



The Failure of Modern Industrial Agriculture

BY JOHN IKERD



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mane treatment of farm animals, and routine feeding of antibiotics to confined animals—among many other problems—have eroded public trust in American agriculture. In response, the defenders of so-called modern agriculture have employed top public relations firms to try to clean up their tarnished public image. Their campaigns emphasize such issues as water quality, food safety, animal welfare, and “food prices and choices.”

Mounting public concerns in each of these areas are supported by

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**SPECIAL INSERT
IN MEMORY: BROTHER
DAVID GRANT ANDREWS, csc**

Disclaimer: The opinions of the authors presented in our newsletter are their own and are not intended to imply the organizations position. OCM has membership with diverse viewpoints on all issues. OCM is committed to one and only one principal; competition.

Americans are being subjected to an ongoing multi-million-dollar propaganda campaign designed to “increase confidence and trust in today’s agriculture.” Food Dialogues, just one example of this broader trend, is a campaign sponsored by the U.S. Farmers and Ranchers Alliance—an industry organization whose funders and board members include Monsanto, DuPont, and John Deere. The campaign features the “faces of farming and ranching”—articulate, attractive young farmers, obviously chosen to put the best possible face on the increasingly ugly business of industrial agriculture, which dominates our food-production system.

Genetically engineered crops, inhu-



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a growing body of scientific evidence. For example, a 1998 EPA study found 35,000 miles of streams in 22 states polluted with biological wastes from concentrated animal feeding operations. The number of “impaired waters” in Iowa has tripled since the late 1980s, as industrial farming systems, such as factory farms, have replaced traditional family farms.

On food safety, a recent U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention study reviewed dozens of studies linking routine feeding of antibiotics in concentrated livestock operations to people being infected with antibiotic-resistant bacteria, such as MRSA. “Use of antibiotics in food-producing animals allows antibiotic-resistant bacteria to thrive,” they concluded. “Resistant bacteria can be transmitted from food-producing animals to humans through the food supply.” The big agricultural corporations claim that they are committed to the humane treatment of animals—while advocating legislation to criminalize unauthorized photography in concentrated animal feeding operations. Numerous scientific studies over the past 50 years have documented inhumane treatment in these “animal factories.” The mistreatment is not only a result of inevitable overcrowding in confinement operations, but also results from routine management practices, transportation, and even in the genetic selection of animals for maximum productivity.

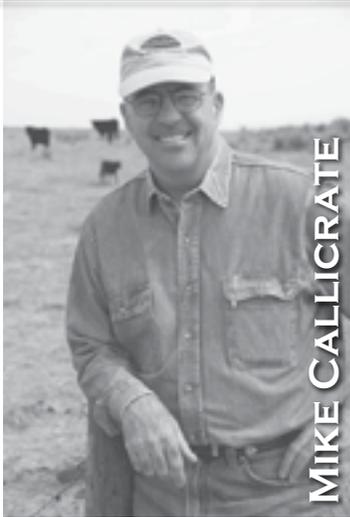
The Food Dialogues campaign claims to advocate consumer choice by supporting all types of farming. However, its language strongly suggests that industrial agriculture is essential to keeping food affordable. It considers organic agriculture and other sustainable farming alternatives to be no more than “niche markets.” In reality, the only clear “benefit” of industrial agriculture is that it requires fewer farmers. There is no indication that industrial agriculture has produced more food than could have been produced with more sustainable methods, only that it has employed far fewer farmers. Any production-cost advantage has been more than offset by higher margins, including profits, elsewhere within the corporate food supply chain. Over the past 20 years, an era of intensive agricultural industrialization, U.S. retail food prices have risen faster than overall inflation rates.

Agricultural industrialization has had a devastating effect on the quality of rural life. Industrial agriculture has replaced independent family farmers with a far smaller number of farm workers, most of whom are paid poorly. In 1960, farmers were still more than 8% of the U.S. workforce. They are less than 1% today. Rural communities have suffered both economically and socially from this loss of traditional farm families. More than 50 years of research demonstrates that communities supported by small to mid-size family farms are better places to live, both economically and socially, than are communities dependent on large farming enterprises.

