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CONTACT:

DOLE AGAIN CALLS FOR END TO SOVIET GRAIN EMBARGO

SALINA, KANSAS -- Senator Bob Dole (R.-Kansas) today called once again for an end to the Soviet grain embargo. Dole said, "The grain embargo has been a disaster for the farmer, has not hurt the Soviet Union and has not achieved the desired objective of causing the Russians to pull out of Afghanistan."

"Recent reports from the European Economic Community show that Russia has imported twice as much grain this year as last year. Russia is finding new markets from which to buy grain and is looking for ways to improve their production system. How can this be helpful to the Kansas farmer who needs markets for his wheat and corn?" Dole said.

"Statistics collected by the EEC show that the Soviet Union imported 28.2 million metric tons of wheat and other grains during the 1979-80 export season, compared to 14.9 million tons the previous year," Dole stated.

Dole reported a top French official said, "The embargo turned out to be 'a bad joke'. The Europeans were the only ones who respected it."

Dole said, "It is evident the Russians are not leaving Afghanistan because of the embargo. Since our objective has failed, how long is the Carter Administration going to continue to enforce a policy that has failed? Does the Carter Administration have any plan to end the embargo? We lose wheat and corn sales every month yet the disastrous policy is kept in effect. I wish President Carter would tell the Kansas farmer what he plans to do."

"The problems the Soviets are having with their food supply were not caused by the embargo, they were caused by the weather and the weakness of the Communist farm production system. President Carter cannot claim the embargo caused the present food problems in the Soviet Union," Dole said.

"The long range implications for the American farmer and taxpayer are certainly not bright if the embargo is kept on. I believe we have a right to know what President Carter plans to do about the embargo if Russia does not pull out of Afghanistan. The key question is, how long is Carter going to keep a policy that has failed in effect? How long is Carter going to punish the American farmer and taxpayer because of his failed foreign policy?" said Dole.