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**Record Group/Collection:** George H.W. Bush Presidential Records  
**Collection/Office of Origin:** Speechwriting, White House Office of  
**Series:** Smith, Curt, Files  
**Subseries:** Chron File, 1989-1992

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**OA/ID Number:** 13888  
**Folder ID Number:** 13888-030

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**Folder Title:**  
FFA [Future Farmers of America], Washington D.C., 7/27/89

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Stack:	Row:	Section:	Shelf:	Position:
<b>G</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>

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*Handwritten notes at top of page:*  
[7/89]  
it's nice to see a...  
use...  
1985  
[scribbles]

TALKING POINTS FOR PRESIDENT'S REMARKS TO FFA

\* Two years ago I addressed your convention in Kansas City.

The theme of the FFA convention that year was "Agriculture's New Spirit" -- ~~an upbeat~~, forward looking message that represents the character of FFA leaders.

I have long shared your enthusiasm for the future of American agriculture. And I am even more optimistic today.

\* Due to the policies set forth in the 1985 farm bill, the news is basically good out in farm country.

- Farm income remains near record highs.

- Our surpluses of farm commodities have been dramatically reduced.

- Most of our good land has been brought back into production.

- Agricultural exports are up -- nearing record highs.

- The farm credit situation is much improved over the ~~early 1980's~~.

\* This progress has been made while cutting the cost of federal farm programs in half, as more farm income is earned in the market place and less is provided from the government.

\* And at home, the development of new crops and uses for agricultural commodities as raw materials for industry holds great promise.

\* The prospects for young people choosing a career in agriculture are indeed bright.

(Smith/Blessey)  
Draft Two  
July 24, 1989  
FARM

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: FFA  
ROOM 450, OLD EOB  
THURSDAY, JULY 27, 1989  
11:05 A.M.

Members of the FFA, Members of the House and Senate,  
Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is an honor to welcome you to the White House. Thirty years ago this very week, President Eisenhower told the FFA: "I always get a kick out of meeting with a bunch of young people."

Today, with apologies to Cole Porter, let me add: I, too, get a kick out of you.

First, I want to me say that I'm delighted to see so many old friends -- Tony Hoyt. Kerry Case now FFA's advisory.  
Cole Harris. man And to be among so many new friends:  
No longer only the Future Farmers of America -- as impressive as that is. Now, also, the Future Leaders of America.

You know, my Congressional liaison is a man named Fred McClure. As we say down in Texas, Fred'll "stand without hitching." A good man. Let me give you the best proof of that. He used to be the national secretary and head of the Texas FFA.

Like all Texans, Fred loves our State's memorable phrases. For instance, you know what we call catfish? "Tourist trout." And we don't refer to animals as animals. No sir. The saying goes that "They're critters, if they're friendly. And varmints, if they're not."

Well, Fred McClure also knows what to call the FFA. And so do I. We call it America at her best. America at her most generous. An America embodied by the FFA motto: "Learning to do, doing to learn; earning to live, living to serve."

For 61 years ago FFA has done just that -- done, and served, so that America could prosper. And today, you're still doing it -- all 50 States, nearly     chapters, more than 400,000 members.

You serve through faith in God, and strength of character. And through the belief in family which makes us whole. You know that what we are matters more than what we have. And believe in doing your best, and "Doing unto others." Working with your minds -- your hands -- as farmers, and as Americans.

Now, I know you like to spread the credit around. After all, that's Rural America's way: Classy, modest, and understated. I'm reminded of how a noted comedian once bought a chicken farm. A friend was astonished. "Do you know anything about breeding chickens?" he asked. "No," the comedian replied, "but the chickens do."

But the thing is: *Tom, Ken, Colman you'll make us*  
 The credit does belong to you. And to your parents. Two years ago, I addressed the FFA convention in Kansas City. Its motto was "Agriculture's New Spirit." Well, today, thanks to your labor, and self-reliance, that spirit is alive, and well -- soaring onward, and upward, on America's behalf.

Want evidence? Consider that only four years ago, the Congress passed a pioneering farm bill. Yet today, farm income

and agricultural exports are nearing record highs. Our surpluses of farm commodities have been drastically reduced. Most of our good land has been brought back into production. And the farm credit situation is greatly improved over a decade ago.

