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speech

OPENING DOORS TO OPPORTUNITY

Excerpts from remarks of Senator Hubert H. Humphrey (D., Minn.) prepared for delivery before the 20th Annual Meeting of the Farmers Union Grain Terminal Association, Saint Paul Auditorium, Saint Paul, Minnesota, on Tuesday night, December 9, 1958

Each year, for the last five years I have been privileged to address this great gathering, I have endeavored to review for you some of the issues closest to your hearts as farm people.

Last year, I broadened that horizon to indicate the role I felt food could occupy in strengthening the free world.

Tonight, as I return to you fresh from new observations in many areas of the world, I am more convinced than ever that we need a bold "food for peace program" as an antidote to the Soviet Union's seven-year program of economic competition with the western world.

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The greatest challenge facing our nation is the challenge of preserving a just and enduring peace.

I am convinced, after my 8 hour interview with Premier Nikita Khrushchev, that we can win the cold war -- and we can prevent a "hot" war.

But we had better make up our minds and start acting boldly on a dozen fronts, if we are to do so.

* * *

The Soviet system is probably going to be around for a long time to come.

We are going to have to learn to live with that system, whether we like it or not.

That doesn't mean that we are going to change our attitude against Communism, because we remain unalterably dedicated to our devotion to the free way of life.

But it does mean we must recognize that if we are to live in peace with the Soviet system, we had better concentrate on a constructive path of action.

We must try to stop the vitriol, the flood of vituperative language. Instead, we must emphasize works of peace.

We must get to know each other better.

Let us frankly admit that there is misinformation and lack of information concerning one another. That is one of many ways in which the exchange program can prove so helpful -- by personal contacts helping to clear away the fog of misunderstanding.

We must make up our mind that it is going to take patience and perseverance between us.

* * *

As we are all aware, the Soviet Union is trying to catch up with our enormous superiority in agricultural achievement.

We are still far ahead in this arena of competition. We have not even begun to exploit our agricultural superiority.

Yet I think that we should make it perfectly clear that we welcome the Soviet effort to raise its agricultural production. We are concerned about the well being of all people, everywhere. And as farm people, I know you share concern for all farm people.

* * *

The Soviet drive for a higher agricultural production is one part of a master plan which they are in the process of commencing -- their new seven-year program.

Recently the Kremlin published this plan in a 32,000 word document entitled "Targets for the Soviet Economy". It bears the name of Premier Khrushchev, and it was published for presentation to the Twenty-First Congress of the Soviet Communist Party -- soon to meet.

This document is a blueprint for economic planning, so that the nine hundred million people of the Communist bloc will ultimately, the Kremlin hopes, out-produce the free nations, out-trade them, out-manuever them, out-wit them, out-last them.

* * *

All of these Soviet efforts represent a formidable challenge to us.

If the Soviets are successful, their meeting of the demands will give them tremendous new strength and influence.

But let us remember this fact -- fulfillment of these goals will require patience and time on their part. And while the Soviets are engaged in these years of peaceful self-improvement endeavor, we must make the most of every minute to maintain the peace.

We must use every hour and day to help penetrate the Soviet system by our own good works, and by our personal relations.

If the Soviets seek to raise their standard of living, their people will be thinking not of war, but rather of peace -- and the promise of even better days ahead. As living standards rise, it is our hope that the Soviet Union will become less and less prone to reckless military adventures.

So far as we are concerned, we must make unmistakably clear to the world, to the Soviet Union, to the satellites, to the new developing nations of Asia-Africa, that we believe in peaceful progress everywhere, including behind the Iron Curtain.

We do not see danger in the rise of living standards. Rather, we see hope and opportunity. We want to keep opening doors to opportunity -- at home and abroad.

* * *

Whether the Soviets meet or do not meet their targets, the important factor for us to remember is that what we are witnessing is a super-drive for super-production.

Now we come to the most crucial point of all. Here is the question before us: Is the United States to counter the Soviet's effort by a drive not toward super-production, but by drastically reduced production?

