

From the Office of:

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San Francisco - February 21 - Senate Majority Whip Hubert H. Humphrey (D.-Minn.) said today that the recent agreement between the United States and Australia and New Zealand will "put an end to unrestrained imports of meat into this country."

Humphrey, addressing the Western States Meat Packers Association here, said the agreement did not go as far as he would have liked on limiting imports of beef, veal and mutton to the U.S. market.

He added, however, that the most important part of the agreement is that we will know for the next three years the maximum volume of imports and will be able to adjust our own marketing accordingly.

Humphrey said the agreement was the best that could be entered into considering our entire world trade picture and in light of forthcoming agricultural negotiations. He said that these negotiations must benefit our farmers as well as our factories or we will not sign on the dotted line.

The Senate Majority Whip also pointed out that any one of the three countries can terminate the agreement with 180 days notice. There will be a re-negotiation of the rate of increase in shipments in 1966.

Under the agreement imports of beef, veal and mutton this year will be limited to approximately the 1962-63 average level, about 6 per cent below the record level of 1963. Future expansion of beef imports will be far below recent levels.

Humphrey pointed out that "trade is a two-way street," and that if we are to "retain our present overseas markets and develop new ones, we must be willing to share the U.S. market to some extent."

(More)

He said the cattle industry should accept its own responsibility and "diligently work to move the record-high cattle inventory down in an orderly fashion that will not result in ruinous prices to producers."

The Senator also told the meat packers he has recommended to the President and the Secretary of Agriculture that the cost of federal meat inspection continue to be borne by the Treasury.

Humphrey discussed the "miracle or modern agriculture" and the importance of continuing and expanding the Food for Peace Program, "our most important instrument for market development and humanitarian assistance."

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