

REMARKS BY SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY
NATIONAL CONVENTION OF THE AMERICAN SCHOOL
FOOD SERVICE ASSOCIATION

Washington, D.C.

August 6, 1974

The issue of assuring adequate supplies of food has increasingly become a matter of concern for all of us.

The present drought, which is gripping our midwestern states, has brought home the vital importance of American agricultural production in any discussion of achieving world-wide food security.

It now appears unlikely that we will be able to rebuild our meager reserves which are at the lowest point in a quarter century.

This is likely to mean food scarcities throughout the world and continued price fluctuations, depending on weather reports and rumors of purchases by importers. World food reserves now are at around 27 days supply, and the prospect is that they will grow even smaller.

It is clear that the food security which we once took for granted is now a thing of the past. We have paid and will continue to pay for this lack of security.

The present Administration has ignored the importance of food security to bring some stability to our agricultural markets.

Unfortunately, this Administration has shown a strong desire to bring to the agricultural field the same high level of mismanagement that it has brought to other areas of the economy.

Our farmers have survived the rough treatment by this Administration, but the price has been high. Many farmers have been forced to leave agriculture, and our dairy and livestock producers have been especially hard hit.

How should we insure that our farmers produce adequate amounts of food? How do we try to make certain that all our people can obtain adequate food at reasonable prices?

Secretary of Agriculture Butz addressed your group on Sunday, and I am sure he had on his rose tinted glasses. He has been attracting a certain amount of attention by suggesting that we could reduce our pet population as one way of dealing with the food crisis.

I also recall that Secretary Butz, in appearing at our hearings on grain reserve legislation, suggested that we could reduce our cattle population in case of a major crop failure.

While I do not like his answer to the problem, I am wondering if even Secretary Butz doesn't realize that there is a food problem.

I would hope that the Administration would see the need to develop sound agricultural policy which has food security as its objective.

We have no agricultural policy today. We have only a motto. And, that motto is "sell, sell and sell."

Since the Administration is reluctant to face up to the need for a food policy, I will offer suggestions in three key areas.

First, we must expand our agricultural production.

Second, food commodity programs for the needy must be improved.

And, third, a major new initiative is needed in the area of nutrition.

I

In expanding agricultural production, we must work with the entire process, from the farmer to the consumer.

We must find ways to expand fertilizer production; and agriculture must be assured adequate supplies of fuel for powering equipment and propane for drying crops.

At the same time, we must expand our research on ways to expand the output of soybeans per acre. Soybeans "fix" their own nitrogen, and unlocking this secret could lead to great production increases in other crops.

I joined other Senators in urging Congress to approve a major increase in funding for nitrogen research. And I am pleased to report that this effort has been successful, in the agricultural appropriations legislation recently cleared for the White House.

It is also imperative that we expand our research efforts to increase our understanding of weather patterns. Dr. Reid Bryson of the University of Wisconsin is one of the leaders in this effort, and it appears that we will be able to develop the technical capability to make long range estimates on weather trends.

This information will be extremely useful in planning ahead for lean crop years.

Information from weather research and from our satellites also will provide information in understanding the basic changes taking place in our world weather patterns.

But such measures to improve and increase our crops can be frustrated unless we also make major improvements in our farm-to-market transportation systems.

This means, first of all, that we should have a national transportation policy.

We simply cannot afford further railroad abandonments. We must not allow our secondary, rural roads to continue to deteriorate.

We need more railcars and boxcars, and we must make them available when and where they are required.

More funds must be invested in secondary roads and bridges. I recently introduced important legislation (S. 3765) designed to strengthen this vital road network.

Finally, a grain reserve program, as I have recommended in my bill, S. 2005, would pay great dividends in providing incentives for our farmers to increase production. Our farmers cannot meet the escalating costs of production with the uncertain boom-or-bust markets offered by this Administration.

II

The second major area of focus in a food security program should be the government commodity programs.

These programs -- which include school lunches, food supplementation for women, infants and children, and food stamps -- are crucially important in providing for the well being of our needy people. There is no reason to underfund these programs or treat them as welfare substitutes.

The school lunch program has been an extremely effective way of insuring that our school children have at least one good meal a day. The ASFSA deserves great credit for the role it has played in making this program a success.

But we can hardly rest on past accomplishments. Inflation and lethargy threaten to undermine the program.

We must make certain that the commodities needed for this program do not take second place to exports abroad.

And we must continue to press for making this a truly universal child feeding program.

The very important pilot feeding program for Women, Infants and Children also strongly merits increased support. This commodity program is designed to test the idea that improved nutrition can break the cycle of low birth weights, infant mortality and mental retardation.

