



NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

(R.-Kans.)

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FARMERS NEED STRIKE LEGISLATION

WASHINGTON, D.C., April 2, 1972 ----- Why should farmers have to

bear the brunt of the union's private fight with management, U.S.

Sen. Dole (R-Kans.) asked today in a statement for release on

Sunday.

The Kansas Senator said that "Congress must share the blame for the loss of this billion dollars in exports for it has pending before it legislation such as S. 560 and S. 3232, which would provide a permanent solution to this problem that faces our nation whenever a transportation union enters into a dispute with management." Dole said the Department of Agriculture has estimated that American farmers have lost about \$400 million in sales and that farmers have lost an additional \$600 million in depressed farm prices as a result of the loss of sales from dock strikes.

(following is the Senator's complete text:)

The current fiscal year could represent another record breaking year for farm exports. By the end of January this year we had exported \$4.6 billion in farm products and this is slightly above the amount exported in the same seven month period last year.

Last year the total farm exports for the year was \$7.8 billion, the highest ever, and well on our way to our goal of \$10 billion in exports by 1980, a necessary goal to maintain our balance of trade and serve our economic projections.

(MORE)

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Strikes Hinder Exports

I should say we have exported \$4.6 billion in agricultural commodities in spite of obstacles such as the longshoremen's strike which has hindered Gulf and West Coast ports where most agricultural commodities are exported.

According to the Department of Agriculture, our losses in exports of wheat, corn, grain sorghum, oats, rice and tobacco have been somewhat offset by increased exports of cotton, soybeans, protein meal, cottonseed oil, nuts, butter, fresh fruits and vegetables

Farmers Lose \$1 Billion From Strike

The Department of Agriculture has estimated that we have lost about \$400 million in sales and that farmers have lost an additional \$600 million in depressed farm prices as a result of this loss of sales from the dock strikes. This totals about a billion dollars

With the unexpected increase in other commodities, the farmers of this nation could have once again set a new record in agricultural exports, but what is more important, it would have stimulated the prices paid to farmers and improved farm income.

Farmers Pay for Dock Strikes

Why is it the farmers have to bear the brunt of the union's private fight with management. Agricultural commodities such as grain have to depend on ocean shipping for their exports. Airplanes are not practical as an alternative.

Legislation Pending for Two Years

Furthermore, I maintain Congress must share the blame for the loss of this billion dollars in exports for it has pending before it legislation, such as S. 560 and S. 3232, which would provide a permanent solution to this problem that faces our nation whenever a transportation union enters into a dispute with management. That legislation has been pending before the Senate Labor and Public Welfare Committee for more than two years, and the bill that we now know as S. 3232 nearly was approved by this body in the form of S.J. Res. 197 when we were considering the temporary provision passed in S.J. Res. 193.

Action Promised

At the time that resolution was considered, the chairman of the Labor and Public Welfare Committee announced his committee "within 30 days . . . will have an executive hearing or meeting to consider the bills on March 17." (CR 4-8-72 page S 1449)

I would assume that such executive hearing or meeting has been conducted and yet, we have not received a bill on the floor of the Senate which would provide a permanent solution to the transportation strikes. I would go further to predict that we shall not receive a bill reported from the Labor and Public Welfare Committee.

I repeat, does the farmer have to suffer the losses incurred by these strikes? Is this the way we reward the man who tills the soil to produce the food we eat?

Is this the thanks we give the farmers who provide us this food at only 16 per cent of our spendable income . . . while the people in France and Russia spend up to 50 per cent of their spendable income for food?

Last summer our wheat farmers saw wheat piled in the street as a result of the dock strike. At prior times we have faced the same situation with corn and grain sorghum as a result of rail strikes.

The time has come for passage of legislation such as S. 3232 which will provide a means toward settlement of such transportation strikes when they endanger the economy of the nation or a region. I ask my colleagues to support this legislation for the future of those farmers remaining in rural America.