

Denver Award Fred Henkel

REMARKS

Rain

VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY

MID-CONTINENT FARMERS' ASSOCIATION

COLUMBIA, MISSOURI

AUGUST 8, 1966

con Paul Jones

Stevens College

Sen Ed Long
Sen Symington
Cont con
Today America lives in abundance. Yet, the world around us remains much the same as President Truman described it in his Inaugural Address 17 years ago.

"More than half the people of the world," he said, "are living in conditions approaching misery. Their food is inadequate. They are victims of disease. Their economic life is primitive and stagnant. Their poverty is a handicap and a threat both to them and to more prosperous areas."

Today, then, I want to talk about both our own American abundance and about the challenge -- and opportunity -- facing us in the hungry world outside.

*\$ up a Billion over last yr
\$15 1/2 Billion*

First, let us take a hard, clear look at the realities of our own American agriculture. - Miracle of Production

The best bargain in the world today is the food basket of the American family.

This is a reality not fully appreciated by those of us who pay for that food basket. We are better fed, at less cost, than any other people in the world. Last year only 18 per cent of our disposable income went for food.

∠ In the last five years, the price of the 11 key foods in the Consumer Price Index has risen by less than 9 per cent. During the same period the weekly earnings, after taxes, of the single worker in industry, for instance, have risen more than 20 per cent.

∠ One hour of factory labor earnings in 1965 bought:
• 12.5 pounds of white bread . . . as compared with
11.1 pounds in 1960;

- 2.4 pounds of round steak . . . as compared with 2.1 pounds in 1960;
- 3.5 pounds of butter . . . compared with 3 pounds;
- 9.9 quarts of milk . . . compared with 8.7 quarts;
- 5 dozen eggs . . . as compared with 3.9 dozen in 1960;

∠ If we make comparisons over a longer period, they are truly startling. We find one hour of factory labor earnings buying two to three times as much in key commodities as 10 to 20 years ago.

While the cost of farm products has been reduced, the farmer has had to pay more for what he buys.

∠ Since 1960, the cost of things the farmer must buy has gone up by some 11 per cent. He has had to keep running to make even gradual gains in his net income.

∠ Since 1960, farm productivity per man per hour has increased by nearly one-third, compared with a productivity gain of about 18 per cent in the rest of our economy.

~~and~~ We must not lose sight of this: Consumers benefit from having fair prices paid to farmers, just as farmers benefit from full employment and expansion in the rest of the economy. We all need each other for a full and balanced prosperity.

Farmers create millions of jobs in our economy.

↳ More than 10 million people have jobs storing, transporting, processing, and merchandising the products of agriculture.

↳ Nearly a million-and-a-half have jobs providing the supplies farmers use. And thousands in rural communities make their livelihood providing services to farmers.

↳ Total investment in American agriculture is more than 250 billion dollars. This is comparable to about three-fourths of the value of current assets for all corporations in the country. It represents three-fifths of the value of all stocks listed on the New York Stock Exchange.

Farming is Big Business!

∠ The investment in agriculture represents 30 thousand, five hundred dollars for each farm worker, as compared with an average investment of 19 thousand, six hundred dollars per employee in manufacturing.

∠ In 1965, when our farmers realized a gross income of nearly 45 billion dollars, they spent almost 31 billion dollars to operate their farm businesses.

∠ Last year they spent more than 3 billion dollars to buy trucks, tractors, and other farm machinery and equipment.

∠ They spent about 2 billion dollars to buy automobiles.

∠ Farming uses more petroleum than any other single industry. ∠ In 1965, more than 3 billion dollars was spent by farmers for petroleum, fuel and oil, and repairs and operations of motor vehicles and machinery.

And all this productivity, all this economic activity is generated by fewer people than live today in the state of California. Our national farm population is today only 12 million.

Where does American agriculture stand in the world?

Exports of our farm commodities are up sharply.

This has a major positive effect on our balance of payments.

In fiscal year 1953, exports of farm products from the United States amounted to less than 3 billion dollars. By fiscal year 1966 the export figure had jumped to nearly 7 billion dollars. Products from 78 million acres of American cropland were shipped abroad. More than 75 per cent of these commodities were sold for dollars.

The market for feed and food grains, oilseeds, protein meals and vegetable oils is highly competitive. But we can and do compete. We can look forward to expansion of farm exports as the economies of other nations grow and their purchasing power increases.

Seneca once observed that "A hungry people listens not to reason nor cares for justice,"

And, in that knowledge, we have, under the Food for Peace program, reached and helped more than a hundred countries.

Under this program we have delivered 150 million tons of food, valued at 15 billion dollars, to needy and disaster-struck nations.

Our Food for Peace program reflects the democratic and humanitarian character of the American people.

