

OCTOBER 7, 1982

The tougher the market becomes, the more stuff we are finding to ship to town. I started on the lambs the first week in August. The calves were moved along about the middle of that month. Grass fires and the dry spell spawned another movement. Somewhere in process, I sold the old ewes but overlooked the old cows.

Each move has been under stress. I've been unable to blame any of the sales on health reasons. I can't seem to get sick enough fast enough to stay up with the economic situation. I have so many different schemes and plans going on the top of my head that the rest of my body gets ignored.

Saturday morning of last week, I offered to give a pint of blood while I was in Angelo. One of the churches had allowed the blood service unit to work from their school. Four nurses were in charge of the program. Just looking at such healthy specimens made me feel bad. Collecting blood must be good for a person. These whitecaps looked like they'd been raised in one of those Scandinavian countries and trained on wheat germ and farm yogurt.

Donors ahead of me in the line were given minimum tests. When it came my time, however, requirements must have increased or the market was softening on whole blood. Two samples were necessary before the lady was satisfied. She said that if I'd wait in the back classroom, she'd slip me a half pint transfusion in a little bit and that if I didn't get to looking better after lunch, she might could let me have a whole pint of blood.

Her diagnosis was a surprise. My blood pressure was better that morning than it'd been in a year. The reason I think my blood level was down was from the extra activity, like the grass fires and drouth dispersals. Doctors claim that sometimes a herders' body is too lethargic to handle the normal flow of blood. Last spring when I was doing so lousy, all I had to take care of was the sports page and maybe a scratch sheet on a couple horse races in New Mexico.

One of the greatest advantages of any depression is the general improvement in people's health. Folks that have to rely on fresh air and sunshine do a whole lot better than if they're hanging out around hospitals and drugstores.

Part of my creed of life is to recommend that people don't get too rich. In my case, I probably function better with a few quarters to rub in my pants than I do flat broke, but it doesn't take much prosperity to ruin my health. Fortunately in the ranch business; we are nearly always right on the verge of a big cure, if not well on the way to complete recovery.

It turned out the lady was joking about giving me blood. She drew off a pint without moment's hesitation. I was plenty relieved to make a donation that didn't involve the government or the market. I hate to think where my blood will end up. Like I told that lady as I left the school, she'd better be sure that whoever was the transfusee didn't let it reach their head, or it'd be a terrible wreck to have a city guy looking for an old cow buyer and not understanding why.