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THE QUEST TO END HUNGER IN OUR TIME:
CAN POLITICAL WILL CATCH UP
WITH OUR CORE VALUES?

*Remarks by David P. Lambert**
Clinton School of Public Service
Speaker Series
Sturgis Hall
Wednesday, September 22, 2010

Thank you, Becca [Swearingen] for your kind introduction. Thank you, Dean Rutherford for inviting me, and congratulations on your strong leadership and the valuable programs you have developed at the Clinton School of Public Service. And thanks to Nikolai DiPippa for your capable assistance. There are so many friends here today, I do not want to call the roll, but just to say thank you to all.

I cannot be in Sturgis Hall without acknowledging my dear friend and mentor, Lee Williams. It was a special occasion four years ago here when President Clinton, Dean Rutherford, Dean Pryor, and Dean Bobbitt joined in the inaugural presentation of the Lee Williams Fellowship in Public Service, presented to Mollie Merry. The President warmly recalled what a treasured mentor Lee has been to him and to so many of us. I am delighted that the current recipient, Mark Lienhart, is here. Lee Williams sends his warm wishes to you and your fellow students.

This is a special moment for me for a several reasons. My brother Bev Lambert, who is with us today, and I have always had great pride in our roots and heritage. Our family settled in Arkansas in 1839, and we have called it home for 171 years. Although I have been away quite a while, this will always be home to me.

Another reason I am honored to be here, of course, is that it was President Clinton who appointed me to serve as Counselor to the U.S. Mission in Rome. The U.S. Mission in Rome serves as a link between the United States and the United Nations organizations dedicated to food and agriculture, the Food and Agriculture Or-

ganization (FAO), the World Food Program (WFP), and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) – known collectively as the Rome Hunger Agencies. The Mission’s purpose is to advance America’s bipartisan commitment to alleviate hunger and build hope in the world.¹

Soon after I arrived in Rome, U.S. Senator David Pryor called me. He said, “you know, I’ve been thinking about this, and I believe you have the best job in our government.” I replied, “Senator, when you consider the developing world beneficiaries I am privileged to serve; the issues I deal with; and, the opportunity to work in Rome with great hunger champions like George McGovern, Tony Hall, and WFP’s Catherine Bertini, I think you are right. I have been blessed.” Soon after I arrived in Rome I also got a very quick education on who makes US policy on the “right to food.”

ARKANSAS’ LEGACY IN GLOBAL FOOD SECURITY

There is a third reason why it is so inspiring to be in Arkansas having a conversation with you about this topic of hunger. It is because I believe that by any critical analysis no other place in America has left a more enduring mark in our shared commitment to end hunger in the world.

I may get some pushback from my friends in Seattle, home to the Gates Foundation and the great work they are doing, especially with the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa. And, I may get some resistance from Des Moines, home of the World Food Prize, and its nearby partner, Iowa State University, where I have the privilege of serving as a Distinguished Fellow at the Seed Science Center. They too have a marvelous record, with programs in more than 30 African countries.

However, when you consider its far-reaching influence around the world, the leaders and institutions identified with Arkansas have done as much as anyone in our nation toward our quest for food security. How can I say this? You know those answers very well,

* David Lambert is a nationally recognized advocate to end hunger. He served as Foreign Agricultural Counselor to the US Mission to the UN Agencies in Rome during the Clinton Administration. He currently provides strategic policy advice to the US private sector, land-grant universities and UN agencies on issues related global food security, child nutrition, food safety and agricultural biotechnology.

1. See UNITED STATES MISSION TO THE UN IN ROME, <http://usunrome.usmission.gov/main/> (last visited Nov.1, 2010).

but let me be specific with my own reasons, and save Heifer International for last.

The Presidential Legacy and Post-Presidential Work of Bill Clinton

First and foremost to what Arkansas has contributed to make our world more food secure is President Clinton's prolific record in international development as President, as well as in his tireless Post-Presidential work. As you know so well, the William J. Clinton Presidential Library & Museum next door is brimming with evidence of this glorious presidential legacy.

The more recent work of the Clinton Foundation has had an especially profound impact on global food security. I would note particularly its work in the areas of child nutrition and obesity, crop improvement, HIV/AIDS, and climate change.²

And, of course, there is the University of Arkansas Clinton School of Public Service and all the ways you already have begun to change the world with your vision, energy and passion.

*Winrock International: "From Arkansas Roots, a Global Mission"*³

Two weeks ago at Winrock's 25th Anniversary celebration in the Clinton Library we heard President Clinton's powerful testimonial that not only is this legacy of Governor Rockefeller transforming lives around the world, but is serving as a model to other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) on delivering long-term, sustainable results. In addition to its fine work here at home, Winrock has implemented more than \$1 billion in development projects in more than 60 countries.⁴

Its work is not the most exciting – it is simply the most valuable. They go to the most forsaken places on this planet and give hope those the most disadvantaged – by empowering women, by improving crop yields, by preserving nature. By any measure Winrock is a global gold standard for NGOs.

2. WILLIAM J. CLINTON FOUNDATION, <http://www.clintonfoundation.org/what-we-do/> (last visited Nov. 1, 2010).

3. WINROCK INT'L, WINROCK INTERNATIONAL: FROM ARKANSAS ROOTS, A GLOBAL MISSION (2005), available at http://www.winrock.org/common/files/publications/winrock_mag_AR_roots.pdf.

4. KARK 4 News, *Milestone for Arkansas's Winrock International*, ARKANSAS MATTERS (Sept. 8, 2010), http://arkansasmatters.com/fulltext/?nxd_id=348785.

Governor Beebe's Leadership

Governor Beebe's leadership on the hunger issue has been exceptional, including his collaboration with the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance, the Arkansas Foodbank Network, and other partners. I would also note the fine work of the Rice Depot.

