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NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

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DOLE URGES UNITY AT FOOD CONFERENCE

ROME, ITALY---"This World Food Conference may well stand as one of the greatest... or one of the most disastrous assemblies of Mankind," Senator Bob Dole said Wednesday morning. "It certainly will be disastrous if we allow ourselves the luxury of indiscriminate bickering while devoting our energies to castigating, dividing and deriding those others who are here for the same basic purpose as we are." Dole, a Senate delegate to the World Food Conference in Rome, made the statement in remarks he delivered to a Non-Government Organization Meeting.

Urging international cooperation, Dole said, "In the meantime, let us as Americans tell the world that we will help...But let us seek the good will of those who have lots of dollars and no wheat as well as those who have lots of people and no wheat."

Following is the full text of Senator Dole's statement:

It is indeed a great honor for me to be able to meet with you today. I sincerely appreciate your invitation to join with you in a mutual attempt to bring help and hope to this Earth's kindred humanity.

In the Pantheon of great and historical events, this World Food Conference may well stand as one of the greatest...or one of the most disastrous assemblies of Mankind. It certainly will be disastrous if we allow ourselves the luxury of indiscriminate bickering while devoting our energies to castigating, dividing and deriding those others who are here for the same basic purpose as we are.

It has been said many times that this meeting is important.

No, this meeting is more than important. Important is a word that rates highly with everybody. For example, it is considered important to have a car, a T.V., and three pairs of shoes.

But it is vital to have food...and to millions upon millions of our fellow humans, this meeting stacks up as vital, not just important, as it does to those who are blessed with great material bounty.

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Our challenge and our mandate then, as I see it, is to make vital decisions to solve the vital problems that are before us.

The question, of course, is "how." How do the leaders of diverse cultures, economies, and political systems find a common answer to a child's tummy ache caused by the lack of food?

How do we as humans, as Western Hemispherians, as North Americans, and United States citizens, contribute best to the common good?

I'm sure each of you knows a way, but I doubt if any of you know the way.

I know I don't know the way, but I would like to share with you some thoughts, about a way to meet our duty to help others.

First, as Americans let us carefully inventory our present options and try to understand the competing "good goals" that are at stake in providing increased United States food aid right now.

As I see it, there are three "good goals" involved in current United States farm export policy. These are: meeting humanitarian and foreign policy needs; protecting against domestic price inflation; and enhancing United States balance of trade and farm income.

The achievement of each of these goals is desirable, of course. Americans want to help hungry people--whether they be in Bangladesh, or in Topeka, Kansas, or in Baltimore, Maryland.

But Americans are suffering from inflation and don't want \$1.00 a loaf bread either.

And Americans need foreign dollar earnings in order to buy Japanese radios, Nigerian cocoa, and Arabian oil.

Yes, a step-up of humanitarian U.S. aid under Title II of P.L. 480 at a time when we are already striving for maximum grain output and have no significant carryover will be costly to one of these other two "good goals."

But, my friends, cost and value are not the same. And it is value, the value of human life that is at stake.

We must ask ourselves then how much does it cost for one human life? How great is the value of one child...because that child could be yours or mine.

Let us then face up to the need.

Let us do our best and ask, not demand, that good men and women from elsewhere do what they can to help solve this vital food and people problem.

My recipe for hope is a simple one. Perhaps it is too simple. But I find that answers which are too complex are not answers at all.

I submit we should concentrate our efforts on capital expansion, on population discipline, and on Man's incredible ingenuity.

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When it comes to capital...which is spelled M-O-N-E-Y in any language...those Nations which have money but not grain should give some of their money to help the hungry Nations. Recent published reports indicate a willingness by at least one of the Opec Nations to do this.

I mean capital for fuel...capital for machinery...capital for fertilizer...money to buy the things the economists call "agricultural inputs" can bring a great new surge in world food production.

Population discipline must come. I can't tell you how to carry that out. The U.S. can't tell any other government much less the people of a foreign nation how to do that.

But it must be done. And it must be done by all of us. There is in my opinion, no sane way that humanity can increase eight-fold in the next century without a modern apocalypse of nuclear incineration and, or grisly famine.

Finally, let us light a lamp of hope to mark and renew our faith in our scientists, our economists, our lawmakers, our leaders and our people, that they will be able to harness knowledge with compassion as the team to tug us all into a future free of want.

In the meantime, let us as Americans tell the world that we will help...as we have in the past to the greatest degree ever recorded in this globe's recorded history.

But let us seek the good will of those who have lots of dollars and now wheat as well as those who have lots of people and no wheat.

Let us all hope...and work for the best for all of us. That is my strategy for hope. What is yours?

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