

REMARKS BY SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

THE INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON FAMINE PREVENTION

Washington, D. C.

December 19, 1977

I am honored to be here this afternoon to receive this plaque from President Ford and other supporters of the Famine Prevention amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1975.

This symposium is really the first full step in the implementation process of this important section of our development policy. The interchange of thoughts and ideas that occurred here today will be the spark that gets this effort underway.

It is indeed appropriate that President Ford, who signed the Foreign Assistance Act of 1975 into law two years ago tomorrow, is here to be a part of this important program.

President Ford and I both are graduates of land grant institutions. And it is these institutions which are the principal entities that will take on the new responsibilities mandated under Title XII.

These institutions have been at the forefront of American agriculture. They are the building blocks for what we have and they will be the mortar for what our agriculture future will be.

Therefore, it is appropriate that these institutions begin to play an integral part in the agricultural development of countries around this planet. As we know too well, this is a small world that we must share together. These land grant colleges have the capacity and the resources to facilitate the development of many nations. And the Title XII program will facilitate the involvement of the land grant institutions in this much needed role.

In closing, I would like to express my deepest appreciation for all of those who have contributed to making this a very significant occasion. My best wishes to all of you in this holiday season.

#

REMARKS BY SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY
INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON FAMINE PREVENTION
DIRKSEN SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
DECEMBER 19, 1977

Mr. President, very distinguished members of the diplomatic corps from many nations, fellow citizens and my colleagues in Congress: the man I want to salute first, with all the sincerity that's in my heart, is Paul Findley for his leadership in making the Famine Prevention Act, the amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1975, a reality.

Paul called me and asked if I'd be willing to join him. I said, "What's it all about?" We talked it over and I said, "Join? I'm your partner. There is no way that you can push me aside. I'm in with you and we'll pass it."

Then we got busy. Those of you who are members of Congress and those of you who are observers of the Washington scene know that it's not easy to pass within one year a major piece of legislation. But we got it done.

The reason is quite simple. The American people understand what President Ford just said -- that the basic human right is the right to food, to life. There is no liberty without life and there isn't much life without liberty. And there is little pursuit of happiness if there's hunger. So the Famine Prevention Act is within the spirit and heritage of this vast land of ours.

Those of you who have traveled throughout America know that the Almighty has blessed us with a variety of climate and land such as hardly any other spot on earth can claim. So we owe much, because we've been given much. We've been given, by Divine Providence, the resources to be of help to others as well as to ourselves.

I might also note that what we call Food for Peace was a bipartisan effort. Food is not a partisan matter. The late Andrew Schoepel, a Kansas Republican, and I teamed up to pass what is known as Public Law 480, Food for Peace. The lives of hundreds of millions of people were saved because of the vast supplies of American grain and other food products which were used to meet emergencies in country after country.

The food that was available under Public Law 480 also has helped build roads, schools and irrigation and health facilities.

In ancient days the kings used to look around for the scientist of that time that could take base metal of any kind and convert it into gold. They called him an alchemist. They'd lock him up in the tower and say, "Now here's a stack of iron ore. Change it into gold."

Well, we finally found a way to take a ton of grain and change it literally into gold -- into health, into nutrition, into education and into facilities that make life a little better for millions and millions of people.

The Famine Prevention Act philosophy is a matter of sharing, not giving. And President Ford in his own inimitable manner, who always speaks to us directly and with great honesty and sincerity, has reminded us that the Famine Prevention program is designed to help make people self-sufficient, to enable them to produce for themselves, not to be supplicants. The Act helps people to improve their land, their technology of agriculture. It helps the person out on the land to have a sense of dignity, to live a better life.

Let us not forget, those of us who live in great urban centers, that over two-thirds of God's children are in rural areas. And let us not forget that the poverty which plagues mankind, even in America, is more persistent in rural America than it is in urban America.

So this Act is designed to strike at the roots of poverty, because a nation without food ceases to be a nation. It becomes nothing more or less than a band of wandering people literally fighting over the scraps which might sustain life. This Act provides for cooperation between what we have to offer here in America and what you have to offer in your respective countries. It is an opportunity for learning together, sharing together, producing together and building together.

