

The original documents are located in Box D31, folder “67th Annual Convention, United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Association, Washington, DC, February 8, 1971” of the Ford Congressional Papers: Press Secretary and Speech File at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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KEYNOTE ADDRESS, BEFORE THE 67TH ANNUAL
CONVENTION OF THE UNITED FRESH FRUIT
AND VEGETABLE ASSOCIATION, 12 NOON
MONDAY, FEB. 8, 1971, WASHINGTON HILTON.

*Wade Chubbuck
Frank Davis*

*Congress members
Oh what its
Brock
Brown*

IT IS RATHER REFRESHING TO TALK
ABOUT FRESH FRUIT AND VEGETABLES IN
FEBRUARY, PARTICULARLY SINCE THIS IS THE
WORST MONTH OF THE WINTER IN WASHINGTON.

*Althea
apple/onions
limited*

OF COURSE, WHAT I KNOW ABOUT THE
PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION OF FRESH FRUIT
AND VEGETABLES WOULD TAKE UP ABOUT ONE LINE
OF TYPE IN THE AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT
YEARBOOK. BUT I REALLY DO NOT THINK THAT
DISQUALIFIES ME TO BE YOUR KEYNOTE
SPEAKER.

YOUR KEYNOTE. WHAT SHOULD THE
KEYNOTE OF YOUR CONVENTION BE? ~~+~~ ~~THINK~~
THE ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION IS REALLY
QUITE OBVIOUS. IT IS AN ANSWER THAT IS



A BIT "IFFY" BECAUSE IT INVOLVES SOME
CRYSTAL BALL-GAZING. BUT I THINK THE
ANSWER IS ONE THAT CAN BE COUNTED UPON
BECAUSE, TRULY, THE CRYSTAL BALL IS NOT
TOO CLOUDY.

Perhaps WHAT I AM LEADING UP TO IS SOME
ECONOMIC FORECASTING AND SOME PREDICTIONS
OF LEGISLATIVE EVENTS TO COME OR ARDENTLY
TO BE WISHED.

WHILE FEBRUARY IS A BIT LATE
FOR 1971 FORECASTS, THIS JUST MEANS I HAVE
HAD ALL THE MORE TIME TO POLISH UP MY
CRYSTAL BALL AND MORE TIME TO LOOK INTO
IT. LET'S HOPE THAT MY READING THEREFORE
HAS ALL THE MORE VALIDITY.

FIRST OF ALL, I LOOK FOR THE
ECONOMY TO REBOUND IN 1971. I ALSO LOOK
FOR THE RATE OF INFLATION TO CONTINUE TO
RECEDE.

INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION HAS BEEN CLIMBING SINCE THE HARD BLOW DEALT THE ECONOMY BY THE GENERAL MOTORS STRIKE LATE LAST FALL. WE CAN NOW LOOK FORWARD TO STRONGER GAINS IN OVERALL OUTPUT, LARGER INCREASES IN PRODUCTIVITY, A SLOWER RISE IN THE PRICE LEVEL AND IN LABOR COSTS PER UNIT OF OUTPUT, AND FURTHER GAINS AGAINST INFLATION.

WE ARE IN THE EARLY STAGES OF A FRESH SURGE IN THE ECONOMY. THE BASIC ECONOMY SHOWS ALL THE EVIDENCE OF RENEWED EXPANSION.

I PERSONALLY EXPECT THE ADMINISTRATION TO PROVIDE ALL OF THE STIMULI NEEDED TO KEEP US ON A COURSE OF RENEWED ECONOMIC GROWTH -- AT A REAL RATE OF ABOUT 4 PER CENT. THE RECENT ADMINISTRATION DECISION TO SPUR INVESTMENT

IRS
↑
IN PLANT AND EQUIPMENT THROUGH PROVISION
FOR FASTER TAX WRITE-OFFS IS SOLID

EVIDENCE. ~~OF THIS.~~ *So is PRESIDENT NIXON'S
FULL EMPLOYMENT BUDGET FOR FISCAL 1972.*
WE ARE ALREADY SEEING A SPURT

IN ECONOMIC ACTIVITY, NOTABLY IN HOUSING.

NATIONALLY, HOUSING STARTS SHOULD REACH

OR BETTER
1,650,000 ~~IN~~ 1971 -- DUE IN PART TO TWO

NEW FEDERAL PROGRAMS. THESE NEW PROGRAMS

ARE THE GOVERNMENT NATIONAL MORTGAGE

ASSOCIATION'S MORTGAGE-BACKED SECURITY

PROGRAM AND THE EMERGENCY HOME FINANCE

ACT OF 1970, WHICH I WILL NOT ELABORATE
ON AT THIS TIME.

SUFFICE IT TO SAY THAT THE
FORMATION OF NEW HOUSEHOLDS IS

SIGNIFICANT FOR THE ECONOMY GENERALLY

AND THE FRESH FRUIT AND VEGETABLE MARKET

SPECIFICALLY.

