



U.S. Congressman
Nick Rahall
WORKING FOR WEST VIRGINIANS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JULY 29, 1991

CONTACT: STEVE SPINA

PHONE: (202) 225-3452

RAHALL REQUESTS DESERT STORM SURPLUS FOR WEST VIRGINIA

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- U.S. Rep. Nick Rahall (D-WV) today disclosed that the Department of Defense has more than \$300 million worth of food stored in depots, stowed away in the hulls of cargo ships, and locked in ports across the country just waiting for use by the American government.

The food was to be used to feed our fighting men and women in the Persian Gulf who had already won the war before much of the food could make it into international waters.

Rahall, a longtime spokesman on the benefits of surplus property, said that the food will probably be deemed excess by the Department of Defense and opened up to the states as surplus property.

"Just like heavy equipment, this food was paid for by the American taxpayer and should be opened up for distribution in America," said Rahall.

Evidently, President Bush agrees. \$2.6 million of perishable goods is being distributed to food banks and homeless shelters across the United States. That still leaves more than \$297 million that should be opened up to the states, according to Rahall.

Rahall is confident that West Virginia will receive a good portion of the supplies. He said distribution will be based on the current allocation formula which takes into account per capita income and population.

"I commend the GSA for implementing this program," said Rahall. "I hope with it, we can show the America people that we can attack the problems of our less fortunate with the same ferocity that with which we dismantled the Iraqi army."

Rep. Rahall currently has a bill pending before Congress that would open up all surplus property to the states before foreign governments.

--30--



Administrator
General Services Administration
Washington, DC 20405



July 26, 1991

THE HONORABLE NICK JOE RAHALL, II
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

JUL 29 AM 8:49

Dear Representative Rahall:

I wanted to inform you about an important interagency Federal program which is being coordinated by the General Services Administration (GSA) to help feed those individuals most in need throughout the United States. The surplus food distribution program named "Operation Desert Share" has begun this week. The program is a humanitarian effort to utilize food no longer needed for Operation Desert Shield/Storm.

The Department of Defense (DOD) has notified GSA that approximately \$300 to \$350 million worth of food is stored in depots across the country, at contractors' plants, points of embarkation, on vessels, and in South West Asia. We expect that a significant amount of that food will be declared excess to DOD's needs.

We have convened a Federal Interagency Task Force to coordinate Federal needs and to help identify eligible recipients. In addition, we will be closely coordinating our efforts with the Governors of the 50 States and their respective Directors of the State Agencies for Surplus Property, who have been notified of the program.

While we anticipate that a large amount of food will be utilized for Federal purposes, including the homeless, our plan also includes a significant transfer to the States. Distribution to the States will be made based on the current allocation formula which considers the population of the State and the per capita income. Along with all other eligible recipients, we are encouraging the distribution of surplus food by the State to the homeless. With this process in place Federal, State and community based organizations can all be served.

Enclosed is a news release announcing Operation Desert Share. A toll-free GSA Federal Supply Service hotline (1-800-788-7872) has been established and will be operating from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. E.D.T. to handle questions and provide additional information.

I solicit your support in this endeavor.

Sincerely,

Richard G. Austin
Administrator



News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 23, 1991

GSA #8969

Contact:

GSA Public Affairs

(202) 501-0705

GSA BEGINS "OPERATION DESERT SHARE"

Administrator Richard G. Austin of the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) announced today "Operation Desert Share", the means for GSA to distribute in the next three months an estimated \$300,000,000 in excess food and related items purchased by the Department of Defense (DOD) to feed U.S. forces engaged in Operation Desert Storm.

Austin said, "This will be an extraordinary opportunity to utilize the concept of President Bush's Points of Light initiative, to enlist the resources and energies of countless national, state and local volunteer organizations to assist the needy throughout the nation."

The first phase of the distribution consisting of \$2,600,000 of perishable and semi-perishable foods at the Norfolk Naval Base in Virginia and \$1,000,000 of non-perishable food items at Port Elizabeth, N.J. will be handled by the Interagency Council on the Homeless, Chaired by Secretary Jack Kemp of the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The Council will transfer the food to the Second Harvest Food Bank Network for distribution to member food banks -- with highest priority to organizations feeding the homeless. Second Harvest distributes donated items to a network of some 180 food banks throughout the country. These food banks, in turn, distribute food to 42,000 soup kitchens, church pantries, senior and day care centers, drug and alcohol treatment centers, homeless shelters and other nonprofit food programs that serve America's needy. The pick-up from Norfolk today will distribute food to cities including, Birmingham,

Atlanta, Savannah and Augusta, GA, Orlando, Miami, Winston-Salem, Charlotte, Oklahoma City, Tulsa, Flint, MI, New York City, Verona, VA, Louisville, Cincinnati, Indianapolis, Canton, OH; East Haven, CT; Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington, DC.

Austin said that a second phase involving the transfer of the bulk of these items will take place next month when DOD completes inventorying the food stuffs stored at four DOD depots to determine how much and what food will be declared excess for distribution to Federal and state agencies through "Operation Desert Share".

A third phase includes food items located in Saudi Arabia and on ships in transit to the United States. These items will be inventoried and made available to other federal agencies, including the Interagency Council on the Homeless, and State Agencies for Surplus Property. Each state agency will be responsible for identifying needy organizations to receive the surplus food.

Mr. Austin also announced the establishment of an interagency task force to be headed by GSA Deputy Administrator John Hiler that will be responsible for coordinating policies and priorities for allocating excess and surplus DOD food to Federal and state agencies and to expedite its distribution.

#