

REMARKS BY SENATOR BOB DOLE

57TH NATIONAL FFA CONVENTION

NOVEMBER 9, 1984

KEEPING AGRICULTURE AND FFA #1

FFA MEMBERS, PARENTS, FFA ADVISORS, FRIENDS AND GUESTS OF THE
FFA - I AM PLEASED TO HAVE BEEN INVITED TO THE 57TH NATIONAL FFA
CONVENTION, AND I CONGRATULATE YOU ON MAKING THIS ONE OF THE
LARGEST GATHERINGS OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE WORLD. IT IS A GOOD
TIME TO BE YOUNG - AND A GREAT TIME TO BE A YOUNG AMERICAN. AND,
BELIEVE IT OR NOT, I'M JUST AS CERTAIN THAT THE YEARS AHEAD WILL
BE GREAT ONES FOR THE AMERICAN FARMER.

IMPORTANCE OF AGRICULTURE

DANIEL WEBSTER ONCE SAID, "LET US NEVER FORGET THAT THE
CULTIVATION OF THE EARTH IS THE MOST IMPORTANT LABOR OF MAN."
EVEN THOUGH FARMERS REPRESENT ONLY THREE PERCENT OF OUR
POPULATION, THAT STATEMENT IS AS TRUE TODAY AS WHEN IT WAS FIRST
SAID 144 YEARS AGO.

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IF YOU LIVE AND WORK ON A FAMILY FARM, YOU CAN BE VERY PROUD THAT ONE FARMER PRODUCES ENOUGH FOOD TO FEED HIMSELF AND 80 OTHER PEOPLE. YOU CAN BE PROUD THAT AGRICULTURE PROVIDES EMPLOYMENT FOR 24 MILLION AMERICANS OR ONE IN EVERY FIVE JOBS. YOU CAN BE PROUD THAT AGRICULTURE WILL PROVIDE A POSITIVE BALANCE OF TRADE TO THE TUNE OF \$20 BILLION THIS YEAR. BECAUSE OF YOU, AMERICANS SPEND ONLY 17 PERCENT OF THEIR AFTER-TAX INCOME ON FOOD. THERE'S NO QUESTION ABOUT IT: THE AMERICAN FARMER IS BOTH THE WONDER AND THE ENVY OF THE WORLD. AND PEOPLE EVERYWHERE SHOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR HIS ACCOMPLISHMENTS - AND CONCERNED ABOUT HIS FUTURE.

WORKING WITH GOVERNMENT

A CHARACTER IN THE BOOK GULLIVER'S TRAVELS MAKES THE STATEMENT: "THAT WHOEVER COULD MAKE TWO EARS OF CORN, OR TWO BLADES OF GRASS, TO GROW UPON A SPOT OF GROUND WHERE ONLY ONE GREW BEFORE, WOULD DESERVE BETTER OF MANKIND, AND DO MORE

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ESSENTIAL SERVICE TO HIS COUNTRY, THAN THE WHOLE RACE OF
POLITICIANS PUT TOGETHER."

I SAY AMEN TO THAT. INDEED, THERE HAVE BEEN TIMES OVER THE
LAST 24 YEARS WHEN I'VE WONDERED IF POLITICIANS ARE LEADING THEIR
CONSTITUENTS OR BEING CHASED BY THEM! AND YET, PRECISELY BECAUSE
AGRICULTURE IS OUR COUNTRY'S MOST IMPORTANT INDUSTRY, YOU HAVE A
VITAL STAKE IN WHAT YOUR POLITICAL LEADERS DO OR FAIL TO DO.

A WINNING TEAM

THIS IS NOT THE TIME NOR PLACE FOR PARTISANSHIP. IT IS,
RATHER, AN OPPORTUNITY TO CELEBRATE TEAMWORK. THE PRESIDENT HAS
SAID THAT AMERICA IS BACK - WE'VE GONE BACK TO BASIC VALUES -
WE'RE BACK ON TRACK ECONOMICALLY - AND MILLIONS OF US HAVE GONE
BACK TO WORK. INTEREST RATES AND INFLATION ARE BOTH FALLING
BACK UNDER CONTROL. AND MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL, AMERICANS ARE
BACK TO BELIEVING IN THEMSELVES AND THEIR COUNTRY.

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TO KEEP ALL THIS GOING WE NEED TO PRACTICE SOMETHING THAT FFA KNOWS ABOUT FIRSTHAND - TEAMWORK.

