

The LaRouche plan to save U.S. farming

The following recommendations for solving the farm crisis were published in The Independent Democrats' 1984 Platform, issued by the presidential campaign of Lyndon LaRouche and Billy Davis in September 1984.

The President must act immediately, and move the Congress to act, to effect the following measures:

1) There must be an immediate moratorium on farm foreclosures, nationwide.

We must implement a policy of something like the following formulation: Any farm which was in the top 75 percent of economic performance during a five-year period preceding 1981 should be protected from foreclosure. This action must be implemented under the title *National Security Emergency*.

2) Establish immediately, a policy of intervention to maintain farmers' prices at 90 percent of parity.

Generally, such a policy is implemented in the following way. If a farmer can not sell a designated crop at the established percentile of a parity-price or higher, the Department of Agriculture intervenes to buy that crop at that price. Then, later, either the grain cartel or agri-business can pay government that price plus a service-charge for its purchase of this stock, or, some of the stock is retained by the government as national strategic reserves, or, the government may directly market such stocks abroad under government to government trade-agreements.

3) The President and Congress must intervene with emergency measures, to facilitate the reorganization of financial affairs.

It should be axiomatic, that by rescheduling existing farm debt of viable farms, at interest-rates between 2 percent and 4 percent, a 100 percent repayment of the principal value of the carried-forward debt will be the normal result. Federal action is required to ensure that restructured debt be classed as performing bank assets, and to provide simple procedures for conducting the financial reorganization.

It should be normal procedure, in these cases, that additional loan-capital be supplied, at prime rates of between 2 percent and 4 percent for loans based on lendable issues of gold-reserve U.S. currency notes through local banks. This should include crop-production loans, and also medium-term

and long-term loans for needed capital improvements and replacements.

Such loans should be available to farmers generally.

4) Disaster relief for farms in relevant regions of the nation.

For example, in regions hit by persisting drought conditions.

5) Immediate action to develop fresh-water management systems in areas suffering or threatened by major water shortages.

Candidate LaRouche has co-sponsored revival of proposals to develop a continental water-management system, to include bringing water now flowing into the Arctic Ocean down through the Western states: one line running in the arid region between California and the Rocky Mountains, and the second to the east of the Rockies, across the river-systems flowing eastward into the Mississippi. The feasibility of such a program was developed years ago by a major engineering firm, a design named the NAWAPA project. . . .

And, for the years immediately ahead of us,

6) Immediate action establishing in the Department of Agriculture an improved market-forecasting system of service to and cooperation with farmers.

It is the complaint of farmers, that the Department of Agriculture's forecasts now manipulate the farmers' production planning to create market conditions to the advantage of the grain cartel and agri-business giants. In fact, it is well within the unique talents of the Department of Agriculture to develop a reliable forecasting service, operated through aid of functions of county agents, to assist farmers in fitting their medium-term and annual production programs within the setting of national consumption, export, and strategic reserve requirements.

Operating under the famous Biblical counsel, concerning "fat years" and "lean years," cooperation between government and independent farmer-entrepreneurs can create a nice mesh between supply management and a parity-price system.

7) The President and Congress must take emergency action in response to the existing and worsening world food shortage. . . .

Food: the key to foreign policy

In this light, food policy must be the cornerstone of U.S. foreign policy. It is not a substitute for other elements of U.S. foreign policy, but every other feature of proper foreign policy depends for its success upon a sound U.S. international food policy.

Unless a nation can feed its people, that nation is more or less certainly doomed to endure the worst political evils of civil strife and emergence of the most vicious sorts of tyrannical governments. . . .

Thus, in a time of continuing and worsening world food shortages, the increase of the supply of food, as this defines

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