That's the way we build peace. Peace cannot be bestowed upon people. Peace must be earned by people. It must be the product of the desire of humanity, wherever the humanity may be, to find answers to their mutual problems.

We are so fortunate, those of you who live on the broad expanse of land that is America -- the prairies, the bread basket of the world, so to speak; the desert that blooms from irrigation; the mountainsides with their trees and other forms of vegetation. We are so fortunate.

At this holiday time it's most appropriate that we should be holding this symposium and studying how we can conquer man's ancient enemy, hunger. Hunger has plagued humanity for centuries and centuries and centuries. And now we have it within our means to eliminate it. We have the technology and know-how in this country, but we can learn a great deal from others.

For example, tropical agriculture is very different from the agriculture of Minnesota or Wisconsin or Michigan -- very different. The agriculture of the arid lands is very different from that of the wetlands. But we can learn together. And that's what educational institutions are all about.

So this symposium is a first step in the implementation of an important part of our development process. Wasn't it Pope John who said, "Development is the name for peace." And it is. Without development, without relieving the burdens of a tired and at times beleaguered mankind, there is no peace. Peace is more than the absence of war. Peace is harmony, cooperation. Peace is the good life. It's hope -- the hope of a better life.

All we are trying to do here in the legal, formal language that we have in these legislative enactments is to bring to bear upon the food problems of the world the spirit of cooperation. We must pool our resources. We have no monopoly on brain power in the United States -- nor do you. But together we have a tremendous resource.

Agriculture is very different in every land and we're going to have to learn from each other. And the interchange of thoughts and ideas that occur here today may well be the spark which gets this effort underway. This effort has been on the books a year, or better. While it takes time to launch anything of this scope, we now must get it off the launching pad and into action.

At this time I call upon the great land grant universities to bestir themselves, to accept this as a mighty challenge. This is an international and interdependent world in which we live.

No longer is nationalism adequate to our needs or our security. And our great land grant universities and colleges must be the first to understand that we are an interdependent world, an interdependent people.

President Ford, you understand that. You've been a great help to us. You helped us along when we were trying to pass the legislation. You gave encouragement to us. You told us that you would sign the legislation if we could work out some of the details. You always were cooperative. And I want this audience to know that, without his help, it could not have been a reality. With his help, it today stands as a landmark of legislative achievement. We're proud of you, Mr. President. You deserve our everlasting thanks.

By the way, my esteemed and beloved friend, President Ford, and I had a little wager on a football game. We had about as much chance in Minnesota to win that game against Michigan as I have to be an astronaut to the planet Mercury or Mars. I figured that it was a hopeless thing. But -- after all -- when you receive a call from an old friend and a former President who'd like to rip you off a little, there isn't much you can do about it, is there? So we made a small wager. It's a piece of currency that will not be in circulation. It will be on the wall in my library. It was a five-dollar bet. After we won (the Gophers from Minnesota beating the Wolverines from Michigan), I couldn't wait to get to the telephone. I had at least 40 members of the Secret Service tracking this man down asking him to please send the money.

And, because of the kind of a man he is, he sent it -- good, solid, American currency. We've had a wonderful friendship -- and, by the way -- you look just marvelous. My goodness, he must scare the living daylights out of any contender.

Let me just say that of the many fine things that he's done -- and he's done many, what he did for America at a time of desperate need was to restore to the Presidency and the White House those all-essential elements of honor, decency and integrity. And Mr. President, that is more important than any legislation that any President can sign or sponsor.

As I've said to you privately, you will be remembered in history as a great President because you came to us (I don't know why we're so lucky -- Divine Providence does watch over us) at a time when our nation was frustrated, cynical, distraught, and worried. He came with this magnificent physical and spiritual presence which he has and said, "America is a good country. The people are good people, and we're going to have a good government." And he not only said it, but he acted that way. Mr. President, you will be remembered as a man of character, of honor, of real patriotism. You restored to our country the honor and the integrity which it so richly deserves. And I salute you.

Now the trouble with these Humphrey speeches is that I always give two or three. I'm not sure which one you will like, so I give you a choice! Imagine what I would be doing if I were in full physical vigor! But I've been having a bit of a struggle of late and once in a while I lose a little of the zest that was somewhat characteristic of my life. Yet it's not difficult to have enthusiasm and conviction for something that is as important as what we're doing here today.

