



NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

(R.-Kans.)

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REMARKS OF SENATOR BOB DOLE
PRESS CONFERENCE AND RALLY
COMMISSION ON DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL HUNGER AND MALNUTRITION
12:00 NOON, SEPTEMBER 27, 1977
CAPITOL STEPS

I am pleased to cosponsor with Pat Leahy and my other colleagues, a resolution to establish Commission on Domestic and International Hunger and Malnutrition.

Needless to say, food production and distribution is a complex problem requiring international attention. I was among the Congressional advisors to the World Food Conference in 1974 and I believe that Conference and subsequent follow-up actions have sparked a keen interest in food matters; an interest which has caught the imagination of people in both developed and yet-to-be-developed nations.

The problem of world hunger and malnutrition still exists, but fortunately more resources are being directed to a broad spectrum of food issues -- food aid, agricultural research, production, distribution, nutrition, investment, trade and so on. Yet still more needs to be done. But it can be done only if all nations work together in a reasoned and rational manner. "Human reason," Thomas Mann wrote, "needs only to will more strongly than fate and it is fate."

SOLUTION SHOULD BE MAJOR INTERNATIONAL GOAL

Frequently we talk about our achievement of putting a man on the moon; and, indeed that was quite an achievement. However, a more difficult goal to achieve because of its international complexities is that of adequately addressing the problems of world hunger and malnutrition.

A major difference between our success in putting a man on the moon and in finding the solution to the hunger and malnutrition problem is that the latter cannot be accomplished by the unilateral action of one nation. It will take the cooperation and coordinated efforts of the developed and developing nations, of national and international institutions and organizations, and of the people themselves in accepting change and providing resources to accomplish it.

After having said this, however, I hasten to say that "ending hunger and malnutrition" should be an international goal. I liked the bold objective declared by Henry Kissinger at the World Food Conference -- "that within a decade no child will go to bed hungry, that no family will fear for its next day's bread, and that no human being's future and capacities will be stunted by malnutrition." I hope that President Carter and other heads of state will help such a dream come true.

AID FROM DEVELOPED NATIONS NECESSARY

I believe that linkage of food assistance to agricultural development is an excellent idea and one that will hasten the day when no one goes to bed hungry. The food gap in developing countries can never be filled with food aid from donor countries. The developed countries must help the needy countries to develop their economies, especially agriculture. This not only makes sense from the standpoint of a humanitarian act, but it also makes good economic sense viewed from our own self-interest perspective. Many former P.L. 480 food recipient countries are now good cash customers for U.S. agricultural exports.

The World Bank has substantially increased its lending for agricultural development in developing nations and I commend that effort.

Section 211 of the International Development and Food assistance Act of 1977 provides "U.S. food assistance for development." That legislation was initiated in the Senate Agriculture Committee. I supported this provision of P.L. 480 and have urged the Carter Administration to increase their P.L. 480 budget substantially above the amounts now planned for FY 78.

BIPARTISAN EFFORT NEEDED

Public Law 480 (Food for Peace), through which \$30 billion worth of farm commodities has gone to foreign recipient countries was passed in 1954 by a Republican Congress and was signed by a Republican President, Dwight D. Eisenhower. It has been amended and supported over the last 23 years by my colleagues on both sides of the aisle. Thus, P.L. 480 probably has had more bipartisan support over a sustained period of time than any other single piece of legislation. Here at home the food stamp program, the child nutrition programs, and other domestic food assistance programs are bipartisan efforts.

I believe the problem of world hunger and malnutrition deserves this strong and effective bipartisan effort.

This is why I am joining with over fifty of my colleagues in the Senate and 240 in the House in asking for the establishment of a Commission on Domestic and International Hunger and Malnutrition. This is needed to maintain the momentum that was initiated by the World Food Conference and to continue the search for ideas and new ways to solve the problems of world hunger and malnutrition. The nearer we come to solving this important human problem the closer we will come to achieving a lasting world peace. I believe it was Mahatma Gandhi who said "Not even God would dare approach a hungry man except in the form of bread."

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