

ADDRESS
The Honorable Hubert H. Humphrey
The Vice President
National Farmers Union Convention
Minneapolis, Minnesota
March 18, 1968

Thank you very much. Thank you very much, Mr. President. It seems like every meeting I go to I always have to start out by saying, "thank you Mr. President." And just in case I get a little bit too big for my boots back home, why The Mr. President comes up here to check on me a little bit. And not only that, to tell tales about me which I, well, which are only partially true. I really did get up in less than forty-five minutes this morning after he called.

I'm very happy that you've had the privilege of listening to my good friends, Senator Mondale and Congresswoman Sullivan. You couldn't have two finer representatives of the Congress of the United States and two better friends of the American people and, particularly, the American farmer, than these two very able congressional public servants. And, Leonor, I'm so happy to have you in Minnesota. We've worked--I liked that wink, too. Do that again--she's not only a very intelligent Congresswoman, she's very pretty, too. This very fine lady is one that has helped us so much in everything relating to the well being of the American people. I remember her great work for the food stamp program when we were working together trying to get that out of Congress and, just recently, her tremendous efforts and tremendous work in the truth-in-lending program to see to it that the American people, particularly the working people, the farm people, the low- and middle-income people, did not pay exorbitant interest rates, interest charges for farm credit.

You've done a great service for the American people, Leonor, and we want to thank you.

And over here to my left, your right, is this fellow who came down to Washington in that great 89th Session of Congress and he came back here to Minnesota and said, "You know, I've only been down here three months and I've got more work done and more accomplished in three months than Humphrey did in sixteen years." And now he says that it's true. And I don't believe I'll even deny it 'cause I can't think of anyone who has proven himself to be a more dedicated and able and powerful Member of the Congress in the sense of power for good than Senator Walter Mondale and, Fritz, we're proud of you and we wish to goodness that every Member of Congress had all the spunk and get-up-and-go and all the knowledge and brain power and all the people power and farm power that Walter Mondale has.

Well, we've had quite a day. You know, I wasn't so sure I was going to get to speak or not, but some of our friends who were out here with the Washington press corps would have told you, "Well, that's not unusual." I go to these meetings in Washington, D. C. and they're always waiting to see whether or not the President is going to come. He gives us a lot of surprises, you know. And I'll be sitting there and I'll have my notes tucked in my pocket and I'm just getting ready to get up and speak, and just about the time I get up and start to take the first deep breath, in he walks. And I have an understanding with him now that if he doesn't get there by at least 10:30 p.m. that I can bolt the doors and make my speech. And this morning, he arrived here by 10:30 a.m. so we let him speak.

And I'll tell you it was a wonderful occasion and I hope my dear friend, Tony Dechant, knows that the presence of the President here today, the President of the United States, was not important because of the message he gave us, but its

importance was also that he came here to the National Convention of the National Farmers Union, this great farm organization of farm families throughout America. It's an honor and a privilege to be here.

You sure do have a lot of the government here today . . . I hope you can take it. The President, Vice President, Chairman of the House Committee on Agriculture, this wonderful Congresswoman, this distinguished Senator from Minnesota. You're going to have the Secretary of Agriculture out here. You're really going to get a chance to see all of Washington--I hope you don't get unhappy about it all--I trust you'll like it.

I talked to Orville Freeman on the telephone just before I came down here and he told me, of course, that he's expecting to be out here with you this week--I believe Wednesday night--and he asked me to bring you his warm greetings right now. I told him a few things that I wanted him to bring along that the presidents of the state organizations had already told me about at noon. So, if Orville comes out here with a large suitcase, it isn't because he's bringing shirts. We had some program things that we were talking about and I want Ed Christianson and Tony Dechant to know that we're going to try to be as helpful as possible.

One other person I want to comment about here just for a minute. When I came to Washington as a young Senator in 1949, we had a great Secretary of Agriculture and I was one of his advocates. I'm happy to say that the President of the United States at that time, Mr. Truman, and the Secretary of Agriculture, Mr. Brannan, were both under attack by the opposition and even under attack by some of the democrats. It isn't unusual--

we seem to do a little of that. But I'm happy to tell you that then Senator Humphrey wasn't one of the attackers. I was one of the supporters of Mr. Truman, and I was one of the supporters of Charlie Brannan. And I've lived to see the day that the American people recognize that in Charlie Brannan they had a great Secretary of Agriculture, and in Harry Truman they had one of the greatest Presidents this country's ever had.

I knew Mondale couldn't take that. I'll let you in on it--the Senator's going to do a little work for me this afternoon. He always is. He's working for you 99 percent of the time and gives me 1 percent of the time and leaves none for himself. That's the kind of a man he is.

But in all sincerity, friends, I don't want to look at the history of the past except for an inspiration for the present. But isn't it interesting how people finally get a sense of perspective and judgment? The Brannan plan--oh, how they ridiculed it. Well, let me say to all of America that the proposals Charles Brannan made as Secretary of Agriculture, which were beaten down and ridiculed, are today in the law books and have helped the farmers of America survive during these years and, hopefully, to give them a better future. And believe me, you can walk out of this hotel and stop anybody on the street and say, "Name me five great American Presidents" and I'll bet my life that one of the five will be none other than that spunky, courageous man from Independence, Missouri, a fighting, courageous President who was a friend of the farmer and didn't hesitate to say so and prove it. Boy, am I a Truman Democrat. I just want you to know that I really am. Every time I get discouraged--and that does happen--I go down to Independence, Missouri and go in and just see him. And when I see that dear

man, I walk out feeling a little better, a little younger, just a little stronger, and a little more determined. Greatness-- greatness in his simplicity; greatness in his honor; greatness in his courage . . . and how they did berate him. I haven't forgotten, and I don't intend to, either. Because it's very difficult, may I say, to remember the little ones who took out after him, but you'll always remember the great one that survived.

Well, we had a good message this morning. I thought it was a humdinger. And I particularly liked it when the President got rid of those notes, just like I'm going to get rid of mine pretty quick, and really started talking to you. I'm going to talk to you today from some notes, but I'm going to basically talk to you from the heart. I think the members of this great organization know that I have never hidden my colors in terms of my friendship for the Farmers Union and my support of the programs and the policies that this great organization has advocated. I've gone up and down, the length and breadth of this state--not once, but a hundred times--even helped in organizing Farmers Union and proud of it because I've never known, I have not known a single request that the Farmers Union has ever made of their government or of their nation that ultimately wasn't good for the country. It's not a self-seeking organization. And there isn't a piece of legislation on the statute books today that's worthy of being called good legislation relating to agriculture that the Farmers Union didn't have something to do with. You can go back to the days of Franklin Delano Roosevelt right up to this particular time, and you'll find that the statutes that helped Mr. Farmer--that have helped

strengthen this farm economy--that had some consideration for the American farm family--that every one of those laws had the input and the inspiration and the backing of the National Farmers Union--everyone.

