The original documents are located in Box 28, “4/3/76 - Goodrich High School Farm Forum, Fond-du-Lac, Wisconsin” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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Thank you, Bill
Governor Knowles
Mel Laird
Ladies and Gentlemen
I AM PLEASED TO BE IN AMERICA'S GREATEST DAIRY STATE.

JUST AS WISCONSIN AND MY OWN HOME STATE OF MICHIGAN SHARE

THE UPPER GREAT LAKES, MICHIGAN ALSO SHARES YOUR ATTACHMENT

TO AMERICA'S BOUNTIFUL DAIRY AND PASTURE LANDS

I CONGRATULATE YOU ON WISCONSIN'S ACHIEVEMENTS.
AMERICA'S FUTURE DEPENDS UPON AMERICA'S FARMERS.

OUR NATIONAL HERITAGE WAS CREATED BY THE FARMERS.

ALL AMERICANS -- AND THE ENTIRE WORLD --

TODAY DEPEND UPON YOU MORE THAN EVER.
ABRAHAM LINCOLN SIGNED THE HOMESTEAD ACT

WHICH EMBODIED OUR FUNDAMENTAL BELIEF IN THE IMPORTANCE

OF THE AMERICAN FAMILY FARM. LINCOLN WAS RIGHT.
THOMAS JEFFERSON AND GEORGE WASHINGTON HAD SHARED

THE SAME VISION. THEY WERE CONVINCED — SO AM I —

THAT A MAN WITH A STAKE IN HIS OWN LAND IS A FREE MAN,

HIS FAMILY A FREE FAMILY — AND, TOGETHER, THE FAMILY FARM

IS THE BASIS OF OUR FREE SOCIETY.
THERE IS A SAYING IN MICHIGAN THAT THE ONLY WAY
A YOUNG PERSON CAN GET STARTED IN FARMING IS TO MARRY ONE
OR INHERIT ONE. IT'S GETTING MUCH HARDER TO DO EITHER,
PARTICULARLY THE LATTER, NOT ONLY IN MICHIGAN,
BUT IN WISCONSIN AND THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES.
THAT IS BECAUSE THE INDIVIDUAL WHO INHERITS
A FARM IS ALL TOO OFTEN SEVERELY PRESSED TO PAY THE ESTATE
TAXES ON IT. OUR OUTDATED INHERITANCE LAWS,
WHICH HAVE NOT RESPONDED TO INFLATION, ARE A REAL THREAT
TO THE FAMILY FARM. THAT IS WHY MY ADMINISTRATION
IS WORKING SO HARD FOR NEW LAWS TO SOLVE THIS PROBLEM.
WE MUST MAINTAIN THE CONTINUITY AND STRENGTH OF FAMILY FARMS. TOO MUCH LABOR AND LOVE GO INTO THE DEVELOPMENT OF A PAYING FARM TO DISMANTLE IT WITH EVERY NEW GENERATION. THAT IS PARTICULARLY TRUE ON THE DAIRY FARM WHERE THE HOURS ARE ENDLESS AND COWS MUST BE MILKED TWICE EVERY DAY IN THE YEAR. WOMEN ARE AS INVOLVED AS MEN ON SUCH FARMS; THE CHILDREN, TOO.
SO IT IS ONLY FAIR THAT THE FAMILY FARM, ALREADY A VITAL INSTITUTION, CONTINUES TO FLOURISH AS A PROFITABLE AND FREE ENTERPRISE.

YOU AND ALL FARMERS MUST HAVE A FAIR RETURN FOR YOUR HARD WORK. THAT'S YOUR GOAL -- AND IT WILL BE MINE AS I CONTINUE TO WORK FOR STRONG MARKETS FOR FARMERS.
WE MUST NEVER FORGET THAT AMERICAN FARMERS MUST PROFIT IF AMERICA IS TO PROFIT. THERE MUST BE ENOUGH INCOME FOR EACH OF YOU TO BUY NEW STOCK, TO REPLACE EQUIPMENT, TO BUILD NEW BARNs, TO CONSERVE AND ENRICH THE SOIL, TO ADOPT NEW TECHNIQUES, AND TO BUY ESSENTIAL SUPPLIES. THAT IS WHAT KEEPS THE ENTIRE AMERICAN ECONOMY GOING.
A decision was required on the unfair competition of certain foreign dairy imports. The question involved foreign nonfat dry milk mixtures designed to evade our dairy import quotas. Importers tried to bypass our limitations by mixing dried milk with other ingredients.
AS PRESIDENT, I WILL NOT TOLERATE SUCH PRACTICES.

