

REMARKS BY SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

TEXAS FARMERS UNION

69th ANNUAL CONVENTION

San Antonio, Texas

December 7, 1971

Mr. Naman, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, I always enjoy visiting the great State of Texas, especially when it involves addressing a meeting of Farmers Union people in the Congressional District represented by the very able Chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, Congressman Bob Poage.

I bring you greetings from Washington and the Administration that gave you Dr. Earl Butz as Secretary of Agriculture.

I suppose by now you have heard from some quarters that Hubert Humphrey is a bad man because he tried to stop that nomination.

According to some of my Republican friends, my motives were purely political.

Well, if trying to keep a man from becoming Secretary of Agriculture whose record is as bad if not worse than former Secretary Benson's is being political, then I'm sure the farmers of this country don't mind my getting a little "political."

I am deeply concerned about the agriculture philosophy of Dr. Butz.

These were my primary objections to his nomination:

-- His belief that government should play only a minimum role in trying to help farmers strengthen their prices and income.

-- His life-long association with the non-farm agribusiness elements of American agriculture and his lack of concern for the economic survival of the family farm.

-- His lack of commitment to programs to combat hunger both at home and abroad.

-- His lack of concern about protection of our environment.

Most of all, I opposed his nomination because he offers nothing more than a continuation of the Administration's totally inadequate and price-depressing agriculture policies.

He has been opposed not only by farmers and farm groups, but by a wide range of other organizations -- religious groups, businessmen and labor unions, civil rights organizations, conservation groups, and thousands of ordinary citizens.

I believe the widespread opposition to him already has destroyed the confidence and respect the American people should have in a cabinet officer able to wield such great power over American agriculture and the American economy.

I will do all I can to work and cooperate with him. But you can be sure he will be hearing from me frequently if he fails to respond to the needs of our nation's farmers.

As most of you are painfully aware, too few people today, including some in Congress, are concerned about the problems of our farm families. The farmer today is almost a forgotten man. The Administration, the daily press, and the TV media have almost forgotten how to spell "farmer."

If the situation were not so serious, it would be humorous in this day of percent parity the way the Republicans talk about how much they are doing for farmers.

Let's go back to the 1968 Presidential campaign. Specifically, let's go back to September of that year to the major farm speech delivered by Mr. Nixon in Des Moines, Iowa. Listen to this. These are Mr. Nixon's words:

"During the past decade the farmer's taxes have gone up 78 percent; his labor costs 46 percent; his machinery costs 30 percent; and his debt interest 59 percent. Everything he has to buy has gone up -- everything he has to sell has gone down. The parity ratio has shriveled to a mere 74 percent -- the lowest since the darkest days of the depression."

End of quote.

Think of that, my friends. Parity at only 74 percent.

We've had a little experience with Republican ideas about parity.

In 1952, before Ezra Taft Benson took office as Secretary of Agriculture, realized net farm income totalled more than \$14 billion. When we finally got Benson out of there, farm income had dropped to \$11.7 billion.

And during that same period, the farm parity ratio skidded from a Democratic high of 95 percent to 81 percent.

It took years to reverse these trends in farm income.

I read a frightening article the other day. The St. Louis Post Dispatch quoted Mr. Benson as saying that he believed that Dr. Butz would have the same deep concern for farmers that he had when he was Secretary.

Now that we have had the Hardin idea of parity -- 70 percent -- what can we expect under Dr. Butz?

The Administration has already gotten grain carryover up to the point where everyone will likely start taking it out on the farmer again because he has produced too much.

Mr. Nixon also said he would improve programs for distribution of milk and food to school children and needy people. But has he? Of course not. We in the Senate had to fight all year long to keep him from cutting those programs.

He said he would provide adequate funding for the rural electrics. But what has he done? He has impounded \$216 million REA dollars which Congress appropriated.

Now let me turn to what I think needs to be done in the immediate future to strengthen the disastrous economic situation which wheat and feed grain producers now face.

First, we need to pass a Strategic Grain Reserve bill similar to the one I have introduced in the Senate. (S. 2729.)