So I wish you well. I'm proud of you, proud to have had your support in my days in public life, but I'm particularly proud of your friendship. I'm sure everyone here knows that your officers are among my closest personal friends. I'm sure that some of you know that Ed Christianson here in Minnesota has been one of my closest advisors and personal friends, and I'm sure you know that the former President, Jim Patton, and now your President, Tony Dechant, are two of the kindest men, two of the men we look to, that Hubert Humphrey looks to and, more important, that President Lyndon Johnson looks to, for guidance and for counsel and sometimes for comfort--and we always get it.

Well, I don't suppose there's any hard news in that stuff, boys, but it's good for the soul. Let me tell you. One thing you learn about this politics is that when you got a friend they're precious, believe me, particularly if they stick with you, and I know where the friends are and we don't always have to look alike and we don't have to agree on everything and we don't always have to speak alike . . . we just have a sort of common philosophy--we happen to believe that this nation is quite a great place to be in--and this government of ours is one that is designed to serve the people.

I want to talk to you about the farm message of your President. I'm sure that Senator Mondale has done this. I spoke, I visited this noon, with the presidents of the state organizations and I said to them what I am now about to say to you,

that a message is a plan of action. It is not action, it is a plan of action. A message is a series of proposals around which we can rally. A message from the President is a line of direction toward which we can point, or a road that we can travel-- and that farm message, that agricultural message that the President sent to the Congress, is a charter of hope for American agriculture. It is a program of promise and of performance for American agriculture. And if it's good for the American farm community, the American agricultural community, then it's good for America. Make no mistake about it, because you cannot have a prosperous America and a depressed agriculture. You cannot have happy, peaceful cities and a growing plight of rural poverty. You cannot have a just America if there's inequity and injustice in rural America. And the one thing that President Johnson and your Vice President are trying to talk to this country about is that we're one great nation and that we have to move together-- that the problems of the city are the problems of rural America and the problems of rural America are also the problems of the city. And your President outlined that this morning when he pointed out how all too often we transfer the poverty of rural America into the slums of the city only to find it aggravated and intensified. This is why he emphasized in the moments he had with you the importance of social and economic policies and programs in rural America that lift the quality of life there, that help maintain an economic level in rural America that permits good living. Now, let's take a good look at that message. I've got some notes here and I'm going to run through them.

Point 1. This, getting right down to cases, calls for the extension of the Food and Agriculture Act of 1965. Now, why? Because as long as American farmers produce more than we can

consume, we're going to need the machinery in government to help balance supply and demand to avoid the income-depressing, farm-killing cycle of glut and scarcity. Now every farmer knows this and I think that every person that's near a farm producer knows it. This year the Food and Agriculture Act has faced its severest test.

Increased wheat and feed grain allotments for 1967 crops were followed by a series of unforeseen events, and you know in Washington we've got a phrase called the "credibility gap." Nobody quite knows what it means but it sounds interesting and that's why it becomes used more and more. Well, I suppose that you know you can get a little credibility gap if the weather gangs up on you and what happens? We had this year, contrary to all the predictions of all the experts, including ministers and economists, politicians and doctors, we had that world-wide bumper crop all over. Total smaller total demand, and that resulted in lower prices.

Ladies and gentlemen, you can no longer isolate the crop of one country from another. When you produce wheat, it's a world-wide crop. When you produce feed grains, it's a world-wide crop. This world of ours is smaller and the American farmer feels it almost more than any one else. Thirty-five to forty years ago, the American farmer could pretty well judge what was going to happen to his prices by what happened in production in America. No longer, because of the rapid communication, because of the market systems that we have, because of transportation, because of financing. All of the world production comes into one pool, not a series of little lakes like it was 25-40 years ago, but one big ocean. And when that ocean's levels rise, prices fall and they fall world-wide.

Well, that's what happened this past year. We didn't plan it that way. It was no mean, nasty trick on the part of the President or the Secretary of Agriculture, and I'm not going to blame God. . . I need Him on my side. But it happened, and we didn't know it was going to happen. And I didn't know that it was going to be as dry this winter as it's been and I didn't know it was going to rain today. You just can't predict all these things and that's why we need these farm programs. Well this act, I think, this Food and Agriculture Act, passed a pretty severe test. Its direct payments provided the margin between profit and loss to a great many farmers. It provided an additional 48 cents for each bushel of wheat, 15 cents for each pound of cotton, 20 cents for each bushel of corn, and I'll tell you, my dear friends, had we had none of these programs, agricultural income would have been reduced by one third--and that's a most conservative estimate.

And we wouldn't have had these programs had you folks not fought for them, had you not have taken the constructive policy line of going down the legislative route--not to fight out on the streets but coming down to fight in Washington--and to work to see that a farm program became law.

You know, I had a little something to do with that law when I was the majority whip with the United States Senate. I helped to pass a farm bill three times in one year before we finally got it to the President of the United States--three times because we kept losing it either in the Senate one time or in the House another time. And where were you? You were right there in the front line, helping us get it. I think you know what the alternative would have been without this act: Lower prices,

lower income. Indeed, the specialists tell us that farm income, as I said, would have dropped as much as a third back to the 1959 levels--wheat at \$1.10 a bushel, corn at 75 cents. Now the President explicitly recognizes that the present act can be improved and we need to work closely with you to improve it.

Now, what's Point 2 of this message? A three-year extension for the Food for Freedom Act. I'm only going to take a minute. The Food for Freedom Act goes far beyond the old Food for Peace Act, of which I was one of the co-sponsors. You know I'm talking about some of my own children here. I'm not one of these fellows that's been out here on the sidelines--I've been in the middle of the fight, and every farmer in this audience knows it. Some of these Johnny-come-latelys, farm specialists that don't know the difference between a ukelele and a corn cob, don't impress me greatly, I'll tell you.

Well, this Food for Freedom Act recognizes that this world of ours needs this blessing of food and fiber in a world that knows too much of hate and selfishness. Our food aid programs have stood out year after year as a great humanitarian beacon of hope and that, within itself, is an ample justification of the Food for Freedom program.

Let me just say to this audience something that I don't have in these notes . . . that this world of ours faces the specter of famine in ten years. We ought to remember that. Every prediction that's being made today by any specialist, scientist or economist or agricultural expert tells us that unless there is literally a miracle breakthrough, mankind in many parts of this world faces the specter of wholesale famine. This is why Food for Freedom becomes important . . . this is why what I'm about

to talk about--this Reserve program--becomes important. This is why we must preserve our American agricultural system, because we have the most efficient system of agriculture that the world has ever know. And we've got to keep it working, together. We can't afford to dissipate it in the name of cost accounting or in the name of some kind of theoretical efficiency or in the name of what they call change. No part of the American economy is more efficient. No part of the American economy has changed more with the times. No part of the American economy has done more for more people, with fewer people doing it than the American agricultural economy, and every city dweller (and this will get me a bad headline in New York and I know it, but let it go anyway), every city dweller owes a debt of gratitude to the farm producers of America because the farmers have subsidized the food bill for hundreds and thousands, yea, millions of American people.

