

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: NOVEMBER 14, 1963

The following is the text of a telegram sent to President Kennedy today by the following Members of Congress: Bob Dole, Kansas; Al Quie, Minnesota; Don Short, North Dakota; Garner Shriver, Kansas; Joe Skubitz, Kansas; Bob Ellsworth, Kansas; Don Brotzman, Colorado; Catherine May, Washington; Ben Reifel, South Dakota; Odin Langen, Minnesota.

The Honorable John F. Kennedy
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Seven days ago a Democrat Member of Congress from Ohio said to Members of the House of Representatives:

"It is a sad commentary that the American people are now largely dependent on propaganda statements from Moscow for news on the current status of wheat negotiations. Khrushchev has taken full advantage of this news vacuum to monopolize our news media on this issue."

This statement appears to be an accurate reflection of the current status of negotiations surrounding the pending sale of wheat to communist Russia. We therefore again urge you to reveal and to explain the details of these negotiations to the American people, particularly in view of your message to Congress on October 10, 1963.

You informed Congress, "These sales would be concluded by private grain dealers for American dollars or gold, either cash on delivery or under normal commercial credit terms."

You also stated, "An added feature is the provision that the wheat we sell to the Soviet Union will be carried in available American ships, supplemented by the vessels of other countries as required."

Despite your earlier statements the following developments have been reported in the press:

--The Department of Commerce announcement of October 18, 1963 stating that the "American Bottom" rule would not apply to commodities other than wheat and wheat flour, thus opening the door for Red Hungary's purchase of corn.

--The Department of Commerce announcement of November 8 that export licenses would be issued for wheat sales to the communist nations if half of it were shipped "when available" on American bottoms.

--The news article from the New York Times of October 18 that the Export-Import Bank would guarantee loans made on the sale of U.S. wheat to the Soviets. As pointed out by a Democrat Senator from Connecticut on November 4, this news article was neither confirmed nor denied by the President of the Export-Import Bank, who was quoted as saying:

"It would be perfectly normal for us to guarantee all or part of a credit for an export transaction of this nature. We would do the same for France and Switzerland, for example."

This question on the method of financing is particularly important in view of the Export-Import Bank's participation in the Hungarian corn transaction.

--The news article by Vincent Burke in the Washington Post of November 5 states that the Export-Import Bank departed from its usual 50-50 practice and has agreed to guarantee all the short-term credit extended by banks to finance the sale of corn to Hungary. This news story went on to report, "This was done after the commercial banks refused to take all the risks required under the agency's normal practice."

The news article from the Washington Post of November 13, reporting the current NATO meetings in London where our government representatives are reportedly asking the "British to refrain from granting excessively favorable credit facilities to the Russians."

The reported insistence of the Russians for a variety of concessions from our government negotiators ranging from shipments "C.I.F." rather than the normal "F.O.B." to the forgiveness of their World War II indebtedness.

We would also point out, Mr. President, that this is our third communication in a sincere effort to bring to the American public pertinent facts concerning this transaction.

In conclusion, Mr. President, we again respectfully request you to explain why a "Private trade" deal is becoming a "government to government" deal, how "American dollars or gold, either cash on delivery or under normal commercial credit terms" can

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include U.S. government backed loans to communist countries, what "One-half American bottoms when available" means and how these transactions will affect our NATO negotiations.

Sincerely yours,

BOB DOLE
AL QUIE
DON SHORT
GARNER SHRIVER
JOE SKUBITZ

BOB ELLSWORTH
DON BROTZMAN
CATHERINE MAY
BEN REIFEL
ODIN LANGEN

NOTE: Previous telegrams were sent to the President on the subject of the United States - Soviet wheat transaction by the above Members of Congress on September 30, 1963 and October 9, 1963.
