Andy Anderson Harvey Schermerhorn
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Floyd Wheeler + Board Members

THE FARM CHALLENGE

Lester Johnson

Remarks prepared for delivery by Senator Hubert H. Humphrey (D.,Minn.) at annual meeting of Pierce-Pepin Electric Cooperative, Ellsworth, Wisconsin, Saturday afternoon, June 13, 1959.

Gov Freeman · Lt Gov Rolvaag - Ron Anderson!!

There is no gathering of any kind which gives me more pleasure than a meeting of the members of a cooperative, folks joined in a common endeavor to make life better for everybody. So I am glad to be here and happy for the opportunity to greet you, to wish you good fortune in the continued health and strength of the Pierce-Pepin Electric Cooperative, and to discuss ideas with you on present farm problems and prospects ahead.

Pierce Pepin Coop Fortune!

Lester Johnson

And it is also a source of real pleasure to be here today with my good friend, cooperator and fellow legislator, your outstanding Congressman -- Lester Johnson.

Lester Johnson actually started the Wisconsin Democratic revival back in 1953 when he won this Congressional seat in a

This NOT A Political Meeting But REA ANNUAL

Good Day for Farm Work

special election. Things have been looking up for the Democrats ever since, not only in Wisconsin, but all over the country.

But Lester's victory meant more than a new era for Democrats. It also meant a great deal to all farmers, Democrats and Republicans alike. He has become a real champion of agriculture in the House of Representatives, and it has been a great help -- and privilege -- for me to have such an able partner on legislation of importance to Wisconsin and Minnesota dairy farmers such as the Humphrey-Johnson Dairy Bill and the Johnson-Humphrey Milk Sanitation Act establishing national standards under the Public Health Service.

He has arranged for hearings on poultry and egg problems in the House next week, and I am working in the same direction in the Senate.

You are fortunate in Wisconsin to have other good friends

of agriculture -- such as my good friend Senator Bill Proxmire, and your capable Governor Gaylord Nelson. Bill Proxmire can always be counted upon to stand solidly with friends of agriculture. He is an effective member of our Senate Committee.

While I am mentioning Wisconsin names, I can not overlook another young man who has made a great and continuing contribution in your behalf. He is Bob Lewis, one time editor of the Wisconsin REA News, the boy from the Wisconsin family farm who has never forgotten his first loyalties. His father, George Lewis, pioneered the REA cooperative movement in Wisconsin, and Bob has carried on in the same tradition of service. He was formerly Administrative Assistant to Senator Proxmire. I am so pleased that Governor Nelson has Bob as his right hand farm advisor -- his agricultural coordinator. Bob Lewis is a man who knows what he is fighting for.

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In all fairness, I might add that agriculture welcomes and recognizes friends from either major political party. We who put the welfare of farm people above partisanship appreciate the consistent support of Republicans such as Senator Milt Young of North Dakota and your own Senator Alexander Wiley, who have refused to go along with this GOP Administration's wreck-the-farmer policies.

Young & Wiley

After ten years of fighting battles for farmers in Washington, I know something about who you can count upon and who you can not. The sure test of faithful performance is a consistent record of support for agriculture throughout the years.

10 yrs of fighting for Ag.

What really counts, is having people in public office who really care -- and who really understand your problems, and want to do something about them.

People who care

That certainly goes for the REA, as well as general farm legislation.

I believe in all kinds of cooperatives, but I have a special place in my heart for the rural electric cooperatives. You have not only brought light and power to the rural areas of America, you have also strengthened the entire farm cooperative movement by teaching more farmers the value of working together to help themselves.

Our rural electric coops have developed strong and courageous leadership because of the very necessity to resist continuing attacks upon your great program. If there is a single destructive trick that foes of your organizations have not used or tried to use in the last six or seven years, I can not name it. I know -- because I have been in the thick of your battles, shoulder to shoulder with men like Clyde Ellis of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

REA Fight | Tell you the story!

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Perhaps it appears that we have just lost a round in our most recent REA fight -- the attempt to override the President's veto on the Humphrey-Price bill. But let me tell you something -- it was a mighty hollow victory for foes of REA, when two-thirds of the Senate voted in your behalf, and we only missed by four votes having a similar two-thirds vote in the House.

