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NEWS from

U.S. Senator Bob Dole

(R.—Kans.)

New Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510 (202) 224-6521

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MONDAY, JANUARY 23, 1978

CONTACT: JANET ANDERSON
BOB DOWNEN

DOLE URGES COMMITTEE TO ADOPT HIS AMENDMENTS TO PANAMA CANAL TREATIES

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Senator Bob Dole today urged the Senate Foreign Relations Committee "to support Committee Amendments to both [Panama Canal] Treaties during mark-up." In letters delivered today to each member of the Committee, Dole outlined several of the amendments he has introduced. He was the first Senator to propose modifications to the Treaties and introduced 6 Amendments and 2 Reservations on September 23, 1976. On October 17, Dole introduced the language of the Carter-Torrijos joint statement in amendment form, and he introduced three additional amendments on January 19, 1978.

Following is the text of Dole's letters to Committee members:

As a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, you have a unique opportunity to help share the format of the Panama Canal Treaties that is presented to the Senate for debate. I urge you to carefully consider and actively support Committee Amendments to both Treaties during mark-up later this month.

During the course of public debate and Committee testimony on the Treaty issue, it has become apparent that there is widespread concern about specific defects and omissions in the Treaties as they were presented to Congress. Many of our colleagues have already proposed modifications, or indicated their willingness to support them. In the interest of expediting the Senate ratification process, the Committee would perform a service by endorsing certain Amendments to the Treaties as reported to the full Senate.

In particular, I want to call your attention to the following Treaty Amendments I have proposed to protect vital American interests in the Panama Canal:

Incorporate the U.S. defense and passage rights provisions of the October 14 "Carter-Torrijos Understanding" directly into the Neutrality Treaty (Amendments #7 & #8; Exec. N, 95-1)

Authorize continued availability to the U.S. of some defense sites and military installations after the year 2000, subject to provisions of a separate bilateral agreement (Amendment #12; Exec. N, 95-1)

Eliminate paragraph 2, Article XII, of the basic Canal Treaty, which restricts negotiations for a new sea-level Canal (Amendment #10; Exec. N, 95-1)

Additional Treaty Amendments and Reservations which I have introduced are attached, and I urge your serious consideration of their merits.

If I can be of any assistance in elaborating upon these proposals, please do not hesitate to contact me.