We will continue to share our abundance with people who lack it. But our programs of food assistance must support, and not deter, agricultural development in places which need it. Food aid is only one part of the War on Hunger.

We need to help the developing countries with an export of ideas and techniques from our own experience.

But these programs must be adapted to their way of doing things -- adapted to problems of climate and water and social structure. Part of the assistance we can give is in establishment of local research institutes, using local staffing and resources, to undertake the same kind of agricultural research which has so contributed to our own productivity.

➔ This is the essence of our new Food for Freedom proposals -- to help others help themselves. When President Johnson proposed the Food for Freedom program he said:

" . . . The time is not far off when all of the combined production, of all the acres, of all the agriculturally productive nations, will not meet the food needs of developing nations -- unless present trends are changed."

⤵ Last month I carried this message again, as spokesman for our government, to the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

and
Farm
cooperatives
Production
Distribution
REA

This Committee is composed of high-ranking ministers of the industrialized nations -- countries that are in a position to be of help to the less developed areas of the world.

∠ I made it quite clear that President Johnson has made a commitment on behalf of the American people to join with the other developed nations in an all-out effort to eradicate large-scale famine and hunger from the face of the earth.

∠ And this brings me to the next reality of American agriculture we all must face.

In the past few years we Americans have come to know what we call "turnpike trance" --- the hypnosis of the highway which has led to thousands of mishaps and accidents.

∠ I say far too many Americans have also fallen victim to "surplus stare" -- the blind belief, taken as fact, that our country is buried under unnecessary, costly tonnages of food.

Today the age of surpluses is all but gone.

Already, our food stocks are dwindling. If we look toward sufficient production for our own needs, for our commercial exports, and for emergency food assistance for the developing countries, we find ourselves close to the safety margin.

The world has been eating into its grain reserves, sharply reducing the carryovers to a point where they should be rebuilt and restored to prudent levels.

In the last four years the world has consumed some 200 million bushels of wheat per year more than it has produced.

In the last four years it has utilized about 6 million tons of feed grains more than it has harvested.

In the case of soybeans, we are using all we produce. Carryovers are minimal.

It is clear that we must raise our production sights
in rice.

Because any plan for agriculture must allow for ample
lead time we must always be deeply concerned about the level
of reserves. Weather, as all of us know, is an unpredictable
hazard. There are reports of drought in many areas of the
country this year. We do not know what the size of this
year's feed grain and soybean crops will be. We hope for the
best, but we will all be concerned until the harvest is in.

It is now apparent that, at the end of the current
marketing year, our wheat stocks will fall below the desirable
reserve level. The same is true for soybeans, where no true
reserve is in sight. Our production of milk is insufficient
now. That is why we have raised the support level for manufacturing
milk to four dollars per hundredweight.

and with feed grains - less than
2 mo. supply - carry over

∠ We are living in a whole new ^{Era} ~~area~~ of demand for feed grains. United States consumption will hit a new peak. We produced a record crop in 1965, but we will use and export more than we harvested.

∠ The number of animal units will go up about four per cent in the next marketing year. Exports are at about 30 million ton rate -- about twice the 1959-63 average. It is possible that by October 1 next year our feed-grain carryover will drop below the desirable level.

∠ Next year will be a year for bringing a substantial part of our reserve acreage out of mothballs.

∠ We must recognize that the long road of surplus has had its turning.

The farmers of this nation will be called upon to expand production.

⌞ This is news. It is good news for our farmers, for our consumers, and for hungry people throughout the world.

⌞ And as the American farmer rises to this challenge, his government is determined that he shall stand on equal footing with the rest of the economy -- that he shall have every opportunity for a fair and just return on his investment, his time, his energy and his extraordinary skill.

⌞ When President Truman looked out on a turbulent, impoverished and hungry world in 1949, he had little immediate hope that this nation -- and our partners -- would in his lifetime be able to challenge those conditions.

But today we are able to challenge them -- and we are able to do so in large part because of the energy and productivity of American agriculture. Today our abundance is a weapon for peace *and freedom* *Health & Food*

We must use that weapon -- ably, honorable and well.

A D D R E S S

By

VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

To

ANNUAL CONVENTIONS OF

MIDCONTINENT FARMERS ASSOCIATION

And

MISSOURI FARMERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

Columbia, Missouri

August 8, 1966

(taken from tape recording)

Thank you very much, my good, long-time and dear friend, Fred Heinkel, and Mrs. Heinkel, nice to see you, too, here today; to your Vice President-- and I am always somewhat mindful of Vice Presidents and like to give them a special pat on the back--Clell Carpenter, my greetings and thanks for meeting us at the airport; Mr. Sappington, the President of your great insurance company; and the Mayor of the City of Columbia, Missouri, John Longwell, a special note of appreciation for your hospitality and your greeting to Mrs. Humphrey and myself; and Howard Lang, who is another Vice President; and finally to Dr. Elmer Ellis, the President of the University of Missouri, a fond greeting of thanks and appreciation.