This progress has occurred while cutting the cost of Federal farm programs in half. For as less farm income was provided by the government, more was acquired in the market place. We -- you -- have told government to tear down the roadblocks of tariffs and trade barriers. And that the wave of the future lies in competition and free enterprise.

Our task now is to build upon that spirit -- the spirit of "Can-do," not "Washington-must." We don't want government to spend more. We want people to spend more. And we must remember that as during the next year we write a new farm bill. Ensuring the many good features of the '85 Act. And at the same time, making needed improvements.

You know, the great humorist Will Rogers once said, "A man in the country does his own thinking -- but you get him into town and he soon will be thinking second-handed."

My friends, our new farm bill must be even-handed. And level-headed. In response to market forces, producers must have more flexibility to decide what crops to grow. And we must recognize how compatible are the concerns of agriculture and the environment. And nowhere more than in water quality.

As we write our farm bill, we'll work to expand exports. And the key to that achievement is the current round of GATT

talks. Yes, we want free trade. But we also want fair trade. And that is why, like the walls of Jericho, penalties which distort world trade must come tumbling down.

For ours is a global economy. And America must compete -- be able to compete. That means expanding our ties with the Soviet Union -- already the third-largest customer for U.S. agricultural commodities. And enlarging our trade with other countries who know, and need, the farming genius of America.

At home, it means developing new crops and uses for agricultural commodities as raw materials for industry. And for you, today's global economy means that there has never been a better place, nor crucial time, to start a career than the America of 1989.

You know, Carl Sandburg was America's poet laureate. A graceful, lyric writer. He spoke -- beautifully, movingly -- about American agriculture. And about the vast horizons and beauty that form the heartland of America.

Once, he said simply: "The Republic is a dream. Nothing happens unless first a dream." My friends, your dreams are America's dreams. And I know you will -- already are -- making those dreams a reality.

Future Farmers. Future Leaders. Of America -- and the world. Thank you for coming here. God bless you you, God bless the FFA, and God bless the United States of America.

# # # #

*outstanding  
in your field*

*will file in 7-27-89  
Smith/Blessey  
Draft Three  
July 26, 1989  
FARM*

(Smith/Blessey)  
Draft Three  
July 26, 1989  
FARM

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: FFA  
ROOM 450, OLD EOB  
THURSDAY, JULY 27, 1989  
11:05 A.M.

Members of the FFA, Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is an honor to welcome you to the White House. Thirty years ago this very week, President Eisenhower told the FFA: "I always get a kick out of meeting with a bunch of young people."

~~Well, since so many of you spend time around farm animals, perhaps I shouldn't say this. But, I, too, get a kick out of you.~~

*Long Case*

First, let me say that I'm delighted to see my old friends Tony Hoyt, ~~Kerry~~ Case, and Coleman Harris. And to be among so many new friends: No longer just the Future Farmers of America -- as impressive as that is. Now, also, the Future Leaders of America.

Two days ago, you heard from Fred McClure, who's my Congressional liaison. But more to the point: He once was national secretary and head of the Texas FFA.

And like all Texans, Fred loves our State's memorable phrases. For instance, you know what we call catfish? "Tourist trout." And we don't refer to animals as animals. No sir. The saying goes that "They're critters, if they're friendly. And varmints, if they're not."

Well, whether you're from Texas or not, we know what to call the FFA. We call it America at her best. America at her most generous. An America embodied by the FFA motto: "Learning to do, doing to learn; earning to live, living to serve."

Last month I announced a "Points of Light Initiative" which asks every American to bring this service into every corner of America. Today, I renew that challenge. And I know that you will meet it. For since 1928<sup>6</sup> FFA has done much, and served many. You have been a point of light. And today, you're still shining -- all 50 States, nearly 8,000 chapters, more than 400,000 members.

You serve through faith in God, and strength of character. And through the belief in family which makes us whole. You know that what we are matters more than what we have. Working with your minds -- your hands -- as farmers, and as Americans.

