



NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

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MULTILATERAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS (MIN) A 'MIXED BAG' FOR AGRICULTURE, SAYS DOLE

WASHINGTON— Senator Bob Dole (R.-Kansas), ranking Republican on the Senate Finance Committee, and a senior member of the Agriculture Committee, said today that the Multilateral Trade Negotiations (MIN) represent a "mixed bag" for the nation's food producing and export sector.

"The Multilateral Trade Negotiations, which have involved over 100 nations and have taken more than five years, are nearly completed. On January 4th of this year the President notified Congress that he intended to enter into this package of agreements. Prior to the actual submission of the MIN package later in the Spring, there will be intensive consultations between the Administration and the Finance Committee concerning the final shape of U.S. legislation to implement the MIN. Included in the package," said Dole, "are codes concerning trade practices which affect our agricultural interests. Since the legislation cannot be amended, and must be voted up or down. Thus we are in a critical stage," added Dole.

The Effect of the MIN on American Agriculture

"Final judgment is not yet possible or wise, partly because important details are not yet negotiated or revealed and partly because further study of the package and consultation with farm groups must be undertaken for a package of this magnitude and complexity," said Dole. "However, our preliminary assessment indicates that there are advantages for U.S. agriculture in some aspects of MIN, but these should not be oversold.

"Considering the magnitude of foreign barriers to our farm exports, including foreign import restrictions and heavily subsidized export competition, the results of the MIN will be disappointing to American farmers. For example, Japan has agreed to some increased market access for our high quality beef, but the amount is tiny in relation to what our cattlemen could export there. Similarly, a new subsidy code which bans subsidies on industrial products still permits heavy agricultural export subsidies within limited disciplines. Furthermore, the U.S. has made, or is rumored to have made, concessions to foreign agricultural interests which must be carefully weighed, including concessions on vegetables, corn, rice and cheese. The increased cheese quotas, whose chief beneficiaries would be the less efficient but highly subsidized foreign producers, causes particular concern," said Dole.

"The Administration asserts that new codes concerning such subjects as subsidies, import relief measures (safeguards), product standards, and import licensing will bring some relief and discipline to foreign trade practices. They further say that these codes, as well as certain specific concessions given by Japan, European countries, and others will open the door to foreign markets for some of our products such as high-quality beef, turkey, and tobacco. Well, we'll certainly be carefully studying these and other areas. Whether or not the codes and other actions indeed will open doors or merely give diplomats a chance to talk is a major question. I hope the package will benefit farmers, and my final judgment will be based on practical effects rather than on Administration hopes and promises," said Dole.