Second, we must insist that the Administration rescind its announced 1972 Feed Grains Program and initiate instead a program for feed grains next year based on base-acreage controls. The Administration has authority to do so under the 1970 Agriculture Act.

Third, the Administration should initiate an additional acreage diversion payment program for wheat next year.

Fourth, the Administration should increase the loan levels of the 1971 corn and wheat crops by at least 25 percent.

I have introduced legislation (S.J. Res. 192) to require that all of these actions be taken. But the Administration already has authority to undertake all of them, with the exception of establishing a reserve inventory of these commodities.

So far they have refused to listen to our requests to take these actions.

Therefore, I intend to continue my efforts to require action through legislation. The House is expected to complete action this week on a strategic grain reserve bill and a bill to increase loan levels for 1971 wheat and feed grain crops. When that legislation reaches the Senate, I hope to further strengthen it by offering some amendments embodying the provisions of my bills.

We must act before Congress adjourns this year.

Late last month I asked the Department of Agriculture to devise a new method to determine whether American farmers are getting a fair return on their labor as compared to non-farm business managers. Current methods of determining parity are inadequate and more efficient measures are needed to measure fair economic returns for family farms.

The Department of Agriculture continues to manipulate the current price parity index in such a way as to make it difficult to determine what a farmer is getting.

They have the regular index, then they have an adjusted index and then they have individual commodity index. But they don't tell us what we need to know.

And, it's time the country was made aware of how really bad things have become on the farm especially among our food and feed grain producers. Next year is an election year. But I don't think Mr. Nixon can fool farmers and rural Americans again. His campaign promises of 1968 have a high casualty rate.

You have always been in the forefront in the battles to preserve our nation's family farm agriculture and I salute you for it. But we must keep up that fight. The future of American agriculture and the American economy are at stake.

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Ed Christman

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✓ Jay Norman - President Texas F.U.

(X) Farmers Union Press Awards * Ben Padcliff - Pres. S. Dak
+ Union
(1) James Vance → Farm editor
Fort Worth Star Telegram
(2) Bedford Forrest * Tony Dechant - Dec 8
Dir KFDA-TV. Chamulo
Farm director

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TEXAS FARMERS UNION
69TH ANNUAL CONVENTION

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS
DECEMBER 7, 1971

Mayr John Gatti
Henry Gonzales
Graham Purcell
Jake Pickle
Ralph Yarbrough
Ben Barnes

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Mr. NAMAN, DISTINGUISHED GUESTS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I ALWAYS ENJOY VISITING THE GREAT STATE OF TEXAS, ESPECIALLY

WHEN IT INVOLVES ADDRESSING A MEETING OF FARMERS UNION PEOPLE

IN THE CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT REPRESENTED BY THE VERY ABLE

CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE, CONGRESSMAN BOB

POAGE.

Bob Poage

I BRING YOU GREETINGS FROM WASHINGTON AND THE ADMINISTRATION

THAT GAVE YOU DR. EARL BUTZ AS SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE.

I ~~suppose you have~~ have read in your papers that you HAVE HEARD FROM SOME QUARTERS THAT

HUBERT HUMPHREY IS A BAD MAN BECAUSE HE TRIED TO STOP THAT

NOMINATION.

ACCORDING TO SOME OF MY REPUBLICAN FRIENDS, MY MOTIVES
WERE PURELY POLITICAL.

WELL, IF TRYING TO KEEP A MAN FROM BECOMING SECRETARY
OF AGRICULTURE WHOSE RECORD IS AS BAD IF NOT WORSE THAN FORMER
SECRETARY BENSON'S IS BEING POLITICAL, THEN I'M SURE THE
FARMERS OF THIS COUNTRY DON'T MIND MY GETTING A LITTLE "POLITICAL."

I AM DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE AGRICULTURE PHILOSOPHY
OF DR. BUTZ.