Let me say just a word about Dr. Ellis. As I greeted him at the airport today as the President of your great University of Missouri, I said, "Now, Doctor, you've been kinda rough on we folks up there in Minnesota these past few years on the grid iron. It seems that every opening game is with the University of Missouri, and we get off to a bad start. So I come here today to appeal for mercy. My University needs a little help." But we are very proud of your University, and we are proud of this fine College where we are privileged to meet today in Columbia, Missouri at Stephens College. It is a wonderful school, and you are living in a great and wonderful state.

Fred Heinkel mentioned a moment ago that I had been with you on other occasions. That's when you were known as the Missouri Farmers Association, and now the Midcontinent Farmers Association. And I have proudly displayed in my office in Washington the Distinguished Service citation that was given to me by your own President, Fred Heinkel, and by your association. There is no other citation that I cherish more than that because it says that I am a friend of agriculture and of the farmer, and I want that to be everlastingly true.

I said to Mr. Carpenter on the way in, I said, you know your countryside looks like a veritable garden, like a park. He said, well, things are a little better. He said that we had had some rain, and I said, well, how long ago was that. And he told me, and I said that was just about the time that I agreed to come out here and speak. I'm happy that I can bring you rain. Now, I don't want you to say that that was due to President Johnson, but since he gets credit for all the things that go wrong, I'd like to give him credit for the things that go right, and the rain is something that we all need.

President Johnson asked me to extend to you, Fred, and to you, Clell, and to each and every one of the officers of this great association his warmest and most intimate friendly personal greetings. I spoke to him last week, and I had a word with him on Saturday about this meeting, but I don't think he'll recall the Saturday occasion. He had something else on his mind that day. He wasn't President on Saturday--he was the father of the bride. But he knew that I was coming here, and he wanted me above all to bring you his thanks, his thanks as the leader of our nation for what you good farm people are doing to strengthen this nation and to give the world encouragement at a time when it desperately needs it.

Senators Long and Symington would like to be with you today. The two Senators from the State of Missouri, and I know there are other areas represented here. But there happens to be a very important piece of legislation in the United States Senate today, and the votes are mighty close, and I just didn't ask them the second time to come. But both of them asked me to express their regrets at not being able to share this day with you. I see my friend, Paul Jones, is here, Congressman, and I am delighted to see him, and I hope that there are other members of the delegation from Missouri.

I want to talk to you about our country today. I want to talk to you about the most blessed land on the face of this earth. I come here not to

complain but to proclaim, to proclaim of the wonders of this republic, and I say that because sometimes I suppose we wonder if anything ever goes right, but I can tell you that many things do. We wouldn't be what we are today had it not have been for the fact that many things have come our way. Nor could America be what it is today were it not for dedicated people, a free enterprise system and free government--a democracy.

We've been blessed with good leaders, but above all we've been blessed with a social and economic and political system that has permitted old evils to be corrected, wrongs to be righted and injustices to be cured. American agriculture has had a very, very important role to play in the greatness of this nation. The productivity of our farms has released manpower for our cities and our industries. Never has America ever had to worry about starvation--never. And the family farm system of American agriculture has produced the miracles of production not only in the 20th Century but in the 19th Century and in the 18th Century if you please that has stood this nation well. Today our strength is still in our land and its people.

We are a fortunate people, even with all of our troubles and all of our heavy burdens. You and I know that there are many sacrifices being made today by many men and women and there are many tears in many families, but this nation of ours is so fortunate when you compare it with what else there is in this world. And I say in all reverence that we should be prayerfully grateful to God Almighty for the blessings that are ours, the privileges that are ours. America today lives in abundance, yet the world around remains much the same as President Truman described it in his inaugural address of 17 years ago. By the way, I'm going to see President Truman this afternoon. You know, he's been in the hospital. And before I go back to Washington, I'm going to stop by and see him, because you never had a better friend than President Truman. This dear man said in that inaugural address: More than half the people of the

world are living in conditions approaching misery. Their food is inadequate. They are victims of disease. Their economic life is primitive and stagnant. Their poverty is a handicap and a threat both to them and the more prosperous areas. You and I know that where there is want there is a constant threat to peace, and where there is poverty there is an invitation to violence. Today, then I want to talk to you both of our own American abundance and what it means to us in the world and the challenge and the opportunity facing us in a hungry world outside.

First, let's take a good, honest, hard, clear look at the realities of our own American agriculture. Well, I think it can be said that at long last we have a farm program that is the product of experience, the product of trial and error, the product of leadership, a farm program that meets the needs of American agriculture. I believe that we've accomplished that with your help and with your guidance.

