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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WASHINGTON, D.C. June 5 -- U.S. Senator Bob Dole (R-Kans.) in a telegram to Swedish Prime Minister Olaf Palme today urged the Swedish Government to intercede on behalf of American Prisoners of War in Southeast Asia. Palme is currently visiting the United States.

Text of the telegram:

Mr. Prime Minister:

Knowing of the Swedish Government's long-standing concern for and efforts on behalf of international human rights, and having a deep personal interest in the status and wellbeing of United States military personnel being held prisoners of war by the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, I respectfully request, in the interest of international justice and humanitarian practices that the Government of Sweden intercede with the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam on behalf of these Americans.

I would suggest that this intercession take the form of a request to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam that it comply with the terms of the 1949 Geneva Convention Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War, of which that government is a signatory.

Failing a satisfactory response by the Democratic Republic of Vietnam to this request, I further suggest that the Swedish Government, in accordance with the 1949 Geneva Convention, offer intern within Sweden, United States personnel held prisoners of war by the Democratic Republic of Vietnam until agreement can be reached on the release of all prisoners.

Internment within Sweden would assure these Americans of the treatment to which they are entitled by the law of nations and concepts of civilized society.

On the part of the families of these prisoners and the entire American public, I appeal to Your Excellency and the government of Sweden to take all possible steps to secure humane treatment for Americans held as prisoners of war in Southeast Asia.

(signed)

Bob Dole
U.S. Senate