



MIKE CALLICRATE

## RURAL ROADS TO SECURITY: The Curse of Factory Farming

Excerpt beginning on page 92:

### The Curse of Factory Farming

Tenancy and land speculation constitute a very serious economic menace and should be reduced to a minimum. But there is a more serious economic menace on the horizon which also involves the land, and follows when ownership and tenant systems break down; namely, corporation farming. Although this menace has not progressed very far, yet it is very serious because it is being promoted by the industrialized, urban-minded, mechanized, stock-gambling forces of this generation. The unsound, agricultural technique of corporation farming will ultimately bring this system to naught. But America, unless we do some thinking and take effective action, may try this unsound agriculture too, if for no other reason than that it makes so many promises under the aegis of our

American economic idol, the corporation. Corporation farming will in time destroy itself with its mechanical methods in a field essentially biological, but before this stupidity will reap its empty harvest, our American families will be finally and completely uprooted from the soil. All ownerships will pass to *United Farms Incorporated*. All rural skills, cultural patterns, traditions, communities will be obliterated. In many places, if not all places, the present farm population will be replaced by

people not now engaged in agriculture, for the inefficient land corporations will have great need of imported cheap labor. They will have to reduce the populations in

their wheat, corn, cotton, livestock, and fruit factories - their vast soil-mining territories. Any rural homesteads remaining on soil acquired by them will have to be removed. Gigantic, collectivized mass shelters will have to be provided for the men and women and children who will come to the company camps. These laborers may be left to camp on the roadsides as we have witnessed in California and Missouri. Homesteads for these people will be unthinkable. The entire corporation process will make it clear that

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RURAL ROADS TO SECURITY  
*America's Third Struggle for Freedom*  
RT. REV. MSGR.  
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# CORPORATION FARMING IS BAD PUBLIC POLICY. IT IS DANGEROUS...



To all our Friends and Supporters:

*Thank you and  
Merry Christmas and a  
Happy New Year!*

OCM BOARD AND STAFF



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in its philosophy the giant factory farm is more important than the farmer who it reduces to the status of the proletarian hired man. Tenancy does much harm to our rural population; but it remains for the land corporation to destroy the farm homes, reduce the farm families to serfs, and erase forever all the economic, social, and spiritual values in our traditionally free and independent, brave and democratic American rural life. This last octopus of Wall Street will drive the remaining families from the land and crush the enterprises upon which they have spent the best years of their life – the personally owned and controlled productive enterprises on which democracy is built. Senator Arthur Capper gives a correct report on corporation farming and its destructive implications when he says:

Corporation farming is bad public policy. It is dangerous... Every farmer

and every business man in rural America and every worker in the big industrial centers should oppose it. I feel that we are justified by the facts as known and the possibilities of the future as indicated by those facts, in using every proper means to nip this corporate farming development before it gets firmly established.<sup>9</sup>

In the areas where farm corporations have picked up the title deeds to their 20,000- and 30,000-acre tracts, the experience of the man, the farm home, the farm family, the school, the church, the community has been a sad one. In these areas social and spiritual leaders have learned what to expect under a system of factory farming. These leaders know that their social, moral, and spiritual institutions are given but a small chance to establish themselves and can never hope to become vital factors in these rootless communities of landless people who are allowed to become even more transient than the harvest in their efforts to find work in the specialized farm factories.

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FRED STOKES



## REFORM THE BEEF CHECKOFF PROGRAM

# Terminate the NCBA gravy train!

Secretary Vilsack has proposed a new Beef Checkoff Program, which is in addition to the current one which will remain as is. As I understand it, three years after the new program goes into effect there would be a referendum to see if Checkoff payers liked it. In the meantime,

**Secretary Vilsack stated in his 2010 letter to NCBA that those funding the checkoff *“need concrete assurances that their monies are used as intended by law, and the generated funds support the interests of all producers and importers, not just NCBA members.”***

the present program would continue and NCBA would presumably continue its lock on the contracting process for the current (mandatory) program and thereby receive more than 80% of their total revenue.

These tens of million each year nourish and empower NCBA as it obstructs reform and pushes its self-interest and that of the packers. Any new and competing program has little chance of success so long as this blatant conflict of interest persists.

It is a conflict first and foremost due to

of 20 members; with 10 being appointed by NCBA and 10 appointed by the CBB. NCBA having half of the votes basically assures control. Moreover, most of the members appointed by the CBB are typically NCBA members.

