

REMARKS BY SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

BEFORE THE MENNONITE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

"THE FOOD CRISIS AND BEYOND"

WASHINGTON, D.C.

MAY 16, 1974

Mr Franz

IT IS A PLEASURE TO BE WITH YOU TODAY. YOUR PEOPLE  
HAVE LONG BEEN RECOGNIZED FOR THEIR INDUSTRY, FORTITUDE AND  
DEEP RELIGIOUS CONVICTIONS.

THE MENNONITE PEOPLE HAVE ALSO BEEN KNOWN FOR THEIR  
CONCERN FOR THE NEEDS OF THE LESS FORTUNATE. YOU REGULARLY  
RESPOND TO HELP THE VICTIMS OF DISASTER HERE IN THE  
UNITED STATES.

AS THE AUTHOR OF THE PL 480, FOOD FOR PEACE LEGISLATION,  
I AM ALSO AWARE OF YOUR HUMANITARIAN EFFORTS ABROAD.

YOUR VOLUNTEERS HAVE BEEN PARTICULARLY HELPFUL IN DEVELOPING  
FOOD FOR WORK PROGRAMS - UTILIZING U.S. FOOD GRANTS TO FEED  
NEEDY PEOPLE AND ENCOURAGE DEVELOPMENT.

WHILE I AM HAPPY TO PAY TRIBUTE WHICH IS WELL DESERVED,  
THIS IS HARDLY A TIME FOR ANYONE TO REST ON PAST LAURELS.

L FAMINE ALREADY STALKS A BROAD BELT ACROSS THE HEART  
OF AFRICA, AND THREATENS OTHER PARTS OF THE GLOBE. THE  
MAY 13 ISSUE OF TIME FOCUSED ON THESE HARSH REALITIES IN A  
MAJOR COVER STORY, ENTITLED "FAMINE CASTS ITS GRIM GLOBAL  
SHADOW."

*time magazine*

L I HAVE REPEATEDLY POINTED OUT THE SERIOUSNESS OF  
THE PRESENT SITUATION, THERE IS AN URGENT NEED FOR THE  
UNITED STATES - AS THE WORLD'S GREAT BREADBASKET - TO FACE  
UP TO THIS PRESENT PERIL.

✓

LAST WEEK AT THE UNITED NATIONS, I OUTLINED A FOUR-  
POINT WORLD FOOD ACTION PROGRAM.

My first recommendation was that there should be an  
immediate expansion in our food aid. American food aid  
has been declining as the world demand on the commercial  
market has gone up. Poorer nations now have to dip into limited  
foreign exchange reserves to buy scarce food to avoid starvation.

I suggested initiating a three year program aimed at  
helping those nations hardest hit by drought, and by rising  
petroleum and food costs. This offer was conditioned on a  
comparable offer from other food surplus nations - notably  
the Canadians and the Australians.

My SECOND PROPOSAL WAS THAT WE MUST ESTABLISH A GRAIN  
RESERVE TO AVOID MASS STARVATION. We HAVE BLITHELY SOLD  
ANYTHING THAT SOMEONE WOULD BUY. SOMEHOW, WE ASSUMED,  
EVERYTHING WOULD WORK OUT ALL RIGHT.

Other NATIONS OF THE WORLD HAVE RELIED ON US IN THE  
PAST BECAUSE OF OUR GREAT CAPACITY TO PRODUCE. We WERE NOT  
ONLY THE WORLD'S BREADBASKET, BUT ALSO THE WORLD'S WAREHOUSE!

Today, WE HAVE ALMOST NO FOOD RESERVES. World FOOD  
RESERVES ARE ALSO DOWN AND APPROACHING A PRECARIOUS THREE  
WEEK LEVEL. For SOME COUNTRIES THIS CLEARLY MEANS  
STARVATION AHEAD.

