

BOB DOLE



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DOLE MEETS WITH TOP JAPANESE TRADE ENVOY

WASHINGTON -- Senator Robert Dole (R.-Kan.) today met with special Japanese trade envoy and Diet member Masumi Esaki to discuss recent attempts by Japanese officials to remove trade barriers currently impeding the flow of U.S. goods to Japan.

As Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, Senator Dole has voiced concern over the alarming U.S. trade deficit with Japan: \$18 billion in 1981, and a projected \$50 billion by 1990.

Following a January Washington meeting Dole had with Japanese Trade Minister Shintaro Abe, Japan took action on 67 of 99 specific trade complaints registered by the United States.

"Although I have been encouraged by Japan's recent attempts to eliminate unfair trade barriers to U.S. exports, I made it clear to Mr. Esaki and his delegation today that Japan must continue to make a serious effort to open up trade channels between the two countries," Dole said.

"There remain substantial trade barriers yet to be cleared. I am still very concerned about the lack of access now plaguing American agriculture products: lumber, grain, citrus, beef and tobacco products, for example. These items must have increased access to the Japanese market," Dole told the visiting delegation.

The Senator expressed disappointment that there didn't appear to be any likelihood of further liberalization of agricultural quotas at the present time, but was encouraged that the trade delegation promised to study seriously the agriculture quota problem with a view toward end-of-the-year talks already scheduled between the two countries.

"The Japanese were eager to know the future of reciprocity legislation already introduced in the Finance Committee's subcommittee on trade. I told them this country doesn't want a trade war. But the size of the trade deficit together with the unfair import barriers has forced Congress to consider means of redressing the problem," Dole said.

Mr. Esaki indicated the Japanese were interested in importing "big ticket items" such as high technology products that will help chop into the "enormous" deficit. Esaki said even if trade channels continue to be streamlined, it could be quite a while before the huge trade deficit is brought into balance.