I am proud of that fight, and my own part in it -- with your backing. When we found out two years ago that the Secretary of Agriculture was attempting to take over the loan-making authority of the REA Administrator, I insisted that Secretary Benson come before our Senate Committee to explain what he was up to.

I acted in good faith, because Secretary Benson had promised in 1953 not to change the operational pattern of REA if he were given authority over its functions under the

President's reorganizational plan. He violated this pledge

You may recall that Ezra "took a walk", and refused to appear -- even though my official authority as chairman of the Subcommittee on Government Reorganization called for acting as a watchdog over his administration of the authority given him.

Secretary Benson virtually hid out until Congress adjourned. So when Congress returned in Jan 1954, my first act was introduction of legislation restricting his authority and returning it to the REA Administrator where it belonged.

This time Secretary Benson could not escape coming before our committee -- and he was unable to convince a majority of the Committee he had acted in good faith. The result was the enactment of the Humphrey-Price bill by both houses of Congress.

Yet, it was vetoed, despite the expressed intent of Congress as to how the program should operate. And the

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Republican Administration, from the White House down, exerted every pressure in the world to sustain that veto.

We lost by just four votes. And, I don't think I have to remind you, four Republican votes in Wisconsin for REA could have turned the tide in your favor. (Your whole REA Hears Tells the Story)

More was involved than just this ~~simple~~ REA organization act. If we could have broken the back of "government by veto" it would have opened the door to great strides forward in giving farmers other help they have been asking for; namely a better farm program, seeing that farmers have a chance to earn a decent farm income while at the same time cutting down the tremendous losses of the Commodity Credit Corporatin.

Yes, if four Republican Congressmen from Wisconsin had voted differently, our immediate legislative future for agriculture would have looked a great deal brighter.

Yet even in supposed defeat we have served notice on

~~REA-wreckers that~~ The vast majority of this Congress is not about to let this great REA program be crippled. And -- we have put the brakes to efforts of this Administration to hike your interest rates on REA loans. That alone was worth the effort.

Now, I want to talk to you today about more than just the great REA program.

You are farm people. The purpose of your REA cooperative is to better enable you to do a good job as farmers. Farming is your business. Yet it is even more -- it is your way of life.

I am sure that uppermost in your minds is the future of American agriculture -- and the extent to which your government is going to help you, or neglect you, in your struggle for economic justice -- ~~in a time of serious economic distress~~.

As a member of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and

Forestry, as a long-time friend of American agriculture -- your problems are of grave concern to me.

They should be of serious concern to all citizens, urban or rural -- for we all have a stake in what happens to agriculture.

The Democratic Party has received a powerful mandate from the farm people of America to right the tragic wrongs that have been done to American agriculture under the Republican Administration in Washington.

Remember, it is the Republican program that is such a mess today -- as much as they would like to duck responsibility.

It is the Republican program, and it has been Republican bungling that has made such a costly mess of it -- without producing any effective results for farm people.

It is high time for some changes to be made.

But it is only fair to warn you that the Congress is working under extremely serious and inescapable limitations. We can not do everything you wish we would do. We can not do everything we want to do.

First, we are working under the limits imposed by the President's veto power. I think it is only fair and accurate to expect that the President will veto any bill we might pass which will do anything substantial to raise farm prices.

This means that Congress is limited in what it can do for farmers to what can be passed by a two-thirds vote -- over a Presidential veto.

Secondly, Congress is limited in what it can do for farmers by the veto power which is held by the Secretary of Agriculture.

You have seen how good farm programs can be ruined by unsympathetic administration. The power of the Secretary of

Veto

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Agriculture to negate the intent and spirit of Congress is great.

The Secretary's power to veto by administrative action limits the good that Congress can do for farmers to those things that are so simple, so direct, that the results can come through to the farm in spite of all the foot-dragging and hostility that it will encounter as it passes through the Department of Agriculture's hands.

Despite these severe handicaps, at least some of us in the Democratic Congress are determined to develop a workable program that will help the farmers of America.

You can mark it down as absolutely certain that the Democratic Congress will not let the Administration pull down the temple of agricultural programs completely in its final hours, as it seems determined to do.

The Democratic Congress will never, never, never give

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Ezra Taft Benson the "Zero-Parity" floor he has asked for. We will not give him the "market-place no-parity gimmick" he has asked for either.

