

PRESS RELEASE FROM THE OFFICE OF  
CONGRESSMAN BOB DOLE (R-KANSAS)

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Congressman Bob Dole (R-Kansas) charged today that Secretary of Agriculture Orville Freeman should either clarify his statement that the U.S. Department of Agriculture "did not lose 'one thin dime' in the Billie Sol Estes scandal" or make of the facts public concerning the Estes controversy.

Dole stated, "Some of the facts the public should have are as follows:

Fact No. 1. That the \$550,000 penalty finally assessed against Estes for cotton allotment violations has not been paid yet. This represents over half-a-million dollar loss to the government, and it is interesting to note that the penalty was not even imposed until May 11, 1962 though it had been determined as early as November, 1961, that the penalty should have been assessed for the illegal cotton allotment transfers. Mr. Freeman should tell the public why it took six months to announce imposition of this penalty and should also advise the taxpayers of this country what was going on behind the scenes during that period of time.

Fact No. 2 Mr. Freeman should explain why Billie Sol Estes continued to serve on the Department's Cotton Advisory Commission after a penalty of \$48,000 had been assessed against him in August of 1961 for over-planting his cotton allotment. Estes was reappointed to the committee in November of 1961, and this information should be of interest to the public and perhaps the Department could also make public the names of any and all other persons appointed to any advisory committee who had paid penalties of \$48,000 prior to their appointment.

Fact No. 3. Mr. Freeman's attempt to shift responsibility to the Eisenhower Administration for the Estes grain empire is an example of cheap politics and complete disregard of the facts. Certainly Freeman knows or should know that the bulk of Estes storage empire was completed after the 1960 elections. For example, the grain storage capacity of all Estes facilities at the end of 1960 was between 22 and 25 million bushel, but by March of 1962 it was over 54 million bushel. And so to believe Secretary Freeman's statement recently made in Minneapolis that the previous administration was responsible for the bulk of the storage payments (nearly \$7-million) we would have to conclude that all of the approximately 30 million bushel storage constructed during the Kennedy Administration was completely empty and that none of the grain stored prior to January 20, 1961 was moved from Estes facilities.

Freeman insults the intelligence of the American people by making such a statement. To infer that none of the Estes grain was moved since the Kennedy Administration took over would be another example of favoritism and it should be of interest to farmers who have had farm stored grain moved by order of the Commodity Credit Corporation and the small elevators operators throughout the country which have been literally stripped of wheat and feed grain storage. Dole called Freeman's statement a feeble attempt to drum up support for the farm bill which will reach the House on Tuesday and stated that one of the strongest arguments against the bill was that it would be an invitation to Estes-type operations by others. # # #