

[From the Haxtun-Fleming Herald, June 9, 1999]

CONGRESSMAN SITS AT THE TABLE OF
FARMERS

(By Jean Gray)

Even as agriculture struggles with low commodity prices, American farmers continue to do what they do best, feed the human race.

A prime example occurred this past Saturday, June 5, as 65 people sat down to a luncheon at the home of local producers, Richard and Cathy Starkebaum. The occasion was a visit to the area by United States Congressman Bob Schaffer (R-Colo.) Schaffer's visit was sponsored by the Colorado Association of Wheat Growers and the Colorado Wheat Administrative Committee.

This was the third-annual CAWG/CWAC tour. Prior to Schaffer's being elected to Congress, his predecessor Wayne Allard participated in the event. According to Jay Wisdom, president of CAWG, the tour has been held in the southern part of the state the last two years. "Congressman Schaffer asked that it be held in northeastern Colorado this year," said Wisdom. "And Rich graciously agreed to host it."

The visit started with a tour of some area wheat fields and culminated with the buffet lunch of barbecue-beef sandwiches, potato salad, baked beans and condiments provided by caterer Joyce Schepler of Fleming.

Thanks to recent rains, the wheat in northeastern Colorado appears healthy with full heads of grain, but prices remain depressed. Darrell Hanavan, executive director of CAWG/CWAC, said that one of the first things the group did that morning was to go through the history of the wheat market. "What we discovered is that wheat prices are at the lowest level since 1991-92," said Hanavan. On Saturday, the wheat market closed at \$2.25 per bushel, according to Jan Workman, Grainland Cooperative, Haxtun. Workman said the Coop's records show that wheat was at \$2.34 per bushel on July 15, 1991, and on July 15, 1990, it was at \$2.56 per bushel. Workman said she has seen wheat at \$2.20 and \$2.13 at harvest time, but could not recall the years.

Wisdom explained to those attending that CAWG is a dues-paying organization that lobbies government, both on the state and federal level, on issues that affect wheat producers. He pointed out that Schaffer is the wheat leader for the State of Colorado in Washington. "The rest of Congress looks to Congressman Schaffer for advice when they vote on ag-related issues," said Wisdom.

He also reported that there have been some success in Colorado recently, specifically with the passage of two pieces of state legislation that offer tax relief to producers. "That will help because we desperately need an influx of money into the ag community," said Wisdom.

Wisdom was referring to House Bills 99-1002 and 99-1381. Both were passed during the 1999 legislative session, and both take effect on July 1, 1999. The two bills are expected to offer \$6.2 million in tax relief to Colorado farmers.

House Bill 99-1102, which was partially sponsored by District One State Senator Marilyn Musgrave, exempts farm equipment from state sales tax.

Senator Musgrave was also involved in sponsoring House Bill 99-1381, which exempts chemicals used in the production of agricultural products from state sales tax. State Representative Diane Hoppe, 65th District, also helped sponsor the measure. Phillips and Logan counties are located in both the 65th House District and Senate District One.

Wisdom said that CAWG is also working on getting some legislation passed that will

make crop insurance more beneficial to farmers. "We are trying to get a safety net program set up," said Wisdom. "It is tough out there."

CAWG has done a good job in its lobbying efforts over the past two years, said Wisdom. "But there's a lot of resistance out there right now. Agriculture is hurting and Congressman Schaffer knows it, so this is your chance to hit him up about your issues."

Brad Barth, a Larrar producer who serves as president of CWAC, thanked Schaffer for his strong support of the wheat industry and said the group is looking forward to working with the Congressman on future issues.

Congressman Schaffer, 36, is originally from Cincinnati, Ohio, but now resides in Fort Collins. He and his wife, Maureen, have four children ranging in age from three to 11. He currently serves on the House agriculture committee.

Barth noted that there are only five members of Congress who represent larger agriculture areas than Schaffer does.

Schaffer told the group that attending these tours helps him represent the ag community better. "When I am standing on the House floor talking about the farmers I just met, and the fields that I just walked, it gives me a lot more authority when I talk about agriculture issues." He added that he needs input from producers like them to do his job well. "With the wide range of topics we deal with in Washington, sometimes agriculture can be overlooked," said Schaffer.

With respect to the American people's apathy to the recent scandals coming out of Washington, Schaffer said the reason most give is that the economy is doing so well. "Most feel as long as the economy is doing well they could care less about the scandal and corruption that is going on," said Schaffer.