The Democratic Congress will not allow the Administration to get away with putting a penalty tax on the refunds that your cooperatives pay to their patrons.

The Democratic Congress will not let the Administration jack up REA interest rates, nor throw the REA co-ops to the ~~wolves~~ financiers of Wall Street.

You can count on that. You can bank on it. You can bet your economic lives on it -- and that is exactly what the stakes are in agricultural policy today. For while the Administration has a powerful veto weapon to use against Congress when it tries to help the farmer, we have a "veto power" of our own when it comes to acting on the Administration's plans to harm the farmers. And we will use it! ~~He will not give up a single inch.~~

This tragic era for agriculture -- the dark era of Ezra -- has had a good and constructive result along with all the misery and waste. So it seems to me, at any rate.

It has made us grow up and come of age in our thinking about farm policy.

We now realize that the real argument in farm policy should not be over the methods and details. The real argument is over basic objectives.

Are you <u>for</u> a program to help the family farm? Or are you <u>against</u> the family farm? That, my friends, is the real issue, the real dividing line, in farm policy debate today.

Almost any farmer in America can think up the general outline of a farm plan that will work -- if there is a will to make it work.

Methods are important. Details are important. Some will work better than others. Some well-intentioned ideas might

not work at all. We need highly-skilled technical experts and conscientious administration to carry out our farm programs. But our trouble is not for lack of ideas and conscientious, skilled people to put them into effect. The Department of Agriculture is overflowing with fine, dedicated career public servants -- who could make a farm program work and work well, if they were given a chance.

Regrettably, the public attitude toward agriculture has been so deliberately distorted that we now need to mobilize better understanding on the part of all American people as the first step toward the new and better farm program

Public attitude re Ag.

some of us are seeking.

And America's farm policies need to be re-examined and clarified in terms of objectives sought in the nation's interest -- not just in terms of political slogans or cliches designed to turn city resident against farm resident, and even farmer against farmer.

And, Before we can enact any effective new farm legislation, we need to make clear what our purposes and objectives are. Purposes + objectives

That's what some of us are trying to do in Congress now, while we are working on new and better legislation.

All the legislative history behind the development of farm programs in America confirms that our objective and purpose has been to assure the American people of a continued abundance of food and fiber, to offer America's farmers an opportunity to achieve economic equality with other segments of our economy, and to preserve and protect America's traditional pattern of family-owned, family-operated farms as the type of agriculture best adapted to our democratic way of life.

In more recent years has been added a new objective in the interest of the entire nation -- the purpose of using our food abundance as a useful and effective humanitarian arm of better international relations.

Repeatedly, the Congress of the United States has restated its intent to uphold these objectives, in one way or another.

But, these objectives are being challenged.

We have heard our blessings of abundance criticized as a curse.

We have heard that even 90% of equality -- let alone full equality -- is more than farmers are entitled to in our economy.

We have heard distrubing yet increasing talk of encouraging a complete change in our historic pattern of farming, to put more emphasis on bigness and efficiency, less on human values and problems ofrural living. We have heard less concern about perpetuating our family farming pattern, and more and more about giving way to the pressures of mass operations — corporation - big-business farming!

Serious questions of public policy are involved, if we are to cross that line.

It is not a change of direction toward which we should be allowed to drift or be pushed, without fully knowing the consequences.

The most damaging product of the Age of Ezra is the dangerous erosion of America's will to do justice for her farm people.

For the first time in the history of our nation, a cancer of doubt has arisen in the public consciousness as to the merit of our family farming system. The most efficient agricultural production system in the world.

The swift rise of vertical integration provides the mechanism whereby big concentrated business and financial interests can extend their domination over agriculture. This will leave the farm family on the farm. But it will take

away its economic independence. The farmer will be told what to grow and where to sell, and the absentee-corporation farm director will control what the farmer gets for his efforts. This is but corporate collectivism with private agricultural commissars. Left Russia.

This ominous forecast for American agriculture holds a powerful, fascinating allure for all too many people in our country today. Its allure has been heightened immeasurably by the discouraging, demoralizing shambles that the Republican Administration has made of our farm program. There is a growing sentiment in our country for just giving up on the farm problem.

