

the vital self-interests of nations, also defines the basis for self-interested relations among nations. A foreign policy not settled upon the solid cornerstone of a sound food policy is a contradiction in terms.

1) The expanded export of food by the United States, especially cereals and dense protein, must be the cornerstone of U.S. foreign policy.

2) U.S. food produced for export (as well as domestic consumption) must be purchased from farmers at not less than 90 percent of a well-determined parity price, and shall be exported through ordinary commercial channels at a price not less than a price based on 90 percent of parity paid to farmers.

3) In the case, that U.S. export is delivered as "Food Assistance" to relatively poorer, hungry nations, the seller shall be the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the buyer shall be the government of the importing nation, subject to the condition that the importing nation may not export this, or product of the same agricultural type. Under those conditions of export sales, the price paid by the importing nation may be less than the standard, parity-determined, commercial price.

4) The government of the United States shall seek to establish agreements with others among the principal food-exporting nations, including agreement with bodies such as the European Community (EC). The purpose of these agreements shall be to establish a uniform policy of practice consistent with indicated U.S. food policy.

5) Although the U.S. government should not prevent itself from subsidizing grants, of reduced prices, to nations receiving Food Assistance, it were desirable that the United States establish a "Food Assistance Grants Fund," preferably in concert with cooperating food-exporting nations, and with importing nations, and that grants made under Food Assistance programs be issued, usually, as deductions from such a Fund.

6) As part of this same program, the United States should sponsor food-technology programs for needy nations, such as those of Africa. As part of this, the U.S. Corps of Engineers should include, under its expanded functions, a foreign agriculture development task force program. This task force should include teams of skilled farmers. The assignment is to assist other nations a) In developing the essential logistical and related infrastructure for improved production and distribution of food, b) To create as teaching-stations, model farms developed with the assistance of U.S. agronomists and farmers applying American experience in the conditions of that locality, and c) To assist institutions of that government in developing the same kinds of civil-engineering and other task force capabilities represented by the U.S.-assistance units.

We should welcome and seek participation of similar task force elements from other food-exporting nations in such programs.

What happened to the American farmer?

by Billy Davis

The presentation which we excerpt here was made to the conference of the Schiller Institute "In Memory of Food," held Feb. 21-22 in Ciudad Obregon, Mexico. Davis, for many years a farmer, ran for governor of his native Mississippi in 1983, endorsed by the National Democratic Policy Committee. In 1984, he was the vice-presidential running-mate of Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., in LaRouche's Independent Democratic bid for President of the United States. Davis is currently an agricultural adviser to the NDPC.

... I have been organizing farmers for years; we have tried every method known to us, to get our government to listen. Not only do they not listen, but it is obvious they don't care. In fact, the Secretary of Agriculture himself told me personally, in 1978, that we needed less than 200,000 farmers. And I said, "But Mr. Secretary, we've got 3 million of us; are you saying we should be only 200,000?" He said, "Don't worry about it; it's a little bit of a problem now, but after everything settles down, *those who survive* will do well."

If there had not been a table between me and him, I would have slugged him! And he was supposed to have been a farmer; it turned out that he was an employee of a cartel, not a farmer. . . .

How the crisis was created

Now, how did all this happen? Let me tell you the story of how it happened, because I lived it.

From 1942 until 1952, the United States had a base price, on agricultural commodities, of 90% of parity, by law. And most of the money in the farming sector of the United States, was made during those years. In 1952, this law was taken away; and then we began a series of programs to change everything.

Then, from about 1962 through 1974, the real story unfolded. We were told by the agricultural experts and advisers, that we had to feed the world; we must plant fence row to fence row. And we did that. Because we thought our nation needed us, to help feed the hungry of the world. And they

told us, privately, that we could make a little money; and we did, for a short time. Every magazine that we read, every expert that we listened to, and even our fellow farmers, were telling us that the ideal farmer was one who was getting bigger every year, who owned the biggest and best equipment; and it was smart business to do that on the other man's money. If you don't believe me, then *you* read the American journals, and the experts, during that period.

Interest rates were 3-6%; we would go to the bank to borrow money to plant a crop, and ask for \$50,000; the banker said, "No, you might need 60—take 60!" We'd just plant another field.

