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NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

(R.-Kans.)

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 21, 1977

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SENATE APPROVES DOLE M.I.A. RESOLUTION

The United States Senator today gave unanimous approval to a Resolution introduced by Senator Bob Dole, urging the President to establish a special Task Force on missing American Servicemen in Southeast Asia. The Resolution also reaffirms the honor of all American veterans who served in the Armed Forces during the Vietnam War era.

Dole commented that he himself was strongly opposed to the "blanket pardon" of Vietnam-era draft evaders which President Carter granted on January 21, and he maintained that priority consideration should be given to two other "final chapters" of the Vietnam War: an accounting for those servicemen who never returned from the war; and the problems -- such as unemployment -- of those veterans who served honorably in that war.

The Dole Concurrent Resolution 3 stated in part that "It is the sense of Congress that the honor of those Americans who upheld the dignity of the law and who served in the Armed Forces of the U.S. in Southeast Asia should be reaffirmed," and that "There should be established a Presidential Task Force on MIA/POW's to propose courses of action to achieve the fullest possible accounting for all Americans listed in a missing status in Southeast Asia."

A final report issued by a special House Committee on MIA/POW's last month concluded that the North Vietnamese possess additional information on the fates of some American servicemen missing in Asia, which has never been turned over to American officials. By approving the Dole Resolution, the Senate officially mandates the establishment of a Presidential Task Force to seek and obtain whatever additional information may be available on these persons. "There should be no discussion of further relations with Vietnam until this question has been fully settled," Dole stated.