

**KANSANS FOR SENATOR DOLE**



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## **NEWS RELEASE**

**OVERLAND PARK, Kan. (Special)**--Before America opens its arms to deserters and draft-dodgers, it should address the priorities of its veterans "who served their country honorably," U.S. Sen. Bob Dole (R.-Kan.) said at a rally here Saturday.

Alluding to the proposal submitted to President Gerald R. Ford earlier Saturday by Secretary of Defense James R. Schlesinger and Attorney General William B. Saxbe, Sen. Dole suggested before the nation "jumps head-long into this issue of amnesty, there are other priorities which must be addressed."

He listed those priorities as: the servicemen still considered missing-in-action (MIAs) and prisoners-of-war (POWs); those veterans left injured and handicapped or otherwise disabled by their service; the educational, social and employment needs of all veterans; and pension benefits for World War I veterans.

Sen. Dole said the anxieties of the families of those men listed as MIAs and POWs must be satisfied, that "the hundreds of men lying in our Veterans Administration hospitals with lingering scars of their service demand our attention," that "there are thousands upon thousands of Vietnam vets who want a college education and want better jobs but are denied both because of lagging benefits" and that "there's no reason World War I vets should be penalized economically in 1974 just because their service came 60 years ago."

The senator has supported case-by-case consideration of amnesty.

"Those who ran off rather than answer their country's call should not be given the red carpet treatment. If they want to come back, I'm sure we can develop a program to achieve that. But, I place my priorities elsewhere --like taking care of these priorities for our veterans," Sen. Dole said.

There are almost 100,000 Vietnam veterans in Kansas and another approximate 200,000 who served from World War I thru the Korean conflict and prior to the outbreak of the Viet war. "Those people deserve our attention first, not those few others who chose the easy way out," the 14-year Congressional veteran said.

Sen. Dole, a veteran of World War II, said the approximately 22,000 deserters and draft-dodgers "should not obscure the facts that there are millions of Americans who did not run away and who merit whatever benefits we can provide them. And that should take a priority--not amnesty." He said he would suggest those priorities in a personal letter to President Ford. "I would be willing to talk with the President about these matters before we get into this amnesty thing."

"I'm cool toward any talk of amnesty now, tho," he added, "when we've got other needs for Americans who did serve their country."

The senator made the remarks at a rally at Antioch Park in Overland Park, a Kansas City suburb. The rally followed a day of statewide distribution of Dole tabloid. Some 250,000 of the tabloids were distributed by over 3,000 volunteers working in 40 cities.