Are we to continue to witness the inexcusable folly in our own country of preventing American agriculture from playing its essential role in the winning of the cold war?

In other words, are we going to treat the productivity of the American farmer as a blessing, or as a curse?

I know that you agree with me that the efficiency of our farms, the fertility of our soil, must not henceforth be treated as a liability, but rather as an asset to the free world.

I know that you will agree that the so-called "surplus" foods in Commodity Credit Corporation warehouses must come to be regarded not as a nuisance, not as a headache, but as an enormous arsenal for free

mankind. It is an arsenal of peace and for peace.

It is an arsenal which conquers not through destroying, but through healing, nourishing, building.

Why? Because half of the world's population still goes to bed hungry every night, because half of the world's peoples are under-nourished, because America's food which, thank heavens, we are in a position to export, gives us a weapon which the Soviet Union does not even dream of having seven years from now.

* * *

The Soviet goals are not necessarily a threat to us, if we continue to maintain our superiority in production, distribution, and consumption.

But the picture of our own goals is something that you and I and every thinking American must attempt to "draw " for ourselves.

For years, as you know, I have been seeking to have America capitalize on what I regard as one of the most significant laws currently on our statute books.

I refer to the Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act, Public Law 480. Under this law, from the sale of American crops there becomes available to us for use in foreign countries for reloan and reinvestment hundreds of millions of dollars in the form of foreign "counterpart" currencies.

These currencies represent one of the great assets of the free world.

It is an asset which should be put to work, instead of lying fallow in State Central Banks.

It is an asset which should be used today -- now -- for investment and research instead of allowing inflation gradually to erode its purchasing power.

In the 85th Congress just concluded, we wrote as amendments to Public Law 480 a series of new uses for the counterpart currencies. I am convinced that in the 86th Congress we will expand with still further uses and expand upon existing uses.

We will be using Public Law 480 funds to help develop branches of American schools abroad, to help further familiarize with the United States, its culture, its language, its forms to strengthen the exchange system. We are using Public Law 480 for a whole variety of research -- farm research, including utilization research, veterinarian research. We are using Public Law 480 for medical research, for translation of scientific periodicals and articles.

Thus, every bit of food going overseas will assist not only health, but a whole continuing cycle of constructive deeds.

Out of my trip to Western Europe, I have developed a series of recommendations for further specific uses of Public Law 480 funds that and I intend to spell out in amendments during the 86th Congress opening in January.

My goal is to use food for peace, food to nourish, to link nations in friendship, food to fulfill the Biblical mandate, "to feed the hungry and heal the sick".

Against the Soviet blueprint for economic supremacy, we must advance our own blueprint for the economic liberation of mankind

from the yoke of misery, of malnutrition, of disease and despair.

It is you who are the architects and engineers of the blueprints. Across the plains of the midwest will be fought the peaceful battles which can help win the "cold" war, and prevent the "hot" war.

* * *

I believe that the next Congress should write a long term food policy, in which we will get away from our year to year thinking and inadequate planning. I believe that we should write a program which announces boldly to the developing areas of the world that we are going to use food for peace -- to the greatest extent in our history.

Let us tell these new nations that we are going to back stop them in their plans to industrialize, and to improve their economies.

We are not going to stand idly by and watch them tighten their already pinched belts by cutting down on food imports when instead they need still larger imports.

We know that they are trying to conserve their limited amounts of capital in order wisely and prudently to expand their productive basis.

Therefore, let us tell them in no uncertain terms that we are prepared to assist them. We are prepared to assure them of their present caloric standards of consumption and of higher caloric standards.

I say to you that if the United States of America can write mutual defense agreements with some 45 nations of the world to check military aggression, we can write mutual food agreements designed to check hunger and malnutrition.

These mutual food agreements would be universally applauded, because they would help everyone and hurt no one. They would be consistent with the entire American tradition of the good Samaritan -- the tradition of sharing abundance with those less fortunate.

