

TOWARD A NATIONAL FOOD POLICY

REMARKS BY SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

ANNUAL MEETING OF GOLD KIST

Atlanta, Georgia

December 6, 1974

I had the privilege of participating in the recently concluded World Food Conference as a Congressional Advisor.

One of my main conclusions growing out of that conference was that we need a sound national food policy in the United States. We are past the point where rhetoric about the free market can be allowed to stand in place of a national food policy.

In developing that policy we must first take into account the needs of our farmers and urban consumers. Both groups have an interest in a sound and profitable agriculture.

At the same time, a sound agricultural policy must not be tilted in favor of one farm group over another.

We also must look at the world food picture in terms of both the countries which can purchase our food products and those which need food aid and technical assistance to produce more food.

Our livestock, dairy, poultry and hog producers are in desperate straits and have been for some time. Yet, our Secretary of Agriculture has nothing to offer but his eternal optimism.

We have very proudly announced that our exports have gone over the \$21 billion mark. But there has been little attention given to the impact of high food export prices on the poorer developing countries.

The more affluent nations have been increasing their standard of living and importing more food. The developing nations have had to allocate scarce funds between costly food, fertilizer and petroleum products.

Until 1972, these needy countries had done a commendable job in expanding food production and staying ahead of population increases. Since 1950 they increased total grain production by 78 percent in comparison with 64 percent for the developed countries.

However, in 1972 the world's food production dropped by 33 million tons. The first time in 20 years that there has been an absolute decrease in output.

To meet population increases and rising standards of living, a world wide increase of about 24 million tons is needed each year.

In the aftermath of The World Food Conference there has been a lot of talk about what the developing countries must do to deal with the food problem.

My answer is that there is a lot which we all can and must do. The developing countries, contrary to general opinion, have spent heavily for their own economic development - eight or nine dollars for every outside dollar of foreign aid.

I would remind my critics and friends that we cannot be smug in our prosperity and ignore the outside world. By the year 2000, over 60 percent of the world's population will be located in the developing world, and this does not include the People's Republic of China which will account for another 18 percent.

This will leave one person in five in what we refer to as the developed world.

The clear conclusion that is drawn from these numbers is that we must all work together unless we want to be an island of prosperity in an ever growing sea of poverty.

To respond to this challenge is in our own long range interest. It also is the right thing to do.

The distinguished Chairman of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry, Senator Talmadge, announced on September 23 that our committee would hold extensive hearings early in 1975. These hearings will cover the entire agriculture spectrum.

This is an opportunity to provide some badly needed leadership in strengthening our agricultural economy.

Senator Talmadge also announced that my bill, S. 2005, would be the starting point for these hearings.

One main area which we will be examining is the target and loan price levels. Our grain farmers today are the beneficiaries of high market prices for wheat and feed grains. But this picture could change abruptly if we have a good harvest and after we have reduced our animal herds.

Farmers are rightly concerned when President Ford calls on them to produce in order to fight inflation. Does he realize that this sounds like low prices and over-production?

Where is the understanding of the increased costs of production, which for my dairy farmers in Minnesota is estimated at 30 percent in one year.

Another key area to be examined will be our export policy. I have suggested that we need a supply management program when our crops are in short supply.

We also must stop deluding ourselves about the existence of an international free market. Other, major exporting and importing countries have established state trading corporations or agencies which respond to political as well as economic opportunities.

In the recent sale to the Soviet Union, the Department of Agriculture finally conceded that we did not have an international free market.

Unfortunately, this was a painful lesson, and our government had to change the rules of business in the middle of the game.

A third major area requiring careful review and analysis is the subject of reserves.

We need to have a reserve program which will enable the Government to make purchases when there is excess production. At the same time, firm rules are required so that any reserves held by the Government do not depress prices.

A reserve can give some stability to our markets and meet export and disaster requirements. Reserves held exclusively in private hands cannot be relied upon to meet national needs, as the Soviet sale demonstrated.

I have recommended that the Government hold a very modest level of reserves. We owe this to our consumers and our farmers who are the main users of grains. It also is needed for our own national defense.

We hear that the Soviet Union has a strategic stockpile of food. Everyone knows stories about battles throughout history which were influenced because of food shortages.

Why are we so foolish as to be willing to sell off all we have to anyone who comes along with money in hand?

Where is our own strategic reserve?

