

Herald and News

Editorial Page

Agriculture And Chemical

In late years, there has been concern, accompanied by deep controversy, over the use of chemicals in agriculture. These chemicals serve varied purposes—to increase yield, to eliminate pests and insects, and so on. Their usefulness in these respects is beyond argument. The controversy arises from a belief that certain of the chemicals, notably the pesticides, may produce harmful effects both on human life and wildlife.

This point of view finds its most eloquent expression in Rachel Carson's recently published book, "Silent Spring." Miss Carson is a writer of high standing, whose previously published "The Sea Around Us" is an acknowledged classic. So "Silent Spring" has been received with high respect, is being very widely read and reviewed, and is, in its field, a considerable influence on public opinion.

The book amounts to a virtually blanket indictment of chemical agriculture. Miss Carson feels profoundly about this, and makes a dramatic case. But, whatever one's personal views, it will be unfortunate indeed if her attitude is accepted totally without question, and if the obverse of the coin is ignored.

A review of the book in Science magazine, by I. L. Baldwin, is of particular interest in balancing the scales. Mr. Baldwin is also an authority—he is professor of agricultural bacteriology at the University of Wisconsin, and serves as chairman of the Committee on Pest Control and Wildlife Relationships of the National Academy of Sciences—National Research Council. He approaches Miss Carson's book without bias, observing that it is "superbly written" and that "the author has made an exhaustive study of the facts bearing on the problem." Then he makes his main point: "It is not, however, a judicial review or a balancing of the gains and losses; rather, it is the prosecuting attorney's impassioned plea

for action against the use of these new materials which have received such widespread acceptance accorded because of the obvious benefits that their use has conferred."

On the specific side, Professor Baldwin states that most authorities, including public health, feel that the dangers involved in the use of pesticides are relatively slight. Known deaths from the cause in this country run to less than 100 a year. By way of comparison, he observes that twice as many deaths are known to be caused by aspirin.

He also believes that Miss Carson, by choice of language, has led to false impressions—as when she writes of a "fall of chemical death rain." The fact is that less than 5 per cent of the country's land area is treated each year with insecticides.

Finally, Professor Baldwin stresses what he regards as a most serious deficiency in "Silent Spring." In his words: "No attempt is made by the author to portray the many positive benefits that society derives from the use of pesticides. No estimates are made of the countless lives that have been saved because of the destruction of insect vectors of disease. No mention is made of the fact that the average length of human life has steadily increased over the last several years. No consideration is given to the important role played by modern pesticides in the production of food and fiber."

Then, to quote him once more: "Modern agriculture, with its high-quality foods and fibers could not exist without the use of pesticides." The old, true balance of nature, in other words, would be a luxury the modern world simply could not afford. The final impression one gets from Professor Baldwin's review is that there is truth in "Silent Spring"—but not the entire truth. There are two sides to this, as there are to the other controversies that mankind must deal with.



EDSON IN WASHINGTON

Predict Good Year Ahead



By PETER EDSON
Washington Correspondent
Newspaper Enterprise Assn.
WASHINGTON (NEA)—The extent to which U.S. government actions influence the national and world economies is emphasized in practically all major business forecasts made for 1963.

however, the California financial giant predicts that consumer spending will be up four per cent, plant and equipment spending up 4 to 5 per cent, government spending up 10 per cent.

This rise in government spending will account for one-third of the increase in gross national product to an estimated \$77 billion for the full year.

Letters To The Editor

Proposal
Zoning may be okay. How about turning it down now, incorporate the district that is to be zoned, and doing our own zoning?
John Gysbers
2742 Dayton Street.

Punishment
Is this 1963 or 1963? We have just read with alarm that the death penalty has been decreed for another one of your citizens, Herbert Mitchell; and we fail to see where anyone, individually, or society as a whole, can possibly benefit from such inhuman acts of revenge.

Free Speech
The evening of Friday, Dec. 28, 1962, the Herald and News published a letter to the editor. This note is meant to be a reply to some of the statements made in the letter.

Phone Calls -- 'By The Numbers'

(The Christian Science Monitor)
Ah, for the days when one picked up a telephone receiver and, to a pleasant "Number, please," replied something like "Crestview 8134" or "Albemarle 6700." Or when the numbers in a fair-sized town could be catalogued as belonging to either "Maple" or "Walnut" exchange.

To be sure, 767-3425 looks like a more formidable memory task than RO 7-3425 especially if one can still think of the RO as standing for Rosecrans. But after all, telephone subscribers in some parts of Europe, West Germany, for example, have been using all-digit numbers for several years without apparent hardship.

THESE DAYS . . .

Whence President's Power?

By JOHN CHAMBERLAIN
As we move into 1963 a White House spokesman—or "highest authority"—indicates that President John F. Kennedy has reflected profitably on the substance of two years' experience in dealing with Khrushchev. But the President, in facing a new Congress, has yet to prove that he is as quick to recognize domestic realities as he is to move with the necessities imposed by the Cold War.

any feeling that the President has had and fast convictions. He lacks the instincts and the attitudes of the zealous and frequently self-righteous reformers of the Nineteen Thirties, who wanted to lift Jane Addams' humanitarian Hull House right out of its Chicago slum and plant it down in Washington as a new wing to the White House. Kennedy was never really close to what Eleanor Roosevelt represented in the Democratic Party, which was one reason for Mrs. Roosevelt's original cohesiveness toward his candidacy.

