

News from Senator

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DOLE MEETS WITH AGRICULTURE LYNG AND VICE PRESIDENT BUSH TO DISCUSS DROUGHT CONDITIONS

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Senator Bob Dole (R-KS) today met with Secretary of Agriculture Richard Lyng and Vice President George Bush to discuss the effects of the drought on U.S. agriculture.

After the meeting at Secretary Lyng's office, Senator Dole made the following remarks:

SECRETARY LYNG TOLD US THAT THE AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN WATCHING THE DROUGHT SITUATION SINCE EARLY MARCH AND KNEW THEN THAT WE WERE GOING TO HAVE SOME PROBLEMS IN PARTS OF THE COUNTRY. IN SOME PARTS OF THE COUNTRY, IT IS VERY SERIOUS, WHILE IN OTHER PARTS SUCH AS KANSAS, IT IS GETTING IN THAT CONDITION.

I THINK THE IMPORTANT THING IS THAT THE SECRETARY TOLD BOTH MYSELF AND THE VICE PRESIDENT THAT THE DEPARTMENT WAS WORKING ON IT. THEY ARE LOOKING AT OPTIONS IN CASE THE DROUGHT GETS MORE SEVERE, WAYS TO HELP THE AMERICAN FARMER, THE FARM FAMILY. SO I FEEL GOOD ABOUT WHAT THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE IS DOING.

I'M PLEASED THAT THE VICE PRESIDENT HAS TAKEN A PERSONAL INTEREST IN THIS. AND I WOULD GUESS THAT UNLESS WE GET SOME RELIEF SOON, WE WILL BE PASSING LEGISLATION TO COME TO THE AID OF THE AMERICAN FARMER.

THE GOVERNMENT CAN'T MAKE IT RAIN. BUT OBVIOUSLY THAT WOULD BE A BIG HELP AND THAT IS WHAT THE FARMER WOULD LIKE TO HAVE. HE DOESN'T WANT GOVERNMENT HELP, HE WANTS TO MARKET HIS CROP -- HE WANTS TO CUT HIS CROP.

IT HASN'T HAD THE IMPACT IN THE WHEAT STATES AS IT HAS IN THE CORNBELT AND IN COTTON AND SOYBEAN STATES. BUT WHAT WE ARE DOING NOW IN CONGRESS IS APPOINTING DEMOCRATS AND REPUBLICANS TO BIPARTISAN COMMITTEES TO KEEP POLITICS OUT OF IT. IT SHOULD NOT BE A TIME FOR PARTISAN POLITICS. YOU SHOULDN'T TAKE ADVANTAGE OF SOMEBODY'S MISERY TO PLAY POLITICS.

WE WANT TO SEE IF WE CAN COME UP WITH A BIPARTISAN RECOMMENDATION IF IT IS NECESSARY. SOME FARMERS ARE ALREADY EXPERIENCING PERSONAL TRAGEDY, BUT NATIONALLY IT IS NOT THERE YET. SO WE CONTINUE TO HOPE FOR RELIEF. BUT IN THE MEANTIME, WE ARE GOING TO WORK TO DO EVERYTHING THAT IS NECESSARY TO HELP THE AMERICAN FARMER.