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City vs. Country

Farmers Remain Steadfast Against Daylight Saving Time; Cities Approve It By Large Vote

Experience with D. S. T. During Wartime Didn't Change Average Farmer's Views, Poll Notes

By GEORGE GALLUP
Director, American Institute of Public Opinion

PRINCETON, N. J., April 15—With many areas of the country getting ready to adopt daylight saving time the last Sunday in April, American farmers continue their overwhelming opposition to the time change.

Daylight saving is the city man's delight. The farmers don't want it even in summer. They are adamant in the belief



that standard time should remain undisturbed the year 'round.

Few issues divide city folk and farm folk as sharply as the question of the time change. The majority of city people like the long evenings of daylight which daylight time provides. But farmers claim that the routine of farm life gets all snarled up if somebody tampers with the clocks — that the dew on the grass won't dry any earlier in the morning and the cows can't get used to being milked an hour earlier.

The reactions of the country are shown in the following coast to coast poll by the Institute:

"Which of the following would you prefer: (a) have daylight saving time the year 'round, (b) have daylight saving time in summer and standard time the rest of the year: (c) have standard time the whole year, including summer?"

Among farmers more than seven in every ten want standard time unchanged the whole year. Farm opposition to daylight saving time has been found in every poll for the past five years.

Among people in cities of over 100,000, six in every ten want daylight saving time either in the summer or for the whole year 'round. During the war, by governmental action, we had year 'round daylight saving time.

The vote today is:

	Farms	Cities	All U.S.
D.S.T. all year	7%	22%	15%
D.S.T. in summer only	16	42	33
S.T. all year	74	29	47
No opinion	3	7	5

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MANY FARMERS, the survey finds, have the attitude that there is something immutable and sacred about time.

"The Lord made the time the way it is," said one farmer, "and men shouldn't tamper with it."

Yet the present system of standard time which we have in the United States, with its four time zones — Eastern Standard, Central Standard, Mountain and Pacific—was the creation of one man—the headmaster of a ladies seminary in Saratoga Springs, N. Y.

His name was Charles F. Dowd, a stocky New Englander with mutton-chop whiskers, an austere face and a deep love of orderliness. Up to 1883 every big city in the United States had its own local time, based on the sun. Boston had one time, Buffalo another, Cleveland another. American railroads used no less than 75 different times. A traveler changing trains in a terminal used by several railroads would find, for example, that the clock on one side of the station gave the time used by one railroad, while the clock on the opposite side would give a different time used by the other railroad.

Dr. Dowd's sense of orderliness was deeply offended by this condition. In 1870 this scientifically-minded school teacher went to the railroads and proposed dividing the country up into four time zones, with all the clocks in a zone conforming. At first no one paid any attention to his scheme. But finally in 1883 the railroads called a conference and on Nov. 18, 1883 a noiseless revolution was affected throughout the United States. The hands of the clocks of some 50,000,000 people were moved forward or backward to conform to the standard time zones set by the Saratoga school teacher.

Yet today many farmers think of standard time as something ordained either by God himself or by long centuries of human custom.