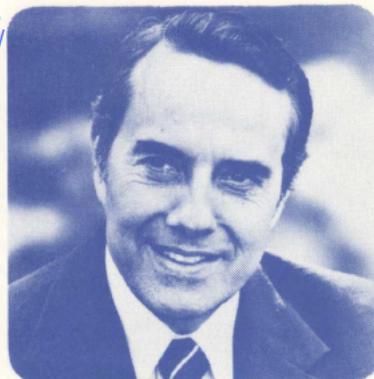


BOB DOLE



(R - Kansas)

2213 Dirksen Building, Washington, D.C. 20510

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 1980

CONTACT: BILL KATS
(202) 224-8947

SECRETARY BROWN'S CALL FOR INVESTIGATION A 'HALF-STEP';
STENNIS ASSURES QUICK ACTION

WASHINGTON -- Senator Bob Dole (R.-Kansas) today labelled Secretary of Defense Harold Brown's call for an Air Force examination of the Titan II missile as "another half-step that does not fully address this serious problem."

And in a related development Dole said that Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman John Stennis (D.-Mississippi) told him in a phone conversation early this afternoon that his committee is proceeding at full speed with an investigation into the Titan system.

"Senator Stennis related his concern about the severity of recent Titan accidents and assured me that the Armed Services Committee was putting its full energies into completion of this study," Dole said.

In a letter today to Secretary of Defense Brown, Dole said, "While I am mindful of your recent instructions to the Air Force to take a 'careful look' and 'examine' the Titan IIs, I do not believe you have gone far enough in addressing this increasingly serious problem. I believe enough 'half-stepping' has gone on with respect to this issue, thus I have requested the Senate and House Armed Services committees to immediately commence independent, comprehensive and objective re-evaluations of this system. I trust you will recognize the critical need for such an evaluation and join me in urging the Congress to begin its evaluation immediately."

Dole also indicated to Brown that he was requesting a complete report on the number and nature of all -- reported and unreported -- Titan II "incidents" in Kansas.

This May the Air Force completed a study on the Titan system, done jointly with the contractors who built the system and its component parts. That study, released on May 9, 1980, concluded that the physical condition of the system is "good" and "considered by many to be better now than when it was new."

While the study cited serious problem areas, the only change sought by the study was congressional approval of incentive pay for the men who handle the highly toxic fuel used to power the rocket engines.

"In my opinion, another Air Force investigation into this missile system will yield the same results as the last one," Dole said. "Secretary Brown's energies could be much better spent in backing an exhaustive and impartial congressional look at this problem."

After several dangerous Titan II incidents in Kansas and at other Titan sites in Arizona and Arkansas, Dole called for Senate Armed Services Committee hearings on the safety and effectiveness of the system. That request was initially made in October 1979.