NCBA advocates policy opposite to the views and interests of most of the cattle producers who fund the program. The supposed “firewall” between checkoff money and non-checkoff money has been a sham from the beginning. How can NCBA be expected to act with equal diligence in pursuing producer interests and its own contrary policy positions? The Proposed GIPSA Rule and mandatory country of origin labeling stand out as stark examples of these conflicting interests.

NCBA has also used checkoff funds to commission studies that reached questionable and self-serving conclusions. Through its advertising buys in farm publications and other media, NCBA has biased editorial perspectives in support of its policy positions and distorting information to paying cattlemen so as to continue its revenue stream.

With a minuscule percentage of the cattle producers as members, the hundreds of millions received over the years has empowered NCBA to represent its brand to be the de facto voice of the cattle industry.

While I have long supported the concept of U. S. beef producers funding a program to promote their product and thereby their financial interests, the cur-

rent program with NCBA as the exclusive contractor has been a resounding failure. This year, as beef demand increases, we will wean the smallest calf crop since 1941 from a declining number of ranchers. Today’s cattle prices, although much better, still do not reflect a fair share of the prices consumers are paying.

**NCBA’s contract with the CBB (Cattlemen’s Beef Board) is clearly a prohibited conflict of interest. It should be summarily terminated now!**

The USDA’s own Beef Promotion and Research Act Guidelines prohibit conflicts of interest or even the appearance of a conflict of interest. Clearly, NCBA’s chokehold over the CBB contracting process is a conflict.

Secretary Vilsack stated in his 2010 letter to NCBA that those funding the checkoff *“need concrete assurances that their monies are used as intended by law, and the generated funds support the interests of all producers and importers, not just NCBA members.”* Given the Clifton Gunderson performance review findings of misappropriation, followed by the 2013 whitewash of the OIG beef checkoff, there is no such assurance.

Not surprising, given the revolving door between NCBA, the big meat packers, and the USDA, that USDA’s legal staff has advised the Secretary that he lacks the authority to find NCBA’s self-dealing and control of the checkoff to be a conflict of interest. OCM initiated the 2004 report on agency capture: “USDA INC., HOW AGRIBUSINESS HAS HIJACKED REGULATORY POLICY AT THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.”

OCM attorneys disagree with USDA’s legal staff:

*“The Secretary has the authority and duty under the Beef Act, Order, and oversight rules to ensure that expenditures*

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LETTER FROM LANGDON:

# Breakfast Roundup?

BY RICHARD OSWALD

**Chemical weed killers have become an indispensable part of commercial agriculture, saving farmers time and back-breaking labor. But they also come with a cost, as loss of effectiveness forces greater use just to keep up.**

**W**hen I was a kid, I worked next to my folks pulling weeds from around fences and buildings on the farmstead every Saturday afternoon. Those were the days.

Starting when it was first released in 1974, the herbicide Roundup became a great labor saver for us. Dad loved to spray it around the farm, killing all those weeds and grasses without ever once shaking out a root ball.

He thought Roundup was the best thing ever.

I also remember the time Dad sprayed too close to the corn east of the house on a windy day, killing off about half an acre. That's when he said if we could ever develop crops immune to Roundup, the farmer would have it made.

He died a year before Roundup Ready soybeans were released in 1994.

Dad always read the label, even if he didn't take it to heart. He used to say Roundup was so benign, you could eat it on your breakfast cereal. He also pointed out it made a great hand cleaner. That's true, it did. Grease comes right off with Roundup. That may have been at least in part due to soapy chemicals that help the product coat plants evenly. But it's also a characteristic of glyphosate, the active ingredient in Roundup.

In addition to being a farmer, for awhile during the '60s and '70s, Dad ran a farm-supply business where they sold feed, fertilizer and farm chemicals of the day. An old farmer once told me he owed everything to my dad, who convinced him to apply another herbicide different from Roundup, atrazine, to his weedy corn crop.

We used that one on our farm too.

Dad carried epinephrine tablets in his pocket because he had allergic reactions to

much of what he sold: aldrin, heptachlor, malathion, lindane, methoxychlor. And he sold chemicals known only by letters and or numbers: DDT; 2,4,5-T; and 2,4-D.

I worked for Dad in his chemical warehouse when I was a high-school teenager. It wasn't unusual for me to have a stiff neck by the end of the day, something Dad said was the result of being so close to so many pesticides.

He was never concerned by that.

