

BOB DOLE
1ST DISTRICT, KANSAS

COMMITTEE:
AGRICULTURE

DISTRICT OFFICES:
ROOMS 210-211 *
FEDERAL BUILDING
HUTCHINSON, KANSAS

BOX 31
RUSSELL, KANSAS

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

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Rm. 244
CA 4-3121, ext. 2715

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Congressman Bob Dole (R-Kansas) stated during House debate on 1964 feed grain legislation Thursday, April 25, that wheat farmers "have friends in Congress" and that the rush to push feed grain legislation through Congress was purely and simply referendum politics. In his remarks Dole said:

"Some of us do not believe we have the right to tell wheat farmers how to vote. Farmers have the intellect, and sharp enough pencils in western Kansas and can use them on May 21 to determine which way to vote.

"This administration is asking you to foreclose, in advance, any further wheat program. Normally, a defendant is entitled to hear the verdict before the hanging, but the New Frontier is using Old Frontier justice in this program. The wheat farmers are being told before the vote is counted, You are not going to have any other program. You either vote 'yes' or down the drain you go.

"I can understand Agriculture Secretary Freeman's desire to get farm programs of his origination enacted by Congress. But it seems he is overstepping the bounds of propriety and good conduct in office when he resorts to misrepresentations and threats to swing others to his way of thinking. In the past, it always has been the job of the Department of Agriculture to assist and inform the farmers but to let them make their decisions. Today the idea seems to be to tell the farmers what they can and must do, and to threaten them with all sorts of dire consequences if they do not do it.

"The feed grain bill before us today is premature and everyone knows it. The referendum next month should have been nonpartisan, neither Democratic nor Republican, for the future economic condition of the American farmer is a matter of grave interest, but despite the pressures, farmers should realize they have friends in Congress. There are those in Congress who are not going to hang a farmer economically on May 22 just for the way he voted on the 21st."

Concluding his remarks on the House floor, Dole said, "Freeman says failure will mean \$1 wheat instead of \$2 wheat. This simply is not true, and he knows it. The American farmer should be entitled to vote in any referendum freely and without fear of executive or legislative reprisal. He should be guaranteed his right to free expression in the basic American concept."

The feed grain bill passed the House by a narrow vote of 208 to 196. An earlier move to send the bill back to committee lost by the narrow margin of 196 to 205.