

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

FRANK S. BETZ (Personal)
Betz Building
HAMMOND, INDIANA

The 10 Lines Below Copied from Senate Resolution 175, 72nd Congress

Whereas the consumption of the forests of the United States has progressed to a point at which their early exhaustion is threatened; it being estimated (1) that over 50 per centum of all the softwood lumber cut in the United States has been cut during the last thirty years; (2) that, with a population almost 60 per centum greater today than at the beginning of the twentieth century, the United States has been using nearly three hundred billion feet of softwood lumber alone during each decade since 1900; (3) that in 1928, with a population of more than one hundred and twenty million, the annual cut of softwood lumber alone was twenty-eight billion feet; and (4) that there now remain in the territory east of the prairies, only about twenty-five billion feet of original timber;

HAMMOND, INDIANA

June 5, 1935.

Mr. F. C. Auchter,
U. S. Dept. of Agriculture,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Auchter:

I am sorry I can't send you a big catalog, but I find those who send out the big catalogs covering trees are like the dogs that bark the loudest but seldom bite!

I took this work up seven years ago. It was up-hill work for the first three years. My total income from all sources was over \$1300 less than I paid one stenographer, but I kept hammering away and from September, 1931, to June, 1932, I shipped out over 50,000 more trees, without it costing taxpayers \$1.00, than did the Forestry Departments of seven of our great states.

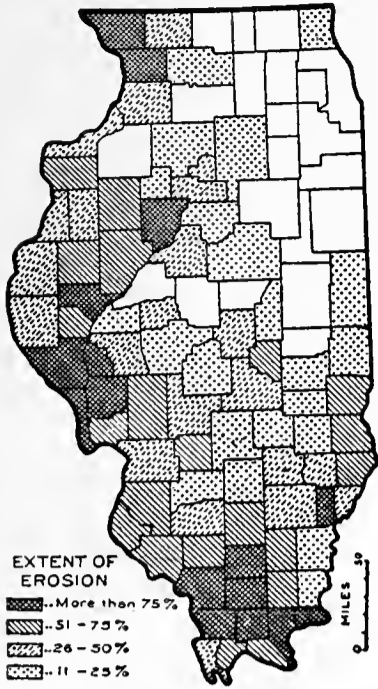
From September, last year, until this spring, I have shipped out more tree than were distributed by the Forestry Departments of Alabama, Idaho, Kansas, Utah, California, Oregon and Washington and 500,000 WALNUTS, HICKORY NUTS and BUTTERNUTS, and over twelve bushel of PINE, SPRUCE and ARBOR VITAE Tree Seed.

Sorry I can't mail you a big catalog.

Yours very truly,

FRANK S. BETZ (Personal)

FSB/VCK



EXTENT OF
EROSION

More than 75%
51 - 75%
26 - 50%
11 - 25%

CITY TAXPAYERS WILL PAY MILLIONS OF DOLLARS

In 1928, after spending days with State Forester Wilcox going over Indiana's soil eroded farm sections on which thousands of families were unable to make a living, I decided to assist in reforesting these 3 million acres of idle land and abandoned farms.

As I lived in Japan in 1916-17, and traveled through the Far East in 1926, seeing poverty was not new to me and I had an idea our taxpayers who must in years to come throw away millions supporting these people would be interested in what Walter Davenport in COLLIER'S calls "our shiftless policies," and would appoint committees in every county for their own benefit and assist in doing what President Roosevelt will do carrying out one of the greatest reforestation propositions ever undertaken in any country, which will enable farmers living on what for a century was the best farmland in America to make a living. This work must be carried out even though it will cost billions, or we will go through what England and Europe did in the 16th century, when no man was allowed to marry until he had planted so many trees.

It seems strange that our large taxpayers take no interest in what it costs to care for 23 million in cities and on what was the best farmland in America from 50 to 100 years ago now ruined by soil erosion, but time will open the eyes of those who forget that conditions change in every country where there are no trees to prevent the rain and melted snow from washing the black top soil from the land.

Take Illinois: The highest priced farmland in the United States 50 years ago. Today 81 of 102 counties, which should produce billions of dollars worth of grain in years to come and pay millions of dollars in taxes, are now practically ruined. There are still thousands of farms in the state producing good crops, which, if not protected, will also be ruined.

F. A. Fischer and every expert on soil erosion have for years predicted that no country could be prosperous and allow over 400 millions dollars' worth of top soil, which requires 1,000 years or more to build up one inch, to wash downstream yearly.