I THINK WE CAN ALSO EXPECT THE

AMERICAN PEOPLE'S SPENDING TO GO UP IN
1971, AND THIS OF COURSE WILL HAVE A
SALUTARY IMPACT ON THE ECONOMY. REFUSAL
TO SPEND OVER THE PAST YEAR HAS HAD A
DEADENING EFFECT ON THE ECONOMIC LIFE OF
THE NATION. A LOOSENING OF THE PURSE
STRINGS IS ESSENTIAL TO ECONOMIC REVIVAL.
WHAT WE NEED, IN SUM, IS A RESURGENCE OF
CONSUMER CONFIDENCE -- AND I THINK IT IS
ON THE WAY.

I STRONGLY BELIEVE WE ARE HEADED
TOWARD A MORE STABLE ECONOMY AND A MORE
STABLE PRICE LEVEL -- AND I SEE THE ONSET
OF A VIGOROUS EXPANSION WHICH WILL PRODUCE
JOB OPPORTUNITIES AND GREATER ABUNDANCE
FOR ALL OUR PEOPLE.

AT THE SAME TIME, THE PRESIDENT
IS PURSUING VIGOROUS MEASURES IN A
CONTINUING FIGHT AGAINST INFLATION. HIS

ACTION ON OIL IMPORTS, HIS COUNTER TO
THE TREMENDOUS PRICE BOOSTS ORIGINALLY
ANNOUNCED BY BETHLEHEM STEEL, AND HIS
PRESSURE ON THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY TO
HOLD COSTS DOWN ARE AMPLE EVIDENCE OF A
STRONG ANTI-INFLATION EFFORT. I SEE THE
PRESIDENT OPERATING IN A ROLE OF ECONOMIC
STATESMANSHIP WHICH WILL BE IN THE BEST
INTERESTS OF ALL OF OUR PEOPLE.

THERE IS OTHER MEDICINE REQUIRED
TO CURE SOME OF THE ILLS OF OUR ECONOMY.

I REFER TO THE OBVIOUS NEED FOR
MACHINERY TO HANDLE LABOR-MANAGEMENT
RELATIONS IN THE FIELD OF AGRICULTURE.


I KNOW THE FRUIT AND VEGETABLE
PRODUCERS AND DISTRIBUTORS HAVE BEEN GOING
THROUGH AN AGONIZING SITUATION DUE TO LACK
OF AN AGRICULTURE LABOR LAW. IT IS THE
GROSSEST KIND OF NEGLECT THAT CONGRESS HAS

NOT YET SET UP GUIDELINES AND MACHINERY FOR THE HANDLING OF REPRESENTATION AND OTHER FARM LABOR DISPUTES.

IT SEEMS OBVIOUS THAT SPECIAL MACHINERY IS NEEDED TO DEAL WITH LABOR PROBLEMS IN THE FIELD OF AGRICULTURE. IT IS GOOD TO KNOW, THEREFORE, THAT THE LABOR DEPARTMENT IS ^{actively} WORKING ON SUCH LEGISLATION AT THE PRESENT TIME.

I HAVE SOME GENERAL IDEAS AS TO WHAT FORM SUCH LEGISLATION SHOULD TAKE.

THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT FARM WORKERS SHOULD HAVE THE RIGHT TO ORGANIZE BUT A BOYCOTT DESIGNED TO FORCE AN EMPLOYER TO SIGN A UNION CONTRACT IS AN UNSATISFACTORY WAY TO SETTLE A REPRESENTATION DISPUTE IN AGRICULTURE. AGRICULTURE IS UNLIKE INDUSTRY. ITS PRODUCTS ARE HIGHLY PERISHABLE.



WHAT WE NEED IS A SPECIALLY
DESIGNED LABOR POLICY FOR THE NATION'S
FARM WORKERS.

THEY SHOULD HAVE THE RIGHT TO
STRIKE BUT EVERY POSSIBLE MECHANISM SHOULD
BE SET UP TO AVOID STRIKES SINCE A VITAL
PART OF THE COUNTRY'S FOOD SUPPLY WOULD
BE AFFECTED. BINDING ARBITRATION BY A
NEUTRAL THIRD PARTY WOULD BE ONE ANSWER.
AND IT SEEMS LOGICAL THAT COVERAGE OF A
NEW FARM LABOR LAW SHOULD BE RESTRICTED
TO THE LARGER FARMS.

THE NEED FOR COLLECTIVE
BARGAINING RULES IN AGRICULTURE IS
UNQUESTIONABLE, JUST AS IS THE NEED FOR
IMPROVED METHODS OF HANDLING NATIONAL
EMERGENCY SITUATIONS IN THE AREA OF
TRANSPORTATION.

IN TRANSPORTATION, FRUIT AND

VEGETABLE GROWERS AND DISTRIBUTORS ARE PERIODICALLY CONFRONTED WITH SHUTDOWNS THAT CREATE CRISIS CONDITIONS AND THREATEN TO DEPRIVE AMERICAN FAMILIES OF THE NECESSITIES OF LIFE.

