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EMBARGO --- HOLD FOR RELEASE WEDNESDAY AM'S, OCTOBER 21

WASHINGTON, D.C. Oct. 21 -- U.S. Senator Bob Dole (R-Kans.) in a personal letter to 72 Senators, announced his support for the United States Supersonic Transport Program today. Fifty-eight of those Senators voted for the SST in 1969, and the remainder were not recorded as being either for or against.

In the letter (a copy is attached), Dole discussed the pros and cons of continuing the SST Prototype Development Program and concluded it is in the nation's best interests that the program go forward. He urged his colleagues to vote for the \$290 million appropriation for the SST, which is included in the Fiscal 1971 Department of Transportation budget request. It is expected this appropriations bill will be considered by the Senate shortly after Congress returns from the November election recess.

UNITED STATES SENATE  
Washington, D. C. 20510

October 21, 1970

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Dear :

I have voted in favor of the SST in the past, but have stated publicly my reservations about the proposed \$290 million appropriations for Fiscal Year 1971. In reaching a determination, I have undertaken a careful examination of all factors involved. Let me emphasize that, although Boeing Company has a facility in Wichita, Kansas, only a small fractional proportion of the prototype contract directly benefits the Wichita area. This fact, therefore, did not influence my decision.

The United States Supersonic Transport Prototype Development Program has been the subject of considerable speculation and discussion in recent months in the press and Congress and by concerned individuals everywhere. I have been troubled by the sharp differences of opinion, but after an in-depth review have concluded the prototype program should go forward. It should be noted that in pursuit of information, we have contacted Boeing officials on several occasions. Frankly, the responses received have not always been consistent or accurate. Should the program go forward, it is my hope Boeing officials will redouble their efforts to keep Members of Congress informed with current and accurate information.

Some opponents of the SST program seek to imply that the Administration is indifferent to environmental or economic concerns, but I find the opposite to be true. The Department of Transportation's Supersonic Transport Office is dealing forthrightly with every issue. Where information is lacking, it is being sought, where clarification or verification is needed, it is being obtained. The technical challenges implicit in the program are being met, and are well within our Nation's capabilities. There is, in my opinion, no factual basis for yielding to the fears, undocumented theories and innuendoes which vocal critics have raised, and thereby jeopardize America's hard-earned leadership in aviation by failing to press forward with the U. S. SST prototype development program.

Based on my examination of the key issues, I have summarized my reasons for urging continuation of the prototype program. Hopefully, you will arrive at the same conclusion and support the program during deliberations on the Department of Transportation Fiscal Year 1971 budget when Congress reconvenes.

#### National Priorities:

The issue of national priorities with regard to spending for the prototype program has been frequently raised. It has been alleged that money being requested for the program could be much better applied elsewhere for other transportation needs or for social welfare programs. I am convinced the priority being placed on the prototype program is correct. It is not a high national priority program dollar-wise, but amounts to only about 2.6% of the country's transportation budget in this year of the highest funding for the prototype program. The FY 1971 transportation budget contains \$1.5 billion for Airports and Airways, and there is \$5.0 billion planned to be applied to this area over the next five years. Urban Mass Transportation has \$3.1 billion budgeted, and there is another \$5.7 billion for Highways. A revitalization of Water Transportation is planned with \$420 million budgeted in FY 1971 and plans following to construct 30 merchant marine ships a year over the next ten years.

Billions are planned for social and welfare programs. In FY 1971 funding for support of human resource programs has surpassed national defense, and now accounts for the largest percentage of the total budget -- \$81.9 billion, or 41%.

The relatively small investment in fiscal 1971 (less than 1/4 of 1% of the U. S. budget) for the prototype program will help pay for the human resource programs of the 1930's. It is most important that industry be able to provide the jobs and pay the taxes needed to maintain the strong and viable economy required to fund the social and welfare requirements of the future. The SST program is a priority for the 1980's which will more than repay the modest place it occupies among the programs of the '70's.

Finally, a decision not to fund this program in FY 1971 would not result in additional funds for other programs. It would, however, mean the loss of a \$708 million investment in technology plus cancellation charges in excess of \$160 million. A decision of this nature would, in my opinion, be foolhardy and in derogation of all reasonable formulations of national priorities.

#### Competition:

At present, the British and French, as well as the Russians, have a strong lead in the entry of civil supersonic aircraft into commercial service. As recently as last week, one of the Concorde prototypes flew at Mach 1.85. Tests of both Concorde prototypes have exceeded expectations and delivery to airlines is scheduled for 1974. Testing of the Russian TU-144 is also progressing well -- the aircraft has already flown at twice the speed of sound, or 1330 mph.

The State Department has reported a likelihood of a Concorde II being produced as a follow-on to the Concorde. It appears that West Germany may join Britain and France in funding and developing this advanced Concorde. It can be expected this model will have improved payload/range capabilities, as well as improved economics.

There is also evidence European countries are making a concerted effort to win the world's subsonic market, as well as the supersonic market, away from the United States. The U. S. now builds and sells about 85% of the world's subsonic jets. This market could be jeopardized by the failure of the U. S. to continue with the Prototype Program.

#### Program Costs:

Some critics have contended that support for the program is a subsidy to industry, and that overruns are inevitable. The facts are that the prototype program was initiated nearly ten years ago as being in the national interest. Development of a U. S. SST was a government proposal to industry, not industry's request to the government.

The prototype program is being managed better than any program of which I am aware. There have been no overruns, and no significant cost adjustments are in sight, if appropriation requests are met and schedules can be kept. The contracts are controlled to discourage cost escalations. When estimates are exceeded, the cost to the contractor increases and the government's share decreases.