And land grant colleges have been in the forefront of American agriculture. We don't produce like we do just because it rains or just because a farmer works hard. Farmers work hard

the world over. We don't produce just because the sun shines upon the land, because the sun knows no boundaries. It shines throughout the entire earth.

We are able to have this fabulous production of American agriculture, because we've educated our farmers. The land grant institution is responsible for this education and training and the outreach of our county agent system which is so important.

You can't educate, unless you meet the pupil. The student and teacher must be in direct contact. We've learned that over the years.

Today our farmers, our fabulous producers, are unhappy with prices. I don't blame them. So am I. I don't know whether I'd be riding a tractor, but I'd sure be making enough noise around here so somebody would think it was a tractor.

But our farmers are able to do what they have done, because they've had the tools to get it done. By the way, it takes capital, and this comes into our development programs, our foreign aid programs, our World Bank -- all these international institutions that for years felt that their money must go to the great industries, the big ports, the big plants. What good does it do to have a port if you've got nothing to ship? What good does it do to have a great factory if you have no customers? What good does it do to build a great urban center if you have riots from hunger?

Now, finally, we've gotten our international financial institutions and our own aid program turned around where a large percentage of the capital is going into agricultural development. Over 60 percent, Paul, of our entire foreign assistance program in the United States goes into agriculture -- agricultural development. That's exclusive of Public Law 480.

In so many countries agriculture has been low on the priority list. Industry, the military, highways -- they're high, because they're easy to see. They show results immediately. Well, you can't grow a tree overnight. But the world needs reforestation, believe me. It has more to do with climate control than all of the rainmakers put together. You can't rebuild soil where the topsoil has been blown away because of the failure to take care of the land in a generation. It does take time. But it can be done.

I lived through the depression in America. I saw the land in the Midwest ravaged by wind, by drought. And I saw that same land rebuilt. We still have a job to do. I'm simply saying that our experiences are of a common nature. We're not that much different. No matter whether you're from -- Africa, Asia, South America, North America -- wherever you may come from, whatever part of the world -- we're not that much different. We're people. We're endowed by our Creator with a brain, with intelligence. We have some resources, some more than others. And we have, if we get together and use those resources, the means of lifting ourselves, not having someone else lift us. We can lift ourselves.

So it is important that these institutions, which are cited in Title XII, begin to play a vital and integral role in the agricultural development of countries on this planet.

But may I say to my friends of the diplomatic corps who are here today that the effort won't work if we have to come knocking at your door. Rather, we have to join hands. We have to

understand that we can help each other. And I want the land grant colleges not only to use their technicians to teach different forms of agriculture, but also to be ambassadors of goodwill.

This Christmas season is the right time to rededicate our lives to banish hunger from the face of the earth. There is no reason for hunger, except man's failure to use good judgement. I want this holiday season to be one in which the nations of the world come to an agreement upon a matter that has no controversy. It isn't a question of the size of a missile or who's got the biggest airplane or who has the largest bomb. We're not talking about that. What we are talking about is -- can we increase the production of wheat, of maize, of millet, of beans, of cotton, of the numerous products that grow on our land which can be used to improve animal husbandry?

Can we teach more young men and women to be veterinarians? Can we train young men and women to go out and teach others how to do a little better job? Can we find the water that is necessary for irrigation? Yes, it's there. It's all there. It's just a matter of using it. Can we dig the wells? We can. If we can dig in the middle of the ocean for oil, in the North Seas, in the Gulf of Mexico -- and I see these ads on television where they're going down 5,000 feet looking for oil -- there's water to be found, too, so that once again, as scripture says, the deserts shall bloom.

In closing I'd like to express my deepest appreciation to you, Doctor Wharton, for the leadership that you've given to us, along with your board of directors.

And to you, Paul, you valiant soldier, you old rascal. We've had so many good battles. It seems like the best friends I have are the ones that I've had to engage in political combat for one reason or another.