In the coming year, we will not only have to deal with major domestic agricultural issues, we also will be following up on the good start made at the World Food Conference on the world food problems.

The Administration, under Secretary Butz, never could quite make up its mind to announce that we are, in fact, increasing our food aid.

I and other Congressional members of the delegation suggested that we announce our intention to increase our food aid by one million tons to about 4.3 million tons. This is a modest proposal, and Secretary Butz conceded that we would likely provide at least this much.

Announcing our intentions in Rome would have been an effective way of providing leadership and mobilizing action by other nations.

We certainly do need to focus our attention on the long range problems. But the long run solutions are no help to those who are starving today.

We all have seen the pictures of starving children with distended stomachs. But the Administration gives the appearance of being unwilling to face up to the existence of a problem.

It is hard to ignore the need and harder still to hold back and not respond. As the poet Browning once said.

"The child's cry in the darkness curses deeper than the strong man in his wrath."

Despite the confusion over food and at the World Food Conference, a number of worthwhile agreements were reached. And, above all, the world's attention was focused on this critical issue.

We should note that all of the resolutions agreed upon are of importance to our own farmers. This is true whether it is the resolution on increasing fertilizer production, establishing an international information system; improving research; or developing an international reserve system.

We must provide strong leadership to help implement the work of the World Food Conference.

At the same time these efforts will benefit our own farmers. And one of the most important steps for us to take in dealing with the food problem is to help our own farmers and stabilize our agricultural economy.

The Secretary of Agriculture appears to be almost oblivious to the problems of agriculture today. We cannot take our farmers for granted and drive them out of production.

I find it more than cruel that farmers are feeling compelled to kill their cattle at a time when the world needs all the food that can be produced.

But how do you get this Administration to wake up?

As Secretary Kissinger summed up the task before us in his address at the World Food Conference:

"Our responsibility is clear.

Let the nations gathered here resolve to confront the challenge, not each other.

Let us agree that the scale and severity of the task require a collaborative effort unprecedented in history.

And let us make global cooperation in food a model for our interdependent world - energy, inflation, population, protection of the environment."

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NO Schedule - Long Speech

Sniffles

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(X)

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operational
over the
world -

ANNUAL MEETING OF GOLD KIST -

MARRIOTT MOTOR HOTEL

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

DECEMBER 6, 1974

1933 - 1974

4th Largest
Coop in U.S.

175,000 Members
from Arizona
to Virginia.

Jakarta

- J. W. Brooks - Chm Board -
- G. A. Burson - Chairman & Exec V.P.
- W. W. Gaston - Senior V.P.
- W. C. Pulliam - V.P.

Pres. Rushing

Dr. Talma
Lee

Gold Kist - Coop

-1-

I HAD THE PRIVILEGE OF PARTICIPATING IN THE RECENTLY
CONCLUDED WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE AS A CONGRESSIONAL ADVISOR.

ONE OF MY MAIN CONCLUSIONS GROWING OUT OF THAT CONFERENCE
WAS THAT WE NEED A SOUND NATIONAL FOOD POLICY IN THE UNITED

STATES. ~~WE ARE PAST THE POINT WHERE RHETORIC ABOUT THE FREE~~

~~MARKET CAN BE ALLOWED TO STAND IN PLACE OF A NATIONAL FOOD~~

~~POLICY.~~

↳ IN DEVELOPING THAT POLICY WE MUST FIRST TAKE INTO
ACCOUNT THE NEEDS OF OUR FARMERS AND URBAN CONSUMERS.

↳ BOTH GROUPS HAVE AN INTEREST IN A SOUND AND PROFITABLE

AGRICULTURE.

national

AT THE SAME TIME, A SOUND AGRICULTURAL POLICY MUST NOT
BE TILTED IN FAVOR OF ONE FARM GROUP OVER ANOTHER.

↳ WE ALSO MUST LOOK AT THE WORLD FOOD PICTURE IN TERMS
OF BOTH THE COUNTRIES WHICH CAN PURCHASE OUR FOOD PRODUCTS
AND THOSE WHICH NEED FOOD AID AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO
PRODUCE MORE FOOD.