THESE WERE MY PRIMARY OBJECTIONS TO HIS NOMINATION:
-- HIS BELIEF THAT GOVERNMENT SHOULD PLAY ONLY A MINIMUM
ROLE IN TRYING TO HELP FARMERS STRENGTHEN THEIR PRICES AND
INCOME.

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-- HIS LIFE-LONG ASSOCIATION WITH THE NON-FARM AGRIBUSINESS
ELEMENTS OF AMERICAN AGRICULTURE AND HIS LACK OF CONCERN FOR
THE ECONOMIC SURVIVAL OF THE FAMILY FARM.

-- HIS LACK OF COMMITMENT TO PROGRAMS TO COMBAT HUNGER
BOTH AT HOME AND ABROAD.

-- HIS LACK OF CONCERN ABOUT PROTECTION OF OUR ENVIRONMENT.

MOST OF ALL, I OPPOSED HIS NOMINATION BECAUSE HE OFFERS
NOTHING MORE THAN A CONTINUATION OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S TOTALLY
INADEQUATE AND PRICE-DEPRESSING AGRICULTURE POLICIES.

~~HE HAS BEEN OPPOSED NOT ONLY BY FARMERS AND FARM GROUPS,
BUT BY A WIDE RANGE OF OTHER ORGANIZATIONS -- RELIGIOUS GROUPS,
BUSINESSMEN AND LABOR UNIONS, CIVIL RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS,
CONSERVATION GROUPS, AND THOUSANDS OF ORDINARY CITIZENS.~~

I READ A FRIGHTENING ARTICLE THE OTHER DAY. THE ST. LOUIS
POST DISPATCH QUOTED MR. BENSON AS SAYING THAT HE BELIEVED THAT
~~_____~~
DR. BUTZ WOULD HAVE THE SAME DEEP CONCERN FOR FARMERS THAT HE
~~==~~
HAD WHEN HE WAS SECRETARY. *Spare us from this, O Lord!*

~~NOW THAT WE HAVE HAD THE HARDIN IDEA OF RARITY 70 PERCENT
-- WHAT CAN WE EXPECT UNDER DR. BUTZ?~~

~~THE ADMINISTRATION HAS ALREADY GOTTEN GRAIN CARRYOVER UP TO
THE POINT WHERE EVERYONE WILL LIKELY START TAKING IT OUT ON THE
FARMER AGAIN BECAUSE HE HAS PRODUCED TOO MUCH.~~

~~MR. NIXON ALSO SAID HE WOULD IMPROVE PROGRAMS FOR DISTRIBUTION
OF MILK AND FOOD TO SCHOOL CHILDREN AND NEEDY PEOPLE. BUT HAS
HE? OF COURSE NOT. WE IN THE SENATE HAD TO FIGHT ALL YEAR LONG
TO KEEP HIM FROM CUTTING THOSE PROGRAMS.~~

I BELIEVE THE WIDESPREAD OPPOSITION TO HIM ALREADY HAS
 DESTROYED THE CONFIDENCE AND RESPECT THE AMERICAN PEOPLE SHOULD
 HAVE IN A CABINET OFFICER ABLE TO WIELD SUCH GREAT POWER OVER
 AMERICAN AGRICULTURE AND THE AMERICAN ECONOMY.

I WILL DO ALL I CAN TO WORK AND COOPERATE WITH HIM. BUT YOU
 CAN BE SURE HE WILL BE HEARING FROM ME FREQUENTLY IF HE FAILS
 TO RESPOND TO THE NEEDS OF OUR NATION'S FARMERS.

AS MOST OF YOU ARE PAINFULLY AWARE, TOO FEW PEOPLE TODAY,

INCLUDING SOME IN CONGRESS, ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE PROBLEMS

OF OUR FARM FAMILIES. THE FARMER TODAY IS ALMOST A FORGOTTEN

MAN. THE ADMINISTRATION, ^{the economists,} THE DAILY PRESS, AND THE TV MEDIA HAVE

ALMOST FORGOTTEN HOW TO SPELL "FARMER."

