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UNITED STATES SENATOR
SPEECH FROM WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE
ROME, ITALY

November 13, 1974

Thank you very much, my former colleague and very good personal friend, Herb Waters. May I express also my appreciation to each of you for giving me some of your time today to talk to you about the World Food Conference and your participation in it. I generally don't speak sitting down, I'm much more of an enthusiastic speaker than that. I see one of my colleagues here today and I do see others here. As a matter of fact, I can say quickly that the members of Congress that have been attending the World Food Conference have been very busy.

My plea first to you is to carry a more positive message about the conference to our nation. I know what makes new confrontation -- that's exactly what makes the headlines. This doesn't always make good sense and it doesn't necessary make good policy but it does make a story, but our confrontation at times also comes through thought. I urge each of us that we go home with the realization that we have a job to do and that job is to explain not only what happened here but what didn't happen and also have some rational explanations of why it happened or didn't happen.

Let me just add a word of commendation to the N.G.O.'s, the non-governmental organizations. You have done an insurmountable work for this conference. I've been working with non-governmental organizations almost all of my Senate public life in the field of foreign assistance and the Food for Peace Program and other activities. You have highlighted the dimension of the world food crisis. You have, in a sense, blown the bugle calling the nation's and the world's attention to these problems. I don't believe that adequate recognition has been given to your work and I regret this. One of the problems of our government is that it tends to become rather exclusive, you have to elbow your way in and sometimes you even have to batter the doors down, but I would like to remind you that government is not just one brandh.

You have government represented here today; furthermore you have a representative of the U.S. delegation, Mr. Dan Shaughnessy, who has worked with you. I think he is a remarkable man; maybe I'm prejudiced because he's a former member of my staff. He's carrying back to the U.S. delegation, as our official delegate, the thoughts you have expressed, the concerns you have stated, the policies you have recommended and he has done so forcefully and effectively. You should be aware that your concerns have had an impact on the official delegation of the United States, and a very favorable one.

You have done other things, too; the regional food conference -- I see our friends Jim McHale from Pennsylvania and Jim Patton. I know of the conferences you have held in Pennsylvania and, as you know, we had one out in Minnesota and this was due to the leadership that some of you here have exercised. My good friend and associate, Herb Waters, who has worked tirelessly. I want to complement you publicly, Herb, for what you've done -- I think it's been an amazing effort of leadership.

We've been receiving telegrams, apparently you folks have some interest in Western Union or one of these electronic companies because the flow of traffic, Transcontinental and Transoceanic, is amazing. We're getting the message and I reminded the U.S. delegation this morning that the message was getting through. I told them that the public back home was beginning to understand what this conference was all about, the shortcomings we have exhibited here, and what is needed to be done.

Now having said this, I want to express myself as to what I think are some of the essential elements are, what we ought to be doing here, and what I think can come out of this conference. I've distributed for you a copy of some of the remarks. I'm not going to burden you by a reading from those remarks but I want you to know that they are part of the record that I'm going to leave with you and some of you can take them along.

I remind you that the first food conference that was ever called was by Franklin Roosevelt in 1943. It met in a spirit of idealism and hope and the stated Declaration of that conference is still true. Mr. Roosevelt, in the declaration of that conference, stated that primary responsibilities lie in each nation for seeing that its own people have food needed for health and life. Steps to this end are for national determination, but each nation can fully achieve its goal only if all its people work together. So you now have the synthesis of national responsibility within a framework of international cooperation and international inter-dependence. Some years later another beloved and respected President of the United States, John Kennedy, in fact 20 years later in a non-governmental conference which was convened in Washington in June of 1963 also said this.

International organizations, cooperation, and international action are indispensable. The contracting world holds more inter-dependence. This inter-dependence requires more financial solutions to its problems. This is not a problem for a single nation, it is a problem for the entire human race because we cannot possibly be satisfied with some nations producing too much. As the President of India said the first problem is to produce enough for all in a way that makes all available to the people around the globe.

There is a great moral issue here. This conference will be judged by how well we meet the moral issue and that is our willingness to rearrange our priorities, to rearrange our policies, to rearrange what we do in such a way that we will be able to feed the children of this earth not merely with subsistence foods but with an adequate and nutritious diet that permits them to develop their physical, mental, and spiritual potentialities to the utmost. We've got to have high ideals and high hopes or conferences like this alter, break apart and become meaningless. I have wanted, and I expect, that the delegation from the United States of America is speaking in the spirit of our nation, not just as pragmatists looking at budgets and structures, but as idealists trying to understand the hopes and aspirations of the fears and the doubts and the pains and sufferings of people.

