

"WORLD FOOD SECURITY"

ADDRESS BY HONORABLE HUBERT H. HUMPHREY
UNITED STATES SENATOR

FOR

THE WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE

ROME, ITALY

NOVEMBRE 1974

The great central problem of our time is hunger,

-- Our grain reserves are almost gone,

-- Rates of population growth have begun to pull ahead of agricultural production in many countries,

- Adverse weather has reduced or eliminated crops in many parts of the world.

- Fertilizer production is handicapped by arbitrary economic conditions,

- Drought already has brought starvation to many people,

We are, in Secretary-General Waldheim's words, "Face to Face with a global emergency."

What happened? What went wrong?

The world has made a very strong effort over the past three decades to solve short and long term food supply problems. Agriculture has been revolutionized in much of the world to expand harvests greatly through improved grain seed and wider use of fertilizer and pesticides.

At the turn of this decade, some Asian nations were on the verge of becoming grain exporters--as they had been before World War Two. We had vast surpluses of grain in some western nations in the fifties and sixties. But even during this period, there were some who foresaw the shoals on which we have now been driven.

There are many causes--climate, population, market fluctuations, energy limitations, misuse of land, distribution difficulties; but one major reason is that we have approached the problem in a piecemeal fashion from narrow, nationalistic viewpoints.

There may yet be time to devise a truly cooperative and coordinated international program for the production, distribution, conservation, and pooling of existing foods, and for the development of both improved genetic stocks and new sources of food. But time is not on our side, and we cannot afford the bickering of the past. Millions of human lives are at stake.

We must be responsive and responsible in these deliberations. We also must be optimistic, for we can do the job.

We must set our goals high, for it is not enough simply to avert famine. The task at hand is nothing less than the marshalling of our total resources in an all-out effort. We are up against the wall and there is nowhere else to go.

Let us try to frame the right questions--questions which can guide the nations of the world, acting in concert, to the effective production and distribution of world food supplies.

Let us try for more than one answer to each question, for we must proceed on many fronts and a range of alternative and backup programs seems only sensible.

Let us identify the constituent parts of the food/population equation and fix various responsibilities in the different sectors as best we can.

The problem of feeding a continually expanding world population is fraught with a range of complexities and uncertainties:

First, in the very near term - now - we must increase the availability of food to the developing world from the food surplus nations in an equitable way. We must meet the emergency with prompt action.

Second, food production in the developing nations must be significantly increased in the years immediately ahead.

And third, the rate of population growth must be brought under control over the long term.

Let us look briefly at each of these.

This is the First Governmental Conference, under the auspices of the United Nations, on world food and agriculture. But it is not the first international forum on the problem. At a non-governmental conference, which convened in Washington in June, 1963, President John Kennedy said:

"International cooperation, international organization, and international action are indispensable. A contracting world grows more interdependent. This interdependence requires multi-national solutions to its problems. This is not a problem for a single nation. It is a problem for the entire human race because we cannot possibly be satisfied with some nations producing too much, as the President of India said, while others produce little... The first problem is to produce enough for all in a way that makes all available to people around the globe."

We have done our best to keep the commitment which President Kennedy, and other presidents and congresses before and since, have made. As a matter of national policy, the United States has provided unprecedented food aid on a massive scale through the Food for Peace program. That program is twenty years old this year. I helped author that legislation, and I believe that it did what we hoped it would do.

There was, in the mid 1950's, no foreseeable limit to American productive capacity. We shipped over 25 billion dollars worth of grain and other food commodities--through sales and outright gifts-- to the world's hungry and needy.

American reserves and productive but idle land were the world's food insurance. But now they are largely gone. In addition, the purchase by the Soviet Union of four of the largest food orders in history in 1972-73 further depleted those reserves and played a role in forcing food prices higher still. The world stockpile of grain is about one fourth what it was in 1961.

This does not mean that American food aid is at an end. But we need international approaches if we are to meet the world's needs effectively.

In the United States, we have had some harvest shortfalls. We have greatly increased direct food sales abroad to balance the increased costs of our oil imports. U.S. agricultural production requires a major expenditure of energy resources.

