

REMARKS BY SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

TEXAS FARMERS UNION

69th ANNUAL CONVENTION

San Antonio, Texas

December 7, 1971

Mr. Naman, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, I always enjoy visiting the great State of Texas, especially when it involves addressing a meeting of Farmers Union people in the Congressional District represented by the very able Chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, Congressman Bob Poage.

I bring you greetings from Washington and the Administration that gave you Dr. Earl Butz as Secretary of Agriculture.

I suppose by now you have heard from some quarters that Hubert Humphrey is a bad man because he tried to stop that nomination.

According to some of my Republican friends, my motives were purely political.

Well, if trying to keep a man from becoming Secretary of Agriculture whose record is as bad if not worse than former Secretary Benson's is being political, then I'm sure the farmers of this country don't mind my getting a little "political."

I am deeply concerned about the agriculture philosophy of Dr. Butz.

These were my primary objections to his nomination:

-- His belief that government should play only a minimum role in trying to help farmers strengthen their prices and income.

-- His life-long association with the non-farm agribusiness elements of American agriculture and his lack of concern for the economic survival of the family farm.

-- His lack of commitment to programs to combat hunger both at home and abroad.

-- His lack of concern about protection of our environment.

Most of all, I opposed his nomination because he offers nothing more than a continuation of the Administration's totally inadequate and price-depressing agriculture policies.

He has been opposed not only by farmers and farm groups, but by a wide range of other organizations -- religious groups, businessmen and labor unions, civil rights organizations, conservation groups, and thousands of ordinary citizens.

I believe the widespread opposition to him already has destroyed the confidence and respect the American people should have in a cabinet officer able to wield such great power over American agriculture and the American economy.

I will do all I can to work and cooperate with him. But you can be sure he will be hearing from me frequently if he fails to respond to the needs of our nation's farmers.

As most of you are painfully aware, too few people today, including some in Congress, are concerned about the problems of our farm families. The farmer today is almost a forgotten man. The Administration, the daily press, and the TV media have almost forgotten how to spell "farmer."

If the situation were not so serious, it would be humorous in this day of percent parity the way the Republicans talk about how much they are doing for farmers.

Let's go back to the 1968 Presidential campaign. Specifically, let's go back to September of that year to the major farm speech delivered by Mr. Nixon in Des Moines, Iowa. Listen to this. These are Mr. Nixon's words:

"During the past decade the farmer's taxes have gone up 78 percent; his labor costs 46 percent; his machinery costs 30 percent; and his debt interest 59 percent. Everything he has to buy has gone up -- everything he has to sell has gone down. The parity ratio has shriveled to a mere 74 percent -- the lowest since the darkest days of the depression."

End of quote.

Think of that, my friends. Parity at only 74 percent.

We've had a little experience with Republican ideas about parity.

In 1952, before Ezra Taft Benson took office as Secretary of Agriculture, realized net farm income totalled more than \$14 billion. When we finally got Benson out of there, farm income had dropped to \$11.7 billion.

And during that same period, the farm parity ratio skidded from a Democratic high of 95 percent to 81 percent.

It took years to reverse these trends in farm income.

I read a frightening article the other day. The St. Louis Post Dispatch quoted Mr. Benson as saying that he believed that Dr. Butz would have the same deep concern for farmers that he had when he was Secretary.

Now that we have had the Hardin idea of parity -- 70 percent -- what can we expect under Dr. Butz?

The Administration has already gotten grain carryover up to the point where everyone will likely start taking it out on the farmer again because he has produced too much.

Mr. Nixon also said he would improve programs for distribution of milk and food to school children and needy people. But has he? Of course not. We in the Senate had to fight all year long to keep him from cutting those programs.

He said he would provide adequate funding for the rural electrics. But what has he done? He has impounded \$216 million REA dollars which Congress appropriated.

Now let me turn to what I think needs to be done in the immediate future to strengthen the disastrous economic situation which wheat and feed grain producers now face.

First, we need to pass a Strategic Grain Reserve bill similar to the one I have introduced in the Senate. (S. 2729.)

