# Cambridge Tribune

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## Farmers' Political Power

There are about twelve million United States citizens actually engaged in farming, and there are about nine million labor union members. Who gets the "goodies" and why?

Everyone knows the answer to the first part of this question, but there are dozens of answers to the "why" part. One very obvious one is that the politician is less frightened of a larger number of unorganized voters than he is of a smaller number of organized voters.

Following this line of reasoning, why don't the farmers organize themselves and scare said politicians into giving them some of the ice cream? Because you can't organize farmers. They won't "jel"; and one of the results is that they are their own masters but don't cut as large a figure as the unions do in the halls of Congress.

The average freedom loving American farmer prefers to be his own boss even if he does have to work more than 40 hours per week. He can run his own affairs and no walking delegate or union official can tell him what he must do. He has no dues and exorbitant initiation fees to pay and doesn't have to run the risk of falling into the clutches of those comparatively few, but very powerful, labor racketeers who are causing so much harm to the labor movement.

The farmer, of course, has his farm association and his powerful "farm bloc" in Congress to represent his interests; but he has a much more potent weapon than this if he would only use it scientifically. It is, of course, the ballot.

It stands to reason that twelve million voters would have more influence—if they used it—than nine million voters. This is crude mathematics but serves to illustrate the point that if all farmers voted alike they could carry almost any election and would wield a far greater force in government than they do now.

But farmers don't vote alike—and the politician knows it. They are swayed too much by party politics. If the average farmer is a Democrat or a Republican, he is going to vote the Democratic or the Republican ticket regardless of almost every other consideration. Can you picture the Massachusetts farmer voting the same way as the Georgia farmer? But you can imagine the Massachusetts union laborer voting with his brother union laborer in Georgia. The trouble is—there are too many Democrats and Republicans and not enough Mugwumps. (Men who vote regardless of party.)

Beside all this, the farmer reads—and very often gets "taken in"—by the big-town newspapers and magazines. The "big-town" interest all runs one way—toward "industry" and "business." The big town theorist thinks macaroni is a vine and the farmer a "necessary evil". He doesn't quite persuade the farmer on these two arguments, but he does influence his political judgment. Maybe this is as it should be; maybe, on the other hand, the big-town theorist isn't always right and maybe your local editor has a sounder mind than the city slicker; maybe a little selfishness pays occasionally — at least it gets more "goodies."

The moral to all this is that the farmer has the power to "get what is coming to him" if he will only use that power scientifically, and the only way to use it scientifically is to make a careful study of the acts and the characters of the candidates and their parties before ever casting a vote. It isn't fair to "vote regardless" and nullify the ballot of a man who has reasoned it carefully out.

## How Many Read The Bible?

The Bible is still the best read book in America, but still is not read by the great majority of people, a recent survey by the Institute of Public Opinion, made at the request of the American Bible Society, shows.

The survey, conducted on a nation-wide basis, found that only 8,500,000 of our adult population read the Bible regularly and 35,000,000 admit they have not opened a Bible during the past year.

The survey did show an increase in Bible reading resulting from the war, more than 4,000,000 people saying that they read the Bible more now than they did before Pearl Harbor.

Usually, in time of war, there is an increase in interest in religion. Whereas the extent of it cannot be measured entirely by a survey of Bible reading, this one factor is certainly an indication of our religious habits.

Although the people in the country towns were found to read the Bible more than those in cities, the survey clearly shows that there is plenty of room for improvement in the time given to religious considerations in every part of the country.

## It May Hurt!

When the doctor says, "This may hurt for a few minutes," most of us gulp and gird ourselves to stand anything during this year so long as it will lead to victory, peace and a better world after the operation is over.

There is no doubt that it will be a year of many heartaches and dreadful suffering. But if we can keep our minds set on the outcome—if we can keep faith that each new incision of the doctor's knife is helping to remove the cancerous growth which would otherwise destroy our civilization—we can look forward to 1943 as being the year in which we are going to get rid of a dreaded disease.

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