The other hard fact of American agriculture is what I said a moment ago-- the miracle of production, unbelievable productive efficiency which I shall comment upon, and the fact that rural America is bearing more than her fair share of the burden of this country.

Now, let this word go from this place because much is being said these days about prices and agriculture and food and wages and all sorts of economic hurdles. So, let the Vice President of the United States, speaking for this government at this moment make this statement, and you put it down in your notebook and repeat it to your neighbor: The best bargain in the world today is the food basket of the American family. Now this is a reality, not fully appreciated by those of us who paid for that food basket, but it is a fact. We are better fed at less cost in America than any other people in the world, and instead of complaining we should be prayerfully grateful that it is our lot

to be so fortunate. Last year only 18% of our disposable income went for food--the lowest ratio in the world. Nobody else in this whole world spends as little of their income for food and gets as much good food, quality food, variety of food as the American consumer. That's the good news.

In the last five years the price index of 11 key foods in the consumer price index has risen by less than 9% in five years. And during the same period, thankfully, weekly earnings after taxes of a single worker in industry have risen more than 20%. One hour of factory labor earnings in 1965, and the earnings have gone up since then, brought, or bought I should say, 12 1/2 pounds of white bread as compared with 11.1 pounds in 1960. One hour of earnings bought 2.4 pounds of round steak as compared with a little over 2 pounds in 1960; 3 1/2 pounds of butter compared with 3 pounds in 1960; 9.9, almost 10, quarts of milk as compared to 8.7 quarts; 5 dozen eggs as compared with 3.9 dozen, almost 4 dozen eggs, in 1960. In other words, the income today buys more and better. If we make comparisons over a longer period they are startling. We find one hour of factory labor earnings buying 2 to 3 times as much in key commodities as 10 or 20 years ago.

Now, why do I tell you this. Because everything is relative. When a price goes up, some people will say, "Look what's happening to the price." But you also need to ask what happened to my income, my ability and capacity to pay that price. And the only way that you can judge prices is on the basis of comparable income. The fact is that the cost of farm products related to wages has been reduced, and the farmer has had to pay more in the meantime for what he buys. Since 1960 the cost of things the farmer must buy have gone up some 11%. In the meantime his prices have gone up 9%. He has had to keep running to make even gradual gains in his net income. Since 1960 farm productivity, and that's what we are always talking about, the productivity of our industry, of our farms, of our farm workers, our industrial workers, the farm productivity

per man hour, per farmer has increased in the last 5 years by $1/3$ --almost $33\frac{1}{3}\%$ compared with a productivity gain in the rest of our economy of 18%. You've been doing all right. You've been showing people how to get things done. And we must not lose sight of this.

Consumers benefit from having fair prices paid to farmers for farm products just as farmers benefit from full employment and an expansion in the rest of the economy. We're in this together, and when a worker is well paid, he can eat what you produce. And when you are reasonably well paid for what you produce, a worker has a chance for a well-paid job as I shall show you, because farmers create millions of jobs in our economy. You know this. I'm telling you nothing today that you do not know, but I hope to tell some other people that are not quite as wise about it as you are. Our task today my friends is communication--to get the true story of agricultural production and economics to the city dweller because, Mr. farmer, you represent a small portion of the population of this land. You are indeed a minority, and a great majority that live in our great urban centers must know the truth about you less their representatives in government, in industry and in labor are led to believe things that are not true and take action based upon false premises. So I say farmers create millions of jobs in our economy. More than 10 million people today have jobs storing, transporting, processing and merchandising the products of agriculture. Nearly a million and a half have jobs providing the supplies that farmers use, and thousands in rural communities make their livelihood providing services to farmers.

Think of this investment figure. Total investment in American agriculture is more than \$250 billion. You may not know it, but you're a big business--\$250 billion invested capital. This is comparable to $3/4$ of the value of the current assets of all the corporations in America. It represents $3/5$ of all of the value of all of the stocks listed on the New York Stock Exchange. So don't

ever get an inferiority complex my friends. You don't have to take a back seat for any body. You are a stockholder in American agriculture that represents \$250 billion of assets in this great wonderful country of ours--a marvelous record.

That investment in agriculture represents \$30,500 for each adult farm worker as compared to an average investment of \$19,600 for each employee in manufacturing. This is why we speak of parity--not only parity of income but parity of opportunity. Because of the vast investment and the right of an owner to have a reasonable return on that investment, every American that believes in our system of enterprise has been brought up to believe that the principles of equity and fair play require that at least there be the opportunity for a fair return on investment. \$30,500 per farm worker is some investment, and it surely requires a fair return.