Inflation has driven up the costs of grain, thus reducing the amount of grain which the United States can buy for assistance programs. And world demand, as differentiated from need, has fluctuated wildly. It is almost certain that the United States no longer can serve unilaterally as the world's reserve bread basket.

There are, however, some things which can be done.

I have urged President Ford to have the United States join with other food surplus nations in a three-year program to meet emergency food needs. But the food surplus nations cannot alone meet and solve all of the problems of providing emergency world supplies.

A World Food Reserve System is an international responsibility, and other groups of nations hold resources without which such a system could not function. International capital is needed to finance the inventories which must be held, to assist in paying for storage facilities, and to help in meeting the spiraling costs of food production. No single nation, or single group of nations, can or should carry the whole burden.

A necessary precondition to the establishment of an international food reserve is the building of national reserves.

I have proposed a national food reserve program in the United States. I urge other nations to establish similar reserve programs so that we can join together in a coordinated international food reserve program and adopt the proposal before the World Food Conference.

At the same time, we must rationalize world market demands for food so that we will be able to meet the need. The centrally-planned economies have a special responsibility in this area for better monitoring of their food and agricultural situations. But all nations need better information than that now available for effective world food management programs.

We need a World Food Information System. But this should be a tool for management of our resources, not an end in itself.

Such a system is not a policy response, and certainly not an action program. It is but another necessary precondition to international protection against famine.

These are some of the things which we must do to increase the availability of food, and we must do them now.

The First World Food Congress, called by Franklin Roosevelt in 1943, met in an atmosphere of idealism and hope. The Declaration of that conference stated that:

"The primary responsibility lies with each nation for seeing that its own people have the food needed for health and life; steps to this end are for national determination. But each nation can fully achieve its goal only if all work together."

The principle that each nation must shoulder the primary responsibility for the well being of its own citizens still holds. It is vital if we are to do the job. In the determinations of national priorities, agriculture generally has received low ranking.

My second point is that food production must be increased in the developing nations.

We must recognize that, up to this decade, the developing countries have expanded their food production at least as much as their populations have grown. The developing countries have supplied most of the assistance for this effort. This has been no small achievement.

Unless steps are taken to limit population growth, most of these efforts will have been in vain.

There are other steps which can be taken by the developing nations.

Capital investment in agriculture must be accorded a higher priority.

Land reform to provide the needed incentives for small farmers is long overdue in many nations.

Realistic appraisals of the requirements for technical assistance programs are needed to guide the national and international actions.

And, beyond these appraisals, an international program of technical assistance is required where it counts most-- on the farms, especially encouraging labor-intensive, small farm development.

Fertilizer production must be increased through better efficiency in existing plants and the building of new ones. The oil exporting nations have the necessary natural gas for the production of nitrogen fertilizers. This resource, coupled with

western technology, offers the possibility of vastly augmented production capacity--perhaps through new plants located in the Middle East.

In addition, the oil producing nations are the only countries in the world with the necessary capital to extend the "green revolution" on a large scale, and to provide the long term credits needed for fueling existing fertilizer plants.

Better distribution of available fertilizer, both within nations and internationally, would significantly increase overall agricultural production.

Improvements in the fertilizer situation also require that priority attention should be given to crops, such as soybeans, which "fix" their own nitrogen and do not require fertilizer. Moreover, many of the native grains cultivated before the "green revolution" do not respond to fertilizer, and the selective genetic upgrading of those grains would seem to offer promise. Perhaps other plants can be induced to "fix" their own nitrogen, I have urged a major research effort in this area in the United States.

We must, then, make an intensive effort to increase agricultural production in countries not now able to feed themselves.

National priorities must be reevaluated to achieve a reasonable balance between industrialization and increased agricultural production.

Needs for capital investment in agriculture must be determined and the requirements for in-country training programs set. Food distribution systems should be improved, and measures taken to curtail the loss of food through inadequate storage. Quite simply, each country must take the lead within its own borders.

These are essential conditions for effective outside assistance, and the United States can and must provide that assistance. We can organize to give food assistance while production is being increased. We can achieve that increased production with additional fertilizers and better seed, and we can provide the needed direct technical assistance.

As these national efforts go forward, the world community must address itself to the development of measures to permit the transfer of advanced agricultural technology to every sort of local situation.