It is generally recognized that the development of the brain is largely completed in the very early years. Thus, this innovative food supplementation effort, which I have played a major part in developing, is an attempt to break the cycle of malnutrition faced by many of our poor people.

A third nutrition effort, the food stamp program, is of major importance for those who cannot afford to buy food at the going prices.

Unfortunately, many needy people are not aware of the fact that they are eligible to participate in this program. The Department of Agriculture estimates that only about forty percent of the 37 million people now eligible are actually getting food stamps.

The cost of administering the program has been a burden for State governments. To address this problem, I recently worked with other Senators in achieving enactment of legislation which includes a provision to raise the Federal share of the Administrative costs to fifty percent.

III

Finally, a basic building block of a national food policy today must be the launching of a major new initiative in the broad and complex area of nutrition.

We have been gaining a great deal of new information on nutrition in recent years. A major effort is needed to bring this information to the American people.

I have introduced S. 3123, the Child Nutrition Act, to lay a solid nutrition foundation in our educational system. There is a great deal more that we must do to inform our children about nutrition.

We also need to bring more nutrition information to our doctors.

Increasingly, experts are becoming convinced that poor diets are a major cause of later illness. Can you imagine what savings and benefits would result from a first class nutrition effort?

We also need to look for innovative ways of packaging and labeling our food. I believe every American family has the right to know the nutrient amounts in a given quantity of food. The time has come to make that right a reality.

Consumer experts such as Marion Burro s are performing a great public service in providing nutrition education features in the media. This effort needs to be expanded.

The nutrition area has barely been scratched. The potential benefits are of incalculable importance, and I firmly believe that this should be a high priority undertaking.

IV

Let us, then, begin to work seriously on this three-part agenda.

There is little argument that we need to increase agricultural production.

Even the Administration concedes the need for our commodity programs. It just does not want to face the cost.

And, the benefits from a sound nutrition program stagger the imagination.

What is stopping us from getting on with this program? The answer is lethargy in a lot of places.

The Administration has failed to provide the needed leadership. It will be up to the citizens and groups such as the American School Food Service Association to provide the initiative and the muscle.

There is no more urgent or worthy goal than food security for all our people.

I pledge to you my continued strong efforts to help achieve this goal. I know I can count on your full support.

#

REMARKS BY SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

NATIONAL CONVENTION OF THE AMERICAN SCHOOL FOOD
SERVICE ASSOCIATION

WASHINGTON, D.C.

AUGUST 6, 1974

Mr John Perryman
Mrs Sutton

President
Mrs Barnett

L THE ISSUE OF ASSURING ADEQUATE SUPPLIES OF FOOD HAS
INCREASINGLY BECOME A MATTER OF CONCERN FOR ALL OF US.

L THE PRESENT DROUGHT, WHICH IS GRIPPING OUR MIDWESTERN
STATES, HAS BROUGHT HOME THE VITAL IMPORTANCE OF AMERICAN
AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION IN ANY DISCUSSION OF ACHIEVING
WORLD-WIDE FOOD SECURITY.

L IT NOW APPEARS UNLIKELY THAT WE WILL BE ABLE TO REBUILD
OUR MEAGER RESERVES WHICH ARE AT THE LOWEST POINT IN A QUARTER
CENTURY.

and L THIS IS LIKELY TO MEAN FOOD SCARCITIES THROUGHOUT THE
WORLD AND CONTINUED PRICE FLUCTUATIONS, DEPENDING ON
WEATHER REPORTS AND RUMORS OF PURCHASES BY IMPORTERS / WORLD
FOOD RESERVES NOW ARE AT AROUND 27 DAYS SUPPLY, AND THE
PROSPECT IS THAT THEY WILL GROW EVEN SMALLER.

L IT IS CLEAR THAT THE FOOD SECURITY WHICH WE ONCE TOOK
FOR GRANTED IS NOW A THING OF THE PAST. L WE HAVE PAID AND WILL
CONTINUE TO PAY FOR THIS LACK OF SECURITY,

L THE PRESENT ADMINISTRATION HAS IGNORED THE IMPORTANCE OF
FOOD SECURITY TO BRING SOME STABILITY TO OUR AGRICULTURAL MARKETS.

L UNFORTUNATELY, ~~the~~ ^{the} ADMINISTRATION HAS SHOWN A STRONG DESIRE
TO BRING TO THE AGRICULTURAL FIELD THE SAME HIGH LEVEL OF
MISMANAGEMENT THAT IT HAS BROUGHT TO OTHER AREAS OF THE ECONOMY.