Second, we must insist that the Administration rescind its announced 1972 Feed Grains Program and initiate instead a program for feed grains next year based on base-acreage controls. The Administration has authority to do so under the 1970 Agriculture Act.

Third, the Administration should initiate an additional acreage diversion payment program for wheat next year.

Fourth, the Administration should increase the loan levels of the 1971 corn and wheat crops by at least 25 percent.

I have introduced legislation (S.J. Res. 192) to require that all of these actions be taken. But the Administration already has authority to undertake all of them, with the exception of establishing a reserve inventory of these commodities.

So far they have refused to listen to our requests to take these actions.

Therefore, I intend to continue my efforts to require action through legislation. The House is expected to complete action this week on a strategic grain reserve bill and a bill to increase loan levels for 1971 wheat and feed grain crops. When that legislation reaches the Senate, I hope to further strengthen it by offering some amendments embodying the provisions of my bills.

We must act before Congress adjourns this year.

Late last month I asked the Department of Agriculture to devise a new method to determine whether American farmers are getting a fair return on their labor as compared to non-farm business managers. Current methods of determining parity are inadequate and more efficient measures are needed to measure fair economic returns for family farms.

The Department of Agriculture continues to manipulate the current price parity index in such a way as to make it difficult to determine what a farmer is getting.

They have the regular index, then they have an adjusted index and then they have individual commodity index. But they don't tell us what we need to know.

And, it's time the country was made aware of how really bad things have become on the farm especially among our food and feed grain producers. Next year is an election year. But I don't think Mr. Nixon can fool farmers and rural Americans again. His campaign promises of 1968 have a high casualty rate.

You have always been in the forefront in the battles to preserve our nation's family farm agriculture and I salute you for it. But we must keep up that fight. The future of American agriculture and the American economy are at stake.

# # # # #

Ed Christman

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✓ Jay Norman - President Texas F.U.

⊗ Farmers Union Press Awards \* Ben Padcliff - Pres. S. Dak  
+ Union

(1) James Vance → Farm Editor  
Fort Worth Star Telegram

\* Tony Dechant - Dec 8

(2) Bedford Forrest  
Op KFDA-TV. Chambers  
Farm Director

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SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS  
DECEMBER 7, 1971

Mayo John Gatti  
Henry Gonzales  
Graham Purcell  
Jake Pickle  
Ralph Yarbrough  
Ben Barnes

000558

MR. NAMAN, DISTINGUISHED GUESTS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I ALWAYS ENJOY VISITING THE GREAT STATE OF TEXAS, ESPECIALLY

WHEN IT INVOLVES ADDRESSING A MEETING OF FARMERS UNION PEOPLE

IN THE CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT REPRESENTED BY THE VERY ABLE

CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE, CONGRESSMAN BOB

POAGE.

Bob Poage

I BRING YOU GREETINGS FROM WASHINGTON AND THE ADMINISTRATION

THAT GAVE YOU DR. EARL BUTZ AS SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE.

I ~~suppose you~~ <sup>have read in your papers that you</sup> HAVE HEARD FROM SOME QUARTERS THAT

HUBERT HUMPHREY IS A BAD MAN BECAUSE HE TRIED TO STOP THAT

NOMINATION.

*Good News*

*Bad News*

ACCORDING TO SOME OF MY REPUBLICAN FRIENDS, MY MOTIVES  
WERE PURELY POLITICAL.

WELL, IF TRYING TO KEEP A MAN FROM BECOMING SECRETARY  
OF AGRICULTURE WHOSE RECORD IS AS BAD IF NOT WORSE THAN FORMER  
SECRETARY BENSON'S IS BEING POLITICAL, THEN I'M SURE THE  
FARMERS OF THIS COUNTRY DON'T MIND MY GETTING A LITTLE "POLITICAL."

I AM DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE AGRICULTURE PHILOSOPHY  
OF DR. BUTZ.