Perhaps most important, industrial agriculture has failed in its most fundamental purpose: providing food security. The percentage of “food insecure” people in the United States is greater today than during the 1960s—early in the current phase of agricultural industrialization. (See Gerald Friedman, “Food Insecurity in Affluent America,” pp. 41-42) Furthermore, the industrial food system is linked to a new kind of food insecurity: unhealthy foods. A recent global report by 500 scientists from 50 countries suggested that “obesity is [now] a bigger health crisis than hunger.” There is growing evidence that America’s diet-related health problems are not limited to poor consumer food choices or processed “junk foods” but begin with a lack of essential nutrients in food crops produced on industrial farms. It’s high time for fundamental change in American agriculture. The growing litany of farm/food problems today cannot be solved by redesigning the USDA “food pyramid,” placing warning labels on junk foods, or imposing more stringent regulations on farmers. Today’s problems are deep and systemic. They are inherent in the worldview from which industrial agriculture emerged and upon which its evolution depends.

In economic terms, industrialization allows capital and technology to be substituted for workers and managers. In other words, it allows raw materials or natural resources to be transformed into more valuable products while employing fewer, lower-skilled workers—in both labor and management positions. In a world with an abundance of natural resources and a

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Merchants of Doubt Exposes the Bull

Not believing doesn't make it untrue

In last week's Atlantic article, Farmland Without Farmers, Wendell Berry describes how industrial agriculture has replaced men with machines, depriving the American landscape of its stewards and the culture they built. He discusses the value of living in a place for a long time and observing, in that place, what's missing.

Over the last 35 years, as Wendell Berry describes, corporations have assumed near total control of agriculture while family farmers have lost their markets, their land, and their livelihoods. When family farmers are replaced with industrial corporate farms, animals, people, communities, and the environment all suffer. Why would any society allow the demise of their farmers and ranchers? They wouldn't if they knew it was happening. In fact, any good citizen would raise hell at the thought of losing their food supply. So why aren't more people speaking out about the concentration and consolidation of our agricultural and food system?

Last week I saw the newly released film, Merchants of Doubt. Robert Kenner, producer of Food Inc., once again brilliantly exposes the lie, the deception and message manipulation that keeps normally intelligent people in the dark. The film explains how the lie often gets more light, more con-

sideration, than the truth. I left the theater reminded of the danger in broadly giving others and their stories the benefit of the doubt. The film reveals the sociopaths among us. They operate from very dark places, knowing full well the damage they cause, while taking pleasure in it.

Around 40 years ago independent poultry farmers lost their markets. They either left the business or were led into contract grower serfdom by giant poultry companies and their partner banks, like the Farm Credit System. Sixteen years ago the big pork packers pounded pig prices down to

cattle feeding operations that have been forced out of business.

From the farm crisis of the eighties, to the plundering and pillaging of the 1990's, to today's final steps to totally crush any hope for an open and fair marketplace, the people who produce our food are left to suffer and die at the hands of big food companies. Not one Secretary of Agriculture in the last 100 years, including Secretary Vilsack in this current administration, has done their duty in protecting the marketplace. In fact government policy has facilitated its demise. All the talk about rural



Mike Callicrate was one of ten cattlemen, who in 1996 sued IBP, now Tyson, for anticompetitive practices. The cattle operation was black-balled by the four big meat packers. When Callicrate closed, fifteen families lost their income and local farmers lost a good market for feed.



8 cents per pound, driving over 90% of our nation's hog farmers out of business. A rigged milk market forced over 85% of our dairy farmers off their farms. Seventeen years ago my world suddenly and painfully changed. My fight to restore a fair market left me ostracized with no one who would buy my cattle. I had to shut down Callicrate Cattle Co., just one of over 39,000

development, support of young farmers, and USDA's "Know your farmer, know your food" campaign, is nothing but a siren call to the corrupt fools game of corporate controlled agriculture and its indentured servitude.