The Work and Legacy of our Congressional Delegations

U.S. Senator Blanche Lincoln is the founder of the U.S. Senate Hunger Caucus, and in her role as Chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee, she has been nationally recognized for her leadership in child nutrition and obesity issues.⁵ U.S. Senator Mark Pryor is a strong partner on these nutrition issues, and particularly to increase appropriations for agriculture and rural development.⁶

Let's remember also that Senator David Pryor – in his 18 years on the Senate Agriculture Committee – played a critical role in modernizing and reforming our School Lunch, Food Stamp, and WIC programs.⁷ And Senator Bumpers' steadfast efforts to insure food aid appropriations.⁸

And, our own J. William Fulbright. At the time of his death in 1995 there had been 250,000 *Fulbright Scholars* over a span of 50 years; imagine what that has meant to the quality of international policy development in parliaments around the world.⁹ Moreover, it

5. See e.g., Jane Black, *Senator Proposes \$4.5 billion for Child Nutrition*, WASH. POST, Mar. 17, 2010, available at <http://voices.washingtonpost.com/all-we-can-eat/food-politics/senate-proposes-45-billion-for.html> (reporting on Senator Lincoln's efforts to pass child nutrition reauthorization).

6. See e.g., *Led by Lincoln, Chambliss, Bipartisan Senate Majority Urges Child Nutrition Act Reauthorization*, AGRI-PULSE (May 27, 2010), available at http://www.agripulse.com/20100527H1_Child_Nutrition.asp (describing bi-partisan effort, including Arkansas Senators Lincoln and Pryor, to reauthorize child nutrition programs).

7. For example, Senator David Pryor co-sponsored the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 1989, S. 2310, 101st Cong. (1989) and the Hunger Prevention Act of 1990, S. 2310, 101st Cong. (1990).

8. Senator Bumpers served on the Senate Appropriations Committee from Jan. 27, 1978–Jan. 6, 1999. *Committee on Appropriations, 138th Anniversary, 1867-2005*, United States Senate, 109th Cong., 1st Sess., Doc. No. 5, available at www.senate.gov/reference/resources/pdf/committeehistories.pdf (last visited Nov. 1, 2010).

9. Today, the Fulbright Program reports that “294,000 ‘Fulbrighters,’ 111,000 from the United States and 183,000 from other countries, have participated in the Program since its inception more than sixty years ago. . . . Currently, the Fulbright Program operates in over 155 countries worldwide.” COUNCIL FOR THE

was Fulbright's legislation that led to U.S. participation in the United Nations, which in turn spawned the World Food Program, the Food and Agriculture Organization, and the International Fund for Agricultural Development.¹⁰

Other Arkansas Contributors and Contributions

Our Secretary of State, Secretary Hillary Rodham Clinton makes it clear to all that global food security is at the top of her agenda; it is the Administration's initiative called Feed the Future.¹¹ The Arkansas connection? Those in our audience have heard her say that her inspiration in part came from her work with poor and hungry children in Arkansas when she was First Lady.

And, Carl Whillock – beloved Arkansan, Counselor to President Clinton. Some of you know about the 2000 Clinton initiative, called the McGovern/Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Act. If not, just imagine a global version of our own National School Lunch Program, with all the same benefits – higher attendance, better academic performance, empowerment for girls, healthier societies, more stable work force, and so on.

President Clinton will be the first to tell you that this great legacy of his Administration would not have happened without the tireless efforts of Carl Whillock. And what is its significance today? McGovern/Dole has provided meals to 22 million children in 44 countries.¹² WFP Head Josette Sheeran calls it: “the most effective human rights program for girls I have ever seen.” And, George McGovern told me just last week that if history were fair, it would be remembered as the *McGovern/Dole/Whillock* program.

Governor [Jim Guy] Tucker's presence here reminds me that his sister, another Arkansan, Carol Tucker Foreman, has done more than anyone I can recall to insure that our nation's food is safe for

INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE OF SCHOLARS, <http://www.cies.org/Fulbright/> (last visited Nov. 1, 2010).

10. Fulbright Resolution, Resolution 25, 78th Cong., 1st Sess., Sept. 21, 1943, CONG. REC. 89, Pt 6, pp. 7728, 7729.

11. FEED THE FUTURE, <http://www.feedthefuture.gov/> (last updated Nov. 22, 2010).

12. *Fact Sheet: McGovern–Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program*, USDA FOREIGN AGRICULTURAL SERVICE (Feb. 2009), available at <http://www.fas.usda.gov/excredits/foodaid/ffe/mcdfactsheet.pdf>; *McGovern-Dole Food for Education Success Stories*, USDA FOREIGN AGRICULTURAL SERVICE (Feb. 26, 2010), available at http://www.fas.usda.gov/scripts/PressRelease/pressrel_dout.asp?Entry=valid&PrNum=0031-10.

consumers. She is widely recognized and respected for her landmark work as a senior official at USDA and as head of Consumer Federation of America's Food Policy Institute.¹³

The University of Arkansas provides leadership through a number of programs. The Dale Bumpers College of Agricultural, Food and Life Sciences has played an important role in agricultural development and farming systems projects in a number of critical countries over the years, including Haiti, Rwanda, Burundi, and Egypt.¹⁴ Moreover, the Division of Agriculture's Center for Agricultural and Rural Sustainability has provided critical leadership in developing innovations for sustainable production, as well as developing standard metrics for global agricultural production.¹⁵ And, Congress recognized the Agricultural Law Program at the University of Arkansas School of Law for "its unique expertise in the area of agricultural law" when it funded the National Agricultural Law Center.¹⁶

