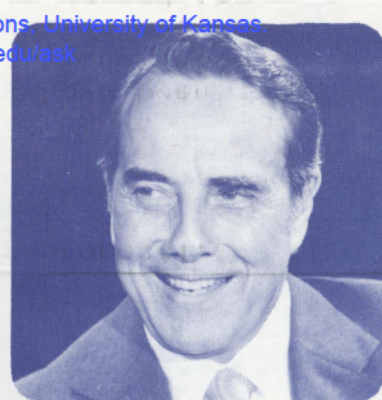


BOB DOLE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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DOLE URGES USDA TO RELEASE EMERGENCY WHEAT TO AFRICAN NATIONS

WASHINGTON -Kansas Senator Bob Dole today urged Secretary of Agriculture John Block to immediately release 300,000 metric tons of wheat and wheat products for the famine-struck sub-Saharan region of Africa. Senator Dole, who introduced legislation under the Temporary Emergency Food Assistance Act of 1983 to establish the Emergency Food Reserve authority, stressed the opportunity to provide humanitarian assistance as quickly as possible.

Dole made his request during a private meeting with Block in the Senator's office this morning. Following the meeting, Dole sent a letter to Block to give further details on his proposal. The text of the letter is as follows:

Dear Secretary Block:

As you know, both the Administration and Congress have been concerned about the severe and widespread famine conditions in Africa, particularly countries such as Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan, Chad, and Mauritania. In the two urgent supplementals passed in the 98th session of Congress, \$150 million was earmarked for food assistance to African countries for distribution through Title II of the PL-480 program.

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has identified slightly less than thirty countries that are potential recipients of emergency food assistance. Preliminary figures could show a need of at least 3.5 mmt, while pledges for 1985 fall far short of necessary levels at this stage. Revised estimates soon to be made available by the FAO could show an even larger food deficit for the sub-Saharan African region.

The Emergency Food Reserve provision established under Section 202 of the Temporary Emergency Food Assistance Act of 1983 provides authority to the Secretary of Agriculture to release 300,000 tons of wheat and wheat products for emergency humanitarian food needs in developing countries. This authority has never been utilized.

Since all of Title II funds in the PL-480 program have been allocated for 1985, any further assistance would have to result from a shift of Title funds within the PL-480 program or additional authorizations by the 99th Congress. Given the urgent needs of African countries, I would urge you to immediately exercise your discretion to release up to 300,000 tons of wheat from the Emergency Food Reserve.