Much of what was the best farmland at one time in 22 states is in worse condition than Illinois. In North Dakota, 25 out of every 100 are on the relief rolls, as are over 4,000 farmers IN ONE COUNTY IN THE SOUTH. 4 million acres ruined in Mississippi and recently 74 sheriffs sold 39,669 farms in one day for nonpayment of taxes . . . almost 200,000 souls without a place to call home. 445,000 of 2 million acres permanently destroyed by soil erosion in the Morris Dam section.

Thousands of farmers between Washington and Jacksonville, Florida, northern Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Arkansas, Missouri and other states are unable to make a living on their land.

Many do not know that since 1840 farmers whose farms would not produce crops came west, took up a homestead, but today there is no good Government land left and they must stay where they are and be cared for by taxpayers.

Joseph Medill, Editor, CHICAGO TRIBUNE, saw the handwriting on the wall in 1860 and advised farmers to plant trees. Had those who inherited these wonderful farms set aside only ONE HOUR EACH YEAR and planted a few of the millions of Walnuts, Hickory Nuts, Butternuts, Oak, Beech, Maple, Elm or Ash seed that rotted on the 3,500,000 acres of idle land in Illinois, these trees would be from 25 to 48 inches in diameter. If planted 42x48 inches and thinned out to 8 ft. cen-

WALNUTS, BUTTERNUTS, CHESTNUTS, HICKORY NUTS,
AMERICAN, CHINESE, JAPANESE or KOREAN for SCOUTS,
SCHOOLS, 4-H CLUB MEMBERS and OTHERS. WRITE.

ters, 782 trees to an acre, or 16 foot centers, 195 trees to an acre, each tree would produce 2 or 3 straight 16-foot logs free from knots worth billions. Trees planted on every farm would have held back the hot winds which dry out the soil, and, as every tree throws off so many gallons of water daily, which is returned as rain, farmers would have benefited.

The City of Attica, Indiana, recently sold 16 Walnut trees for \$1,000. Old settlers there remember when they were planted.

Think of it: 3,500,000 acres of the best timber growing land in Illinois, much of which has not produced a dollar for 50 years, and the freight bill on the lumber shipped into the state for one year has amounted to 28 million dollars or over \$20 per 1,000 feet, when the finest Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota White Pine formerly sold on the Chicago docks for \$8 per 1,000 and over 30 million acres of Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota timber growing land have not produced one dollar for from 50 to 80 years.

As the bulk of lumber is used north of the Ohio and east of the Mississippi and practically every state east of the Rocky Mountains now uses lumber from other states and have millions of acres of the best timber producing land bringing in no income, it looks as if someone is to blame. Farmers have received as much as 394 million dollars for logs sold in a single year, which, with portable sawmills, they could saw into lumber for less than \$4 per 1,000 during the winter when there is little farm work.

In many states taxes are reduced to 3 to 5 cents an acre on land planted with trees. In many states there is no tax until the trees are cut. The savings on taxes will more than pay all expenses, and if walnuts are planted, each tree will produce from \$3 to \$6 worth of nuts yearly, which can be sold to candy factories. Any boy can make over \$100 per acre yearly raising Christmas trees. If interested, write.

Originally we had 822 million acres of timber. Today we have less than 120 million. On the Pacific Coast there are about 925 billion feet of standing timber, and in the South, 125 billion. The Government tells us half of the softwood standing timber we owned in 1900 was cut the first 30 years, and the original timber east of the Mississippi would not supply us for one year, which, if true, how can experts claim what we have left, much in mountainous sections far from transportation, will provide for 27 million pupils in school for 50 to 75 years ~~when~~ they grow up and furnish the billions of feet for export, when in 1900 we used 35 billion feet when we had 15,503,000 pupils?

Many do not know that trees large enough to make the assorted sizes of softwood lumber we require are from 60 to 250 years old, or that trees now cut on the Pacific Coast are from 500 to 3000 years old. Nor do they know that Pine, Spruce, Hemlock and other softwood lumber grows in cold countries only.

Nor that more trees were killed by prairie fires in 1932 on 52 million acres than have been planted by all state nurseries to date, and with this evidence many have written me: "Your tree planting idea is foolish, a waste of time and money." But I held on, hoping one day some one would realize that with untold millions of acres of what was our best farmland ruined and no place for these farmers to go, they would realize something must be done.

Take Indiana: In 1905 only 5 counties required state aid. In 1928 there were 29. Today there are 41 on which taxpayers will throw away millions yearly, which could have been saved, and the original 5 counties are still on the list.