Arkansas corporations and cooperatives – Wal-Mart, Tyson, Riceland, and others – have been invaluable in providing relief supplies for the devastating losses in Haiti and the Gulf Coast. They also have been exceptionally generous with their financial and food resources, partnering with NGOs like Share Our Strength. I would like to particularly acknowledge Wal-Mart's recent \$2 billion commitment to end hunger in the US.¹⁷

Arkansas agriculture is prolific as an annual \$7.5 billion industry,¹⁸ producing almost half of our nation's rice,¹⁹ and ranking 2nd nationally in broiler production, 3rd in upland cotton, and 3rd in catfish.²⁰ But even more relevant to my point is that Arkansas has been

13. *Food and Agriculture: The Food Policy Institute*, CONSUMER FEDERATION OF AMERICA, <http://www.consumerfed.org/index.php/food-and-agriculture> (last visited Nov. 13, 2010).

14. *Dale Bumpers College of Agricultural Food & Life Sciences*, UNIV. OF ARK., <http://bumperscollege.uark.edu/54.htm> (last visited Nov. 13, 2010).

15. *Center for Agricultural and Rural Sustainability*, UNIV. OF ARKANSAS AGRIC., <http://www.uark.edu/ua/cars/> (last visited Nov. 13, 2010).

16. 133 CONG. REC. S17948-01 (daily ed. Dec. 11, 1987) (statement of Senator Burdick, N.D.).

17. Stephanie Strom, *Wal-Mart Gives \$2 billion to Fight Hunger*, N.Y. TIMES (May 12, 2010), available at <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/13/us/13gift.html?scp=1&sq=wal-mart%20gives%20%20billion%20to%20hunger&st=Search>.

18. *State Fact Sheets: Arkansas, Top Commodities, Exports, and Counties*, USDA, ECON. RES. SERV., <http://www.ers.usda.gov/statefacts/ar.htm> (last updated Dec. 9, 2010).

19. *Id.* (reporting that in 2009 Arkansas produced 40.5% of U.S. rice).

20. UNIV. OF ARKANSAS DIV. OF AGRIC., *ECONOMIC IMPACT OF ARKANSAS AGRICULTURE*, 2010 (2010), available at http://division.uaex.edu/news_publications/EconImpactAg_2010.pdf.

a key supplier of grains and oilseeds to the global market, which was particularly critical during the 2008 export bans by other major suppliers.²¹ Our wheat may play a similar role this year.

Heifer International

Nearly 70 years ago when someone had the glorious epiphany to understand the critical need for the most desperately poor children to have animal sourced protein as a regular part of their diets. Heifer International gives families “a hand-up, not just a hand-out” empowering them “to turn lives of hunger and poverty into self-reliance and hope” by providing them with livestock and training in how to care for them.²² The livestock helps the families to “improve their nutrition and generate income in sustainable ways.”²³ And now, with Jo Luck’s 2010 World Food Prize award, we know the rest is history.²⁴ I do hope we all fully appreciate that this Prize is the U.S. equivalent of the Nobel Peace Prize. It is a huge deal. She will share it with the Rev. David Beckmann, who leads another great NGO, Bread for the World.²⁵

The World Food Prize was started by Norman Borlaug – who, incidentally, was a founding director of Winrock International – and is awarded to those who have made the greatest contributions toward alleviating global hunger, usually through agricultural science.²⁶ Their endeavors have saved hundreds of millions of lives. For example, development of Quality Protein Maize and hybrid rice, Integrated Pest Management and the Sterile Insect Technique, control of Rinderpest and resistance to potato blight, Food for Education and the Grameen Bank, and the Green Revolution in India. The inspiring work of its Laureates is a sweeping chronicle of the perseverance of public servants determined to give children around the world a brighter and healthier day.

21. For example, Arkansas was the leading state for rice export in 2009. See *State Fact Sheets: Arkansas, Top Commodities, Exports, and Counties*, *supra* note 18.

22. HEIFER INTERNATIONAL, <http://www.heifer.org/site/c.edJRKQNiFiG/b.201470/> (last visited Nov. 1, 2010).

23. *Id.*

24. *The 2010 World Food Prize Laureate Award Ceremony to Honor Rev. David Beckmann & Ms. Jo Luck*, WORLD FOOD PRIZE (Oct. 14, 2010), http://www.worldfoodprize.org/en/events/laureate_award_ceremony/2010_ceremony/.

25. BREAD FOR THE WORLD, <http://www.bread.org/about-us/david-beckmann.html> (last visited Nov. 13, 2010).

26. WORLD FOOD PRIZE, http://www.worldfoodprize.org/en/dr_norman_e_borlaug/short_biography/ (last visited Nov. 13, 2010).

So these are among the monumental – and I believe unparalleled – contributions of Arkansans and our institutions toward a more well-fed and safer world. And while this work is so impressive we know we still have much to do. But why should all of us be involved?

ENDING HUNGER: WHO SHOULD BE AT THE TABLE?

All Americans have a direct stake in this issue of hunger. In addition it being a moral issue and a faith issue, we learned well from the 2008 food price crisis that it is a serious national security issue. As Senator Lugar stated, “[a]chieving food security for all people also would have profound implications for peace and US national security. Hungry people are desperate people, and desperation often sows the seeds of conflict and extremism.”²⁷

Moreover, it is a significant economic and trade issue. As Secretary Clinton has said, “Food insecurity is not only a source of suffering, it is a direct threat to economic growth and global stability.”²⁸ She joins President Obama in urging that we use the full range of America’s “smart power” tools – diplomacy, defense, and development – to address the global challenges of the 21st Century.²⁹

In fact, the *Feed the Future* initiative is one of our government’s highest priorities. In response to 2009 G8 Summit, where donors pledged \$20 billion in agricultural development and new approach to global food security, the US pledged \$3.5 billion to strengthen the world’s food supply.³⁰

What is particularly impressive about *Feed the Future*, beyond its philosophy of investing in country-owned plans, is that it is such a comprehensive, government-wide effort, with everyone in Washington at the table. State, because global food security is a foreign relations, development, trade and national security issue; USDA, for ag markets; USAID, for development; Treasury, for financing; MCC, for foreign assistance; USTR, ag trade; Commerce, for ag business, and DOD and NSC for national security.