He added, however, that while the economy is good for most segments of the business community, that is not true in agriculture. "The biggest reason is trade," said Schaffer. "When it comes to cars, computers, and other hi-tech manufacturing, the United States is doing well because they have worked hard at opening those areas of trade. But when they sit down with a representative from these other countries, they have to offer some kind of trade in return. The only thing these other countries have to offer is agriculture products, so American farmers have gotten a bad rap."

He added that it is a big political battle. "One that we have to be prepared to fight." He said one way to fight is through organizations like CAWG/CWAC and he encouraged them to join and participate.

PRESIDENT CLINTON ADDRESSES
INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATION
CONFERENCE—REAFFIRMS
AMERICAN COMMITMENT
TO INTERNATIONAL LABOR
RIGHTS

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 16, 1999

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, today at the Geneva Conference of the International Labor Organization, President Clinton became the first President of the United States to address the International Labor Organization (ILO) in Geneva. In this particularly excellent address, the President reaffirmed in the strongest terms the commitment of the United States to the ILO and to the protection of international labor rights.

The ILO—an organization established in the aftermath of World War I and affiliated with the United Nations after its creation in 1945—is in the forefront of the fight to assure that workers have the right to organize, the right to bargain collectively, the right to a safe work place, and the rights to speak out and to assemble in the defense and protection of these rights.

Mr. Speaker, President Clinton also called attention in particular to the fight of the United States against abusive child labor. In far too many places around, children are forced to work unconscionably long hours, which interferes with their education and limits their future opportunities. More serious is the exploitation of children in pornography and prostitution, which happens in many places around the globe. Children are recruited by some governments and by some political movements to serve in military conflicts, and we must work to end that pernicious practice. Children also work in hazardous and dangerous occupations where they risk their lives, their health, and their future.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the request of the President to the Congress to provide \$25 million in funding to help create a new arm of the ILO to work with developing countries to put basic labor standards in place to assure workers in these countries basic health and safety protections as well as assuring them the right to organize. I also urge support of the President's request to the Congress for \$10 million to strengthen U.S. bilateral support for governments seeking to raise their own fundamental labor standards. I also urge support for the President's requests for funding of programs to reduce child labor.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that President Clinton's outstanding address to the International Labor Organization be placed in the RECORD, and I urge my colleagues to give thoughtful attention to his excellent remarks.

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT TO THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATION CONFERENCE

THE PRESIDENT. Thank you very much, Director General Somavia, for your fine statement and your excellent work. Conference President Mumuni, Director General Petrovsky, ladies and gentlemen of the ILO: It is a great honor for me to be here today with, as you have noticed, quite a large American delegation. I hope you will take it as a commitment of the United States to our shared vision, and not simply as a burning desire for us to visit this beautiful city on every possible opportunity.

I am delighted to be here with Secretary Albright and Secretary of Labor Herman; with my National Economic Advisor Gene Sperling, and my National Security Advisor Sandy Berger. We're delighted to be joined by the President of the American Federation of Labor, the AFL-CIO, John Sweeney, and several of the leaders of the U.S. labor movement; and with Senator TOM HARKIN from Iowa who is the foremost advocate in the United States of the abolition of child labor. I am grateful to all of them for coming with me, and to the First Lady and our daughter for joining us on this trip. And I thank you for your warm reception of her presence here.

It is indeed an honor for me to be the first American President to speak before the ILO in Geneva. It is long overdue. There is no organization that has worked harder to bring people together around fundamental human aspirations, and no organization whose mission is more vital for today and tomorrow.

The ILO, as the Director General said, was created in the wake of the devastation of

World War I as part of a vision to provide stability to a world recovering from war, a vision put forward by our President, Woodrow Wilson. He said then, "While we are fighting for freedom we must see that labor is free." At a time when dangerous doctrines of dictatorship were increasingly appealing the ILO was founded on the realization that injustice produces, and I quote, "unrest so great that the peace and harmony of the world are imperiled."

Over time the organization was strengthened, and the United States played its role, starting with President Franklin Roosevelt and following through his successors and many others in the United States Congress, down to the strong supporters today, including Senator HARKIN and the distinguished senior Senator from New York, PATRICK MOYNIHAN.

For half a century, the ILO has waged a struggle of rising prosperity and widening freedom, from the shipyards of Poland to the diamond mines of South Africa. Today, as the Director General said, you remain the only organization to bring together governments, labor unions and business, to try to unite people in common cause—the dignity of work, the belief that honest labor, fairly compensated, gives meaning and structure to our lives; the ability of every family and all children to rise as far as their talents will take them.