CONGRESS MUST FACE UP TO THE
NEED TO IMPROVE THE HANDLING OF LABOR
DISPUTES IN TRANSPORTATION. THE PRESENT
MACHINERY FOR DEALING WITH SUCH SITUATIONS
IS UNDENIABLY INADEQUATE. THE CRISIS
ATMOSPHERE UNDER WHICH WE NOW ARE
OPERATING CANNOT BE ALLOWED TO CONTINUE.

YOU WILL RECALL THAT WHEN THE
RAIL UNIONS DECLARED THEIR INTENTION TO
CALL A NATIONWIDE STRIKE LAST DECEMBER 10
THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAD EXHAUSTED ALL
EXISTING PROCEDURES FOR ATTEMPTING TO
BRING ABOUT A SETTLEMENT OF THE DISPUTE.
THE SECRETARY OF LABOR HAD SOUGHT A

VOLUNTARY EXTENSION OF NEGOTIATIONS BUT WITHOUT SUCCESS.

HOW DID CONGRESS DEAL WITH THIS NATIONAL EMERGENCY? BY PROHIBITING A RAIL STRIKE UNTIL MARCH 1 AND BY GIVING THE RAILROAD WORKERS A RAISE. THAT ACTION WAS THE CLIMAX OF A SERIES OF IRRESPONSIBLE ACTIONS ON THE PART OF THE CONGRESS -- AN INCREDIBLE SERIES OF DELAYING MANEUVERS WHICH SPELLED REFUSAL TO FACE UP TO RESPONSIBILITY.

I AM AMAZED THAT THERE HAS NOT BEEN A PUBLIC OUTCRY OVER THE ^{Majority Party's} DEMOCRATIC CONGRESSIONAL LEADERSHIP'S REPEATED INSISTENCE ON AVOIDING A RESPONSIBLE SOLUTION TO OUR LABOR-MANAGEMENT DIFFICULTIES IN TRANSPORTATION.

AFTER ALL, THE DECEMBER STRIKE CRISIS DEVELOPED LESS THAN A YEAR AFTER



A SIMILAR EMERGENCY HAD SURFACED AT THE END OF JANUARY 1970.

WHAT DID THE CONGRESS DO TO DEAL WITH THAT EMERGENCY? FIRST THE CONGRESS LEGISLATED A 37-DAY DELAY IN THE STRIKE DEADLINE. THEN WHEN THIS DID NOT PRODUCE A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT THE CONGRESS IMPOSED ON THE RAIL UNIONS THE AGREEMENT WHICH HAD BEEN ENDORSED BY ALL OF THE RAIL UNIONS BUT ONE.

THE MOST RECENT ACTION TAKEN BY THE CONGRESS TO DEAL WITH A RAIL STRIKE WAS FAR WORSE THAN THAT OF LAST APRIL 9. INSTEAD OF IMPOSING A SETTLEMENT, THE CONGRESS GAVE THE UNIONS PART OF WHAT THEY WERE SEEKING AND THUS DESTROYED MUCH OF THE BARGAINING POWER OF RAILROAD MANAGEMENT.

WHAT CAN ONE SAY ABOUT THE FACT THAT RAIL DISPUTES REPEATEDLY ARE WINDING UP

IN THE LAP OF CONGRESS? I THINK ONE MUST CONCLUDE THAT COLLECTIVE BARGAINING HAS BROKEN DOWN IN THE RAILROAD INDUSTRY AND THAT CONGRESS HAS BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN THE DESTRUCTION OF IT.

WHY HAS CONGRESS FAILED TO LEGISLATE AN IMPROVED WAY OF DEALING WITH LABOR DISPUTES IN TRANSPORTATION? HAS THE CONGRESS LACKED FOR EXECUTIVE BRANCH GUIDANCE? NOT AT ALL. FOR NEARLY A YEAR THE CONGRESS HAS HAD BEFORE IT A LIST OF CAREFULLY PREPARED RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY PRESIDENT NIXON LAST FEBRUARY 27.

I PERSONALLY INTRODUCED THE ADMINISTRATION BILL IN THE HOUSE.

WHY HAS NO ACTION BEEN TAKEN? WHY HAVE WE NOT EVEN HAD HEARINGS ON THE PRESIDENT'S PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVED HANDLING OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY DISPUTES IN TRANSPORTATION?

Majority

THE ANSWER IS THAT THE DEMOCRATIC
LEADERSHIP IN THE CONGRESS CONSIDERS IT
MORE IMPORTANT TO KEEP LABOR LEADERS HAPPY
THAN TO KEEP THE TRAINS RUNNING WITHOUT
INTERRUPTION. THAT MAKES FOR AN
INTOLERABLE SITUATION.

LABOR LEADERS ARE OPPOSED TO A
NIXON RECOMMENDATION WHICH THE AFL-CIO
LOOKS UPON AS COMPULSORY ARBITRATION.