This sentiment is strong among those who do not understand the tremendous values and strengths in our family farming system, nor the unusual problems which farm families must face.

There are millions and millions of citizens in our

population who are far removed from the soil. Their number is increasing year by year. Domination of agriculture by centralized corporate power appeals to many of them as an easy way out of the farm problem.

And it appeals even more strongly to those who simply do not care about what happens to farm people.

But I am one of the people who care, and so is Lester Johnson here, and so is Senator Proxmire, Gaylord Nelson. And I believe that there are many more elected representatives like us in the Congress of the United States.

Rather than stumble and drift along blindly because of a vacuum of sound farm policy leadership from the present Administration, farm people and city people alike need to do some soul searching, and some honest appraisal of what we really want -- and the alternatives we face. Perhaps I can be helpful in that direction today, by outlining to you my

own guidlines for trying to develop a new and better farm program.

We need an agricultural stabilization program far less costly to the American taxpayers than the present inexcusable mess -- yet one that is far more effective in its protection of family farmers and their contribution to the American economy.

We can, and must, have both.

We need an agricultural stabilization program that provides more equality of opportunity for agriculture to keep pace with the rest of our expanding economy in terms of income, yet one that does not make the farmer dependent on the government for that income.

We need a program that recognizes the need for and encourages farmers to help themselves through cooperative action for bargaining power in the market place and for whatever

production adjustments that may be necessary to make the best use of our human, soil, and water resources.

We need a program that recognizes and is tailored to the vast technological changes, yet does so without sacrificing the human and social values of our traditional American pattern of family owner-operated farms.

We need a program that recognizes the farmer's stewardship responsibility for conserving productivity of our land for the sake of future generations, yet recognizes too that the entire nation shares that same responsibility -- and must share in the cost of seeing that it is properly done.

We need a program that really does something about surpluses -- making use of what we have, and adjusting production to keep from building up more beyond the level of possible need.

Above all, we need a national food policy closely meshed

with our farm policy, so that we can better gear our 3004132 productive resources to the needs of humanity at home and abroad -- instead of producing for government storage bins.

If the choice facing us rests between abundance and scarcity, consumers and farmers alike have a vital stake in abundance -- wisely used. Farm abundance has done more to check inflation and the increase in the cost of living than any other single factor in our economy.

Until we as a nation face up to our social responsibility of deciding what we are going to do about the areas of hardship and suffering in our own midst -- and to what extent we are willing to share our potential abundance with hungry peoples of the world as a force for freedom -- until these questions are resolved, it appears morally wrong to insist that American agriculture drastically curb its output below levels for which human need exists.

Society must recognize that in the long run, it pays the price one way or another.

Is it not cheaper -- and far better -- to enlist our food abundance in waging peace, than to be faced with enlisting our sons and mobilizing our economy for war?

Is it not cheaper -- and far better -- to invest some of our abundance in raising the living standards of low-income groups in our country, rather than turning to a scarcity philosophy that can only force up food costs to all segments of our society?

If American agriculture is offered no alternative other than following the pattern of monopoly industry, in cutting back its production to the point where it can receive more income for less output, it will be consumers of the nation who will pay the bill.

Farmers would <u>like</u> to produce in abundance, if that

abundance is wisely used, and they can receive a fair return for their investment, their managerial skill, and their labor.

Yet there is no reason why farmers alone should subsidize other segments of our society already receiving a greater proportionate share of our national income, nor any reason why farmers alone should bear the costs of producing to meet the needs of underdeveloped areas of the world, in the interests of American foreign policy.

If consumers want the price protection of always having a little more than enough to eat, if the nation wants the valuable asset of abundance in a world of need, then the public must recognize that there is a public interest stake in government providing a climate of conditions in which farmers can survive economically.

You can not do it by writing off farm people as second

class citizens who are not to share in the general prosperity and progress of the nation.

You can not do it by throwing farmers on the mercy of the free market for what they sell, when the costs of what they buy are bolstered and supported by all kinds of built-in protectors.

Food is basic to national life.

Price protection, farm credit, conservation assistance -- all such farm programs are but means to an end -- not the end itself.

There is no simple answer to achieving these objectives, no one panacea for the entire farm problem. Neither can any one bill meet all the problems we face.