27. 111 CONG. REC. S1679 (daily ed. Feb. 5, 2009) (statement of Sen. Lugar).

28. *Secretary Clinton’s Digital Town Hall Meeting in Santo Domingo*, DIPNOTE, U.S. DEPT OF STATE OFFICIAL BLOG (Apr. 17, 2009, 6:15PM), http://blogs.state.gov/index.php/archive/entry/clinton_digital_santo_domingo.

29. Hillary Clinton, U.S. Sec’y of State, Remarks On the Obama Administration’s National Security Strategy at the Brookings Institute (May 27, 2010), *available at* <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/05/142312.htm>.

30. *Feed the Future At a Glance*, FEED THE FUTURE, http://www.feedthefuture.gov/gh_factsheet.html (last updated May 20, 2010).

A SNAPSHOT OF HUNGER

So, where do we find ourselves today? What is our food security challenge? The statistics are disheartening – even numbing. But let’s take a look at the entire picture, a snapshot, starting locally and going globally.

Even with the legacy of our own global leadership, we know that we have a paradox here at home; we also have a promising opportunity to do something about it.

In Arkansas:

- We have the highest incidence of child hunger in nation and alarming rate of child obesity;
- We have the third highest incidence overall of hunger and food insecurity in the nation;
- Over 400,000 Arkansans do not have enough to eat;
- The child poverty rate is nearly 25%, affecting 170,000 of our children;
- Sixteen percent of our households are food insecure;
- Just under 240,000 students are eligible for free school lunch;
- Food banks serve 152,000 Arkansas children annually;
- Almost 400,000 Arkansans participate in the food stamp program (SNAP).³¹

While we are hurting, according to the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC), Arkansas is not dramatically different from Nebraska or North Carolina or Indiana – to some extent they all mirror our nation.³²

In the United States as a whole:

- Forty-nine million Americans are food insecure;
- Seventeen million children are food insecure, with 500,000 chronically hungry;
- Thirty-nine million Americans rely on SNAP;
- One in seven American households is food insecure.³³

And, according the recent Sodexo Report, an exhaustive economic analysis by three universities, hunger in the US costs Americans \$90 billion a year – malnutrition, hospitalizations, lost job opportunities, diminished outcomes in education, and costs to chari-

31. FOOD RESEARCH AND ACTION CENTER, <http://frac.org/> (last visited Nov. 13, 2010).

32. *Id.*

33. *Id.*

ties.³⁴ Moreover, obesity is exploding – as are the “food deserts” that exacerbate it.

Globally:

- One billion people are hungry, that is 1/6 of the planet;
- Twenty-five thousand die per day (the equivalent of 60 full jumbo jets each day);
- One child dies every 5 seconds;
- One in three children in world is malnourished;
- Ninety percent of global child hunger is chronic;
- One hundred-eighty million children are stunted in their growth due to hunger.³⁵

HOW DO WE RESPOND? SELECTED ISSUES

So, how do we respond? This is a very broad topic with all of its issues interconnected. HIV/AIDS is linked to nutrition, which is linked to food production which is linked to climate change, which is linked to new technologies, and so on. Moreover, these issues must be dealt with together. In fact one of my students observed that to teach a course on hunger just for starters one should be an agricultural economist, climatologist, nutritionist, plant geneticist, seed scientist, and trade lawyer.

She makes a valuable point about the breadth of the subject. Root causes range from government policies and poverty to trade barriers and environmental degradation. And, there are many policy answers – democracy building, trade liberalization, debt relief, food aid, and so on. Many disciplines are involved, and clearly we do need greater understanding and collaboration toward the solutions.

But today I would like to highlight just a few priority issues I believe deserve special attention if we are to bend this arc of history to end hunger in our time. The issues I want to underline I raise either because they are not getting the support needed, or because they are so misunderstood.

Then when I close I would like to go back to our domestic picture and appeal to those of you coming out of the Clinton School – and all of our students – to continue to be a force for change – not

34. *The Economic Cost of Hunger*, SODEXHO FOUNDATION, Jun. 5, 2007, available at http://www.sodexhofoundation.org/hunger_us/newsroom/studies/hungerstudies/costofhunger.asp.

35. SODEXHO FOUND., *THE ECONOMIC COST OF DOMESTIC HUNGER 5* (2007), available at http://www.sodexhofoundation.org/hunger_us/Images/Cost%20of%20Domic%20Hunger%20Report%20_tcm150-155150.pdf.

only across the ocean – but also here at home. First, issues I believe deserve special attention:

Population

Recently I mentioned to a long-time respected United States diplomat that I wanted to discuss the population issue at the Clinton School. He said you may not want to do that because it is too controversial to raise. I said that is a reason we should be talking about it, and remember I learned from Senator Fulbright that we should think the unthinkable, and challenge all assumptions.

In fact, there is no issue more critical to the global food security equation than population. We know this because speakers at every hunger conference begin with something like the words: “We are six billion going to nine billion by 2050.”

