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For Release - May 4

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MAY 4, 1973

MR. DARRELL M. TRENT
ACTING DIRECTOR
OFFICE OF EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS
WASHINGTON, D. C.

WE REPRESENT STATES THAT ARE HEAVILY DEPENDENT UPON AN ADEQUATE FUEL SUPPLY FOR THE PRODUCTION OF AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES. OUR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS CONSTITUTE A LARGE PORTION OF THE FOOD SUPPLY ESSENTIAL TO THE PHYSICAL AND ECONOMIC LIFE OF THIS NATION. OUR FOOD PRODUCTS ALSO HAVE A HIGH PRIORITY AS AN INSTRUMENT OF FOREIGN POLICY AND THE EFFORTS THAT ARE BEING MADE TO SOLVE THIS NATION'S CRITICAL BALANCE OF PAYMENTS PROBLEM.

OUR OFFICES IN RECENT DAYS HAVE BEEN DELUGED WITH COMPLAINTS FROM OIL DEALERS WHO SERVE CUSTOMERS IN THE RURAL AREAS. THE ESSENCE OF THESE COMPLAINTS IS THAT THE COMPANIES WHICH FOR YEARS HAVE BEEN SUPPLYING THESE DEALERS WITH FUEL FOR AGRICULTURAL PURPOSES ARE NOW EITHER CANCELING CONTRACTS OR SHARPLY CURTAILING THE AMOUNTS OF FUEL THEY WILL CONTRACT TO DELIVER THIS YEAR. FARMERS WHO RELY ON IRRIGATION TO PRODUCE THEIR CROPS HAVE TOLD US THEIR DEALERS ARE BEING FORCED TO CUT BACK THE AMOUNT OF FUEL THAT CAN BE DELIVERED DURING THE IRRIGATION SEASON AHEAD.

THE OVERALL FUEL SHORTAGE IN OUR STATES IS SO CRITICAL THAT WE RESPECTFULLY REQUEST YOU PROCEED IMMEDIATELY TO PREPARE A FUEL ALLOCATION PLAN THAT RECOGNIZES THE PRIORITY NEEDS OF AGRICULTURE. IT IS ESSENTIAL TO THE ECONOMIES OF OUR STATES AS WELL AS THE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION OF THE REGION WE REPRESENT THAT THIS PLAN BE FORUMLATED AND PUT INTO EFFECT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

WE THEREFORE REQUEST THAT YOU MEET WITH US IN VICE PRESIDENT AGNEW'S OFFICE IN THE NEW SENATE OFFICE BUILDING, ROOM 2203, AT 9 A.M., TUESDAY, MAY 8, WITH A PROPOSED PLAN FOR DISCUSSION. WE CITE YOUR AUTHORITY UNDER SECTION 2(a) OF THE RECENTLY ENACTED EXTENSION OF THE ECONOMIC STABILIZATION ACT OF 1970 WHICH SECTION MAKES IT THE DUTY OF THE ADMINISTRATION TO ALLOCATE PETROLEUM PRODUCTS IN ORDER TO ASSURE SUFFICIENT SUPPLIES TO MEET "THE ESSENTIAL NEEDS OF VARIOUS SECTIONS OF THE NATION."

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