

The Editor,
Family Herald,
Montreal, Que.,

Dear Sir:

Have just read your Editorial in issue of Family Herald for January 19th, 1967. "The Producers Right to Protection." Following that, the article under caption "One Man's Opinion" We Need an Incentive-Income Policy for Farmers, by Dr Baldur H. Christjanson.

My reaction to Dr Christjanson's article was that it should not go unanswered nor without some rebuttal and I enclose herewith some of my personal opinions gleaned from almost fifty years of active farming - a family farm- interspersed with eight years experience as a miller in a country flour mill, twelve years as M.L.A. representing one of the best farming districts in Manitoba with five of those twelve years as Minister without Portfolio in the Government.

Not belonging to any Farm Union and only very distantly affiliated with the Federation Of Agriculture by virtue of being a member of Co-operative Associations which in turn form part of The Federation Of Agriculture I feel that what I have to say is more or less my own opinion, formed out of my own endeavours on the land and from association of friends and neighbors in agriculture, business and politics.

Dear Sir:

Have just read your editorial in issue of Jan 19th 1967 "The Producers Right to Protection". Following that, the article under One Man's Opinion we need An Incentive-Income Policy for Farmers. Dr. Baldur H. Kristjanson.

At the outset may I just simply state that since 1917, I have been more or less actively engaged in a family farm enterprise. Poultry, Cattle, Hogs, Wheat ^{and coarse grains} ~~and other~~. I have kept fairly accurate records of expenses & receipts during those years. I have watched with interest and actively participated in the transition of agriculture from the years 1917 to 1967. When I stated "more or less actively engaged in farming" the "less" part consisted of eight years as manager miller in a country flour mill. ^{During two of} which I also operated my own farm. I learned a lot more about farming & my brother farmer ~~than~~ during those ^{eight} nine years of observation than in actual farming. ^{prior to that} ~~In two seasons out of nine~~ ^{during which} from 1926 - 1948 our family of six children arrived. One son and five daughters. They were educated in ~~A~~ urban consolidated schools situated in ^{two} ~~one~~ of the best farming communities in Manitoba. During their scholastic life they

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were consistently and constantly subjected to the idea that to work at any manual work such as farming, cleaning barns, milking cows, washing cream separators gathering eggs was degrading work. Despite the fact that learning to do all these things gave the youngsters a self reliance that they could get on where else. This fact of education was more or less general across Manitoba in the late twenties and all of the thirties. I only know our educational curriculum in Manitoba at that time but I feel sure that the end result in Canada proves it to be as widespread in other provinces ^{during those years}. Is it any wonder we have fewer & fewer of our young men staying with the farm their fathers started.

~~My wife and~~ As parents we tried to offset the effects of our educational system by trying to instill in the children a love of the land, at least proving to them that the existence of the whole of society depended upon the soil and how it was cared for. As one result my son and I have farmed five quarter sections for years. Two quarters he rented from a neighbor and three quarters on the home place. It might be called a family farm. He has kept very accurate accounts of his farm operations although given none of this opportunity of bookkeeping in elementary or high school attendance.

1^B We cannot enunciate a clear national food policy unless we assess all the factors that go into the production of that food which the policy will make use of.

Unless we revamp our whole educational system as regards land use, ^{or tenure} so that adults as well as children will be well conversant with the results of societies demands upon agriculture we shall just be doing a piecemeal job and the "roof will fall in before the house is finished". To me that seems to be a basic and economic necessity.

Secondly all the factors regarding tillage of land by areas. What tillage is necessary in each area to maintain continuing fertility of the soil with due regard to seasonal and regional rainfall.

Thirdly the equipment necessary to cultivate the soil in the best possible and most economic manner. In the matter of equipment it might be well to ^{broaden the} make a study of how efficient many machine companies are as well as how efficiently the farmer operates his land. With four big machine companies each producing eight or nine different models and sizes of tractors to do the one job, cultivating land, each company supplying its own myriad repairs for their machines none of which except ^{a few} bearings ^{are} interchangeable with

2A This Mr. Editor is not a singular statement of one families achievement. Many of my neighbors have done much better, some with several sons still carrying on with the land work.

