

afma

AMERICAN FEED

MANUFACTURERS
ASSOCIATION, INC.

NEWS RELEASES

7 JACKSON BOULEVARD • CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60604
TELEPHONE: AREA CODE 312 • 427-0046

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FROM: GALE A JOHNSON
Phone: Sheraton-Park 462-0940

CONGRESS WILL REFUSE TO PERMANENTLY EXTEND CURRENT FARM PROGRESS

WASHINGTON, D.C., MAY 28, 1968 -- An economy-minded Congress, spurred by an electorate which is frustrated by the high cost of government, will refuse to permanently extend current farm legislation this year, Rep. Robert Dole (R), Kansas, predicted Tuesday in Washington, D. C.

Dole, who addressed the 60th Annual Convention of the American Feed Manufacturers Association (AFMA), also said that the \$7 billion Agriculture Department budget will also be a prime future target for legislators.

"I have never seen the Congress so economy minded as they are at this time," he said. "I don't believe that anyone can seriously doubt but that significant cuts must and will be made in the Federal budget."

Tracing the growth of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), he said that the growth of its employment rolls indicated a "burgeoning growth into a full-fledged bureaucracy." In 1900 the USDA employed about 1000 people. Today that number has "mushroomed" to about 100,000 with some 19 separate bureaus, and a budget of \$6.8 billion.

Dole pointed out that "the American Citizenry is also frustrated and indignant about many things. They are fed up with the high cost of government and taxes."

Reviewing the "tortured path" of farm legislation since the original Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933, Dole described results of the farm programs since then as "a real paradox."

"In some ways, American agriculture has been amazingly successful over the past decades. But in other ways our attempts at developing and influencing national policies and programs to serve the farmer have been dismal failures," he said.

Dole reminded the 1,500 feedmen that 100 years ago each American farmer supplied enough agricultural commodities for five people. Today he provides for 40 people. "The average American is eating better at a lower cost--in terms of his income--than ever before" he said pointing out that in 1967, food cost the consumer only 17.7 percent of his income. This compares with 20 percent in 1960 and 22.2 percent in 1950."

all of the world,' the farmer has been very poorly paid for his efforts," Dole said. He cited the 1967 record:

- a 10 percent drop in farm income
- an increase in farm liabilities by \$4.2 billion
- a 3 percent decrease in the number of farms
- a farm parity level at its lowest since the depression.

Referring to farmer frustration, he said, "the bewilderment and discontent of the farmer is spreading and its effects will be felt."

Pointing to the shift of political power since World War II to the middle class suburban areas, Dole said the nation is "coming sharply to a crucial corner in terms of our national agricultural policy and programs."

"Of pending farm legislation before Congress, the extension of the Food and Agricultural Act and proposals on farm bargaining power are of the most immediate concern to the farmer," said Dole. "While significant action may not be taken on either during this session, important dialogues are underway which may well set the scene for action in the next Congress."

Dole concluded his talk to the AFMA Convention with a plea for improved farm programs. "I cannot believe that we can seriously advocate a complete pull out. For better or worse, we now have a situation where government payments approach 20 percent of our farm income."

"Somehow, we have to develop some balance to our farm policies which, while meeting the greater needs of our nation, also will allow the farmer to earn his fair share for his labor and investment. The American farmer is much too important to the well-being of our entire society to be abandoned," he concluded.