

BOB DOLE
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COMMITTEE:
AGRICULTURE

DISTRICT OFFICE:
210 FEDERAL BUILDING
HUTCHINSON, KANSAS 67501

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

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SEPTEMBER 1, 1965

Congressman Bob Dole (R-Kan) stated today that Administration efforts to include coverage of farm workers under minimum wage provisions will increase food costs, increase farm unemployment, and lead to bankruptcy of many small operators.

The efforts to increase the general minimum wage and extend its coverage is another illustration of the vast influence labor leaders have on the policies of this Administration. It is also another attack upon rural America, which unfortunately will increase in frequency as big city political bosses, labor leaders, and civil rights leaders strengthen their hold on this Administration.

Congressman Dole stated, "It seems strange indeed that Secretary of Agriculture, Orville Freeman, the widely heralded spokesman for American agriculture, has been silent on the subject of including farm workers under the minimum wage laws. The United States Department of Agriculture, under Secretary Freeman, is noted for its mass propaganda efforts used in promoting farm legislation, but it appears their bureaucratic printing presses have now broken down, and the farmer is without high level support on this critical issue. Briefly, the bill passed by the House Education and Labor Committee, with the blessings of its Chairman, Adam Clayton Powell, amends the Fair Labor Standards Act in the following important respects:

1. Extends coverage to all temporary and seasonal farm workers.
2. The minimum wage for farm workers would be \$1.15 an hour beginning July 1, 1966 and \$1.25 an hour beginning July 1, 1968.
3. No provision is made for piece rate workers. Thus each such worker would be paid the minimum wage regardless of production.
4. Prohibits employment in agriculture of any worker under 16 years of age, except (1) members of the farmer's family and (2) workers 12 to 15 with parental consent who live at their permanent residence and commute daily to work.
5. Repeals the exemption from minimum wages of country grain elevators, but provides an exemption from overtime if such elevator employs not more than 5 workers.'

"The general effect of this proposed legislation will be to increase farmers' costs at the very time his production expenses constitute about 70 per cent of gross income.

Specifically, the legislation can be expected to have the following effects on farmers:

1. forcing smaller, marginal producers out of business;
2. forcing some producers to shift to other less labor intensive crops at a possible reduction in income to them and an aggravation of surplus problems of certain of these crops;
3. undermining incentive methods of payment which will require growers to pay some workers more than their productivity warrants and to increase their supervision;
4. increasing farmers' record keeping requirements;

(more)

5. increasing competition from foreign produced agricultural commodities;
6. forcing mechanization on an unsound basis;
7. placing youth employment programs in agriculture under the discretion of the Secretary of Labor.

"In addition, the proposed changes will adversely affect the workers by providing reduced employment opportunities and by virtually eliminating any incentive method of payment."

Congressman Dole concluded: "I repeat again this proposal illustrates there is no place for rural America in the so-called "Great Society." When the wishes of labor leaders are involved, we, in effect, have two Secretaries of Labor and no Secretary of Agriculture."

RELEASING OFFICE: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

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