L OUR FARMERS HAVE SURVIVED THE ~~ROUGH~~ ^{ROUGH} TREATMENT ~~BY THIS~~
~~ADMINISTRATION~~ BUT THE PRICE HAS BEEN HIGH. L MANY FARMERS
HAVE BEEN FORCED TO LEAVE AGRICULTURE, AND OUR DAIRY AND
LIVESTOCK PRODUCERS HAVE BEEN ESPECIALLY HARD HIT.

↳ HOW SHOULD WE INSURE THAT OUR FARMERS PRODUCE ADEQUATE
AMOUNTS OF FOOD? HOW DO WE TRY TO MAKE CERTAIN THAT ALL OUR
PEOPLE CAN OBTAIN ADEQUATE FOOD AT REASONABLE PRICES?

↳ SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE BUTZ ADDRESSED YOUR GROUP ON
SUNDAY, AND I AM SURE HE HAD ON HIS ROSE TINTED GLASSES. HE
HAS BEEN ATTRACTING A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF ATTENTION BY SUGGESTING
THAT WE COULD REDUCE OUR PET POPULATION AS ONE WAY OF DEALING
WITH THE FOOD CRISIS.

↳ I ALSO RECALL THAT SECRETARY BUTZ, IN APPEARING AT OUR
HEARINGS ON GRAIN RESERVE LEGISLATION, SUGGESTED THAT WE
COULD REDUCE OUR CATTLE POPULATION IN CASE OF A MAJOR CROP
FAILURE.

L WHILE I DO NOT LIKE HIS ANSWER TO THE PROBLEM, I AM
WONDERING IF ~~EVER~~ SECRETARY BUTZ ~~DOESN'T~~ REALIZES THAT THERE
IS A FOOD PROBLEM.

L I WOULD HOPE THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WOULD SEE THE NEED
TO DEVELOP SOUND AGRICULTURAL POLICY WHICH HAS FOOD SECURITY
AS ITS OBJECTIVE.

L WE HAVE NO ^{National Food} ~~AGRICULTURAL~~ POLICY TODAY L WE HAVE ONLY A
MOTTO. AND, THAT MOTTO IS "SELL, SELL AND SELL."

L SINCE THE ADMINISTRATION IS RELUCTANT TO FACE UP TO THE
^{National} NEED FOR A FOOD POLICY, I WILL OFFER SUGGESTIONS IN THREE KEY
AREAS.

L FIRST, WE MUST EXPAND OUR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION.

L SECOND, FOOD COMMODITY PROGRAMS FOR THE NEEDY MUST BE
IMPROVED.

AND, THIRD, A MAJOR NEW INITIATIVE IS NEEDED IN THE AREA OF
NUTRITION.

I

L IN EXPANDING AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, WE MUST WORK WITH
THE ENTIRE PROCESS, FROM THE FARMER TO THE CONSUMER.

WE MUST FIND WAYS TO EXPAND FERTILIZER PRODUCTION; AND
AGRICULTURE MUST BE ASSURED ADEQUATE SUPPLIES OF FUEL FOR
POWERING EQUIPMENT AND PROPANE FOR DRYING CROPS.

L AT THE SAME TIME, WE MUST EXPAND OUR RESEARCH ON WAYS TO
EXPAND THE OUTPUT OF ^{*feed grains and*} SOYBEANS PER ACRE. SOYBEANS "FIX" THEIR
OWN NITROGEN, AND UNLOCKING THIS SECRET COULD LEAD TO GREAT
PRODUCTION INCREASES IN OTHER CROPS.

L I JOINED OTHER SENATORS IN URGING CONGRESS TO APPROVE A
MAJOR INCREASE IN FUNDING FOR ^{*Soybean*} ~~NITROGEN~~ RESEARCH.

AND I AM PLEASED TO REPORT THAT THIS EFFORT HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL,
IN THE AGRICULTURAL APPROPRIATIONS LEGISLATION RECENTLY
CLEARED FOR THE WHITE HOUSE.

IT IS ALSO IMPERATIVE THAT WE EXPAND OUR RESEARCH EFFORTS
TO INCREASE OUR UNDERSTANDING OF WEATHER PATTERNS DR.

REID BRYSON OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN IS ONE OF THE
LEADERS IN THIS EFFORT, AND IT APPEARS THAT WE WILL BE ABLE TO
DEVELOP THE TECHNICAL CAPABILITY TO MAKE LONG RANGE ESTIMATES
ON WEATHER TRENDS.

THIS INFORMATION WILL BE EXTREMELY USEFUL IN PLANNING
AHEAD FOR LEAN CROP YEARS.