In 1965 when our farmers realized a gross income of nearly \$45 billion they spent almost \$31 billion to operate their farm business--\$45 billion. I'm happy to tell you that projected farm income this year, net farm income this year, looks like it will be over \$1 billion more than last year. Last year you may recall it was \$14,100,000,000 net. This year it is estimated to be \$15,500,000,000 net. Compare that my dear friends with \$11,100,000,000 net in 1960--\$4 1/2 billion increase in a little over 5 years. That isn't bad. It seems to me like that's rather steady economic progress.

Last year these same farmers that I speak of spent \$3 billion to buy trucks and tractors and other farm machinery and equipment, and they spent \$2 billion alone to buy automobiles. So Detroit has an interest in you, too. Farming uses more petroleum than any other single industry. In 1965 more than \$3 billion was spent for petroleum, fuel and oil, repairs and operation of farm motor vehicles and machinery. Now, all of this productivity and all of

this economic activity--and it is some record--is generated by fewer people than live in the State of California. Yes, far less than live in the State of California because our national farm population is today only 12 million out of a total population in America of 196 million. So the 12 million farmers are the owners of \$250 billion worth of assets, and the 12 million farmers or people living in agricultural areas generated \$45 billion worth of gross income last year.

Now that's the domestic picture. I can give you a lot of facts about the prices of commodities. You know them better than I do, and you and I know that prices vary in regions. It's difficult to ever pin a particular dollars and cents price. The best thing about prices for agriculture is they're better, and I want you good friends to know something. I was born in a rural area. My family were farm people or people closely associated with farm people, and I had enough experience with low prices on farms to know that if you have a choice between a low price and a reasonably good price it doesn't take you long to make up your mind does it--a good price.

Let's say a word now about American agriculture in the world because no longer can we just think of ourselves here at home. Those days are over if ever they existed. Exports of our farm commodities--exports to earn dollars to strengthen your country are up sharply. In fact, the soybean is the largest single dollar earner of exports in the United States--the little old soybean. I gather you raise a few around here. We raise a lot of them up in Minnesota, and I'm for them raising more. This increase in the exports has had a major positive effect on our balance of payments, and every time you read in the paper that America is losing its gold supply just remember that one of the checks on it, one of the curbs on it, one of the things that's saving that gold supply, is what you produce. In the fiscal year 1953--that's 12 1/2 years ago--the exports of farm products amounted to less than \$3 billion. In fiscal year 1966 that export figure had jumped to \$7 billion. Ladies and gentlemen, had

it not jumped the gold would have been flowing out of Fort Knox, Kentucky like a flood of the Missouri River--or before we put the dams in the Missouri.

Products from 78 million acres of American cropland were shipped abroad last year, and more than 75% of those products were sold for cash--dollars--came right back here to the United States of America. Between 20% and 25% went on long-term credits, and under our Public Law 480 the market for feed and food grains, oil seeds, protein meal and vegetable oils is rising every year, and its highly competitive. But we can compete. No European producer, no Latin America producer, no Asian producer can match the productive genius and the competitive price of American agricultural products--the raw product or the processed. And we can look forward to the expansion of our farm exports as the economies of other nations grow, and their purchasing power increases.

In fact, my dear friends, every time that you read that another nation is doing a little better economically it means that you're going to do better economically, because today other nations look to the United States of America for much of their food supply. And you are the producers of food and fiber. An old Roman by the name of Seneca back in the days of Julius Caesar once observed that a hungry people listens not to reason nor cares for justice. And this is one of the great international facts of the 20th Century. Hunger and poverty breed frustration, bitterness and sometimes violence, and hunger, poverty are the seedbeds for all forms of totalitarianism, for demagogues, for revolution, and it's in that knowledge that we have under the Food for Peace Program which has been a reality in this country now for 12 years reached and helped more than 100 countries. Every farm family in America can honestly say that they've helped save a life. What greater good can you do. Under this program of our Food for Peace we have delivered 150 million tons of food to needy people valued at 15 billions of dollars. Our Food for Peace reflects your conscience, your religion, the democratic and humanitarian character of the

American people. We have taken seriously those great words of Testament and Bible: "Feed ye the hungry. Heal ye the sick." We have taken those words to heart as a matter of national policy, and I can think of no program ever launched by any country that has done more good for more people who were in desperate need of help than the overseas food program of the American government and of the American nation--our Food for Peace Program. It's been religion at work.

Now, we're going to continue to share that abundance with people who lack it. We can do no less. You couldn't sleep well. You couldn't look at yourself in the mirror if you knew that this nation with its capacity to help hungry people refused to do so with our wealth and our power. Let me just remind you of a figure that you ought never to forget today: This great country of yours and mine last year produced 50% of everything that was produced in the world--this country. About 5% of the people of the world live here--about 5%, between 5 and 6. Yet, we have 35% of the personal income. My dear friends, we are blessed. Therefore, we have responsibilities, and we cannot shirk them nor shall we. But our programs of food assistance must support and not retard or defer or deter agricultural development in places which need it. It isn't good enough just to give people food--we must also help them produce their own food. Food aid is only one part of the War on Hunger. We need to help the developing countries with an export of ideas and techniques from our own experience. And this is why our farm cooperatives are doing such a job around the world. I'm the author of the amendment to the Foreign Aid Act that requires your government to help other countries develop farm cooperatives because the answer to state agriculture, the answer to Soviet and Chinese Communist agriculture is the free enterprise agriculture that's based around the farmer's cooperative--his own cooperative.

