

News from Senator

# BOB DOLE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
TUESDAY, MARCH 23, 1982

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## DOLE MEETS WITH SOVIET OFFICIALS TO REOPEN GRAIN TRADE

WASHINGTON -- In an effort to reopen stagnant grain channels to the Soviet Union, Senators Bob Dole (R. - Kan.) and Roger Jepsen (R. - Iowa) today announced they have recently met with top Soviet officials.

At a breakfast this morning for the American Agriculture Editors Association, Dole described last Friday's face-to-face session with Soviet Ambassador Anatoli Dobrynin and Trade Representative Yuri Kalashnikov.

"Senator Jepsen and I concluded several weeks ago that something had to be done to remove the de facto grain embargo that has existed ever since the imposition of martial law in Poland last December," Dole said. "We believe that the meeting with the Soviets was the necessary first step to removing a psychological trade barrier between the two countries."

Senator Dole said the Friday meeting with Dobrynin was a positive one, not only serving as an icebreaker, but also as a signal that grain trade could revert to pre-Carter Embargo levels if each trading partner views the other as "reliable."

"A communications vacuum has existed between the U. S. and the Soviet Union ever since the political problems in Poland, and, in my view, no one seemed willing to jump into that void," Dole said. "Other offices have been merely whining about the farm economy without offering any realistic suggestions that could improve conditions. There has been talk of more government supports, a policy that has tacked-on an additional \$5-billion to an already strapped budget. We believe that by meeting with the Soviets, and expressing our mutual trade interests, the most significant available first step has already been taken. Farmers don't want government hand-outs, they just want the opportunity to make a profit in the marketplace."

Both Dole and Jepsen indicated strong support for President Reagan's major agriculture policy statement yesterday in which the President insisted any trade embargo would be an across-the-board measure imposed only in the face of an extreme emergency. The Senators believe that as a result of the President's statement, the United States will indeed be perceived as a more reliable trading partner.

"We have to increase exports. By meeting with the Soviets, in addition to the President's strong commitment yesterday, the pressure will be on the administration to vigorously pursue export opportunities. The President made an outstanding speech on Monday, but unless we start selling something, it won't mean much. And that is the next step--getting the Soviets back into the market," Dole concluded.