This, then, is not only my conclusion based upon my experience in Russia. It is my conclusion based upon years of effort in the United States Congress to utilize American agriculture in the service of this country and in the service of mankind everywhere.

It offers a way to open new doors of opportunity for our own hard pressed farm people, and new doors of opportunity toward building a peaceful world.

We must continually look for ways to open such doors, instead of closing our minds, and our hearts and shutting out opportunity for progress and peace.

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OPENING DOORS TO OPPORTUNITY

Address by Senator Hubert H. Humphrey at the 21st Annual Meeting of the Farmers Union Grain Terminal Association, Saint Paul Auditorium, Saint Paul, Minnesota. December 9, 1958.

My heart is filled with mixed emotions tonight -- of humility, of gratitude, and of joy.

For the past five weeks, as you know, Mrs. Humphrey and I have been traveling extensively abroad, trying to perform a useful and constructive service for the Congress and our country.

Our tour took us to France, Switzerland, Germany, Great Britain, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Finland -- and Russia.

Just a week ago, I was in Moscow -- and inside the Kremlin, talking to Nikita Khrushchev, the leader and dictator of the Soviets -- Tonight, I'm in Saint Paul talking to the people -- the sovereign power -- in our great democracy.

Let me assure you, it is mighty good to be home. Tonight, as never before, I appreciate freedom.

What a homecoming this is! -- Thanks.

Your GTA annual meeting is always an inspiring occasion. It has become the outstanding gathering of its kind in the entire heartland of America. It has become a significant pace-setter in the formulation and guidance of farm policy, and both a sounding-board and a rallying point for mobilizing renewed efforts in the continuing

struggle for economic equality for agriculture.

For twenty years, the GTA, under the dynamic guidance of your veteran General Manager, M. W. "Bill" Thatcher, has become of increasing strength and significance in the midwest. The GTA has never given up trying to open the doors of better opportunity for agriculture.

Each year, for the last five years, I have been privileged to address this great gathering.

Last year, I tried to indicate the role I believed food could occupy in strengthening the free world.

Tonight, as I return to you from new observations in many areas of the world, I am more convinced than ever that we need a bold "food for peace" program as an effective challenge to the Soviet Union's seven-year program of economic competition with the western world.

The greatest challenge facing our nation is that of securing a just and enduring peace. I want to talk to you about it.

Farm people and city people alike, here and throughout the free world, must unite behind a winning counter-offensive to the economic challenge which has been unleashed by the Soviet Union.

To the extent that we can win this "cold" war, as I earnestly believe we can and will and must -- to that extent, we will help check another type of war. I mean a much grimmer war, a "hot" war.

In that war, World War III, there could be no real victor.

The result would be a devastated globe, consisting of radio active rubble.

It need not happen. Our goal is, and must be, peace and justice -- Let us never yield in our determination to achieve this goal.

I am convinced, after my eight-hour interview with Premier Nikita Khrushchev, that we can win the "cold" war -- and we can prevent a "hot" war.

But, we had better make up our minds to start acting boldly on a dozen fronts, if we are to do so.

The basic point which we must constantly bear in mind is this:

The Soviet system is probably going to be around for a long time to come. We cannot wish it away -- nor does it seem on the verge of collapse or disintegration.

We are going to have to learn to live with that system whether we like it or not.

That doesn't mean that we are going to change our basic attitude against Communism. No, indeed, we remain unalterably dedicated to the free way of life -- to an ever expanding area of freedom.

But, it does mean we must recognize that if we are to live in peace, we had better concentrate on a constructive path of action.

We must try to stop the vitriol, the flood of vituperative language. I spoke to Khrushchev on this! Instead, we must emphasize

works of peace.

We must get to know each other better.

Let us frankly admit that there is misinformation and lack of information concerning one another. That is one of many ways in which the exchange program can prove so helpful -- by personal contacts helping to clear away the fog of misunderstanding.

