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# NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

(R.—Kans.)

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## DOLE OBJECTS TO RETAIL BEEF PRICES

WASHINGTON, D.C.--"It appears consumers have been getting the short end of the stick on the price of beef," Senator Bob Dole said in Washington today, "and unless we see lower beef prices, packers and retailers may find that there are few cattle feeders left in business to purchase beef from in a few months."

Dole said that U.S. Department of Agriculture figures indicated that the retail price of beef had dropped, on the average, no more than 10.5 cents per pound while the price of live cattle was dropping at a rate which should have produced an equivalent decrease of cents 32 cents per pound on retail beef.

The figures were developed by USDA in a comparison study undertaken at Dole's urging. The study compared live cattle prices with prices charged at retail for beef over the counter. The study concluded that "it is difficult to read into the data currently available, that markets are being manipulated." The study acknowledged that "there is no question that many cattle feeders have suffered substantial losses because of the distortions caused by price ceilings last year." It added that marketplace "readjustments" are taking place although "the truckers strike added untimely further distortions to cattle and beef prices and market flows."

Dole said that recent indications of declining retail beef prices were "encouraging" but that he hopes the trend will continue. "If beef retailers would reduce their profit margins to normal levels," he added, "they could sell consumers a greater volume of beef at lower prices, or pay cattle feeders a better price, or better still, they could do both."