

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



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DOLE PRAISES CARTER MX DECISION, SAYS BASING MODE MUST BE CHOSEN

CHICAGO -- Senator Bob Dole (R-Kan.) reacted positively today to President Carter's decision to lift the suspension on full-scale development of the MX missile but called for a quick decision on the urgent question of a basing mode for the system. "This missile system is vital to U.S. efforts to help close the increasing gap over the next six years between U.S. and Soviet strategic capabilities," Dole said. "Two and a half years ago the Ford Administration made this same decision and ordered full funding for research and development in order to have this deterrent system on line when it would be needed. The present Administration suspended that order and is only now getting back on track. The most critical decision, then and now," said Dole, "was what kind of launching system would be used in order to counter the vulnerability problem of our present silos."

The Kansas Senator said, "The time for temporizing, while our survivability problem continues to get worse, is over. Military experts now project that by 1982 over 90% of our ICBM strategic weapons, the backbone of our nuclear deterrent, will be vulnerable to a surprise, first-strike attack by the Soviet Union. Even now if the President were to make an immediate decision it would be 1986 before the MX would be fully deployed."

The choice is between a mobile launching platform hauled between sites on special twenty-mile railroad tracks and the shell-game system of hiding each missile in any one of twenty different launching holes. "Whichever way the decision goes, it must be made soon-- we have already lost 2½ years," Dole said.

"When the MX is deployed the Soviet Union will be faced with a major incentive against a surprise, first-strike on the United States. The present Russian advantage in numbers will have a reduced, though still dangerous effect on the strategic picture because there will be less likelihood the USSR could "ride-out" an American retaliatory response. But until we can get MX and other new systems ready to go, we will face an increasingly adventurous and intransigent Soviet foreign policy in the years ahead."