

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
SUNDAY, OCT. 5, 1980

CONTACT: KIM WELLS
(913) 233-1203

DOLE SAYS IT IS NATIONAL DISGRACE THAT 15% OF ELDERLY LIVE IN POVERTY

KANSAS CITY, KS.--Senator Bob Dole (R.-Kansas) said today that recently released figures that show 15 percent of the nation's elderly population living below the poverty line "constitute a national disgrace."

The figures, released by the President's Commission on Pension Policy over the weekend, also indicated that "if it weren't for food stamps, Medicare, subsidized housing, this portion of our elderly would be living in abject, rock bottom poverty." The report went on to say that "a significant portion of (the remainder of) the elderly population lives in borderline poverty."

Disturbing

"I find these figures very disturbing," Senator Dole told an audience in Kansas City, Kansas, Sunday. "The harsh facts are that inflation and economic stagnation hit our senior citizens hardest of all. And they are the most vulnerable. Nor is it a problem that's likely to fade in the 1980's. Every demographic report I've seen indicates that the population over the age of 65 will be increasing at record rates in the coming decade. To my mind, there's nothing quite so important as seeking solutions to the plight of our elderly citizens. They deserve better than what they have been getting over the past five years," Dole said.

Proud

"I'm proud of my work on the Senate Agriculture Committee and the Senate Finance Committee for elderly Kansans and older citizens all across this nation. I'm proud of my work for food stamps, for Medicare and Medicaid, for meals programs and transportation programs for our elderly. And I can tell you one thing-- Bob Dole is going to be there working for the elderly in those same Committees, should the voters of Kansas honor me with another term. I can think of no more important work for a United States Senator than insuring that our senior citizens can live out their lives with dignity and respect," Dole said.