THOSE PARENTS SITTING IN THE AUDIENCE TODAY SHOULD BE PROUD THAT THEIR SONS AND DAUGHTERS HAVE AN INTEREST IN AGRICULTURE. I KNOW IT'S NOT ALWAYS CONVENIENT TO EXCUSE A FAMILY MEMBER FROM THE CHORES TO ATTEND AN FFA EVENT. AND SOMETIMES "DAD" PROBABLY FEELS THAT FFA STANDS FOR "FATHER FARMS ALONE." BUT THAT'S JUST ONE MORE EXAMPLE OF THE SUPPORT REQUIRED IF YOUNG PEOPLE ARE TO DEVELOP THEIR TALENTS AND REALIZE THEIR POTENTIAL. AND IF IT'S TRUE, AS ELIZABETH TELLS ME IT IS, "THAT BESIDE EVERY GOOD MAN STANDS A GOOD WOMAN," THEN IT'S ALSO TRUE THAT BESIDE EVERY GOOD FFA MEMBER STANDS SOME VERY FINE PARENTS.

OF COURSE THE KEY TO THIS WINNING TEAM ARE THE FFA MEMBERS THEMSELVES -- 450,000 STRONG IN OVER 8,000 FFA CHAPTERS. YOU HOLD IN YOUR HANDS A PRICELESS TREASURE, A SIX LETTER WORD THAT

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SAYS IT ALL. A TREASURE THAT MONEY CAN'T BUY, ARMIES CAN'T CONQUER AND SCIENCE CAN'T ANALYZE. IT IS THE FUTURE. WHETHER YOU ARE ATTENDING YOUR FIRST NATIONAL CONVENTION OR YOUR LAST AS AN ACTIVE MEMBER, YOUR EXPERIENCE HERE REPRESENTS A NEW BEGINNING. AND WE IN WASHINGTON HAVE AN OBLIGATION TO MAKE SURE THAT THE PROMISE OF THIS DAY BECOMES THE PROSPEROUS REALITY OF TOMORROW.

THE 1985 AGENDA

HOW CAN WE DO THAT?

FIRST, WE CAN DO IT BY PASSING A 1985 FARM BILL THAT REDUCES OVERALL GOVERNMENT OUTLAYS WHILE ENCOURAGING FARMER PROFITABILITY AND STRENGTHENING EXPORTS. THESE DAYS, THERE ARE SEVERE LIMITS ON GOVERNMENT'S FINANCIAL RESOURCES - AND YET THERE ARE NO LIMITS ON INDIVIDUAL EFFORT OR NATIONAL IMAGINATION. IF WE APPLY A LITTLE OF BOTH, WE CAN ACCOMPLISH THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT THING

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THAT WOULD HELP THE FARMER - INCLUDING FARMERS OF YOUR
GENERATION - TO ACHIEVE LASTING PROSPERITY IN A HEALTHY ECONOMY.

MUCH OF THE DISCUSSION AS WE WRITE FARM LEGISLATION WILL NO
DOUBT CENTER ON THE ISSUE OF COMPETITIVENESS. OBVIOUSLY, YOU
CAN'T REMAIN COMPETITIVE ABROAD IF YOU RESORT TO SELF-DEFEATING
MEASURES LIKE GRAIN EMBARGOES - OR IF YOU TOLERATE WITHOUT
RESPONSE FOREIGN SUBSIDIES AND AN OVERVALUED U.S. DOLLAR.

THE PRESIDENT HAS MADE IT PLAIN THAT HE WILL NEVER RESORT TO
AN EMBARGO TO MAKE A POLITICAL POINT. NOW THE TIME HAS COME TO
GET TO WORK ON REDRESSING THE IMBALANCE OF TRADE. AND THAT MEANS
DOING SOMETHING SIGNIFICANT TO REDUCE OUR OWN BUDGET DEFICIT,
WHICH WOULD LOWER INTEREST RATES AND IMPROVE THE COMPETITIVE
CLIMATE FOR FARM PRODUCTS OVERSEAS. WE CAN CONVENE TALKS ON
FOREIGN TRADE. WE CAN SUBSIDIZE THIS CROP OR PROMOTE THAT ONE.
BUT NONE OF THESE STEPS BY THEMSELVES CAN BEGIN TO MATCH THE

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IMPORTANCE OF CONTROLLING OUR OWN URGE AS A GOVERNMENT TOO SPEND MORE THAN WE TAKE IN.