Free Speech

Without criticism of our public officials, our two party system of government would be impossible. We would have to conform to the dictation of a single party because we could not criticize the public officials. They, the public officials, would stop being our representatives and would become representatives of only the party.

Free Speech

Secondly, the definition of an editorial should be established. An editorial can be a critical discussion or simple, straight forward criticism. The author of an editorial must have a topic to write about and must have opinions to express. If it does not contain opinions then it is not an editorial, but a simple commentary, a series of explanatory notes.

Free Speech

Under this plan, the Federal Reserve draws on foreign currencies from foreign central banks to buy their surplus dollars which might be presented on claims against U.S. gold. Later, when the pressure is off, the currencies are swapped back.

THEY SAY . . .

We and the Russians are like two fighting cocks circling round and round each other in a barn, ignoring the fact that the barn is burning down.
—Dr. Benjamin Spock.

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q—What metal makes the best magnets?
A—Hard steel.

Q—Which was the first Axis capital to fall to the Allies in World War II?
A—Rome.

NOTHING SPECIAL

(W. B. S.)

The Gazette-Times at Corvallis recently observed the 100th birthday of that eminent Oregon newspaper. In a special section produced to celebrate the event, the numerous community activities and accomplishments of the newspaper have been reviewed. The Gazette-Times has been and is a credit to the newspaper industry, and is one of only three Oregon newspapers to join the select century-of-service ranks. I can only hope that when the Herald and News marks 100 years of service to this community we can point with the same degree of pride as do the owners and operators of the Gazette-Times to our achievements.

That nagging worry that has pestered some of us as we read of all the unusually stormy weather around the globe has been (unfortunately) confirmed by no less an authority than Dr. Irving P. Krick, the Denver meteorologist. He says flatly that recent weather disturbances confirm his thesis that high-level nuclear blasts have altered the earth's weather patterns.

I don't have enough space here, and I don't possess the know-how to boil the article down. But for those cash customers who want to know all about Dr. Krick and his disconcerting conclusion, come on down and I'll lend you my copy of the National Observer which carries the interesting story.

Closer to home, there's a storm brewing that doesn't have much appeal, either. It stems from the proposal (or request) to the City Dads for a reclassification of zones adjacent to the new OTI campus. The object is to change the zoning to permit multiple-story buildings at the fringe of the campus. There are many ramifications to this situation, but I doubt that there is sufficient merit to the proposal to warrant serious consideration by the Council at this time. It would appear reasonable to me that such moves could be better considered after the OTI campus is completely installed and we get a good idea of what is needed to provide services and housing in the immediate area. Let this attitude be misunderstood.

Fascinated by the dispatch with which the youngest mother on the block got rid of pesky salesmen, a neighbor asked for the secret.

"Oh, it's very simple," the girl smiled. "I tell them I'm so glad they've come because I want to show them my latest line of greeting cards."

Note to pre-med students: It is absolutely without foundation that you can get through your courses by reading Ben Casey.

WASHINGTON REPORT . . .

Red Living Standard Concern To Leaders

By FULTON LEWIS JR.
Yegorovsk, a textile center of 60,000 population, 72 miles southeast of Moscow, is one of many towns clustered in a broad belt around the Soviet capital that are sealed off to foreigners.

Recently Pravda carried a letter from a 32-year-old working mother who lives in that city. Published to impress upon party agitators the need for more intensive "counter-propaganda," the letter indicates widespread consumer unrest behind the iron Curtain. It asks:

"Why do we send so much money to underdeveloped countries when the need is so extreme at home?"

"Why have food prices gone up?"

"Is it really necessary to spend so much on armaments?"

"Is the U.S.A. really threatening us with war?"

"Why are things so much better in the U.S.A. than here?"

To Pravda editors the letter was significant: "After all, Yegorovsk is not the only place where there are people who fail to understand. There are lots of them everywhere."

"Everywhere" includes Novocherkassk, the industrial city of 94,000 in southern Russia, where last June several hundred persons were killed while demonstrating against high prices and low wages.

The Soviet standard of living—not Berlin, nor Cuba, nor Laos—is now the greatest problem that faces Nikita Khrushchev. Five years ago, the Soviet Premier promised that by 1960 the average Soviet citizen would be eating as much as does his U.S. counterpart.

In many parts of the Soviet Union, housewives must begin standing in line at 6 a.m. if they are to buy food. Meat is scarce everywhere and often sold at sky-high prices by black marketers. Large quantities of meat must now be imported from Poland, five and seven-year plans to the contrary.

Soviet agriculture is in worse shape than ever. While the Soviet population has increased by 16 million since 1938, agricultural production has remained virtually stagnant, and grain production fell below the 1958 figure in 1959, 1960, and 1961. Final figures for 1962 are not yet in, but it is known to have been another disastrous year.

Editors of the highly-authoritative "Problems of the Peoples of

Almanac

By United Press International
Today is Sunday, Jan. 13, the 37th day of 1963 with 352 to follow.

The moon is approaching its last quarter.

The morning stars are Mars and Jupiter.

Those born on this day include author Harriet Alper, in 1924.

On this day in history:

In 1868, composer Stephen Foster died in Bellevue Hospital, New York City.