At long last your government is doing something to promote that democratic development. But these programs that we seek to promote, they must be adapted to the way of doing things in the country to which they are directed. You can't send a program for Missouri to Nepal or a program from Minnesota to Pakistan or even India. You can send the techniques, you can send the technological know-how, but every program must be adapted to the problems of climate and water and social structure. Part of the assistance that we give is in the establishment of local research institutes, the development of agricultural colleges, using local staffing and resources to undertake the same kind of agricultural research there which have contributed so much to our own productivity here.

Now this is the essence of President Johnson's new Food for Freedom proposals--to help others help themselves. People don't want to be on the dole. They'd like to earn enough to be able to buy. They'd like to learn enough to be able to produce, and if they learn enough to be able to produce, they'll earn enough to be able to buy. And when they earn enough to be able to buy, we can sell. That's the kind of sensible program that we are directing our energies toward. President Johnson said when he proposed the Food for Freedom Program which by the way is still in Committee, and I want you to call your Congressman and your Senators and say now look here, what happened to that farm program called "Food for Freedom?" There's something else going on in America except for our cities, or the airline strike or whatever else that may be. These are all important--I wouldn't want to downgrade any of them. But we've been waiting to pass Food for Freedom for eight months, and the only argument over the bill seems to be whether or not we are going to have production that is needed to carry our share of the responsibility on a continuing basis or whether we're going to have an overseas food program that depends on the

accident of weather and surpluses. You can't have that anymore. We have to look ahead, we have to have something in mind, some plan in mind that we wish to fulfill. Well, President Johnson had these words to say. He said the time is not far off when all the combined production of all of the acres of all the agriculturally productive nations will not meet the food needs of the developing nations unless present trends are changed. What he said was the world faces starvation--this world. This world faces the prospect of hunger--this world. And it need not, because we know how to prevent it.

Ladies and Gentlemen, there was a time when it could have been said that starvation and hunger could not be prevented because man did not know what to do. And I guess one can be forgiven if he knows not what he does. But my fellow Americans that day is long passed. We do know what to do. We do know how to produce the food. We do know how to educate the illiterate. We do know how to export our technology. We do know how to answer the Lord's Prayer of give us this day our daily bread. We do know that there need be no hunger, and your President is asking your Congress and asking the well-to-do nations of the world, asking the industrialized nations of the world to rise up in conscience and to help the hungry before it's too late, to teach the people how to help themselves before it's too late. Why, ladies and gentlemen, had we not have sent food aid to India this year more people would have died in India from starvation than the total population of men, women and children of North Vietnam and South Vietnam put together.

I wish we could get people as excited about saving lives with food as we can about what goes on in Vietnam and Southeast Asia. I ask the people of America that have any conscience to remember that the United States of America should be a life giving nation not a life taking nation. That we should be a nation of helpers, we should be a nation of healers, we should be a nation of educators, of providers and not just soldiers, not just manning the ramparts

against aggression, as important as that is. A balanced attitude on the part of our people.

Last month I carried this same message that I now give to you as the spokesman for your government through the development of Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in Washington. This is a great international meeting. This committee is composed of the high ranking ministers, foreign ministers, food ministers of industrialized nations--countries that are in a position to be of help to the less developed areas of the world. I made it manifestly clear on your part that President Johnson and the United States has made a commitment on behalf of the American people to join with the other developed nations in an all out effort to eradicate large-scale famine and hunger from the face of the earth. And I made it equally clear that we couldn't do it alone, that even if the American people turned loose every acre that they had, and did everything within our capacity to produce that we alone could not stem the tide of starvation. I called upon them to be generous, to rise up like a mighty army to help feed God's children and to help us preserve the peace.

So it brings me now to the final reality that American agriculture must face and that we all must face. In the past few years we Americans have come to know what we call the turnpike stare or trance. You know, you get on these big interstates, and there's no stops, and all at once you're just almost like you, well you get a fixed glaze and a fixed stare--the hypnosis of the highways--which by the way has led to thousands of mishaps and accidents. I say far too many Americans have also fallen victim to the surplus trance, or the surplus stare. The blind belief taken as a fact that our country is buried under a mountain of surplus foods, costly tonnages of every conceivable kind of farm product. Well, let's get the record straight. Today, the age of surpluses is gone--gone. And with it must come a whole change of thinking and conduct.