And that is as true as any man can make a statement. The share of the dollar spent for food today is less than it's been for years. And when I hear people say, "Well, we can't afford to have those farmers get paid a little more because it will cut into the consumer," let's remember we're all consumers and we'd all like to be bigger ones. You would be, but I learned in my dad's drugstore, when you don't have any money you're not a consumer, you're just a visitor, and there's a lot of difference.

Let me also point out that this overseas food assistance, and we poured it out in billions of dollars, billions of dollars, has not only been good compassion, peace and charity, but has been good business because today, American agricultural products find great markets in Japan and Turkey, Greece, Italy, Spain and other

parts of the world which once received food assistance as a gift, and who now are cash customers.

You know everybody talked about this balance of payments. Very few know what it means, but they talk a lot about it. It's one of the reasons we talk a lot about it. So, if you don't know what it means, you don't have to feel responsible, you know. Very few people understand the problem about gold except that there isn't as much of it around here as there used to be. But I'll tell you what you can understand--that if it were not for American agricultural exports that are dollar earners, gold earners for America, this American economy would be in serious trouble. American agricultural exports can compete with any agricultural economy and any agricultural product anywhere in the world. We can out-produce, we can outsell, we can out-distribute any country in the world when it comes to agricultural products. Pretty good record, I'd say, for just a bunch of farmers. Wouldn't you say so?

So when I say to you that food aid is more than being kind and good, it's more than good neighborliness--it's good business, it's good foreign policy, and it's one of the building blocks of peace. The late, beloved Pope John said, "Where there is constant want there is no peace." And when you think of peace, work for peace, want peace, you better think about food and fiber, you better think about God's children that are hungry, ill clothed, sick, the victims of poverty, hopelessness. There isn't any peace in that kind of a world. And I'm looking at more peace-makers in this audience than all the sign carriers put together across this country.

Now I want to talk to you about another little matter, and that is a program that relates to Point 3 of the President's message, namely, a National Food Bank for wheat, feed grains and soybeans. That's Point 3. We call this the food reserve. This isn't new, we've just been fighting for it for years. I can remember as a Senator when I introduced this legislation. We passed it a couple of times in the Senate, Lenore, but we couldn't get some of those folks over in the House to help us. You did, but we couldn't get some of them. Well, the food bank would serve multiple purposes. It would protect the consumer against food scarcity. It would protect the farmer against falling prices and would further cushion the ups and downs of any commodity program. This program has three critical ingredients and we need to have our people understand it.

A reserve owned by farmers under strengthened resale provisions in a price support program. The Johnson-Humphrey Administration has always believed that farmers should be able to retain their equity as long as possible, and the inventory in the hands of Commodity Credit Corporation should be reduced to a safe minimum. That is why we extended recently the resale privilege to warehouses. If we get this food reserve program, this food bank, we'll have for the first time the kind of assured stability with a forward movement of progress for agriculture that a continuing efficient and prosperous agriculture needs. And I appeal to you today to have your voices heard on Capitol Hill, to speak to your Congressmen and your Representatives and your Senators to see if we can't get this food bank, this great reserve program of commodities that the President discussed this morning, to see if we can't get this program on the statute books.

This particular proposal also provides authority for the Secretary of Agriculture to buy additional reserves at market prices without waiting until prices drop to support levels, and it provides insulation of the food bank from the commercial market. And one of the reasons we've been concerned over the years about the reserve program is that it might be used as a dumping mechanism to depress prices. The Administration proposal and the proposal supported by Congressman Poage and Senator Mondale is a proposal which will insulate these reserves from the commercial market so that the country can be sure of a food supply and the farmers can be sure of a decent price in the marketplace. That's the only kind of a reserve program that's worth while.

Now let's talk a little bit about Point 4. This is perhaps the most important of all the points in the President's message. All of the other programs put together require this program if we're really going to have an effective farm program, and I'm talking about increased bargaining power for the farmer in the American marketplace. This isn't the first time I've talked about it. And I'm proud, boy am I proud, to have a Senator from Minnesota who is the author of this bill . . . and there it is, S. 2973, by Senator Mondale . . . and I believe there are eighteen co-sponsors. If you will get behind this proposal, if you will go with every member of the Senate, if you will speak with your friends in the House--Republican or Democrat--(and there are several different kinds of Democrats this day, take any kind you want). Just go talk to them. If you go talk to them, talk to them plainly, talk to them constructively, talk to them patiently, talk to them insistently. I think we can get some action.

Tony Dechant was in Des Moines reminding the National Farm Institute last month that the farmer is the only businessman left in America who is still forced to sell his products at wholesale prices set by somebody else . . . that's a losing game, friends . . . and to buy his products at wholesale prices, also set by somebody else. Heads I win, tails you lose. When a farmer has to have his wholesale prices set by somebody else and the retail prices for the things he buys set by somebody else, he's in trouble. So, what we're talking about when we talk about bargaining power is to no longer permit the farmer to get what somebody else offers him, but to charge what he thinks is fair and reasonable for his commodity and to go into the competitive marketplace with his price tag on him. That's what you do when you buy a car or a plow or a tractor.

Yes, it's interesting, this kind of language. The farmer gets a certain price. Somebody else charges a certain price. When you go to see your lawyer or your doctor, your druggist, your hardware merchant, your implement dealer, he says if you want this service or this product, the price is so much. Mr. Farmer goes in with his commodities, somebody says, "Well, how ya doin, Jake. I'll give ya so much." When you're on the "give ya" line and the other fellas on the "charge ya" line, you're at the end of the line and you know it.

Real and effective bargaining power is long overdue, particularly for commodities like livestock, poultry, fruits and vegetables, which are not covered by any price support payment programs, and I have said already that we have this bill before us which has several titles in it, but Title I has the National Agriculture Relations Act. The National Agriculture

Relations Act, which was designed and conceived by the people in this organization. It was advocated many times by Tony Dechant and your officers, and may I say also, by that old firebrand from over at GTA, Bill Thatcher. I've heard him talk about it time after time.

Imagine what the labor movement would be without a National Labor Relations Board. Imagine what American agriculture can be with a National Agriculture Relations Act, which permits you to, in a sense, bargain for yourselves, organize for yourselves, within the rules laid down by public policy by government. It'll make a better America, friends.

Now, we don't know all of the how's and the if's and the and's of effective farm bargaining, but we know that it is possible. More importantly, we know that it is necessary and I want to make it quite clear now, lest there be any doubt, that the Johnson-Humphrey Administration is for it, and we're going to fight for it too.

