

# Kuhfuss Blasts Govt. Spending

The major problems facing farmers in 1973 and in the 93rd Congress are inflation, labor relations, international trade, the drafting of a new farm program and farm bargaining legislation, William J. Kuhfuss, president of the American Farm Bureau Federation, said in Los Angeles this week during an address to the 54th annual meeting of the Federation.

The Federation is the largest general farm organization in the world with more than 2 million member families in 49 states and Puerto Rico. There is no Farm Bureau in Alaska.

"The best farm program," Kuhfuss said, "is one that encourages expanded outlets for trade. The 62 million acres of production that we are now exporting are practically equal to the 61 million acres that are being held out of production by the government programs in the U S in the past year."

"To increase the exports of those crops that we can produce efficiently would enable us to reduce the number of acres held out of production. The over-supplied domestic market could be relieved if a sufficient volume could be sold satisfactorily in the export market."

"The alternative is to restrict output, produce for our own needs, strangle our productive

capacity and ability, and live within a depressed economy with a limited number of jobs. I do not like this alternative."

The current Agricultural Act of 1970 expire December 31, 1973, and the 93rd Congress will be faced with drafting a new farm program or extending the current law.

Voting delegates of the member State Farm Bureaus will adopt policies on a new farm program during the convention sessions this week.

"Inflation is a serious threat to the economic stability in our economy today," Kuhfuss said, "not only for farmers, but all citizens. The individual farm family's net spendable income is based on the long established formula: unit price of the food and fiber produced, multiplied by the volume marketed, less the costs of production, including taxes, equals net income."

"The continuing rise in farm costs limits the net return to farmers. Farm production expenses in the first half of 1972 were estimated at an annual rate of \$46 billion, about \$2 billion above 1971. Farm prices have not kept pace with farm costs. As a result, farmers have been operating at 75 percent of parity."

Kuhfuss pointed out that most economists recognize that

government spending in excess of income is the primary cause of inflation, but the Administration and Congress have failed to bring federal expenditures into line with receipts.

"The Congress—your Senators and Representatives and mine—are responsible. Are we as individuals giving the kind of direction to our legislators we should to achieve fiscal responsibility?"

"Farm Bureau in 1972 made line-by-line recommendations to the Appropriations Committees of both the House and Senate for reducing appropriations for fiscal 1973 which called for cuts of nearly \$23 billion in new spending authority, and nearly \$15 billion in expenditures."

"Unfortunately, Congress did not accept these recommendations because we as taxpayers apparently have not convinced House and Senate members that we really want to cut government spending."

"The tragedy of all this is that big government spending is a twin of increased centralized government and it is going to require a total national effort to slow down and eventually halt this runaway plunge toward national bankruptcy leading to the doom of enterprise and freedom as we have known it in America."

Kuhfuss also called for national legislation that would provide speedy arbitration of dock strikes "that can shut down the shipping lanes to our foreign customers."

He pointed out that the Taft-Hartley law has been "wholly

inadequate" in transportation disputes, and said we need legislation applicable to the transportation industry such as the Packwood bill. Farm Bureau, he said, should aggressively support such legislation in the 93rd Congress.

On the secondary boycott of food products, Kuhfuss said: "Farm Bureau is not opposed to the right and privilege of farm workers to organize and bargain collectively for the commodity they have to sell—which is labor. We are opposed to the violation of certain principles which we think are guaranteed in the United States Constitution and which the United Farm Workers leadership is ignoring. What's wrong with workers having a say by secret ballot on whether they want a union to represent them? What's wrong with having the same protection for agriculture as provided for industry which makes a secondary boycott unlawful?"

The Federation president also called for legislation to improve farmers' bargaining power with handlers and processors.

"Legislation is needed," he said, "to require good faith bargaining between farmer representatives and handlers if farmers are to be properly represented at the bargaining table."

Kuhfuss said he was optimistic about the future of America and agriculture "provided we retain the competitive enterprise system in which supply and demand are the primary determinants of market prices."

