



NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

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FROM THE NATION'S CAPITOL
BY SENATOR BOB DOLE

GRAIN EXPORT INVESTIGATIONS

We've all read a great deal recently about the U.S. system of inspecting grain for export shipment and allegations of bribery and corruption within that system.

MAINTAIN POSITION

It is absolutely essential to the maintenance of our position as a major grain exporting nation -- agricultural exports are expected to reach \$22 billion this year and over \$11 billion of that will be grain -- that these charges be thoroughly investigated. Senator Herman Talmadge, chairman of the Agriculture Committee, approved the request of Senator Hubert Humphrey and myself that in-depth investigations into the handling, grading, weighing and shipping practices be conducted by the Subcommittee on Foreign Agricultural Policy.

Results of this investigation, which has been going on for three weeks in cooperation with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Internal Revenue Service and General Accounting Office, will be discussed in Subcommittee hearings June 19.

If investigations show that our present grain inspection laws are outdated, or that the present system invites corruption, the Agriculture Committee will develop amendments to update and improve the laws.

EMERGENCY LEGISLATION

Meanwhile, Senator Humphrey and I have introduced legislation to provide stricter penalties and additional, one-year, emergency authority for the Secretary of Agriculture to protect our export markets for wheat and other grains. With this temporary authority, the Secretary would be able to tighten any loose ends that exist in the present system. He would be authorized to hire additional personnel to perform original inspection and re-inspection under new standards and procedures for loading grain. The bill would permanently change the law to make bribery of an inspector a felony. This legislation will also be discussed in the June 19 hearings.

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HISTORY OF QUALITY GRAIN

The success we have enjoyed in expanded export markets for grain can be largely attributed to our reputation of delivering the quality grain desired by foreign customers. However, the recent reports of corruption have caused some foreign buyers to be over cautious in booking future shipments. Investigations and legislation should help in clearing up doubts that have led to this overly cautious attitude.

We know that high quality grain leaves Kansas and other grain-producing states. Action by Congress and the Department of Agriculture will assure our foreign customers that they receive the same high quality grain in precisely the same weight, quantity and degree of cleanliness they paid for.

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EMERGENCY LEGISLATION

Senator Humphrey and I have introduced legislation to provide standards and additional one-year emergency authority for the Secretary of Agriculture to protect our export markets for wheat and other grains. With this authority, the Secretary would be able to tighten any loose ends that exist in the present system. He would be authorized to hire additional personnel to perform regular inspection and re-inspection under new standards and procedures for loading grain. The bill would generally change the law to make it the duty of an inspector to inspect. This legislation will also be discussed in the days to come.

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