Individuals and groups like The

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Letter from Langdon:
**BLINDED BY
THE LIGHT**

County of Origin Labeling didn't hurt the Canadian cattle market, a new study of U.S. meat prices says. Big meatpackers would just to prefer to keep customers in the dark about where their meat comes from.

BY RICHARD OSWALD

Your family is hungry.

They rely on you to feed them.

And you want to provide them with healthy, safe, good-quality food that is free of contamination.

Now, picture a room full of doors. Behind each door, you're told, is food from all over the world. It could be from anywhere - Brazil, Mexico, Canada, China. But the doors are blank - no labels. Finally, even though you're not sure what you're getting into, you choose a door, looking for that safe, nutritious food to feed your family. But before you can step over the threshold, the people in charge make you put on a blindfold.

That adds a whole new dimension to picking door number 3, doesn't it?

For years, opponents of your right to know where your food comes from have been trying to convince Congress and the American people to keep the blindfold on. The less you know about food, they say, the better it is for everyone.

They're saying we might be blinded by the light.

Now, most Americans don't feel this way. That's why Congress passed a law in 2008 requiring Country of Origin Labeling, or COOL. It requires food sellers to put some labels on those doors so we can know more about what's in there. And COOL is sup-



posed to prevent anyone from putting a blindfold over consumers' eyes.

But some food producers and foreign governments have been fighting the law for years. One claim is that labeling meat with its country of origin violates trade agreements we have with countries like Canada and Mexico.

As evidence of this economic harm, COOL opponents have pointed to a study that purported to show that COOL cost the Canadian cattle industry \$1 billion.

But a new study by C. Robert Taylor, Ph.D., of Auburn University disproves some of this decidedly one-sided, behind-closed-door claims by foreign governments and big business.

Through his broad, detailed analysis, Taylor proved that the opponents of COOL cherry-picked market data to make it appear Country of Origin Labeling hurts the pricing of imported live cattle and hogs.

First, Taylor showed that the recession was the cause of most of the change in meat prices, not COOL. The market data that COOL opponents used for their study were

gathered after the U.S. recession started. During that period, consumer demand for all higher-priced cuts of meat declined based on personal buying power, not because of unjust discrimination in global markets, as opponents of COOL claim.

Critics of Country of Origin Labeling needed to prove this kind of economic harm so they could challenge not-so-sovereign U.S. law in World Trade Organization courts or to enlist help from friendly members of Congress.

Taylor also disproved another claim against COOL - that it dropped the price of imported slaughter cattle. Taylor's study showed the opposite was true, in fact. During years following enactment of COOL, the price that Canadian slaughter cattle fetched in the U.S. market actually improved, relative to similar American cattle. (Slaughter cattle are mature animals ready for harvest.)

Removing the blindfold from consumers' eyes

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Obama's Game of Chicken - The untold story of how the administration tried to stand up to big agricultural companies on behalf of independent farmers, and lost.

CALLICRATE (continued from page 3)

Organization for Competitive Markets and R-CALF, warning that the loss of our markets is the loss our freedom have been laughed at and ridiculed by the meat industries' own merchants of doubt. IBP's CEO and President, Robert Peterson, arrogantly proclaimed the cause of crashing cattle prices during the 1980s and 90s: "It's supply and it's demand." His toady defenders, from land grant university economists and commodity brokers to big cattle feeders hoping to gain IBP's favor, cheered in agreement and shouted down those telling the truth. Meanwhile IBP posted record profits as cattlemen went broke and consumers paid more. The many organizations that once represented independent producers, like the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) and the Kansas Livestock Association (KLA) were captured by the big meat packers. These organizations have provided cover for the meat packers swindle as their members' livelihoods were lost to the packers' rigged marketplace.

