

(Continued from page 13)

quantities, there is the same risk — and the risk also of upsetting markets in other countries and bringing retaliation upon us from other governments

Thus the surplus situation that has grown up as a result of unwise price supports — the wartime, rigid, incentive price supports continued too long after the wartime markets no longer existed — that surplus appears up to this point to have present-

ed a nearly insoluble problem. In spite of everything we have been able to do in disposal, surpluses have continued to flow into the Commodity Credit Corporation more rapidly than they could be moved out. The result has been a tragedy for farmers and a dilemma for the Administration.

5. What more can be done about them?

It is against this background, and to help solve the dilemma, that the Soil Bank legislation was proposed.

The Soil Bank will not be a cure-all. It should be one more tool to help overcome the distortions created by the surpluses and to get agriculture back to more freedom and prosperity

The voluntary and temporary Soil Bank provided for in the Agricultural Act of 1956 has three interrelated purposes

First, to achieve a temporary reduction in farm output, with their participation.

Second, in consequence of smaller production, to provide an opportunity — a place in the market — to liquidate surplus stocks without depressing market prices

Third, to shift an acreage of cropland not now needed into grass and trees and other conserving uses. The reason is to conserve and safeguard our precious heritage of soil and water resources against the future needs of the many generations yet unborn

Unfortunately, the Soil Bank legislation, was so long delayed that it could not be fully effective for 1956. Only a partial program could be established — and the partial application will

have little effect this year on the surplus stocks. The real test of the Soil Bank as a means of surplus elimination will come next year

It must be made to work. It must not be degenerated by political pressure into a mere crop insurance or drought relief scheme — for which it was not intended — and thereby fail in its most important purpose of surplus reduction

To restrict production is unpalatable to farmers, even for a cause as important as the elimination of surpluses. But I expect a large proportion of farmers to recognize the necessity for the Soil Bank and to accept the voluntary participation it offers.

To ask farmers to restrict production is unpalatable for me. But since it must be done before the burden of surpluses hurts our farmers even more seriously, a temporary and voluntary Soil Bank seems to promise the best solution.

And when the surpluses are eliminated and the distortions they have caused are behind us there is one more essential we must then avoid, as we would a plague, all price-support schemes or other programs of a kind that would build up surplus problems again.

I have spoken feelingly of these situations that now exist, because they are so basic and fundamental to the prosperity of agriculture — and to the well-being of farm families. This Administration has one broad objective in carrying out its responsibilities to our farm people. That is to do everything in our power to develop and maintain a sound, prosperous, expanding, and free agriculture. We believe that only in this way can farm life be the profitable and satisfying experience we all want it to be.

We believe there are many ways in which government can render assistance to agriculture, and be a real servant of farmers. And we believe this is government's proper role.

We believe that to whatever degree agricultural programs force government to control farmers, there is a corresponding risk that government will become master instead of servant. We do not believe that master is a proper role of government.

We are dedicated to reversing any such trend, as rapidly and completely as possible without causing disruption to agriculture in the process. We are equally dedicated to avoiding any new programs that do not lead as rapidly as possible to restoring and maintaining farmers' own rights to operate their own farms.

We have always before us such contrasts as the inspiring example of your poultry industry vs. the sad plight of the so-called basic crops.

You are free, expanding and progressive. You have expanded egg production 22 per cent and poultry meat 52 per cent in a decade — and have increased your markets proportionately.

They have had rigid price supports — and have become surplus-depressed and production-controlled. Their problems have gotten worse, not better.

Your future may be interpreted anywhere in the range from encouraging to inspiring. Until their production and markets can be brought back into balance, their outlook is discouraging and bleak.

Ladies and gentlemen, the transition from war to peace is never easy for agriculture. War always brings insatiable demands and rising prices. It is easier to gear up to greater production than it is to readjust to the changing demands of peacetime. But surely no one wants war as a solution to any difficulties that readjustment may bring. Our great blessing is that we have peace — a peace achieved and maintained under the leadership of our great President.

We are fortunate in this transition to peacetime conditions that we have had a national economy continuing to operate at a high level. Our problems of agriculture adjustment would be far more complex if this were not true.

Farmers have been caught in a cost-price squeeze the seriousness of which I would certainly not minimize. Yet never before in history has the transition from war to peace been made as smoothly of with as little distress to farmers. If it were not for surpluses, the average of farm prices would now stand about 90 per cent of parity.

The percentage of farms owned by the families who operate them is at a record high level — and the number of farm foreclosures is near an all-time low. This is in sharp contrast with the years shortly after World War I.

But surely it does not mean that this Administration is satisfied with farm conditions as they are. In keeping with our responsibility to farmers, a whole battery of programs — some old and some new — is being operated to protect and improve the economic position of farm families. These include:

Credit — on a liberalized basis

Conservation — for which funds have been increased.

Price supports — into which the essential principle of flexibility is being re-established.

Assistance for perishable farm products — to relieve market gluts where such assistance will be constructive.

The Rural Development Program — for opening the doors of greater opportunity to low-income farmers.

The Soil Bank.

Drought relief.

Expanded research on production and marketing problems, and

Technical assistance through the Extension Service.

Many of these programs are reaching to new horizons, to be of fuller service to farm families, to help achieve more efficient production and marketing — and, I pray always, to help keep farmers free as well as prosperous.

I am proud of the opportunity I have had to serve the interests of farmers in this Administration. I am proud also of my many associates in the Department of Agriculture. They, too, have worked devotedly in your interests. I am glad to have the record of our stewardship thoroughly discussed in the election campaign.

The positive, constructive programs advocated by this Administration are designed to retain to farmers their full heritage of freedom, and to contribute to a sound and expanding farm prosperity. They are programs founded neither on the quicksand of war nor the entanglements of bureaucracy.

With God's help we will carry out our role of dedicated servant, to help agriculture go forward.

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