

REMARKS BY SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

TOUR AND DEDICATION OF THE BIG STONE CANNING COMPANY PLANT

A NATIONAL FOOD POLICY

Arlington, Minnesota

August 27, 1974

It is a great pleasure for me to be here with you today for the dedication of the Big Stone Canning Company Plant.

I am heartened at the initiative of this community in raising the \$2 million bond issue to restore the facility. Not only did you restore the old plant, you actually expanded it.

This should be an important contribution to the economy of this area. I long have supported having the Federal Government make funds available to encourage rural development.

We do not need a big rural development program. But this is the kind of program which pays big dividends. It benefits our rural areas by providing employment, supporting agriculture, and preventing needless migration to the large urban areas.

Your community can feel proud of its role in making a meaningful contribution to today's food crisis.

We have learned a great deal in the last two years about the importance and the complexity of our American agricultural system.

Now that we are facing a world food shortage, we have come to realize that we cannot take our great agricultural productivity for granted.

Many nations of the world face serious food deficits. Our productive capacity means not only markets for our farmers, but life itself to the people of these countries.

With so many people dependent on our farmers and their output, we should make certain that our farmers are well rewarded. They should be treated as the first class citizens which they are.

I only wish that our Department of Agriculture would listen to this message. Every time I hear from the Department, it is offering some excuse for not taking steps to help our farmers.

We need to encourage our farmers to produce by assuring them good, steady prices for their milk, livestock, eggs and crops.

Everyone knows about our great Minnesota dairy farmers. And yet an estimated 1,500 have left the business because prices have dropped about \$2 per hundred weight in just four months. This makes no sense at all.

If we want farmers to increase their output, we must provide them with the incentive to produce. It is hardly fair to expect our farmers to absorb a 12 percent inflation rate.

When I am back here in Minnesota, I hear about the low milk prices, the high price of parts, twine, fertilizer and machinery.

In addition, practically everything the farmer needs is in short supply.

To deal with this situation, we need leadership which pays attention to these agricultural problems. And we also need a national food policy.

I long have argued that a national food policy is needed. The time for decision on this issue is long overdue.

A national food policy must look beyond the level of production and commercial demand. We must also take into account our humanitarian needs at home and abroad.

A sound national food policy must look to the total agricultural picture from the farmer to the ultimate consumer. This involves credit, transportation, adequate supplies of fuel and fertilizer, new seeds, expanded agricultural research, and storage, processing and distribution facilities.

A sound national food policy also must include a food reserve program. A reserve program will serve to assure adequate food and fiber for American consumers, enable us to meet our export commitments and serve as a buffer in case of disaster.

A reserve program establishes a degree of stability in our agricultural markets since we can buy when there is production in excess of needs.

Just as we must be prepared to buy when there is excess production, so we also should have reserves on hand in times of need.

The Department of Agriculture refuses to concede the havoc produced by not having a reserve.

This has been one of the major causes of inflation. And we all know that no one benefits from boom and bust prices.

I should point out that we must look beyond our own nation in developing a national food policy.

In the future, the competition for precious food will involve not only the traditional population and agricultural production equation. It also will be heavily influenced by the level of demand in the developed countries where consumers have begun to demand more protein in the form of meat, milk and eggs.

The poorer nations already have had to cut consumption and deplete their limited foreign exchange holdings.

Famine already has hit large parts of Africa, and Southeast Asia is near the danger point. A further delay in monsoon rains could spell disaster.

The United States occupies a critical role under these circumstances because it holds the key as the world's major food reserve nation. With world food reserves down to about 27 days, this is a matter of serious concern to other nations.

This is why a national food reserve policy is of such great importance. In an era of plenty, there was no great urgency. There was more margin for error.

That era is gone.

I call on our Government to recognize the importance of such a policy. And I urge you to lend your support to this effort.

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A NATIONAL FOOD POLICY

ARLINGTON, MINNESOTA

AUGUST 27, 1974

President - David Kraus - Big Stone  
Canning Co

IT IS A GREAT PLEASURE FOR ME TO BE HERE WITH YOU TODAY  
FOR THE DEDICATION OF THE BIG STONE CANNING COMPANY PLANT.

