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## Charles Lutz Visits Dordt

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## Charles Lutz Visits Dordt

On campus March 9, 1982, was Charles Lutz, author of *Farming The Lord's Land*. Lutz, Director of the Office of Church and Society of the American Lutheran Church lectured in Dr. Allan Kramer's Land Use Economics Course and was the keynote speaker at the Christian Farmers of America dinner meeting held in the West Commons.

Lutz's Iowa connection includes having spent his high school years in Renwick (Humboldt County) and his collegiate days at Wartburg in Waverly. Lutz, who attended seminary but is not a minister, challenged farmers, students, and other interested Christians to develop a "theology of the land." He urged listeners to regard the land as a gift from God, a gift that is more a trust than an absolute gift. God, he asserted, always retains title to the land. Human beings, whether farmers or others, are merely tenants. Thus they must recognize limits to property rights. Decisions concerning land use must be made with the good of the community in mind. Land is to be held tenderly and tentatively; these are biblical notions (cf. the Sabbatical and Jubilee regulations of the Old Testament).

All land practices must be such that the

land is left in a better condition for the next generation, for it is from the land, "the placenta for life," that we are sustained, said Lutz.

Prime agricultural land must be kept for producing food and fibre and for providing a habitat for wild life. When speculators hold land for "development," that land will likely produce "asphalt (i.e., a paved parking area) as its last crop," said Lutz. Conservation of land includes more than keeping topsoil from blowing, or washing away. One million acres of prime agricultural land is lost in the United States each year. Cities and suburbs carve out "subdivisions" from farm land; interstate highways cut wide swaths for roadbed median and right of way. At 2,000 calories per day, 16 million people could have been fed, from United States farm land lost this way each year.

Lutz stated that a "theology of the land" is the basis for Christian action. Our life-style must reflect a caring attitude; we must seek public policies which will keep farm land from being destroyed, misused, or acquired by greedy entrepreneurs.

John M. Zinkand

## Technology Lecture Series

The meaning and the goals of technology were subjects of a February lecture series held in conjunction with the recent introduction of a four-year engineering program at Dordt. The lecturers were Robert Hudspith, of the engineering faculty of McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, and Michael Van Wijk, manager of industrial studies of Alcan International of Pierrefonds, Quebec.

Hudspith answered "What is Technology?" in his first lecture by pointing out that technology possesses certain characteristics. Each characteristic illustrates that technology is non-neutral. Thus, in technology there is a tendency to build larger

and more complex machines and other structures (for example, modern day 747s have replaced small commercial passenger planes), and consequently we need large scale management. Some persons say that technology is acceptable only when it is used properly. But, says Hudspith, in the nature of the case, management must be large scale if there is to be large scale building. If such management has undesirable results, then technology—at least as we now conceive it—of necessity must involve those results. It is not a simple matter of proper and improper use of technology.

So it is with other characteristics.