But reasonable men should be able to agree on combining an entire kit of economic and program tools in order that each commodity may be handled in the manner best suited to its unique needs.

We need more adequate credit designed to family farm requirements. We need better conservation programs. We need more research directed into utilization of our abundance. We need a food stamp program to increase consumption amony our aged, our handicapped, our dependent children and our unemployed. We need greatly expanded uses of our food internationally under a "Food for Peace" program.

Yet with all of this, we need the government's cooperation with farmers toward more adequate income protection and production adjustment. We can do it through combined use of income equalization payments to producers, through marketing orders and agreements, through orderly-marketing loans and direct purchases, through marketing quotas, through payments in kind in some instances, through greater rural development aid, and through government sanction of farmers banding together to help themselves when they develop and accept programs

to do so by majority vote of producers.

Far from regimentation, such a program offers the real freedom farmers need -- freedom from poverty, freedom from economic domination, and freedom of choice as to the alternatives they prefer in seeking to avoid the hardship of the wildly fluctuating free markets over which they now have no control.

These are not pie-in-the-sky proposals. They are sound and practical and should be achieved, if American agriculture mobilizes its forces and carries its true story to the rest of the American people.

And with such a program, I am sure, we can at long last secure for all agriculture assurances which I have termed my "Farmer's Bill of Rights", as standards from which farmers should never retreat.

They include:

1. The right to full equality of economic opportunity.

2. The right for improved standards of rural living.

3. The right of reasonable protection against natural hazards.

4. The right to extend agricultural free enterprise through cooperative action.

5. The right to public cooperation and assistance in conserving and saving the soil.

6. The right to preserve the social and human values of family farming.

7. The right to decent land tenure which encourages the desirable goal of farm ownership.

8. The right to a democratic voice in his own farm program.

9. The right to benefits of an expanding world trade.

10. The right to a long-term program of food reserves

to protect consumers against costly scarcity.

11. The right to assurance that land reclamation development will result in establishment of new family farms, not factories-in-the-field.

12. The right to the entire nation's support for use of food and fiber as a force for freedom throughout the world.

These, I believe, are the basic rights of American agriculture.

They are not new rights. They are not rights of spcial privilege,gained through misuse or abuse of tremendous power over the lifelines of the nation's food supply.

Rather, they are rights of historic precedent, earned by the great and continuing contribution of agriculture to American life -- the fulfillment of the nation's needs in peace or war, in good times or bad, at personal profitor loss.

They need to be restated now only as a guiding beacon of light, cast upon the darkness of present confusion over America's farm policy.

They must be just as zealously guarded against forces which seek to destroy them, as we guard other historic rights, privileges, and responsibilities of freedom in our democracy.

June 12, 1959

FOR RELEASE: SATURDAY P.M.
June 13, 1959

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But Lester's victory meant more than a new era for Democrats. It also meant a great deal to all farmers, Democrats and Republicans alike. He has become a real champion of agriculture in the House of Representatives, has been a great help -- and privilege -- for me to have such an able partner on legislation

of importance to Wisconsin and Minnesota dairy farmers as the Humphrey-Johnson Dairy Bill and the Johnson-Humphrey Milk Sanitation Act establishing national standards under the Public Health Service.

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this great program be crippled. And -- we have put the brakes to efforts of this Administration to hike your interest rates on REA loans. That alone was worth the effort.

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make a farm program work and work well, if they were given a chance.

Regrettably, the public attitude toward agriculture has been so deliberately distorted that we now need to mobilize better understanding on the part of all American people as the first step toward the new and better farm program some of us are seeking.

America's farm policies need to be re-examined and clarified in terms of objectives sought in the nation's interest -- not just in terms of political slogans or cliches designed to turn city resident against farm resident, and even farmer against farmer.

Before we can enact any effective new farm legislation, we need to make clear what our purposes and objectives are.

That's what some of us are trying to do in Congress now, while we are working on new and better legislation.

All the legislative history behind the development of farm programs in America confirms that our objective and purpose has been to assure the American people of a continued abundance of food and fiber, to offer America's farmers an opportunity to achieve economic equality with other segments of our economy, and to preserve and protect America's traditional pattern of family-owned, family-operated farms as the type of agriculture best adapted to our democratic way of life.