And to you, Mr. Parker, former director of AID, and Mr. Gilligan and to Clem here, my dear friend over in the House of Representatives. He's been on top of this program since day one -- a fine citizen, comes from a good state. One of his fellow congressmen said that Wisconsin was the gateway to paradise. I said, "That's right. Minnesota is just across the border."

So, on this happy note, let me again say how honored I am to be presented with this plaque by a former President of the United States and, as far as I'm concerned, one of the finest men that ever came to the halls of Congress.

May I express a special greeting to Betty. She was so good on television last night. It was marvelous. She was the narrator for the Nutcracker Suite Ballet. Besides that, she's pretty. Some fellows just outmarry themselves, you know.

But it is a unique and rare honor to be presented a plaque by a former President. And I'll guarantee you, Mr. President, that this plaque will be as close to that five dollar bill as my arms will be to my dear wife when I greet her on Christmas day.

God bless you and thank you very much for this symposium.

REMARKS BY SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

THE INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON FAMINE PREVENTION

WASHINGTON, D. C.

*Question
Please*

Deplomatic Corps

DECEMBER 19, 1977

*Vice. Pres Mondale
Pres Ford*

*- Sen Clark
- Sen Dole*

Gov. Billigan

Pres. Wharton of miss. state

cong Zablocki

cong Finley

Title III - Famine Prevention

For. ASSIST- Act of 1975

I AM HONORED TO BE HERE THIS AFTERNOON TO RECEIVE THIS
PLAQUE FROM PRESIDENT FORD AND OTHER SUPPORTERS OF THE FAMINE
PREVENTION AMENDMENT TO THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1975.

↳ THIS SYMPOSIUM IS REALLY THE FIRST FULL STEP IN THE
IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS OF THIS IMPORTANT SECTION OF OUR
DEVELOPMENT POLICY ↳ THE INTERCHANGE OF THOUGHTS AND IDEAS
THAT OCCUR ~~HERE~~ HERE TODAY WILL BE THE SPARK THAT GETS THIS
EFFORT UNDERWAY.

12/180

↳ IT IS INDEED APPROPRIATE THAT PRESIDENT FORD, WHO
SIGNED THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1975 INTO LAW TWO YEARS
AGO TOMORROW, IS HERE TO BE A PART OF THIS IMPORTANT
PROGRAM.

↳ PRESIDENT FORD AND I BOTH ARE GRADUATES OF LAND GRANT
INSTITUTIONS. AND IT IS THESE INSTITUTIONS WHICH ARE THE
PRINCIPAL ENTITIES THAT WILL TAKE ON THE NEW RESPONSIBILITIES
MANDATED UNDER TITLE XII.

↳ THESE INSTITUTIONS HAVE BEEN AT THE FOREFRONT OF AMERICAN
AGRICULTURE. THEY ARE THE BUILDING BLOCKS FOR WHAT WE HAVE
AND THEY WILL BE THE MORTAR FOR WHAT OUR AGRICULTURE FUTURE
WILL BE.

↳ THEREFORE, IT IS APPROPRIATE THAT THESE INSTITUTIONS
BEGIN TO PLAY AN INTEGRAL PART IN THE AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT
OF COUNTRIES AROUND THIS PLANET. AS WE KNOW TOO WELL,
THIS IS A SMALL WORLD THAT WE MUST SHARE TOGETHER.

THESE LAND GRANT COLLEGES HAVE THE CAPACITY AND THE RESOURCES
TO FACILITATE THE DEVELOPMENT OF MANY NATIONS AND THE TITLE XII
PROGRAM WILL FACILITATE THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE LAND GRANT
INSTITUTIONS IN THIS MUCH NEEDED ROLE.

IN CLOSING, I WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS MY DEEPEST APPRECIATION
FOR ALL OF THOSE WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO MAKING THIS A VERY
SIGNIFICANT OCCASION. MY BEST WISHES TO ALL OF YOU IN THIS
HOLIDAY SEASON.

#####



Minnesota Historical Society

Copyright in this digital version belongs to the Minnesota Historical Society and its content may not be copied without the copyright holder's express written permission. Users may print, download, link to, or email content, however, for individual use.

To request permission for commercial or educational use, please contact the Minnesota Historical Society.



www.mnhs.org