THIS SHOULD NOT MEAN THAT
CONGRESS SIMPLY SITS BACK AND DOES NOTHING
TO IMPROVE THE MACHINERY FOR HANDLING
RAILROAD LABOR-MANAGEMENT DISPUTES. THE
NET RESULT OF THIS INACTION IS THAT
CONGRESS IS PERIODICALLY FORCED TO STEP
IN ON THE EVE OF A STRIKE AND SUBSTITUTE
ITS JUDGMENT FOR THE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING
PROCESS.

NOBODY IN CONGRESS -- INCLUDING

ME -- IS WEDDED TO THE PRESIDENT'S PROPOSALS. BUT THEY ARE AN EXCELLENT BEGINNING POINT, AND HEARINGS ARE VERY MUCH IN ORDER.

WHAT POSSIBLE EXCUSE CAN THERE BE FOR NOT HOLDING HEARINGS ON THE PRESIDENT'S RECOMMENDATIONS? NONE, OF COURSE. AND YET WHEN I DEMANDED LAST DECEMBER THAT HEARINGS BE HELD IN 1971, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSE INTERSTATE AND FOREIGN COMMERCE COMMITTEE MERELY SAID HE WOULD "CONSIDER" IT. THIS IS THE ATTITUDE THAT HAS SUBJECTED THE AMERICAN PEOPLE TO ONE RAIL CRISIS AFTER ANOTHER.

SUCH AN ATTITUDE IS ALL THE MORE ASTOUNDING WHEN YOU CONSIDER THAT NOBODY IN THE CONGRESS CAN ARGUE THAT THE RAILWAY LABOR ACT OF 1926 IS WORKING. NEITHER IS THE TAFT-HARTLEY ACT ADEQUATE

FOR HANDLING TRANSPORTATION LABOR DISPUTES.
IN A WORD, EXISTING LEGISLATION FOR
DEALING WITH NATIONAL EMERGENCY DISPUTES
IN TRANSPORTATION IS SERIOUSLY DEFICIENT
AND EVERYONE KNOWS IT.

THE PRESIDENT HAS ASKED THAT
THREE ADDITIONAL OPTIONS BE MADE AVAILABLE
TO HIM WHEN THE EXISTING COOLING OFF
PERIOD EXPIRES WITHOUT A SETTLEMENT IN
A RAIL OR AIRLINE LABOR DISPUTE.

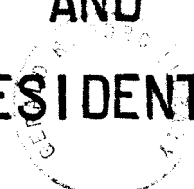
THE FIRST OPTION WOULD BE TO
EXTEND THE COOLING OFF PERIOD FOR UP TO
30 MORE DAYS. THIS WOULD BE THE MOST
ATTRACTIVE OPTION IF THE DISPUTE APPEARED
VERY CLOSE TO A SETTLEMENT.

THE SECOND OPTION WOULD BE
PARTIAL OPERATION OF THE TROUBLED INDUSTRY.
THIS WOULD ALLOW THE MAJOR PART OF A
STRIKE OR LOCKOUT TO CONTINUE, ALONG WITH

A STEPUP IN NEGOTIATIONS. THIS PROCEDURE COULD BE INVOKED FOR UP TO SIX MONTHS.

THE THIRD OPTION WOULD BE WHAT IS KNOWN AS THE "FINAL OFFER" PROCEDURE. UNDER THIS PROCEDURE EACH OF THE TWO PARTIES WOULD SUBMIT FINAL OFFERS AND THEN HAVE FIVE DAYS TO BARGAIN OVER THESE FINAL PROPOSALS FOR SETTLEMENT. IF NO AGREEMENT RESULTED, A FINAL SELECTOR GROUP OF THREE NEUTRAL MEMBERS WOULD BE APPOINTED BY THE TWO PARTIES OR, IF THEY COULD NOT AGREE ON THE APPOINTMENTS, BY THE PRESIDENT. THIS GROUP WOULD CHOOSE ONE OF THE FINAL OFFERS AS THE FINAL AND BINDING SETTLEMENT.

THE COURTS COULD DECLARE EITHER PARTIAL OPERATION OF AN INDUSTRY OR A FINAL OFFER SELECTION INVALID IF THIS WERE FOUND TO BE EITHER ARBITRARY OR CAPRICIOUS. AND IF NONE OF THE OPTIONS WORKED, THE PRESIDENT



COULD THEN SUBMIT THE ENTIRE MATTER TO CONGRESS AS HE DOES UNDER PRESENT LAW.

THE PRESIDENT IS SEEKING TO BE FAIR AND TO ACT IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE NATION. HIS RECOMMENDATIONS SHOW COURAGE, SINCE THE ENTIRE AREA OF LABOR-MANAGEMENT RELATIONS IS MOST SENSITIVE POLITICALLY. IF ONLY CONGRESS WOULD DISPLAY THE SAME BRAND OF COURAGE!

I HAVE RANGED OVER A BROAD AREA TODAY, COVERING THE HEALTH OF THE ECONOMY AND THE NEED FOR FEDERAL LEGISLATION DEALING WITH COLLECTIVE BARGAINING IN AGRICULTURE AND TRANSPORTATION.