~~THESE WERE MY PRIMARY OBJECTIONS TO HIS NOMINATION:  
-- HIS BELIEF THAT GOVERNMENT SHOULD PLAY ONLY A MINIMUM  
ROLE IN TRYING TO HELP FARMERS STRENGTHEN THEIR PRICES AND  
INCOME.~~

-- HIS LIFE-LONG ASSOCIATION WITH THE NON-FARM AGRIBUSINESS ELEMENTS OF AMERICAN AGRICULTURE AND HIS LACK OF CONCERN FOR THE ECONOMIC SURVIVAL OF THE FAMILY FARM.

-- HIS LACK OF COMMITMENT TO PROGRAMS TO COMBAT HUNGER BOTH AT HOME AND ABROAD.

-- HIS LACK OF CONCERN ABOUT PROTECTION OF OUR ENVIRONMENT.

MOST OF ALL, I OPPOSED HIS NOMINATION BECAUSE HE OFFERS NOTHING MORE THAN A CONTINUATION OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S TOTALLY INADEQUATE AND PRICE-DEPRESSING AGRICULTURE POLICIES.

~~HE HAS BEEN OPPOSED NOT ONLY BY FARMERS AND FARM GROUPS, BUT BY A WIDE RANGE OF OTHER ORGANIZATIONS -- RELIGIOUS GROUPS, BUSINESSMEN AND LABOR UNIONS, CIVIL RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS, CONSERVATION GROUPS, AND THOUSANDS OF ORDINARY CITIZENS.~~

I READ A FRIGHTENING ARTICLE THE OTHER DAY, THE ST. LOUIS  
 POST DISPATCH QUOTED MR. BENSON AS SAYING THAT HE BELIEVED THAT

DR. BUTZ WOULD HAVE THE SAME DEEP CONCERN FOR FARMERS THAT HE

HAD WHEN HE WAS SECRETARY

*Spare us from this, O Lord!*

~~NOW THAT WE HAVE HAD THE HARDIN IDEA OF RARITY 70 PERCENT~~

~~WHAT CAN WE EXPECT UNDER DR. BUTZ?~~

~~THE ADMINISTRATION HAS ALREADY GOTTEN GRAIN CARRYOVER UP TO~~

~~THE POINT WHERE EVERYONE WILL LIKELY START TAKING IT OUT ON THE~~

~~FARMER AGAIN BECAUSE HE HAS PRODUCED TOO MUCH.~~

~~MR. NIXON ALSO SAID HE WOULD IMPROVE PROGRAMS FOR DISTRIBUTION~~

~~OF MILK AND FOOD TO SCHOOL CHILDREN AND NEEDY PEOPLE, BUT HAS~~

~~HE? OF COURSE NOT, WE IN THE SENATE HAD TO FIGHT ALL YEAR LONG~~

~~TO KEEP HIM FROM CUTTING THOSE PROGRAMS.~~

I BELIEVE THE WIDESPREAD OPPOSITION TO HIM ALREADY HAS DESTROYED THE CONFIDENCE AND RESPECT THE AMERICAN PEOPLE SHOULD HAVE IN A CABINET OFFICER ABLE TO WIELD SUCH GREAT POWER OVER AMERICAN AGRICULTURE AND THE AMERICAN ECONOMY.

I WILL DO ALL I CAN TO WORK AND COOPERATE WITH HIM. BUT YOU CAN BE SURE HE WILL BE HEARING FROM ME FREQUENTLY IF HE FAILS TO RESPOND TO THE NEEDS OF OUR NATION'S FARMERS.

*new income*

*our fight -  
new farm  
income!*

AS MOST OF YOU ARE PAINFULLY AWARE, TOO FEW PEOPLE TODAY,

INCLUDING SOME IN CONGRESS, ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE PROBLEMS

OF OUR FARM FAMILIES. THE FARMER TODAY IS ALMOST A FORGOTTEN

MAN. THE ADMINISTRATION, <sup>the economists,</sup> THE DAILY PRESS, AND THE TV MEDIA HAVE

ALMOST FORGOTTEN HOW TO SPELL "FARMER."

