The Best Risk in Agriculture

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is the highest on record. With the nation's population twelve million larger than in 1940 million head. They are now down to about 76 and increasing at a rate of over two million a year, there is a market for much more instead of less livestock poduction. Moreover, our agricultural system, with its large outlay of grass, hay, roughage and feed grains, requires an extensive livestock production if it is to remain sound and prosperous.

These facts give a gravity to the situation and raise the question of when and how the downward frend in livestock can be reversed. That it must be reversed, if the national welfare is to be served, is plain.

For various reasons, particularly the use of grass and forage that would otherwise not be utilized and the growing food preference of consumers, cattle are the most important fac-tor in the case. For three years slaughter and normal losses have exceeded the annual calf

The main influence in this downward trend in the cattle cycle is different from those of the past, which were usually low prices, bad times or drought on the range. Cattlemen this time are marketing their herds more closely because of high prices and the uncertainty of how long these prices

So long as this is the chief consideration the downward trend will continue. It can be reversed only when stockmen feel enough confidence in the future to start holding back breeding stock and marketing fewer animals than the number of calves raised. This will mean less meat on the market temporarily, but it will be to the consumers' long-time advantage-a fact of which they should be fully in-

higher average incomes people have demon- culture.

THIS country is facing a really serious live-strated that they want more meat in their stock situation. Cattle numbers have undiet. While pork has been called "the poor dergone another sharp reduction, a spring pig man's meat," a preference for beef has been incrop below last year's total has been forecast, dicated ever since the war boosted wages. Not and sheep are close to the lowest point since even last year's heavy marketings satisfied the demand. To supply consumers with as much the 1860's
All of this decrease in the sources of supply comes at a time when the demand for meat ply comes at a time when the demand for meat the inventory, observers say it would be necessary to increase cattle numbers to well over 90

> Full utilization of our pasture, hay and roughage resources, as well as good land use, warrants an increase in cattle production. Since the first World War the number of horses and mules has gone down about 17 million. In terms of hay and pasture required this is equivalent to about 20 million cattle and calves. Most of this slack has been taken up by them. But a further reduction in work stock is anticipated and a decline of 18 million head of sheep since 1942 is equal to the grazing requirements for another two million head of cattle.

A national land policy, certain within the next decade and furthering the use of land fo grass and legume crops, will increase the grazing and forage facilities available for cattle. crops. The heavy movement of cattle to market The prospects of outside competition are less in 1946 and 1947 drew heavily on the reserves for replacement and future marketing, for it included more cows and calves than usual. This excludes any hope of an early expansion in its commitments to Great Britain and to proincluded more cows and calves than usual. This excludes any hope of an early expansion in beef cattle. In fact, Charles A. Burmeister, of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, and regarded by many as the ablest analyst of the livestock industry, figures 1951 as the nearest livestock industry, figures 1951 as the nearest to look for an increase in cattle numbers.

There is another point that should cause cattle producers to think hard. A meat supply, below consumer demands and high priced, is likely to cause public resentment and to make meat a political target. It provides a handy argument for those who want price controls, rationing and other Government interference. That these would obstruct rather than encourage an increase in live-stock production is beside the point. Their threat is real,

But the opportunity is likewise real. The facts of the situation—our increasing population, the demand for meat, higher labor income, the lack of import competition, the sound financial condition of the range—all add up to one of the most favorable prospects cat-Stockmen should be able to find good reasons for this confidence in the future. With ly looks like the number 1 best risk in agritle raisers ever had. In fact, livestock general-



STITCH IN TIME-OPERA- | a real Arctic rescue must be | planning, so the U.S. army TION PARADOG . . . When | made there is little time for is working out its rescue

strategy - just in case through practice maneuvers. Here, a simulated wrecked plane with "survivors" waving wildly in front of it and an "SOS" written in huge letters in the snow marks the object of the rescue plane in "Operation Para-dog" at Goose Bay, Labra-dor. Following the call for help, dogs are rushed by plane to the scene of the wreckage and there dropped with a parachute, together with a dog driver and a doc-

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TRAINING STARTS EARLY IN PALES. TINE . . . Looking forward to the time when they will have a section of this globe which they can call home, the people of Palestine are training their youths for their defense army, the Haganah. Young high school students, girls and boys alike, are undergoing intensive training under expert supervision. intensive training, under expert supervision, to protect their homeland in event of a pos-

sible future "holy war" by Arabs objecting to partition of Palestine. Above left, a high school girl, attired in haphazard military garb, is typical of the youngsters now in training for the defense army. Top panel shows youthful Tel Aviv high school girls walking tight ropes as part of their training schedule. In bottom panel, Haganah high school boys set out on an extended march.

land and Kearney produced a dot the landscape and some The Platte valley in central wonderful crop of corn in farms have as many as eight

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More corn is in evidence along this 50 - mile strip than in any similar section United States. While 1947 was a dry season, water pumped from shallow wells did the

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