President -
 States of the Union -
 White House Country
 Fair

new
income

our fight -
 new farm
 income

IF THE SITUATION WERE NOT SO SERIOUS, IT WOULD BE HUMOROUS
IN THIS DAY OF ⁶⁹PERCENT PARITY, THE WAY THE REPUBLICANS TALK ABOUT
HOW MUCH THEY ARE DOING FOR FARMERS. !

Broken Promise

LET'S GO BACK TO THE 1968 PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN. SPECIFICALLY,

LET'S GO BACK TO SEPTEMBER OF THAT YEAR TO THE MAJOR FARM

SPEECH DELIVERED BY MR. NIXON IN DES MOINES, IOWA. LISTEN TO

THIS. THESE ARE MR. NIXON'S WORDS:

"DURING THE PAST DECADE THE FARMER'S TAXES HAVE GONE UP
78 PERCENT; HIS LABOR COSTS 46 PERCENT; HIS MACHINERY COSTS 30
PERCENT; AND HIS DEBT INTEREST 59 PERCENT. EVERYTHING HE HAS
TO BUY HAS GONE UP -- EVERYTHING HE HAS TO SELL HAS GONE DOWN.

THE PARITY RATIO HAS SHRIVELED TO A MERE 74 PERCENT -- THE LOWEST

SINCE THE DARKEST DAYS OF THE DEPRESSION.

*This is intolerable!
we can + we will do better"*

Today Farm Party 69% — with agree
from

⊗ Over 600,000 farmers & Rural People a year leaving Rural America

⊗ Farm Population growing older

⊗ Rural America — Poverty

fewer Doctors, Poorer Schools, fewer jobs, substandard Housing

Agriculture needs & Rural America
needs a government that cares

action now!

(1) Strategic Grain Reserve

(2) Feed grain Program based on
Base-acreage, rather than
the slippery ineffective Set Acre

(3) additional acreage diversion
Payment program for wheat next year

(4) { Increase loan levels on 1971
{ corn & wheat crops by at least
{ 25%

Can Do all of this, under 1970 act!

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END OF QUOTE.

~~THINK OF THAT, MY FRIENDS, PARITY AT ONLY 74 PERCENT.~~

Today 69% yes

WE'VE HAD A LITTLE EXPERIENCE WITH REPUBLICAN IDEAS ABOUT

PARITY.

IN 1952, BEFORE EZRA TAFT BENSON TOOK OFFICE AS SECRETARY
OF AGRICULTURE, REALIZED NET FARM INCOME TOTALLED MORE THAN \$14
BILLION. WHEN WE FINALLY GOT BENSON OUT OF THERE, FARM INCOME
HAD DROPPED TO \$11.7 BILLION.

AND DURING THAT SAME PERIOD, THE FARM PARITY RATIO SKIDDED
FROM A DEMOCRATIC HIGH OF 95 PERCENT TO 81 PERCENT.

IT TOOK YEARS TO REVERSE THESE TRENDS IN FARM INCOME.

~~There~~ THEREFORE, I INTEND TO CONTINUE MY EFFORTS TO REQUIRE ACTION THROUGH LEGISLATION. THE HOUSE IS EXPECTED TO COMPLETE ACTION THIS WEEK ON A STRATEGIC GRAIN RESERVE BILL AND A BILL TO INCREASE LOAN LEVELS FOR 1971 WHEAT AND FEED GRAIN CROPS. WHEN THAT LEGISLATION REACHES THE SENATE, I HOPE TO FURTHER STRENGTHEN IT BY OFFERING SOME AMENDMENTS EMBODYING THE PROVISIONS OF MY BILLS.

~~WE MUST ACT BEFORE CONGRESS ADJOURNS THIS YEAR~~

LATE LAST MONTH I ASKED THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO DEVISE A NEW METHOD TO DETERMINE WHETHER AMERICAN FARMERS ARE GETTING A FAIR RETURN ON THEIR LABOR AS COMPARED TO NON-FARM BUSINESS MANAGERS. CURRENT METHODS OF DETERMINING PARITY ARE INADEQUATE. ~~AND~~ MORE EFFICIENT MEASURES ARE NEEDED TO MEASURE FAIR ECONOMIC RETURNS FOR FAMILY FARMS.