2B Their competitor smacks to me of far greater inefficiency than any farm operation I've ever heard of. If society is going to force the farmer to become more & more efficient in order to provide society, including the farmer, with more abundant goods & services then so should society realize that not only the agricultural segment of its structure become efficient but the producers of those tools necessary to agriculture must assume their fair share of the burden and standardize all agricultural machinery so that all of society benefits in the resulting efficiency of servicing. This is much more necessary now when built in obsolescence ^{in farm machinery} is much more prevalent than two decades ago.

In the distribution of our product from the farms I think we could take a good clear look at transportation. We are subsidizing two great railroads in Canada & at the same time building heavy provincial highways for trucks to carry produce upon which in many cases run parallel to railroad tracks. It would indeed be enlightening to ~~make~~ ^{have} those same railroads compile the lists

3B of damage claims, community by ^{Under direction of independent auditors} community, that have arisen since their trucks look over handling perishable merchandise and that are a direct ^{result} attribute of carelessness & inefficiency that go to enhance the cost of food to all of society.

(In your articles published in your paper under the name Opinion) (I think that Dr. Kristjanson will admit that in helping the farmer to be more efficient one must take into consideration all the obstacles in the way of that efficiency. I do not agree with Dr. Kristjanson that we should set up an efficiency score and the ones that made the points in the exam will be participants to income transfers (another new fangled term for plain subsidy) In other words if the man that produces food in any society is going to have to become efficient to a certain criteria then every segment of that society which contributes to the needs of that producer of food should come under the same efficiency criteria. These include the products of all the mechanisms necessary to modern Agriculture. It has yet to be proved that these manufacturers are operating efficiently. As a long

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time user of some of their products I have some reservations as to their efficiency.

I raise the question to Dr. Krustjanson if before he submitted his article he considered all the implications in deciding who and who are not efficient farmers? There are so many factors involved in that survey, there are so many sacred cows to be slaughtered that I doubt if any factual, down to earth, findings could be achieved in time to halt the steady flow of both efficient and inefficient farmers, family and otherwise, from our land.

We as farmers look with a dim eye on subsidies no matter whether you call them that or the more sophisticated transfer of income etc. What many of us do ask is that we get a fair chance to compete in our own sphere. Our products are all graded to Government standard before they are sold. What we are able to purchase in return in the form of goods and services is a very different matter. To enable farmers to operate to their best efficiency in providing food for our modern society it seems only fair to suggest that all necessary equipment be bought to produce that food should undergo the same rigorous inspection and be subject to the same rigorous requirements of performance.

Throughout his article Mr. Kristjanson implies that the consumer interest must be paramount. He states he wants good quality low cost food. With every type of produce from agriculture being strictly graded he is assured of good quality at least. As for low cost the farmer cannot be too greatly blamed for the high cost. The final payment for wheat has just been announced. The producer of No 3 wheat will receive $\$1.74$ per bushel net to him. It takes about 2 bush ^{No 3 Wls} & 20 lbs to make one hundred pounds of flour.

One hundred pounds of contract flour (priced to bakeries ^{considerably below retail}) will produce from 120 to 125 16 oz loaves of bread. The farmer has received $\$4.06$ for the wheat content. The consumer who demands that his bread be baked, sliced, wrapped and delivered to his door each day is responsible for the price of bread once it starts on its way from the flour mill. In his finished product he is paying on the basis of $\$15.40$ ^{$-\$20.00$} for the hundred pounds of wheat which netted the farmer $\$4.06$ and if the bread is two days old he won't buy it. These are the factors relating to low cost food. If society or the consumer is going to demand that the farmer become more efficient then society should

6th recognize that in itself and its habits
likes and dislikes it contributes enormously
to the cost of the food it consumes.

It is my belief that generally speaking
there is no section of society in Canada
that has adapted itself more quickly to more
efficient methods than our Canadian farmer.
He has continually brought the cost of his
production down in order to retain his
share of the national income. He is forced
by ever rising costs and ever increasing
inefficiency on the part of other sections of
his society. He has to work with nature and
in the hours nature provides him. He dislikes
regimentation because in working with
nature one submits to nature's regimentation and
that alone. If this nation is to continue
supplying its share of food to a hungry world
then agriculture must be given the place it
deserves in our society. A recognition of its
worth and desirability in our educational institutions.
a complete reamping of its inefficiency in
other spheres of agricultural supply and a
recognition on the part of all of our society of
the nature and heritage of the land upon
which we exist.