Now, I know you like to spread the credit around. After all, that's rural America's way: Modest and understated. I'm reminded of how a noted comedian once bought a chicken farm. A friend was astonished. "Do you know anything about breeding chickens?" he asked. "No," the comedian replied, "but the chickens do."

But the thing is: The credit does belong to you. And to your parents. Two years ago, I addressed the FFA convention in Kansas City. Its ~~motto~~<sup>vee</sup> was "Agriculture's New Spirit." Well, today, thanks to your hard work, and self-reliance, that spirit is alive, and well.

Want evidence? Consider that only four years ago, the Congress passed a pioneering farm bill to help a whole community in crisis. ~~Yet today,~~ <sup>This year</sup> farm income and agricultural exports are nearing record highs. Our surpluses of farm commodities have been drastically reduced. Most of our good land has been brought back into production. And the farm credit situation has greatly improved over the last decade.

This progress has occurred while cutting the cost of Federal farm programs in half. For when the farm economy is strong, and government has to pay less, all America benefits. We -- you -- have told government to tear down the roadblocks of tariffs and trade barriers. And that the wave of the future lies in competition and free enterprise.

Our task now is to build upon that spirit -- the spirit of "America-Can," not "Washington-must." We don't want government to spend more. We want people to earn more. And we must remember that next year when we write a new farm bill. Ensuring the many good features of the 1985 Act. And at the same time, making needed improvements.

You know, the great humorist Will Rogers once said, "A man in the country does his own thinking -- but you get him into town and he soon will be thinking second-handed." [PAUSE]

My friends, our new farm bill must be even-handed. And level-headed. In response to market forces, producers must have more flexibility to decide what crops to grow. And regarding agriculture and the environment, we must see their concerns as

compatible. Both, for example, need clean, safe, and quality water.

But we can't stop there. For we must work to expand exports. And the key to that achievement is the current round of GATT talks. Yes, we want free trade. But we also want fair trade. And that is why, like the walls of Jericho, barriers which distort world trade must come tumbling down.

For ours is a global economy. And America must compete -- be able to compete. That means, as our relations improve, expanding our ties with the Soviet Union -- already the third-largest customer for U.S. agricultural commodities. And enlarging our trade with other countries who know, and need, the farming genius of America.

At home, the need to compete means developing new crops and uses for agricultural commodities as raw materials for industry. And for you, our global economy means there has never been a better place -- nor more crucial time -- to start a career than America, today.

I'm sure all of you have read Carl Sandburg. He was America's poet laureate -- a graceful, lyric writer. He spoke -- beautifully, movingly -- about American agriculture. And about the vast horizons and beauty that form the heartland of America.

Once, he said simply: "The Republic is a dream. Nothing happens unless first a dream."

My friends, your dreams are big dreams. Future Farmers who will feed the world of tomorrow. Future Leaders whose character

and commitment will enrich America's destiny -- not merely for your generation, but for all the generations to come.

Thank you for coming here -- and may your dreams become reality. God bless you, Godspeed to the FFA, and God bless the United States of America.

# # # #

Curt

REMARKS: FFA  
ROOM 450, OLD EOB  
THURSDAY, JULY 27, 1989  
11:05 A.M.

MEMBERS OF THE FFA, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.

IT IS AN HONOR TO WELCOME YOU TO THE WHITE HOUSE.  
THIRTY YEARS AGO THIS VERY WEEK, PRESIDENT EISENHOWER  
TOLD THE FFA: "I ALWAYS GET A KICK OUT OF MEETING WITH  
A BUNCH OF YOUNG PEOPLE."

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WELL, TODAY WITH APOLOGIES TO THAT NOTED COMPOSER COLE  
PORTER, LET ME SAY, AS HE DID: "I GET A KICK OUT OF  
YOU."

FIRST, I WANT TO NOTE THAT I'M DELIGHTED TO SEE  
TONY HOYT AND LARRY CASE ONCE AGAIN. AND TO BE AMONG  
SO MANY NEW FRIENDS: NO LONGER JUST THE FUTURE FARMERS  
OF AMERICA -- AS IMPRESSIVE AS THAT IS. NOW, ALSO,  
THE FUTURE LEADERS OF AMERICA.

