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NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

(R.—Kans.)

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DOLE SAYS NO PLANS TO CLOSE LEAVENWORTH

Topeka, Kansas -- Responding to a surge of mixed reaction over a story last week that the Bureau of Prisons intends to phase out the U. S. Penitentiary at Leavenworth, Senator Bob Dole advised today that no such concrete plans are in the making.

"While it is true that the Bureau has a long-term desire to replace the large facilities at both Leavenworth and Atlanta, Georgia, with smaller, more manageable units, such a development is not within the foreseeable future -- and certainly, no closing will occur during the next ten years."

Dole explained that his Washington office had been in touch with the Public Information Director at the Bureau of Prisons to obtain a factual evaluation of the rumor which had been circulated. "It was all a big misunderstanding which began a week and a half ago when a Thomson Newspapers reporter interviewed Bureau of Prisons' Director Norman Carlson," the Senator continued. "He accurately recorded Carlson's comment that 'Leavenworth and Atlanta could not be closed before 1984,' but the headline accompanying the account erroneously interpreted that to mean 'Leavenworth will definitely close within a minimum of ten years.'"

"It was one of those situations where an ambiguous headline was contradicted by the text which followed, and the writer of the story expressed regret that the misleading label had been attached," Dole suggested. "Mike Aun, the Public Information Director who clarified the Bureau's position on the matter, acknowledged that the issue had become a 'tempest in a teapot.'"

Senator Dole went on to say that the story should not have been received as any more than speculation in the first place, since the Bureau of Prisons has been saying for years that it would like to close both Leavenworth and Atlanta. "The realities of the situation, however, are that it's not going to happen for a long time, and the people of Leavenworth who fear a damaging economical impact don't have a thing to worry about."

"As a matter of fact," Dole stated, "the Bureau would like to have a new facility at Leavenworth right now. But that would cost about \$14 million -- which is about all Congress has appropriated to keep the existing projects going."

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