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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WASHINGTON, D.C., June 9 --- U.S. Sen. Bob Dole (R-Kans.) deplored attacks by prominent Democrats that President Nixon has been "playing politics" with the war, in a floor statement given in the Senate today. Text of statement follows.

FALSE CHARGES AGAINST THE PRESIDENT

Events and statements of recent days have forced me to the conclusion that some members of the other party are willing to exceed the bounds of partisanship, reason and common decency in their efforts to downgrade the President and advance their own personal interests.

Deplorable Attacks

Accusations that the President of the United States has deliberately prolonged the war in Indochina and has used the lives of our men in Vietnam as political pawns are the meanest and most offensive sort of political distortion.

To say that it is the President's "intention to play his last great card for peace at a time closer to November 1972, when the chances will be greater that the action will benefit the coming Presidential campaign," is as inexcusable as it is outrageous.

In the first place, such charges are erroneous, and in the second place they violate the longstanding tradition in this country of keeping this and other conflicts out of the partisan political arena.

Democrats Could Have Been Accused

If the same tactics had prevailed in earlier years, members of the Republican Party just as easily could have charged that our involvement in Vietnam and the escalation that followed it were also motivated by the partisan political considerations.

If this line of attack had been followed in 1964 and 1968, President Nixon's predecessors could have been accused by Republican office seekers of inaugurating and deepening our involvement in Vietnam to gain the low unemployment, increasing gross national product and general prosperity, which are the political benefits of a war-time economy. Such charges against Presidents Kennedy and Johnson would have been ridiculous and inaccurate, but they would have been no more uncalled for and out of place than those being made against President Nixon today.

No Republican Charges

But no Republican cries "Foul" or "politics" were heard when our commitments were made and when our involvement was escalated. Nor did Republican leaders object when President Johnson announced a halt to the bombing of North Vietnam two days before the 1968 elections.

I am proud that the Republican Party has always put the national interest above party interest, and that Republicans have steadfastly refused to place their personal ambitions ahead of our nation's security and its bipartisan foreign policy.

It is the height of irresponsibility and blind personal ambition for members of the other party to attack President Nixon as they have done in recent days.

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Facts Refute the Attacks

These attacks are all the more offensive when it is taken into consideration that in 1969 President Nixon inherited a war which had cost 14,000 American deaths and 28 billion American dollars the previous year, and that he has reversed the entire course of the war, cut combat fatalities by more than two-thirds, and withdrawn more than one-half the troops who were involved when he took office. It is interesting that the morning after these attacks on the President, a United Press International survey revealed our troops are being pulled out of Vietnam at a rate that is 40 per cent faster than necessary to meet the President's announced December 1 goal of 184,000 troops. American forces are now leaving that war-torn country at a rate of more than 19,000 a month, and more than 22,500 have left in the past 35 days.

Sincere and Effective Policy

Anyone who has followed the progress of the President's programs in Southeast Asia cannot question his sincerity or the effectiveness of his policies. The President is not the one who is playing politics with the war in Vietnam. Instead, it is the very individuals who are accusing him: those critics who are jockeying to take the lead in the race for the 1972 nomination to oppose him.

Now, at a time when we are seeing clear and irrefutable progress toward the end of American involvement in Vietnam, I call on all Americans --- and especially members of the Democrat Party --- to confine their criticism to the issues and to refrain from toying with the lives of America's fighting men for political gain.