LET ME REITERATE THAT I THINK THE BASIC ECONOMY IS NOT ONLY HEALTHY BUT EAGER TO RESPOND TO IMPROVING CONDITIONS.

AS TO THE PROSPECTS FOR NEW LABOR LEGISLATION, I CAN ONLY STATE FLATLY

THAT THE NEED IS THERE AND CONGRESSIONAL
COURAGE HAS BEEN THE MISSING INGREDIENT.

THE RIGHT TO STRIKE IS GENERALLY
ACCEPTED IN AMERICA, AND THIS IS HEALTHY.
BUT LET US BE HONEST ABOUT IT. A
NATIONWIDE RAILROAD STRIKE WILL NEVER BE
COUNTENANCED BY THE CONGRESS. IN VIEW OF
THAT, WE HAD BETTER ACT TO IMPROVE THE
EXISTING MACHINERY FOR SETTLEMENT OF RAIL
DISPUTES.

I FIND IT DIFFICULT TO BELIEVE
THAT THE PRESENT INACTION IN CONGRESS CAN
CONTINUE. THE REASON IS THAT I BELIEVE IN
THE GREAT GOOD SENSE OF THE AMERICAN
PEOPLE. I BELIEVE THEY WILL DEMAND THAT
SOMETHING BE DONE.

I DON'T KNOW ABOUT OTHER MEMBERS
OF THE CONGRESS, BUT I WILL GLADLY RELY
ON WHAT THE PEOPLE OF AMERICA FEEL IS THE

RIGHT THING TO DO. I HAVE GREAT CONFIDENCE
IN WHAT I CALL OUR NATIONAL CONSCIENCE.
IF THE CONGRESS WILL HEED THE CALL OF THAT
CONSCIENCE, AMERICA CANNOT GO WRONG. I
FREELY LEAVE THE NATION'S FUTURE IN THE
HANDS OF ITS CITIZENS.

-- END --

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KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY REP. GERALD R. FORD, R-MICH.
REPUBLICAN LEADER, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
BEFORE THE 67th ANNUAL CONVENTION
OF THE UNITED FRESH FRUIT AND VEGETABLE ASSOCIATION
WASHINGTON HILTON HOTEL
WASHINGTON, D.C.
12 NOON, FEBRUARY 8, 1971

FOR RELEASE IN PM's OF MONDAY, FEB. 8, 1971

It is rather refreshing to talk about fresh fruit and vegetables in February, particularly since this is the worst month of the winter in Washington.

Of course, what I know about the production and distribution of fresh fruit and vegetables would take up about one line of type in the Agriculture Department yearbook. But I really do not think that disqualifies me to be your keynote speaker.

Your keynote. What should the keynote of your convention be? I think the answer to that question is really quite obvious. It is an answer that is a bit "iffy" because it involves some crystal ball-gazing. But I think the answer is one that can be counted upon because, truly, the crystal ball is not too cloudy.

What I am leading up to is some economic forecasting and some predictions of legislative events to come or ardently to be wished.

While February is a bit late for 1971 forecasts, this just means I have had all the more time to polish up my crystal ball and more time to look into it. Let's hope that my reading therefore has all the more validity.

First of all, I look for the economy to rebound in 1971. I also look for the rate of inflation to continue to recede.

Industrial production has been climbing since the hard blow dealt the economy by the General Motors strike late last fall. We can now look forward to stronger gains in overall output, larger increases in productivity, a slower rise in the price level and in labor costs per unit of output, and further gains against inflation.

We are in the early stages of a fresh surge in the economy. The basic economy shows all the evidence of renewed expansion.

I personally expect the Administration to provide all of the stimuli needed to keep us on a course of renewed economic growth--at a real rate of about 4 per cent. The recent Administration decision to spur investment in plant and equipment through provision for faster tax write-offs is solid evidence of this.

(more)



We are already seeing a spurt in economic activity, notably in housing. Nationally, housing starts should reach 1,650,000 in 1971--due in part to two new Federal programs. These new programs are the Government National Mortgage Association's mortgage-backed security program and the Emergency Home Finance Act of 1970, which I will not elaborate on at this time.

Suffice it to say that the formation of new households is significant for the economy generally and the fresh fruit and vegetable market specifically.

I think we can also expect the American people's spending to go up in 1971, and this of course will have a salutary impact on the economy. Refusal to spend over the past year has had a deadening effect on the economic life of the Nation. A loosening of the purse strings is essential to economic revival. What we need, in sum, is a resurgence of consumer confidence--and I think it is on the way.

I strongly believe we are headed toward a more stable economy and a more stable price level--and I see the onset of a vigorous expansion which will produce greater job opportunities and greater abundance for all our people.

At the same time, the President is pursuing vigorous measures in a continuing fight against inflation. His action on oil imports, his counter to the tremendous price boosts originally announced by Bethlehem Steel, and his pressure on the construction industry to hold costs down are ample evidence of a strong anti-inflation effort. I see the President operating in a role of economic statesmanship which will be in the best interests of all of our people.

There is other medicine required to cure some of the ills of our economy.