The meat industry's merchants of doubt promoted many false messages like, "If you're going broke, you must be a bad manager. You should learn to manage risk. You have to become more efficient. The beef industry can learn from the vertically



Craig Watts is about as farmer as they come. He chews tobacco, he's gruff, he wears overalls, and he loves Willie Nelson.

integrated poultry industry. Change is inevitable."

When we finally got the packers into a courtroom, they hired the most expensive masters of deception they could find. They claimed, "Correlation isn't causation. Study after study has shown no effect from concentration and consolidation, and captive supplies don't affect the market." They falsely claimed "efficiency and economies of scale" in justifying their mergers and acquisitions.

Unbelievably, if you prove to a jury that you were cheated by a meat packer, you still lose. The packers and their federal court judges came up with their "harm to competition" defense. So unless you could prove the impossible - that competition in the entire national market was negatively affected, you were denied compensation and justice. It was like a woman losing her purse to a thief having to prove that the theft of her purse damaged women with purses everywhere.

At the 2002 National Cattlemen's Beef Association annual gathering, John Tyson, today a billionaire, promised cattlemen that if Tyson bought IBP, the world's biggest beef packer, they would never vertically integrate like they did with the chicken and hog industries. Christopher Leonard in his 2014 book, *The Meat Racket*, details

the abusive, destructive, inhumane and environmentally degrading system Tyson built in poultry, known as "Chickenization".

Like the tobacco industry's answer to the anti-smoking campaign, or hired guns fighting the Mothers Against Drunk Driving, the beef industries main argument against the enforcement of antitrust laws was the same anti-government rhetoric: don't tell us what to do, don't interfere with our private business deals, no matter who gets hurt - freedom, freedom, free

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Funded by the Beef Checkoff.

Cattlemen pay for their own hanging rope - Forced by law to pay into a government promotion program that is used to pay the beef industries own merchants of doubt.

AGRICULTURE (continued from page 2)

scarcity of workers, industrialization seemed a logical strategy for economic development. With increases in populations and depletion of natural resources, the economic benefits of industrialization have declined while the negative consequences for unemployment and environmental degradation have grown.

For agriculture, the benefits of industrialization have been fewer and the costs have been greater. The reality of agriculture is in conflict with the worldview that supports industrialization. Industrialization is rooted in a mechanistic worldview: the industrial world works like a big, complex machine that can be manipulated by humans to extract natural resources and use them to meet our needs and wants. In reality, the world is an extremely complex living ecosystem, of which we humans are a part. Our well-being ultimately depends on working and living in harmony with nature rather than conquering nature. We are currently seeing the disastrous consequences of treating living ecosystems as if they were inanimate mechanisms.

Thankfully, a new kind of agriculture is emerging to meet these ecological, social, and economic challenges. The new farmers may call their farms “organic,” “ecological,” “biological,” “holistic,” or “biodynamic.” Their farming methods may be called “agroecology,” “nature farming,” or “permaculture.” They all fit under the conceptual umbrella of sustainable agriculture. They are committed to meeting the food needs of all in the present without diminishing opportunities for those who will live in the future. The strength of this movement is most visible in the growth of the organic-foods market, although some types of “organic farms,” especially those mimicking industrial agriculture, may not be sustainable. Sales of organic foods grew by more than 20% per year during the 1990s and early 2000s, before leveling off at around 10%–12% annual growth following the recession of 2008. Organic foods now amount to around \$35 billion in annual sales, something less than 5% of total food sales. The local food movement, as exemplified by farmers markets and “community supported agriculture,” has replaced organics as the most dynamic sector of the

food market, although it is only about half as large in sales.

Some question whether organic or other sustainable farms can meet the food needs of a growing global population. A comprehensive review in the journal *Nature* compared organic and conventional crop yields in “developed” countries, concluding: “Under certain conditions—that is, with good management practices, particular crop types and growing conditions—organic systems can . . . nearly match conventional yields.” The challenge in the United States and the so-called developed world is to create a food system that will meet the basic food needs of all without degrading its natural and human resources. Ecological and social sustainability, not just yields, is the logical motivation for organic agriculture in the so-called developed world. Globally, industrial agriculture is not needed to “feed the world.” Small, diversified farms already provide food for least 70% of the world’s population and could double or triple yields without resorting to industrial production methods.

