

New Delhi, India
December 20, 1966

Honorable Orville Freeman
Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Pursuant to your request, we, the undersigned, have travelled throughout India and have made on-the-spot visits to drought-stricken farming areas and appropriate storage and transportation facilities. We discussed food problems with Indian officials at all levels and U.S. Government and voluntary agency people.

We were impressed by the magnitude of economic progress, especially in agriculture, by the severity of the drought in northern India, and by the awesome prospect of human suffering which is certain to follow if no help is forthcoming. We wish to emphasize that we were impressed by programs and progress toward Indian self-sufficiency.

A most urgent decision is required if food aid from the United States is to arrive in an orderly manner during February, March, and April. More deliberate planning for follow-up assistance should be firmed up by March.

Based on figures available to us at this time and considering our declining U.S. reserves, we recommend that 1.8 million tons of grain (at least 30% sorghum) be furnished the Government of India, with maximum amount donated under Title II of P.L. 480 before December 31, or in the alternative if legally more expeditious under Title II of the new Act immediately after January 1, with announcement of such action at once. The donation should be: (1) based on emergency drought relief for the people of India from the people of the United States; (2) require that to the maximum extent possible the United States donated grain be distributed free to needy persons or proceeds be used for their relief; and (3) the announcement should express the hope of the United States that the USSR and other countries will join the United States, Canada, and Australia in helping India meet her food and fertilizer shortages. A portion of the 1.8 million tons should be considered for Title III distribution through voluntary agencies.

Donations to GOI appear more advantageous than concessional sales (1) because of excessive United States holdings of rupees in India; (2) in order to enable GOI to more effectively negotiate help from the USSR and other countries; (3) to follow examples of Canada and Australia; and (4) to help persuade GOI officials and the Indian press to move more quickly toward the United States position regarding Vietnam and to change open criticism of U.S. military strategy to one of condemnation of Communist aggression.

We expressed to some GOI officials our belief that the American people feel that some Indian spokesmen have been unfair to both the United States Government and to a majority of the Indian people by their undue criticism of the United States policy in Vietnam. Yet, we have never been welcomed more enthusiastically or hospitably than we were during this visit.

We draw your attention to Section 103(i) of the new PL 480 Act which requires the President to promote progress toward assurance of an adequate food supply by encouraging countries with which agreements are made to give higher emphasis to the production of food crops (such as grain) than to the production of non-food crops (such as cotton) as are in world surplus. In view of large U.S. holdings of rupees, we suggest that in negotiating long-term agreements concessional sales for local currency be replaced by sales on credit eventually repayable in dollars as early as economic conditions in India permit. In view of rapid population growth in India, we urge that any new agreement further emphasize and support efforts to expand agricultural production and technology while implementing effective family planning programs.

We suggest that no new long-term agreements with India under Titles I and IV be concluded until the matters we have discussed herein have been resolved. However, a long-term agreement should be concluded by March 1967.

Sincerely yours,

W.R. Foage, M.C.

Jack Miller, U.S.S.

Bob Dole, M.C.