↳ OUR LIVESTOCK, DAIRY, POULTRY AND HOG PRODUCERS ARE IN
DESPERATE STRAITS AND HAVE BEEN FOR SOME TIME ← ~~YET, OUR~~
~~SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE HAS NOTHING TO OFFER BUT HIS ETERNAL~~
~~OPTIMISM.~~

↳ ~~WE HAVE VERY PROUDLY ANNOUNCED THAT OUR EXPORTS HAVE GONE~~
~~OVER THE \$21 BILLION MARK~~ ← ~~BUT THERE HAS BEEN LITTLE~~
~~ATTENTION GIVEN TO THE IMPACT OF HIGH FOOD EXPORT PRICES ON~~
~~THE POORER DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.~~

Prosperous nations

THE MORE AFFLUENT ~~NATIONS~~ HAVE BEEN INCREASING THEIR

STANDARD OF LIVING AND IMPORTING MORE FOOD. THE DEVELOPING NATIONS HAVE HAD TO ALLOCATE SCARCE FUNDS BETWEEN COSTLY FOOD, FERTILIZER AND PETROLEUM PRODUCTS.

UNTIL 1972, THESE NEEDY COUNTRIES HAD DONE A COMMENDABLE JOB IN EXPANDING FOOD PRODUCTION AND STAYING AHEAD OF POPULATION INCREASES. SINCE 1950 THEY INCREASED TOTAL GRAIN PRODUCTION BY 78 PERCENT IN COMPARISON WITH 64 PERCENT FOR THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES.

HOWEVER, IN 1972 THE WORLD'S FOOD PRODUCTION DROPPED BY 33 MILLION TONS, THE FIRST TIME IN 20 YEARS THAT THERE HAS BEEN AN ABSOLUTE DECREASE IN OUTPUT.

*To meet population increases
need ^{urgently} 25 million tons of feed grain
a yr*

TO MEET POPULATION INCREASES AND RISING STANDARDS OF LIVING,
A WORLD WIDE INCREASE OF ABOUT 24 MILLION TONS IS NEEDED EACH
YEAR.

IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE THERE HAS
BEEN A LOT OF TALK ABOUT WHAT THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES MUST DO
TO DEAL WITH THE FOOD PROBLEM.

MY ANSWER IS THAT THERE IS A LOT WHICH WE ALL CAN AND MUST
DO. THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, CONTRARY TO GENERAL OPINION, HAVE
SPENT HEAVILY FOR THEIR OWN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - EIGHT OR NINE
DOLLARS FOR EVERY OUTSIDE DOLLAR OF FOREIGN AID.

I WOULD REMIND MY CRITICS AND FRIENDS THAT WE CANNOT BE
SMUG IN OUR PROSPERITY AND IGNORE THE OUTSIDE WORLD.

BY THE YEAR 2000, OVER 60 PERCENT OF THE WORLD'S POPULATION WILL BE LOCATED IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD, AND THIS DOES NOT INCLUDE THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA WHICH WILL ACCOUNT FOR ANOTHER 18 PERCENT.

THIS WILL LEAVE ONE PERSON IN FIVE IN WHAT WE REFER TO AS THE DEVELOPED WORLD.

THE CLEAR CONCLUSION THAT IS DRAWN FROM THESE NUMBERS IS THAT WE MUST ALL WORK TOGETHER UNLESS WE WANT TO BE AN ISLAND OF PROSPERITY IN AN EVER GROWING SEA OF POVERTY,

↳ TO RESPOND TO THIS CHALLENGE IS IN OUR OWN LONG RANGE INTEREST. IT ALSO IS THE RIGHT THING TO DO.

THE DISTINGUISHED CHAIRMAN OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY, SENATOR TALMADGE, ANNOUNCED ON

Sen Talmadge sets hearing on
Talmadge

Senate Hearings -

SEPTEMBER 23 THAT OUR COMMITTEE WOULD HOLD EXTENSIVE HEARINGS
EARLY IN 1975. THESE HEARINGS WILL COVER THE ENTIRE AGRICULTURE
SPECTRUM.

↳ THIS IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO PROVIDE SOME BADLY NEEDED
LEADERSHIP IN STRENGTHENING OUR AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY.

