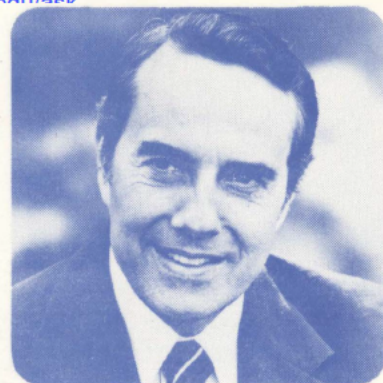


## News from Senator

# BOB DOLE



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### DOLE CALLS ON BERGLAND TO JUSTIFY CARTER FARM RECORD BEFORE A DEBATE IS CONSIDERED

WELLINGTON, Kan. — Senator Bob Dole (R Kan.), a member of the Senate Agriculture Committee, today sent a list of 25 questions on farm policy to Secretary of Agriculture Bob Bergland, saying that these questions need to be answered before any consideration is given to a debate over farm matters.

Bergland has offered a challenge to debate a spokesman designated by the Reagan campaign on farm policy.

"There have been numerous problems in the agricultural area the past few years," Dole said. "Agricultural income is down significantly and there is justifiable unrest in the rural community. Many farmers feel the authority given to the secretary by the Congress has been used to limit farm income instead of raising farm income to levels high enough to make a profit.

"I believe it is important to have some facts established before public debates are even considered."

Among the 25 questions were these:

1. Farmers tell me it is hard to have confidence in the farm policies of an Administration when net farm income has dropped by 29.49 percent in nominal terms and 38.81 percent in real terms in the last year alone. Why should your Administration deserve the confidence of American farmers in light of the above statistics? How long do you expect farm income to be at these very low levels?
2. Net farm income in real terms (1967 dollars) is estimated by USDA to be \$9.7 billion for 1980. That is the lowest for any year since the depths of the Great Depression in 1934, when it was \$9.4 billion in 1967 dollars. How long do you think the depression in American agriculture will last?
3. Farm debt was \$90.8 billion in 1976. In 1980 its is estimated to be 157.9 billion - an increase of 74 percent. 1976 to 6.7 in 1980. Doesn't this mean that farmers are financing the cheap food policies by increasing their burden of debt? Doesn't this mean that farmers are subsidizing food policies by refinancing their land? Hasn't your administration done as much to force the family farm out of existence as any other administration in our history?
4. It has been widely reported that President Carter awarded USDA Chief Economist Howard Hjort a \$20,000 bonus because he successfully made the shift in USDA policy from producer oriented to consumer oriented policy and budgetary matters. Mr. Hjort may be a hard worker, but the reason for giving the award is nothing short of astounding. Is it fair to farmers to give awards in USDA for changing the emphasis in USDA for changing the emphasis in USDA from producers to consumers? If USDA is not going to be an advocate for farmers, who is? Also, with farm income down drastically this year, how do you justify a \$20,000 bonus to the chief economic architect who designed the current farm program?
5. How can you possibly defend the Administration's effort to destroy USDA by "reorganizing" important soil conservation functions to the Department of the Interior and the Forest Service to a new Department of Natural Resources?
6. With the Senate vote on the grain embargo, why do you persist in keeping the ineffective and discriminatory policy in effect?
7. With energy independence for agriculture so important, why has it taken the Department so long in implementing programs designed to provide assistance to farmers for the production of alternative fuels such as gasohol, from agricultural commodities?