The Farmers Union has a long record of building cooperatives. And you can't really have any prosperous, even a reasonably prosperous, farm economy without our cooperatives. They've already increased the farmer's voice in the marketplace and they're going to be a crucial element in this future bargaining strength. But let me re-emphasize that partnership between the farmers and the government is essential to bargaining power. If you're going to have effective bargaining, you can have it, you can do most of it yourself, but you're going to need the partnership with the friendly government, and be sure that it's friendly. I'll get to that a little later on.

Now, when you have the machinery, let me talk to you about bargaining for a minute. I've been thinking about this for several years and, as you know, this isn't my first time to talk to you about it. When you have the machinery to maintain a reasonable supply-demand balance like you have in your Food and Agriculture Act of 1965, only then farm bargaining power increases. When you allow farmers to reseal their grain on their farm or under their ownership, farm bargaining power increases. When you improve nutrition for children under the School Milk program, School Lunch, Food Stamp, Domestic Donation program, farm bargaining power increases. When you reduce unemployment, when you employ the hard-core unemployed, when you help people lift themselves out of poverty so that they become producing citizens and consuming citizens, and when you enable more Americans to have a decent diet--and this Administration has done these things more than any other--then farm bargaining power increases.

Remember, Mr. and Mrs. Farmer, every time you read that a hard-core unemployed worker in Harlem or Cleveland or Chicago or Detroit is employed, and he starts to earn a paycheck, you've helped yourself. He helps you because his standard of living comes up and he starts to consume, he starts to use food and fiber. So all of these programs are tied together. When you negotiate an international commodity agreement, as Tony Dechant and others helped us to do last summer over in Europe in the Kennedy Round trade negotiations, farm bargaining power increases. When you do any of these and all of these things you add to the sum total of your strength in the marketplace, you increase your bargaining and, with the National Agriculture Relations Act and with the improvement in commodity agreements and marketing agreements and marketing orders, then you begin to get strength so that

you can start determining your own destiny within the rules laid down by public policy. But, more importantly, with a partnership with your government. And it's bargaining power that can put the American farmer firmly on his two feet in the American marketplace. And that's why we're for it . . . it's good for this country.

Just imagine what America would have been like today with sweat-shop labor. Imagine what America would be like today if people weren't paid a living wage and a decent wage in our factories. And let me be quite candid with you, Mr. Farmer . . . every time a worker gets a decent wage, he's a better customer. And, Mr. Worker, let me be equally candid with you . . . every time a farmer gets a fair price he can buy what you produce in that factory--automobiles, textiles, home appliances. The thousand and one things that people want for what we call a good standard of living are only possible when people are paid a fair wage for their work and receive a fair price for their production. And when you get the fair wage and the fair price for production, you never fail to make a profit, Mr. Businessman. Profits are made, not out of the poor; profits are made out of the people who have decent income and decent prices and a decent reward for their work and their services. That's the way you do it in a great economy.

Your President emphasized this morning that we have a number of proposals to improve the general quality of life in rural America. And it's essential that we do so. Our young people are not going to stay in rural America just because the air is clean. As a matter of fact, pollution is extending that far out now. They're not going to stay in rural America just because they can read nice stories about grandfather and grandmother. They're not going to stay in rural America if they find

out they can earn more per hour working in a filling station than they can with a \$100 thousand or a \$50 thousand investment on the farm. And they're not going to stay in rural America either after they've had a highschool education, and many of them a college education, when they find out that the schools are not as good or that the hospitals are not as good, or that the library is non-existent, or that the town is starting to dry up.

So we have to get in this country an urban-rural balance. Part of the answer to the problem of the over-crowded city is a better and more modern American countryside . . . not to keep the boys simply down on the farm, but to see that this great population explosion that we have in America . . . which will increase our population by 100 million people between now and the year 2000 . . . that those 100 million will not just filter into the over-crowded metropolitan centers but they'll find opportunity and they'll find decent living--they'll find a good wage--they'll find a wholesome environment out in what we call rural America. And part of all of that means that the producers of food and fiber in rural America must share equitably, must share fairly in the economic growth and the prosperity of this nation. It isn't good enough any longer just to conjure up beautiful memories about this wonderful countryside of ours.

You can't live on memories. You can't live on fiction. You cannot live even on nice poetry. Your young men and women have television and can see what's going on in this world. They are better educated than any generation in our history. They're going to want a modern community next door. They're going to want a decent home on their farm if they're going to live there.

They're going to want running water--that's not the name of an Indian Chief, you know. They're going to want inside sanitary facilities, they're going to want a modern living experience. And if we're going to have it we're going to have to do the things that we've done for our urban communities and then some. I'm happy to tell you that as your Vice President, I chair a Cabinet committee of the top Cabinet officers of this government to try to bring to bear in rural America today more and more of these programs for better roads, for sanitary facilities, for hospitals, for schools, for cultural centers, for new industries, so that if some members of the family who live out in the country and produce food and fiber wish to go to town and work in the factory, there'll be a factory there; that they don't have to run off to Chicago or even to Minneapolis, or to Peoria or someplace else; they can be near Worthington, or Huron, or Butte, or some other place. I think I know these communities.

Well, we have Operation Out-Reach which will continue to bring ninety federal programs designed to improve everything from health to housing, from education to economic development right out in the countryside.

So parity for the farmer today is not just parity of price, it's parity of living, because man does not live by bread alone. Parity of living--all of the benefits that come with a good American life.

Now for the final words to you--I want to talk to you--and I'm very reluctant to do this, as you know. I'd like to reluctantly talk a little to you about politics. All kinds of politics. Republican politics; Democratic politics; concerned Democratic politics; Republican conservatives--we've got all kinds of politics in this country.

And I want to talk to you about farm politics for a minute. You're practical people. And passing farm programs is a practical business. What's the use of standing here at these meetings and talking about a legislative program if we're not going to do anything about it. And I know how important it is to pass these programs.

But I'll tell you something else, friends . . . it's important to find out who your friends are and who your enemies are, and even if you can't pass them, you ought to get a vote on them and then you have your day. I tell you you never, you just cannot imagine how pious and how repenting a man can be the closer he comes to hanging. And the closer that people become--the closer that people in Congress and elsewhere come to that election--the more they seem to see in you and I think you ought to take a look and see what's in them. And having been down in Washington for twenty years, there's only one way to find out. Have the ayes and the nays, the yesses and the nos, call the roll, because when they call the roll in Congress there is no little line that says maybe. It's either yes or no, and then you can find out who your friends are and who your enemies are.

And I'm going to give you that old Samuel Gompers labor leader formula--punish your enemies and reward your friends--and if you find some in the Democratic Party that haven't been helping you, you know what to do about it. And if you want to look over in the other party, the hunting will be much better. You'll know what to do about it.