I AM HEARTENED AT THE INITIATIVE OF THIS COMMUNITY IN  
RAISING THE \$2 MILLION BOND ISSUE TO RESTORE THE FACILITY.

NOT ONLY DID YOU RESTORE THE OLD PLANT, YOU ACTUALLY  
EXPANDED IT.

THIS SHOULD BE AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TO THE  
ECONOMY OF THIS AREA. I LONG HAVE SUPPORTED HAVING THE  
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT MAKE FUNDS AVAILABLE TO ENCOURAGE RURAL  
DEVELOPMENT.

WE ~~NEED~~ NEED A ~~RURAL~~ RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, ~~THIS~~ THIS  
IS THE KIND OF PROGRAM WHICH PAYS BIG DIVIDENDS. IT BENEFITS  
OUR RURAL AREAS BY PROVIDING EMPLOYMENT, SUPPORTING AGRICULTURE, T  
AND PREVENTING NEEDLESS MIGRATION TO THE LARGE URBAN AREAS.

YOUR COMMUNITY CAN FEEL PROUD OF ITS ROLE IN MAKING A  
MEANINGFUL CONTRIBUTION TO TODAY'S FOOD CRISIS.

WE HAVE LEARNED A GREAT DEAL IN THE LAST TWO YEARS ABOUT  
THE IMPORTANCE AND THE COMPLEXITY OF OUR AMERICAN AGRICULTURAL  
SYSTEM.

NOW THAT WE ARE FACING A WORLD FOOD SHORTAGE, WE HAVE COME  
TO REALIZE THAT WE CANNOT TAKE OUR GREAT AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY  
FOR GRANTED.

MANY NATIONS OF THE WORLD FACE SERIOUS FOOD DEFICITS.  
OUR PRODUCTIVE CAPACITY MEANS NOT ONLY MARKETS FOR OUR FARMERS,  
BUT LIFE ITSELF TO THE PEOPLE OF THESE COUNTRIES.

WITH SO MANY PEOPLE DEPENDENT ON OUR FARMERS AND THEIR  
OUTPUT, WE SHOULD MAKE CERTAIN THAT OUR FARMERS ARE WELL REWARDED.

THEY SHOULD BE TREATED AS THE FIRST CLASS CITIZENS WHICH THEY ARE.

I ONLY WISH THAT OUR DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE WOULD LISTEN TO THIS MESSAGE. EVERY TIME I HEAR FROM THE DEPARTMENT, IT IS OFFERING SOME EXCUSE FOR NOT TAKING STEPS TO HELP OUR FARMERS.

WE NEED TO ENCOURAGE OUR FARMERS TO PRODUCE BY ASSURING THEM GOOD, STEADY PRICES FOR THEIR MILK, LIVESTOCK, EGGS AND CROPS.

EVERYONE KNOWS ABOUT OUR GREAT MINNESOTA DAIRY FARMERS. AND YET AN ESTIMATED 1,500 HAVE LEFT THE BUSINESS BECAUSE PRICES HAVE DROPPED ABOUT \$2 PER HUNDRED WEIGHT IN JUST FOUR MONTHS. THIS MAKES NO SENSE AT ALL.

IF WE WANT FARMERS TO INCREASE THEIR OUTPUT, WE MUST PROVIDE THEM WITH THE INCENTIVE TO PRODUCE. IT IS HARDLY FAIR TO EXPECT OUR FARMERS TO ABSORB A 12 PERCENT INFLATION RATE.

WHEN I AM BACK IN MINNESOTA, I HEAR ABOUT THE LOW MILK PRICES, THE HIGH PRICE OF PARTS, TWINE, FERTILIZER AND MACHINERY.

IN ADDITION, P<sup>C</sup>R<sup>A</sup>TICALLY EVERYTHING THE FARMER NEEDS IS IN SHORT SUPPLY.

TO DEAL WITH THIS SITUATION, WE NEED LEADERSHIP WHICH PAYS ATTENTION TO THESE AGRICULTURAL PROBLEMS. AND WE ALSO NEED A NATIONAL FOOD POLICY.

