

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



(R - Kansas)

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10, 1983

CONTACT: WALT RIKER,
SCOTT RICHARDSON 202/224-6521

DOLE ADDRESSES OHIO CORNGROWERS

CALLS FOR PRIVATE SECTOR CONFERENCE ON FARM TRADE RULES

COLUMBUS, OHIO -- In remarks to the Ohio Cornrowers Association, Kansas Senator Bob Dole today expressed support for creation of an international conference of private sector agriculture representatives to seek agreement on the proper role of governments in intervening in international agricultural trade.

"Perhaps those who have the most stake in avoiding a trade war -- farmers and businessmen involved in farm trade -- can be more successful at finding solutions than their government representatives," said Dole, in reference to the use of farm export subsidies by the European Economic Community and other countries.

"The international rules governing agricultural trade, particularly in the subsidies area, do not work well. The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) is bogged down in disputes over what the rules should be," said Dole. "Meanwhile, governments inch ever closer to retaliation through greater export subsidization that would be mutually debilitating and budget-busting. At the GATT ministerial meeting in November 1982, the European Economic Community refused to consider a GATT review of the rules on agricultural trade. Perhaps if a consensus is reached in the private sector first, the citizens of each country can persuade their elected representatives to act."

Other initiatives raised by the Kansas Republican for improving conditions for U.S. agricultural exports included:

- Linking the granting of benefits under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) to advanced developing countries to their agreement not to use export subsidies.
- Budgeting cargo preference for U.S. flag shipping under either the Defense or Transportation Departments rather than in the P.L. 480 account.
- Expanding the use of surplus farm products as bonuses for foreign commercial purchases of U.S. farm and non-farm goods.
- Increasing food assistance to developing countries which agree to retire a proportionate share of their foreign debt.

Dole also elaborated on his request in a letter to President Reagan on November 1 for the establishment of a Presidential Task Force on Agricultural Trade and Food Assistance Policy. Dole issued a warning of the difficulties in trying to increase funding for export programs when the federal budget -- including agricultural programs -- is out of control.

"We must strive to get more productivity out of our expenditures on food aid and trade by reviewing existing programs and trying to make them more efficient," said Dole.