



NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

(R.-Kans.)

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DOLE TO REQUEST INVESTIGATION INTO \$10-\$25 MILLION PEANUT SCANDAL

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Senator Bob Dole will today ask the Senate Agriculture Committee to conduct an investigation and hearing into an alleged \$10 to \$25 million peanut inspection scandal.

Dole said he has been furnished a tape recording of an interview with an Alabama State peanut inspector, who was licensed by USDA to inspect peanuts, who said that he accepted bribes and falsified overtime records for himself and others in exchange for switching official peanut lot samples and otherwise misgrading official peanut samples for Moultrie Session, owner of several peanut warehouses and processing plants in Alabama and Georgia.

In the taped radio interview, Mr. George Gilford confessed that he coordinated an operation set up by Mr. Sessions whereby peanuts under government loan were bought for \$140 a ton when they went out of condition, and then either blended with good peanuts, or switched lot samples to cause them to be upgraded. These misgraded peanuts, according to Gilford, were then sold for between \$300 and over \$400 a ton. Gilford estimated that Sessions made as much as \$10 to \$25 million during the past 6 years from Gilford's efforts in switching samples and falsifying records as a licensed federal peanut inspector.

Dole will also ask Senator Walter Huddleston, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Agricultural Production, Marketing & Stabilization, Senate Committee on Agriculture, to schedule hearings and initiate a staff investigation into the alleged improprieties. The Kansas Senator, who is ranking Republican on the Senate Agriculture Committee, will also request a progress report on investigations being conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the United States Department of Agriculture. Dole said he would make the requests in letters today to Senator Huddleston, Attorney General Griffin Bell and Secretary of Agriculture Bob Bergland.

"I am eager to learn if the peanut farmers have lost money through this mid-grading of peanuts," Dole said, "and if preliminary investigations justify it, I am prepared to ask for additional staffing and coordination with G.A.O., as we did in the Grain Inspection scandal a few years ago."