

Questions and Answers About Farm Program

plied by Texas Agricultural Association)

view of the fact that the Supreme Court decision other developments have occurring so rapidly during past two weeks, much concern has arisen in the minds of farmers and others interested in farm program.

th hope of clarifying many questions which have come up as a result of this general confusion Texas Agricultural Association has prepared a list of 40 questions, together with their answers, which are in the minds of persons at this time.

as follows:

1. Did the Supreme Court decision utterly destroy AAA?

2. Does the Act still stand. The Supreme Court destroyed the heart of the Act by declaring it illegal for the states to make farmers to produce which was said to be a matter for the states to decide, if at all. Processing tax was not outlawed. Marketing agreements are still in force. The Supreme Court's removal provision by way of export subsidies is still valid. Bankhead Act and tobacco potato control acts are still in force.

3. Was the Supreme Court decision a political nature?

4. Do we think so. Justice Roberts delivered the majority opinion since he was mentioned for presidency. The strong language of the opinion reveals a nature from the judicial curb of using restraint in voicing opinions.

5. Are the members of the Supreme Court really great lawyers?

6. Some of them are regarded as great legal minds of our day. Chief Justice Hughes, Brandeis, Hughes, Stone, Brandeis, Cardozo. Three of these are the AA as constitutional. Chief Justice Hughes is said to have shared the same views joined the majority at the last time because of the strong language used by Justice Stone in minority opinion.

7. Has the Supreme Court the power to declare an act of Congress unconstitutional?

8. This is debatable. No such power is given the Court in the Constitution, but the Court has gradually taken the power unto itself and the procedure has come to be accepted.

9. Can Congress or the President override the Supreme Court?

10. Congress has the power to determine certain points of procedure, and the President has the power to make new appointments to the Court. Congress, for instance, can increase the number of members on the Court, or it could pass a law requiring more than two-thirds majority to declare an act of Congress unconstitutional. Had such a law been in force AAA would have been declared valid.

11. Can any farm program be declared unconstitutional?

12. It is possible, but able lawyers in Congress confident this can be done.

13. What are the plans being considered?

14. Most prominent of these is to amend the Soil Conservation Act of 1935 to give the basis of an effective farm program per se. It is satisfactory as AAA was. Some one thinks of trying to circumvent the Supreme Court by setting the legislation clearly unconstitutional according to the Court's decision.

15. What is the personal attitude of Secretary Wallace toward a farm program?

16. Secretary Wallace will give a farm program that will give the farmer the best of his chief life and always has. He is utterly honest, sincere and capable. Best of all he is a fighter, no easily thwarted. If farmers stand by him and Secretary Davis they will get the best possible kind of farm program under the circumstances. It is Congress and not Wallace, however, that will write and enact the legislation.

17. What about Chester Davis, a good man?

18. He has proven himself the ablest of the many New Deal administrators. Much of the success of AAA was due to him. He has been a farmer, a farm paper editor, a commissioner of agriculture, and for years devoted himself to fighting in Washington for a farm program. Davis Wallace give agriculture the best leadership it has ever had.

19. Is Secretary Wallace as interested in cotton as other people?

20. He sees everything from a national standpoint. He is not sectional. He knows that all farm interests must prosper together or go down together. He constantly talks about unity of interests.

21. Do Secretary Wallace and other Cabinet members agree their views about the farm program?

22. So far as can be known they certainly there is little friction or disagreement in Roosevelt's Cabinet. All see farm well essential to national welfare.

23. What is the attitude of our Senators and Representatives?

24. With one or two exceptions all known to be favorable. However, powerful interests work on Congressmen, and the farmer is the only one of many contentions of a Texas Congress-

man. Without meaning to injure the farmer a Congressman might switch his votes to support some kind of farm bill not satisfactory to farmers.

12. Do our representatives act for the benefit of agriculture or for voters?

13. They want to pull for the best interest of agriculture, but votes are necessarily the deciding factor in their actions.

14. Is it certain we shall get a satisfactory farm program?

15. By no means. Everything is in the balance right now, and probably will be until some Act is finally passed. Regardless what you read in the papers, or hear, whether we get a good farm program or a useless one depends on what farmers in Texas and every other State do about it now and right straight thru until the legislation is passed. One letter is worth several telegrams. Congressmen should be buried with letters from farmers and farmers' friends.