I took this trip down memory lane when a friend contacted me the other day, asking about glyphosate application to wheat. Though Monsanto has developed glyphosate-resistant wheat, none to date has been approved for sale. So if we don't have Roundup Ready wheat, why are wheat farmers using glyphosate?

With a few reservations, glyphosate can be applied to wheat and small grains as a desiccant, or a moisture remover by causing the plant to die. That's according to South Dakota State University.

Even though Great Britain allows the import of genetically modified crops and food containing GMO's, growing genetically altered plants is still on hold there. But glyphosate can be applied to wheat in the United Kingdom the same as it is here.

We know it's done because glyphosate has been detected in grain harvested from treated plants.

Awhile back I found an interesting tidbit on glyphosate I never knew. According to what I read, the product was first formulated in 1964 by Stauffer Chemical Company to remove mineral deposits from pipes and boilers. The serendipitous discovery that it also killed plants on contact was then patented by Monsanto.

Later in New Zealand, when Stauffer tried to develop its own patented herbicide from glyphosate, Monsanto sued and won

the right to be sole patent holder. That is similar to the way Monsanto was able to patent glyphosate-resistant genes in plants.

The rest is history.

We used atrazine in the '60s and '70s much the same way we use glyphosate today, but as a residual or longer-acting herbicide too. Over time, we've seen atrazine lose most of its effectiveness, just like Roundup, though the honeymoon may have lasted longer this time with glyphosate. We went from applying a little over a pound of atrazine here at home where we grew corn every year, to more than four pounds per acre when we stopped using it.

Obviously crop rotation was not part of the program, and certainly not possible, because crops like wheat and soybeans don't tolerate atrazine. Eventually atrazine became totally ineffective as weed control. But some still say it has a use. Over the last few years, I have spoken many times with a corporate representative of a large chemical company who still defends the use of atrazine because he says it helps other, newer herbicides work more effectively.

Roundup still works on some of our weeds and grasses, but we have gone from very low rate of use to much higher ones, just like atrazine. Now, just as my chemical-company friend advocates for atrazine, we use glyphosate in conjunction with other herbicides. I noted this year on our farm that when reducing rates of one herbicide to my corn crop allowed some weeds to slip through, every mid- to late-season herbicide product available to correct the problem included some glyphosate.

It's gotta be in there!

Is that a bad thing? Well, it doesn't seem good. But maybe that's just the way nature and corporations work.

Now Dow Chemical Company wants to patent a gene that makes crops resistant

to another of Dad's old favorites, 2,4-D, that was first synthesized in 1941.

Environmentalists link 2,4-D to Vietnam War-era Agent Orange, associated with serious health side effects experienced by many Vietnam vets. But scientists say it wasn't 2,4-D in the mix that sickened people, but the dioxin that was part of the mixture.

Old as it is, 2,4-D and members of its molecular family are still effective on most broadleaf weeds. It can be used before crops are planted and before seedlings emerge from the soil. And it can be applied to crops that have matured to kill growing weeds before harvest. It's also used in the development of new varieties of conventional crops. But there are concerns about planting crops that can tolerate 2,4-D anytime. That's because the chemical might be applied throughout the growing season with many adverse effects on less tolerant crops and ornamental vegetation when vapors or spray drifts well beyond the edges of treated fields.

That's nothing new to farmers, because that's always been a problem with herbicides, especially volatile ones like 2,4-D.

Genetic resistance to 2,4-D in crops could also mean gradual loss of 2,4-D effectiveness as farmers rely more and more on the old, inexpensive, patent-free generic standby.

Development of crops that resist 2,4-D is kind of a freebie for seed and chemical companies. They could develop a profitable, new patented gene based on an old chemical, in lieu of doing expensive research on new, better, safer herbicides.

Dad never followed through on his statement he could eat Roundup on his breakfast. And even though I have breathed and sometimes almost bathed in all sorts of pesticides – including 2,4-D – for most of my life, I really don't want to either.