Everywhere we look, we can see the failure of the grand experiment of industrial agriculture. It’s time for fundamental change.

*JOHN IKERD is professor emeritus of agricultural economics at the University of Missouri-Columbia and author of several books, including *The Essentials of Economic Sustainability* (Kumarian Press, 2012).*

SOURCES: Sources: Food Dialogues, “About USFRA” (fooddialogues.com); Food Dialogues, “Faces of Farmers and Ranchers” (fooddialogues.com); U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, “Unified National Strategy for Animal Feeding Operations,” Sept. 11, 1998; Bridget Huber, “Large Livestock Farms Spread Across Iowa, Threatening Waterways” (IowaWatch.org); U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention, “Antibiotic Resistance Threats in the U.S. 2013” (cdc.gov); World Society for Protection of Animals, “What’s on Your Plate? The Hidden Costs of Industrial Animal Agriculture in Canada,” 2012 (richarddagan.com); Economic Research Service, United States Department of Agriculture, “Price Spreads from Farm to Consumer” (ers.usda.gov); Richard Volpe, “Price inflation for food outpacing many other spending categories,” Economic Research Service, USDA (ers.usda.gov); Curtis Stofferahn, “Industrialized Farming and Its Relationship to Community Well-Being: an Update of the 2000 Report by Linda Lobao,” North Dakota, Office of Attorney General, September 2006 (und.edu); CBS documentary, “Hunger in America,” 1968 (youtube.com); Alisha Coleman-Jensen, Christian Gregory, and Anita Singh, “Household Food Security in the United States in 2013,” Economic Research Report No. (ERR-173) (ers.usda.gov); Danielle Dellorto, “Global report: Obesity bigger health crisis than hunger,” CNN News, Dec. 14, 2012 (cnn.com); John Ikerd, “Foreword,” in William A. Albrecht, *Soil Fertility & Human and Animal Health*, 2013; Organic Trade Association, “Consumer-driven U.S. organic market surpasses \$31 billion in 2011” (organicnewsroom.com); Local Harvest, “Community Supported Agriculture” (localharvest.org); Verena Seufert, Navin Ramankutty, and Jonathan A. Foley, “Comparing the yields of organic and conventional agriculture,” *Nature*, May 10, 2012 (nature.com); Parke Wilde, “Crop yields are only part of the organic vs. conventional farming debate,” *Grist*, May 2012 (grist.org); United Nations Environmental Program, *Towards a Green Economy: Pathways to Sustainable Development and Poverty Eradication*, 2010 (unep.org); Fred Kirschenmann, “The challenge of ending hunger,” Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture, Leopold letter, winter 2012 (leopold.iastate.edu); Olivier De Schutter, United Nations General Assembly, Human Rights Council, “Report submitted by the Special Rapporteur on the right to food,” Dec. 20, 2010 (srfood.org).



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CALLICRATE (continued from page 5)

dom! NCBA leaders were guzzling the meat packers Kool-Aid, along with their whiskey.

With the help of NCBA, the meat packers convinced Congress, the USDA, and court judges that they should be free to do anything they wanted as long as it was in their business interest. And to add insult to injury, the meat packers did it with money and political power from the cattlemen's own Beef Checkoff, originally established to promote beef, not fewer producers. The Beef Checkoff, captured by the meat packer controlled NCBA via a merger in 1996, represents over 80% of their operating budget.

So Wendell Berry might ask someone who has been in a place for a long time, what's missing, what's changed?