↳ ~~SENATOR TALMADGE ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT MY BILL, S. 2005, WOULD
BE THE STARTING POINT FOR THESE HEARINGS.~~

↳ ONE MAIN AREA WHICH WE WILL BE EXAMINING IS THE TARGET AND
LOAN PRICE LEVELS. OUR GRAIN FARMERS TODAY ARE THE BENEFICIARIES
OF HIGH MARKET PRICES FOR WHEAT AND FEED GRAINS. BUT THIS PICTURE
COULD CHANGE ABRUPTLY IF WE HAVE A GOOD HARVEST AND AFTER WE HAVE
REDUCED OUR ANIMAL HERDS. + *Poultry flocks*

FARMERS ARE RIGHTLY CONCERNED WHEN PRESIDENT FORD CALLS ON THEM ~~TO PRODUCE~~ ^{for all out production} IN ORDER TO FIGHT INFLATION / DOES HE REALIZE

THAT THIS SOUNDS LIKE LOW PRICES AND OVER-PRODUCTION?

WHERE IS THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE INCREASED COSTS OF PRODUCTION, WHICH FOR MY DAIRY FARMERS IN MINNESOTA IS ESTIMATED

^{seen}
AT 30 PERCENT IN ONE YEAR.

ANOTHER KEY AREA TO BE EXAMINED WILL BE OUR EXPORT POLICY.
I HAVE SUGGESTED THAT WE NEED A SUPPLY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM WHEN OUR CROPS ARE IN SHORT SUPPLY.

WE ALSO MUST STOP DELUDING OURSELVES ABOUT THE EXISTENCE OF AN INTERNATIONAL FREE MARKET. ^{many} ~~OUR~~ EXPORTING AND IMPORTING COUNTRIES HAVE ESTABLISHED STATE TRADING CORPORATIONS OR AGENCIES WHICH RESPOND TO POLITICAL AS WELL AS ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES.

IN THE RECENT SALE TO THE SOVIET UNION, THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FINALLY CONCEDED THAT WE DID NOT HAVE AN INTERNATIONAL FREE MARKET.

UNFORTUNATELY, THIS WAS A PAINFUL LESSON, AND OUR GOVERNMENT HAD TO CHANGE THE RULES OF BUSINESS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE GAME.

A THIRD MAJOR AREA REQUIRING CAREFUL REVIEW AND

ANALYSIS IS THE SUBJECT OF RESERVES. *You want to have*

Reserves - who is to hold
WE NEED TO HAVE A RESERVE PROGRAM WHICH WILL ENABLE THE *them - how must -*
GOVERNMENT TO MAKE PURCHASES WHEN THERE IS EXCESS PRODUCTION.

How can they be insulated
AT THE SAME TIME, FIRM RULES ARE REQUIRED SO THAT ANY RESERVES *from the market, so*
HELD BY THE GOVERNMENT DO NOT DERRESS PRICES.

*as not to have a
Price depressing effect*

A RESERVE CAN GIVE SOME STABILITY TO OUR MARKETS AND MEET

EXPORT AND DISASTER REQUIREMENTS. *L* RESERVES HELD EXCLUSIVELY

IN PRIVATE HANDS CANNOT BE RELIED UPON TO MEET NATIONAL NEEDS,

AS THE ^{Recent} SOVIET SALE DEMONSTRATED. -

*Recess program would
Permit Govt purchase
when there production.*

L I HAVE RECOMMENDED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HOLD A VERY MODEST

LEVEL OF RESERVES *L* ^{Shelton} WE OWE THIS TO OUR CONSUMERS AND OUR FARMERS

WHO ARE THE MAIN USERS OF GRAINS. *L* IT ALSO IS NEEDED FOR OUR

OWN NATIONAL DEFENSE.

L WE HEAR THAT THE SOVIET UNION HAS A STRATEGIC STOCKPILE

OF FOOD. *L* EVERYONE KNOWS STORIES ABOUT BATTLES THROUGHOUT HISTORY

WHICH WERE INFLUENCED BECAUSE OF FOOD SHORTAGES.

L WHY ARE WE SO FOOLISH AS TO BE WILLING TO SELL OFF ALL WE

HAVE TO ANYONE WHO COMES ALONG WITH MONEY IN HAND?

where is our Strategic Reserve?

WHERE IS OUR OWN STRATEGIC RESERVE?

L IN THE COMING YEAR, WE WILL NOT ONLY HAVE TO DEAL WITH MAJOR
DOMESTIC AGRICULTURAL ISSUES, WE ALSO WILL BE FOLLOWING UP ON
THE GOOD START MADE AT THE WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE ON THE WORLD
FOOD PROBLEMS.

