

Farmers Union Urges Expanded Regulations

Editor's Note: Harley Libby of Jefferson, president of the Oregon Farmers Union, submits this article as a statement of the position of his organization on a national program for agriculture.

1—Most farmers, regardless of the organization they belong to or the commodity they raise, believe some national program of price and production regulation is both certain and necessary, and they have a common interest in receiving a living price for their products.

2—The Farmers Union believes such a program should not be confined to a few basic commodities only but should be spread to all possible and necessary products. The failure to spread these benefits in former plans has tended to concentrate interest and production into a few protected crops and has done much to create the surpluses of today.

3—We believe any program should be definitely limited in the amount that any individual might share in its benefits. We think this feature is vital if we are to maintain the family farm in America.

4—Farmers expect no miracles. They do ask that a plan be so devised as to bring a better degree of stability to the market price of farm commodities and to give agriculture a more equitable place in the economy than it has today.

5—Any successful plan must contain positive provision for distribution and consumption. Our commodities are those of food and fiber. We raise them to be consumed or worn for the benefit of humanity, not stored, beyond reasonable security amounts, to depress future markets.

6—We have recently witnessed a beef buying program supposedly intended to aid the plight of the drought-bitten farmers of the midwest whose main benefits went to the packers because the payments were made only on dressed and processed beef. We are apparently about to witness a repetition of this in the pork program where the purchases will be made only of dressed pork and pork products.

The financial earnings of the packers and processors certainly show no distress. The farmer finds it difficult to understand how a program set up to help agriculture

could be so devised except by intent.

Benefits for Farmers

We repeat—any plan intended to help farmers wants to insure that its benefits go directly to farmers. The creation of a soil bank or acreage reserve embodied in legislation introduced into Congress last year by the National Farmers Union may well need to be a feature of any long range farm program. The idea is beginning to find favor with many groups who have been hesitant or critical in the past.

If this legislation is enacted we believe there should be a definite limitation to the amount that any individual might benefit from it.

We believe also that the volume of production in any plan should be measured in units rather than acres.

Not Good for Consumer

This business of driving farm prices down to create scarcity, though it may end surpluses, is not good for consumer or producer, in the long haul. The casualty list of those who are economically crowded off the land is far too great.

The farmer is engaged in a necessary and honorable vocation. He seeks, and is entitled to, a position of parity and equality in a prosperous economy. He will not achieve that position by the route of the sliding scale and the flexible price program.

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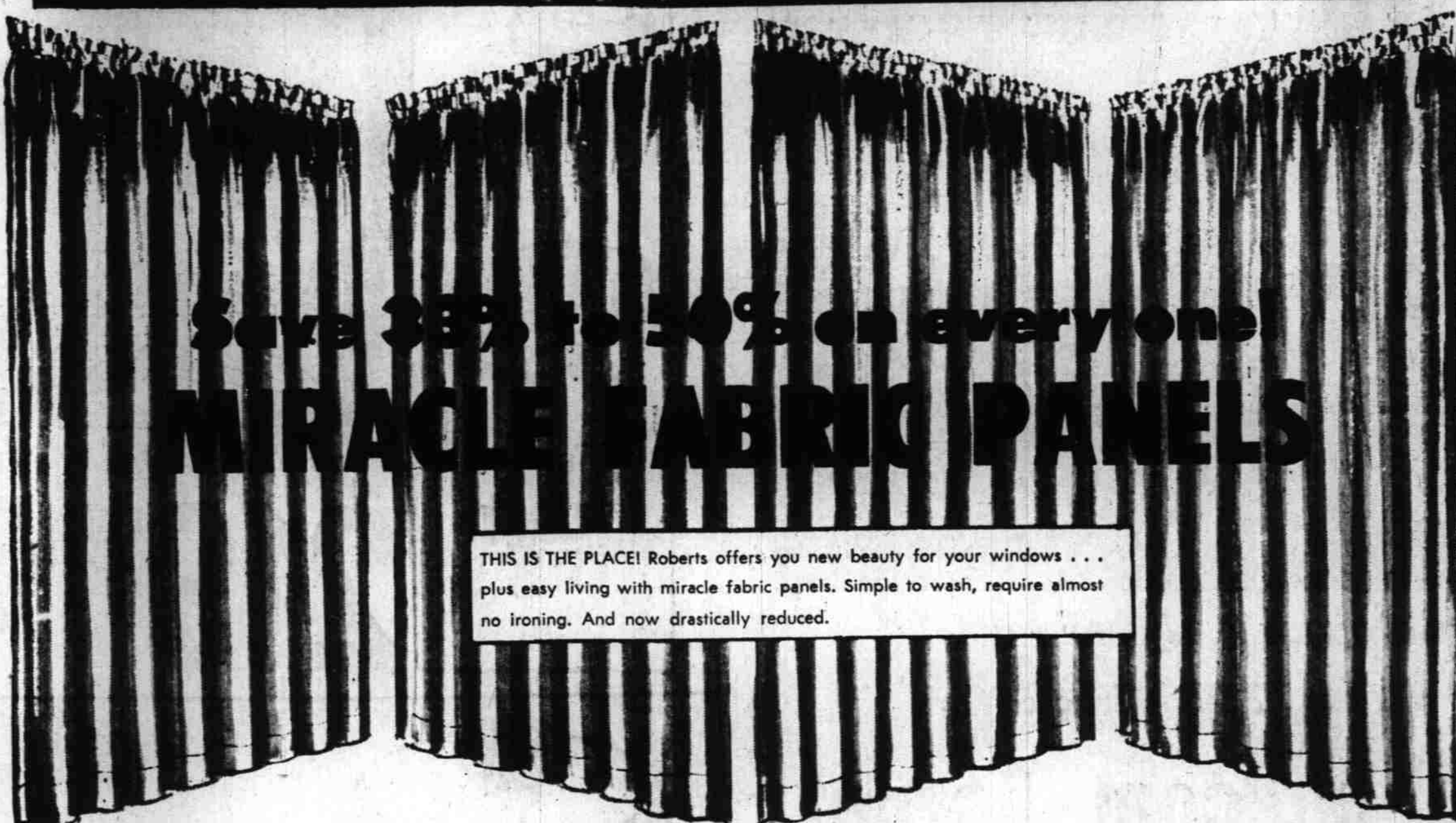
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