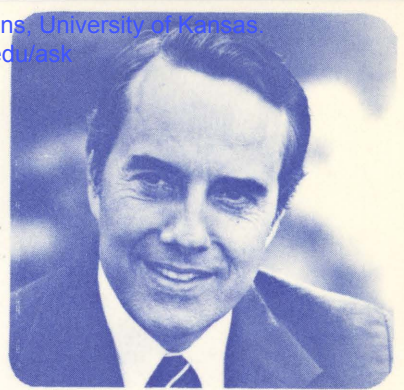


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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
TUESDAY, AUGUST 12, 1980

not released

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CARTER ECONOMIC POLICIES HAVE RAVAGED HOPES OF ELDERLY AMERICANS, DOLE SAYS

WICHITA -- Senator Bob Dole (R-Kan.), ranking Republican on the Senate subcommittee on nutrition of the Senate Agriculture Committee, said today that the Carter Administration's economic policies "have ripped to shreds the hopes of the elderly for a carefree retirement."

Dole and Senator Rudy Boschwitz (R-Minn.), also a member of the nutrition subcommittee, today held public hearings on the nutrition needs of older Americans in Wichita and later in Kansas City, Kan.

"The elderly find themselves living in fear of being poverty-stricken during a time when they had hoped to be able to relax after a life of hard work," Dole said. "The food stamp program is becoming more of an income maintenance program than the supplemental nutrition program, which was its original intent. This happens because the ravages of inflation have caused increases in the cost of all other necessities, like housing, energy, transportation and medical care. What little income exists, evaporates quickly as the great hand of inflation sweeps by. Invariably, nutrition takes a back seat to the other necessities of life.

"Senator Boschwitz and I are seeking information today that will be helpful to us at the federal level in making nutrition programs for the elderly more effective.

"In Kansas, there are nearly 400,000 individuals who are age 60 or over. Of these numbers, about 40 percent are elderly who reside in rural areas. Their problems are complicated by distance and a lack of accessibility to available services. This imposed feeling of isolation further complicates the delivery of services to a significant segment of our nation's elderly. The psychological effects of this isolation have profound effects on their daily habits, including nutrition intake.

"Given the fiscal environment in which we find ourselves as we head into the Eighties, there is a great emphasis being placed on limiting federal spending. However, there is a sense of responsibility toward our nation's elderly population, and the budget will not be balanced at their expense. There is a prevailing protective attitude toward those who cannot help themselves -- they are the victims of economic circumstances beyond their control that they have not caused, and over which they have no control -- circumstances that nonetheless control them. From the federal level we can expect to see policies of controlled federal spending emerge. This will require improved program administration and increased responsiveness to the needs of an aging population. Existing programs in social services, education, housing, employment, crime prevention and other areas must be tailored to better serve the needs of older Americans.

"We in Washington do not have all the answers. Only by hearing from those involved in these programs at the grassroots level can we hope to legislate intelligently on these important issues. My commitment to satisfy the needs of our elderly is undiminished."