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243 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING AREA CODE 202 225-2715

> COMMITTEES: AGRICULTURE GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

DISTRICT OFFICE:

210 FEDERAL BUILDING HUTCHINSON, KANSAS 67501 Congress of the United States House of Representatives Mashington, D.C. 20515

BARBER	HODGEMAN	RAWL
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LARK	KINGMAN	RICE
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DWARDS	LOGAN	SALINE
LLIS	MEADE	SCOTT
LLSWORTH	MITCHELL	SEWAR
INNEY	MORTON	SHER
ORD	NESS	SHERM
OVE	NORTON	SMITH
RAHAM	OSBORNE	STAFF
RANT	OTTAWA	STANT
RAY	PAWNEE	STEVE
REELEY	PHILLIPS	THOM/
IAMILTON	PRATT	TREGO
IARPER		WALLA
ASKEL		WICHIT

CONGRESSMAN DOLE REPORTS FROM WASHINGTON

FOR RELEASE: WEEK OF APRIL 24, 1967

"Facts Refute Freeman Claims"

Secretary of Agriculture Orville L. Freeman visited Kansas April 19 to ask farmers to "advise and counsel" with him on the causes of declining farm prices.

In a speech delivered at Hutchinson, he indicated that things were pretty bad when he became Secretary a little more than six years ago. He said farm prices and income have improved under his stewardship.

Mr. Freeman must be using some kind of "new math". The farm price and cost figures Kansas farmers are entering in their own ledgers this year tell quite a different story.

Farm Income Down

Just in the last year, according to the Agriculture Department's own published figures, hog prices are down 25%, beef cattle down 10.4%, sheep down 16%, lambs down 19.8%, eggs down 16.9%, chickens down 17.9%. The parity ratio, which averaged 84.5 during the eight Eisenhower years, is currently down to 74 and may be heading even lower as farm production costs continue to rise under the inflationary forces generated by war and the Administration's big-spending programs.

The most recent "Agricultural Prices" report of USDA shows the average price received by farmers for wheat on March 15, 1967, was \$1.59 per bushel. This compares with a 1957-59 average price of \$1.84, according to USDA. Cattle prices are depressed under the combined weight of huge meat imports and the discovery by USDA a few weeks ago that there are some 4 million more cattle in the United States than had been previously reported.

Moreover, in comparing farm prices and income in 1967 with those of the 1950's, it must be remembered that the dollar has lost much of its purchasing power. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that a dollar is worth 13 cents less in actual purchasing power now than it was in the 1957-59 base period. To put it another way, if a farmer had a net income of \$5,000 a year in the 1957-59 period, he would have to earn about \$5,700 in 1967 to have the same income, in terms of constant dollars. This is the price farmers are paying for inflation.

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CONGRESSION DOLE REPORTS FROM MASHINETON

FOR RELEVENT: NELK OF APRIL 26, 1907

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country is engaged in a full scale war. The surpluses of wheat and feed grains are gone. If farmers can't get a fair price for their products under these conditions, when will they? If Mr. Freeman has the answer to that question, he didn't give it in Kansas.

American agriculture is in a harsh cost-price squeeze, and it's getting tighter all the time. Relentless economic forces are pushing more than 600,000 farm people off the land every year.

Meanwhile, most other sectors of the economy are enjoying a boom.

domestic and world-wide demand for food are at a record high and growing. The

Agriculture on Skids While Rest of Economy Booms

According to the President's Economic Report, total farm debt rose \$4.2 billion in 1966 -- from \$41.6 billion to \$45.8 billion. That figures out to an average debt increase per farm of \$1,220 and represents nearly four times as much as the increase in farm income for the year. This clearly indicates that many farmers are being forced to use credit as a substitute for income.

Farm Debt on Increase

terms of constant dollars. This is thus have farmers are paying the inflation.

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