NOW A BUDGET HAS BEEN DEFINED AS AN ORDERLY SYSTEM OF LIVING BEYOND YOUR MEANS. IN WASHINGTON, THOUGH, IT'S NOT EVEN VERY ORDERLY -- JUST PROFLIGATE. TRUE, THINGS HAVE GOTTEN BETTER SINCE RONALD REAGAN TOOK OFFICE. THE ANNUAL RATE OF BUDGETARY GROWTH HAS BEEN CUT IN HALF. UNCLE SAM'S BEEN PUT ON A DIET, BEFORE HE EATS ALL OF US OUT OF HOUSE AND HOME. BUT THE OLD MAN IS STILL GROSSLY OVERWEIGHT.

NOW CONGRESS DID MANAGE TO PASS A DEFICIT REDUCTION PLAN LAST YEAR, A DOWN PAYMENT THAT WILL DRAIN OFF PERHAPS \$150 BILLION WORTH OF THAT RED INK OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS. IT'S A START, AND A SIGNAL TO THE FINANCIAL MARKETS THAT WE MEANT BUSINESS, EVEN IN AN ELECTION YEAR. BUT IT'S ONLY A START -- AND THE TIME TO BEGIN CHOPPING DOWN THE REMAINING DEFICIT IS NOW.

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EACH DAY OF DELAY REPRESENTS A RISK TO YOUR FUTURE PROSPERITY. DEFICITS THAT ANNUALLY APPROACH \$200 BILLION WOULD THREATEN OUR SPECTACULAR ECONOMIC RECOVERY BY REKINDLING INFLATION AND KEEPING INTEREST RATES HIGH, WITH THE RESULT BEING FEWER JOBS FOR YOUR GENERATION.

TO ACCOMPLISH THE TASK OF DEFICIT REDUCTION, WE WILL TAKE A CLOSE LOOK AT ALL BUDGET CUTTING POSSIBILITIES. THERE ARE NO SACRED COWS ON THE FARM AND WE CAN'T HAVE ANY IN THE FEDERAL BUDGET EITHER.

THE VOICE RINGING THROUGH BOTH COUNTRYSIDE AND CITY ALIKE IS CALLING FOR ACTION NOW. PRESIDENT REAGAN AND THE CONGRESS CAN DO THE JOB WITH A LITTLE LUCK, A LOT OF STATESMANSHIP, AND, OF COURSE, HARD WORK. AMERICA, AND THE FUTURE FARMERS OF AMERICA, STAND ON THE THRESHOLD OF TOMORROW AND ITS WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY IS WIDE OPEN. WITH YOUR HELP, WE'LL SECURE A FUTURE THAT IS

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BRIGHTER THAN EVER BEFORE.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

FFA TALKING POINTS

- o This is the 57th Annual National Convention of the FFA. The convention crowd is expected to be about 23,000 members and guests.
- o This year's national president, Ron Wineinger, is from Marion, Kansas. Other officers are: Bill Caraway, New Mexico; Rhonda Scheulen, Missouri; Melody Lawson, Arizona; Carol Irvine, Maryland; and Chuck Duggar, Florida. New officers will be elected at this year's convention.
- o FFA Theme: "Keep agriculture number 1, support vocational agriculture and FFA."
- o The FFA is a national organization with approximately 470,000 members in over 8000 FFA chapters across the nation.

GENERAL AG POINTS

- o Agriculture is the nation's biggest industry. Agriculture employs 24 million people in this country.
- o One farmer produces enough for himself and 80 other Americans.
- o U.S. ag exports are estimated to be \$38 billion in 1985.
- o Americans spend less than 17% of our disposable income on food, compared to 70% in some countries.

1985 FARM BILL POINTS

- o Agriculture's basic problem is the same today as in the 1920's -- excess supplies and low prices.
- o The farm bill will be addressed with sensitivity to large outlays for recent programs. Costs have risen from \$4 billion to \$19 billion last year. PIK was valued at an additional \$9 billion cost.
- o Initiatives passed in the 1985 farm bill will likely influence the agriculture environment of many FFA members at this conference.
- o Macroeconomic issues have become just as important in impacting agriculture as farm programs. High interest rates raise production costs for farmers and lead to a strong dollar which reduces ag exports.
- o New legislation will want to be flexible to address long-range concerns.
- o Much discussion will focus on how to remain competitive in world markets. Other countries have become increasingly competitive in recent years as the U.S. has lost markets due to embargoes, a strong dollar, and foreign subsidies.

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FFA - I AM PLEASED TO ~~BE HERE~~ ^{I am here} IN KANSAS CITY AT THE 57TH NATIONAL
FFA CONVENTION! I CONGRATULATE YOU ON ~~ATTRACTING 23,000 PEOPLE TO~~
THIS YEAR'S CONVENTION AND FOR ANNUALLY MAKING THIS ONE OF THE
LARGEST YOUTH CONVENTIONS IN THE WORLD.

