

BOB DOLE



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DOLE: GATES GAVE PRIVATE ASSURANCE ABOUT FUTURE IN WICHITA

Washington, DC -- Senator Bob Dole (R-KS) disclosed today that he had been privately assured in May of Gates-Learjet's intention to stay in Wichita.

Sen. Dole said he was given the assurance by James Taylor, president and chief executive officer of Gates-Learjet, last May when the company sought assistance in securing a Pentagon buy-out of aircraft now leased to the Air Force.

"Before I agreed to help Gates with the buy-out, I wanted to satisfy myself that they were committed to Wichita. Jim Taylor put his company's pledge to me in writing, discounting rumors that if the proposed buy-out happens Gates-Learjet would cut-and-run. Jim's a man of his word. I believe him when he tells me 'nothing could be farther from the truth' than the rumor that Gates will proceed to relocate operations to Tucson," said Sen. Dole.

In his letter to Dole, dated May 19, 1986, Taylor wrote, "To link a rumored move to the proceeds from the Air Force buy-out is totally absurd. I don't know where these stories start but they are totally inaccurate. In fact, we are increasing our Aerospace Subcontract business in Wichita to help offset the cyclical nature of the general aviation business."

Gates-Learjet has proposed selling to the Air Force 80 planes that it is currently leasing. The proposal was approved by Congress last June, provided the Pentagon realizes a 10-percent savings over the cost of the lease term. According to Dole, Gates-Learjet has offered to sell the planes to the Air Force for \$2.299 million resulting in a savings of more than \$400,000.

Recently, the International Machinists Union protested the buy-out after new rumors surfaced purporting a move from Wichita by Gates-Learjet. The union is urging the House Armed Services Committee to reject the planes' purchase by the Air Force.

Said Sen. Dole, "I understand and appreciate the union's concern. I had the same concerns in May, but I'm convinced Gates is in Wichita to stay."