INFORMATION FROM WEATHER RESEARCH AND FROM OUR SATELLITES

valuable
ALSO WILL PROVIDE INFORMATION IN UNDERSTANDING THE BASIC CHANGES
TAKING PLACE IN OUR WORLD WEATHER PATTERNS.

*Earth Resources
+ Weather*

✓ BUT SUCH MEASURES TO IMPROVE AND INCREASE OUR CROPS CAN
BE FRUSTRATED UNLESS WE ALSO MAKE MAJOR IMPROVEMENTS IN OUR
FARM-TO-MARKET TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS.

✓ THIS MEANS, FIRST OF ALL, THAT WE SHOULD HAVE A NATIONAL
TRANSPORTATION POLICY.

WE SIMPLY CANNOT AFFORD FURTHER RAILROAD ABANDONMENTS ✓ WE
MUST NOT ALLOW OUR SECONDARY, RURAL ROADS TO CONTINUE TO
DETERIORATE.

✓ WE NEED MORE RAILCARS AND BOXCARS, AND WE MUST MAKE THEM
AVAILABLE WHEN AND WHERE THEY ARE REQUIRED.

✓ MORE FUNDS MUST BE INVESTED IN SECONDARY ROADS AND BRIDGES.
I RECENTLY INTRODUCED IMPORTANT LEGISLATION (S. 3765) DESIGNED
TO STRENGTHEN THIS VITAL ROAD NETWORK.

Storage - Processing

Reserve

L FINALLY, A GRAIN RESERVE PROGRAM, AS I HAVE RECOMMENDED IN MY
BILL, S. 2005, WOULD PAY GREAT DIVIDENDS IN PROVIDING
INCENTIVES FOR OUR FARMERS TO INCREASE PRODUCTION. OUR
FARMERS CANNOT MEET THE ESCALATING COSTS OF PRODUCTION
WITH THE UNCERTAIN BOOM-OR-BUST MARKETS OFFERED BY THIS
ADMINISTRATION. - also Reserve for Emergencies

II

Consumer Protection

L THE SECOND MAJOR AREA OF FOCUS IN A FOOD SECURITY
PROGRAM SHOULD BE THE GOVERNMENT COMMODITY PROGRAMS,
L THESE PROGRAMS -- WHICH INCLUDE SCHOOL LUNCHES, FOOD
SUPPLEMENTATION FOR WOMEN, INFANTS AND CHILDREN, AND FOOD
STAMPS -- ARE CRUCIALLY IMPORTANT IN PROVIDING FOR THE WELL

BEING OF OUR NEEDY PEOPLE. L THERE IS NO justification for REASON TO UNDERFUNDING

THESE PROGRAMS OR TREAT THEM AS WELFARE SUBSTITUTES.

✓ THE SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM HAS BEEN AN EXTREMELY EFFECTIVE
WAY OF INSURING THAT OUR SCHOOL CHILDREN HAVE AT LEAST ONE

GOOD MEAL A DAY. ✓ THE ASFSA DESERVES GREAT CREDIT FOR THE ROLE
IT HAS PLAYED IN MAKING THIS PROGRAM A SUCCESS.

✓ BUT WE CAN HARDLY REST ON PAST ACCOMPLISHMENTS.
INFLATION AND LETHARGY THREATEN TO UNDERMINE THE PROGRAM.

✓ WE MUST MAKE CERTAIN THAT THE COMMODITIES NEEDED FOR
THIS PROGRAM DO NOT TAKE SECOND PLACE TO EXPORTS ABROAD.

(X) ✓ AND WE MUST CONTINUE TO PRESS FOR MAKING THIS A TRULY
UNIVERSAL CHILD FEEDING PROGRAM. - *yes*

✓ THE VERY IMPORTANT PILOT FEEDING PROGRAM FOR WOMEN,
WIC
INFANTS AND CHILDREN ALSO STRONGLY MERITS INCREASED SUPPORT.

✓ THIS COMMODITY PROGRAM IS DESIGNED TO TEST THE IDEA THAT
IMPROVED NUTRITION CAN BREAK THE CYCLE OF LOW BIRTH WEIGHTS,
INFANT MORTALITY AND MENTAL RETARDATION.

It is generally recognized that the development of the
brain is largely completed in the very early years. Thus,
this innovative food supplementation effort, which I have
played a major part in developing, is an attempt to break the
cycle of malnutrition faced by many of our poor people.

A third nutrition effort, the food stamp program, is
of major importance for those who cannot afford to buy food
at the going prices.

Unfortunately, many needy people are not aware of the
fact that they are eligible to participate in this program.