We must remember that over half of the food produced in the developing nations is consumed in the immediate area of production. It is here, with the small farmer, that the greatest immediate gains can be made.

I would stress, once again, that this is a matter for concerted action. It is not a matter of either "going it alone" or receiving outside help. It requires both, and each nation bears a heavy responsibility both for its own population and as a member of the world community.

The control of population growth, my third point, must be achieved in this century if we are to be successful in feeding the world, at even the barest subsistence level, over the long term. We have not been successful up to this point in promoting the widespread use of family planning methods, though we should continue those efforts. We know that as standards of living rise, and a measure of social security is assured, family size drops.

The message is clear: We must, through continued emphasis on increasing agricultural production, increasing employment, and improving food and income distribution raise standards of living beyond the subsistence level.

Jobs must be created, and families provided with a better measure of stability and security.

Parents must have some assurance that their children, on whom they have traditionally relied for their own support in old age, will grow to become productive and contributing members of the family and the society. There can be no voluntary reduction of birth rates, without this expectation of better economic security at home and throughout a nation.

There are many other areas requiring our attention.

The need for the conservation of scarce resources--energy as well as food- is a requirement for all, but particularly of the industrialized nations.

The opportunities for the development of new food resources from the sea, and better use of foods we have, are overdue for international action programs.

We need priority attention to reducing the losses of food through waste, spoilage and over consumption.

We must expand agricultural research and development programs nationally, and coordinate them internationally.

We must assure that increased gains in production are more evenly distributed to those who need food.

These and other variables on the food side of the food/production equation must be addressed in a realistic way by our responsible national and international agencies.

I will strongly urge that this be done in my own country.

Our time is short, and the challenge is international in scope. Our primary goal is enough food for all. At this moment, the alternatives are less birth or more death.

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THE GREAT CENTRAL PROBLEM OF OUR TIME IS HUNGER,

-- OUR GRAIN RESERVES ARE ALMOST GONE,

-- RATES OF POPULATION GROWTH HAVE BEGUN TO PULL
AHEAD OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION IN MANY COUNTRIES,

-- ADVERSE WEATHER HAS REDUCED OR ELIMINATED CROPS
IN MANY PARTS OF THE WORLD,

-- FERTILIZER PRODUCTION IS HANDICAPPED BY ARBITRARY
ECONOMIC CONDITIONS,

-- DROUGHT ALREADY HAS BROUGHT STARVATION TO MANY
PEOPLE,

WE ARE, IN SECRETARY-GENERAL WALDHEIM'S WORDS, "FACE
TO FACE WITH A GLOBAL EMERGENCY."

WHAT HAPPENED? WHAT WENT WRONG?

THE WORLD HAS MADE A VERY STRONG EFFORT OVER THE PAST
THREE DECADES TO SOLVE SHORT AND LONG TERM FOOD SUPPLY
PROBLEMS. AGRICULTURE HAS BEEN REVOLUTIONIZED IN MUCH OF

THE WORLD TO EXPAND HARVESTS GREATLY THROUGH IMPROVED GRAIN SEED AND WIDER USE OF FERTILIZER AND PESTICIDES.

AT THE TURN OF THIS DECADE, SOME ASIAN NATIONS WERE ON THE VERGE OF BECOMING GRAIN EXPORTERS--AS THEY HAD BEEN BEFORE WORLD WAR TWO. WE HAD VAST SURPLUSES OF GRAIN IN SOME WESTERN NATIONS IN THE FIFTIES AND SIXTIES, BUT EVEN DURING THIS PERIOD, THERE WERE SOME WHO FORESAW THE SHOALS ON WHICH WE HAVE NOW BEEN DRIVEN.

THERE ARE MANY CAUSES--CLIMATE, POPULATION, MARKET FLUCTUATIONS, ENERGY LIMITATIONS, MISUSE OF LAND, DISTRIBUTION DIFFICULTIES; BUT ONE MAJOR REASON IS THAT WE HAVE APPROACHED THE PROBLEM IN A PIECEMEAL FASHION FROM NARROW, NATIONALISTIC VIEWPOINTS.

