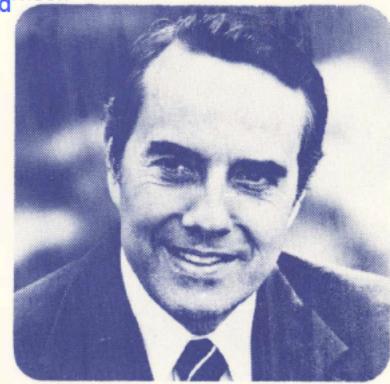


News from Senator

BOB DOLE



(R - Kansas)

2213 Dirksen Building, Washington, D.C. 20510

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CONTACT: WALT RIKER
(202) 224-6521

TRADE FIGURES WORRY DOLE

WASHINGTON - Senator Bob Dole (R.-Kan.) today expressed serious concern with the merchandise trade figures released for the fourth quarter of 1981 by the U.S. Department of Commerce. According to Dole, the figures represent a continuing and alarming inability of the United States to sell competitive products to Japan and a weakening of traditionally strong competitive positions in agriculture exports.

The Department of Commerce places the fourth quarter trade deficit at \$9.3 billion, a 33-percent increase over the preceding quarter's figures.

"The deficit is particularly discouraging in that it represents reversal of the trend of declining deficits of the past three years and came in a year of actual decline in the value of imports of petroleum and petroleum products," said Dole. "While the United States spent \$77.6 billion for imported oil and oil products in 1981, or about one third of our total import bill, this was still a reduction of over \$1.3 billion from the preceding year.

"Exports as a whole declined by 2 percent. Our agricultural producers continued their strong export performance, but only in value terms. Despite this increase, the figures reflect the difficult problems faced by our farmers. Exports of agricultural products increased 9 percent in terms of volume, but only 4 percent in terms of value, dramatically indicating the depressed world market conditions," Dole said.

"While the increased deficit can be attributed to a number of factors, it is clear that the United States government as a whole and the Committee on Finance in particular must continue its efforts to insure competitive market opportunities for all our producers. Not only must we expand trading opportunities in other markets for our manufactured products, we must also see to it that our farmers are not forced to compete with artificially low priced products around the world.

"I will continue to follow the trade figures closely and be actively involved in the legislative process seeking to insure that they represent a fair balance of competitive opportunities," Dole stated.