*President -  
State of the Union -  
White House Country  
Fair*

IF THE SITUATION WERE NOT SO SERIOUS, IT WOULD BE HUMOROUS  
 IN THIS DAY OF <sup>69</sup> PERCENT PARITY, THE WAY THE REPUBLICANS TALK ABOUT  
 HOW MUCH THEY ARE DOING FOR FARMERS. !

*Broken Promise*

LET'S GO BACK TO THE 1968 PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN, SPECIFICALLY,

LET'S GO BACK TO SEPTEMBER OF THAT YEAR TO THE MAJOR FARM

SPEECH DELIVERED BY MR. NIXON IN DES MOINES, IOWA. LISTEN TO

THIS. THESE ARE MR. NIXON'S WORDS:

"DURING THE PAST DECADE THE FARMER'S TAXES HAVE GONE UP  
 78 PERCENT; HIS LABOR COSTS 46 PERCENT; HIS MACHINERY COSTS 30

PERCENT; AND HIS DEBT INTEREST 59 PERCENT. EVERYTHING HE HAS

TO BUY HAS GONE UP -- EVERYTHING HE HAS TO SELL HAS GONE DOWN.

THE PARITY RATIO HAS SHRIVELED TO A MERE 74 PERCENT -- THE LOWEST

SINCE THE DARKEST DAYS OF THE DEPRESSION. *This is intolerable!*

*we can + we will do better"*

no new Prospects

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Today Farm Party 69%

with agree  
from

⊗ Over 600,000 farmers + Rural People a year leaving Rural America

⊗ Farm Population growing older

⊗ Rural America - Poverty

fewer Doctors, Poor Schools, few jobs, substandard Housing

Agriculture needs + Rural America  
needs a government that cares

action now!

(1) Strategic Grain Reserve

(2) Feed grain Program based on Base-acreage, rather than the slippery ineffective Set Acre

(3) additional acreage diversion  
Payment program for wheat next year

(4) { Increase loan levels on 1971  
{ corn + wheat crops by at least  
{ 25%

Can Do all of this, under 1970 act!

END OF QUOTE.

~~THINK OF THAT, MY FRIENDS, PARITY AT ONLY 74 PERCENT.~~

*Today 69% yes*

WE'VE HAD A LITTLE EXPERIENCE WITH REPUBLICAN IDEAS ABOUT

PARITY.

IN 1952, BEFORE EZRA TAFT BENSON TOOK OFFICE AS SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE, REALIZED NET FARM INCOME TOTALLED MORE THAN \$14 BILLION. WHEN WE FINALLY GOT BENSON OUT OF THERE, FARM INCOME HAD DROPPED TO \$11.7 BILLION.

AND DURING THAT SAME PERIOD, THE FARM PARITY RATIO SKIDDED FROM A DEMOCRATIC HIGH OF 95 PERCENT TO 81 PERCENT.

IT TOOK YEARS TO REVERSE THESE TRENDS IN FARM INCOME.

~~With~~ THEREFORE, I INTEND TO CONTINUE MY EFFORTS TO REQUIRE ACTION THROUGH LEGISLATION. THE HOUSE IS EXPECTED TO COMPLETE ACTION THIS WEEK ON A STRATEGIC GRAIN RESERVE BILL AND A BILL TO INCREASE LOAN LEVELS FOR 1971 WHEAT AND FEED GRAIN CROPS. WHEN THAT LEGISLATION REACHES THE SENATE, I HOPE TO FURTHER STRENGTHEN IT BY OFFERING SOME AMENDMENTS EMBODYING THE PROVISIONS OF MY BILLS.

~~WE MUST ACT BEFORE CONGRESS ADJOURNS THIS YEAR~~

LATE LAST MONTH I ASKED THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO DEVISE A NEW METHOD TO DETERMINE WHETHER AMERICAN FARMERS ARE GETTING A FAIR RETURN ON THEIR LABOR AS COMPARED TO NON-FARM BUSINESS MANAGERS. CURRENT METHODS OF DETERMINING PARITY ARE INADEQUATE. MORE EFFICIENT MEASURES ARE NEEDED TO MEASURE FAIR ECONOMIC RETURNS FOR FAMILY FARMS.