THERE MAY YET BE TIME TO DEVISE A TRULY COOPERATIVE AND COORDINATED INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM FOR THE PRODUCTION, DISTRIBUTION, CONSERVATION, AND POOLING OF EXISTING FOODS,

AND FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF BOTH IMPROVED GENETIC STOCKS AND NEW SOURCES OF FOOD. BUT TIME IS NOT ON OUR SIDE, AND WE CANNOT AFFORD THE BICKERING OF THE PAST, MILLIONS OF HUMAN LIVES ARE AT STAKE.

WE MUST BE RESPONSIVE AND RESPONSIBLE IN THESE DELIBERATIONS. WE ALSO MUST BE OPTIMISTIC, FOR WE CAN DO THE JOB.

WE MUST SET OUR GOALS HIGH, FOR IT IS NOT ENOUGH SIMPLY TO AVERT FAMINE. THE TASK AT HAND IS NOTHING LESS THAN THE MARSHALLING OF OUR TOTAL RESOURCES IN AN ALL-OUT EFFORT. WE ARE UP AGAINST THE WALL AND THERE IS NOWHERE ELSE TO GO.

LET US TRY TO FRAME THE RIGHT QUESTIONS--QUESTIONS WHICH CAN GUIDE THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD, ACTING IN CONCERT, TO THE EFFECTIVE PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION OF WORLD FOOD SUPPLIES.

LET US TRY FOR MORE THAN ONE ANSWER TO EACH QUESTION,
FOR WE MUST PROCEED ON MANY FRONTS AND A RANGE OF ALTERNATIVE
AND BACKUP PROGRAMS SEEMS ONLY SENSIBLE.

LET US IDENTIFY THE CONSTITUENT PARTS OF THE FOOD/
POPULATION EQUATION AND FIX VARIOUS RESPONSIBILITIES IN
THE DIFFERENT SECTORS AS BEST WE CAN.

THE PROBLEM OF FEEDING A CONTINUALLY EXPANDING WORLD
POPULATION IS FRAUGHT WITH A RANGE OF COMPLEXITIES AND
UNCERTAINTIES:

FIRST, IN THE VERY NEAR TERM ^{- NOW -} WE MUST INCREASE THE
AVAILABILITY OF FOOD TO THE DEVELOPING WORLD FROM THE
FOOD SURPLUS NATIONS IN AN EQUITABLE WAY. **WE MUST MEET THE**
EMERGENCY WITH PROMPT ACTION.

SECOND, FOOD PRODUCTION IN THE DEVELOPING NATIONS
MUST BE SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASED IN THE YEARS IMMEDIATELY
AHEAD.

AND THIRD, THE RATE OF POPULATION GROWTH MUST BE
BROUGHT UNDER CONTROL OVER THE LONG TERM.

LET US LOOK BRIEFLY AT EACH OF THESE.

THIS IS THE FIRST GOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE, UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE UNITED NATIONS, ON WORLD FOOD AND AGRICULTURE. BUT IT IS NOT THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON THE PROBLEM. AT A NON-GOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE, WHICH CONVENED IN WASHINGTON IN JUNE, 1963, PRESIDENT JOHN KENNEDY SAID:

"INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION, INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION, AND INTERNATIONAL ACTION ARE INDISPENSABLE. A CONTRACTING WORLD GROWS MORE INTERDEPENDENT. THIS INTERDEPENDENCE REQUIRES MULTI-NATIONAL SOLUTIONS TO ITS PROBLEMS. THIS IS NOT A PROBLEM FOR A SINGLE NATION. IT IS A PROBLEM FOR THE ENTIRE HUMAN RACE BECAUSE WE CANNOT POSSIBLY BE SATISFIED WITH SOME NATIONS PRODUCING TOO MUCH, AS THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA SAID, WHILE OTHERS PRODUCE LITTLE... THE FIRST PROBLEM IS TO PRODUCE ENOUGH FOR ALL IN A WAY THAT MAKES ALL AVAILABLE TO PEOPLE AROUND THE GLOBE."