YOU HAVE A VERY GOOD THEME THIS YEAR: "KEEP AGRICULTURE NUMBER
ONE, SUPPORT VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE AND FFA." I FEEL VERY STRONGLY
ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF SUPPORTING FFA. MANY OF YOU IN THIS AUDIENCE
HAVE BEEN TO WASHINGTON, D.C. DURING THIS PAST YEAR PARTICIPATING
IN THE WASHINGTON CONFERENCE PROGRAM AND THE STATE PRESIDENT'S
CONFERENCE. I'VE HAD THE PLEASURE OF MEETING WITH NATIONAL OFFICERS,
STATE OFFICERS, DISTRICT OFFICERS, LOCAL OFFICERS AND CHAPTER
MEMBERS, AND ~~I MUST SAY THAT~~ ^{More want} THE YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE BLUE AND
GOLD FFA JACKETS DO AN OUTSTANDING JOB REPRESENTING AGRICULTURE
AND OUR FUTURE!

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I WAS VERY PLEASED TO RECEIVE THE HONORARY AMERICAN FARMER
DEGREE A FEW YEARS AGO ~~AND I KNOW ELIZABETH IS VERY PLEASED TO~~
~~RECEIVE IT TODAY~~ -- I ~~ALWAYS WANTED TO HAVE ANOTHER FARMER IN~~
~~THE HOUSE.~~ ^{and} I ~~WANT~~ TO EXTEND A SPECIAL NOTE OF CONGRATULATIONS
TO THOSE OF YOU WHO RECEIVED THE AMERICAN FARMER DEGREE TODAY.
~~BECAUSE~~ IT REPRESENTS A REAL MILESTONE IN YOUR FFA ACTIVITY, AND
I KNOW IT IS A GOAL YOU'VE WORKED VERY HARD TO ACHIEVE.

IMPORTANCE OF AGRICULTURE

IT'S ~~VERY~~ EXCITING TO BE IN SUCH A LARGE AUDIENCE FILLED WITH
A GENERATION ^{young} OF FARMERS AND AGRICULTURAL LEADERS. DANIEL WEBSTER
ONCE SAID, "LET US NEVER FORGET THAT THE CULTIVATION OF THE EARTH
IS THE MOST IMPORTANT LABOR OF MAN." EVEN THOUGH FARMERS REPRESENT
ONLY THREE PERCENT OF OUR POPULATION, THAT STATEMENT IS AS TRUE
TODAY AS WHEN IT WAS FIRST SAID 144 YEARS AGO.

IF YOU LIVE AND WORK ON A FAMILY FARM, YOU CAN BE VERY PROUD
THAT ONE FARMER PRODUCES ENOUGH FOOD TO FEED HIMSELF AND 80 OTHER

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PEOPLE. YOU CAN BE VERY PROUD THAT AGRICULTURE PROVIDES EMPLOYMENT FOR 24 MILLION AMERICANS OR ONE IN EVERY FIVE JOBS. YOU CAN BE VERY PROUD THAT AGRICULTURE WILL PROVIDE A POSITIVE BALANCE OF TRADE TO THE TUNE OF \$20 BILLION THIS YEAR. YET, AMERICANS SPEND ONLY 17 PERCENT OF THEIR AFTER-TAX INCOME ON FOOD. YOU CAN BE VERY PROUD THAT THE AMERICAN FARMER IS BOTH THE WONDER AND THE ENVY OF THE WORLD. AND PEOPLE EVERYWHERE SHOULD BE CONCERNED ABOUT FARMERS IF THEY EAT FOOD.

WORKING WITH GOVERNMENT

A CHARACTER IN THE BOOK GULLIVER'S TRAVELS MADE THE STATEMENT: "THAT WHOEVER COULD MAKE TWO EARS OF CORN, OR TWO BLADES OF GRASS, TO GROW UPON A SPOT OF GROUND WHERE ONLY ONE GREW BEFORE, WOULD DESERVE BETTER OF MANKIND, AND DO MORE ESSENTIAL SERVICE TO HIS COUNTRY, THAN THE WHOLE RACE OF POLITICIANS PUT TOGETHER."