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THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE CONTINUES TO MANIPULATE
THE CURRENT PRICE PARITY INDEX IN SUCH A WAY AS TO MAKE IT
DIFFICULT TO DETERMINE WHAT A FARMER IS GETTING.

THEY HAVE THE REGULAR INDEX, THEN THEY HAVE AN ADJUSTED
INDEX AND THEN THEY HAVE INDIVIDUAL COMMODITY INDEX, BUT THEY
DON'T TELL US WHAT WE NEED TO KNOW.

AND, IT'S TIME THE COUNTRY WAS MADE AWARE OF HOW REALLY
BAD THINGS HAVE BECOME ON THE FARM ESPECIALLY AMONG OUR FOOD
AND FEED GRAIN PRODUCERS. NEXT YEAR IS AN ELECTION YEAR. BUT
I DON'T THINK MR. NIXON CAN FOOL FARMERS AND RURAL AMERICANS
AGAIN. ~~HIS CAMPAIGN PROMISES OF 1968 HAVE A HIGH CASUALTY RATE.~~

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YOU HAVE ALWAYS BEEN IN THE FOREFRONT IN THE BATTLES TO
PRESERVE OUR NATION'S FAMILY FARM AGRICULTURE AND I SALUTE YOU
FOR IT. BUT WE MUST KEEP UP THAT FIGHT. THE FUTURE OF AMERICAN
AGRICULTURE AND THE AMERICAN ECONOMY ARE AT STAKE.

We have things to do - Expand Markets

- ✓ Farm credit for young farmers
- ✓ Rural Housing + Medical Care
- ✓ Strengthen Bargaining -
Strengthen Coops - REA too
- ✓ Fed. Reserve
- ✓ Council of Economic Advisors
- ✓ School Lunch for all
- ✓ Combat Hunger

HE SAID HE WOULD PROVIDE ADEQUATE FUNDING FOR THE RURAL ELECTRICS. BUT WHAT HAS HE DONE? HE HAS IMPOUNDED \$216 MILLION REA DOLLARS WHICH CONGRESS APPROPRIATED.

NOW LET ME TURN TO WHAT I THINK NEEDS TO BE DONE IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE TO STRENGTHEN THE DISASTROUS ECONOMIC SITUATION WHICH WHEAT AND FEED GRAIN PRODUCERS NOW FACE.

FIRST, WE NEED TO PASS A STRATEGIC GRAIN RESERVE BILL SIMILAR TO THE ONE I HAVE INTRODUCED IN THE SENATE. (S. 2729.)

SECOND, WE MUST INSIST THAT THE ADMINISTRATION RESCIND ITS ANNOUNCED 1972 FEED GRAINS PROGRAM AND INITIATE INSTEAD A PROGRAM FOR FEED GRAINS NEXT YEAR BASED ON BASE-ACREAGE CONTROLS.

THE ADMINISTRATION HAS AUTHORITY TO DO SO UNDER THE
1970 AGRICULTURE ACT.

THIRD, THE ADMINISTRATION SHOULD INITIATE AN ADDITIONAL
ACREAGE DIVERSION PAYMENT PROGRAM FOR WHEAT NEXT YEAR.

FOURTH, THE ADMINISTRATION SHOULD INCREASE THE LOAN LEVELS
OF THE 1971 CORN AND WHEAT CROPS BY AT LEAST 25 PERCENT.

I HAVE INTRODUCED LEGISLATION (S.J. RES. 192) TO REQUIRE
THAT ALL OF THESE ACTIONS BE TAKEN. BUT THE ADMINISTRATION ALREADY
HAS AUTHORITY TO UNDERTAKE ALL OF THEM, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF
ESTABLISHING A RESERVE INVENTORY OF THESE COMMODITIES.

SO FAR THEY HAVE REFUSED TO LISTEN TO OUR REQUESTS TO TAKE
THESE ACTIONS.



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