In 1974, the first shoe dropped. In August, the cattle market was broken. Livestock that was worth thousands of dollars, in a matter of just hours, was worth less than a 100. It happened that quickly; we had no chance. The banks who had loaned the money to the cattlemen, panicked, and demanded that we carry all the cattle to the market and pay the debt immediately. And the market went even further down. The bankers did not care if a man had enough feed to feed his cattle for a year; they wanted to take their losses and get out.

Within a period of four years, every commodity, from corn, to wheat, to soybeans, and feed grain, went down the same way. And we were faced with a situation in which we could not pay our debts. We went to the bank and said, "I can't pay, but I need money to plant my next crop." They said, "No problem! The experts say that next year will be a better year. We'll reorganize your debt; sign this paper, and next year, you'll owe us just a little more, but the market is going to be better." It didn't get any better.

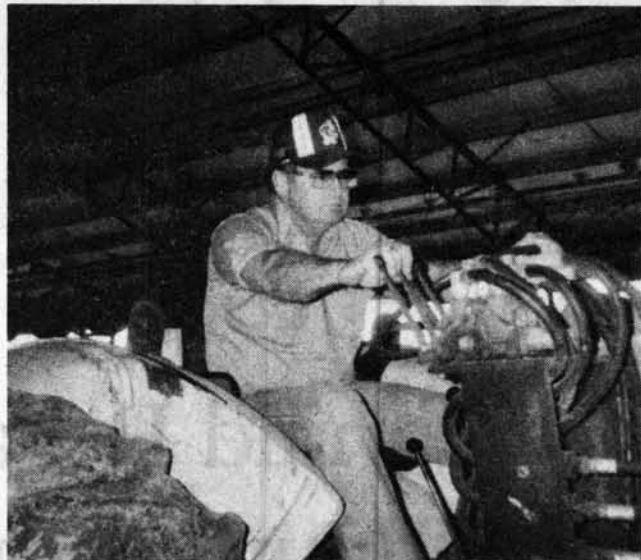
So the next year, we went back to the same banks, and we said, "Please, may we have some money to plant another crop?" The banker looked across the desk, and said, "Your wheat did not do well this year, so I suggest that next year you plant soya-beans—*then* I will loan you the money. Because the experts say that soya-beans are going to be the crop." So we sold all the corn equipment, we sold the cattle, and we planted soya-beans.

The market the next year was so bad, that we almost had to pay the man to take the crop!

We went to the government: "What's wrong?" The government said, "You are *bad managers!* But we will fix the problem, with this new computer." We went to the politician; we even collected money to donate to the politician; but he found a higher bidder!

Now, does this sound familiar to you? Think of what I have just described, as your country; and put the International Monetary Fund where the banker is, and Henry Kissinger where the expert is. Does it sound even *more* familiar? The story has not changed since the days of the Roman Empire.

Because I was a farmer, I did not concern myself with anything but farming, and I didn't know *why* I was having such problems, until I realized that what was happening to me, was happening to my country, and every country which



Billy Davis

I visited, and every farmer in those countries.

It did not just happen; this crisis was created, intentionally. Because you have seen the same thing, if you know the history of your country—whatever country that is—you have seen the same thing happen before. In Mexico, it happened from 1918 to 1925—the same thing. . . .

So what are you to do? In 1983, a group of farmers, farm leaders from the United States, sought the advice of one man, after we had tried everything else. And after he had talked to us for three hours, explaining to us why we were in such a fix, we asked him one simple question: "What can we do?" He didn't smile; he looked us straight in the eye, and he said, "Become a candidate for office!"

I'm a farmer. Politicians?—I don't like them! And you tell me to be a politician? "No! A statesman! Because you must become the government, by proper means!"

I didn't sleep all night. The next day, I became the candidate for the governorship of my state; and I will continue to do the same. Because my problems were not economic; that was a symptom. My problem was a *moral* problem. And the question was whether I had the moral fortitude, to stand up for what I knew was right, and take on all adversaries. Because this man, Lyndon LaRouche, told me more about myself in three hours, than I had learned in all of my life up to that point. He put a mirror in front of me and made me look at myself; and I didn't like what I saw.

One of the greatest citizens of Mexico, in my opinion, before he led his troops into the Revolution, told the troops and the citizens of his town, that it was something they had to do. And I would like to share with you one short statement. He asked them:

"With what right, will we be able to claim the title of citizen for our children, if we are not worthy of being so ourselves?"—*Alvaro Obregon*