In a world too often divided, this organization has been a powerful force for unity, justice, equality and shared prosperity. For all that, I thank you. Now, at the edge of a new century, at the dawn of the Information Age, the ILO and its vision are more vital than ever—for the world is becoming a much smaller and much, much more interdependent place. Most nations are linked to the new dynamic, idea-driven, technology-powered, highly competitive international economy.

The digital revolution is a profound, powerful and potentially democratizing force. It can empower people and nations, enabling the wise and far-sighted to develop more quickly and with less damage to the environment. It can enable us to work together across the world as easily as if we were working just across the hall. Competition, communications and more open markets spur stunning innovations and make their fruits available to business and workers worldwide.

Consider this: Every single day, half a million air passengers, 1.5 billion e-mail messages and \$1.5 trillion cross international borders. We also have new tools to eradicate diseases that have long plagued humanity, to remove the threat of global warming and environmental destruction, to lift billions of people into the first truly global middle class.

Yet, as the financial crisis of the last two years has shown, the global economy with its churning, hyperactivity, poses new risks, as well, of disruption, dislocation and division. A financial crisis in one country can be felt on factory floors half a world away. The world has changed, much of it for the better, but too often our response to its new challenges has not changed.

Globalization is not a proposal or a policy choice, it is a fact. But how we respond to it will make all the difference. We cannot dam up the tides of economic change anymore than King Knute could still the waters. Nor can we tell our people to sink or swim on their own. We must find a new way—a new and democratic way—to maximize market potential and social justice, competition and community. We must put a human face on the global economy, giving working people everywhere a stake in its success, equipping them all to reap its rewards, providing for

their families the basic conditions of a just society. All nations must embrace this vision, and all the great economic institutions of the world must devote their creativity and energy to this end.

Last May, I had the opportunity to come and speak to the World Trade Organization and stress that as we fight for open markets, it must open its doors to the concerns of working people and the environment. Last November, I spoke to the International Monetary Fund and World Bank and stressed that we must build a new financial architecture as modern as today's markets, to tame the cycles of boom and bust in the global economy as we can now do in national economies; to ensure the integrity of international financial transactions; and to expand social safety nets for the most vulnerable.

Today, I say to you that the ILO, too, must be ready for the 21st century, along the lines that Director General Somavia has outlined.

Let me begin by stating my firm belief that open trade is not contrary to the interest of working people. Competition and integration lead to stronger growth, more and better jobs, more widely shared gains. Renewed protectionism in any of our nations would lead to a spiral of retaliation that would diminish the standard of living for working people everywhere. Moreover, a failure to expand trade further could choke off innovation and diminish the very possibilities of the information economy. No, we need more trade, not less.

Unfortunately, working people the world over do not believe this. Even in the United States, with the lowest unemployment rate in a generation, where exports accounted for 30 percent of our growth until the financial crisis hit Asia, working people strongly resist new market-opening measures. There are many reasons. In advanced countries the benefits of open trade outweigh the burdens. But they are widely spread, while the dislocations of open trade are painfully concentrated.

In all countries, the premium the modern economy places on skills leaves too many hard-working people behind. In poor countries, the gains seem too often to go to the already wealthy and powerful, with little or no rise in the general standard of living. And the international organizations charged with monitoring and providing for rules of fair trade, and enforcement of them, seem to take a very long time to work their way to the right decision, often too late to affect the people who have been disadvantaged.

So as we press for more open trade, we must do more to ensure that all our people are lifted by the global economy. As we prepare to launch a new global round of trade talks in Seattle in November, it is vital that the WTO and the ILO work together to advance that common goal.

We clearly see that a thriving global economy will grow out of the skills, the idea, the education of millions of individuals. In each of our nations and as a community of nations, we must invest in our people and lift them to their full potential. If we allow the ups and downs of financial crises to divert us from investing in our people, it is not only those citizens or nations that will suffer—the entire world will suffer from their lost potential.

It is clear that when nations face financial crisis, they need the commitment and the expertise not only of the international financial institutions, they need the ILO as well. The IMF, the World Bank and WTO, themselves, should work more closely with the ILO, and this organization must be willing and able to assume more responsibility.

The lesson of the past two years is plain: Those nations with strong social safety nets are better able to weather the storms. Those

strong safety nets do not just include financial assistance and emergency aid for poorest people, they also call for the empowerment of the poorest people.

This weekend in Cologne, I will join my partners in the G-8 in calling for a new focus on stronger safety nets within nations and within the international community. We will also urge improved cooperation between the ILO and the international financial institutions in promoting social protections and core labor standards. And we should press forward to lift the debt burden that is crushing many of the poorest nations.