I LONG HAVE ARGUED THAT A NATIONAL FOOD POLICY IS NEEDED. THE TIME FOR DECISION ON THIS ISSUE IS LONG OVERDUE.

A NATIONAL FOOD POLICY MUST LOOK BEYOND THE LEVEL OF PRODUCTION AND COMMERCIAL DEMAND. WE MUST ALSO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT OUR HUMANITARIAN NEEDS AT HOME AND ABROAD.

A SOUND NATIONAL FOOD POLICY MUST LOOK TO THE TOTAL AGRICULTURAL PICTURE FROM THE FARMER TO THE ULTIMATE CONSUMER. THIS INVOLVES CREDIT, TRANSPORTATION, ADEQUATE SUPPLIES OF FUEL AND FERTILIZER, NEW SEEDS, EXPANDED AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH, AND STORAGE, PROCESSING AND DISTRIBUTION FACILITIES.

A SOUND NATIONAL FOOD POLICY ALSO MUST INCLUDE A FOOD RESERVE PROGRAM. A RESERVE PROGRAM WILL SERVE TO ASSURE ADEQUATE FOOD AND FIBER FOR AMERICAN CONSUMERS, ENABLE US TO MEET OUR EXPORT COMMITMENTS AND SERVE AS A BUFFER IN CASE OF DISASTER.



A RESERVE PROGRAM ESTABLISHES A DEGREE OF STABILITY IN OUR AGRICULTURAL MARKETS SINCE WE CAN BUY WHEN THERE IS PRODUCTION IN EXCESS OF NEEDS.

JUST AS WE MUST BE PREPARED TO BUY WHEN THERE IS EXCESS PRODUCTION, SO WE ALSO SHOULD HAVE RESERVES ON HAND IN TIMES OF NEED.

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE REFUSES TO CONCEDE THE HAVOC PRODUCED BY NOT HAVING A RESERVE.

THIS HAS BEEN ONE OF THE MAJOR CAUSES OF INFLATION. AND WE ALL KNOW THAT NO ONE BENEFITS FROM BOOM AND BUST PRICES.

I SHOULD POINT OUT THAT WE MUST LOOK BEYOND OUR OWN NATION IN DEVELOPING A NATIONAL FOOD POLICY.

IN THE FUTURE, THE COMPETITION FOR PRECIOUS FOOD WILL INVOLVE NOT ONLY THE TRADITIONAL POPULATION AND AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION EQUATION. IT ALSO WILL BE HEAVILY INFLUENCED BY THE LEVEL OF DEMAND IN THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES WHERE CONSUMERS HAVE BEGUN TO DEMAND MORE PROTEIN IN THE FORM OF MEAT, MILK AND EGGS.

THE POORER NATIONS ALREADY HAVE HAD TO CUT CONSUMPTION AND DEplete THEIR LIMITED FOREIGN EXCHANGE HOLDINGS.

FAMINE ALREADY HAS HIT LARGE PARTS OF AFRICA, AND SOUTHEAST ASIA IS NEAR THE DANGER POINT. A FURTHER DELAY IN MONSOON RAINS COULD SPELL DISASTER.

THE UNITED STATES OCCUPIES A CRITICAL ROLE UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES BECAUSE IT HOLDS THE KEY AS THE WORLD'S MAJOR FOOD RESERVE NATION.

WITH WORLD FOOD RESERVES DOWN TO ABOUT 27 DAYS, THIS IS A  
MATTER OF SERIOUS CONCERN TO OTHER NATIONS.

THIS IS WHY A NATIONAL FOOD RESERVE POLICY IS OF SUCH GREAT  
IMPORTANCE. IN AN ERA OF PLENTY, THERE WAS NO GREAT URGENCY.

THERE WAS MORE MARGIN FOR ERROR.

THAT ERA IS GONE.

I CALL ON OUR GOVERNMENT TO RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF  
SUCH A POLICY. AND I URGE YOU TO LEND YOUR SUPPORT TO THIS  
EFFORT.

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