

● **Farm Bill**

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bill; and "No," when asked if he thought it could be passed without a suitable provision for cotton.

These questions and others were vigorously debated by Rep. Paul Findley, R-Ill. and Sen. George McGovern, D-S.D. before a gathering of Newspaper Farm Editors of America.

Senator McGovern speaking in support of the bill said he had heard no consumer-oriented reaction to the often-cited "bread tax" aspects of the wheat bill. He said, "there is a growing awareness in cities that city problems are influenced by rural area problems." He cited the city employment problems resulting from farmers migrating to the cities.

He maintained that all sections of the farm program must be presented as one package to pass. "We can't ask urban representatives to vote for agricultural appropriations five or six times without getting them into difficulty back home." But, he believes they will support the legislation if they only have to vote for one bill. He was also quite firm about the need to include a cotton plan in

the omnibus bill to maintain the southern-midwestern coalition of legislators.

Congressmen Findley, on the other hand, felt the general farm bill could not pass WITH the cotton legislation. "The cotton bill is such a mess that without a major shift in the current cotton program, it would be more of a handicap than an asset to the omnibus bill," he said.

Findley went on to say that one often-overlooked item in the proposed farm bill is that the right of a farmer to grow a commodity will itself become a commodity (ed. He was referring to the section which deals with the buying and selling of allotment quotas by farmers.) "This will lead to the day when farmers will have to buy up a federal franchise to produce anything of consequence."

Findley claimed that the main resistance to the farm bill is coming from taxpayers. USDA expenditures continue to increase, he said, and the taxpayers want to curtail this spending. "The sooner we get back to a market place commodity system the better off we'll be," the Congressman said. He told the group that he had submitted a bill to relate crop loans to market prices. Also, that he

prefers a land retirement type approach rather than direct payments "which tend to become habit forming."

McGovern said that farmers will always need some form of compensation, whether direct payment or otherwise. "If we reduce support to farm communities it will work an extreme hardship on the entire economic community."

In response to this, Findley cited a study he had made by an outstanding economist at the University of Illinois. It concluded that farm prices are so heavily effected by foreign trade that the influence of government programs had no effect in the long run. "I ran for reelection on this thesis in a farming district, and received more votes than I had in the previous election — and this in the face of the Democratic landslide," Findley concluded.

● **No Zip**

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Ill., addressed the farm editors.

From his prepared talk, the Secretary commented on the inequity of incomes of skilled workers and farmers saying that of the 3.5 million farmers only 400,000 have incomes comparable to those of skilled laborers. "And yet the average American family spends a lesser percentage of their take-home pay for food than families in any other nation."

But, he stated, if we are to continue to enjoy low cost food, and if the farmer is to receive a recent reward for his efforts, then farm commodity programs must be continued and strengthened. Without such programs, net farm income would drop in half, Freeman maintained.

In discussing the loan money available to communities through the Office of Economic Opportunities (OEO),

Freeman said that only about 5 percent of it is going to rural areas. "Rural areas are at a disadvantage both in not being well-informed and because they are in many small units each of which must apply separately for loans. A large city, in comparison, can initiate action on a large loan with a single phone call."

● **Farm Calendar**

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Farm Bureau Bldg., Diller-ville Rd., Lancaster.

— May 5 and 6; Poultry Products Short Course at Penn State.

May 6 — 2 p.m. Dedication of new Pa. Dept. of Agriculture Bldg. by Governor Scranton at Harrisburg.

May 7 — 2 p.m. County FFA Milk Products Contest at Ephrata High School.

May 8 — 40th Annual Dairy Exposition at Penn State University, at the new dairy barns.



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