We must make up our minds that the path to peace is going to take patience and perseverance. There are many obstacles in our way -- many disappointments in the past and I suppose in the future.

As we are all aware, the Soviet Union is trying to catch up with our enormous superiority in agricultural achievement.

We are still far ahead in this arena of competition. We have not even begun to use and apply our agricultural superiority.

Yet, I think that we should make it perfectly clear that we welcome the Soviet effort to raise its agricultural production.

We are concerned about the well-being of all people everywhere. And, as farm people, I know you share concern for all farm people.

As a matter of fact, that is one of the points I emphasized when I had a chance to speak over the Moscow radio. And, I asked for this. Here is what I said, in part:

"There is no single group in all the Soviet Union

which deserves more of the good things of life than the tillers of the soil. The peasant in Russia has been a forgotten man. But, we as Americans wish well for the farmers of the Soviet Union. We hope that they will be able to enjoy larger consumption of the food which they themselves produce by the sweat of their brow and enjoy more of the comforts of modern technology."

The Soviet drive for a higher agricultural production is one part of a master plan -- their new seven-year program.

Recently, the Kremlin published this plan in a 32,000-word document, entitled "Targets for the Soviet Economy." It bears the name of Premier Khrushchev, and it was published for presentation to the Twenty-First Congress of the Soviet Communist Party -- soon to meet.

This document is a blueprint for economic planning, so that the nine hundred million people of the Communist bloc will ultimately, the Kremlin hopes, out-produce the free nations, out-trade them, out-manuever them, out-wit them, out-last them.

The biggest single target of the Soviet's seven-year plan is the field of heavy industry, where Russia hopes to jump its steel output by 1965 to the total of one hundred million tons of steel.

In addition, the Soviets hope to widen their transportation network, enlarge their electric fuel generating power facilities and their petroleum production power, increase the number of housing units

and achieve other key goals.

All of these Soviet efforts represent a formidable challenge to us.

If the Soviets are successful, it will give them tremendous new strength and influence.

But, let us remember this fact -- fulfillment of these goals will require patience and time on their part. And while the Soviets are engaged in these years of peaceful self-improvement endeavor, we must make the most of every minute to maintain the peace.

We must use every hour and day to help penetrate the Soviet system by our own good works, and by our personal relations.

If the Soviets seek to raise their standard of living, their people will be thinking not of war, but rather of peace -- and the promise of even better days ahead. As living standards rise, it is our hope that the Soviet Union will become less and less prone to reckless military adventures.

So far as we are concerned, we must make unmistakably clear to the world, to the Soviet Union, to the satellites, to the new developing nations of Asia-Africa, that we believe in peaceful progress everywhere, including behind the Iron Curtain.

We do not see danger in the rise of living standards. Rather, we see hope and opportunity. We want to keep opening doors to opportunity -- at home and abroad.

Perhaps the most ambitious of all Soviet targets is in the field of agriculture.

The Soviet leaders recognize that their agricultural system is inadequate and inefficient.

It represents a serious element of weakness in the Soviet state.

On the world propaganda front also, the weakness of Soviet agriculture is a serious drawback to them because, remember, they are aiming their propaganda principally at the underdeveloped areas of the world which are also largely agricultural.

It is understandable, therefore, why the Soviets are so determined to modernize and make more efficient their productive and agricultural system. Then, too, if they are to achieve a higher standard of living for Soviet workers and industries, rising food production is likewise necessary.

Everywhere, in city and country alike the Soviet citizen is demanding a better life. He wants more food, better housing, better clothing, more consumption -- This represents an urgent need for peace -- not war.

The Soviets realize that food is the key to strength, of the entire rural pattern -- roads and electricity.

Compared to our own agriculture, the Soviet farm system is crude and grossly inefficient.

The American farmer remains the most productive, most efficient producer of food and fiber in the world. The individual farmer, aided by his cooperative in this country, is the true "miracle-man" by any conceivable comparison with the peasants of the Soviet Union who are tied to their collective or State farms.