In more recent years, has been added a new objective in the interest of the entire nation -- the purpose of using our

abundance as a useful and effective humanitarian arm of better international relations.

Repeatedly, the Congress of the United States has restated its intent to uphold these objectives, in one way or another.

But these objectives are being challenged -- we have heard our blessings of abundance criticized as a curse.

We have heard that even 90% of equality -- let alone full equality -- is more than farmers are entitled to in our economy.

We have heard disturbing yet increasing talk of encouraging a complete change in our historic pattern of farming, to put more emphasis on bigness and efficiency, less on human values and problems of rural living. We have heard less concern about perpetuating our family farming pattern, and more and more about giving way to the pressure of mass operations.

Serious questions of public policy are involved, if we are to cross that line.

It is not a change of direction toward which we should be allowed to drift or be pushed, without fully knowing the consequences.

The most damaging product of the Age of Ezra is the dangerous erosion of America's will to do justice for her farm people.

For the first time in the history of our nation, a cancer of doubt has arisen in the public consciousness as to the merit of

our family farming system -- the most efficient agricultural production system in the world.

The swift rise of vertical integration provides the mechanism whereby big concentrated business and financial interests can extend their domination over agriculture. This will leave the farm family on the farm. But it will take away its economic independence. The farmer will be told what to grow and where to sell, and the absentee-corporation farm director will control what the farmer gets for his efforts. This is but corporate collectivism -- with private agricultural commissions.

This ominous forecast for American agriculture holds a powerful, fascinating allure for all too many people in our country today. Its allure has been heightened immeasurably by the discouraging, demoralizing shambles that the Republican Administration has made of our farm programs. There is a growing sentiment in our country for just giving up on the farm problem.

This sentiment is strong among those who do not understand the tremendous values and strengths in our family farming system, nor the unusual problems which farm families must face. There are millions and millions of citizens in our population who are far removed from the soil. Their number is increasing year by year. Domination of agriculture by centralized corporate power appeals to many of them as an easy way out of the farm problem.

And it appeals even more strongly to those who simply do not care about what happens to farm people.

But I am one of the people who care, and so is Lester Johnson here, and so is Senator Proxmire. And I believe that there are many more elected representatives like us in the Congress of the United States.

Rather than stumble and drift along blindly because of a vacuum of sound farm policy leadership from the present Administration, farm people and city people alike need to do some soul searching, and some honest appraisal of what we really want -- and the alternatives we face. Perhaps I can be helpful in that direction today, by outlining to you my <u>own</u> guidelines for trying to develop a new and better farm program.

We need an agricultural stabilization program far less costly to the American taxpayers than the present inexcusable mess -- yet one that is far more effective in its protection of family farmers and their contribution to the American economy.

We can, and must, have both.

We need an agricultural stabilization program that provides more equality of opportunity for agriculture to keep pace with the rest of our expanding economy in terms of income, yet one that does not make the farmer dependent on the government for that income.

We need a program that recognizes the need for and encourages farmers to help themselves through cooperative action for bargaining power in the market place and for whatever production adjustments that may be necessary to make the best use of our human, soil, and water resources.

We need a program that recognizes and is tailored to the vast technological changes, yet does so without sacrificing the human and social values of our traditional American pattern of family owner-operated farms.

We need a program that recognizes the farmer's stewardship responsibility for conserving productivity of our land for the sake of future generations, yet recognizes too that the entire nation shares that same responsibility -- and must share in the cost of seeing that it is properly done.

We need a program that really does something about surpluses -- making use of what we have, and adjusting production to keep from building up more beyond the level of possible need.

Above all, we need a national food policy closely meshed with our farm policy, so that we can better gear our productive resources to the needs of humanity at home and abroad -- instead of producing for government storage bins.

If the choice facing us rests between abundance and scarcity, consumers and farmers alike have a vital stake in abundance -- wisely used. Farm abundance has done more to check

inflation and the increase in the cost of living than any other single factor in our economy.

Until we as a nation face up to our social responsibility of deciding what we are going to do about the areas of hardship and suffering in our own midst -- and to what extent we are willing to share out potential abundance with hungry peoples of the world as a force for freedom -- until these questions are resolved, it appears morally wrong to insist that American agriculture drastically curb its output below levels for which human need exists.

Society must recognize that in the long run, it pays the price one way or another.

