

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



(R - Kansas)

SH 141 Hart Building, Washington, D.C. 20510

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6, 1983

CONTACT: WALT RIKER
(202) 224-6521

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR BOB DOLE

NUTRITION SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING OF WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6, 1983

NUTRITIONAL STATUS OF LOW-INCOME AMERICANS IN THE 1980'S

We welcome those of you who have come here today to testify before the Nutrition Subcommittee on "The Nutritional Status of Low-Income Americans in the 1980's." Some of you have traveled long distances to be with us, and we appreciate your making that effort and taking the time from your busy schedules. We look forward to hearing what you will have to say. The information you provide will be helpful as we make policy decisions during the 98th Congress with regard to federal nutrition programs.

I would like to extend a special welcome to my friend and colleague Jack Danforth, who has been very active in the area of nutrition issues, even though he is not a member of this Committee.

DOMESTIC HUNGER AND MALNUTRITION

This Senator has been concerned about the increasing reports of a rise in domestic hunger and malnutrition -- reports that are reminiscent of the times two decades ago when the field foundation did its studies in low-income areas in this country. As a result of the work of the Select Committee on Nutrition, many of the current federal nutrition programs came into being, with the Food Stamp Program acting as the mainstay for other efforts, like the child nutrition programs, WIC, and the elderly feeding programs, which target particularly vulnerable segments of our population. Recently with the enactment of the jobs bill into law, an expanded commodity distribution program was included, based on S. 17, which was an attempt to expand efforts to provide surplus commodities to those charitable organizations serving the poor and unemployed, like food banks, soup kitchens, and churches. For whatever reasons, there are many families and individuals who are not being reached or satisfied by existing nutrition programs.

The character of a nation will be judged by the way it treats its poor. It is embarrassing to have the leader of a foreign nation visit and make reference to our soup kitchens. When Prime Minister Nakasone from Japan attended a reception in his honor during a recent visit to Washington, D.C., he said: "I am aware of the economic difficulty facing the U.S. today. When we see pictures of people standing in soup lines and sleeping in their cars we are very saddened."

DIFFICULT ECONOMIC TIMES INCREASE HUMAN NEEDS

The prolonged nature of the current economic recession has created great hardship for many families and individuals across this country. We should not exercise judgment concerning policy options without listening to those in daily contact with the people our decisions may affect. We need to evaluate what is happening at the local level with regard to the nutrition needs of low-income Americans, in order to be able to make reasonable decisions concerning federal nutrition policies here in the Congress. There is a scarcity of available data on nutrition needs in the 1980's, and many of our witnesses have new statistical evidence to share with us.

....MORE

We are especially concerned about the elderly, whose problems are unique and compounded by more complex health needs and the lack of accessibility to available assistance in many cases. Children, infants and pregnant mothers are another group that is particularly vulnerable because of the health implications of a lack of good nutrition at critical stages of growth. There are some new studies available on the effectiveness of the WIC Program, as well as the School Lunch and School Breakfast programs, and we will hear about those from our child nutrition panel.

CONTACT: WALT BAKER
(202) 524-6831

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6, 1983

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR BOB DOLE

-30-

NUTRITION SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING OF WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6, 1983

NUTRITIONAL STATUS OF LOW-INCOME AMERICANS IN THE 1980'S

We welcome those of you who have come here today to testify before the Nutrition Subcommittee on "The Nutritional Status of Low-Income Americans in the 1980's." Some of you have traveled long distances to be with us, and we appreciate your making that effort and taking the time from your busy schedules. We look forward to hearing what you will have to say. The information you provide will be helpful as we make policy decisions during the 98th Congress with regard to federal nutrition programs.

I would like to extend a special welcome to my friend and colleague Jack Denton, who has been very active in the area of nutrition issues, even though he is not a member of this Committee.

DOMESTIC HUNGER AND MALNUTRITION

This Senator has been concerned about the increasing reports of a rise in domestic hunger and malnutrition -- reports that are reminiscent of the times two decades ago when the food foundation did its studies in low-income areas in this country. As a result of the work of the Select Committee on Nutrition, many of the current federal nutrition programs came into being, with the food stamp program acting as the mainstay for other efforts. The child nutrition program, WIC, and the elderly feeding program, which target particularly vulnerable segments of our population, recently with the enactment of the bill, an expanded commodity distribution program was included, based on S. 17, which was an attempt to expand efforts to provide supplies commodities to those charitable organizations serving the poor and unemployed, like food banks, soup kitchens, and churches. For whatever reasons, there are many families and individuals who are not being reached or satisfied by existing nutrition programs.

The character of a nation will be judged by the way it treats its poor. It is embarrassing to have the leader of a foreign nation visit and make reference to our soup kitchens. When Prime Minister Nakasone from Japan attended a reception in his honor during a recent visit to Washington, D.C., he said, "I am aware of the economic difficulty facing the U.S. today. When we see pictures of people standing in soup lines and sleeping in their cars we are very sad."

DIFFICULT ECONOMIC TIMES INCREASE HUMAN NEEDS

The prolonged nature of the current economic recession has created great hardship for many families and individuals across this country. We should not exercise judgment concerning policy options without listening to those in daily contact with the people our decisions may affect. We need to evaluate what is happening at the local level with regard to the nutrition needs of low-income Americans in order to be able to make responsible decisions concerning federal nutrition policy in the Congress. There is a scarcity of available data on nutrition needs in the 1980's, and many of our witnesses have new statistical evidence to share with us.

MORE