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# NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

(R.—Kans.)

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## MEASURE WOULD RAISE VA TO CABINET LEVEL

WASHINGTON, D.C.--Before leaving to spend the Fourth of July Senate recess in Kansas, Senator Bob Dole introduced a bill that would raise the Veterans Administration to cabinet level status by establishing a Department of Veterans Affairs.

Stating facts that indicate the importance of the VA in the government, Dole said, "The Veterans Administration has a direct influence on the lives of over 29 million veterans. When wives and children of veterans are added to this figure, it is apparent that the activities of the Veterans Administration affect nearly one-half of our population of over 200 million Americans.

"The Veterans Administration is the second largest federal employer, with over two hundred 202,000 and employees. It has a budget of \$13.4 billion for fiscal year 1975, making it the third largest agency by budget in the federal government.

"The diversification of services within the Veterans Administration is paralleled by almost no other federal agency. VA services range from education and training to housing, business and farm loans, to disability compensation and pension to life insurance and many other services."

Dole said the best example of the tremendous range of VA services may be its vast medical system. "This system, which includes 171 hospitals and over 200 clinics, treats over 80,000 in-patients daily. There are over 14 million out-patients treated annually by the VA."

Senator Dole said that while this idea has been presented to the Congress in previous years, he felt it had not received adequate consideration. Dole added that establishment of a Department of Veterans Affairs would lead to greater consistency and more effectiveness in dealing with the many benefits and rights established by the Congress for Veterans and their dependents and beneficiaries.