- We've lost nearly half of our cattle ranchers.
- Over 39,000 cattle feeding operations have gone out of business, including small farmer feeders, good stewards and husbandmen who fed their crops to their livestock, while spreading valuable manure on the land.
- Over 90 percent of our hog farmers are gone.
- Over 85 percent of our dairymen are out of business.
- At the same time that per capita poultry consumption has doubled (without a checkoff), per capita beef consumption has dropped by nearly a third (overall beef consumption is at record levels only due to population growth).
- We just weaned the smallest calf crop since 1941. Cattle prices are historically high, but a price should not be confused with a market.
- Retail beef prices are at all-time record highs.
- The poultry market is dead.
- The hog market is dead.
- And the finished cattle market is on life support.
- Four meat packers slaughter 85% of the finished cattle compared to a third thirty years ago.

- A constitutional amendment was just approved by voters in Missouri allowing China to buy more of the state for factory hog farms, and other uses, in accordance with China's five-year food security plan. Senator Ken Schilz from Western Nebraska is sponsoring legislation to make the state of Nebraska and its precious land and water resources also available to China and other corporate and foreign interests. So called Right to Farm laws are also pending in other states.
- Essentially all of a farmer's inputs and outputs are controlled by a handful of multinational corporations.
- Factory farms are growing in size and in numbers, not because they're better in any way, but because they have market access through big food service and big retail, and they hold the power to externalize costs. Their industrial practices are wasteful, destroy soil health, pollute the environment, and the food they produce makes us sick.
- Big meat processors continue to destroy processing infrastructure by killing off smaller competitors, which forces producers to transport animals longer distances to slaughter. They continue to exploit their workers and fight against food safety oversight.
- We are now dependent on other countries, multinational corporations, and foreign state sponsored enterprises (China's Smithfield and Brazil's JBS) to feed ourselves.
- The U.S., once considered a model for feeding the world, is now a net food importer on a value basis.

Yes, the merchants of doubt in our food system are playing their game of deception very well. Folly marches on!

Thanks to filmmaker Robert Kenner for his important work and Wendell Berry for his words of wisdom.

OSWALD (continued from page 4)

didn't hurt Canadian producers; it may have helped them.

Taylor's report also disproved another claim – that letting American consumers know where their meat comes from had affected prices of feeder cattle in exporting countries. To show this, Taylor used monthly data going back as far as 1995. Access to such long-term data is important for reaching accurate conclusions about beef trade, because U.S. cattle prices follow cycles lasting from 10 to 15 years.

Livestock prices have always responded to supply, demand, weather, trade and other economic factors, as well as inventories on farms and ranches. Line charts depicting long term price trends show highs and lows, peaks and valleys representing fluctuations in the market.

Finally and perhaps most important, Taylor proved all this using publicly available data provided by meatpackers themselves through mandatory USDA price reporting, rather than the secret, proprietary data that was used in the previous study.

Taylor's research proves that opponents of COOL took a narrow snapshot of one small portion of the cattle price cycle and labeled it the big picture.

Why did packers and foreign governments oppose COOL when American consumers made it clear they want to know where their food comes from?

They did it to keep you in the dark.

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



IN MEMORY

*Brother David
Grant Andrews, CSC*

MARCH 16, 1944 - JANUARY 5, 2015

A Catholic brother who spoke truth to “the powerful and the short-sighted profit-makers” will be remembered for his work bridging advocacy and religious communities. “Brother Dave” led the National Catholic Rural Life organization and helped found the Organization for Competitive Markets.

David Andrews, a Catholic brother and “truth speaker” who confronted powerful institutions on behalf of marginalized groups such as small farmers and rural residents, died this week at the age of 70.

Known widely as “Brother Dave,” Andrews was a member of the Congregation of Holy Cross, an international Catholic religious order of men.

In the second half of a life that included stints as a school teacher and administrator, spiritual retreat-center director and lawyer, Brother Andrews

became deeply involved in rural and food policy efforts. His activities included national work to create stronger antitrust regulation against corporate meatpackers, as well as international efforts at the United Nations and the Vatican to relieve hunger and create more just rural economies.

