or high quality uncertified seed, are relatively unsuccessful because of the high standards and extra care that are necessary.

In the first place, he must be a good farmer. His crop rotations and cultural practices must be designed to discourage weed growth and provide relatively weed-free soil for the production of high quality seed. Weeds which do appear should be controlled with cultivator, hoe or chemicals. The war on weeds must be waged in fence-rows, pastures, and wasteland, as well as in cultivated fields. Hand roguing of certified grain fields may be necessary.

Every precaution should be taken to keep down the percentage of weed seed in the harvested crop. Some weed seeds can be easily cleaned from crop seed, but the most efficient method to produce clean seed is the prevention of weed growth.

Primary noxious weeds at field inspection and either primary or secondary noxious weed seed in the seed inspection mean trouble for the producer. Disqualification of a seed lot can well be the difference between profit and loss in some years.

Quality must be assured. Seed production is a business where many things can go wrong for reasons beyond the control of the producer. In this case, the grower must be ready to make a satisfactory adjustment. Producer responsibility does not end with delivery of the seed to the dealer, who must be fully satisfied if he is to buy from the same grower another year.

The production of seed may be a farmer's major enterprise or it may be incidental to other production and a source of added income. In either case, such production is a service to agriculture and to mankind. It is an important part of man's struggle to better himself and the world in which he lives.

Probably each year sees fewer seed producers, whether of certified or uncertified seed, selling their product to the farmer-user. They are finding out as many have before them, that producing seed of high genetic purity and freedom from noxious weed seeds is a specialized job for which they are qualified and equipped. But the final processing, packaging and selling are other specialized jobs for which the grower ordinarily does not have the facilities, equipment or know-how to do profitably, and which the commercial seed processor or wholesale dealer can do much better.

and the bread run out even but that's what the farmer faces—abundant production or production in line with consumption."

Sir Edmund Hillary, conqueror of Mt. Everest, regards a much lower Himalayan peak—22,310-foot Ama Dablam—as "the most fantastically difficult peak any of us have seen. It seems unclimbable."



Guthrie McClintic, the theatrical producer and husband of actress Katherine Cornell, in his first 14 months in this city worked a total of 11 weeks, he told us at a Book and Author luncheon. Back in those days, free lunches were served at the old Knickerbocker Hotel, and Guthrie many times took advantage of these. One day, he was sitting discouraged and tired in Bryant Park, with his shoes off resting his aching feet, when an actor-friend suggested he go see the well-known producer Winthrop Ames. Guthrie did, but inside the office, he was so nervous in asking Ames for a job, that he knocked over the big ink-well on the latter's desk, mopping up the whole office. Practically bounced out, Guthrie sat down a few hours later and wrote Ames a hot letter. To his surprise, he received an answer—and a job as stage manager. He married Miss Cornell in 1921. The first play he produced was "The Dover Road," fondly remembered by many of us who played in it later as amateurs.

There seems to be a mania for male quarters with simple names. For instance, currently popular are "The Four Coins," "The Freshmen," and "The Crew Cuts." Joe Smith doesn't like the way some of them sing. He suggests that some of them sound as if they should be named—in alphabetical order—"The Four Dopes," "The Five Nuts" and "The Six Saps."

A Wall Street man who has a million reasons for being pretty sure, Joe Docter, gives me the following prediction for 1956 about the stock market: some stocks will continue to sell higher but stocks that have had unusual advances should be sold. Everything indicates continued prosperity. The public now is not inclined to sell their stocks. Natural resources which supply products for new industries appear to be the safest buys, with securities of good mining companies leading the list.

Either some fish or those who name them are "all wet." For example, what is known as sea trout in Boston are called weakfish in Baltimore, while the Boston scup is the Baltimore Porgie. On the other hand, Boston scrod are said to be actually baby haddock, but



A/2e G. W. WILEY, husband of the former Louise Parlon, Route 1, Waynesville, has returned to duty in Warrington, England with the Air Force's 53rd Weather Reconnaissance Squadron. The couple was married December 29 and spent most of Airman Wiley's leave visiting his parents in Focosa, Ga.

live in New York they are called codfish. In Boston, pollock is called just that but elsewhere it is known as bluefish. One way to be sure of getting what you order, therefore, is to order fish chowder.

Her Royal Majesty's Brittanica Government must be fuming. A local television company is running a series of screwball ads on the radio, poking fun at the English—while, of course, trying to sell TV sets. The last zany episode went something like this: "Well, Chumley, we're almost to the top of Mt. Everest. Don't give up, old chap! Think of the honor of the Empire! Think of how much you can save on thingabob television sets. And besides, the company will show you the set free, right here on Everest."

Gotham Gatherings: thanks for the large mail response to our recent column on the late O. O. McIntyre... folks here who love inspiring music helping to celebrate the 90th birthday of Jean Sibelius, composer of the magnificent "Finlandia"... somebody cracked that the only thing wrong with the dollar that used to buy twice as much as we didn't have it... sign on NYU bulletin board: "Anything worth doing is worth doing for money"... Maurice Chevalier made a hit here at the Waldorf, being billed nostalgically, to a lot of us at least, as "The King is Back"... a traveller returned from France reports that a Texas

oil man looked at the Eiffel Tower and commented, "Man, how many barrels a day do you reckon they get out of that rig?"... Sammy Kaye, the bandleader, says he gets an average of six musical manuscripts a day from prison inmates. Wonder if some of them came from Sing Sing?

Cortisone, the chemical widely used for treatment of arthritis, has been found in rare Mexican yams by field workers of the United States Department of Agriculture.

Police Want Ad
ANN ARBOR, Mich. (AP)—Ann Arbor's police department, caught 15 officers short, has advertised under the "male help wanted" section of the Ann Arbor News for patrolmen.
Chief Casper Enkemann says it was the first time in his memory that the department has ever had to advertise for this purpose.
The department difficulties were increased when 11 men quit because of low pay. It usually employs 66 men.

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