16. If I write a letter will it be read by office boy or by men to whom written?

17. Congressmen are very sensitive to letters. Usually they read every one and ponder every word. It takes lots more effort to write a letter than send a telegram. Congressmen know this.

18. What should I write?

19. Whatever is on your mind. That the AAA helped you, that you expect Congress to frame a good substitute, why you think some plans good and others bad, why you think domestic allotment plan without control will break down, whether you think following soil conservation and build up soil and prices at the same time, and that you are back of any plan that Wallace and Davis will approve.

20. How will the Soil Conservation plan be passed?

21. A short body of amendments will probably be added on to the original Act to clearly permit AAA to go ahead with a substitute plan to reach and help every farmer. This will be debated first in the House and Senate committees on agriculture. Every kind of attempt will be made to insert sentences, clauses, phrases to give this or that group their pet scheme. Some of these suggestions may be good but the net effect of all of them will be to delay the measure and perhaps destroy most of its good. When each branch has finally agreed on its Bill (similar ones are being introduced in both houses) the Bills will be debated on the floor of both branches. At that time opponents (or friends) may try to break up farm legislation by offering amendments.

22. When at last both branches have passed their Bills it may be found that the two Bills differ. Then a joint committee of both houses is appointed to reach mutual agreements and come out with a single Bill. This Bill then goes back to each house for debate where further amendments may be offered (usually not if party discipline holds) and the Bill is finally passed and becomes an Act of Congress. Throughout this procedure which is usually long, lasting weeks at the shortest unless there is a dire emergency, anything can happen. The voice of the farmer is only one of many voices heard by Congress.

23. Who are the main ones fighting a farm program?

24. American Liberty League openly, and many others will join them when any farm program worth anything is brought out in Congress. Processors will likely oppose it should it touch them in any way. Big tax payers will probably oppose any bill because it means more taxes. The bitterest opposition will probably be under cover. It will show up thru innocent looking but destroying amendments. The opposition will of course seek to split and divide farmers themselves.

25. Who is most likely to oppose a good farm bill, labor? banktr? business men?

26. It looks as though labor will officially stand by the farmer in this crisis. Bankers are not apt to oppose—they declared for AAA at the recent national meeting in New Orleans. The bulk of Southern and Western business men are sure to support a good bill—they know how AAA helped them. A general hue and cry of added taxes, of helping farmers as a class, of robbing Peter to pay Paul, will be raised. It will confuse and probably turn many in all walks of life against a farm program. If people only understood there would be practically no opposition.

27. Unfortunately for the farmer, there are many people in American, in Texas, who make it their business to see that people do not understand. Others are just naturally opposed to anything that takes money, or to anything which is new or to anything which they do not understand. Farmers have two battles ahead the first to see that a good farm program is enacted into law; the second, to educate the American people to the wisdom and necessity of such a program and to convince them that it is in the national welfare.

28. How do Western farmers feel about the decision and the new program?

29. The same as you do. The only danger is that they may break up

into warring farm organization camps.

20. How do Northwestern farmers stand on this?

21. Not so much interested—they never suffered as much in 1932 as South and West. They are more friendly now, however, and may very likely support a new program or at least not oppose. Under proposed plans they would stand to get more aid than before.

22. Can various farm organizations be made to work in harmony for a program?

23. It is always hard to get farm organizations to stand together for anything. They are nearer together on a program now than ever before. Their unanimous approval of the 7-point platform in the Washington farm leader conference January 10-11 was marvelous. Each organization, however, tends to pull away to itself and to want its own peculiar farm plan. Only strong support straight from dirt farmers will cause leaders to stay in line. Texas can do a lot to force national farm leaders to go down the line for a Wallace-Davis plan.

24. Did the Texas Agricultural Association have a hand in making the 7-point platform?

25. Yes, but only by fighting for it. Texas was not recognized on the Committee of 13 that framed the platform in spite of speeches and protests. Mr. Lucas therefore calmly joined the committee and made the 14th member, deliberating and contributing with the rest. The reason for exclusion was partly that Texas is not regarded as well enough organized, partly that Texas Agricultural Association has not joined a national farm organization.

