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NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

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DOLE CAUTIONS AGAINST RELAXATION OF DEFENSE READINESS

WASHINGTON, D.C.--Senator Bob Dole today called for careful, constructive and thorough examination of the \$86 billion Nixon defense budget by Congress. But he cautioned against making excessive defense spending cuts in the wake of diplomatic success at ending the Vietnam War and improving relations with China and the Soviet Union.

Senator Dole told the annual ROTC Breakfast of the Reserve Officers Association:

"I believe it is necessary to take a long view of these matters. And in my mind, defense spending -- at this time -- is the most reliable investment we can make in the future of our country.

"Of course diplomacy is a necessary part of our national policies, and we all feverently hope that it will continue to bear fruit. But in terms of reliability, I do not think there is any question that our diplomatic achievements -- at this point -- fall short of providing us with the degree of assurance we want to rely on as the foundation of American security or world peace in the immediate future.

"I heartily support the SALT agreement on limiting U.S. and Russian missile strength. I believe the negotiations on reducing Soviet and American troop levels in Europe are to be encouraged. I applaud the great achievements toward more normal relations with China.

"But quite frankly, I do not believe the Russians or Chinese have proved anything to us yet. And until they do, I will place a great deal more confidence in the might of our Army, Navy, Marines, and Air Force than in Brezhnev's signature or Mao's handshake."