I remind this audience that on Election Day in November, you're going to negotiate a four-year contract and it's not subject to renegotiate in the middle . . . a four-year contract

for whoever is to be President--a two-year contract for your Congressman--a six-year contract for your Senators, if you have a Senator up in your state . . . and every one of them are final. Very seldom do we impeach anybody or recall them around this country. So whatever you vote for on that day, until the next election do us part, you're stuck with them. And you better be careful. You're going to the marketplace of political decision to decide what happens to American agriculture.

I happen to be one that maybe has a slightly prejudiced point of view about this. You have to take that into consideration. I think you already have.

That reminds me of a story that I heard about a football team--and we tell it down in Washington. We've got what we call the "Redskins" down there. Shows how far this country's come--we're even willing to have some Reds around Washington--some Redskins. Otto Graham's our coach. He used to play football at Northwestern University. They tell this story about a young fellow that came out of college and this great professional football team was looking for talent. Otto Graham was interviewing this half-back and this half-back said, "Listen, coach, I'm good. I can run a hundred yards fully uniformed in ten seconds." The coach said, "That's almost impossible." He said, "Well, I can do it. I've been doing it all the time." And then the fellow said, "And that's not all coach. Listen, my average punt last year was 72 yards." The coach looked at him disbelieving. He said, "That's a fact, coach. You can look at my record. My average punt is 72 yards." The coach said, "Well, that's fantastic--that's phenomenal. The player said, "But that isn't all. My average pass for the last three years, and I played varsity at the University for three years, was fifty-two

yards, and I was always on target." Coach Graham said, "My goodness. I've never heard anything like it. You are the most incredible, you are the most fantastic football player I've ever heard of. Now, you've told me all about your assets, do you have any limitations?" And this young fellow said, "Well, coach, I do exaggerate a bit."

And I suppose when you're in political life, you tend to once in a while get a little over-exuberant. Well, I'd just like to take a few minutes to tell you that you take off ten percent now if you wish to for exuberance. But I don't think you have to take off that much. First of all, I believe that we have a President today whose record as a Senator, whose record as a Congressman, whose record as President is clear and unequivocal pro farmer. We have a President who's fought from the days that he served in the House of Representatives to the White House for fair prices, for a decent profit for the farmer, for protection from the speculator, and the unpredictable forces of the market, and the health and welfare of rural America.

I served in that Senate with him for sixteen years and I'll challenge anyone in this office, in this audience, to find one time that Lyndon Johnson, Senator, or Lyndon Johnson, Congressman, did not support the program that the Farmers Union had before the Congress of the United States for American agriculture. He believes in parity for American agriculture--not just parity of price but of opportunity and living. I doubt if you've forgotten the effects of some neglect . . . and it was some Republican neglect . . . a few years ago. I haven't. I was serving in the Senate when you people used to come to me when we had another Secretary of Agriculture. I really miss

that fellow. I made some of the best speeches of my life in the name of Benson, but I don't blame just him alone.

Farm income dropped a full twenty percent in eight years. And that's net income. I know it's not as good now as I'd like it or as you'd like it, but, oh, let me tell you it looks like a paradise compared to what it was back eight years ago. . . . down \$2½ billion and by 1960 the Commodity Credit Corporation had \$8 billion worth of surplus supplies in stock. And we've been bailing ourselves out of that surplus ever since. I know what that meant out here in Minnesota. I don't think this nation or its food producers wants to go through it again.

I think you've got a different situation today. I know that you have a friend in the President and in the Vice President and in those who have been with you here today. But it takes a lot more than a strong determined friend of the farmer in the White House to enact sound farm legislation. Much of what I've said here today will just be another speech unless we can get it through Congress. The people in Congress ultimately set the policy and there's nothing automatic about Congress adopting farm programs anymore. Particularly when some Senators and some Representatives, even from rural districts, vote against them.

So keep this in mind when you look over your presidential and congressional candidates in the months ahead. Find out where they and their supporters stand on farm prices, farm programs, farm bargaining, Food for Freedom, the Reserve bill, the Food Bank. Ask them, and then take a look at the list of sponsors of the Curtis bill . . . the Curtis bill--that's farm poison you know--agricultural arsenic--a program to eliminate all farm programs and introduced by a prominent member of the House of Representatives . . . and plenty of people who support

it, as Lenore Sullivan can tell you here today. It includes the names of some of the Republicans who voted 110 to 14 to kill the 1965 Farm Act. You know I've been down there fighting with these fellows . . . if I sort of wiggle and wobble a little bit, it's still that I'm suffering from the blows. I know what it takes, so do you.

Democrats, farm and city alike, provided the margin to get that 1965 act through. We got more votes out of Chicago Democrats than we got out of farm Republicans. Somebody said to me, "Now what in the world has happened?" Why don't we do better in the Ninetieth Congress? Well, I'll tell you why. I was talking to our friend here from Iowa. When you lose three or four good congressmen from the state of Iowa who voted solidly for the farm program, who backed the Farmers Union program, who backed the Administration program . . . when you lose forty-seven congressmen in one election that went down the line for you, you don't need to look any further as to why you have trouble. Believe me.

Sam Rayburn, the Speaker of the House, used to say that any mule can kick a barn down, but it takes a good carpenter to build one. Well, we've got some barn kickers around, and they've been kicking. I urge you to ask some pointed questions before you step up to the polls, not just questions on peace and war, not just questions on taxes and on beautification or on highway construction, but ask some questions, too, about your program.

There are many issues that confront the American people. There's a lot of unfinished business ahead of us in America and a lot of unfinished business for American agriculture. And it's going to take some builders and not barn wreckers to carry on

and, hopefully, to finish that business.

Now, my fellow Americans, you've been kind to me again today. You've listened to my message and, in a very real sense, my plea to you. Cause if there's been one lesson that I've learned in my public life, it is that no man alone can do very much. You can be an advocate, you can speak, you can work, and you can vote, but it takes a lot of us pulling together, building together. Ben Franklin once said we're either going to hang together or we're going to hang separately. And you're not going to find very much success in the future unless you're able to find people that you can work with and build with to help create the kind of America that we want.

And I don't come here just to tell you to think of the farmer. I come here to tell you to think of your country, to think of every part of it, to think of every city, to think of every county and every state . . . to remember that this is one nation and it needs your help. Your President asked for it today. I shall not repeat his words. I ask you to remember just this . . . that every American is entitled to his chance whether he's black or white, city or rural, poor or rich. He's entitled to his chance to live and to work and to be himself, and he's entitled from this government of ours to at least have the gates of opportunity thrown open so if he can bring to bear his talents and his capacities, possibly he can make something out of his life.

