



NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

(R.—Kans.)

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DOLE TO INSIST ON "MANY AMENDMENTS" TO PANAMA CANAL TREATIES

(KANSAS CITY--) Senator Bob Dole said today that there are "several essential issues that must be resolved" in the pending Panama Canal Treaties before they will be ratified by the Senate. "The prevailing concerns about the Treaty go beyond mere semantics on just one or two points," Dole said. "There will be a number of serious Amendments set forth and rigorously pursued when the Treaties reach the Senate floor. Among others, I will propose that the United States retain at least one military base in the former Canal Zone to facilitate defense rights after the year 2000."

Dole noted that he has already introduced 8 Amendments and 2 Reservations to the pending Canal Treaties, and will be proposing additional modifications when the Senate reconvenes. "These Treaties touch on many areas--everything from defense rights to judicial systems to economic arrangements. This Administration, and the Panamanian government, are engaged in wishful thinking if they expect the Senate to overwhelmingly support the Treaties based on one or two wording changes," Dole said.

DOLE AMENDMENTS

Senator Dole said that, in addition to Amendments he is promoting to protect American defense and passage rights through the Canal, he will be "aggressively pushing for a delay in the transfer of United States jurisdiction over the Canal Zone, and for elimination of any restrictions on U.S. rights to build a new Canal. Also, his Amendments would protect employee rights and promote human rights in Panama.

Dole said his recent trip to Panama convinced him that there is a real danger in transferring Canal operations and facilities to the Panamanians too soon. He said he also feels it would be a serious mistake for the United States to commit itself not to build a new Canal anywhere besides Panama, as is currently contained in the Treaty.

"It took 13 years to negotiate the many provisions of these Treaties. We can expect the Senate to take several weeks, at least, to go over them with a fine-toothed comb, and to propose many Amendments and Reservations," Dole said. He added that changes "must be made by Amendment or Reservation, in order to have a legally binding effect. Understandings or Footnotes just won't be acceptable."