Over the course of more than three decades working in food, hunger, agriculture reform and rural development, Brother Andrews was a one-man architect of social justice advocacy networks, said one co-worker.

“Dave was the epitome of a people person,” said Patty Lovera of Food and Water Watch, where Brother Andrews worked for six years until his retirement last summer. Throughout his long and varied career, he knit people and groups together around his core beliefs in social justice and caring for the environment, she said.

“He bridged the advocacy world and the faith community,” Lovera said.

Brother Andrews’ networking acumen continued throughout his life, even after he became ill. “His hospital room was like a salon,” Lovera said,

“with people from various parts of his career dropping by to visit.” These included former students, activists and co-workers.

Brother Andrews directed for 13 years the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, which helped rural congregations and addressed rural social-justice issues. While at Catholic Rural Life, he became involved in trying to protect small farmers by advocating for stronger enforcement of antitrust regulation against poultry and other meatpacking industries.

“Brother Dave has been at the very center of this effort from the very beginning,” said Thomas F. “Fred” Stokes, who first met Andrews in 1998 at a meeting that led to the creation of the Organization for Competitive Markets. The two men served together on the board of that organization, which opposes corporate concentration in the U.S. food system.

“Brother Dave was a strong proponent of fair play and justice,” Stokes said. “He had a religious conscience and perspective.”

Another OCM board member, Mike Callicrate, said Brother Andrews had a strong and calming presence during difficult times. “I remember distinctly the feeling of his presence in the courtroom during [an anti-trust proceeding]



IN MEMORY



ANDREWS (continued from page 3)

in Montgomery, Alabama,” Callicrate said. “I was on the witness stand getting pounded by the Tyson/IBP attorneys and the judge. Brother Dave’s presence brought on a calmness and confidence for me in that very stormy place.”

Brother Andrews was part of efforts that led to Department of Justice hearings on stronger regulation of the meat industry under the 2008 Grain Inspection Packers and Stockyards Act (GIPSA). He attended four of the five hearings conducted by DOJ and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. He was distraught at the lack of action from the Obama administration to enforce anti-trust rules against meatpackers.

“The Obama administration lifted up hopes and dashed them to the dustbin of history, unlikely to be re-energized again, a terrible defeat at the hands of the corporate meat industry,” he wrote in a 2012 blog post. “Those of us seeking a just food system will have to work harder now that this effort to occupy the food system has collapsed.”

Though he held strong opinions, he always looked for ways to connect with people who opposed his views, said colleague Barbara Ross.

“While he was vehemently for or against many issues that were of deep concern to him, I never heard him speak a negative word against any human being,” said Ross, director of services for the Diocese of Jefferson City, Missouri. “In that regard, he remained neutral or would even try to find something to say that would return some humanity to the person.”

Brother Andrews was born in Mansfield, Massachusetts, and was one of 10 children, according to an obituary released by the family.

That obituary attributed some of Brother Andrews’ concerns about social justice to his upbringing in a large family. “A truth-speaker, he fearlessly and eloquently voiced concerns about our relationship to the earth and to each other, challenging the complacent, the powerful and the short-sighted profit-makers,” the obituary said.

Brother Andrews was also deeply engaged in international work. He served as a senior adviser to Miguel D’Escoto, president of the 63rd General Assembly of the United Nations, and attended the last three World Trade Organization meetings, World Food Summits and the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa, according to a 2013 press release.

He served on numerous boards besides that of the Organization for Competitive Markets, including Heifer International, the Community Food Security Coalition, the Sustainable Agriculture Coalition and the National Campaign for Sustainable Agriculture.

When failing health demanded his attention, Br. David retired to St. Joseph Center in Valatie, but maintained a keen interest in community news and the world issues that stayed close to his heart. On Monday morning, January 5, 2015, while receiving his dialysis treatment in Ghent, New York, Br. David peacefully slipped the bonds of this good earth and went to meet the God of Truth who had called him since early on. May our dear Brother David rest in peace.



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