I refer to the obvious need for machinery to handle labor-management relations in the field of agriculture.

I know the fruit and vegetable producers and distributors have been going through an agonizing situation due to lack of an agriculture labor law. It is the grossest kind of neglect that Congress has not yet set up guidelines and machinery for the handling of representation and other farm labor disputes.

It seems obvious that special machinery is needed to deal with labor problems in the field of agriculture. It is good to know, therefore, that the Labor Department is working on such legislation at the present time.

I have some general ideas as to what form such legislation should take.

There is no question that farm workers should have the right to organize but a boycott designed to force an employer to sign a union contract is an unsatisfactory way to settle a representation dispute in agriculture. Agriculture is unlike industry. Its products are highly perishable.

(more)

What we need is a specially designed labor policy for the Nation's farm workers.

They should have the right to strike but every possible mechanism should be set up to avoid strikes since a vital part of the country's food supply would be affected. Binding arbitration by a neutral third party would be one answer. And it seems logical that coverage of a new farm labor law should be restricted to the larger farms.

The need for collective bargaining rules in agriculture is unquestionable, just as is the need for improved methods of handling national emergency situations in the area of transportation.

In transportation, fruit and vegetable growers and distributors are periodically confronted with shutdowns that create crisis conditions and threaten to deprive American families of the necessities of life.

Congress must face up to the need to improve the handling of labor disputes in transportation. The present machinery for dealing with such situations is undeniably inadequate. The crisis atmosphere under which we now are operating cannot be allowed to continue.

You will recall that when the rail unions declared their intention to call a nationwide strike last Dec. 10 the Federal Government had exhausted all existing procedures for attempting to bring about a settlement of the dispute. The Secretary of Labor had sought a voluntary extension of negotiations but without success.

How did Congress deal with this national emergency? By prohibiting a rail strike until March 1 and by giving the railroad workers a raise. That action was the climax of a series of irresponsible actions on the part of the Congress--an incredible series of delaying maneuvers which spelled refusal to face up to responsibility.

I am amazed that there has not been a public outcry over the Democratic congressional leadership's repeated insistence on avoiding a responsible solution to our labor-management difficulties in transportation.

After all, the December strike crisis developed less than a year after a similar emergency had surfaced at the end of January 1970.

What did the Congress do to deal with that emergency? First the Congress legislated a 37-day delay in the strike deadline. Then when this did not produce a negotiated settlement the Congress imposed on the rail unions the agreement which had been endorsed by all of the rail unions but one.

(more)

The most recent action taken by the Congress to deal with a rail strike was far worse than that of last April 9. Instead of imposing a settlement, the Congress gave the unions part of what they were seeking and thus destroyed much of the bargaining power of railroad management.

What can one say about the fact that rail disputes repeatedly are winding up in the lap of Congress? I think one must conclude that collective bargaining has broken down in the railroad industry and that Congress has been instrumental in the destruction of it.

Why has Congress failed to legislate an improved way of dealing with labor disputes in transportation? Has the Congress lacked for Executive Branch guidance? Not at all. For nearly a year the Congress has had before it a list of carefully prepared recommendations made by President Nixon last Feb. 27. I personally introduced the Administration bill in the House.

Why has no action been taken? Why have we not even had hearings on the President's proposals for improved handling of national emergency disputes in transportation?

The answer is that the Democratic leadership in the Congress considers it more important to keep labor leaders happy than to keep the trains running without interruption. That makes for an intolerable situation.

Labor leaders are opposed to a Nixon recommendation which the AFL-CIO looks upon as compulsory arbitration.

This should not mean that Congress simply sits back and does nothing to improve the machinery for handling railroad labor-management disputes. The net result of this inaction is that Congress is periodically forced to step in on the eve of a strike and substitute its judgment for the collective bargaining process.

Nobody in Congress--including me--is wedded to the President's proposals. But they are an excellent beginning point, and hearings are very much in order.

What possible excuse can there be for not holding hearings on the President's recommendations? None, of course. And yet when I demanded last December that hearings be held in 1971, the chairman of the House Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee merely said he would "consider" it. This is the attitude that has subjected the American people to one rail crisis after another.

Such an attitude is all the more astounding when you consider that nobody in the Congress can argue that the Railway Labor Act of 1926 is working. Neither is the Taft-Hartley Act adequate for handling transportation labor disputes. In a

(more)



word, existing legislation for dealing with national emergency disputes in transportation is seriously deficient and everyone knows it.

The President has asked that three additional options be made available to him when the existing cooling off period expires without a settlement in a rail or airline labor dispute.

The first option would be to extend the cooling off period for up to 30 more days. This would be the most attractive option if the dispute appeared very close to a settlement.

The second option would be partial operation of the troubled industry. This would allow the major part of a strike or lockout to continue, along with a stepup in negotiations. This procedure could be invoked for up to six months.

The third option would be what is known as the "final offer" procedure. Under this procedure each of the two parties would submit final offers and then have five days to bargain over these final proposals for settlement. If no agreement resulted, a final selector group of three neutral members would be appointed by the two parties or if they could not agree on the appointments, by the President. This group would choose one of the final offers as the final and binding settlement.