But, the Soviets are determined to catch up.

In 1965, the Soviets expect to make available to their ninety million peasants a million new tractors, 400,000 new combines, thirty-four million tons of fertilizer.

That year, they hope to produce forty-five million tons of milk. To illustrate our present superiority, I need only cite the fact that this year, American agriculture is producing sixty-three million tons of milk.

Seven years from now, the Communist commissars expect hens to lay thirty-seven billion eggs per year. Here again the comparison is favorable to us, for already we have a sixty-billion egg production yearly.

Right now, we produce 14 million tons of meat, whereas seven years from now, the Russians hope to produce 12 million tons of meat.

Now, as one notes these statistics, you may get the impression that we have nothing to be concerned from the Soviet target goals, particularly because we must remember that these are only targets, and in the past, the Soviets have had a notorious series of disappointments in their

farm production.

Time after time, Russian agriculture has failed to achieve production goals set under the whip of the Commissars.

But, we must not underestimate the Soviets' iron determination to correct their weakness in agriculture. I sensed and witnessed this determination in my discussions.

They have a vast plan to develop virgin soil in the plains of Siberia. They are shipping hundreds of thousands of so-called pioneers into the virgin areas, hoping to bring land into extensive production. This program has been underway for two years -- and it shows unmistakable signs of success.

Whether the Soviets meet or do not meet their targets, the important factor for us to remember is that what we are witnessing is a super-drive for super-production.

Now, we come to the most crucial point of all. Here is the question before us: Is the United States to counter the Soviet's effort by a drive not toward super-production, but by drastically reduced production?

Are we to continue to witness the inexcusable folly in our own country of preventing American agriculture from playing its essential role in the winning of the "cold" war?

In other words, are we going to treat the productivity of the American farmer as a blessing, or as a curse?

I know that you will agree with me that the efficiency of our farms, the fertility of our soil, must not henceforth be treated as a liability, but rather as an asset to the free world.

I know that you will agree that the so-called "surplus" foods in Commodity Credit Corporation warehouses must come to be regarded not as a nuisance, not as a headache, but as an enormous arsenal for free mankind. It is an arsenal of peace and for peace.

It is an arsenal which conquers not through destroying, but through healing, nourishing, building.

Why? Because half of the world's population still goes to bed hungry every night, because half of the world's peoples are undernourished, because America's food which, thank heavens, we are in a position to export, gives us an advantage which the Soviet Union does not even dream of having seven years from now.

I spoke at great length with the Soviet Minister of Agriculture Matskeyvich. I discussed with him his plans for rural electrification, rural roads, farm research, and related problems.

He freely acknowledged his recognition of current American superiority in many farm fields, but I can assure you that I have rarely met a man of such obvious iron will, self-confidence and absolute determination to catch up to us.

We discussed fields of cooperation. Already 6 agricultural exchange teams have visited the two countries. I discussed with him the

importance of closer collaboration in veterinary medicine. Why? Because Russian farmers, like American farmers, are still plagued by a host of diseases which reduce livestock and livestock production, and, worst of all, which are transmissible to man. I refer to diseases such as bovine tuberculosis, brucellosis, anthrax, swine viruses, etc. He expressed his eagerness for such cooperation.

Similarly, he expressed his desire to collaborate in such fields as seed research, for the Soviet Union is perhaps the most research-conscious nation on earth, not excepting our own. He told me: "Send us your seeds. We will be glad to test them among our 1,500 State Research Centers. We will test them under different climatic conditions." As you remember, the Soviet Eurasian land mass includes the freezing regions of the super-Arctic and the hot subtropical zone.

He indicated that by 1965, he expected collective farms to double productivity, and productivity of state farms to increase by 60%. He stated that peasants will increase the income return to themselves by $1\frac{1}{2}$ times for each "work day unit." But, he said, further, that peasants, instead of cultivating their own small plots after regular working hours or getting milk from their own cow or eggs from their own chickens, will come increasingly to get even such limited "personal income" from the collective farm.

