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Solving the Farmer's Problem.

ECONOMISTS and farm experts of the middle west convene here today to discuss "Prices, Debts and the Farmer." A program of addresses and discussions aimed at finding the causes and the way out for the farmer whose plight constitutes a major element in the devastation that has swept through the economic life of the country and on whose recovery all recovery is conditioned.

It is highly improbable that any sure-fire formula for discovering that mystical corner around which we like to believe prosperity is hiding will be evolved by the conference. Nor is that the purpose, we are inclined to think, of the meeting. Men of the calibre who will discuss the farm situation here today realize the complexity of the problem demands a far-reaching program of action which cannot be expressed in any popular catch-phrase or slogan. The solution requires joint action of the co-operative farm population and the federal government. Some details of such a plan will no doubt be suggested by the conference.

The value of the meeting, however, lies rather in the further definition it will give to just what the farmer's problem is—a crystallization of the vague ideas now held by the millions who know something is wrong but cannot say just what.

There are in the United States today about thirty million people living on the farms. Fifty million more are engaged in supplying goods and services to the farmers, making a total which is a majority of the American people directly or indirectly dependent on the welfare of the farmer. Probably 90 percent—perhaps more—of the students now enrolled at Nebraska are of this class. Like the rest, they know something is wrong, but they don't know what or why.

Some idea of what the problem is can be got from statistics. Farm mortgages at the present time total about nine billion dollars, a figure almost equal to the total foreign war debt owed the United States. Most of this indebtedness was incurred when farm produce prices were several times what they are now. Annual purchasing power has dropped from sixteen billion dollars in 1920 to five billion in 1932. The result is that farmers are able to meet neither the interest or principal payments or tax assessment and are losing their farms. Farm tenancy has increased about 45 percent in the last twenty years. American agriculture is rapidly approaching a state of land lord control. And with the loss of their property the farm population, long the stable element in American life, is losing that stability which once insured

the continuity of American ideals and institutions.

The cause is found, first, in over-production and, second, in the loss of the foreign market for the surplus as a result of the tariff barriers of other countries erected in retaliation to America's "protective" wall.

The solution, it is easy to point out, must be in increasing the price of farm produce and decreasing the amount of farm indebtedness. At first glance, it would appear that currency inflation, the historic result of which has been to accomplish both of these, is the need. But inflation has its grave dangers.

Among the recommendations recently advanced of Prof. Maynard Krueger of the University of Chicago are the following: "A system which would bring about a control on production of farm products; a marketing agency which would eliminate many of the middlemen existing as parasites in the present system of distribution; a federal corporation which would, through funds secured by a capital levy or through the issuance of bonds, buy as many of the outstanding farm mortgages as possible, leaving the actual title with the user of the land and taking the technical title only; a decrease in the tariff barriers even to the extent of total abolition; a break-up of the farm machinery monopoly; the formation of a political front, either by creation of a new party or by joining the already socialist party; the abolition of the present property tax which places an extremely heavy burden on the farmer; the tightening of the income and inheritance laws in addition to a substantial increase of both."

These may sound radical and idealistic, but among them no doubt are some suggestions which would alleviate the present condition. Whether or not these are the ones which the Nebraska conference will suggest or the ones which must inevitably be adopted through action of the farmers themselves and action of the federal government, no one can tell. Some solution to the problem, however, is absolutely prerequisite to national recovery and to the salvation of the economic life of a large part of the country of which Nebraska students are representatives.

First Lesson In Honesty.

THIS is about hon-est-ty. It is written in the simple i-di-om of the un-der-grad-u-ate, and it is meant to bring to light a kind of crime which has grown to be considered "the thing to do." It is about the sale of books which do not belong to the one who sells them.

It is too much to hope that a conception of mor-al-ity that looks on this type of il-leg-al sale as not honest will be found in an un-der-grad-u-ate. For the un-der-grad-u-ate has al-most no un-der-stand-ing. If he had, he would not sell the books he finds, but would try to get them back to their owners.

This is true be-cause books cost mon-ey and mon-ey is some-thing which is scarce. Why it is scarce is not for the un-der-grad-u-ate mind, but the fact re-mains that there are only a few luck-y students who can afford to buy a book twice. The large paint-ing that will be on the book store win-dows to-mor-row has a connection with this de-sire of the book-stores to sell things.

But the un-der-grad-u-ate who sells books which he finds does not know the mean-ing of that, so we shall not wor-ry him with it any-more. He should know, how-ever, that it would in-crease the world's re-spect for the un-der-grad-u-ate a great deal if he would re-a-lize that sell-ing books which be-long to an-oth-er who needs them is not the "thing to do."

That is all. Now lis-ten to the scornful cries of the un-der-grad-u-ates.

Ruth Schellberg Is Concessions Winner

Ruth Schellberg, concession saleswoman who made the greatest number of sales at the Nebraska-Pitt game Saturday, will receive the box of candy awarded by W. A. A. Second place goes to Gertrude Christiansen, while Winifred Shallcross and Roma Harrington tied for third place. Jean Alden, concession manager for the W. A. A., announces that there will be places for many new saleswomen at the Thanksgiving game, as many who have sold at previous games will be out of town on this date.

OFFICIAL BULLETIN

Ag Frosh Commission.

Pros and cons of co-education will be investigated by the Ag college freshman commission next Thursday noon, in the north annex of the home economics parlors at 12:20.

Vesper Staff.

An important meeting of the vesper staff will be held Thursday Nov. 17 at 4 o'clock in Ellen Smith hall.

Ag Upperclass Commission.

Personal problems and etiquette are subjects for discussion at Ag college upperclass commission Thursday, November 17. Place: home economics parlors. Time: 12:20.

Dramatic Club.

Dramatic club will meet Thursday night in the Temple theater at 8 o'clock.

Ag Y. M. Council.

The regular meeting of the Ag Y. Freshman council Thursday evening at 7 o'clock will be led by Prof. H. C. Filley of the department of rural economics. He will speak on "Economic Problems of the Time." The group meets in 303 Ag hall.

Cornhusker Staff.

A meeting of the entire editorial staff is called for 2 o'clock this afternoon in the Cornhusker office.

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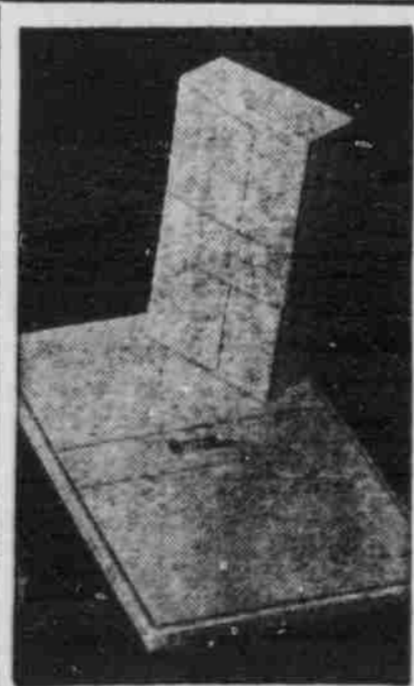
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It is important that every member be present. At 4 o'clock a special meeting of the members of the junior and senior staffs will be called. All members required to attend.

Phi Chi Theta.

Phi Chi Theta will meet at Ellen Smith Hall Thursday at 7:15.

Plate Dinner Changed Daily

25¢ to 50¢

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