

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

~~THE~~ PRESIDENT HAS SEEN . . .

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.

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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 OUR OUTDATED INHERITANCE LAWS,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
*We're making headway BUT we've not a
long way to go.*
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 MOST 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.

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