

administrative structure did not give enough emphasis to the whole broad area of rural development.

Secretary FREEMAN. I have not had occasion to discuss that with them. I always welcome constructive suggestions but I do think this is an area where we have reorganized the department with this target in mind and where the highest attention is being focused on it on my part and at an assistant secretaryship level right now.

In addition we have a program here in Washington to maintain close relationships with the other departments of Government and to carry forward our "Outreach" program.

So, I would be of the opinion, not wanting to be dogmatic about it, that we are pretty well organized with this goal in mind.

Mr. GOODELL. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

Chairman PERKINS. Mr. Scherle, further questions?

Mr. SCHERLE. Mr. Secretary, I am sure I speak for many thousands of farmers throughout the United States, being one myself, I think so much of this so-called prosperity that we hear about from you and the President is all on paper—something like bank notes.

Agriculture in itself is very unhappy for the simple reason that they can look around and see that in other related industries the economy has advanced quite rapidly.

The majority of farmers in America today feel cheated, they feel resentful because they only have 65 percent of the purchasing power that other people enjoy in related industry.

Secretary FREEMAN. Might I point out to you that is 15 percent more than they had when I became Secretary of Agriculture?

Mr. SCHERLE. Mr. Freeman, I know what they have today and I saw an article not too long ago and I don't know whether this was your recommendation or President Johnson's that there are in excess in America today 1½ million too many farmers.

Now, was this statement yours or was this a misquote?

Secretary FREEMAN. That statement was not made by me at any time and it was not made by the President at any time. That is a totally fictitious statement that has been dreamed out of the air someplace as a number of your statements so obviously have.

Mr. SCHERLE. I must be reading strange newspapers.

Secretary FREEMAN. I agree with you.

Mr. SCHERLE. We take 135 newspapers from our district. I can't see where they are all wrong.

Secretary FREEMAN. You read 135 a week and do all those newspapers agree?

Mr. SCHERLE. With the exception of your quotes.

Secretary FREEMAN. You must have remarkable newspapers in Iowa if you have 135 agreeing with each other and you read them all week. You are a pretty learned man.

Mr. SCHERLE. They are all in agreement as to what you have said.

I find there are more and more people leaving the farms. But those farmers staying on the farm are going deeper and deeper in debt.

My question at this time is: Do you or do you not believe in farm unionization?

Do you think that the farmworkers should be unionized?

Secretary FREEMAN. I am not quite sure what you mean. What do you mean by "unionized"? Do you mean should farmers have the right to join a union if they want to?