The courts could declare either partial operation of an industry or a final offer selection invalid if this were found to be either arbitrary or capricious. And if none of the options worked, the President could then submit the entire matter to Congress as he does under present law.

The President is seeking to be fair and to act in the best interests of the Nation. His recommendations show courage, since the entire area of labor-management relations is most sensitive politically. If only Congress would display the same brand of courage!

I have ranged over a broad area today, covering the health of the economy and the need for Federal legislation dealing with collective bargaining in agriculture and transportation.

Let me reiterate that I think the basic economy is not only healthy but eager to respond to improving conditions.

As to the prospects for new labor legislation, I can only state flatly that the need is there and congressional courage has been the missing ingredient.

The right to strike is generally accepted in America, and this is healthy. But let us be honest about it. A nationwide railroad strike will never be

(more)

countenanced by the Congress. In view of that, we had better act to improve the existing machinery for settlement of rail disputes.

I find it difficult to believe that the present inaction in Congress can continue. The reason is that I believe in the great good sense of the American people. I believe they will demand that something be done.

I don't know about other members of the Congress, but I will gladly rely on what the people of America feel is the right thing to do. I have great confidence in what I call our national conscience. If the Congress will heed the call of that conscience, America cannot go wrong. I freely leave the Nation's future in the hands of its citizens.

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While February is a bit late for 1971 forecasts, this just means I have had all the more time to polish up my crystal ball and more time to look into it. Let's hope that my reading therefore has all the more validity.

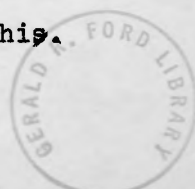
First of all, I look for the economy to rebound in 1971. I also look for the rate of inflation to continue to recede.

Industrial production has been climbing since the hard blow dealt the economy by the General Motors strike late last fall. We can now look forward to stronger gains in overall output, larger increases in productivity, a slower rise in the price level and in labor costs per unit of output, and further gains against inflation.

We are in the early stages of a fresh surge in the economy. The basic economy shows all the evidence of renewed expansion.

I personally expect the Administration to provide all of the stimuli needed to keep us on a course of renewed economic growth--at a real rate of about 4 per cent. The recent Administration decision to spur investment in plant and equipment through provision for faster tax write-offs is solid evidence of this.

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We are already seeing a spurt in economic activity, notably in housing. Nationally, housing starts should reach 1,650,000 in 1971--due in part to two new Federal programs. These new programs are the Government National Mortgage Association's mortgage-backed security program and the Emergency Home Finance Act of 1970, which I will not elaborate on at this time.

Suffice it to say that the formation of new households is significant for the economy generally and the fresh fruit and vegetable market specifically.

I think we can also expect the American people's spending to go up in 1971, and this of course will have a salutary impact on the economy. Refusal to spend over the past year has had a deadening effect on the economic life of the Nation. A loosening of the purse strings is essential to economic revival. What we need, in sum, is a resurgence of consumer confidence--and I think it is on the way.

I strongly believe we are headed toward a more stable economy and a more stable price level--and I see the onset of a vigorous expansion which will produce greater job opportunities and greater abundance for all our people.

At the same time, the President is pursuing vigorous measures in a continuing fight against inflation. His action on oil imports, his counter to the tremendous price boosts originally announced by Bethlehem Steel, and his pressure on the construction industry to hold costs down are ample evidence of a strong anti-inflation effort. I see the President operating in a role of economic statesmanship which will be in the best interests of all of our people.

There is other medicine required to cure some of the ills of our economy.

I refer to the obvious need for machinery to handle labor-management relations in the field of agriculture.

I know the fruit and vegetable producers and distributors have been going through an agonizing situation due to lack of an agriculture labor law. It is the grossest kind of neglect that Congress has not yet set up guidelines and machinery for the handling of representation and other farm labor disputes.

It seems obvious that special machinery is needed to deal with labor problems in the field of agriculture. It is good to know, therefore, that the Labor Department is working on such legislation at the present time.

I have some general ideas as to what form such legislation should take.

There is no question that farm workers should have the right to organize but a boycott designed to force an employer to sign a union contract is an unsatisfactory way to settle a representation dispute in agriculture. Agriculture is unlike industry. Its products are highly perishable.

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What we need is a specially designed labor policy for the Nation's farm workers.

They should have the right to strike but every possible mechanism should be set up to avoid strikes since a vital part of the country's food supply would be affected. Binding arbitration by a neutral third party would be one answer. And it seems logical that coverage of a new farm labor law should be restricted to the larger farms.

The need for collective bargaining rules in agriculture is unquestionable, just as is the need for improved methods of handling national emergency situations in the area of transportation.

In transportation, fruit and vegetable growers and distributors are periodically confronted with shutdowns that create crisis conditions and threaten to deprive American families of the necessities of life.

Congress must face up to the need to improve the handling of labor disputes in transportation. The present machinery for dealing with such situations is undeniably inadequate. The crisis atmosphere under which we now are operating cannot be allowed to continue.