This then is a brief picture of the Soviet goals. It is not necessarily a threat to us, if we continue to maintain our superiority in production, distribution, and consumption.

But the picture of our own goals is something that you and I and every thinking American must attempt to "draw" for ourselves.

For years, as you know, I have been seeking to have America capitalize on what I regard as one of the most significant laws currently on our statute books.

I refer to the Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act, Public Law 480. Under this law, from the sale of American crops there becomes available to us for use in foreign countries for reloan and re-investment hundreds of millions of dollars in the form of foreign "counterpart" currencies.

These currencies represent one of the great assets of the free world. No other nation has such a rich resource -- well over two and one-half billion dollars of idle resources --

It is an asset which should be put to work, instead of lying fallow in State Central Banks.

It is an asset which should be used today -- now -- for investment and research instead of allowing inflation gradually to erode its purchasing power.

In the 85th Congress just concluded, we wrote as amendments to Public Law 480 a series of new uses for the counterpart currencies. I am convinced that in the 86th Congress we will expand with still further uses and expand upon existing uses.

We will be using Public Law 480 funds to help develop branches

of American schools abroad, to help further familiarize with the United States, its culture, its language, and to strengthen the person exchange system. We are using Public Law 480 for a whole variety of research -- farm research, including agricultural product utilization research, veterinarian research. We are using Public Law 480 for medical research, for translation of scientific periodicals and articles.

Thus, every bit of food going overseas will assist not only health, but a whole continuing cycle of constructive deeds.

Out of our trip to western Europe, I have developed a series of recommendations for further specific uses of Public Law 480 funds and, that, I intend to spell out in amendments during the 86th Congress opening in January.

My goal is to use food for peace, food to nourish, to link nations in friendship, food to fulfill the Biblical mandate, "to feed the hungry and heal the sick."

Against the Soviet blueprint for economic supremacy, we must advance our own blueprint for the economic liberation of mankind from the yoke of misery, of malnutrition, of disease and despair. We can and should do this in cooperation with our allies, and in particular our great friend and neighbor to the north, Canada.

It is you who are the architects and engineers of the blueprints. Across the plains of the midwest will be fought the peaceful battles which can help win the "cold" war, and prevent the "hot" war.

Finally, let me turn to my principal recommendation of this evening. I believe that the next Congress should write a long-term food policy, in which we will get away from our year-to-year thinking and inadequate planning. I believe that we should write a program which announces boldly to the developing areas of the world that we are going to use food for peace -- to the greatest extent in our history.

Let us tell these new nations that we are going to "back stop" them in their plans to industrialize, and to improve their economies.

We are not going to stand idly by and watch them tighten their already pinched belts by cutting down on food imports when instead they need still larger imports.

We know that they are trying to conserve their limited amounts of capital in order wisely and prudently to expand their productive base.

Therefore, let us tell them in no uncertain terms that we are prepared to assist them. We are prepared to assure them of their present caloric standards of consumption and of higher caloric standards.

I say to you that if the United States of America can write mutual defense agreements with some 45 nations of the world to check military aggression, we can write mutual food agreements designed to check hunger and malnutrition. We can thaw out the "cold" war with warm hearts.

These mutual food agreements would be universally applauded, because they would help everyone and hurt no one. They would be consistent

with the entire American tradition of the Good Samaritan -- the tradition of sharing abundance with those less fortunate. Yes, we can dispel the International fog of tension and hostility by clear thought and works of peace.

This, then, is not only my conclusion based upon my brief and limited experience in Russia. It is my conclusion based upon years of effort in the United States Congress to utilize American agriculture in the service of this country, and in the service of mankind everywhere.

It offers a way to open new doors of opportunity for our own hard pressed farm people, and new doors of opportunity toward building a peaceful world -- and that is the kind of world we want.

We must continually look for ways to open such doors, instead of closing our minds, and our hearts -- and shutting out opportunity for progress and peace.



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