Already our food stocks are dwindling. If we look towards sufficient production for our needs, for our commercial exports and for emergency food assistance for developing countries, we find ourselves this day of August, 1966 very close to the safety margin.

You know, ladies and gentlemen, this country cannot be without some inventory of food and fiber. We have too many responsibilities, there are too many uncertainties of production. Too many things that one cannot either premeditate or predict. And we have been thinking so long that we had almost uncontrollable surpluses that we can't quite bring ourselves to knowing that things have changed. Let me tell you how it's been changing. The world has been eating into our grain reserves, sharply reducing the carryovers to a place where they should be rebuilt and restored at once to prudent levels. In the last four years, the world has consumed some 200 million bushels of wheat per year more than it produced. The total amount of wheat reserves in the world today are less than America had three years ago. And I tell you that when wheat reserves get that low they offer an opportunity to the speculator for manipulation of price.

And I have been concerned as I have watched the Soviet Union buy up millions and millions of dollars worth of wheat wherever it can put its hands on it and get it that that nation may very well be storehousing and warehousing wheat not only for its own domestic purposes but for its international purposes. You've heard me say on other occasions when Mr. Krushchev was the Prime Minister of the Soviet Union that if he had our abundance he wouldn't have complained. He would have been using it to make the world over in their image. And all I say is my friends, all I say is that we have had the good fortune of having this abundant supply of food and fiber, we have not sought to make the world over in our image, but we have sought to save lives to preserve peace and to

give nations that are on the verge of destruction through poverty and hunger a chance to live. Yes, in the last four years 200 million bushels of wheat consumed more than the world produced each year, and they took it out of the reserves. In the last four years the world has utilized about 6 million tons of feed grains more than it has harvested, and the feed grains in your own America are getting down to a reasonably short supply. In the case of soybeans, we are using all we can produce. Carryovers are minimal with less than 2 weeks of soybean carryover contemplated for the year 1967. That's no surplus--that's flirting with trouble. Therefore, it is clear that we must raise our production sights. We need to raise them in several commodities. It's surely been clear that we had to raise them in rice, when our storehouse of rice was drained dry because any plan for agriculture must allow ample lead time. We must always be concerned about the levels of reserves. You can't produce a corn crop tomorrow. You can't produce a wheat crop in another week. And you can't produce soybeans in a month no matter what the emergency is. You have to have some of it around, and may I say to insulate it from the market enough so that it does not have a price depressing effect upon the producer who depends upon that product for his living.

I don't need to tell you about weather, you've been experiencing a little of it yourself. I lived in the South Dakota dust bowl. I said I've learned more economics in one South Dakota dust storm than in seven years at the University. And I did. I learned that when you don't have it, you don't have it, it doesn't make any difference how much you've read. And I learned it doesn't make any difference how many acres you have if there's no rain. And I learned that it doesn't make any difference how good a farmer you are if nature conspires against you, and I hope that we've learned out of war and peace the value, the imperative value, of an arsenal of food. I trust we don't have to be reminded that a nation has no strength anywhere if it is without nutrition, without proper diet, without food.

It is now apparent that at the end of the current bargaining year, this year, our wheat stocks will fall below the desirable reserve level. Now what do you think would happen if that was in the Pentagon. Let me tell you the draft call was up because we had to have a certain amount of manpower for the defense of this country. And when we need more oil when our planes using jet fuel, we get it. We have reserves. Ladies and gentlemen, we need the same reserves of food and fiber and surely in wheat. The same is true of soybeans where no true reserve is in sight. Our production of milk is insufficient now. That's why we have raised the support level for manufacturing milk to \$4 per cwt. in the hopes that farmers will keep their milk cows. Dairying is a difficult business, expensive and hard work and demanding. I want every consumer to know that when you look at a bottle of milk remember that's an awful lot of work not only for the cow but for the farmer as well.

And as the Secretary of Agriculture pointed out this morning, the price of milk to farmers in New York had gone up a penny, but the price to the consumer had gone up three cents. And milk is not available unless you have dairy cows. Now we're living in a whole new era of demand for food and for feed grains. The United States consumption will hit a new peak of feed grains. We produced a record crop in 1965, but we will use and export more than we harvested. The number of animal units will go up about 4% in the next marketing year, and animals eat corn and feed grains. Exports are running at about a 30 billion ton rate, about twice the 1959 and 1963 average, and exports of feed grains are going up because as the European economy gets better, they eat more meat, and when they eat more meat they need more feed grains, and Europe cannot produce feed grains in sufficient supply for its meat cattle, its poultry.

