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lifting grain embargo, lfi, wl

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Thank you for \$\$your letter\$\$ regarding the ending of the Soviet grain embargo.

As you know, on April 24, 1981 President Reagan announced that the grain embargo against the Soviet Union, implemented by President Carter after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, would be lifted. I believe that decision was wrong.

The reasons for the grain embargo were clear. The Soviet move into Afghanistan, a wanton act of aggression, continued. In addition, the Soviets continued to hold the threat of invasion over Poland, a nation whose people were fighting for greater freedoms. It was generally agreed that the grain embargo was an effective weapon against the Soviets. I felt that given the conditions in Poland and Afghanistan, lifting the embargo sent the Soviets an inappropriate signal.

In addition, the Reagan Administration's inconsistency has undermined the political consensus here in the United States. Congress has come to agree -- as I have -- with the assessment of the Soviet Union as an expanding military power which the U.S. must face and restrain. However, the decision on the grain embargo has the effect of trivializing the reality of the Soviet threat, a reality which President Reagan has always emphasized in the past.

Our relations with the Soviet Union are very complex. We must recognize the reality of the Soviet military threat and guard against Soviet penetration in the Third World and the Middle East. However, we must also acknowledge the need for arms control: in this case, our interests are best served by negotiating with the Soviets. In view of this complexity it is very important that we be consistent in our statements and actions toward the Soviet Union. I felt that the lifting of the grain embargo was misinterpreted and cast doubt on American resolve.

Again, thank you for writing on this important issue. I hope you will continue to share your views with me.