26. Who represented Texas at this Washington conference?

27. The Texas Agricultural Association in the persons of H. G. Lucas, president; C. H. Day, vice president; H. C. Matthews, secretary-treasurer; V. P. Marshall, member of Texas Farmers Protective Committee. The Texas Co-operative Council by Reagan McCarty, president, and Hayden Perry of Robstown. The Farmers National Grain Corporation by L. I. Mayhugh, Kress. The American Rice Growers Association by Lamar C. Trousdale, Houston. Farmers of Bell county raised money to send Mr. Marshall, and Hale county farmers raised the money to send Mr. Day. Messrs. Lucas and Matthews were financed by the Texas Agricultural Association through the Farmers Protective Committee. Mr. Perry financed himself. The others were presumably financed by their respective organizations.

28. Why was Commissioner McDonald heard by the Senate Agricultural Committee instead of these accredited Texas farm leaders?

29. No one could tell for sure. McDonald was heard within half an hour of the time he arrived. Invitations to the meeting were issued by Senator Smith of S. C. only 24 hours before it was held. McDonald came by plane. Texans repeatedly asked to be heard but were never called. By the help of Texas senator the Texas Agricultural Association and Texas Co-operative Council inserted a statement in the record next day. It repudiated McDonald as expressing the sentiments of Texas farmers and declared unsatisfactory and dangerous his domestic allotment plan unaccompanied by some form of control. The statement endorsed a combination domestic allotment and soil conservation plan. The proposed amended Soil Conservation Act plan embodies these ideas.

30. How long did the Texas representatives remain in Washington?

31. About one week, and busy all the time. Mr. Marshall remained with Mr. Perry and the others left. Mr. Marshall has been asked to stay to keep his finger on the pulse of affairs.

32. Why is money needed by the Texas Agricultural Association?

33. To keep a man in Washington to see legislation through; to send a representative to Decatur, Ill., to join hands in this fight with the Illinois Agricultural Association which is at one with Texas on this farm program; to pay for legal aid engaged last summer on Bankhead injunction and other AAA suits; to finance the expenses of association officials who are leading the fight for a farm program at the expense of their own personal time; to publish the "Farmers' Banner" and to pay a small salary to an editor engaged to put this and various news stories and other informational helps out to county associations; and to pay a stenographer and necessary office expenses. Millions are arrayed against the farmer, the least he can do is to try to fight with a few thousands of dollars. Texas farmers must organize strong county associations and raise some money. The Government is ready to help but farmers must do something themselves.

34. How will the proposed soil conservation program work?

35. Definite answer not now possible. Idea will be to finance farmers to take a percentage of cultivated acres, or enough acres to make up a given volume of crops that will save and protect the soil. It may limit acres of any kind of cultivated row crops because these promote rather than retard erosion. Livestock numbers may be limited to keep from overstocking which promotes erosion. Land so shifted may be paid for by rental system.

36. All these are guesses but they

show the intent. Plan may go so far as to provide for complete sound farm management plan of cropping. It is believed that the plan will afford quite a degree of control of production of basic crops. Payments may be more or less than under AAA, but it is hoped enough control will be secured to keep prices at fairly satisfactory levels.

28. What will be the status of landlord and tenant?

29. Again, no one knows. About half of American farmers are tenants. Any plan must take tenantry into account. Every landlord wants and expects this. Every effort will be made to be fair all around—a plan must be approximately fair or it has no chance of success.

30. Will the program be administered by Soil Conservation Service?

31. Secretary Wallace has definitely and publicly spoken on this. It is his purpose to have the Triple A organization including field services administer the program. The farmer committees are to be retained. The Extension Service will continue to play its same part. The Soil Conservation Service, Secretary Wallace indicated would continue to conduct its experiments and demonstrations. Doubtless the two organizations

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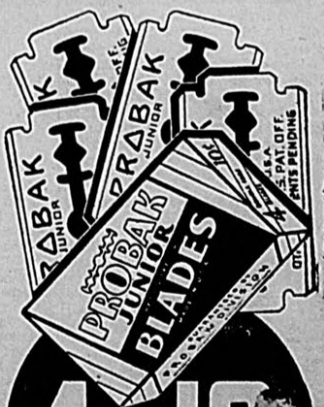
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