

Easter bunny rabbit hopped to it in 325 A.D.



Thursday, April 15, 1978 OBSERVER & ECCENTRIC (7A)(SF)7A

Spring

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the moon. Because of the moon's importance in determining the day on which Easter is celebrated, the bunny rabbit became associated with that holy day.

Eggs, of course, are symbols of new life and are fitting in the commemoration of the Resurrection. Almost every country in the world has its own special traditions concerning Easter eggs, including our own Easter egg hunt on the White House lawn.

IN THE PAST, Easter was traditionally a time for paying the rent, which might be in cash or produce. Spices were often used as part of the payment.

Presenting a new pair of gloves to a landlord at Easter was an old method of insuring land tenure. It is still a custom in some countries to give new gloves as Easter gifts.

This custom comes from the early days of Christianity, when Easter was a popular time for baptizing converts. Those being taken into the church wore new white robes to signify the new life given them by the Resurrection. It is still customary to buy new clothes for Easter, and the superstitious believe that if you do not have something new for that day the year will be unlucky for you.

DANCING is an important part of the celebration of Easter in many lands par-

ticularly in Spain. Ukrainian girls dance the habulki, a dance that welcomes the spring. In Ireland, too, there is dancing on Easter Sunday. Everyone competes for a prize cake with their dancing, and finally, one lucky couple wins and "takes the cake."

Many Easter rituals are directly linked to crop growth rituals of the past. In Greek Macedonia, girls rig up swings in cherry trees on Easter morning, and swings are erected on all the village greens. While the girls swing, dancers dance the ancient "hora." In Latvia, a similar custom prevails, only the dance is different. The original intention of these rituals, before the advent of Christianity, was to encourage the crops to grow as high as the girls could swing.

Water, all important in the growth of crops, has long been a part of Easter games in European countries. Easter water is considered especially blessed, and people go around sprinkling each other and even their animals with it.

All of these, and many more beautiful customs, both pagan and Christian, blend together from many lands in our own modern observance of Easter Sunday.

You may write GundeLLa, c/o Box 64, Garden City 48125. For a personal reply, please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Esch introduces bill to amend estate tax

U.S. Rep. Marvin Esch (R-Mich.) recently told the house ways and means committee that changes in estate tax laws "may determine the future of America's small businesses and family farms."

Esch testified before the committee in support of his bill, HR 803, which would double the estate tax exemption, increase the amount a spouse could inherit without taxes and provide extra deductions for small businesses and family farmers.

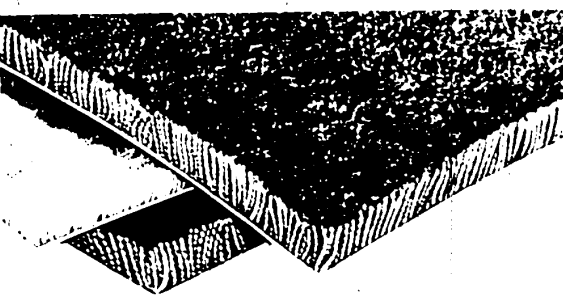
"Estate tax levels have not been amended since 1942," said Esch. "Inflation has therefore greatly eroded the impact of the law and which is much more realistic in light of today's price levels."

The bill contains a provision which would revise the exemption level each year on the basis of the cost of living.

"I believe we should include a cost of living escalation factor in the law. If we do not, the family of a dependent who dies in 1978 will receive more benefit from the

exemption than one who dies five or 10 years from now," he said.

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