

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

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THE WHITE HOUSE

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

THE BRIEFING ROOM

1:35 P.M. EDT

Good afternoon. Will you please sit down.

I wish to announce my decision to accept the resignation of Earl Butz as Secretary of the Department of Agriculture.

This has been one of the saddest decisions of my Presidency.

Two years ago Earl Butz told me that he wanted to leave the Cabinet. At my request, he agreed to stay on until the end of this term, in spite of personal family obligations. I felt that I needed him in the Cabinet to implement my policies of full farm production coupled with fair prices for the consumer and good income for farmers through the sales of their products throughout the world.

Earl Butz has been and continues to be a close personal friend, and a man who loves his country and all that it represents.

Earl Butz has devoted more than 20 years of his life in public and academic service: As an Assistant Secretary in the Eisenhower Administration; as a professor and then a Dean at one of the most distinguished universities in this country; and more recently as the Secretary of a Department that has helped to restore personal freedom and abundance to American farms.

Yet Earl Butz is also wise enough and courageous enough to recognize that no single individual, no matter how distinguished his past public service, should cast a shadow over the integrity and good will of the American Government by his comments.

For that reason, I have accepted the resignation of this decent and good man.

END

(AT 1:37 P.M. EDT)