The Department of Agriculture estimates that only about forty
percent of the 37 million people now eligible are actually
getting food stamps.

THE COST OF ADMINISTERING THE PROGRAM HAS BEEN A BURDEN
FOR STATE GOVERNMENTS. TO ADDRESS THIS PROBLEM, I RECENTLY
WORKED WITH OTHER SENATORS IN ACHIEVING ENACTMENT OF LEGISLATION
WHICH INCLUDES A PROVISION TO RAISE THE FEDERAL SHARE OF THE
ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS TO FIFTY PERCENT.

III

FINALLY, A BASIC BUILDING BLOCK OF A NATIONAL FOOD POLICY
TODAY MUST BE THE LAUNCHING OF A MAJOR NEW INITIATIVE IN THE
BROAD AND COMPLEX AREA OF NUTRITION.

WE HAVE BEEN GAINING A GREAT DEAL OF NEW INFORMATION
ON NUTRITION IN RECENT YEARS. A MAJOR EFFORT IS NEEDED TO
BRING THIS INFORMATION TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.

I HAVE INTRODUCED S. 3123, THE CHILD NUTRITION ACT, TO
Universal School Feeding program
LAY A SOLID NUTRITION FOUNDATION IN OUR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM.

also S. 3864 - Sen McHauern - to authorize the
Commissioner of Education to make grants

for Teacher Training, Pilot + demonstration projects,
+ comprehensive school programs with
respect to nutrition education.

THERE IS A GREAT DEAL MORE THAT WE MUST DO TO INFORM OUR

CHILDREN ABOUT NUTRITION.

Action - Congress

DOCTORS.

WE ALSO NEED TO BRING MORE NUTRITION INFORMATION TO OUR

INCREASINGLY, EXPERTS ARE BECOMING CONVINCED THAT POOR

DIETS ARE A MAJOR CAUSE OF LATER ILLNESS. CAN YOU IMAGINE

WHAT SAVINGS AND BENEFITS WOULD RESULT FROM A FIRST CLASS

NUTRITION EFFORT?

WE ALSO NEED TO LOOK FOR INNOVATIVE WAYS OF PACKAGING AND
LABELING OUR FOOD. I BELIEVE EVERY AMERICAN FAMILY HAS THE
RIGHT TO KNOW THE NUTRIENT AMOUNTS IN A GIVEN QUANTITY OF FOOD.

THE TIME HAS COME TO MAKE THAT RIGHT A REALITY.

CONSUMER EXPERTS SUCH AS MARION BURROWS ARE PERFORMING
A GREAT PUBLIC SERVICE IN PROVIDING NUTRITION EDUCATION
FEATURES IN THE MEDIA. THIS EFFORT NEEDS TO BE EXPANDED.

L THE NUTRITION AREA HAS BARELY BEEN SCRATCHED. THE
POTENTIAL BENEFITS ARE OF INCALCULABLE IMPORTANCE, AND I
FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT THIS SHOULD BE A HIGH PRIORITY UNDERTAKING.

IV

LET US, THEN, BEGIN TO WORK SERIOUSLY ON THIS THREE-PART
AGENDA.

THERE IS LITTLE ARGUMENT THAT WE NEED TO INCREASE
AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION.

L EVEN THE ADMINISTRATION CONCEDES THE NEED FOR OUR COMMODITY
PROGRAMS. IT JUST DOES NOT WANT TO FACE THE COST.

L AND, THE BENEFITS FROM A SOUND NUTRITION PROGRAM STAGGER
THE IMAGINATION.

L WHAT IS STOPPING US FROM GETTING ON WITH THIS PROGRAM?
THE ANSWER IS LETHARGY IN A LOT OF PLACES.

THE ADMINISTRATION HAS FAILED TO PROVIDE THE NEEDED
LEADERSHIP. IT WILL BE UP TO THE CITIZENS AND GROUPS SUCH AS
THE AMERICAN SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE ASSOCIATION TO PROVIDE THE
INITIATIVE AND THE MUSCLE.

THERE IS NO MORE URGENT OR WORTHY GOAL THAN FOOD SECURITY
FOR ALL OUR PEOPLE.

I PLEDGE TO YOU MY CONTINUED STRONG EFFORTS TO HELP
ACHIEVE THIS GOAL. I KNOW I CAN COUNT ON YOUR FULL SUPPORT.

#



Minnesota Historical Society

Copyright in this digital version belongs to the Minnesota Historical Society and its content may not be copied without the copyright holder's express written permission. Users may print, download, link to, or email content, however, for individual use.

To request permission for commercial or educational use, please contact the Minnesota Historical Society.



www.mnhs.org