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NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

(R.—Kans.)

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DOLE CALLS FOR ACTION ON PROPANE PRICES

LA CYGNE, KS.--Senator Bob Dole said today that he favored an immediate roll-back of prices being charged for propane.

"I have talked with Kansans all over the State about the high price of propane and many report that their heating costs in this extremely cold weather we are having are running well over \$100 a month. In some cases, for an average sized house, the monthly expense may come closer to \$150."

Dole said he had talked to Federal Energy Office Director William Simon on Thursday and had told Simon about the price situation, which Dole described as "outrageous." "It affects many people," Dole added, "but older people on fixed incomes are particularly hard hit by having to pay \$100 or more per month this year for something that cost \$50 or less last year."

Dole said "the indications are that the price of propane has risen 300% or more in the past year. I'm not at all convinced that the cost of producing it has risen even close to that much. The explanation for the price rise must lie elsewhere, and I would favor a roll-back of forty-five to sixty days duration, during which time the Internal Revenue Service might investigate the reasons for the price increases." Dole is recommending similar investigation into the pricing of other items such as petrochemical feedstocks and the like.

"In addition," Dole said, "the propane retailer finds himself in an untenable position because he is locked into his May 15th profit margins, while his operating costs have also risen some 300% or so. These dealers require some relief if they are to stay in business serving people's needs for heating fuel."