

Cong. Bob Dole (R-Kansas) said today "decision of the U.S. Department of Agriculture to move out the grain it has stored with the Estes elevator interests in West Texas amounts to an admission the grain should not have been stored there in the first instance."

Dole said he understood approximately 42 million bushels of government-owned grain would be shipped from the Estes elevators during the next 18 months at a probable cost of several millions of dollars. The loading "out" and "in" charges will be $3\frac{1}{2}$ cents per bushel plus transportation costs averaging between 10 and 15 cents per bushel depending upon destination, would amount to ^{well} over \$5 million, Dole theorized. This in itself refutes Freeman's statement that Estes' operations hadn't cost the government a "dime."

Dole stated, "It becomes increasingly more difficult to determine just what the policy of the USDA is, but at present it is one of confusion, delay, and without direction. The decision now to transfer millions of bushels of grain is analogous to the delay by the Department in imposing the \$500,000 fine upon Estes for violation of cotton acreage allotment regulations months after the facts were available to the Department. The action is also similar to Freeman's decision to appoint Estes to the Cotton Advisory Council two months after Estes paid a fine of \$48,000 in 1961 for cotton acreage allotment violations. In fact this recent decision follows the pattern of indecisiveness and inaction which has marked the handling of the Billie Sol Estes matter by USDA officials including Secretary Freeman."

Dole concluded that while official USDA press releases may indicate there was no favoritism shown to Estes, certainly the actions by USDA officials gives just the opposite impression.