This could not occur in Europe, nor would it in Indiana, or any other state, if county agricultural agents, who know conditions of every farm, could notify the state forester to deliver so many trees free of charge to Mr. Brown, and see they were properly planted for protecting his land, which would enable him to support his family instead of compelling taxpayers to. **IT WILL BE DONE THIS WAY SOMETIME.**

Today a farmer unable to buy food and clothing for his children on a farm being ruined by soil erosion is informed by the state forester that the trees required for protecting the top soil on his land will cost \$50. The chances are not one in 20 farmers on these farms ever had \$50 at one time and they know if unable to support their family taxpayers must.

Farmers in timber sections always paid taxes while their land would produce grain and they had timber to sell. Had they spent **ONLY ONE HOUR** each year planting a few of the millions of Walnuts or other tree seed that rotted on the ground they could have had a perpetual independent income.

I may be wrong, but if those not familiar with soil eroded sections would cover the thousands of miles of farming districts of the Far East and the sections in this country where farmers made no attempt to protect the top soil on their land, they will

understand why business men in these sections who should have advised the farmers will eventually be no better off than the farmer.

The article, "A DEBT WE OWE" written years ago by President Roosevelt, on soil eroded China, and lumber conditions, proves he knew what the people of this country would eventually face. He planted thousands of trees on his farm and had the leaders of Chambers of Commerce, Rotary, Kiwanis, Lions, Eagles, Woman's, American Legion, Izaak Walton Leagues and the many fish and game and hunting clubs who read this article and knew what has happened in every country would happen here, appointed committees to work with state foresters, and each member donated only \$1.00, it would have saved \$100 for every man, woman and child and trees would have been planted along every stream on every farm, which could be protected from fire, and would have produced billions of dollars worth of lumber. It will cost 10 billion dollars to carry out President Roosevelt's proposition as it should be in order to save the children of the very people who "poo-pooed" this idea from supporting those on soil eroded farms as long as they live. The poor man will never pay it.

NATION'S BUSINESS tells us 2,600 schools failed to open last fall and 20,000 closed before April 1st; 25% of teachers now earn less than \$750 and 85,000 less than \$450 yearly and thousands not one dollar. If pupils were taught to plant trees, as in foreign countries, they would have lumber when they grow up and farmers would not be in the condition they are. The time will come when Boards of Education will see that pupils are taught to plant some of the many varieties which can be had for **ONE CENT EACH** or for **10 CENTS YEARLY**, more assorted tree seed, which, if planted as cabbage or tomatoes, would in 5 years reforest the largest farm.

Hammond pupils planted over 2 million tree seed in 1929; in 1930, over 8 million; in 1931, pupils in the county planted more Black Walnuts than all state nurseries in the United States that year, and pupils throughout the state planted over 400,000 Black Walnuts I furnished free.

In Palestine over one million trees are growing from seed purchased in Europe by friends and myself and shipped to the Forestry Department.

From October, 1931, to May, 1932, over 50,000 more trees up to 4 years old were shipped through my efforts without it costing taxpayers one dollar than were shipped by the state forestry departments of Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Mississippi, Utah, California and Washington combined.

This should convince business men in farming sections, who will eventually be the great losers, that if a committee in each county would assist President Roosevelt and the state forester millions of acres still producing crops could be saved that otherwise will be a total loss.

J. H. Baldwin, Principal of the Washington School, told pupils the necessity of planting trees and they brought enough pennies for 2,400. I could mention 500 similar instances. The Calumet State Bank bought 20,000 trees for Hammond pupils in 1933. Rotary and Kiwanis paid the tree bill for 1934. At least 900,000 Scouts, 4H Club members, pupils and others planted trees—Walnuts, Hickory Nuts, Butternuts and tree seed sent through this office.

Every park superintendent could leave a living monument that would cause everyone to remember him for years, as many are now doing, by planting a variety of one, two and three-year-old seedlings and assorted tree seeds every year, which would cost but little and at the same time beautify the park and city and teach pupils how to raise trees at practically no expense. Here is an opportunity for any business man to invest 50 cents to \$1.00 yearly for an assortment of tree seed to be turned over to the park superintendent.

Trees are planted in other countries because it is the law. In little Japan, where millions of families live on less than two acres, they plant 5 times more and Germany 27 times more than we do. In some countries the income from municipal forests pays all taxes, operates street cars, furnishes electric lights and water.

Many would assist in this work but they dislike to be criticized by those who have an idea because they are smart enough to get by in times like these their children will. Again, I find many still think if it is corn, wheat, pork or cotton, it means United States.