Compounding that reality, the UN says we must double food production by 2050, and that climate change will cause maize yields in Africa to drop by 30% by 2030.³⁶ So, “Population is a ticking time bomb.” Not my words, but those of the great agricultural scientist from Purdue, Gibesa Ejeta, last year’s World Food Prize winner, standing at the podium where Jo Luck will stand next month.³⁷ Jeffrey Sachs concurs: “We are on an absolutely unsustainable population path.”³⁸ And, Norman Borlaug’s warnings were even more ominous when accepting the Nobel Peace Prize in 1970.³⁹

36. *Food Production Must Double by 2050 to Meet Demand from World’s Growing Population, Innovative Strategies Needed to Combat Hunger, Experts Tell Second Committee*, UNITED NATIONS, GENERAL ASSEMBLY (Oct. 9, 2009), available at <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2009/gaef3242.doc.htm>.

37. Sara Schafer, *World-Renowned Agronomist Calls Food Shortage “Ticking Time Bomb,”* FARM JOURNAL AGWEB (Oct. 15, 2009), http://www.agweb.com/article/World-Renowned_Agronomist_Calls_Food_Shortage_%E2%80%9CTicking_Time_Bomb_196303/.

38. See JEFFREY SACHS, COMMON WEALTH: ECONOMICS FOR A CROWDED PLANET, 311 (The Penguin Group, 2008).

39. *Nobel Prizes*, NOBELPRIZE.ORG, http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1970/borlaug-acceptance.html (last visited Nov. 14, 2010).

A few examples of why we should be concerned:

- In 1900 we were 1.6 billion people; in 2000 we were 6.1 billion;
- Population is increasing at 80 million per year. In the four years of President Obama's current term, we will have grown 320 million, or the population of the United States;
- Population Reference Bureau projects that East Africa's Uganda, now 32 million and the size of Oregon, will reach 96 million by 2050; its population will triple in 40 years;
- Ethiopia, through hundreds of years of human history reached 10 million at the start of WWII; it is now 80 million; in other words, it has grown 800% in three generations.⁴⁰

These examples raise a profound question: At what population level is our planet no longer sustainable? We must deliver the best policies. Let me be clear: it is not my purpose to get into concerns of conscience, or religious or ethical aspects of this issue.

The reality is that the most effective policy options are not controversial; it's just that they have not gotten the necessary attention and support. I refer to development, especially agricultural development which has dropped so precipitously in the last 25 years; and to education, and to nutrition, including school lunch programs.⁴¹

George McGovern widely cites UN data showing that girls who have had the benefit of education with school lunch have an average of 2.9 births, while those without that benefit have 6.1 births. In fact, lots of studies show that primary education for girls does more to ease population growth than anything else.⁴²

Governance

We know that levels of assistance, the work of the UN and NGOs, and food aid all are important. However, the most critical piece in the food security equation is the quality of governance. As one policy expert observed: "The root cause of hunger isn't a scarcity of food or land; it is a scarcity of democracy."⁴³

40. Interview with Carl Haub, Senior Demographer, Population Reference Bureau (Aug. 31, 2010).

41. *See generally*, ROGER THUROW & SCOTT KILMAN, ENOUGH: WHY THE WORLD'S POOREST STARVE IN AN AGE OF PLENTY (2009).

42. *See e.g.*, Steve Connor, Science Editor, *Educate Girls to Stop Population Soaring*, THE INDEPENDENT (Dec. 4, 2008), <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/education-news/educate-girls-to-stop-population-soaring-1050580.html>.

43. Frances Moore Lappe, *Beyond Hunger - Extending Democracy*, BIOSPHERE 2000: PROTECTING OUR GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT 187 (Donald G. Kaufman, Cecilia M. Franz ed., 1993).

So, when we examine those root causes, we inevitably return to policies and political will of governments – they are at the core of most other basic causes, including AIDS, famine, civil wars, trade policies. Look no further than Zimbabwe, North Korea, Somalia, and DRC – they are textbook cases of how policies of oppressive regimes or lack of governance have disempowered their people, with stunning implications for food security and health. One UN estimate says that an eight year old child in North Korea is seven inches shorter than a child the same age in South Korea.⁴⁴

In fact, this focus on governance is why our Millennium Challenge Corporation model is so important as a smart approach to foreign assistance. We hold our developing country partners to three standards: a) good governance, b) economic freedom, and c) investment in their citizens.⁴⁵

The Empowerment Of Women And Opportunity For Girls

Although global forums abound with lip service about the need to empower women, the reality is that our international institutions – and member governments – are far behind the curve on this noble goal. That more than 80% of the farmers of the world are women, that they earn only 10% of the income, that they are allowed less than 5% of technical assistance to agriculture, and own less than 1% of land, should be unacceptable to every opinion leader in both government and civil society.⁴⁶ As UN Hunger Ambassador Ertharin Cousin reminds us, this reality must be built in to the assumptions of national agricultural policies.⁴⁷

In far too many places women have all of the responsibility for everything important to family and children, including the producing of food, while men exclusively control the economic levers of government policy, land tenure, education opportunity, and bank credit. Empowerment of women, including their education when young, is at the heart of the matter on global food security. Women

44. See Blaine Harden, *Global Changes Skew Calculus Of Food Aid For N. Korea*, WASH. POST, Mar. 15, 2008, available at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/03/14/AR2008031404214.html>.

45. MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORPORATION, <http://www.mcc.gov/pages/about> (last visited Nov. 14, 2010).

46. *Women and Food Security*, FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION, <http://www.fao.org/FOCUS/E/Women/Sustin-e.htm> (last visited Nov. 14, 2010).

47. Interview with Ambassador Ertharin Cousin, Ambassador to the UN Agencies in Rome (Apr. 12, 2010).

are the key to our goals on child nutrition, as well as on agricultural productivity.

Moreover, we know that when women are allowed to participate in the political arena, they are far more likely than men to take care of the true needs of the community, including safe drinking water, education and child safety. Yet, women are significantly outnumbered in the political process, and democracy without the participation of women is a paradox on its face.