ACCORDINGLY, I SIGNED A PROCLAMATION LAST WEEK TO PUT A ZERO QUOTA ON SUCH IMPORTS.
THE LAST THREE YEARS HAVE BEEN THE THREE HIGHEST NET FARM INCOME YEARS IN HISTORY. THAT IS THE WAY IT SHOULD BE. AND THAT IS THE WAY IT'S GOING TO BE. IT TOOK HARD WORK ON YOUR PART. AND IT TOOK THE RIGHT KIND OF FARM POLICIES.
IN RECENT DAYS, THE WORLD’S POPULATION PASSED THE FOUR BILLION MARK. LOOKING AHEAD, WE WILL BE HARD PUT TO FEED THE WORLD. THIS IS CERTAINLY NO TIME TO PULL BACK ON OUR EFFORTS TO HELP YOU INCREASE YOUR PRODUCTIVITY AND YOUR EFFICIENCY.
I represented farmers -- including dairy farmers --

when I served in the Congress. As President, I refuse

to go back to the old, harmful farm programs we had

during most of those years. They meant disaster for too

many farmers. They created great surpluses.

They damaged the free market economy.
I will not go back to programs that require the Department of Agriculture to interfere in the daily operation of every farm in America. And I will use every power in my command to inject common sense into the operation of the federal agencies which seek occupational safety and health and environmental protection.
WE ALL BELIEVE IN SAFETY, HEALTH, AND THE ENVIRONMENT.

BUT THE FARMER IS ALSO ENTITLED TO SAFETY FROM THOSE WHO WOULD CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH HIS FARM CANNOT FUNCTION.
UNDER MY ADMINISTRATION, WE HAVE WORKED TOWARD A MINIMUM OF FEDERAL REGULATION. YOU INCREASED YOUR PRODUCTION. HAD IT NOT BEEN FOR YOUR PRODUCTIVITY, IT WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE TO INCREASE AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS TO ABOUT 22 BILLION DOLLARS IN 1975.
Wisconsin depends mostly on imported petroleum. Without the increased farm exports, we would have been hard put to pay the increased price for foreign oil. Imported petroleum cost America 27 billion dollars last year, and the figure will be even higher this year.
I appreciate what the farmer is doing for America.

Whether you are a dairy farmer, raise hogs, or grow soybeans, you bolster our economy. Farm families also enhance our ethical, religious, and moral values. Our patriotism, and our national character.
TO BE STRONG EXTERNALLY, WE MUST REASSERT TRADITIONAL VALUES THAT STRENGTHEN US AT HOME.

AND WE MUST REJECT THE BIG GOVERNMENT CONCEPT IN FAVOR OF A TRUE PARTNERSHIP IN WHICH PRIVATE, LAND-OWNING MEN AND WOMEN CAN ACHIEVE PROSPERITY WITHOUT UNDUE FEDERAL INTERFERENCE.
FARMING IS TOO IMPORTANT TO BE LEFT TO THE POLITICIANS -- IN OR OUT OF WASHINGTON.

TO YOU DAIRY FARMERS, I SAY:

YOU MUST HAVE EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE A FAIR PROFIT OUT OF YOUR MILK.
YOU MUST HAVE ADEQUATE INCENTIVES FOR FULL FOOD PRODUCTION.

WE MUST KEEP THE DEAD HAND OF FEDERAL REGULATION OFF YOUR FARMS SO THAT THE LIVE HANDS OF THE FARMERS CAN GO ON PRODUCING.
SOME NATIONS WITH OTHER ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHIES HAVE VIRTUALLY THE SAME TRACTORS AND BALERS THAT YOU USE. BUT THOSE NATIONS DO NOT HAVE THE GREATEST PIECE OF FARM MACHINERY EVER BUILT -- THE FREE ENTERPRISE SYSTEM OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.
WE HAVE TURNED THINGS AROUND IN RURAL AMERICA.

BUT WE MUST KEEP MOVING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.

WE HAVE MUCH MORE TO DO. I AM READY, WILLING,

AND ABLE TO WORK WITH YOU TO GET IT DONE.
I am fighting to cut government spending, to curb inflation, and to assure a growing economy for the future. But this struggle can succeed only if you, our farmers, succeed.

I am on your side. Let's work together.

Thank you very much.

End of text.