STATEMENT BY REPRESENTATIVE FORD:

Among the current headlines: "FARMERS VOTE TO CUT BUYING" -- "FARMERS DISMAYED BY DECLINING PRICES" -- "AN ANGRY RUMBLE FROM THE FARMERS" -- "FARMERS REPORTED DUMPING MILK" -- "FARMERS APPROVE MACHINE BOYCOTT" -- "SHOOTING, HOARDING MARK DAIRY BOYCOTT". The American farmer is angry!

The Johnson-Humphrey Administration's inflationary fiscal policies have shot farm production costs sky-high. The American farmer now has his back to the barn wall as never before.

The Johnson-Humphrey Administration's market price manipulations have sharply decreased prices received by farmers. The parity ratio today stands at 74 -- the lowest since June of 1934 -- down from last year's 82 and threatening to slide still further from the parity level of 100. As you know the parity ratio is the relationship between prices the farmer receives and the costs he has to meet.

Because of its lack of real concern for the consumer's as well as the farmer's interest, the Johnson-Humphrey Administration has stirred a storm of discontent and resentment on the part of our farmers. Consumers have not benefitted accordingly.

Constructively, Republicans in the House and in the Senate have introduced more than fifty farm bills in this new Congress, bills designed first to check and then to remedy the damage done to both (more)
the farmer and the consumer by the Johnson-Humphrey cost-price squeeze.

With the farm price of hogs down over 30 per cent in less than a year, with the farm price of eggs down 24 per cent, with the farm price of wheat down 14 per cent, with the farm price of chickens down 11 per cent -- and with practically none of these price drops benefitting the consumer -- the American people may well ask -- as indeed they do -- what price the Johnson-Humphrey Administration?
Once again, as was true a year ago, the American farmer becomes the victim of the Johnson-Humphrey Administration's double-edged sword: a new record-high in farm operating costs -- a near-record low in farm prices -- and, we repeat, with no real benefit received by the American consumer.

A major factor in the impact of this double-edged sword is the unwanted and unwarranted flow of agricultural imports into this country. Their depressing effect upon farm prices is severe. It threatens to become far worse. One example: in 1965 this country imported 900 million pounds of milk and dairy products; in 1966 this country imported 2.7 billion pounds of milk and dairy products; this year the figure threatens to reach 4 billion pounds of milk and dairy products. More than half of this deluge of milk imports is coming from the Common Market countries of Europe.

57 bills have been introduced by Members of the House and 42 Senators have co-sponsored a bill demanding that such imports be limited. Action by the Johnson-Humphrey Administration in this and every other imperiled area of American agriculture is not only called for but demanded. If agricultural imports continue unchecked at their present rate and volume, our entire agricultural economy is threatened. Our farm surplus is almost gone because of government manipulations and foreign imports. A world food crisis is impending. Our obligations to provide food for the world's needy are increasing annually. It is sheerest folly to impair in any slightest way the efficiency of American agriculture and its incentive and ability to produce food.

As the number and variety of constructive Republican proposals for solution of our several farm programs indicate, there is today no excuse whatever to tolerate the unwillingness or the inability of the Johnson-Humphrey Administration to act -- and to act now -- in the people's interest. How justified our people are in asking as indeed they do -- what price the Johnson-Humphrey Administration?