Related, there is no demographic subset in humanity more discriminated against than young girls in the developing world. Too often they must stay home with the livestock, while their brothers are given the privilege of going to school, and the nutrition advantage that comes with that education. These girls are more malnourished, have children earlier, are more vulnerable to disease, have less control of their future, and are often forced into riskier professions.

Speaking of which, while it is not my purpose to focus on sex trafficking, we should remember that of the nearly 7 million women and girls now in forced prostitution and forced labor, to some extent this global tragedy is a consequence of food insecurity.⁴⁸

Early Child Nutrition

The most critical issue in our international development objectives – and where leadership is most urgently needed – is in early child nutrition. It is the linchpin for everything else we try to achieve in international development policy, and supports all of the UN Millennium Development Goals. If we do not get this part right, we will have learned nothing.

The recent Lancet report on Maternal and Child Undernutrition is an alarm bell for the global community. It says that “our international nutrition system is fragmented, dysfunctional, and desperately in need of reform, that undernutrition is the cause of 35% of all child deaths”, and – as I mentioned earlier – that 180 million children are stunted – irreversibly – and will never have a normal life.⁴⁹ We know that a child’s height for age is the greatest predictor

48. U.S. DEP’T OF STATE, *TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS REPORT* (10th ed. June 2010).

49. Saul S Morris, Bruce Cogill, Ricardo Uauy, *Effective International Action Against Undernutrition: Why Has It Proven So Difficult And What Can Be Done To Accelerate Progress? (Part of Maternal and Child Undernutrition Series)*, *THE LANCET*, (Jan. 17, 2008) available at <http://www.thelancet.com/series/maternal-and-child-undernutrition>.

of human capital. It is imperative that we get this issue on national agendas.

Obesity

As a malnutrition issue in the US, obesity is by far the most urgent, eclipsing undernutrition. It is our nation's #1 public health problem, and will cost us \$200 billion this year. Obesity is the #1 cause of heart disease and hypertension, and the principal risk factor in type II diabetes. It has tripled in our children in one generation, and – for the first time in American history our youngest generation will have a shorter lifespan than their parents.⁵⁰

Who is to blame? Without question, all of our institutions – parents, the medical fraternity, academia, governments, the food industry, everyone shares the blame. However, rather than pointing fingers, I would urge that we look forward, because it is these very same institutions that will lead us out of this crisis.

Agricultural Research

Of all our policy responses to alleviate the condition of global hunger, no set of interventions holds more promise than investment in agricultural research. And yet it remains severely underfunded. In fact, notwithstanding very strong efforts of our own delegations over the last several decades, the U.S. budget for agricultural research is only 1% to 2% of biomedical research.⁵¹

More specifically, the entire budget for USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture is less than last year's NIH budget increase. This is particularly paradoxical because the more we can achieve through agricultural research the more pressure we take off of biomedical research budgets. In other words, we have one billion chronically hungry in the world and because they are so poorly nourished they more readily suffer from disease.

Just consider USDA's research priorities: 1) global food security, 2) bioenergy, 3) climate change – mitigation and adaptation, 4) nutrition/obesity, and 5) food safety. So, in major ways this research goes toward preventing those human conditions that biomedical research must deal with later.

50. See generally, *Obesity and Overweight*, CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL, <http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/index.html> (last visited Nov. 14, 2010).

51. *Budget*, NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF HEALTH, <http://www.nih.gov/about/budget.htm> (last updated May 18, 2010).

Part of our problem is that we must give science a human face. We must do a more effective job of telling the great story of how agricultural science benefits people. Take the example of “Golden Rice.” Many reports talk about a new genetic trait or the conquest of science. That is not the message to get greater public support. The message should be about the hundreds of thousands of children whose lives might be spared from the agony of vitamin A deficiency.

As you know, so much of this invaluable research goes on in our great land-grant university system, one of President Lincoln’s most enduring legacies. The exceptional contributions we get from schools like Arkansas, Cornell, Iowa State, Texas A&M, U.C. Davis, Auburn and many others. Their work is transforming lives in the developing world, and yet their story has never been told as it should be. Whether responding to a distressed farmer in Lee County or a starving child in Sudan, agricultural science always must have a human face. That is how we create political will to change things.

Postharvest Loss

Related to the agricultural research issue, postharvest loss deserves special note because it is such an important part of sustainable agricultural development efforts meant to increase food availability. These are instances where the commodity is harvested but never reaches the beneficiary. If this does not strike you as a critical issue – think again; there are few areas where we can do more to improve the food security picture than in postharvest loss.

While our losses in the US on perishables range from 20% to 25%, often product deterioration or plate waste, in the developing world we lose 30% to 50% or more on fruits and vegetables.⁵² The problem areas are temperature management, physical damage and packaging.

Some selected examples from 2009 assessments by the Global Cold Chain Alliance: Forty percent of tomatoes in India. Let’s think about this country with 25% of the world’s hunger, 75 million children hungry, and 4 out of 10 ripe tomatoes never reach the child.

52. *WFLO Identifies Postharvest Technologies For Farmers In Sub-Saharan Africa and India*, COLD FACTS, GLOBAL COLD CHAIN ALLIANCE, 20 (Mar-Apr. 2010), available at http://www.gcca.org/hq/bulletins/cf/2010-02_Mar-Apr.pdf.