WE HAVE DONE OUR BEST TO KEEP THE COMMITMENT WHICH PRESIDENT KENNEDY, AND OTHER PRESIDENTS AND CONGRESSES

BEFORE AND SINCE, HAVE MADE, AS A MATTER OF NATIONAL POLICY, THE UNITED STATES HAS PROVIDED UNPRECEDENTED FOOD AID ON A MASSIVE SCALE THROUGH THE FOOD FOR PEACE PROGRAM. THAT PROGRAM IS TWENTY YEARS OLD THIS YEAR. I HELPED AUTHOR THAT LEGISLATION, AND I BELIEVE THAT IT DID WHAT WE HOPED IT WOULD DO.

THERE WAS, IN THE MID 1950'S, NO FORESEEABLE LIMIT TO AMERICAN PRODUCTIVE CAPACITY. WE SHIPPED OVER \$25 BILLION DOLLARS WORTH OF GRAIN AND OTHER FOOD COMMODITIES--THROUGH SALES AND OUTRIGHT GIFTS--TO THE WORLD'S HUNGRY AND NEEDY.

AMERICAN RESERVES AND PRODUCTIVE BUT IDLE LAND WERE THE WORLD'S FOOD INSURANCE, BUT NOW THEY ARE LARGELY GONE. IN ADDITION, THE PURCHASE BY THE SOVIET UNION OF FOUR OF THE LARGEST FOOD ORDERS IN HISTORY IN 1972-73 FURTHER DEPLETED THOSE RESERVES AND PLAYED A ROLE IN FORCING FOOD PRICES HIGHER STILL. THE WORLD STOCKPILE OF GRAIN IS ABOUT

ONE FOURTH WHAT IT WAS IN 1961.

THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT AMERICAN FOOD AID IS AT AN END. BUT WE NEED INTERNATIONAL APPROACHES IF WE ARE TO MEET THE WORLD'S NEEDS EFFECTIVELY.

IN THE UNITED STATES, WE HAVE HAD SOME HARVEST SHORTFALLS. WE HAVE GREATLY INCREASED DIRECT FOOD SALES ABROAD TO BALANCE THE INCREASED COSTS OF OUR OIL IMPORTS. U. S. AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION REQUIRES A MAJOR EXPENDITURE OF ENERGY RESOURCES.

INFLATION HAS DRIVEN UP THE COSTS OF GRAIN, THUS REDUCING THE AMOUNT OF GRAIN WHICH THE UNITED STATES CAN BUY FOR ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS. AND WORLD DEMAND, AS DIFFERENTIATED FROM NEED, HAS FLUCTUATED WILDLY. IT IS ALMOST CERTAIN THAT THE UNITED STATES NO LONGER CAN SERVE UNILATERALLY AS THE WORLD'S RESERVE BREAD BASKET.

THERE ARE, HOWEVER, SOME THINGS WHICH CAN BE DONE.

I HAVE URGED PRESIDENT FORD TO HAVE THE UNITED STATES
JOIN WITH OTHER FOOD SURPLUS NATIONS IN A THREE-YEAR PROGRAM
TO MEET EMERGENCY FOOD NEEDS. BUT THE FOOD SURPLUS NATIONS
CANNOT ALONE MEET AND SOLVE ALL OF THE PROBLEMS OF PROVIDING
EMERGENCY WORLD SUPPLIES.

↳ A WORLD FOOD RESERVE SYSTEM IS AN INTERNATIONAL
RESPONSIBILITY, AND OTHER GROUPS OF NATIONS HOLD RESOURCES
WITHOUT WHICH SUCH A SYSTEM COULD NOT FUNCTION. INTERNATIONAL
CAPITAL IS NEEDED TO FINANCE THE INVENTORIES WHICH MUST BE
HELD, TO ASSIST IN PAYING FOR STORAGE FACILITIES, AND TO
HELP IN MEETING THE SPIRALING COSTS OF FOOD PRODUCTION.
NO SINGLE NATION, OR SINGLE GROUP OF NATIONS, CAN OR
SHOULD CARRY THE WHOLE BURDEN.

↳ A NECESSARY PRECONDITION TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN
INTERNATIONAL FOOD RESERVE IS THE BUILDING OF NATIONAL
RESERVES.