Each company has a total awareness of the importance of maintaining tight managerial control to keep costs within estimates. The Boeing Company has affirmed, in writing, their commitment to program estimates which were established long ago.

#### Payback Provisions:

I fail to understand why the government's participation in the development of an American SST is singled out by critics as a "subsidy" when countless examples of Federal investment in technology development in other areas are not so labeled. This is especially distressing in view of the payback provisions, which are unique to this program.

The 500-airplane royalty base is not only realistic, it is very probably conservative. On that basis, the recoupment of all Federal funds invested in the program by the sale of the 300th airplane is assured. If

the prototype program is carried forward successfully, the government will realize a substantial profit on its investment.

#### Economics and Productivity:

Economic studies performed by DOT and Boeing have shown the initial production design will be a highly profitable aircraft in airline operation, with a range of at least the distance from New York to Paris at full payload. This exceeds the capabilities of the initial Boeing 707 by about 700 miles. If history repeats, growth versions will be produced with extended range, just as have developed in the cases of the Boeing and Douglas subsonic jets.

The U. S. SST will be profitable because the unique speed and capacity results in a productivity in seat miles almost twice that of the larger 747. Historically, the improved productivity of each new type aircraft has resulted in lower operating costs, thereby offsetting the effect of escalating airline costs and allowing airline fares to be reduced while the costs of other goods and services have been climbing sharply. The U. S. SST will be no exception. During its introductory period, higher than normal passenger load factors will reduce costs per passenger mile. Later, costs will be more resistant to inflationary cost influences of labor and maintenance.

The rapid growth in international passenger traffic will be met in part by supersonic transports, reducing the necessity for greater numbers of less productive aircraft. Not only will the SST be able to operate over an expanding network of routes, but it will also be able to spread departure and arrival times and relieve airport congestion. On the airways, the SST will utilize a new level of airspace above 55,000 feet.

As a result of rapid traffic growth, it is conservatively forecast that a U. S. SST would carry in 1985 as much traffic as the entire Free World traffic in 1969. This will mean an economically sound program for the manufacturers as well as the airlines. Proceeding with the program will help to insure the survival of the Nation's commercial aircraft industry and serve to prevent the export of jobs and technology to foreign manufacturers. It will increase revenue to the government through taxes and better enable the Nation to carry on needed programs for improving the quality of life for all people.

#### Sonic Boom and Noise:

The President and the Secretary of Transportation have stated that supersonic flight which would produce a sonic boom will not be permitted over the United States. Since that pronouncement in September, 1969, the FAA has issued a Notice of Proposed Rule Making which clearly establishes that sonic booms will not be allowed over land in this country.

The Supersonic Transport will be capable of operating from existing airports and will not entail an expensive modification of our airport system. The aircraft was designed from the outset to be capable of operating from any airfield which presently accommodates long range subsonic jets. As for airport compatibility on noise grounds, it should be emphasized that over the community, where most noise complaints originate, the supersonic transport will be about one-half as annoying as the intercontinental subsonic jets.

#### Environmental Aspects:

Environmental claims and counterclaims concerning supersonic flight have confused rather than clarified the actual facts. An extensive study of what has been said by critics leads me to believe that their claims range from the exaggerated to the ridiculous. The proponents, on the other hand, have stuck to results of studies by qualified experts. The "doomsday" oracles of a new ice age or a destruction of life due to ultraviolet radiation can, in my opinion and that of experts in the relevant disciplines, be summarily dismissed.

The recent (September 21, 1970) report of the Library of Congress Legislative Reference Service does an excellent job of putting the environmental issues of supersonic flight in their proper perspective. I urge your review of this important document. DOT has recently announced an environmental R&D program dedicated to providing answers to any legitimate concerns which are raised concerning environmental aspects of supersonic flight.

To summarize a very complicated subject, the following table on environmental concerns is offered:

<u>Concern:</u>	<u>Remarks:</u>
Green house effect (Increasing earth's temperature)	Temperature changes due to SST gaseous exhaust products would be hardly detectable. <u>Not a problem.</u>
Layer of dust (Increasing earth's temperature)	Particles introduced into stratosphere from a fleet of SST's would be a small amount (1/27 of the daily dose injected from outer space). <u>Not a problem.</u>
Formation of Clouds	Highly unlikely anywhere, with remote possibility of exception of the polar regions. Research needed to determine amount and frequency of occurrence, if any. Determination can be made prior to SST production decision.
Ultraviolet radiation (On earth's surface)	Could be barely detectable change, but it would be smaller than daily variations between places on earth's surface, such as Denver to Washington, D. C.
Spatial radiation (To occupants of plane)	Radiation received by occupants of SST would be about the same or less than that received in subsonic jet on same route flight.
Solar flares	Occurrence of solar flares causing high radiation levels very infrequent (perhaps once in 50 years). SST could descend to lower altitude soon enough to avoid excessive radiation to occupants.

In substance, my investigation regarding all environmental aspects of the prototype program leads me to believe the program is being conducted with the active support and advice of the recognized experts in all relevant disciplines. None of these experts has indicated the program should not go forward and, as a matter of fact, have generally endorsed its continuation.

The U. S. Civil Supersonic Transport Program is a sound program, and a wise national investment. As you know, it has had the support of Presidents Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon. To a very significant degree, the prototype program is a program in basic environmental research for the development of data and technology which will insure that commercial supersonic flight will not in any way degrade the world's environment.

In consideration of the facts as stated above, I shall vote in favor of the Department of Transportation FY 1971 appropriations bill when considered by the Senate in November. I strongly urge you to do likewise.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ BOB DOLE  
U. S. Senate