

From the Office of
Senator Hubert H. Humphrey
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All that farmers ask is a chance to "hold their own" with other segments of our economy, Senator Hubert H. Humphrey (D-Minn.) declared today in an address before the Old Settlers Picnic and Celebration at Odessa, Minnesota.

"That's all that parity really means -- a chance to break even with rising costs the farmer must pay," Senator Humphrey said.

"I'm tired of continuing efforts to make it appear that farm legislation is 'special privilege' legislation," he declared. "As a matter of fact, it's just extending to agriculture some of the protection and economic benefits we've already provided to other segments of our economy.

"Why do we hear so much about the evil of farm subsidies, and so little about the huge subsidies to the maritime industry, the subsidies to our airlines, the subsidies to our newspapers and magazines, the tax amortization benefits to industry, and other government guarantees and protection to the rest of our economy?" Senator Humphrey asked.

"Price supports have never guaranteed profits to farmers -- they've just been some assurance of stability against the risks he must take, some attempt at creating an economic climate in which the farmer can hold his own with other segments of our economy.

"Why shouldn't our farmers share in the economic protection and economic gains benefitting the rest of the economy?"

Senator Humphrey said greater efforts must be made to develop new world markets for America's abundance of food.

"As long as there are hungry people in the world, there's no real surplus of food," he said. "And with so much hunger and suffering still existing in the world, America's abundance of food should be a blessing we can wisely use to help strengthen freedom and democracy -- not a curse around our necks.

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"It's time we quit thinking about food carryovers in storage simply as unwanted surplus, and started thinking about them as our margin of safety against possible food shortages.

"It's time we made greater use of the American farmer's ability to produce in our foreign aid programs -- and turned our food abundance into a powerful weapon for freedom."

Senator Humphrey told of his efforts to extend emergency wheat loans to Pakistan to avert famine, in which the Administration recently joined, and discussed his bill to increase the present designations of "normal" safe reserves of storable commodities to assure this country of adequate supplies to back up our foreign policy.

"We've simply got to raise our sights," Senator Humphrey said. "In my opinion, world food needs, not just domestic markets, will eventually be the only controlling factor in American farm production. We would be short-sighted indeed to tailor our production to restricted markets, when there exists such a tremendous human need for food in the world."

Senator Humphrey said he was "vigorously opposed to any scarcity philosophy" calling for curtailment of production -- "plowing under the farmer's 'know how', rather than making good use of it to help feed the world."

He outlined his proposal for creation of an International Food Reserve to "make fuller use of our ability to produce, rather than just shut off the spigot of our agricultural knowledge and technological ability."



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