L THE ADMINISTRATION, UNDER SECRETARY BUTZ, NEVER COULD QUITE
MAKE UP ITS MIND TO ANNOUNCE THAT WE ARE, IN FACT, INCREASING
OUR FOOD AID.

L I AND OTHER CONGRESSIONAL MEMBERS OF THE DELEGATION SUGGESTED
THAT WE ANNOUNCE OUR INTENTION TO INCREASE OUR FOOD AID BY ONE
MILLION TONS TO ABOUT 4.3 MILLION TONS. L THIS IS A MODEST
PROPOSAL, AND SECRETARY BUTZ CONCEDED THAT WE WOULD LIKELY
PROVIDE AT LEAST THIS MUCH.

ANNOUNCING OUR INTENTIONS IN ROME WOULD HAVE BEEN AN EFFECTIVE WAY OF PROVIDING LEADERSHIP AND MOBILIZING ACTION BY OTHER NATIONS.

WE CERTAINLY DO NEED TO FOCUS OUR ATTENTION ON THE LONG RANGE PROBLEMS. BUT THE LONG RUN SOLUTIONS ARE NO HELP TO THOSE WHO ARE STARVING TODAY.

WE ALL HAVE SEEN THE PICTURES OF STARVING CHILDREN WITH DISTENDED STOMACHS. BUT THE ADMINISTRATION GIVES THE APPEARANCE OF BEING UNWILLING TO FACE UP TO THE EXISTENCE OF A PROBLEM.

IT IS HARD TO IGNORE THE NEED AND HARDER STILL TO HOLD BACK AND NOT RESPOND. AS THE POET BROWNING ONCE SAID,

"THE CHILD'S CRY IN THE DARKNESS CURSES DEEPER THAN THE STRONG MAN IN HIS WRATH."

DESPITE THE CONFUSION OVER FOOD AID AT THE WORLD FOOD

CONFERENCE, A NUMBER OF WORTHWHILE AGREEMENTS WERE REACHED,

AND, ABOVE ALL, THE WORLD'S ATTENTION WAS FOCUSED ON THIS

CRITICAL ISSUE.

WE SHOULD NOTE THAT ALL OF THE RESOLUTIONS AGREED UPON ARE
OF IMPORTANCE TO OUR OWN FARMERS. *L* THIS IS TRUE WHETHER IT IS
THE RESOLUTION ON INCREASING FERTILIZER PRODUCTION, ESTABLISHING
AN INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION SYSTEM; IMPROVING RESEARCH; OR
DEVELOPING AN INTERNATIONAL RESERVE SYSTEM.

WE MUST PROVIDE STRONG LEADERSHIP TO HELP IMPLEMENT THE
WORK OF THE WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE.

AT THE SAME TIME THESE EFFORTS WILL BENEFIT OUR OWN FARMERS.

~~AND~~ ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT STEPS FOR US TO TAKE IN DEALING WITH THE FOOD PROBLEM IS TO HELP OUR OWN FARMERS AND STABILIZE OUR AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY.

~~THE SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE APPEARS TO BE ALMOST OBLIVIOUS TO THE PROBLEMS OF AGRICULTURE TODAY.~~ WE CANNOT TAKE OUR FARMERS FOR GRANTED AND DRIVE THEM OUT OF PRODUCTION.

I FIND IT MORE THAN CRUEL THAT FARMERS ARE FEELING COMPELLED TO KILL THEIR CATTLE AT A TIME WHEN THE WORLD NEEDS ALL THE FOOD THAT CAN BE PRODUCED.

~~BUT HOW DO YOU GET THIS ADMINISTRATION TO WAKE UP?~~

~~AS SECRETARY KISSINGER SUMMED UP THE TASK BEFORE US IN HIS ADDRESS AT THE WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE:~~

"OUR RESPONSIBILITY IS CLEAR.

LET THE NATIONS GATHERED HERE RESOLVE TO CONFRONT THE
CHALLENGE, NOT EACH OTHER.

LET US AGREE THAT THE SCALE AND SEVERITY OF THE TASK
REQUIRE A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT UNPRECEDENTED IN HISTORY.

AND LET US MAKE GLOBAL COOPERATION IN FOOD A MODEL FOR
OUR INTERDEPENDENT WORLD - ENERGY, INFLATION, POPULATION,
PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT."

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