↳ GRAIN RESERVES PROVIDE A MEASURE OF STABILITY IN THE  
WORLD FOOD ECONOMY. ↳ IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THE CONGRESS ACT  
QUICKLY TO PASS LEGISLATION I HAVE PROPOSED TO ESTABLISH  
A NATIONAL FOOD RESERVE.

↳ THE NEED EXISTS ALSO FOR A WORLD FOOD RESERVE. ↳ THE  
NOVEMBER WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE MUST TAKE UP THE PLAN OF  
F.A.O. DIRECTOR-GENERAL BOERMA TO COORDINATE NATIONAL  
FOOD RESERVE PROGRAMS. SUCH A PLAN SHOULD BE IMPLEMENTED  
WITHOUT DELAY.

↳ THE THIRD ELEMENT OF THE WORLD FOOD ACTION PROGRAM  
IS TO INCREASE THE PRODUCTION OF FERTILIZER. ↳ A SHORTAGE  
OF CHEMICAL FERTILIZER IS ALREADY HAVING SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES  
ON AGRICULTURE PRODUCTION IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD.

THIS IS ESPECIALLY TRUE IN SOUTH ASIA,

NOT ONLY HAVE FERTILIZER PRICES SOARED, BUT MANY

POOR COUNTRIES HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO PURCHASE REQUIRED AMOUNTS

AT ANY PRICE. JAPAN, THE UNITED STATES, AND EUROPEAN NATIONS

REDUCED THEIR FERTILIZER EXPORTS TO MEET THEIR OWN DOMESTIC

NEEDS.

A MAJOR COOPERATIVE EFFORT IS NEEDED TO INCREASE

THE EFFICIENCY OF PRODUCTION IN EXISTING DEVELOPING-COUNTRY

FERTILIZER PLANTS. MANY ARE NOW PRODUCING AT BELOW

TWO-THIRDS THEIR CAPACITY.

ADDITIONAL PLANT CAPACITY IS ALSO NEEDED. THE UNITED STATES AND OTHER INDUSTRIAL NATIONS SHOULD ASSURE THE OIL EXPORTING NATIONS -- WHICH ARE BLESSED WITH NATURAL GAS, THE FEEDSTOCK OF NITROGEN FERTILIZER -- THAT WE WILL SHARE OUR TECHNOLOGIES TO OPEN THESE NEEDED NEW SUPPLIES OF FERTILIZER.

IT IS OF VITAL IMPORTANCE THAT WE SECURE THE SUPPORT AND COOPERATION OF THE MIDDLE EAST OIL PRODUCING NATIONS.

THEY POSSESS THE PETROLEUM AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES NEEDED TO ADDRESS THE FOOD AND FERTILIZER PRODUCTION PROBLEMS.

THE FOURTH AND FINAL FEATURE OF THE PROGRAM IS TO LAUNCH A MAJOR EFFORT TO INCREASE AGRICULTURE PRODUCTION. MANY OF THE COUNTRIES NOW IN SERIOUS STRAITS WERE MAKING REASONABLE PROGRESS UNTIL ABOUT TWO YEARS AGO.



✓ WE KNOW THAT THESE COUNTRIES HOLD THE POTENTIAL FOR  
SIGNIFICANT INCREASES IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION.

✓ MOST OF THEM NOW USE LITTLE FERTILIZER, AND APPLYING  
A GIVEN AMOUNT WILL BRING A GREATER RETURN THAN WOULD THE SAME  
QUANTITY IN THE UNITED STATES.

✓ THIS EFFORT IS ALSO NEEDED TO BRING EMPLOYMENT TO THE  
GROWING NUMBERS OF UNEMPLOYED AND UNDEREMPLOYED PEOPLE IN THE  
DEVELOPING WORLD.

✓ THIS APPROACH WILL ALSO PROVIDE THE FOUNDATION TO BRING  
FOOD PRODUCTION AND POPULATION BACK INTO BALANCE.