TWO DAYS AGO, YOU HEARD FROM FRED McCLURE, WHO'S MY CONGRESSIONAL LIAISON. BUT MORE TO THE POINT: HE ONCE WAS NATIONAL SECRETARY AND HEAD OF THE TEXAS FFA.

AND LIKE ALL TEXANS, FRED LOVES OUR STATE'S MEMORABLE PHRASES. FOR INSTANCE, YOU KNOW WHAT WE CALL CATFISH? "TOURIST TROUT." AND WE DON'T REFER TO ANIMALS AS ANIMALS. NO SIR. THE SAYING GOES THAT "THEY'RE CRITTERS, IF THEY'RE FRIENDLY. AND VARMINTS, IF THEY'RE NOT."

WELL, WHETHER YOU'RE FROM TEXAS OR NOT, WE KNOW WHAT TO CALL THE FFA. WE CALL IT AMERICA AT HER BEST. AMERICA AT HER MOST GENEROUS. AN AMERICA EMBODIED BY THE FFA MOTTO: "LEARNING TO DO, DOING TO LEARN; EARNING TO LIVE, LIVING TO SERVE."

LAST MONTH I ANNOUNCED A "POINTS OF LIGHT INITIATIVE" WHICH ASKS EVERY AMERICAN TO BRING THIS SERVICE INTO EVERY CORNER OF AMERICA. TODAY, I RENEW THAT CHALLENGE. AND I KNOW THAT YOU WILL MEET IT.

- 5 -

FOR SINCE 1926 FFA HAS DONE MUCH, AND SERVED MANY. YOU HAVE BEEN A POINT OF LIGHT. AND TODAY, YOU'RE STILL SHINING -- ALL 50 STATES, NEARLY 8,000 CHAPTERS, MORE THAN 400,000 MEMBERS.

YOU SERVE THROUGH FAITH IN GOD, AND STRENGTH OF CHARACTER. AND THROUGH THE BELIEF IN FAMILY WHICH MAKES US WHOLE. YOU KNOW THAT WHAT WE ARE MATTERS MORE THAN WHAT WE HAVE. WORKING WITH YOUR MINDS -- YOUR HANDS -- AS FARMERS, AND AS AMERICANS.

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NOW, I KNOW YOU LIKE TO SPREAD THE CREDIT AROUND. AFTER ALL, THAT'S RURAL AMERICA'S WAY: MODEST AND UNDERSTATED. I'M REMINDED OF HOW A NOTED COMEDIAN ONCE BOUGHT A CHICKEN FARM. A FRIEND WAS ASTONISHED. "DO YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT BREEDING CHICKENS?" HE ASKED. "NO," THE COMEDIAN REPLIED, "BUT THE CHICKENS DO."

BUT THE THING IS: THE CREDIT DOES BELONG TO YOU. AND TO YOUR PARENTS. TWO YEARS AGO, I ADDRESSED THE FFA CONVENTION IN KANSAS CITY.

**ITS THEME WAS "AGRICULTURE'S NEW SPIRIT." WELL, TODAY, THANKS TO YOUR HARD WORK, AND SELF-RELIANCE, THAT SPIRIT IS ALIVE, AND WELL.**

**WANT EVIDENCE? CONSIDER THAT ONLY FOUR YEARS AGO, THE CONGRESS PASSED A PIONEERING FARM BILL TO HELP A WHOLE COMMUNITY IN CRISIS. YET THIS YEAR, FARM INCOME AND AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS ARE NEARING RECORD HIGHS. OUR SURPLUSES OF FARM COMMODITIES HAVE BEEN DRASTICALLY REDUCED.**

**MOST OF OUR GOOD LAND HAS BEEN BROUGHT BACK INTO PRODUCTION. AND THE FARM CREDIT SITUATION HAS GREATLY IMPROVED OVER THE LAST DECADE.**

**THIS PROGRESS HAS OCCURRED WHILE CUTTING THE COST OF FEDERAL FARM PROGRAMS IN HALF. FOR WHEN THE FARM ECONOMY IS STRONG, AND GOVERNMENT HAS TO PAY LESS, ALL AMERICA BENEFITS.**

WE -- YOU -- HAVE TOLD GOVERNMENT TO TEAR DOWN THE ROADBLOCKS OF TARIFFS AND TRADE BARRIERS. AND THAT THE WAVE OF THE FUTURE LIES IN COMPETITION AND FREE ENTERPRISE.