Now the question is whether I have a choice.<sup>RO</sup>

*Richard Oswald, a fifth generation farmer, lives in Langdon, Missouri, and is president of the Missouri Farmers Union.*

# WTO, COOL, TPP

## The Alphabet Soup of the Loss of National Sovereignty



If you were not concerned about our loss of national sovereignty before, you should be now, following the World Trade Organization (WTO) recent ruling against the Country of Origin Labeling (COOL). Although the WTO acknowledges that the United States has the right to label, and even though Canada has their own version of COOL, the WTO cites a very minor excuse to deny American consumers from knowing the origin of their meat. The labeling requirement, which has already been amended to satisfy the WTO, simply shows where that particular cut of meat was born, raised, and slaughtered. If the steer was born in Canada, raised in Canada, and slaughtered in the United States, the label so indicates. If, however, the animal in question was born, raised, and slaughtered in the United States this is what the label states. Meat from cattle, sheep, hogs, and chickens that originate from Canada, Mexico, and the United States are treated exactly same, yet WTO finds that this is discriminatory towards Canadian and Mexican producers because of the costs associated with keeping the information on the origin of each animal. In this information technology age where firms keep track of every little nut and bolt in their inventory, keeping track of a 1200 pound steer is considered by WTO to be too expensive.

Country of Origin Labeling has

of course been an issue favored by family farmers and ranchers and ninety percent of consumers. After considerable effort by family agriculture and consumer groups, the law was first passed in 2002. This opened up twelve years of intensive warfare with the meat packing cartel who tried every tactic open to them to block implementation. Family farmers and ranchers have distrusted the trade agreements from the very beginning, seeing them as vehicles to increase imports of a wide range of agricultural products – particularly beef. The meat packing cartel, of course, wants the unhindered ability to source product anywhere in the world. The less information they are required to share with the consumer the better they can price that product – hence the fight, the appeal to the WTO, and this latest WTO ruling that our COOL requirement is unacceptable.

The issue goes far beyond the labeling of meat. This WTO ruling shows the extent that we have traded away our democratic rights as American citizens in entering “trade at any cost” agreements. The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was not the first trade agreement but it was the biggest and the template for subsequent agreements. After 20 years of NAFTA the results are in and although the agreement has been good

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Mark A. Dawber gives us a sound warning when he writes:

*The maintenance of the family the year-round is not the overhead of farming. It is the overhead of civilization. Replace individual farmers with floating hands employed for a few months in the year and you might just as well nail shut the doors of the churches and the institutions of learning. Individual farmers, not floating farm hands, rear children and give opportunities for scholastic education.*<sup>10</sup>

A picture of what he calls “floating farm hands” is graphically give us in these verses. It will not readily be forgotten.<sup>MC</sup>



STOKES (continued from page 3)

*are lawful and fulfil the purpose of the checkoff program. Expenditures requested for the Secretary’s approval that are made in violation of law, regulation, or enforcement guidelines designed to protect the integrity of the checkoff should be rejected. Secretary Vilsack noted in his 2010 letter to NCBA that those funding the checkoff “need concrete assurances that their monies are used as intended by law, and the generated funds support the interests of all producers and importers, not just NCBA members.” It is within the Secretary’s authority to directly provide such concrete assurance to producers and importers by enforcing the prohibition against conflict of interests in the checkoff contracting process, by ensuring that no private organization received preferential treatment (or anything close to a checkoff contract monopoly), and by preventing any entity’s policy activities from being enhanced by substantially increased revenues and shared expenses with checkoff funds.”*

So I call on Secretary Vilsack to fulfill his obligation to seek out and end conflicts of interest and corruption in the beef checkoff. It’s his duty, and the only thing stopping NCBA from using cattle producer’s own money to promote a corporate owned and controlled global meat industry.<sup>FS</sup>

## THE MOVERS

*The East wind whips the skirts of the snow  
with a passing shower,  
and over Iowa on the first of March  
wheels churn hub deep in the mud  
or grit their teeth across the icy roads.  
Home is only a shadow  
flying down the wind in a  
twisted swirl of snowflakes,  
traveling down the road in an old  
lumber wagon  
drawn by two shaggy horses  
whose bones are too big for their flesh.  
Even the wild goose  
is not so homeless as these movers.  
Peering ahead through the sliding  
curtain  
of March rain they pass  
with the furniture of home packed in  
a wagon.  
Past corner, past grove, to the hilltop  
they go  
until only chairlegs point from the  
skyline  
like roots of trees torn from the earth.  
And they are gone...  
The Rural Family In Mass Production  
This, the parade of the landless, the  
tenants,  
the dispossessed,  
but of their Canaan they march  
with Moses asleep in the Bible.*

*Who will call them back, who will  
ask:  
are you the chosen people, do you  
inherit  
only a backward glance and a cry and  
a heartbreak?  
Are you the meek?  
But the early twilight  
drops like a shawl on their shoulders  
and sullen water  
slowly fills the wagon ruts and the  
hoof prints.*

*-James Hearst of Maplehearth, Country  
Men - (The Prairie Press)*



<sup>9</sup> Dawber, M. A., quoted in *Rebuilding Rural America* (New York: Friendship Co., 1937), p. 38.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 40.