They fail to realize that before our millions of acres of land were ruined by soil erosion, gang plows, seeders, reapers, threshing machines and cheap labor enabled us to produce grain at a low price. They do not know that 40 acres in many sections will not produce the grain formerly raised on 10. They also forget thousands of our expert farmers, stock raisers and cotton growers are in cheap labor countries teaching those who farmed with the wooden plow for centuries how we operate with modern machinery.

Newspapers recently told about a 25,000 acre farm in Texas. In Russia American experts opened up one farm of 375,000 acres and another of 277,000 and others larger than we ever dreamed of. Recently we bought 10 million bushels of rye raised in the Balkans on land farmed for centuries.

See **GEOGRAPHIC MAGAZINE** on the great Argentine wheat fields now being opened up. They will soon be shippers of cotton, but the 4 million pounds of "Minnesota" turkey they sent us for our Thanksgiving dinners was the great joke.

We import over 3 million pounds of dried eggs from China yearly. They have little grain. We have more than we can use. There are hundreds of other items I could mention. The time will come when those who say, "We lead the world," will learn that millions of acres of grain producing farmland are now being opened up in foreign countries by people who have been asleep for centuries.

While in Delhi, India, I learned the great Sukkar Dam with over 4,900 miles of canals, 2 larger than Suez, irrigating over 6 million acres, was practically completed. The **NEW YORK TIMES** tells us 2,500,000 farmers receiving 10 to 15 cents a day produced over 50 million bushels of wheat and millions of tons of other produce the first year, much for our former markets. The **HYERABAD DAM**, just completed, irrigates over 3 million acres. Other big projects are under construction.

The **ASSUAN DAM**, on the Nile, reclaimed 1,400,000 acres of new land by controlling the floodwaters from Abyssinia. They now raise three crops of the finest grain I ever saw yearly instead of one.

We are not only losing out on our farms and timber that will make lumber. The **CHICAGO TRIBUNE**, March 16, tells us since the war Americans have invested \$2,777,693,244.00 in factories in foreign countries, turning out millions of dollars of goods with American machinery, which, if made here, would benefit our workmen and farmers. Today it is cheaper to ship machinery to foreign countries and have the goods made there.

If those who have written me that teaching pupils to plant trees for protecting farmlands and providing themselves with lumber when they grow up is a kindergarten proposition would read the article in the **SATURDAY EVENING POST**, July 7, on Japan, a country smaller than California, with half of our population and only one-sixth of the land cultivated, operating plants night and day turning out millions of dollars worth of finished goods for the United States at the price of raw material, they would understand.

In 1916-17, I lived there, had over 30 firms making goods formerly made in Europe. Mechanics earned from 30 to 60 cents a day while our scale was from 45 to 65 cents an hour.

I said then, "Give them modern machinery and they would lead the world." When I was there in 1926 many who had little shops in 1916 had big factories.

Our trouble is the very men who should know what is going on in cheap labor countries are too busy to investigate. If they make a trip around the world, they generally do so on one steamer. All they get is a good ride. To get on the inside, travel on the **DOLLAR LINE** and stop off 15 to 30 days at any port. Cover the country with an automobile and a guide who knows the game and catch the next steamer.

I was raised on a farm in northern Wisconsin. Commencing in 1884 I sold hospital insurance for years to lumbermen in over 300 logging camps in Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota. Since then, with an automobile, I have covered most soil eroded sections east of the Rocky Mountains, traveled through Cuba, Jamaica, Hawaii, Canada, Russia and Mexico, from Los Angeles to Seward, Alaska, down the Yukon to the Arctic Circle, crossed Panama before the canal was built, the Atlantic 41 and the Pacific 5 times, saw them logging with elephants in Burma and hauling logs with water buffalo in the Philippines and always notice the timber in every country I visit.

Up to the present time printed matter on tree planting has been mailed to over one million people.

Am prepared to ship over 5,000,000 assorted trees, the majority in bundles of 250 or more at one cent each, and millions of assorted tree seeds from all parts of the world to anyone interested in this work.

Those desiring information on trees, soil erosion, lumber conditions, can obtain same from the Forestry Department, Washington, or any public library.

The Scout 25-cent and the Izaak Walton League 50-cent and \$1.00 packages of assorted seed for raising the most beautiful Evergreen trees grown in Japan, Korea, Manchuria, China and Siberia, with full instructions and list of over 100 trees, mailed to anyone who will take an interest in this work.—F.S.B.

P. S.—A LOT OF GENUINE 5-YEAR-OLD KOSTER BLUE AND COLORADO BLUE SPRUCE OFFERED CHEAP.