Forty percent of eggplants in Ghana. Seventy percent of mangoes in Benin. Eighty percent of bananas in Rwanda.⁵³

Here is the problem: In the last 30 years less than 5% of funding for horticulture development has gone toward postharvest loss, while 95% has gone toward trying to increase production. What is wrong with this picture? An even more stunning finding from the work of GCCA, supported by a Gates Foundation grant, is that more than one dozen simple, low cost postharvest technologies tested have the potential to raise incomes among the poorest of the poor by at least 30%.⁵⁴

In other words, more nutritious food makes it to market; farmers (especially women horticulturalists) have higher incomes to purchase more of a variety of foods; the nutritional status of women and children is increased. That's the potential gain if we just stop wasting what is already being produced.

Role Of Private Sector

When we look at all the institutions around the world that have been involved in the global food security equation, who is most conspicuously missing? Who has the resources, experience and expertise to make a major difference in this picture but has been relatively unengaged with the UN and major NGOs in a collaborative way? Answer: the private sector.

Former USDA Secretary Glickman addressing an FAO Conference in Rome called the private sector "the untapped frontier" in our quest to end global hunger.⁵⁵ A recent Independent External Evaluation of FAO made this recommendation: "FAO should establish a clear corporate strategy and policy framework for working with the private sector, including small and medium size firms. Only through these strategic partnerships can FAO fulfill its mandate as the global broker of essential agricultural knowledge."⁵⁶ It

53. Interview with Symantha A. Holben, International Programs Manager, Global Cold Chain Alliance (Aug. 16, 2010).

54. *WFLO Identifies Postharvest Technologies For Farmers In Sub-Saharan Africa and India*, COLD FACTS, GLOBAL COLD CHAIN ALLIANCE, 20 (Mar-Apr. 2010), available at http://www.gcca.org/hq/bulletins/cf/2010-02_Mar-Apr.pdf.

55. Dan Glickman, U.S. Sec'y of Agric., Speech at the World Food Summit (Nov. 13-17, 1996), available at <http://www.fao.org/DOCREP/003/X0736M/rep2/usa.htm>.

56. *The Challenge of Renewal, An Independent External Evaluation of the Food and Agriculture Organization*, FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION (Jul. 2007), available at <http://www.fao.org/unfao/bodies/IEE-Working-Draft-Report/K0489E.pdf>.

further noted that FAO has “relatively little contact with the private sector, and does not understand its role and importance. There should be a high premium on strengthening these partnerships.”⁵⁷

Just consider what companies could do if the UN and NGOs more effectively engaged them. What could Wal-Mart teach India about inventory controls? What could FedEx teach Ethiopia about food logistics? What could Coca-Cola teach Guatemala about water quality and water safety? The possibilities are endless.

From our own experience we know that companies in Arkansas are eager to engage on these issues. Just look at the promising partnerships today of companies like Wal-Mart and Tyson Foods with the Governor’s Office, the Alliance for Hunger Relief, and Share Our Strength.⁵⁸

Sustainability

No concept is more central to the current debate on food security – domestic and global – than Sustainability, or Sustainable Agriculture. In fact, on Earth Day last year the new USDA Secretary Vilsack was asked to characterize his vision for the Department, and he answered with one word – “sustainable.”⁵⁹

For more than a century the idea of sustainable agriculture has been a relatively benign and appealing term: prosperous farmer, happy family, good crops, vibrant market, protected environment. Sustainability has three essential components: a) economic, b) social, c) environmental. The UN’s classic definition: “Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”⁶⁰

And yet, today there is no term more charged with controversy or divisive rhetoric. Why is this? A number of reasons: agricultural industry stakeholders do not know what is required of them; they do not know who will be the winners and the losers; and, there is no consensus on what “sustainability” really means.

57. *Id.*

58. Press Release, Earthtimes.org, *Share Our Strength, Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance and State of Arkansas Launch No Kid Hungry Campaign*, Oct. 1, 2010, <http://www.earthtimes.org/articles/press/no-kid-hungry-caign,1484832.html>.

59. Jane Black, *For Vilsack, the Proof is in the Planting*, WASH. POST, Apr. 22, 2009, available at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/04/21/AR2009042100876.html>.

60. *Our Common Future, Chapter 2: Towards Sustainable Development*, UN DOCUMENTS, available at <http://www.un-documents.net/ocf-02.htm>, (last visited Nov. 14, 2010).

Marty Matlock, Director of the University of Arkansas's Center for Agricultural and Rural Sustainability perhaps best captures the difficulty of this term: "Everything is connected. Everything is changing. We are all in this together...The complexity of the tasks can be quite overwhelming. The danger of unintended consequences is also quite daunting. If you pull one thread you do not know what will unravel." He adds, "Sustainable agricultural production is as much about economic prosperity for producers and social prosperity for rural communities as environmental protection. These are important realizations."⁶¹

Just examples to highlight the complexity of this issue, and how misperceptions can have serious consequences:

- The assumption that water used in growing Ethiopian Coffee depletes aquifers;
- The rush to biofuels without appreciating the implications for climate change or the global food supply;
- Activism against genetically modified drought-tolerant White Maize in Sub-Saharan Africa;
- The implications if everyone, everywhere, insisted on locally grown food.

The USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) Director Roger Beachy identifies the problem this way: our discussion focuses on "practices" rather than "societal goals," and if sustainability is a goal we should be looking at outcomes rather than practices.⁶² When we look just at practices we come up with lots of arbitrary rules: You must use organic.⁶³ You cannot use GM.⁶⁴ You must only use locally grown.⁶⁵ You cannot use pesticides.⁶⁶

Bill Gates hits a similar note. He calls the debate on a technological approach to increase productivity versus an environmental approach to promote sustainability a "false choice."⁶⁷ He warns that with population going toward nine billion we must do both.⁶⁸

The reality is that these agricultural systems – conventional, GM, organic, and others to come – will *co-exist*. How can I say that

61. *Center for Agricultural and Rural Sustainability*, UNIV. OF AGRIC. DIV. OF AGRIC., <http://www.uark.edu/ua/cars/> (last visited Nov. 14, 2010).