One of the tragedies of government is that it becomes bureaucratic, which means it loses its soul. The country that prides itself in the government of the people, by the people and for the people must speak like the people, must feel like people, must suffer and experience the joy and exhilaration of people, and this is why a few of us here have spoken the way we have.

There aren't easy answers to the problems that descend upon us or we wouldn't be coming to this conference. We cannot just outline what we think are the minimal standards for nations to follow but we must outline and set forth what we believe are the highest standards and reach for them knowing full well that we may not quite be able to touch them. And that's why I've always believed that there has to be an element of spirituality or moral up life at every one of these conferences and that this is where you fit.

To me there aren't governmental organizations that represent the spirit, the soul and the conscience of what we have tried to call with many names and mutual assistance, foreign assistance, or foreign aid. It's just like my belief in the parlistic society of ours in America - the belief that the private institution has much to offer to public policy by giving it the kind of measurement and standard, the kind of spirit and content, that brings a humane touch in any one of its performance.

If any of you are discouraged with what seems to be almost insurmountable problems at times, just remember the difference between greatness and littleness is the difference between doing what is possible and what to some people is impossible. Greatness is measured by the ability, the challenge of the impossible to accomplish it. When I hear people say that there isn't any hope, it can't be done, that nations won't respond, I reject that kind of negative thinking and child-like idealisms because I'm neither a child nor do I have child-like idealisms. I've been around the scene for a long time but I have not lost faith in the ability in people to do what needs to be done.

Now what's the very first thing we need to do? There are two problems of course; (1) the immediate, the suffering of millions of people, the starvation of famine that faces many parts of the world now and (2) what reasonable and intelligent people know will be the problems down the road 5, 10, 16 20 years from now. One time somebody was asked what is the difference between the short run and the long run and a wise old cracker answered that in the long run we're all dead, so people do have an interest in the short run as well as the long run. It does not good to say that this conference is not designed to take care of the emergency, as some have said, because the emergency is here for $\frac{1}{2}$ billion people or more. The representatives of those people are here and the problem is here. It does little good to talk about inter-dependence, a global policy and a global problem if we don't recognize them as the people that are suffering and part of the world population and part of mankind.

So I have called upon my country, your country, our country, and I've called upon it to face up to the emergency food aid issue ~~and to face up to the emergency food aid issue~~ in this conference and to get to the leadership both in the sense of idealism and practicalities that this conference needs. A leader is not one that does it for somebody else. A leader is not one that plays God. A leader is one that summons the best out of others as he calls upon the best within himself to join in the common cause and common purpose. That's what this country of ours, the United States, has got to do in both public and private organizations in public and private life. That's why I wanted us to set standards here. No one every won a game playing defensive ball - you have to score. No one wins by merely reacting - you have to have a strategy or at least have a plan for action.

This conference was initiated at the request of the United States. In the month of August, 1973, I wrote to then President Nixon, from my office in Minneapolis, a long letter outlining the necessity for world food conference. Sometime later the Secretary of State, Mr. Kissinger, was before our Committee on Foreign Relations for the purpose of confirmation of his nomination. I quizzed him at length at that time on whether or not he had seen the letter, what the President's reaction was, and what he thought about such a conference. I'm happy to tell you that he looked with favor upon the conference or at least the idea. Subsequently, we've talked a great deal about it and to the credit of Secretary Kissinger, he made that address to the United Nations outlining that America would like a world food conference.

We're here because America helped bring us here and, therefore, I expect our country to act as a sponsor and give the kind of moral, political, economic, and social leadership that will make this conference a proven success or a proven constructive force. This is why some of us in the Congressional delegation have asked for an increase in our projected food aid. Now quite honestly, we have asked for a minimal amount. I want to repeat here what I've said to the delegation and what I've said elsewhere. The additional million tons that we're asking for is not a large request. As a matter of fact, it is but a beginning but it could have an electrifying effect in this conference and it could get the government of the United States off the defensive and out in the open.

