

FOR THE SENATE:

Everett M. Dirksen  
of Illinois

Thomas H. Kuchel  
of California

Bourke B. Hickenlooper  
of Iowa

Margaret Chase Smith  
of Maine

George Murphy  
of California

Milton R. Young  
of North Dakota

Hugh Scott  
of Pennsylvania

PRESIDING:

The National Chairman  
Ray C. Bliss

THE REPUBLICAN LEADERSHIP  
OF THE CONGRESS

Press Release

Issued following a  
Leadership Meeting

March 23, 1967

FOR THE HOUSE  
OF REPRESENTATIVES:

Gerald R. Ford  
of Michigan

Leslie C. Arends  
of Illinois

Melvin R. Laird  
of Wisconsin

John J. Rhodes  
of Arizona

H. Allen Smith  
of California

Bob Wilson  
of California

Charles E. Goodell  
of New York

Richard H. Poff  
of Virginia

William C. Cramer  
of Florida

For Release

2 p.m., March 23, 1967

STATEMENT BY REPRESENTATIVE FORD:

Among the current headlines: "FARMERS VOTE TO CUT BUYING" --  
"FARMERS DISMAYED BY DECLINING PRICES" -- "AN ANGRY RUMBLE FROM THE  
FARMERS" -- "FARMERS REPORTED DUMPING MILK" -- "FARMERS APPROVE  
MACHINE BOYCOTT" -- "SHOOTING, HOARDING MARK DAIRY BOYCOTT". The  
American farmer is angry!

The Johnson-Humphrey Administration's inflationary fiscal poli-  
cies have shot farm production costs sky-high. The American farmer  
now has his back to the barn wall as never before.

The Johnson-Humphrey Administration's market price manipulations  
have sharply decreased prices received by farmers. The parity ratio  
today stands at 74 -- the lowest since June of 1934 -- down from  
last year's 82 and threatening to slide still further from the parity  
level of 100. As you know the parity ratio is the relationship  
between prices the farmer receives and the costs he has to meet.

Because of its lack of real concern for the consumer's as well  
as the farmer's interest, the Johnson-Humphrey Administration has  
stirred a storm of discontent and resentment on the part of our  
farmers. Consumers have not benefitted accordingly.

Constructively, Republicans in the House and in the Senate have  
introduced more than fifty farm bills in this new Congress, bills  
designed first to check and then to remedy the damage done to both

(more)

Mr. Ford

March 23, 1967

the farmer and the consumer by the Johnson-Humphrey cost-price squeeze.

With the farm price of hogs down over 30 per cent in less than a year, with the farm price of eggs down 24 per cent, with the farm price of wheat down 14 per cent, with the farm price of chickens down 11 per cent -- and with practically none of these price drops benefitting the consumer -- the American people may well ask -- as indeed they do -- what price the Johnson-Humphrey Administration?

Once again, as was true a year ago, the American farmer becomes the victim of the Johnson-Humphrey Administration's double-edged sword: a new record-high in farm operating costs -- a near-record low in farm prices -- and, we repeat, with no real benefit received by the American consumer.

A major factor in the impact of this double-edged sword is the unwanted and unwarranted flow of agricultural imports into this country. Their depressing effect upon farm prices is severe. It threatens to become far worse. One example: in 1965 this country imported 900 million pounds of milk and dairy products; in 1966 this country imported 2.7 billion pounds of milk and dairy products; this year the figure threatens to reach 4 billion pounds of milk and dairy products. More than half of this deluge of milk imports is coming from the Common Market countries of Europe.

57 bills have been introduced by Members of the House and 42 Senators have co-sponsored a bill demanding that such imports be limited. Action by the Johnson-Humphrey Administration in this and every other imperiled area of American agriculture is not only called for but demanded. If agricultural imports continue unchecked at their present rate and volume, our entire agricultural economy is threatened. Our farm surplus is almost gone because of government manipulations and foreign imports. A world food crisis is impending. Our obligations to provide food for the world's needy are increasing annually. It is sheerest folly to impair in any slightest way the efficiency of American agriculture and its incentive and ability to produce food.

As the number and variety of constructive Republican proposals for solution of our several farm programs indicate, there is today no excuse whatever to tolerate the unwillingness or the inability of the Johnson-Humphrey Administration to act -- and to act now -- in the people's interest. How justified our people are in asking -- as indeed they do -- what price the Johnson-Humphrey Administration?