

FROM:

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FARMERS ONLY 6¢ AWAY FROM DISASTER, HUMPHREY CHARGES

Huron, S.Dak; Nov. 12 -- "American farmers are only 6¢ away from the dark days of the Great Depression," Senator Hubert H. Humphrey warned here tonight.

The Minnesota Democrat cited figures showing that farmers today are getting only 38¢ of the dollar the consumer ^{pays} for food. This is only 6¢ higher than the record low of 32¢ hit in 1932 and 1933.

Sen. Humphrey cited his Family Farm Program Development bill and "food for peace" proposal as necessary steps. The former would give farmers freedom to help formulate their own commodity programs and establish a "fair price" -- one that would yield returns on the farmer's capital and labor comparable to non-farm earnings. The latter proposes to use American agricultural abundance as an instrument of foreign policy.

"We must admit our present national farm policies are bankrupt," he said. "The disparity between farm income and non-farm income becomes greater each year, despite our supposed goals of public policy toward bringing them together."

Speaking in his old home town before the South Dakota Farmer's Union, Sen. Humphrey touched on the livestock feed program: "We see the result of of Ezra Benson's corn program -- a crop 17% larger than the record corn crop of 1958 -- a program which the Secretary calls 'sound' brought about by 'sound legislation', which will result in higher livestock production. At the same time that he has encouraged this mammoth over-production of feed grains, he is urging hog producers to be 'careful' not to over-expand their production!"

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Harold Golseth

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REMARKS OF SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

SOUTH DAKOTA FARMERS UNION

HURON, SOUTH DAKOTA - NOVEMBER 12, 1959

*my mother
my - Brother*

*Hubert
Congressman
the Governor*

"We see the result of Ezra Benson's corn program -- a crop 17% larger than the record corn crop of 1958 -- a program which the Secretary calls 'sound' brought about by 'sound legislation', which will result in higher livestock production. At the same time that he has encouraged this mammoth over-production of feed grains, he is urging hog producers to be careful not to over-expand their production!

"What do you think will be the result of this mountain of feed grain on livestock production? This is of more than academic interest to you here in South Dakota. Hog prices are down about 32% from last year -- the corn belt is hard hit. How far down will cattle prices be next year when the record number of cattle and calves now on feed goes to market?

"You here in South Dakota have suffered severely from drouth this year. You have taken a big loss on some crops through natural disaster -- and a big loss on others because of farm price and farm program disaster. The parity ratio in mid-October stood at *79* -- the lowest it has been since 1940, 19 years ago!

"City newspaper headlines in recent days have spread what seemed to some good news -- food prices were down to city consumers. But this only reflects the deepening decline of farm prices.

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"Farmers are now getting only around 38¢ of each dollar the consumer spends for food. In 1951, farmers received 47¢ of each consumer dollar spent for food. Agriculture is always breaking records, it seems. But here's one that should never even be approached, but seems to be slipping up on us -- the record low for the farmer's share of the food dollar was hit in 1932 and 1933 -- it stood at 32¢ in those black years.

"In other words, at this very moment American farmers are only 6¢ away from the dark days of the Great Depression!"

"Growing stocks of feed grains and of wheat in the hands of the Commodity Credit Corporation have resulted in increasingly great pressure to cast aside the present wheat program.

"The Administration's attitude is alarmingly reminiscent of the folk-tale family which, pursued by a pack of ravening wolves, kept throwing one child after the other from the sleigh, hoping each time to gain a little headway on the pack. Cotton and rice and corn have been pushed out. Now the wheat program is being pushed. You can expect public pronouncements from high places that the Benson corn program must be applied to wheat.

"That's what the Administration tried to get through Congress this past session. That's what they will be pounding the drums for in this next session. This is their last chance to wreck all programs and force farmers into a 'free market'."



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