I think it's time that we have that commitment coming from the President and from our country. We've asked for it today and I have yet to say that it's going to come. I know two secretaries have indicated to me privately that they don't think our demand is excessive. Further, what I have to say to you is what I've said to others - I'm a public man. I do not intend to stand by and let the Office of Management and Budget set public policies - I think that's our job. I'm willing to take whatever political risk is involved in setting that policy and I want you to take this message home because this is what we gave. The World Food Conference will continue for years to come what we've started here and we're going to have to be prepared to carry out the struggle.

On emergency food aid, the United States can't feed the world alone and we don't intend to. We ought not to expect to, nor should we conceive that we think we can. What we can do better, we have done better, and it's an obligation of ours to do better because we are a leader in food production. We also need, of course, to emphasis long term agricultural development. This is a complicated business but we need more knowledge of this area, we need more than headline stories, we need more than 10 minute strips on television. Agricultural development, rural development in America is a complicated business and not very sexy either. It doesn't have much charisma to it. It's hard work. Long term agricultural development involves financing and I'll tell you one thing we've learned here is that agriculture is not a cheap industry.

I think that this has been a good awakening for many people who have looked upon our own farmers in America as somehow an industry that anybody can do, that if you didn't know what else you could do, you could farm. May I suggest that if you've got that idea, you better get off the farm right away because it requires great knowledge, understanding, preseverence and patience to be a compaceno, peasant or an American Farmer and make no mistake about it. We have a problem of financing and it's going to be an immense task. It's going to run into the billions of dollars, but not for America alone. We'll pay our share, but the whole world and the entire internation financial structure must be redirected toward the development of the rural economy, which is the biggest for any kind of economy and it has

been and it always will be. I always believed the way people prepared their land is about the way they are going to take of their people.

There are governments and their representatives at this conference who are chastising United States of America and have done a poor job. Many of them, you know it and I know it, have not taken care of their own people and their own land and I'm not going to sit idly by and accept the guilt for everything. I think I've got to say this, I think it needs to be said publicly and I wish I could say it to the whole conference - we are guilty of some things, we've made mistakes, no doubt about it but I say to those who criticize us, you don't come with clean hands. There needs to be a total re-evaluation - nation by nation - of the policies that are pursued concerning the family life, the production of food and fiber, its distribution, and its role in the economy. You need to say it and I need to say it. We don't have to crawl into a hole because somebody comes up and says "you Americans, it's all your fault". I'm proud of that fact that my nation has been generous, I want it to continue to be generous. I also want it to be thoughtful of the needs of others, not only of the compassion and charity which we need to extend, but also the education and the technical assistance, the respect and the dignity that we need to extend to others and we can do much of that.

Earlier I mentioned research. We can be of great help in this by working through international organizations, through the great university systems of our own and elsewhere in the world. Research is vital and I don't think adequate emphasis in this World Food Conference has been placed upon the long term role that research can play in water conservancy, in new seeds, in land chemistry, land use and new technologies. The whole gamut of activities need to be re-examined.

I made some proposals in the field of fertilizer. May I say this gets into the emergency area. You cannot build a fertilizer plant between now and next August - and they are costly. The financing of them is a difficult thing. So, just as we need an emergency food aid, we need an emergency fertilizer conservation program. One of the things I suggested, and which our delegation has placed before this conference, is a voluntary fertilizer conservation effort in every nation and the United States of America where we use so much fertilizer for non-productive purposes. We can get along with less fertilizer on golf courses and still get a golf game. We can get along with less fertilizer on own lawns and, may I say that in the spirit of sincerity, it will eliminate have to mow the lawn.

We can save 1½ million tons of fertilizer in America in the coming year by just a modest amount of fertilizer conservation on non-productive uses. This act will produce millions of tons of feed grains that are desperately needed in this world and at the same time it will be a cost saving for the American people. There needs to be a way and means of financing new fertilizer plants, new agricultural production, and this is going to be one of the difficult assignments following this conference. I want to leave this thought with you - don't expect it to be solved at this conference - expect that the mechanisms may be set up to solve this problem to find a way for long term financing of this development that we need.