We're in a great adventure in this America of ours today. An adventure in opportunity. Millions of our fellow Americans that never before even knew what it was to realize first-class citizenship are beginning to . . . beginning to taste it, beginning to have it. Millions of people have been broken out

of the prison and bondage of poverty in the last four or five years. We've expanded our programs in education more in three years than we did in one hundred. We've increased our programs in health for the young, for the elderly in medical research, 300 percent in four years. We have created a great partnership in this country. At least we're in the beginning of creating one between the government and the people. Just last Saturday I stood with a thousand of the corporate directors of this country and some of the top labor leaders talking to them about business and labor joining together in a mighty effort, in an alliance, to provide jobs, not relief, not a dole . . . but jobs--good-paying jobs for the hard-core unemployed. It's a difficult assignment, but one that has to be done.

I've gone the length and breadth of this country as your Vice President. I've been in over 500 of the communities of this nation. I've traveled over a half million miles. I've been with the richest of the rich and the poorest of the poor. I've been in the penthouses and the palaces, and I've been in the slums and the dirty, filthy shacks. I think I know a little bit about what's going on in this country. Some of our fellow Americans would have you believe that America is sick. I tell you it's not sick at all. America is going through a great change. It's in ferment, it's restless, and a person that's sick doesn't have the strength for ferment and for change and for restlessness. A great moral decision is being made in this country--a decision about people. That decision is that if you bear the title "Citizen of the United States," you have the greatest title that anybody can give you . . . and that as a citizen of this Republic, regardless of your station in life, regardless of your color, or your religion, or your political affiliation, you're entitled to a fair break . . . you're

entitled to a chance. And we are breaking through the barriers of yesterday, the barriers of race, the barriers of class, the barriers of discrimination, the barriers of hate and, at long last, we're beginning to stand up like real Americans. Oh, I know its troublesome, and I know that those who preach doom and despondency and despair can make a wonderful case unless you start to examine it.

But there's never been a time when there were great changes in the world that there wasn't turbulence and tension and some degree of restlessness--never . . . always been the same. When labor unions were organized, when the industrial age came upon us, when political democracy was on the march . . . always what some people call trouble . . . but what I call the growing pains of a free people.

In a very little while I'll take off in a plane and fly back to Washington. I've looked at the weather map, and I've used this analogy because it's so true. And, like you, I always wonder how, what kind of a flight it's going to be, but I've been told they're going to go out of a low, with rain and clouds and fog, and we're finally--after we get out around Detroit--we're going to come into a high. And the pilot has already said, 'Mr. Vice President, when we go through that fine line between the low and the high, you're going to have some turbulence, so put on your seat belt.'

Ladies and gentlemen, you've all traveled, you know of what I speak. And when you're going through that turbulence, you don't get up and start running around the cabin shouting and hollering and then want to throw the pilot out. They used to say, don't change horses in the middle of the stream. I say,

don't change pilots in the middle of a storm. And believe me, if you stay with us, and if you have faith in your country and what it stands for, faith in yourself, of the knowledge of this country and its great resources, with a commitment of yourself and your courage and your energy, we're going to get out of this turbulent period. We're going to get through this band of storm clouds, and we're going to come into the bright sunlight of a better day. We'll be in the high of American democracy. That's what's happening in this country. That's what's happening in this world.

All over the world there's this restlessness, and it's not bad. Not bad, my friends, except for those that will it. For the strong and the brave and the conscientious and the determined, and people that know what they want and are willing to make some sacrifices for it, I swear to you that if we stick with what we're doing at home and abroad, if we do not yield, if we do not panic, if we do not retreat, if we do not despair, if we will be the kind of Americans we think we are and that we say we are, that we've got a better day coming, the likes of which no nation has known.

Boy, am I proud to live at this time and be a part of this history . . . proud to be an American in the last third of the twentieth century because, as surely as I stand before you, I know that in the decade ahead America will be even better than the America that you and I have known.

Thank you, and good luck!

Monday, PM's
March 18, 1968OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

REMARKS
VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY
NATIONAL FARMERS UNION CONVENTION
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

MARCH 18, 1968

"The farm was here before the factory....

"America was built on a foundation of farms and ranches supplying the food and fiber for a bountiful and restless nation.

"It was the farmer's qualities -- his hard work and perseverance, his independence and initiative -- which gave strength to a Nation's character.

"Agriculture, our first industry, remains our greatest. It is the vital center of our economy -- fueling our industry and commerce, feeding our people and the hungry of the world....

"But the American farmer, who helped to build America's prosperity, still does not fully -- or fairly -- share in it."

Those are not the words of Tony Dechant -- though they might well be.

Those words are from President Johnson's new message to the Congress on agriculture.

And the unfair, unjust paradox of inadequate incomes for the very industry and the very people who provide the keystone of American prosperity is what that message is designed to correct.

Inadequate farm income means more than an unfair break for the farmer.

It means an entire rural economy held back.

It means transferring poverty from a rural setting to an urban slum -- a cruel gamble and a disservice to all.

It means infringement of a fundamental American freedom -- freedom to choose where to live and where to work -- for millions of young Americans who can see no future on the farms and homesteads they love.

Now you and I have been getting together off and on over the last few years to read the health chart on American agriculture.

The chart didn't look too good back in the 'fifties -- higher and higher outlays by the taxpayer for farm programs, and less and less income for the farmer.

The chart has turned up in the sixties...net farm income up 55 per cent today...exports at an all-time high of 6.8 billion dollars in 1967...inventories below a billion dollars for the first time since 1953.

But you know and I know that the patient is still a long way from perfect health.

And all of us who have struggled with the complexities of farm legislation over the years know that there aren't any miracle remedies on the shelf.

There is, however, in this year's farm message, the most comprehensive, reasoned, clear and bold farm program ever set down by any American President.

It is your program. Your leaders had a great deal to do with what it says, and you've been for everything that's in it.

The Johnson-Humphrey Administration says to the American farmers: We don't presume to take care of you. But we do mean to work closely with you as partners to see that you can fully and fairly take care of yourselves in the marketplace...at home and abroad...now and for years and decades to come.

Let's take a closer look at that message.

Point one calls for a permanent extension of the Food and Agriculture Act of 1965.

As long as the farms of America produce more than we can consume, we are going to need machinery to balance supply and demand -- to avoid the income-depressing, farm-killing cycle of glut and scarcity.

This year the Food and Agriculture Act of 1965 faced its severest test. Increased wheat and feedgrain allotments for 1967 crops were followed by a series of unforeseen events: world-wide bumper crops, smaller total demand -- and lower prices for the farmer.

But I submit to you that the 1965 Act passed the test this year. Its direct payments provided the margin between profit and loss for a great many farmers -- an additional 48 cents for each bushel of wheat -- 15 cents for each pound of cotton...20 cents for each bushel of corn.

You know what the alternative would have been without the Act -- lower cash prices and no government payments to cushion the impact. Indeed the specialists tell us that farm income could have dropped as much as a third -- back to 1959 levels...wheat at a dollar and ten cents a bushel... corn at 75 cents.

