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FOR RELEASE: Upon delivery,  
Wednesday, November 4, 1959

EXCERPTS FROM REMARKS BY SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY  
BEFORE NATIONAL CREAMERIES ASSOCIATION CONVENTION,  
St. Paul, Minnesota, November 4, 1959

My remarks to you tonight will be directed to three matters of importance to you as food processors and American citizens. These are (1) removal of trade barriers to the free flow of good, wholesome milk in interstate commerce, (2) the Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act (Public Law 480) as a stabilizing force in your industry through a greater flow of dairy products overseas, and (3) the family farm legislation I have introduced in the Congress.

I know you are interested in the removal of trade barriers to the free flow of milk across state lines. The multiplicity of local milk sanitation standards prevent good, wholesome milk produced in the natural milk-producing areas of this country from moving freely into many other sections. Originally local milk regulations were essential for protection of the public, but too often today they have become a weapon of economic warfare. They have been used as economic barriers to confine the area of production for a given market.

As you know, I am the Senate sponsor of legislation to establish uniform milk standards to apply to milk moving in interstate commerce -- legislation that would allow milk meeting the high requirements of the model milk ordinance and code recommended by the U. S. Health Service to move into any market.

The free interstate movement of the wholesome dairy products of Midwestern farms is of particular importance to the agricultural economy of states such as Minnesota and Wisconsin. In the interest of improved nutrition, too, it is important that consumers in the large urban centers be encouraged to increase their use of milk and other dairy products. Barriers to trade have never resulted in increased consumption of any commodity.

In most areas of our economy consumers across the nation have long enjoyed the benefits of free interstate trade. Midwestern meat producers supply the nation's dinner tables. Broilers grown in Delaware and Maryland or Georgia or Arkansas provide Sunday dinner for families in Minnesota. I am told that Florida oranges even find their way into California. Only milk is subject to a maze of out-dated and unnecessary regulations.

There is evidence of a mounting interest in the legislation which would do away with these local barriers.

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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.

This was originally passed as a surplus disposal program, whereby our government-owned agricultural commodities were sold overseas for local currencies and donated under certain conditions.

But I, and a great many of my colleagues in the Senate, and, I am positive, a great many people throughout this country, see that we have here a force for freedom and peace more effective, more far-reaching than any military weapon.

Food is the common denominator of international life. Man must eat to survive. It may well be that bread, not guns, will decide mankind's future destiny. Let's use FOOD FOR PEACE.

In areas of Africa and Asia, as well as in other parts of the world, food means far more to vast millions of people today than anything else. No one can look into the future and say that our abundant food production is a surplus. We should share this abundance. In Public Law 480 we have the tool. What we need now is the imagination and courage to use it as an instrument of peace.

Operations under Public Law 480 contribute greatly to the well-being of farmers in this country. The fact that the domestic dairy industry is in a comparatively more stable position today is due in no small part to the fact that we were able to channel a great deal of nonfat dry milk, butter, and cheese into the countries where the need existed and there were no dollars to buy.

From the start of operations under Public Law 480, through June of this year, almost 286 million pounds of dairy products have been sold abroad for foreign currency. In addition, large quantities of cheese, butter, and dry milk have gone to assist friendly foreign people when famine or other urgent emergencies struck.

Through voluntary agencies, a great many dairy commodities have been distributed abroad as the gift of the American people.

And here at home 14 million school children have enjoyed wholesome dairy products at a minimum cost through the domestic application of the law. More than a million needy persons in charitable institutions and over 5 million in homes -- including the unemployed -- have received gratefully these so-called "surplus" foods.

We should be proud and happy that we have been able to use food in these constructive ways. We should expand and extend the opportunities available to us to do so.

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Farmers well know that the price support programs have been mismanaged and distorted.

Rather than stumble and drift because of a vacuum of sound farm policy leadership, farm people and city people alike need to do some soul searching and to make some honest appraisal of what we really want -- and the alternatives we face.

I introduced late in the session of the Congress just past a bill which I feel holds the key to building a bright and prosperous agricultural future. This is the Family Farm Program Development Act.

This proposal requires that as a first step a determination of the real need for farm products -- overseas as well as at home -- should be made. How much food is needed by the developing countries of the world? What kinds? How much of the need can be supplied by our country through normal channels of trade? How much of the need should be supplied by other means -- by donation in case of famine or disaster, or by grant or loan to friendly governments struggling with grave economic problems?

How much food do we really need here at home? How much is required for uses other than those supplied by the market -- for our school children, for the needy, the unemployed, the handicapped, the aged, the dependent children?

Only when we have determined the true needs for food and fiber will we be in a position to make long-range plans for land use, for broader soil and water conservation programs, for an intelligent program of program adjustments that will serve our total interests.

The Family Farm Program Development Act requires that such long range plans be made.

This proposal calls upon farmers directly for the first time to work with the Secretary of Agriculture in formulating a program adapted to the unique needs of each commodity that is in price trouble due to surplus supply.

This proposal establishes a new fair price standard geared to current economic conditions, not frozen to periods of the past. A fair price is defined as that price which will yield returns on capital and labor on representative family farms, comparable to non-farm earnings. The calculation will be based on facts and figures collected by the Department of Agriculture. Farmers will be placed in the same position as any other producing group in this nation -- they will be expected to make a profit on their operations.

Far from regimentation, such a program offers the real freedom farmers need -- freedom from poverty, freedom from economic domination, and freedom of choice.



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