

150 WASHINGTON WHEAT MEN HEAR BENSON AT PORTLAND



SECRETARY BENSON

PORTLAND, Oregon -- Agriculture Secretary Ezra T. Benson has promised the nation's wheat growers consideration for their domestic parity program in 1957.

In a talk to 600 delegates of which 150 men from the State of Washington attending the National Association of Wheat Growers annual meeting here, Benson said:

"We should not confuse the issue by pressing for the domestic parity program in 1956 but pass the president's program first and in 1957 turn our attention to a more unified effort for a domestic parity plan.

Benson said the USDA would team up with wheat growers in an educational program to obtain widespread support of the domestic parity plan.

The association, however, passed resolutions calling for both the domestic parity plan and the administration's "soil bank" proposal this year. Growers asked that participation in the soil bank be obtained on a voluntary basis through adequate financial incentives.

Grower delegates declared outspoken opposition to the administration's present flexible price supports, holding "the program operated under present legislation must be unqualifiedly rejected on the grounds that they aggravate instead of alleviate the problem of declining prices and incomes for wheat growers."

Benson maintained that the administration's proposed nine-point program would bolster farmers' incomes this year. He said help for farmers would come through repeal of the federal farm gas tax and soil-bank payments. He reaffirmed his opposition to restoration of 90 per cent of parity supports, calling it a "bankrupt program" that was responsible for present surpluses.

The Wheat men voiced concern over proposals of Mid-west corn growers for elimination of acreage allotments on corn. This attitude, the convention held, indicates corn

DWELLEY JONES IN WASHINGTON D.C.

Mr. Dwelley Jones, Vice Chairman of the Legislative Committee of the Association is now in Washington D.C. representing wheat producers of the state. Mr. Jones left his home in Walla Walla, January 22 to testify at the Senate Agriculture Committee hearings. Mr. Jones gave his testimony on Monday, January 24. The following is the statements made by Mr. Jones at that meeting....

Seantor Ellender and Committee Members:

My name is Dwelley Jones. I am a wheat farmer from Walla Walla, Washington. I represent the Washington State Wheat Growers Association. I am an operator who is both an owner and a tenant, which gives me an opportunity to better observe the difficulties of both classes of farmers. I am back here at my own expense to represent Washington State wheat farmers.

At the hearing this Committee held in Pendleton, Oregon, last fall, I was a member of the audience -- along with many other Washington farmers. We were all encouraged to see that this Committee had a full grasp of the problem we were facing and was honestly seeking a solution to this perplexing dilemma.

I happened to be sitting between two farmers who, like myself, were economics majors in college. We decided, following your hearing, that we would study the problem and see if we might be able to contribute some ideas to its solution.

We were all forcibly impressed by your Committee's statements that our agricultural plant was over-producing. As in any other industry which is over-producing, that production must be curtailed to balance with consumption. During this process, the American farmer must still be able to earn a livelihood. In addition to balancing our production with our consumption, we are faced with the problem of absorbing 1 1/2 billion bushels of grain surpluses into domestic and foreign channels. Our solution to the problem is divided into four parts: First, we propose a land bank to remove lands from production. Second, we propose total acreage allotments to control the lands remaining in production. Third, we propose a price support program to enable the farmer to live on the same level as other segments of our economy. Fourth, we propose to utilize our surpluses within a short period of time.

These principles have been gone over by this Committee many times. I would like to point out where we have a