



NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

(R.—Kans.)

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DOLE SPONSORS ROCK ISLAND RELIEF EFFORT

Washington, D. C. -- Senator Bob Dole announced today that he had sponsored legislation authorizing the Secretary of Transportation to make a loan of \$100 million to the financially-troubled Rock Island Railroad.

The bill, introduced late Friday night by Dole and 13 other Midwestern Senators, was the product of a Thursday meeting at which it was concluded that "no other approach would be adequate to insure continuation of the services now provided by Rock Island, while avoiding wide-scale economic dislocation."

"Although many have been willing to let the Rock Island die and be picked over by competing lines," Dole said, "I did not believe that represented a very sound and responsible solution to the immediate problem. When we start talking about grain elevators left with no rail service whatsoever, and small communities with 50 percent unemployment, we have to react in terms of an emergency."

"I'm not interested in rushing to the aid of bankrupt corporations," he continued, but the picture changes somewhat when a vital element of our transportation system -- affecting more than 550 industries and 8,300 workers in Kansas alone -- is at stake. Moreover, by contrast with the hundreds of millions of dollars in outright subsidies this Congress has made to the Penn Central network, a \$100 million loan -- with full repayment provisions -- seems entirely reasonable for a carrier serving 13 States."

Dole explained that the Rock Island loan, if approved, would not only establish the railroad's financial stability, keep all its trains running, and maintain its current work force, but would also enable it to institute a comprehensive rehabilitation program to increase its overall efficiency. "That in itself is going to create about 5,000 new jobs -- a great many of them in Kansas -- and to me that's a worthwhile investment."