The President explicitly recognizes that the present Act can be improved, and we mean to work closely with you to improve it.

But let's extend it permanently now, so that the farmer, like any other businessman, can do his planning in advance and never be the innocent victim of a program lapse.

Point two: A three year extension of the Food for Freedom Act.

Last year you and your fellow American farmers kept literally millions of people in developing countries around the world from starvation. You improved the diets of millions more.

In a world that knows too much of hate and selfishness, our food aid programs have stood out year after year as a humanitarian beacon of hope. That in itself is ample justification for the Food for Freedom Program.

But there is more than the humanitarian justification. Food aid has meant economic development which in turn has created new markets for American agricultural products. Japan, Turkey, Greece, Italy, Spain and many countries which have received assistance under U.S. food aid programs are now among our best dollar customers for farm exports.

Food aid is more than good-neighborliness. It is good business.

And in a hungry world, strong, productive, independent American family farms amount to no less than a massive defense system in the cause of peace. No other nation can equal it.

Food power -- and the food aid programs which you and I have fought so hard for over the years -- are America's exclusive tool for building a safer, freer world.

This Nation should pay its producers a fair price for that food power -- and use it to the full.

Point three of the President's message is creation of a National Food Bank for wheat, feedgrains, and soy beans.

The Food Bank would serve multiple purposes -- protecting the consumer against food scarcity...protecting the farmer against falling prices...and further cushioning the ups and downs that are part of any commodity program.

This program has three critical ingredients:

-- A reserve owned by farmers under strengthened resale provisions in the price support program. The Johnson-Humphrey Administration has always believed that farmers should be able to retain their equity as long as possible, and that the inventory in the hands of the Commodity Credit Corporation should be reduced to a safe minimum. That is why we recently extended the resale privilege to warehouses;

-- Authority for the Secretary of Agriculture to buy additional reserves at market prices -- without waiting until prices drop to support levels;

-- Insulation of the Food Bank from the commercial market.

We introduced legislation for a Food Bank of this kind in the Congress last year. Now let's pass it.

Now point four is perhaps the most important, and all the other programs are calculated to support it: Increased bargaining power for the farmer in the American marketplace.

As Tony Dechant reminded the National Farm Institute last month: The farmer is the only businessman left in America who is still forced to sell his products at wholesale prices set by somebody else...and to buy his production supplies at retail prices, also set by someone else.

Real and effective bargaining power for the American farmer is long overdue -- especially in livestock, poultry, fruits and vegetables which are not covered by price support and payment programs.

I am happy to say that a great young Senator, Walter Mondale, has introduced a bill in the Senate along the lines of the National Agricultural Relations Act Tony Dechant and Bill Thatcher have been urging for so long.

We still don't know all the "how's" of effective farm bargaining. But we know it is possible...it is necessary... and the Johnson-Humphrey Administration is for it.

The Farmer's Union has a long-standing record of building farm cooperatives. Cooperatives have already increased the farmer's voice in the marketplace, and will be a crucial element in future bargaining strength.

But let me also re-emphasize that partnership between the farmers and government is essential to bargaining power.

When you have the machinery to maintain a reasonable supply-demand balance -- and only then -- farm bargaining power increases.

When you allow farmers to resell their grain, farm bargaining power increases.

When you improve nutrition for children under school milk, school lunch, Food Stamp and domestic donation programs, farm bargaining power increases.

When you reduce unemployment, help people lift themselves out of poverty, and enable more Americans to afford a decent diet -- and this Administration has done those things -- farm bargaining power increases.

When you negotiate an international commodity agreement, as Tony Dechant and others helped us do last summer in the Kennedy Round trade negotiation in Geneva, farm bargaining power increases.

And it is bargaining power that can put the American farmer firmly on his own two feet in the American marketplace.

Finally, there are proposals to improve the general quality of life in rural America for all who live there and all who wish they could.

"Operation Outreach," begun last year, will continue to bring 90 federal programs designed to improve everything from health to housing...from education to economic development...right into the countryside.

Parity for the American farmer will mean little without parity for his community...parity in everything that belongs to a modern American standard of living for every rural citizen: Meaningful job opportunities...decent housing...adequate diets...the chance to lead a full and productive life.

* * *

My Fellow Minnesotans know very well that I am reluctant to talk politics -- especially when there is an election only a few months away.

But you are practical people -- and passing farm programs is a very practical business.

Farm bargaining power is going to be tested on election day in November.

On election day you are going to negotiate a four-year contract -- and it won't be subject to renegotiation.

On election day you are going into the marketplace of political decision to decide what happens to American agriculture -- and to all those programs the Farmers Union has fought for long and hard.

Today we have a President whose record is clear and unequivocal.

We have a President who has fought as a Senator and in the White House for American agriculture...for fair prices with a decent profit for the farmer...for protection from the speculator and the unpredictable forces of the market...for the health and welfare of rural America.

He believes in parity for American agriculture...in full and equal opportunity for every farm family and agricultural producer.

I doubt if you've forgotten the effects of the Republican neglect a few years ago.

Farm income dropped a full 20 per cent in eight years -- down two and a quarter billion dollars. By 1960 the Commodity Credit Corporation held eight billion dollars worth of stock.

I know what that meant here in Minnesota and throughout the country -- and I don't think this nation or its food producers can afford to go through it again.

Yes, American agriculture has a good friend in President Lyndon Johnson.

But it takes more than a strong, determined, friend-of-the-farmer in the White House to enact sound farm legislation.

Much of what I have discussed today has to get through the Congress before it can do America's farm economy any good.

And there is nothing automatic about Congress adopting farm programs any more -- particularly when Senators and Representatives from rural districts vote against them. We can no longer depend on a strong bipartisan farm bloc like the one we had until the 1950's.

Keep this in mind when you look over your Congressional candidates in the months ahead.

Find out where they and their supporters stand on farm prices...and farm programs...and farm bargaining.

Take a look, also, at the list of sponsors of the Curtis Bill -- a proposal to eliminate all farm programs.

It also includes the names of some of the Republicans who voted 110 to 14 to kill the 1965 Farm Act. Democrats, farm and city alike, provided the margin to get that bill through.

As Sam Rayburn used to say, "Any donkey can kick a barn down, but it takes a good carpenter to build one."

So I urge you to ask some pointed questions before you step into the polls. There is a lot of unfinished business ahead of us in American agriculture and it is going to take builders, not barn wreckers, to finish it.

* * *

President Johnson concluded his message in these words:

"The stability and endurance of the farmer are a priceless part of our nation's heritage. His love of the land expressed the American dream -- that a man should be able to shape his own destiny with his own hands.

"The American farmer today stands in the proud tradition of his fathers.

"But he is faced, as no generation before him, with the problems of an accelerating technology. It is bringing fundamental and forceful change to the farmer and the rural community."