OUR TASK NOW IS TO BUILD UPON THAT SPIRIT -- THE SPIRIT OF "AMERICA-CAN," NOT "WASHINGTON-MUST." WE DON'T WANT GOVERNMENT TO SPEND MORE. WE WANT PEOPLE TO EARN MORE.

AND WE MUST REMEMBER THAT NEXT YEAR WHEN WE WRITE A NEW FARM BILL. ENSURING THE MANY GOOD FEATURES OF THE 1985 ACT. AND AT THE SAME TIME, MAKING NEEDED IMPROVEMENTS.

YOU KNOW, THE GREAT HUMORIST WILL ROGERS ONCE SAID, "A MAN IN THE COUNTRY DOES HIS OWN THINKING -- BUT YOU GET HIM INTO TOWN AND HE SOON WILL BE THINKING SECOND-HANDED." [PAUSE]

OUR NEW FARM BILL MUST BE EVEN-HANDED. AND LEVEL-HEADED.

IN RESPONSE TO MARKET FORCES, PRODUCERS MUST HAVE MORE FLEXIBILITY TO DECIDE WHAT CROPS TO GROW. AND REGARDING AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT, WE MUST SEE THEIR CONCERNS AS COMPATIBLE. BOTH, FOR EXAMPLE, NEED CLEAN, SAFE, AND QUALITY WATER.

BUT WE CAN'T STOP THERE. FOR WE MUST WORK TO EXPAND EXPORTS. AND THE KEY TO THAT ACHIEVEMENT IS THE CURRENT ROUND OF GATT TALKS. YES, WE WANT FREE TRADE. BUT WE ALSO WANT FAIR TRADE.

AND THAT IS WHY, LIKE THE WALLS OF JERICHO, BARRIERS WHICH DISTORT WORLD TRADE MUST COME TUMBLING DOWN.

FOR OURS IS A GLOBAL ECONOMY. AND AMERICA MUST COMPETE -- BE ABLE TO COMPETE. THAT MEANS, AS OUR RELATIONS IMPROVE, EXPANDING OUR TIES WITH THE SOVIET UNION -- ALREADY THE THIRD-LARGEST CUSTOMER FOR U.S. AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES. AND ENLARGING OUR TRADE WITH OTHER COUNTRIES WHO KNOW, AND NEED, THE FARMING GENIUS OF AMERICA.

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AT HOME, THE NEED TO COMPETE MEANS DEVELOPING NEW CROPS AND USES FOR AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES AS RAW MATERIALS FOR INDUSTRY. AND FOR YOU, OUR GLOBAL ECONOMY MEANS THERE HAS NEVER BEEN A BETTER PLACE -- NOR MORE CRUCIAL TIME -- TO START A CAREER THAN IN AMERICA, TODAY.

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I'M SURE ALL OF YOU HAVE READ CARL SANDBURG. HE WAS AMERICA'S POET LAUREATE -- A GRACEFUL, LYRIC WRITER. HE SPOKE --BEAUTIFULLY, MOVINGLY -- ABOUT AMERICAN AGRICULTURE. AND ABOUT THE VAST HORIZONS AND BEAUTY THAT FORM THE HEARTLAND OF AMERICA.

ONCE, HE SAID SIMPLY: "THE REPUBLIC IS A DREAM. NOTHING HAPPENS UNLESS FIRST A DREAM."

YOUR DREAMS ARE BIG DREAMS. FUTURE FARMERS WHO WILL FEED THE WORLD OF TOMORROW.

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**FUTURE LEADERS WHOSE CHARACTER AND COMMITMENT WILL ENRICH AMERICA'S DESTINY -- NOT MERELY FOR YOUR GENERATION, BUT FOR ALL THE GENERATIONS TO COME.**

**THANK YOU FOR COMING HERE -- AND MAY YOUR DREAMS BECOME REALITY. GOD BLESS YOU, GODSPEED TO THE FFA, AND GOD BLESS THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.**

**# # # #**