Is it not cheaper -- and far better -- to enlist our food abundance in waging peace, than to be faced with enlisting our sons and mobilizing our economy for war?

Is it not cheaper -- and far better -- to invest some of our abundance in raising the living standards of low-income groups in our country, rather than turning to a scarcity philosophy that can only force up food costs to all segments of our society.

American agriculture is offered no alternative other than following the pattern of monopoly industry, in cutting back its production to the point where it can receive more income for less output, it will be consumers of the nation who will pay the bill.

Farmers would like to produce in abundance, if that abundance is wisely used, and they can receive a fair return for their investment, their managerial skill, and their labor.

Yet there is no reason why farmers alone should subsidize other segments of our society already receiving a greater proportionate share of our national income, nor any reason why farmers alone should bear the costs of producing to meet the needs of underdeveloped areas of the world, in the interests of America's foreign policy.

If consumers want the price protection of always having a little more than enough to eat, if the nation wants the valuable asset of abundance in a world of need, then the public must recognize that there is a public interest stake in government providing a climate of conditions in which farmers can survive economically.

You cannot do it by writing off farm people as second class citizens, who are not to share in the general prosperity and progress of the nation.

You cannot do it by throwing farmers on the mercy of the free market for what they sell, when the costs of what they buy are bolstered and supported by all kinds of built-in protectors.

Food is basic to national life.

Price protection, farm credit, conservation assistance -- all such farm programs are but means to an end -- not the end itself.

There is no simple answer to achieving these objectives, no one panacea for the entire farm problem. Neither can any one bill meet all the problems we face.

But reasonable men should be able to agree on combining an entire kit of economic and program tools in order that each commodity may be handled in the manner best suited to its unique needs.

We need more adequate credit designed to family farm requirements. We need better conservation programs. We need more research directed into utilization of our abundance. We need a food stamp program to increase consumption among our aged, our handicapped, our dependent children and our unemployed. We need greatly expanded uses of our food internationally under a "Food for Peace" program.

Yet with all of this, we need the government's cooperation with farmers toward more adequate income protection and production adjustment. We can do it through combined use of income equalization payments to producers, through marketing orders and agreements, through orderly-marketing loans and direct purchases, through marketing quotas, through payments in kind in some instances, through greater rural development aid and through government sanction of farmers banding together to help themselves when they develop and accept programs to do so by majority vote of producers.

Far from regimentation, such a program offers the real freedom farmers need – freedom from poverty, freedom from economic domination, and freedom of choice as to the alternatives they prefer in seeking to avoid the hardship of the wildly fluctuating free markets over which they now have no control.

These are not pie-in-the-sky proposals. They are sound and practical and should be achieved, if American agriculture mobilizes its forces and carries its true story to the rest of the American people.

And with such a program, I am sure, we can at long last secure for all agriculture assurances which I have termed my "Farmer's Bill of Rights", as standards from which farmers should never retreat.

They include:

1. The right to full equality of economic opportunity.

2. The right for improved standards of rural living.

3. The right of reasonable protection against natural hazards.

4. The right to extend agricultural free enterprise through cooperative action.

5. The right to public cooperation and assistance in conserving and saving the soil.

6. The right to preserve the social and human values of family farming.

7. The right to decent land tenure which encourages the desirable goal of farm ownership.

8. The right to a democratic voice in his own farm program.

9. The right to benefits of an expanding world trade.

10. The right to a long-term program of food reserves to protect consumers against costly scarcity.

11. The right to assurance that land reclamation development will result in establishment of new family farms, not factories-in-the-field.

12. The right to the entire nation's support for use of food and fiber as a force for freedom throughout the world.

These, I believe, are the basic rights of American agriculture.

They are not new rights. They are not rights of special privilege, gained through misuse or abuse of tremendous power over the lifelines of the nation's food supply.

Rather, they are rights of historic precedent, earned by the great and continuing contribution of agriculture to American life -- the fulfillment of the nation's needs in peace or war, in good times or bad, at personal profit or loss.

They need to be restated now only as a guiding beacon of light, cast upon the darkness of present confusion over America's farm policy.

They must be just as zealously guarded against forces which seek to destroy them, as we guard other historic rights, privileges, and responsibilities of freedom in our democracy.

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