STOCKTON  
(continued from page 5)

to trans-national corporations, the impacts on the American, Canadian, and Mexican middle and working classes have been primarily negative.

Back in 1994, when NAFTA was ratified by Congress among a manure truck load of extravagant promises, only family farmers/ranchers, labor unions, and environmentalists were skeptical. Each of course, for very different reasons. The forces who steamrollered the trade agreements through Congress systematically marginalized this opposition, ridiculing them as “anti-free trade.” Both Democratic and Republican Administrations have been totally bi-partisan in negotiating and signing agreements that have transferred our democratic rights as citizens of the United States to trans-national corporations and the WTO.

Labor unions saw early on that the trade agreements were all about gutting hard won labor rights. After 20 years of outsourcing our manufacturing industries, the incomes of working and middle class Americans have fallen. Millions of Americans are now trapped in jobs that pay less than a living wage, with no health, vacation, and retirement benefits. The rest, who are lucky enough to still have what can be considered a good job, work harder for less and their retirement options have been severely cut. The pundits on TV and the radio seem puzzled why the recovery from the 2008 “Great Recession” has been no tepid. There is no mystery, outsourcing and a trade deficit running at 40 to 50 billion dollars per month has taken its inevitable toll on the American middle and working classes.

A hot button political issue that is also all about WTO and globalization is the Keystone Pipeline. This pipeline is to run from Canada, through Montana, South Dakota, Nebraska and ultimately to Texas. Once the President signs off on the project, which he most probably will after the elections, a foreign corporation will have the right to condemn land belonging to taxpaying Americans, in order to transport crude oil to refineries in Texas. This is important to the oil cartel because from Texas, the domestic market for the gasoline and diesel can be played off against the world market, resulting in higher fuel prices for everybody.

The media and the politicians never cast

it in those terms. Instead, they point the finger at so-called “extreme” environmentalist for denying Americans good jobs. Building a pipeline may create good –temporary – jobs but the project will leave the risks of pipeline ruptures on the backs of poorly compensated land owners and whoever or whatever might be downstream. At this point in our national circumstances, we need the oil and having this country energy independent from the Middle East is a very good thing. But from this consumer of gasoline’s point of view, the sensible thing would be to build refineries in Canada, Montana, and North Dakota where we will have permanent good jobs and cheaper fuel. However, the trade agreements, take precedence over what is good for people so that will never happen because thanks to NAFTA and the WTO, foreign oil companies have more rights than American landowners.

Something that is never talked about is how the trade agreements and WTO treat taxes. Most countries, excepting the US, fund their public infrastructure and services through a Value Added Tax (VAT) which is a type of national sales tax. Depending upon the country, the VAT runs somewhere between fifteen and twenty percent of the retail value of the item. Under the WTO regulations, the VAT can be deducted from exports and added to imports. The US does not have a VAT but instead uses a system of local sales and property taxes which under the WTO rules cannot be rebated on exports or added to imports. This makes US manufacturing non-competitive on both our own domestic market and globally. Meanwhile the rich

have been successful in having their tax obligations reduced and the corporations which they own are allowed to offshore their profits. The tax burden, therefore, has inevitably shifted downward to the local level where ordinary people cannot avoid paying more in sales and property taxes. The result is that our infrastructure is collapsing and our communities and schools are underfunded.

The forces of globalization never sleep and never stop in their quest to free themselves completely from constraints imposed by democratic aspirations and nation states. The Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) will be the biggest trade agreement ever and it is ready for ratification. Chances are that soon after the elections, the TPP will be put forward on a “fast-track.” No debate allowed, and no opportunity for citizens to comprehend what is in the agreement. The beneficiaries – the transnational corporations – already know because they were welcomed behind the closed doors of the negotiations. We can be pretty sure that labor and environmental rights have been further eroded and that, once again, American family agriculture has been sacrificed to the global market. We have a new crop of Congressmen and Senators who are joining the left-over duds of the last Congress and they all will soon be asked to vote for the TPP. Will they support national sovereignty and the American people or the transnational corporations?<sup>GS</sup>

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