We are working to forge a bold agreement to more than triple debt relief for the world's poorest nations and to target those savings to education, health care, child survival and fighting poverty. I pledge to work to find the resources so we can do our part and contribute our share toward an expanded trust fund for debt relief.

Yet, as important as our efforts to strengthen safety nets and relieve debt burdens are, for citizens throughout the world to feel that they truly have a hand in shaping their future they must know the dignity and respect of basic rights in the workplace.

You have taken a vital step toward lifting the lives of working people by adopting the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work last year. The document is a blueprint for the global economy that honors our values—the dignity of work, an end to discrimination, an end to forced labor, freedom of association, the right of people to organize and bargain in a civil and peaceful way. These are not just labor rights, they're human rights. They are a charter for a truly modern economy. We must make them an everyday reality all across the world.

We advance these rights first by standing up to those who abuse them. Today, one member nation, Burma stands in defiance of the ILO's most fundamental values and most serious findings. The Director General has just reported to us that the flagrant violation of human rights persists, and I urge the ILO governing body to take definite steps. For Burma is out of step with the standards of the world community and the aspirations of its people. Until people have the right to shape their destiny we must stand by them and keep up the pressure for change.

We also advance core labor rights by standing with those who seek to make them a reality in the workplace. Many countries need extra assistance to meet these standards. Whether it's rewriting inadequate labor laws, or helping fight discrimination against women and minorities in the workplace, the ILO must be able to help.

That is why in the balanced budget I submitted to our Congress this year I've asked for \$25 million to help create a new arm of the ILO, to work with developing countries to put in place basic labor standards—protections, safe work places, the right to organize. I ask other governments to join us. I've also asked for \$10 million from our Congress to strengthen U.S. bilateral support for governments seeking to raise such core labor standards.

We have asked for millions of dollars also to build on our voluntary anti-sweat shop initiative to encourage the many innovative programs that are being developed to eliminate sweat shops and raise consumer awareness of the conditions in which the clothes they wear and the toys they buy for their children are made.

But we must go further, to give life to our dream of an economy that lifts all our people. To do that, we must wipe from the Earth the most vicious forms of abusive child labor. Every single day tens of millions of children work in conditions that shock the conscience. There are children chained to

often risky machines; children handling dangerous chemicals; children forced to work when they should be in school, preparing themselves and their countries for a better tomorrow. Each of our nations must take responsibility.

Last week, at the inspiration of Senator Tom Harkin, who is here with me today, I directed all agencies of the United States government to make absolutely sure they are not buying any products made with abusive child labor.

But we must also act together. Today, the time has come to build on the growing world consensus to ban the most abusive forms of child labor—to join together and to say there are some things we cannot and will not tolerate.

We will not tolerate children being used in pornography and prostitution. We will not tolerate children in slavery or bondage. We will not tolerate children being forcibly recruited to serve in armed conflicts. We will not tolerate young children risking their health and breaking their bodies in hazardous and dangerous working conditions for hours unconscionably long—regardless of country, regardless of circumstance. These are not some archaic practices out of a Charles Dickens novel. These are things that happen in too many places today.

I am proud of what is being done at your meeting. In January, I said to our Congress and the American people in the State of the Union address, that we would work with the ILO on a new initiative to raise labor standards and to conclude a treaty to ban abusive child labor everywhere in the world. I am proud to say that the United States will support your convention. After I return home I will send it to the U.S. Senate for ratification, and I ask all other countries to ratify it, as well.

We thank you for achieving a true breakthrough for the children of the world. We thank the nations here represented who have made genuine progress in dealing with this issue in their own nations. You have written an important new chapter in our effort to honor our values and protect our children.

Passing this convention alone, however, will not solve the problem. We must also work aggressively to enforce it. And we must address root causes, the tangled pathology of poverty and hopelessness that leads to abusive child labor. Where that still exists it is simply not enough to close the factories where the worst child labor practices occur. We must also ensure that children then have access to schools and their parents have jobs. Otherwise, we may find children in even more abusive circumstances.

That is why the work of the International Program for the Elimination of Child Labor is so important. With the support of the United States, it is working in places around the world to get children out of business of making fireworks, to help children move from their jobs as domestic servants, to take children from factories to schools.

Let me cite just one example of the success being achieved, the work being done to eliminate child labor from the soccer ball industry in Pakistan. Two years ago, thousands of children under the age of 14 worked for 50 companies stitching soccer balls full-time. The industry, the ILO and UNICEF joined together to remove children from the production of soccer balls and give them a chance to go to school, and to monitor the results.

