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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 3, 1976

MEETING WITH LEADERSHIP OF THE KANSAS FARM BUREAU  
FOLLOWED BY SIGNING OF H.R. 6346  
RURAL DEVELOPMENT R & D EXTENSION  
AND "CUSTOM COMBINE" EXEMPTION

Monday, April 5, 1976  
The Cabinet Room  
3:30 p.m. (30 minutes)

From: Jim Cannon *For Lead*

I. PURPOSE

- To meet with a dozen leaders of the Kansas Farm Bureau.
- To sign H.R. 6346, which extends authority for Rural Development R & D and exempts certain farm workers from the Farm Labor Contractor Registration Act.

II. BACKGROUND, PARTICIPANTS, AGENDA AND PRESS PLAN

A. Background:

Since Kansas is the leading wheat state and Senator Dole sponsored the farm labor ("custom combine") rider to H.R. 6346, the visit of the Kansas Farm Bureau leaders to the White House is a worthwhile occasion for signing H.R. 6346. Unfortunately, unless there is a change in his plans, Senator Dole will be out of Washington and unable to attend.

Kansas Farm Bureau. This is the largest general farm organization in Kansas (about 91,500 families). The group with which you will be meeting consists of ten "Leaders of the Year" from throughout the state plus the key statewide officers and staff. The Kansas Farm Bureau President, John J. Armstrong, who recently went on the national board of the Farm Bureau, is coming specially for this meeting.



Kansas has a reasonably diversified agriculture. The top two farm commodities are cattle and wheat: Kansas is the leading wheat producing state and the second largest cattle state (after Texas). Other important commodities include corn, grain sorghums and hogs. The State has 79,000 farms averaging about one square mile in size.

Farmers in Kansas are unhappy about low grain prices, with the Administration being blamed because of the Russian embargo. There is also displeasure over cattle prices, which have recently drifted down. The Kansas farmers are concerned about meat imports (which are being restrained voluntarily under agreements negotiated with other nations) and the recent change in beef grading standards (which occurred just at the time when cattle prices were weakening).

A major problem in Kansas is the drought situation, which is substantially harming the winter wheat crop. The weather situation is still bad, with very little relief to date.

H.R. 6364. You have agreed to sign this bill, which extends through fiscal year 1979 the appropriation authorization for certain rural development research and development activities.

Most significantly, a rider attached to H.R. 6346 on the Senate floor by Senator Dole, exempts custom combine operators, hay harvesters, and sheep shearers from the Farm Labor Contractor Registration Act (which assures minimal standards for housing, wages, food, medical services and safety for unskilled migrant workers). This amendment was strongly supported in the Plains States.

B. Participants:

Kansas Farm Bureau

John J. Armstrong - President

Gerald Lawrence - Director

Paul Fleener - Public Affairs Director

John Blythe - Assistant Public Affairs Director



George Grossenbacher  
Andrew Duffle  
Larry Cline  
Richard Newell  
Orvill Stigge  
Dean Haresnape  
Larry Panning  
Lawrence Erbes  
Curtis Ramsay  
William Mai

Congressional

Senator Bob Dole (Possible)  
Senator James Pearson  
Representative Keith Sebelius  
Representative Garner Shriver  
Representative Larry Winn, Jr. (Possible)  
Representative Joe Skubitz (Possible)  
Others at Tab A for Signing Ceremony

Administration

Secretary Earl Butz	Jim Cavanaugh
Under Secretary Jack Knebel	Max Friedersdorf
Jack Marsh	Bill Kendall
Dick Cheney	Charlie Leppert
Jim Cannon	Paul Leach
Jim Lynn	

C. Agenda:

1. 3:30 p.m. meeting with Kansas Farm Bureau and members of Kansas Congressional Delegation.  
(15 minutes)
2. 3:50 p.m. signing ceremony with Kansas Farm Bureau and Larger Congressional Group.  
(10 minutes)

D. Press Plan:

To be announced; White House photographs at both stages.



III. TALKING POINTS

Kansas Farm Bureau

1. I would like to welcome all of you to Washington and the White House.
2. I'm glad we were able to arrange for you to visit with us.
3. And I want to congratulate all of you who have been chosen "Leaders of the Year" for that fine honor.
4. Also, I would like to congratulate you John Armstrong for your recent election to the National Board of the Farm Bureau.
5. It's good to have Secretary Butz here. As you probably know, I recently reorganized our agricultural policy making machinery into a cabinet-level agricultural Policy Committee and designated Earl as Chairman.
6. At the first meeting of this Committee last week, much emphasis was placed on problems of international agricultural trade.
7. This is critical to our Nation's economy and my Administration is committed to increasing our trade in food.
8. Because of last fall's grain agreement with the Russians, we now have a regular market in Russia for at least six million tons of corn and wheat each year through 1980 -- and maybe much more.
9. Since the grain sales to Russia resumed last fall we have sold them three million tons and we remain ready to sell the Russians more this year.
10. I would like to hear about other issues which are important in Kansas.
11. Then, we are going to have a ceremony to sign H.R. 6346, which exempts custom combine operators, hay harvesters and sheep shearers from the Farm Labor Act.



Signing Ceremony

1. I am pleased to have you all here today for the signing of H.R. 6346, which extends the authority for certain rural development research and development activities through fiscal year 1979.
2. Most importantly, though, another section of this bill exempts custom combine operators, hay harvesters and sheep shearers from the Farm Labor Contractor Registration Act.
3. I am only sorry that my good friend Senator Bob Dole is not able to be here to participate in the ceremony since he led the effort to clarify the Farm Labor Contractor Registration Act.
4. I understand that failure to change this Act could lead to severe hardship for the custom combine operators and others.
5. Since the Farm Labor Act was intended to protect unskilled migrant farm workers --- not the more skilled workers exempted today by the legislation I am signing --- I think this one exemption makes sense.
6. I am committed to reducing and resisting regulation in areas such as this where it is not needed or is not appropriate.
7. Thus it is a pleasure to sign H.R. 6346 today.