✓ I HAVE PROPOSED A NATIONAL FOOD RESERVE PROGRAM IN THE UNITED STATES, I URGE OTHER NATIONS TO ESTABLISH SIMILAR RESERVE PROGRAMS SO THAT WE CAN JOIN TOGETHER IN A COORDINATED INTERNATIONAL FOOD RESERVE PROGRAM AND ADOPT THE PROPOSAL BEFORE THE WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE.

AT THE SAME TIME, WE MUST RATIONALIZE WORLD MARKET DEMANDS FOR FOOD SO THAT WE WILL BE ABLE TO MEET THE NEED. THE CENTRALLY-PLANNED ECONOMIES HAVE A SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN THIS AREA FOR BETTER MONITORING OF THEIR FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL SITUATIONS. BUT ALL NATIONS NEED BETTER INFORMATION THAN THAT NOW AVAILABLE FOR EFFECTIVE WORLD FOOD MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS.

✓ WE NEED A WORLD FOOD INFORMATION SYSTEM, BUT THIS SHOULD BE A TOOL FOR MANAGEMENT OF OUR RESOURCES, NOT AN END IN ITSELF. SUCH A SYSTEM IS NOT A POLICY RESPONSE, AND CERTAINLY NOT AN ACTION PROGRAM. IT IS BUT ANOTHER

NECESSARY PRECONDITION TO INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION AGAINST
FAMINE.

THESE ARE SOME OF THE THINGS WHICH WE MUST DO TO INCREASE
THE AVAILABILITY OF FOOD, AND WE MUST DO THEM NOW.

THE FIRST WORLD FOOD CONGRESS, CALLED BY FRANKLIN
ROOSEVELT IN 1943, MET IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF IDEALISM AND
HOPE. THE DECLARATION OF THAT CONFERENCE STATED THAT:

"THE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY LIES WITH EACH
NATION FOR SEEING THAT ITS OWN PEOPLE HAVE
THE FOOD NEEDED FOR HEALTH AND LIFE; STEPS
TO THIS END ARE FOR NATIONAL DETERMINATION,
BUT EACH NATION CAN FULLY ACHIEVE ITS GOAL
ONLY IF ALL WORK TOGETHER."

THE PRINCIPLE THAT EACH NATION MUST SHOULDER THE
PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE WELL BEING OF ITS OWN
CITIZENS STILL HOLDS. IT IS VITAL IF WE ARE TO DO THE
JOB. IN THE DETERMINATIONS OF NATIONAL PRIORITIES,
AGRICULTURE GENERALLY HAS RECEIVED LOW RANKING.

MY SECOND POINT IS THAT FOOD PRODUCTION MUST BE
INCREASED IN THE DEVELOPING NATIONS.

WE MUST RECOGNIZE THAT, UP TO THIS DECADE, THE
DEVELOPING COUNTRIES HAVE EXPANDED THEIR FOOD PRODUCTION
AT LEAST AS MUCH AS THEIR POPULATIONS HAVE GROWN. THE
DEVELOPING COUNTRIES HAVE SUPPLIED MOST OF THE ASSISTANCE
FOR THIS EFFORT. THIS HAS BEEN NO SMALL ACHIEVEMENT.

UNLESS STEPS ARE TAKEN TO LIMIT POPULATION GROWTH,
MOST OF THESE EFFORTS WILL HAVE BEEN IN VAIN.

THERE ARE OTHER STEPS WHICH CAN BE TAKEN BY THE
DEVELOPING NATIONS.

↳ CAPITAL INVESTMENT IN AGRICULTURE MUST BE ACCORDED
A HIGHER PRIORITY.

↳ LAND REFORM TO PROVIDE THE NEEDED INCENTIVES FOR SMALL
FARMERS IS LONG OVERDUE IN MANY NATIONS.

