

... and God changed his mind

Written by Bruce Enberg

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One of the big hits among the Super Bowl commercials was a Dodge truck spot that hardly showed the product or the company logo. Instead it showed nostalgic pictures of a bucolic American farm life while the late Paul Harvey laid on the platitudes like a 40 ton John Deere liquid manure wagon.

"...And on the eighth day, God looked down on his planned paradise and said I need a caretaker- So God made a Farmer". This speech was delivered by Harvey in 1978 at the behest of his Agri-business sponsors to a convention of high school students that belonged the FFA (Future Farmers). Few if any of the 1000 or so boys who were there that day, and would be now be about 50 years old, likely have farms.

Harvey, who was one of the most glib radio talkers ever, went on and on about what ridiculous hours farmers work, making it sound like they did it because it was the 'godly' thing to do, or the American way. The only reason they needed to literally work themselves to death was the extremely low prices the five dominant corporations enforced on the farmers.

"God said I need somebody willing to get up before dawn, milk the cows, work all day in the field, milk cows again, eat supper then go to town and stay past midnight at a meeting of the school board – So God made a Farmer". Today much of that hard work is being done by NAFTA refugees who do the milking 24 hours a day at 10,000 cow corporate operations. These people who are now economic refugees were 'made by God' to have their own farms, or rather they got land via the Mexican revolution, but have been driven off their land by cheap corn provided by American agribusiness under NAFTA.

In fact the American farmer didn't get his land from God either, he got it, or least was able to keep it because of 'land reform' during the New Deal. The states also had laws that broke up the giant farming operations that had sprung up during the gilded age of the 19th century. And these regulations remained in place until they were universally and simultaneously struck down across the country by Appeals Court Judges appointed by George Bush. Remember the Republicans didn't allow Clinton to fill any vacancies on the Appeals Courts. The Supreme Court simply ignored a hundred years of precedent, not to mention 'states rights', and allowed these 'surprisingly' identical rulings to stand.

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Harvey also liked to talk about how piously religious farmers were. Actually the so-called 'piety' came from one the worst of his Agri-business sponsors, a massive privately held company owned by a secretive family of Christian Dominionists rumored to be one of richest in the world. These people carry the cross around the world and beat farmers to death with it anywhere they can, and that's just about everywhere.

– So God made a Farmer. Then God changed his mind, drove all the farmers from the land and replaced them with slave plantations – and he saw that it was good. [pause] and now you know, the rest of the story.

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