-11-

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE CONTINUES TO MANIPULATE  
THE CURRENT PRICE PARITY INDEX IN SUCH A WAY AS TO MAKE IT  
DIFFICULT TO DETERMINE WHAT A FARMER IS GETTING.

THEY HAVE THE REGULAR INDEX, THEN THEY HAVE AN ADJUSTED  
INDEX AND THEN THEY HAVE INDIVIDUAL COMMODITY INDEX, BUT THEY  
DON'T TELL US WHAT WE NEED TO KNOW.!

AND, IT'S TIME THE COUNTRY WAS MADE AWARE OF HOW REALLY  
BAD THINGS HAVE BECOME ON THE FARM ESPECIALLY AMONG OUR FOOD  
AND FEED GRAIN PRODUCERS. NEXT YEAR IS AN ELECTION YEAR. BUT  
I DON'T THINK MR. NIXON CAN FOOL FARMERS AND RURAL AMERICANS  
AGAIN. ~~HIS CAMPAIGN PROMISES OF 1968 HAVE A HIGH CASUALTY RATE.~~

YOU HAVE ALWAYS BEEN IN THE FOREFRONT IN THE BATTLES TO PRESERVE OUR NATION'S FAMILY FARM AGRICULTURE AND I SALUTE YOU FOR IT. BUT WE MUST KEEP UP THAT FIGHT. THE FUTURE OF AMERICAN AGRICULTURE AND THE AMERICAN ECONOMY ARE AT STAKE.

- We have things to do - Expand Markets
- ✓ Farm credit for young farmers
  - ✓ Rural Housing + Medical Care
  - ✓ Strengthen Bargaining -  
Strengthen Coops - REA too
  - ✓ Fed. Reserve
  - ✓ Council of Economic Advisors
  - ✓ School Lunch for all
  - ✓ Combat Hunger

HE SAID HE WOULD PROVIDE ADEQUATE FUNDING FOR THE RURAL ELECTRICS. BUT WHAT HAS HE DONE? HE HAS IMPOUNDED \$216 MILLION REA DOLLARS WHICH CONGRESS APPROPRIATED.

NOW LET ME TURN TO WHAT I THINK NEEDS TO BE DONE IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE TO STRENGTHEN THE DISASTROUS ECONOMIC SITUATION WHICH WHEAT AND FEED GRAIN PRODUCERS NOW FACE.

FIRST, WE NEED TO PASS A STRATEGIC GRAIN RESERVE BILL SIMILAR TO THE ONE I HAVE INTRODUCED IN THE SENATE. (S. 2729.)

SECOND, WE MUST INSIST THAT THE ADMINISTRATION RESCIND ITS ANNOUNCED 1972 FEED GRAINS PROGRAM AND INITIATE INSTEAD A PROGRAM FOR FEED GRAINS NEXT YEAR BASED ON BASE-ACREAGE CONTROLS.

THE ADMINISTRATION HAS AUTHORITY TO DO SO UNDER THE  
1970 AGRICULTURE ACT.

THIRD, THE ADMINISTRATION SHOULD INITIATE AN ADDITIONAL  
ACREAGE DIVERSION PAYMENT PROGRAM FOR WHEAT NEXT YEAR.

FOURTH, THE ADMINISTRATION SHOULD INCREASE THE LOAN LEVELS  
OF THE 1971 CORN AND WHEAT CROPS BY AT LEAST 25 PERCENT.

I HAVE INTRODUCED LEGISLATION (S.J. RES. 192) TO REQUIRE  
THAT ALL OF THESE ACTIONS BE TAKEN. BUT THE ADMINISTRATION ALREADY  
HAS AUTHORITY TO UNDERTAKE ALL OF THEM, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF  
ESTABLISHING A RESERVE INVENTORY OF THESE COMMODITIES.

SO FAR THEY HAVE REFUSED TO LISTEN TO OUR REQUESTS TO TAKE  
THESE ACTIONS.



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