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617

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WASHINGTON, D.C. Dec. 10, 1970 -- U.S. Senator Bob Dole, in a statement on the Senate floor today said, "The nation is well aware of the railroad strike which began this morning, but how many Americans realize that Congress has been on strike for 11 months this year?"

Today, many are attempting to fix the blame for the railroad strike. Unions involved are blaming the railroad companies, and the companies in turn are blaming the unions. Commentators and news analysts have placed the onus in various quarters. Here on Capitol Hill some have decided that President Nixon should shoulder major responsibility for the paralysis now gripping the nation, with others indicting both the unions and management.

"I would certainly not wish to chill the exercise of free speech in America. Nor do I feel that either labor or management should be restricted in employing the full range of tools available to them in the collective bargaining process.

But it is questionable for anyone on Capitol Hill to criticize the unions or companies involved in this strike or to fault the President for attempting to alleviate it.

How can Congress blame the parties or the President when the Senate and the House have been on strike all year?

It is probably too late now, as adjournment and the holidays quickly approach, to salvage much from this session of Congress. The point is, however, that the Congressional work stoppage has had and will take its effect and the nation's business has gone unfinished.

There is no excuse for the Congress allowing major Presidential initiatives to suffocate without even receiving the courtesy of votes on their merits. The President's revenue sharing plan, the major Administration proposal to accelerate estate and gift tax payments, significant innovations in consumer protection, emergency school aid, and the tax on leaded gasoline will all die without receiving Congressional action.

I would suggest that, when Members of Congress feel the temptation to blame parties to strikes and those who are working to avoid them and alleviate their effects, that they stop and consider the strike record of Congress and be a bit less ready to cast the first stone."