

97



NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

(R.—Kans.)

New Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510 (202) 225-6521

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
THURSDAY, MAY 15, 1975

CONTACT: JANET ANDERSON

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION EXEMPTED FROM ACA JURISDICTION

WASHINGTON, D.C.--As the end of debate on Consumer Protection legislation neared, the Senate Thursday adopted a "farm exemption amendment" authored by Senator Bob Dole.

Explaining the need for his amendment to S. 200, the bill establishing an Agency for Consumer Advocacy, Dole cited "numerous examples of Government interventions prompted by well-intentioned, consumer oriented efforts that have had a detrimental impact on the agricultural industry."

Dole pointed out that some government actions "to help consumers in the short run, have been harmful in the long run." Though the soybean export embargo in 1973 was an action "taken on behalf of consumers," Dole said, "I cannot find how it benefited them."

Without the agricultural exemption provision, it is expected that establishment of the consumer advocacy agency might "create another voice in the Government calling for intervention in export sales and other matters directly affecting farm production."

One concern raised by some is that the proposed consumer agency would find it hard to resist pressures to seek to force lower prices for food and other household needs. In Dole's view, these pressures could result in ACA opposition to food exports, to reasonable levels of milk price supports, and even to the kind of pressures that led to a freeze on beef prices in 1973.

The amendment, passed by a 55-34 margin, is identical to language contained in a Dole substitute ACA bill offered in 1974, and widely supported at the time. The farm exemption, Dole says, will not exempt the non-farm food costs, "the biggest source" of food price increases, and would avoid forcing farmers unfairly to defend themselves from the "adversary positions ACA would take with respect to farm prices."