PERHAPS THAT'S TRUE. ~~BEING IN WASHINGTON 24 YEARS~~, THERE HAVE BEEN TIMES WHEN I'VE WONDERED IF POLITICIANS ARE LEADING THEIR CONSTITUENTS OR BEING CHASED BY THEM! I'VE OFTEN SAID, IN REFERRING

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TO POLITICAL LEADERS: "JUDGE US BY WHAT WE DO AND NOT WHAT WE SAY."
I MENTIONED A MOMENT AGO THAT AGRICULTURE IS OUR COUNTRY'S MOST
IMPORTANT INDUSTRY. BECAUSE YOU REPRESENT ITS FUTURE, YOU HAVE A
VITAL STAKE IN WHAT YOUR POLITICAL LEADERS DO OR FAIL TO DO.

A FEW SHORT YEARS AGO, THE AMERICAN FARMER WAS SEVERELY HURT
BY THE RUSSIAN GRAIN EMBARGO. IT WRECKED OUR MARKETS AND TARNISHED
OUR IMAGE AS A RELIABLE SUPPLIER OF FOOD. INTEREST RATES AT
21.5 PERCENT AND DOUBLE DIGIT INFLATION WERE CHOKING FARMERS. WHEN
RONALD REAGAN CAME INTO OFFICE, HE ENDED THE GRAIN EMBARGO AND
SINCE THAT TIME WE HAVE BEGUN TO REGAIN OUR SHARE OF THE SOVIET
MARKET. BUT IT TAKES A LONG TIME TO REVERSE THE EFFECTS OF A BAD
POLICY.

IN THE LAST FOUR YEARS WE HAVE BROUGHT INTEREST RATES DOWN TO
12 PERCENT AND HAVE REDUCED INFLATION TO ABOUT FOUR PERCENT. THESE
ARE ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT FIGURES FOR YOUNG FARMERS. THE AMERICAN
FARMER HAS PROVEN HE CAN PRODUCE, BUT THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN

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IS THAT WE MUST ALSO MARKET, EXPORT AND DISTRIBUTE OUR PRODUCTS IN ORDER FOR AGRICULTURE TO BE SUCCESSFUL. THAT REQUIRES YOUR PARTICIPATION TO INSURE THAT GOVERNMENT WORKS FOR FARMERS AND NOT AGAINST THEM.

MANY OF YOU ARE APPROACHING THE AGE WHEN YOU CAN VOTE AND SOME OF YOU DID JUST A FEW DAYS AGO. YOUR COLLECTIVE VOICE CAN MAKE A POSITIVE IMPACT FOR THE GOOD OF AGRICULTURE. NO ONE IN THIS ROOM TODAY COULD URGE YOU TOO STRONGLY TO PARTICIPATE IN OUR POLITICAL SYSTEM. PARTICIPATION IN THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS IS ONE OF YOUR GREATEST PRIVILEGES AND ONE OF YOUR MOST IMPORTANT RESPONSIBILITIES. MANY WHO HAVE GONE BEFORE YOU HAVE FOUGHT FOR, SUFFERED BECAUSE OF, AND DIED FOR YOUR RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE IN A FREE SOCIETY.

A FINAL CHALLENGE

YOU'VE HAD A VERY GOOD OPPORTUNITY THIS WEEK TO LEARN ABOUT AGRICULTURE, YOURSELVES AND OTHER PEOPLE. IT IS LIKELY THAT YOU

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HAVE LISTENED TO SEVERAL INSPIRING SPEAKERS. BUT THE CHALLENGE IS BOTH FOR THE SPEAKERS AND THE AUDIENCE. IT IS UP TO YOU TO TAKE WHAT A SPEAKER SAYS ON A GIVEN DAY AND APPLY IT. NOT JUST FOR THAT DAY, BUT EVERY DAY. NOT JUST FOR A WEEK OR A YEAR, BUT FOR A LIFETIME.

THE IMPORTANT POINT ABOUT YOUR FUTURE AS YOUNG PEOPLE, IS THAT YOU WILL HAVE GREAT OPPORTUNITIES TO MAKE YOUR LIVES AND YOUR ACTIONS REALLY COUNT. ALONG WITH THE OPPORTUNITIES YOU ARE LIKELY TO FIND YOUR SHARE OF ADVERSITY. SOME PEOPLE SEE ADVERSITY AND BACK DOWN, WHILE OTHERS SEE OBSTACLES AS MOUNTAINS WHICH CAN ELEVATE THEM TO NEW HEIGHTS. MY CHALLENGE FOR YOU IS TO REMEMBER THAT YOU CAN'T DETERMINE THE LENGTH OF YOUR LIFE, BUT YOU CAN DETERMINE ITS WIDTH AND ITS DEPTH.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.