

BOB DOLE



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DOLE CALLS FOR POSITIVE APPROACH TO INTERNATIONAL TRADE --

REJECTS DEMOCRAT'S "MINDLESS PROTECTIONISM"

PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA -- Senator Robert Dole (R.-Kan.), whose Senate Finance Committee has jurisdiction over international trade, today ripped recent Democratic statements on trade as "mindless protectionism."

Dole leveled the charge as the keynote speaker at a fund-raising dinner for Senator John Heinz (R.-Penn.) who serves on the Kansas Senator's Finance Committee.

"Last week, in response to the President's economic progress report, a spokesman for the Democratic party suggested that they were advocating 'fair trade' as one alternative to the President's program," Dole said. "Recently other would-be presidential hopefuls have gone even further singing songs of almost mindless protectionism. After listening to these statements, I found them to be both amazing in their naivete and amusing in that key Republican trade policy initiatives are now being claimed as Democrat ideas."

According to Dole, revitalizing the nation's economy is the first step toward making U.S. businesses more competitive in the international marketplace.

"We can't save struggling, non-competitive American businesses by merely imposing strict trade barriers," Dole said. "While our industries become more competitive on the homefront through a revitalized economy, we must continue to expand our export markets and to protect American jobs from unfair foreign competition."

Dole pointed out that the U.S. is still the world's leading trading nation, with total trade last year topping the \$500 billion mark.

"It's clear we do not help ourselves with mindless protectionism. In addition to the fact that we make money, we must continue to trade for an even more important reason -- jobs," Dole said. "80 percent of all new manufacturing jobs created in the late 1970's were linked to export. In agriculture one out of every three acres planted by American farmers is producing crops for export. Since we know that export and import growth are closely linked, we will surely stop our economic expansion dead in its tracks if we simply close our market to the products of the countries to whom we are selling our products. It is naive to think otherwise."

As Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, Dole cited recent export expansion legislation as proof the Administration and Republicans on the Hill have clearly taken the lead on international trade issues. Dole also underscored his Committee's commitment to protect U.S. jobs from unfair foreign competition.

"Not only has the Administration pursued unfair trade practice cases under domestic law, they have also been active under international agreements. The President has initiated more cases under these agreements in the time he has been in office than any of his predecessors," Dole said.