L I HAVE OUTLINED THIS PROGRAM BECAUSE I FEEL THAT WE HAVE  
A CRISIS WHICH REQUIRES URGENT STEPS. { GROUPS SUCH AS THE  
MENNONITES HAVE RESPONDED GENEROUSLY TO SUCH CALLS FOR HELP  
IN THE PAST.

L I <sup>am</sup> ~~HAVE~~ INTRODUCED A RESOLUTION TO BEGIN THE PROCESS OF  
IMPLEMENTATION. L YOUR SUPPORT - INDEED THE SUPPORT OF ALL  
AMERICANS - IS NEEDED NOW TO MAKE CERTAIN THAT WE DO RESPOND,  
AND IN TIME.

L WHILE WE NEED TO RESPOND TO THIS CRISIS, THERE IS A NEED  
TO LOOK FOR LONGER RANGE SOLUTIONS.

ONE MAJOR QUESTION IN NEED OF EXAMINATION IS THE ENERGY  
QUESTION AS IT RELATES TO AGRICULTURE PRODUCTION. AMERICAN  
AGRICULTURE IS ENERGY-INTENSIVE -- OUR FOOD PRODUCTION REQUIRES  
MAJOR FUEL AND FERTILIZER SUPPLIES. WHILE OUR PRODUCTION  
RESULTS HAVE BEEN TRULY PHENOMENAL, THE WORLD CANNOT ADOPT  
THIS SAME FORM OF PRODUCTION. THE ENERGY IS JUST NOT AVAILABLE.

THUS, AS WE SEARCH FOR WAYS OF DEALING WITH GROWING  
FOOD SCARCITY, NEW PRODUCTION METHODS MUST BE DISCOVERED.

ONE APPROACH IS TO FIND NEW SOURCES OF ENERGY TO PRODUCE  
FERTILIZER AND POWER OUR AGRICULTURAL EQUIPMENT.

ANOTHER AVENUE - ~~ABOUT~~ A LONG TERM SOLUTION - IS TO  
UNCOVER WAYS OF MINIMIZING THE FERTILIZER REQUIRED.

↳ SOYBEANS DO NOT REQUIRE FERTILIZER. IN FACT THEY DO NOT REALLY RESPOND TO IT. THEY "FIX" THEIR OWN NITROGEN THROUGH BACTERIA WHICH CLING TO THE ROOTS.

↳ RESEARCH IS BEING CONDUCTED TO DISCOVER MORE INFORMATION ON HOW THIS PROCESS TAKES PLACE. ↳ PERHAPS OTHER CROPS CAN ALSO BE INDUCED TO "FIX" THEIR OWN NITROGEN. ↳ I AND OTHER SENATORS HAVE CALLED ON THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO MAKE A MAJOR INCREASE IN THIS RESEARCH EFFORT.

↳ MOST AMERICANS SELDOM REALIZE - IN TERMS OF ENERGY - HOW INEFFICIENT OUR MODERN AGRICULTURE REALLY IS.

↳ IN AMERICAN AGRICULTURE, WE OFTEN EXPEND FIVE TO TEN CALORIES OF ENERGY FOR EACH <sup>good</sup> CALORIE OBTAINED.

↳ PRIMITIVE SOCIETIES OFTEN OBTAINED FIVE TO FIFTY CALORIES FOR EACH CALORIE OF ENERGY EXPENDED.

↳ WHEN ENERGY WAS READILY AVAILABLE AT LOW COSTS - OR AT LEAST IT WAS THOUGHT TO BE - THE ENERGY EQUATION WAS PRETTY MUCH IGNORED.

↳ WITH ENERGY NOW AT A PREMIUM, WE CANNOT GO OUR OWN WAY IGNORING THE REST OF THE WORLD WHILE USING THE LION'S SHARE OF ENERGY. ↳ WE WILL NEED TO FIND NEW METHODS TO MAXIMIZE AGRICULTURE OUTPUT WHILE CONSERVING ENERGY.