There are a couple of other points that I feel a concern about and want to share them with you. Your help is needed on world food reserves. The United States of America is in a very poor position to be talking about world food reserves because we don't have them for ourselves. I happen to believe and I think I know that some other countries in the world also look upon food reserves as vital to their national security - not only vital to the humanitarian needs of their people, but vital to their national security - and no member of my government

can dispute that fact I stated. I am confident that there are certain large powers in the world today that have food reserves as a strategic reserve and yet the United States of American, which pours out its fortune to maintain a power military establishment for what we believe is our national security, can deliver no thought to the development of food reserves either for humanitarian assistance, market stability or national security.

I'm going to be relentless in my pursuit and in public policy to establish a food reserve program in the United States of American so that when we are called upon in any day ahead, if God's children are suffering from starvation, we'll be able to help with the Lord's work. And if our nation needs food reserves for market stability and national security, we will be able to do something about it. If our nation should suffer danger to our national security, we'll have the food reserves that give us that extra element of security that no bomb, tank, plane, or gun can every give us. It's absolutely ridiculous to pursue the policy we presently pursue market forces permitting our food to be made available to those who have the most monies that can buy the most in the least period of time. That is not the way to run the country. It's that kind of thinking which lets people talk about food as a weapon.

I don't look upon food as a weapon. I look upon food as life. I look upon it as a God given resource for the preservation of human kind. I look upon it as a constructive resource. I want our vocabulary to be very careful when we start talking about food and what it means in our foreign policy. I'm grateful that America's a reserve food producing country because we can help so many people. We can help ourselves in anything we do. Food is a great economic asset but I have to tell you that food, above all, is like saving lives, giving life, and making life meaningful. So I come down hard on the food reserve program. I don't think we ought to look for specific answers but we can find the answer. A nation that created the computer ought to be able to find an answer on how to manage a food reserve. I just don't buy the statement that the size of it makes it too complicated. I want to compliment Dr. Boerma the Director of the Food and Agricultural Organization, on his initiative on this matter, his intelligent advice and council to us.

Finally there is the matter of a World Food Information Center. I outlined in my remarks I made available to you, what we call a World Food Information Center and how it can be pulled together. But again, may I say, the best way to do it is to improve our own. We have a splendid information program, agricul ural information program, in the Department of Agriculture. It can be improved, it is being improved and it will be further improved. We've taken the initiative in Congress under the Office of Technology Assessment, of which I'm a member, to design a much more elaborate and sophisticated food information program for the United States of America and, hopefully, as it ties into a world system.

It is impossible for any of us in any country to project what the food needs will be unless we have a more reliable, more timely, more accurate and more comprehensive World Food Information System. This is a part of a mechanism. It isn't the emotional subject of emergency food aid, but emergency food aid will be the parent of life from here on out unless we get a better information system. I think some of us need to come to grips with it. We have presented, when I say we I mean members of Congress under my leadership, to our delegation an outline of an information system that we want to be brought to the attention of this World Food Conference. I think that outline is helpful and tends to be a very valuable assistance.

I want to thank you Mr. Waters for permitting me to address this organization of N.G.O.'s - you've done so much world wide. You have carried the message of love, morality, decency, sharing and service to hundreds of millions of people. I can think of no group or organization that has done more to bring the true message of American democracy to the world than those who are represented in this group. That's why you ought to be listened to. This is why you deserve special recognition and this is why I come to you and say that we desperately need you now.

Don't leave this conference either frustrated, cynical, or angry. Leave this conference because this was step one in the long journey that men and women of decency and concern must undertake for a better world. Go back to our people and tell them what the food facts are. Go back to our people and tell them what America can contribute to the solution as you see it. Go back to our people and tell them what the dimensions of the problems are and the necessity for international cooperation.

Maybe this Food Conference is something that will remind us that man does not live alone. Mankind is interdependent. I have worried about the fact that our nation is experiencing a great period of disenchantment not only with domestic politics but with our role in the world. It was so easy once when we had the big gun and the big bank account to be able to do things and get people to obey our suggestions or commands.

Today it's a different world. Other people have big guns and we don't have all the bank accounts, not by a long shot and we're going to have to encourage other people who are coming into new wealth to learn how to share because in the giving there is the receiving. In the sharing there is the gain, and giving takes time to learn just like taking. We're just going to have to understand that it's a different world. We're also going to have to understand that America is needed but the world is not its cupcake, we're part of it and we have some responsibility to it. I guess what I'm trying to say is that there is no room for any form of separation from the rest of the globe. There is no way for any kind of isolation, neo-isolation or old isolation.



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