Some voices today express doubt that the American farm and the American farmer can survive. They say we must sacrifice that priceless heritage...that American dream on the altar of progress.

I doubt it.

Yes, there has been technological change, and it has brought pluses and minuses to the American farm, just as to the rest of our society.

Yes, there are stresses and strains...changes in labor and living patterns...disappointments as well as new opportunities. That will be true in every segment of American society for the foreseeable future.

But the world must eat.

The ability of the American consumer to pay for his food is rapidly increasing.

Labor productivity is rising more than twice as fast on the American farm as it is in the non-farm sector of our economy.

Our opportunities to export food will keep going up.

All of that means opportunity for the American farmer.

And who would assert that the American farmer is less resourceful...less responsive to new opportunity...less innovative than other Americans?

If the farmers of America speak up courageously and forcefully in their own behalf...if we and you together have the patience and determination to preserve and improve our agricultural programs...if we trust our hopes and not our fears, American agriculture can prosper as never before.

And rural America can continue to stand for that which is best in all America.

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*Mrs Sullivan
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REMARKS

*Ed Chert
Tony
Dechant*

VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY
NATIONAL FARMERS UNION CONVENTION

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Braun*

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

MARCH 18, 1968

Rosal Harbo

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Waltham
Lenore Sullivan

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Truth
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Ⓟ Food
Stamp

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└ We still don't know all the "how's" of effective farm bargaining. └ But we know it is possible... it is necessary... and the Johnson-Humphrey Administration is for it.

└ The Farmer's Union has a long-standing record of building farm cooperatives. └ Cooperatives have already increased the farmer's voice in the marketplace, and will be a crucial element in future bargaining strength.

└ But let me also re-emphasize that partnership between the farmers and government is essential to bargaining power.

└ When you have the machinery to maintain a reasonable supply-demand balance -- and only then -- farm bargaining power increases.

└ When you allow farmers to resell their grain, farm bargaining power increases.

↳ When you improve nutrition for children under
school milk, school lunch, Food Stamp and domestic *food*
donation programs, farm bargaining power increases.

↳ When you reduce unemployment, help people lift
themselves out of poverty, and enable more Americans to
afford a decent diet -- and this Administration has done
those things -- farm bargaining power increases.

↳ When you negotiate an international commodity
agreement, as Tony Dechant and others helped us do
last summer in the Kennedy Round trade negotiation in
Geneva, farm bargaining power increases.

↳ And it is bargaining power that can put the American
farmer firmly on his own two feet in the American marketplace.

ⓧ Finally, there are proposals to improve the general
quality of life in rural America for all who live there
and all who wish they could.

↳ "Operation Outreach," begun last year, will continue to bring 90 federal programs designed to improve everything from health to housing... from education to economic development... right into the countryside.

↳ Parity for the American farmer will mean little without parity for his community...parity in everything that belongs to a modern American standard of living for every rural citizen: Meaningful job opportunities...decent housing...adequate diets...the chance to lead a full and productive life.

* * *

↳ My Fellow Minnesotans know very well that I am
"reluctant" to talk politics -- especially when there is an election only a few months away.

But you are practical people -- and passing farm programs is a very practical business.

└ Farm bargaining power is going to be tested on election day in November.

└ On election day you are going to negotiate a four-year contract -- and it won't be subject to renegotiation.

└ On election day you are going into the marketplace of political decision to decide what happens to American agriculture -- and to all those programs the Farmers Union has fought for long and hard.

└ Today we have a President whose record is clear and unequivocal.

└ We have a President who has fought as a Senator and in the White House for American agriculture... for fair prices with a decent profit for the farmer... for protection from the speculator and the unpredictable forces of the market... for the health and welfare of rural America.

L He believes in parity for American agriculture...in full and equal opportunity for every farm family and agricultural producer.

L I doubt if you've forgotten the effects of Republican neglect a few years ago.

L Farm income dropped a full 20 per cent in eight years -- down two and a quarter billion dollars. By 1960 the Commodity Credit Corporation held eight billion dollars worth of stock.

L I know what that meant here in Minnesota and throughout the country -- and I don't think this nation or its food producers can afford to go through it again.

L Yes, American agriculture has a good friend in President Lyndon Johnson.

└ But it takes more than a strong, determined, friend-
of-the-farmer in the White House to enact sound
farm legislation.

└ Much of what I have discussed today has to get
through the Congress before it can do America's farm
economy any good.

└ And there is nothing automatic about Congress adopting
farm programs any more -- particularly when ^{some} Senators and ^{some}
Representatives from rural districts vote against them. └ We
~~can no longer depend on a strong bipartisan farm bloc like~~
~~the one we had until the 1950's.~~ ^{Presidential and}

└ Keep this in mind when you look over your Congressional
candidates in the months ahead.

Find out where they and their supporters stand on farm
prices...and farm programs...and farm bargaining.

Take a look, also, at the list of sponsors of the Curtis Bill -- a proposal to eliminate all farm programs.

It also includes the names of some of the Republicans who voted 110 to 14 to kill the 1965 Farm Act. Democrats, farm and city alike, provided the margin to get that bill through.

As Sam Rayburn used to say, "Any ^{man} ~~country~~ can kick a barn down, but it takes a good carpenter to build one."

So I urge you to ask some pointed questions before you step into the polls. There is a lot of unfinished business ahead of us in American agriculture and it is going to take builders, not barn wreckers, to finish it.

* * *

President Johnson concluded his message in these words:

End.

"The stability and endurance of the farmer are a priceless part of our nation's heritage. His love of the land expressed the American dream -- that a man should be able to shape his own destiny with his own hands.

"The American farmer today stands in the proud tradition of his fathers.

"But he is faced, as no generation before him, with the problems of an accelerating technology. It is bringing fundamental and forceful change to the farmer and the rural community."

Some voices today express doubt that the American farm and the American farmer can survive. They say we must sacrifice that priceless heritage...that American dream on the altar of progress.

✧ I doubt it.

Yes, there has been technological change, and it has brought pluses and minuses to the American farm, just as to the rest of our society.

Yes, there are stresses and strains...changes in labor and living patterns...disappointments as well as new opportunities. That will be true in every segment of American society for the foreseeable future.

But the world must eat.

The ability of the American consumer to pay for his food is rapidly increasing.

Labor productivity is rising more than twice as fast on the American farm as it is in the non-farm sector of our economy.

Our opportunities to export food will keep going up.

All of that means opportunity for the American farmer.

And who would assert that the American farmer is
less resourceful...less responsive to new opportunity...
less innovative than any other American?

If the farmers of America speak up courageously and
forcefully in their own behalf...if we and you together have
the patience and determination to preserve and improve our
agricultural programs...if we trust our hopes and not our
fears, American agriculture can prosper as never before.

And rural America can continue to stand for that
which is best in all America.

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