↳ ANOTHER FEATURE OF THE ENERGY EQUATION IS THE FACT THAT MUCH OF THE GRAIN WE UTILIZE IS CONSUMED INDIRECTLY IN THE POORER NATIONS MOST GRAINS ARE UTILIZED DIRECTLY RATHER THAN IN THE FORM OF MEAT, MILK AND EGGS.

*must, mill. 8995*

AS A RESULT, WE CONSUME FAR MORE FOOD THAN AN INDIAN OR  
CHINESE. THE EMINENT NUTRITIONIST, JEAN MAYER, STATED THIS  
FACT RATHER BLUNTLY:

"THE SAME AMOUNT OF FOOD THAT IS FEEDING 210  
MILLION AMERICANS WOULD FEED 1.5 BILLION CHINESE ON  
AN AVERAGE CHINESE DIET."

ANOTHER EXPERT HAS SUMMED UP THIS PROBLEM BY SAYING  
THAT THE CEREALS OF THE POOR MAN WERE NOW BEING USED TO  
FEED THE RICH MAN'S COW.

THIS IS INDEED A SERIOUS MORAL ISSUE. WE WILL NEED TO  
START PAYING ATTENTION TO THE ENERGY EQUATION. \ OUTPUT WILL  
HAVE TO BE RELATED TO THE NET ENERGY USED.

ANOTHER CRITICAL LONG RANGE ISSUE REQUIRING URGENT  
CONSIDERATION IS THE NEED FOR A NATIONAL FOOD POLICY. OUR  
GOVERNMENT LAUNCHED BLINDLY INTO THE RUSSIAN WHEAT DEAL  
WITH THE ASSUMPTION OF CONTINUED PLENTY.

WHILE AMERICANS ARE NOT LIKELY TO GO HUNGRY, WE  
HAVE - IN THE WORDS OF FORMER SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE  
ORVILLE FREEMAN - A WHOLE NEW BALL GAME.

THE MOTTO OF THIS ADMINISTRATION IS STILL TO SELL,  
SELL AND SELL. WE MUST BEGIN TO REALIZE THAT FOOD IS A  
FORM OF SECURITY FOR US AND THE WORLD. IT IS A MORE  
EFFECTIVE FORM OF SECURITY THAN TANKS AND GUNS.

✓ A FOOD RESERVE PROGRAM IS ONE IMPORTANT PART OF A  
TOTAL FOOD POLICY. ✓ AT RECENT FOOD RESERVE HEARINGS BY THE  
SENATE AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY COMMITTEE, I REFERRED TO THE  
FOOD RESERVE MENTIONED IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS. THERE THE STORY  
IS TOLD OF JOSEPH AND THE SEVEN GOOD YEARS FOLLOWED BY THE  
SEVEN LEAN YEARS.

✓ SECRETARY BUTZ'S REPLY, UNFORTUNATELY, WAS THAT HE DID  
NOT THINK THE IDEA HAD WORKED THEN OR WOULD WORK TODAY.

✓ WE NEED TO RECOGNIZE OUR STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE AS  
A SURPLUS FOOD PRODUCING NATION. ✓ AMERICAN LEADERS HAVE  
BECOME CONCERNED THAT OTHER NATIONS MIGHT GANG UP AND  
WITHOLD CRITICAL RAW MATERIALS. ✓ OUR FOOD IS MORE CRITICAL  
THAN ANY RAW MATERIALS.



↳ WE CAN ALSO SET A COOPERATIVE EXAMPLE IN THE WAY WE USE  
OUR FOOD. ↳ THIS OPPORTUNITY MUST BE SEIZED FOR THE BENEFIT  
OF THE WORLD ECONOMY AND ALSO WORLD PEACE.

↳ A FURTHER LONG RANGE ISSUE WE NEED TO FACE IS  
POPULATION EXPANSION - ONE OF MAN'S MOST THORNY PROBLEMS.

↳ THE DIE - IN TERMS OF POPULATION GROWTH - IS ALREADY CAST  
FOR MOST OF THE REMAINDER OF THIS CENTURY.