REALISTIC APPRAISALS OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS ARE NEEDED TO GUIDE THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ACTIONS,

AND, BEYOND THESE APPRAISALS, AN INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IS REQUIRED WHERE IT COUNTS MOST--
ON THE FARMS, ESPECIALLY ENCOURAGING LABOR-INTENSIVE, SMALL FARM DEVELOPMENT,

FERTILIZER PRODUCTION MUST BE INCREASED THROUGH BETTER EFFICIENCY IN EXISTING PLANTS AND THE BUILDING OF NEW ONES.
THE OIL EXPORTING NATIONS HAVE THE NECESSARY NATURAL GAS FOR THE PRODUCTION OF NITROGEN FERTILIZERS. THIS RESOURCE, COUPLED WITH WESTERN TECHNOLOGY, OFFERS THE POSSIBILITY OF VASTLY AUGMENTED PRODUCTION CAPACITY--PERHAPS THROUGH NEW PLANTS LOCATED IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

IN ADDITION, THE OIL PRODUCING NATIONS ARE THE ONLY COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD WITH THE NECESSARY CAPITAL TO EXTEND

THE "GREEN REVOLUTION" ON A LARGE SCALE, AND TO PROVIDE THE LONG TERM CREDITS NEEDED FOR FUELING EXISTING FERTILIZER PLANTS.

L BETTER DISTRIBUTION OF AVAILABLE FERTILIZER, BOTH WITHIN NATIONS AND INTERNATIONALLY, WOULD SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASE OVERALL AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION.

L IMPROVEMENTS IN THE FERTILIZER SITUATION ALSO REQUIRE THAT PRIORITY ATTENTION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO CROPS, SUCH AS SOYBEANS, WHICH "FIX" THEIR OWN NITROGEN AND DO NOT REQUIRE FERTILIZER. MOREOVER, MANY OF THE NATIVE GRAINS CULTIVATED BEFORE THE "GREEN REVOLUTION" DO NOT RESPOND TO FERTILIZER, AND THE SELECTIVE GENETIC UPGRADING OF THOSE GRAINS WOULD SEEM TO OFFER PROMISE. PERHAPS OTHER PLANTS CAN BE INDUCED TO "FIX" THEIR OWN NITROGEN. I HAVE URGED A MAJOR RESEARCH EFFORT IN THIS AREA IN THE UNITED STATES,

L WE MUST, THEN, MAKE AN INTENSIVE EFFORT TO INCREASE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION IN COUNTRIES NOT NOW ABLE TO FEED

THEMSELVES. NATIONAL PRIORITIES MUST BE REEVALUATED TO
ACHIEVE A REASONABLE BALANCE BETWEEN INDUSTRIALIZATION
AND INCREASED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION.

NEEDS FOR CAPITAL INVESTMENT IN AGRICULTURE MUST BE
DETERMINED AND THE REQUIREMENTS FOR IN-COUNTRY TRAINING
PROGRAMS SET. FOOD DISTRIBUTION SYSTEMS SHOULD BE IMPROVED,
AND MEASURES TAKEN TO CURTAIL THE LOSS OF FOOD THROUGH
INADEQUATE STORAGE. QUITE SIMPLY, EACH COUNTRY MUST TAKE
THE LEAD WITHIN ITS OWN BORDERS.

THESE ARE ESSENTIAL CONDITIONS FOR EFFECTIVE OUTSIDE
ASSISTANCE, AND THE UNITED STATES CAN AND MUST PROVIDE THAT
ASSISTANCE. WE CAN ORGANIZE TO GIVE FOOD ASSISTANCE WHILE
PRODUCTION IS BEING INCREASED. WE CAN ACHIEVE THAT INCREASED
PRODUCTION WITH ADDITIONAL FERTILIZERS AND BETTER SEED, AND
WE CAN PROVIDE THE NEEDED DIRECT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE,

AS THESE NATIONAL EFFORTS GO FORWARD, THE WORLD
COMMUNITY MUST ADDRESS ITSELF TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF MEASURES

TO PERMIT THE TRANSFER OF ADVANCED AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY
TO EVERY SORT OF LOCAL SITUATION. WE MUST REMEMBER THAT
OVER HALF OF THE FOOD PRODUCED IN THE DEVELOPING NATIONS
IS CONSUMED IN THE IMMEDIATE AREA OF PRODUCTION. IT IS
HERE, WITH THE SMALL FARMER, THAT THE GREATEST IMMEDIATE
GAINS CAN BE MADE.