62. *Science, Sustainability, and Society*, Dr. Roger Beachy, NIFA Director and Chief Scientist, USDA Ag Outlook Forum 2010, Feb 18, 2010.

63. *Id.*

64. *Id.*

65. *Id.*

66. *Id.*

67. Bill Gates, Keynote Address at 2009 World Food Prize (Oct. 15, 2009).

68. *Id.*

with confidence? Because you already have decided. You create the marketplace demand, and you already know where you will shop and what you will accept.

WHY DON'T WE JUST TEACH THEM TO FISH?

Let me please comment on something that has bothered me for a long time. It is this attitude that we should not give them fish, but teach them to fish. Otherwise we create dependency, and really do not help anyone. Let me try to answer that.

In an ideal world there would be only development work; there would be no emergency food aid. We prefer development, and have had a glorious history: the Marshall Plan, the Peace Corps, our foreign scholarships, the work of USAID and our development partners, and all the rest.

However, that is not the world we find ourselves in today. Former UN World Food Programme (WFP) Head Jim Morris cites a World Bank report that in the last 30 years natural disasters on our planet have quadrupled; that is why WFP is now about eighty-five percent emergency food aid, and only fifteen percent development. Would we like for this to be “flipped”? Of course we would.

But just as it is our priority in Arkansas is to first respond to emergencies – natural disasters, drought and floods, the United States has that same philosophy overseas. So whether it is a famine in North Korea, earthquake in Haiti, hurricane in Honduras, drought in Ethiopia, war in Kosovo, or flood in Mozambique, if children are at risk the U.S. – directly or through its UN partners – will respond if possible. That – in a bipartisan way – is how we have defined ourselves. So these are our core values.

I can't resist adding a note about Tocqueville, and what he thought of us. You know that when he returned to France nearly 200 years ago and wrote his epic *Democracy in America*, he said these Americans are really strange people. They sometimes just knock on doors and ask their neighbors: are you okay? Do you need anything to eat? And, apparently they want nothing in return. Could Tocqueville come to Arkansas today surely he would carefully record Governor Beebe's words: “No child, senior citizen, man, or woman deserves to go without food.”

BENDING THE ARC OF HISTORY

Today I have talked a lot about global issues. Now I would like to close by speaking directly to the University of Arkansas Clinton

School of Public Service students about their challenge. Remember what sets you apart from other Presidential graduate schools. The others are schools of government or public affairs – their graduates are trained to manage the world. You are different. You are public service. You are trained to change the world. What an awesome responsibility you have accepted.

Anywhere in the world that you work to end hunger is wonderful and to be applauded. No doubt this journey will take you to many far away places. But I do also want to encourage you to continue to spend some of your energy building on your already inspiring efforts here at home. Because, just as Arkansas and its institutions have contributed so much in our quest to end global hunger, this state also needs you now – your energy, your voice, and most of all – your passion. After all, Mother Theresa’s own advice to us from India was “Just do the thing that is in front of you.”

In many essential respects the defining narrative of our own nation’s history has been about a race; it is a race in which our political will has tried to catch up with our core values.

By core values I mean what you are willing to fight for, and how you want to be remembered in the long sweep of history. The change always comes in that moment of realization when what we have been willing to accept does not match what we know to be right – that is when we bend this historic arc of America’s history.

Women here should especially remember that just ninety years ago – more than fifty years after the Civil War amendments – you were not trusted with the vote. We said this is not who we are! So, we changed our Constitution.

A mere seventy years ago, just over two generations, we allowed girls eleven years old to work in textile mills for seventy hours a week, with bleeding hands, and no heat or health insurance. We finally said, enough!

And, as unimaginable as it now seems, it was not very long ago that the color of our skin determined which building we could go to school in. As a society we said these are not our core values!

And a couple of examples directly related to our theme today, down payments on our goal of ending hunger. In the 1930s someone came up with this idea that we should use our tax dollars and print stamps that could be used by poor and hungry people to buy food. Nearly everyone said that is a nutty idea – not with my tax dollars. A radical notion.

Well, some seventy years later the food stamp program – now known as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP

– is one of the most accepted federal programs in America’s history, with nearly 40 million beneficiaries and a \$50 billion budget.

SNAP is I believe testimony to FDR’s defining statement in 1937 of who we should be as a people: “The test of our progress is not whether we have added to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we have provided enough for those who have too little.”

Have we accepted Roosevelt’s words as our core values? Proof may be that there has been not a single bill in a recent Congress to repeal food stamps. In other words, an earlier generation decided to dramatically change our core values in a way that will be remembered in the long reach of history, and they sent a determined message to Congress. So this is one of the ways our time will be identified by generations to come.

One other example. Not too many years ago we allowed our own children, particularly those who were poor, to go to school listless and emaciated, with nothing to eat during the entire day. We finally said that is not who we are! And that was two hundred and nineteen billion meals ago for our National School Lunch Program.

It now serves about thirty-one million students, and operates in 101,000 institutions, at an annual cost of about \$10 billion. But those are just numbers; in a deeper sense it is a statement for history that we regard basic child nutrition as a paramount goal of our society. Although we still have much to do, it is now accepted as one of our core values.

So you see where we are going in this arc of America’s history on food security. Just as earlier generations have made progress with these down payments, yours can be the generation that ends hunger in America once and for all. Your children can look back at you in 30 years, and say “Yes, they did it!” Their political will caught up with their core values.

And you could not have a more inspiring challenge than the words of Anne Frank, found right here in Sturgis Hall, accompanying the gift of the Class of 2009: “How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world.” Thank you, and Godspeed!