You will recall that when the rail unions declared their intention to call a nationwide strike last Dec. 10 the Federal Government had exhausted all existing procedures for attempting to bring about a settlement of the dispute. The Secretary of Labor had sought a voluntary extension of negotiations but without success.

How did Congress deal with this national emergency? By prohibiting a rail strike until March 1 and by giving the railroad workers a raise. That action was the climax of a series of irresponsible actions on the part of the Congress--an incredible series of delaying maneuvers which spelled refusal to face up to responsibility.

I am amazed that there has not been a public outcry over the Democratic congressional leadership's repeated insistence on avoiding a responsible solution to our labor-management difficulties in transportation.

After all, the December strike crisis developed less than a year after a similar emergency had surfaced at the end of January 1970.

What did the Congress do to deal with that emergency? First the Congress legislated a 37-day delay in the strike deadline. Then when this did not produce a negotiated settlement the Congress imposed on the rail unions the agreement which had been endorsed by all of the rail unions but one.

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The most recent action taken by the Congress to deal with a rail strike was far worse than that of last April 9. Instead of imposing a settlement, the Congress gave the unions part of what they were seeking and thus destroyed much of the bargaining power of railroad management.

What can one say about the fact that rail disputes repeatedly are winding up in the lap of Congress? I think one must conclude that collective bargaining has broken down in the railroad industry and that Congress has been instrumental in the destruction of it.

Why has Congress failed to legislate an improved way of dealing with labor disputes in transportation? Has the Congress lacked for Executive Branch guidance? Not at all. For nearly a year the Congress has had before it a list of carefully prepared recommendations made by President Nixon last Feb. 27. I personally introduced the Administration bill in the House.

Why has no action been taken? Why have we not even had hearings on the President's proposals for improved handling of national emergency disputes in transportation?

The answer is that the Democratic leadership in the Congress considers it more important to keep labor leaders happy than to keep the trains running without interruption. That makes for an intolerable situation.

Labor leaders are opposed to a Nixon recommendation which the AFL-CIO looks upon as compulsory arbitration.

This should not mean that Congress simply sits back and does nothing to improve the machinery for handling railroad labor-management disputes. The net result of this inaction is that Congress is periodically forced to step in on the eve of a strike and substitute its judgment for the collective bargaining process.

Nobody in Congress--including me--is wedded to the President's proposals. But they are an excellent beginning point, and hearings are very much in order.

What possible excuse can there be for not holding hearings on the President's recommendations? None, of course. And yet when I demanded last December that hearings be held in 1971, the chairman of the House Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee merely said he would "consider" it. This is the attitude that has subjected the American people to one rail crisis after another.

Such an attitude is all the more astounding when you consider that nobody in the Congress can argue that the Railway Labor Act of 1926 is working. Neither is the Taft-Hartley Act adequate for handling transportation labor disputes. In a

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word, existing legislation for dealing with national emergency disputes in transportation is seriously deficient and everyone knows it.

The President has asked that three additional options be made available to him when the existing cooling off period expires without a settlement in a rail or airline labor dispute.

The first option would be to extend the cooling off period for up to 30 more days. This would be the most attractive option if the dispute appeared very close to a settlement.

The second option would be partial operation of the troubled industry. This would allow the major part of a strike or lockout to continue, along with a stepup in negotiations. This procedure could be invoked for up to six months.

The third option would be what is known as the "final offer" procedure. Under this procedure each of the two parties would submit final offers and then have five days to bargain over these final proposals for settlement. If no agreement resulted, a final selector group of three neutral members would be appointed by the two parties or if they could not agree on the appointments, by the President. This group would choose one of the final offers as the final and binding settlement.

The courts could declare either partial operation of an industry or a final offer selection invalid if this were found to be either arbitrary or capricious. And if none of the options worked, the President could then submit the entire matter to Congress as he does under present law.

The President is seeking to be fair and to act in the best interests of the Nation. His recommendations show courage, since the entire area of labor-management relations is most sensitive politically. If only Congress would display the same brand of courage!

I have ranged over a broad area today, covering the health of the economy and the need for Federal legislation dealing with collective bargaining in agriculture and transportation.

Let me reiterate that I think the basic economy is not only healthy but eager to respond to improving conditions.

As to the prospects for new labor legislation, I can only state flatly that the need is there and congressional courage has been the missing ingredient.

The right to strike is generally accepted in America, and this is healthy. But let us be honest about it. A nationwide railroad strike will never be

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countenanced by the Congress. In view of that, we had better act to improve the existing machinery for settlement of rail disputes.

I find it difficult to believe that the present inaction in Congress can continue. The reason is that I believe in the great good sense of the American people. I believe they will demand that something be done.

I don't know about other members of the Congress, but I will gladly rely on what the people of America feel is the right thing to do. I have great confidence in what I call our national conscience. If the Congress will heed the call of that conscience, America cannot go wrong. I freely leave the Nation's future in the hands of its citizens.

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