I WOULD STRESS, ONCE AGAIN, THAT THIS IS A MATTER FOR
CONCERTED ACTION. IT IS NOT A MATTER OF EITHER "GOING IT
ALONE" OR RECEIVING OUTSIDE HELP. IT REQUIRES BOTH, AND
EACH NATION BEARS A HEAVY RESPONSIBILITY BOTH FOR ITS OWN
POPULATION AND AS A MEMBER OF THE WORLD COMMUNITY.

THE CONTROL OF POPULATION GROWTH, MY THIRD POINT,
MUST BE ACHIEVED IN THIS CENTURY IF WE ARE TO BE SUCCESSFUL
IN FEEDING THE WORLD, AT EVEN THE BAREST SUBSISTENCE LEVEL,
OVER THE LONG TERM. WE HAVE NOT BEEN SUCCESSFUL UP TO
THIS POINT IN PROMOTING THE WIDESPREAD USE OF FAMILY PLANNING
METHODS, THOUGH WE SHOULD CONTINUE THOSE EFFORTS. WE KNOW

THAT AS STANDARDS OF LIVING RISE, AND A MEASURE OF SOCIAL SECURITY IS ASSURED, FAMILY SIZE DROPS.

↳ THE MESSAGE IS CLEAR: WE MUST, THROUGH CONTINUED EMPHASIS ON INCREASING AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, INCREASING EMPLOYMENT, AND IMPROVING FOOD AND INCOME DISTRIBUTION RAISE STANDARDS OF LIVING BEYOND THE SUBSISTENCE LEVEL.

↳ JOBS MUST BE CREATED, AND FAMILIES PROVIDED WITH A BETTER MEASURE OF STABILITY AND SECURITY.

PARENTS MUST HAVE SOME ASSURANCE THAT THEIR CHILDREN, ON WHOM THEY HAVE TRADITIONALLY RELIED FOR THEIR OWN SUPPORT IN OLD AGE, WILL GROW TO BECOME PRODUCTIVE AND CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY AND THE SOCIETY. THERE CAN BE NO VOLUNTARY REDUCTION OF BIRTH RATES, WITHOUT THIS EXPECTATION OF BETTER ECONOMIC SECURITY AT HOME AND THROUGHOUT A NATION.

THERE ARE MANY OTHER AREAS REQUIRING OUR ATTENTION.

THE NEED FOR THE CONSERVATION OF SCARCE RESOURCES-- ENERGY AS WELL AS FOOD--IS A REQUIREMENT FOR ALL, BUT

PARTICULARLY OF THE INDUSTRIALIZED NATIONS.

THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW FOOD RESOURCES FROM THE SEA, AND BETTER USE OF FOODS WE HAVE, ARE OVERDUE FOR INTERNATIONAL ACTION PROGRAMS,

WE NEED PRIORITY ATTENTION TO REDUCING THE LOSSES OF FOOD THROUGH WASTE, SPOILAGE AND OVER CONSUMPTION,

WE MUST EXPAND AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS NATIONALLY, AND COORDINATE THEM INTERNATIONALLY,

WE MUST ASSURE THAT INCREASED GAINS IN PRODUCTION ARE MORE EVENLY DISTRIBUTED TO THOSE WHO NEED FOOD,

THESE AND OTHER VARIABLES ON THE FOOD SIDE OF THE FOOD/PRODUCTION EQUATION MUST BE ADDRESSED IN A REALISTIC WAY BY OUR RESPONSIBLE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES,

I WILL STRONGLY URGE THAT THIS BE DONE IN MY OWN COUNTRY,

OUR TIME IS SHORT, AND THE CHALLENGE IS INTERNATIONAL IN SCOPE. OUR PRIMARY GOAL IS ENOUGH FOOD FOR ALL. AT THIS MOMENT, THE ALTERNATIVES ARE LESS BIRTH OR MORE DEATH,

WE MUST TRY IN THE KNOWLEDGE THAT WE MAY LOSE, BUT
IN THE HOPE WE WILL WIN, IT IS CLEAR THAT IF WE DO NOT
FIND WORKABLE SOLUTIONS, NATURE WILL PERFORM THE RADICAL
SURGERY FOR US.

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Minnesota Historical Society

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