The use of productive resources and the distribution of output should be motivated by the profit system."

Secondly, he said, we must stem inflation through sound monetary and fiscal policies.

"Third, we need guideline legislation that will keep groups in our economy from exercising monopoly power or promoting selfish interests to the detriment of the public interest. We must restrain monopoly whether it be in agriculture, business, labor, or government."

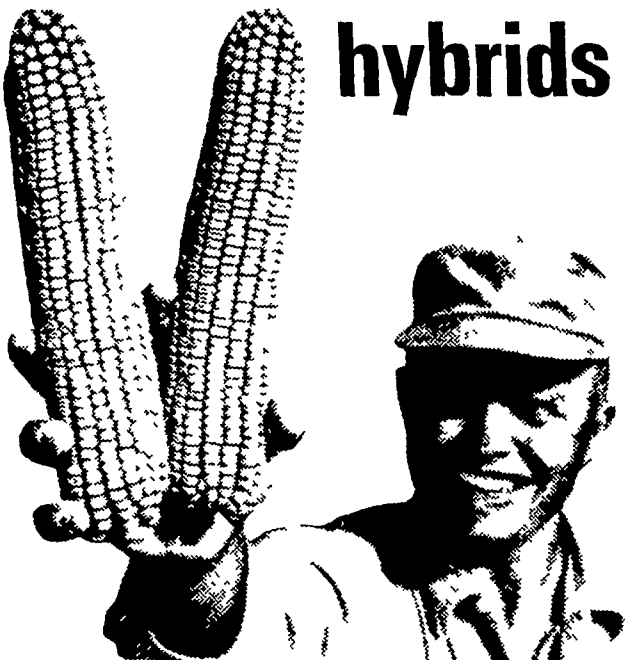
"Fourth, we must reduce government dominance in the management decisions of individual farmers and individual businesses."

"Fifth, we must be a part of the total world trade and market if we are to do our just share in raising the living standards of our fellowmen throughout the world and help preserve peace with a healthy and dynamic economy here in America."

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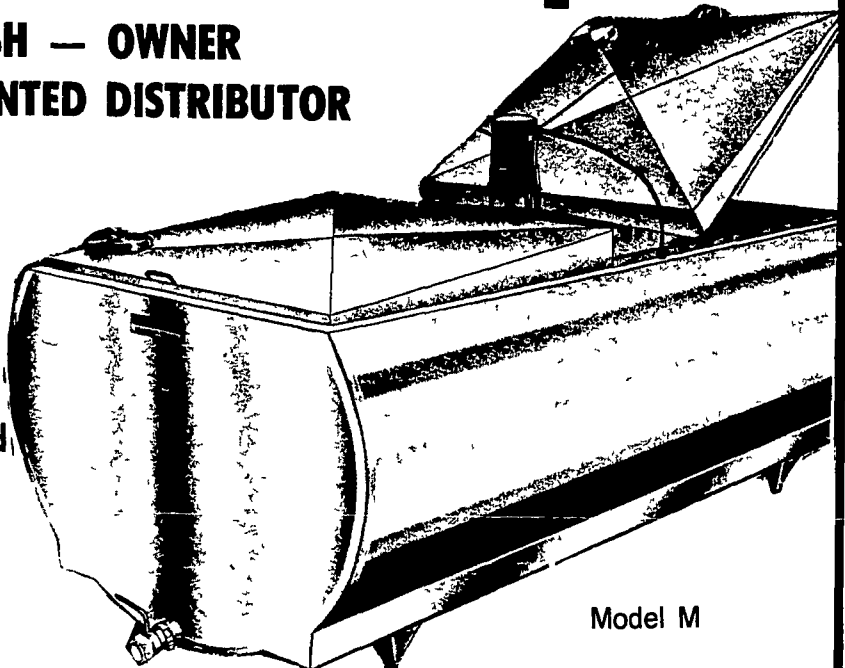
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