

FROM THE OFFICE OF CONGRESSMAN BOB DOLE  
1st District

For Release after 11 a.m. Friday, November 20, 1964

McPherson-Congressman Bob Dole appeared here this morning before the student body of McPherson College and discussed the topic, "What It Means To Be A Congressman".

He told the students, "Your contribution to good government should not end with the vote you cast in the General Election. Public officials will continue to need your opinions and suggestions. To be an effective citizen, you should know how to help public officials, including your Congressman.

Dole stated being a Congressman means many things, but the principal job is law-making and whatever interferes with an understanding of the issues necessarily reduces a Member's effectiveness. Being a Congressman means one must be willing to objectively face the issues; withstand the pressures of special interest groups; devote long hours to his duties, but above all, it means an opportunity to serve his State and Nation. "This opportunity is deserved only so long as it is acknowledged by hard work, an open mind, and a real desire to serve," he said.

"The first requirement, obviously, for success in politics", the First District Congressman pointed out, "is to get elected. It also takes a 'thick' skin to withstand the criticism and irresponsible charges made by some who apparently have little regard for factual information. These persons serve as political 'hatchet men' and by using half-truths and distortions, seek to sow seeds of distrust, rather than inform the people about fundamental issues." Candidates should be judged on their stand on the issues, not misjudged by use of smear tactics.

Dole listed a few "Do's" and "Don'ts" for those wanting to help their Congressman once the election is over. These suggestions would apply to any Congressman, Republican or Democrat or anyone, regardless of party, who wants to help his Congressman.

"Do-Write about matters on which you have information and in which you are concerned. In discussing issues, show specifically, from your own experience, how the proposal affects you.

"Do-Acknowledge things your Congressman does that you approve.

"Do-When you have an interest in a subject, inform your Congressman or Senator while there is still time for him to take effective action. Most of the legislative drafting work is done in committees.

"Don't-Try to instruct your Congressman or Senator on how to vote on every issue that comes up.

"Don't--Rely on pressure campaigns of petitions, mass mailings, mass telephone programs on subjects you know little about personally. A thoughtful letter based on specifics has much more meaning for a Congressman or Senator.

"Don't-Berate your Congressman or Senator, if he does not agree with you. You have a chance at the next election to vote against him if you object to his service. If you disagree, give reasons for your disagreement but in fairness consider his entire record, not just his voting on a few pet issues.

"Don't-Pretend to represent more political influences than you have. Write or talk with your Congressman as an individual with personal concern about issues, but don't attempt to speak for all your neighbors.

"Don't-Rely blindly on 'voting records' kept by pressure groups as appraisals of your Congressman's attitude. Some of these groups often compile a list of favorite issues and rank Congressmen only by their votes on their favorite issues. In considering any 'rating' know what issues are used to rate your Congressman".

Following the McPherson meeting, Cong. Dole went to Salina and Beloit to meet with constituents.