It is possible that by October the 1st next year our feed grain carryover will drop below the safe and desirable level. It's running below the three

months level right now. So, the Vice President comes to tell you that next year, and we'll start doing that this year, because you have to plan ahead, we will be, next year will be a year for bringing a substantial part of our reserve acreage out of mothballs and putting it to work. And there will be markets for the products, markets at home and abroad. The farmers of this nation will be called upon to expand their production, not to expand it at the expense of a fair price, not to expand it at the expense of farm economic stability. We went through that once before, and, Fred, we're not going to let that happen again. You and I spent too many days working on that. We're not going to go through one of those days where we ask farmers to increase their production and then scold them afterwards when they've done it. You remember the 1950, 51, 52 period, the Korean War period, when you were asked to get out there and expand your wheat, expand your feed grains, expand your soybeans, and we even told the farm cooperatives to expand their storage. After they had done their job real well and fed a nation and helped feed half the world, there were a number of people who went around scolding the farmers because they produced too much. They said they had too many storage facilities. President Lyndon Johnson comes from Texas and lives on the banks of the Pedernales and is a rancher himself, and Hubert H. Humphrey, born in South Dakota, his grandfather a farmer in Day County on his mother's side, and his grandfather on his father's side a farmer in Dakota County, Minnesota, and his father a small town druggist that served the farm area. Hubert Humphrey, Vice President of the United States, and Lyndon Johnson, President of the United States, are not going to turn their backs on American agriculture. You can remember that you have two friends in the two front offices.

Well, this is the news that I give you today--about production, about needs, and its good news for our farmers, and its good news for our consumers, and its good news for the hungry people throughout the world. And as that American farmer rises to this challenge, his government is determined that he

shall stand on equal footing with the rest of the economy, that he shall have every opportunity for a fair and just return on his investment, his time, his energy and his extraordinary skill. We don't intend to have American agriculture be the cushion for the rest of the nation, to take all the body blows of inflation. We intend that American agriculture shall have a fair return on its investment, and we intend to keep our promise, not only the promise of this President and this Vice President, but the promise that's been given throughout the years by other Presidents, namely parity of income and parity of opportunity for the American farmer.

I submit that it's not an idle dream, but it's a realistic goal that can be achieved for the adequately sized family farm in the decade of the 60's. I believe that the record of progress since the 1960 period demonstrates that we can fulfill our commitments. It's been a struggle, it's been difficult, and we know that progress doesn't come quickly. Sometimes it comes slowly, and sometimes by inches rather than giant strides, but we're making that progress.

When President Truman looked out on a turbulent and poverished world in 1949 he had little immediate hope that this nation and our partners would in his lifetime be able to change the conditions of poverty and hunger, but today we are able to change them, and we're going to dream big, and we're going to think big, and we're going to act big and humbly, because we're able to do so in a large part because of the energy and the productivity of American agriculture. Today our abundance is a weapon for peace and freedom, and today your America is waging three mighty wars, wars that everyone of us can join in on--the war against hunger, the war against disease and the war against ignorance. Only two weeks ago I heard President Johnson say to his Cabinet that the three pillars of the foreign policy of this country in terms of assistance overseas were education, help and food, and regretablely my friends all we hear about is the war in Vietnam. But there is another war going on there, too, not just a war

on the battlefield and in the jungles but the war against social misery, the war against poverty and ignorance, the war to build a better country, and it's being built under the most adverse of circumstances. New farm production, new schools, new school books, new hospitals, oh, if I but had the time to tell you today.

I ask you my fellow Americans to remember when you hear criticism of your country that you can remember that no nation has given so much in the cause of peace, and no nation has made such a determined effort in the history of mankind to fulfill the promises of justice and equal opportunity. We are committed as a people and a nation to what Abraham Lincoln called the last best hope on earth. And you remember when he said, "We'll either meanly lose it or nobly save it." And we're going to save it by doing what we ought to do at home and abroad, helping the impoverished when they need help, lifting the sights of our people to higher ground and being a leader worthy of respect.

I leave you with what your children start their day with, and that message is one to me that's more than just memorizing the Pledge of Allegiance and carrying within those words in the Pledge of Allegiance of our Flag the commitments of this nation to itself and to all of mankind. Your boy and your girl says it, and you ought to say it, too, and pause after every word because it carries with it the story of one nation. It carries with it the commitment of this nation to moral purposes, and it carries with it in its words the message of liberty and opportunity and priceless christian individuality. You remember the words: "One nation, under God, with liberty and justice for all." To do less would be to fail in our heritage and our responsibilities.

I want to thank each and every one of you for being good citizens. I ask you to put your faith not only in yourselves and in your country but in

that Divine Providence that has stood us so well throughout the entire history of our nation. Much has been given unto us and much is expected of us. I want the world to know that the people of rural America can not only produce as no other people, but that the people of rural America are filled with compassion and a sense of justice and a mission to help spread the message of freedom and opportunity throughout the lands of this earth.

Thank you very much.

- - - - -



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