Today, the work has been taken up by women in 80 poor villages in Pakistan, giving them new employment and their families new stabilities. Meanwhile, the children have started to go to school, so that when they come of age, they will be able to do better jobs raising the standard of living of

their families, their villages and their nation. I thank all who were involved in this endeavor and ask others to follow their lead.

I am pleased that our administration has increased our support for IPEC by tenfold. I ask you to think what could be achieved by a full and focused international effort to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. Think of the children who would go to school, whose lives would open up, whose very health would flower, freed of the crushing burden of dangerous and demeaning work, given back those irreplaceable hours of childhood for learning and playing and living.

By giving life to core labor standards, by acting effectively to lift the burden of debt, by putting a more human face on the world trading system and the global economy, by ending the worst forms of child labor, we will be giving our children the 21st century they deserve.

These are hopeful times. Previous generations sought to redeem the rights of labor in a time of world war and organized tyranny. We have a chance to build a world more prosperous, more united, more humane than ever before. In so doing, we can fulfill the dreams of the ILO's founders, and redeem the struggles of those who fought and organized, who sacrificed and, yes, died—for freedom, equality, and justice in the workplace.

It is our great good fortune that in our time we have been given the golden opportunity to make the 21st century a period of abundance and achievement for all. Because we can do that, we must. It is a gift to our children worthy of the millennium.

Thank you very much.

TRIBUTE TO RETIRING MIDDLE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL TOM HAYES

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 16, 1999

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, it has come to my attention that a distinguished career in teaching has come to an end. The Honorable Tom Hayes, Principal of Lexington Middle School, recently retired after 34 years as a teacher, coach, counselor, and administrator.

Mr. Hayes started teaching in the Lexington school system as a student teacher in the spring of 1965. He was offered a contract to teach full time in the fall of the same year. Mr. Hayes served as a teacher, coach, and counselor until 1986, when he left Lexington to take a position in the St. James School District. In 1993, Mr. Hayes found his way back to Lexington to serve as principal at the Middle School.

Mr. Hayes educated Missouri's youth and enjoyed watching his students grow and mature into adults. He is also gratified when the young people he taught come back to him years later as adults to thank him. As a coach, he coached multiple championship teams, both in football and wrestling. Through hard work focusing on fundamentals, he helped average athletes develop into skilled players.

Although Mr. Hayes has retired from the Lexington School District, he is still an active community member as the Mayor of Lexington, Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Hayes had an outstanding career in education, and he will surely be missed by everyone at Lexington Middle School. I wish him and his wife Sherry all the

best in the days ahead. I am certain that the Members of the House will join me in paying tribute to this fine Missourian.

BOND PRICE COMPETITION IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 1999

SPEECH OF

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 14, 1999

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, fellow colleagues, I rise in support of the Bond Price Competition Improvement Act of 1999. The Committee on Commerce and Subcommittee of Finance, of which I am a member, has held a number of hearings to review the process and competition in mutual fund fees and bond prices.

Witnesses repeatedly testified that transparency of corporate bonds was poor. Witnesses also revealed that individual purchasers of the same bond from the same dealer at approximately the same time may be given widely divergent prices.

Mr. Speaker, fellow colleagues, improved transparency of the bond market would lead to improved bond prices for investors, and increased transparency would assist the relevant regulators with development of an audit trail.

In today's ever changing global economy, information is our most valuable resource. By improving the information available to investors, leading to more competitive prices for bonds, we hope to eliminate price discrimination and promote a more fair and competitive market.

The Bond Price Competition Improvement Act, which is supported by the NASD, SEC and Bond Market Association has many advantages. However, the three economic benefits that I am mostly enthusiastic about are:

1. It will bolster investor protection by providing investors with better opportunities to monitor the behavior of the entities that make markets in secondary securities;
2. It will help improve market liquidity by boosting investor and market confidence in a market; and
3. It will enhance market efficiency by boosting the price discovery process of moving toward the "optimal price" for a particular security.

Market power invested in one bond dealer enables the dealer to charge prices that are higher than those that would be available in a fully competitive market. Due to the lack of transparency in the current bond market dealers sometimes offer the same bond to different customers at significantly different prices. This price discrimination is facilitated by the lack of pricing information to investors.

I am convinced that improved transparency in the corporate debt markets as addressed in the Bond Price Competition Improvement Act will eliminate this practice.

I would like to commend my fellow colleagues on the Commerce Committee, committee staff, and legislative staff on working together to draft this important bill and I hope that we can continue to work together in this spirit of bipartisanship in the future.

Mr. Speaker, Congress is at its best when we work together to solve problems such as these. The American people deserve nothing