

NEWS RELEASE FROM THE OFFICE OF
CONGRESSMAN BOB DOLE (R-KANSAS)

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Cong. Bob Dole (R-Kansas) predicted today that unless the Administration is able to push it's farm bill through Congress very soon the Estes case, which directly involves the integrity of the Department of Agriculture, could well mean defeat of the Freeman program this year. "Members of both parties," Dole said, "feel that the investigation has moved much too slowly particularly as it relates to the Department of Agriculture."

Cong. Dole, Director of "Project Uncover" in the House, has been particularly interested in the transfer of some 5.2 million bushels of wheat from the Kansas City Commodity area to Estes storage facilities in Plainview, Texas. Dole stated, "My interest has been stimulated because of a statement made by Secretary Freeman before the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry on February 21, 1962, where Freeman clearly indicated that the moving of grain, including wheat and corn, from one storage facility to another for storage was against USDA policy. " "If this is true," Dole said, " then somebody had better have an answer to questions about Estes vast storage empire which mushroomed in 1961. "

In his regular newsletter to constituents Dole said, "When the curtain finally rings down on the almost incredible Billie Sol Estes story, as it one day must, we will have the answers to at least some of the questions which have been raised in connection with a mushrooming scandal many newsmen are already comparing with Teapot Dome. New names are being interjected into the Estes story daily. There are accusations of wrong-doing--and indignant denials--tossed about at a furious rate."

In his comments Dole stated, "It seems to me, however, that what is involved here is not whether some USDA employee or other government official in position to do a favor for Estes was indiscreet enough to accept a ten-gallon hat, an expensive pair of shoes or even a \$250 suit from the indicted, now bankrupt, financier. Estes wasn't playing in a 'penny-ante' game. Millions of dollars passed through his hands and he desperately needed more quick millions to bolster his shaky, over-extended, business operations. "

Dole continued, "Small favors wouldn't help him. He needed big ones. Did he get them? There is considerable evidence that he did. If he did, were there pay-offs? If there were pay-offs, who will believe they were limited to clothing? If Estes got big favors which meant big money to him, is it unreasonable to suspect there may have been big pay-offs, as well? And, finally, the big question: If there were big payoffs, who received them?"

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