↳ I HAVE NO SIMPLE PANACEA TO OFFER. BUT, WE MUST BEGIN  
TO UNDERSTAND THE PROBLEM IF WE ARE TO BEGIN TO STABILIZE  
POPULATION GROWTH IN THE FUTURE.

↳ WE CAN DRAW SOME USEFUL CONCLUSIONS FROM OUR OWN  
EXPERIENCE.

PEOPLE NEED TO HAVE A MEASURE OF SECURITY BEFORE THEY CHOOSE  
TO HAVE FEWER CHILDREN. THIS MEANS SECURITY IN TERMS OF  
ADEQUATE FOOD, HEALTH CARE, EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT.

THESE, IN MY VIEW, ARE THE BASICS OF ASSURING DEVELOPMENT  
IN THE POOR NATIONS. LAST YEAR, I HELPED REDEFINE AND RESHAPE  
THE FOREIGN AID PROGRAM TO GIVE PRIORITY TO THESE AREAS.

THIS SECURITY FOR PEOPLE IS NOT NOW PRESENT IN MUCH  
OF THE DEVELOPING WORLD. THERE ARE TOO MANY CHILDREN WITH  
DISTENDED STOMACHS AND BROOM-STICK LEGS. A 1970 SURVEY OF A  
PAKISTAN COMMUNITY REVEALED THAT <sup>87%</sup> EIGHTY SEVEN PERCENT OF  
THE CHILDREN DID NOT GET SUFFICIENT FOOD DURING THE CRITICAL  
FIRST YEAR.

WE ARE ALSO AWARE OF PARENTS WHO VIEW GROWN SONS AS  
THEIR ONLY FORM OF SOCIAL SECURITY TO SPEAK OF FAMILY  
PLANNING UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES HAS ALMOST NO MEANING.

LEST WE BE TOO SMUG OVER OUR OWN LOW RATE OF  
POPULATION INCREASE, A WORD OF CAUTION IS IN ORDER. WE  
CONSUME MORE RESOURCES, DISTURB THE ECOLOGY MORE AND  
CREATE FAR MORE POLLUTION THAN THE EARTH'S POOR PEOPLE.

THUS THERE IS GOOD REASON TO ARGUE THAT IT IS JUST AS  
URGENT FOR THE AFFLUENT TO CONTROL THEIR POPULATION INCREASE.

IN REVIEWING THESE LONG AND SHORT TERM PROBLEMS, IT  
BECOMES INCREASINGLY CLEAR THAT OUR FATE IS TIED TO THAT OF  
OTHER NATIONS.

WE ARE TOLD BY SOME SO-CALLED EXPERTS THAT AMERICANS WANT TO TURN THEIR BACKS ON THE WORLD. I DO NOT BELIEVE THIS, AND FURTHERMORE, IT IS JUST NOT POSSIBLE.

I AM REMINDED OF WENDELL WILKIE'S BOOK, ONE WORLD. THE THEME OF ONE WORLD HAS OFTEN BEEN DERIDED IN THE UNITED STATES.

WHETHER OR NOT WE ARE TODAY WILLING TO CONCEDE THE APPROPRIATENESS OF THE TERM, WE MUST BEGIN TO LIVE AND THINK OF OURSELVES AS CITIZENS OF ONE WORLD.

I HAVE FAITH THAT THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WILL RESPOND TO THIS CRISIS AS THEY HAVE BEFORE. RATHER THAN AGREEING WITH THE PESSIMISTS, I SHARE THE VIEW OF CARL SANDBURG WHO SAID:

"I SEE AMERICA, NOT IN THE SETTING SUN OF A BLACK NIGHT OF DESPAIR AHEAD OF US. I SEE AMERICA IN THE CRIMSON LIGHT OF A RISING SUN FRESH FROM THE BURNING, CREATIVE HAND OF GOD. I SEE GREAT DAYS AHEAD, GREAT DAYS POSSIBLE TO MEN AND WOMEN OF WILL AND VISION."

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