

FROM: THE OFFICE OF U.S. SENATOR BOB DOLE
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WASHINGTON, D.C., Jan. 2, 1971 -- SENATOR BOB DOLE (REP. KANSAS) TODAY IN A STATEMENT ON THE SENATE FLOOR SAID FORMER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE ROBERT S. MAC NAMARA "OWES CONGRESS AND THE AMERICAN PUBLIC A FULL EXPLANATION" FOR THE WAY THE TFX AIRPLANE WAS HANDLED BY THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT UNDER MAC NAMARA.

THE CONTRACT FOR THE TFX, LATER KNOWN AS THE F-111, WAS AWARDED TO GENERAL DYNAMICS CORPORATION OVER THE BOEING COMPANY IN 1962. THE BOEING CONTRACT PROPOSAL HAD BEEN RECOMMENDED BY MILITARY EXPERTS OVER THE GENERAL DYNAMICS BID, BECAUSE IT APPEARED TO BE THE BEST PLANE AT THE LOWEST COST. SECRETARY MAC NAMARA OVERRULED THAT RECOMMENDATION AND THE F-111 PROGRAM ULTIMATELY PRODUCED APPROXIMATELY 1/3 THE NUMBER OF PLANES ORIGINALLY CALLED FOR AT \$3.3 MILLION MORE THAN HAD BEEN ESTIMATED.

DOLE WAS COMMENTING ON A RECENT SENATE INVESTIGATIONS SUBCOMMITTEES REPORT ON ITS STUDY OF THE TFX. THE REPORT TERMED THE TFX PROGRAM A "FAILURE" AND PLACED PRIMARY BLAME ON DEFENSE DEPARTMENT "MISMANAGEMENT". IT ALSO CITED CASES OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST, DECEPTION AND PUBLIC DISTORTION OF FACTS IN DEFENSE DEPARTMENT HANDLING OF THE PROGRAM UNDER MAC NAMARA.

DOLE SAID, "THE TFX PROGRAM RAISES MAJOR QUESTIONS ABOUT HOW OTHER DECISIONS WERE MADE AND POLICY ISSUES RESOLVED DURING THE KENNEDY-JOHNSON-MAC NAMARA YEARS, ESPECIALLY WITH REGARD TO UNITED STATES INVOLVEMENT IN VIETNAM".

"HAVE TENS OF THOUSANDS OF AMERICAN LIVES BEEN SQUANDERED IN SOUTHEAST ASIA BECAUSE SECRETARY MAC NAMARA AND HIS UNDERLINGS WERE TOO CONCERNED WITH "COST EFFECTIVENESS," "COMMONALITY" AND "SYSTEMS ANALYSIS" TO CARE ABOUT "KILLED IN ACTION", PRISONER OF WAR, OR "PERMANENTLY DISABLED?"