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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WASHINGTON, D.C., NOVEMBER 23, 1971 -- U.S. Senator Bob Dole, along with six other Senators, met with Secretary of State William Rogers this morning to discuss the Middle East situation. Senator Dole made this statement on the Senate floor following that meeting:

"This morning a group of Senators met with Secretary of State William Rogers. We discussed rather forthrightly and in some detail the concern about the situation in the Middle East.

I believe, of course, that America's primary obligation in the Middle East is a peaceful settlement of the problem there. This is also the view of President Nixon and the Secretary of State.

I believe, along with several others, that the military balance at this time between the strength of the Arab countries and that of the State of Israel is not favorable to Israel.

This morning as we met with the Secretary of State, a number of us suggested to the Secretary that Phantom jets be delivered to Israel in the near future.

Nowhere is the importance of sincere U.S. commitment more crucial to a Nation's survival than is the case with Israel in the Middle East. The Israeli's can foresee in the reduction of our commitment to Europe, as suggested in a pending bill, an erosion of our support for their own cause. Therefore, we must reaffirm our commitments. For to dilute United States commitment in Europe must also suggest dilution in the Middle East. Accordingly, I strongly urge that the Senate adopt Amendment #750, which would provide \$500 million for Israel, of which \$250 million would be for Phantom F-4 jets, and \$250 million for other supporting military assistance.

The fine line of American commitment to Europe, if reduced as called for, must directly affect Israel, politically and militarily. At the present time there is no solution in sight to the stalemate on the Foreign Aid Bill, which includes \$300 million in credit for Israel. Given this certainty, the President will lack flexibility in maintaining the balance of power in the Middle East unless he can have the funding suggested in the proposed amendment # 750.

This situation has been made more acute by the recent bellicose statements by President Sadat, and his pledge to fight suggests an increasingly truculent attitude. The Soviets have recently delivered Badger Bombers and are sustaining a high level of arms support. We must permit the President to keep up with these developments.

Much of the growing uncertainty and the intensity of the problem in the Middle East may well have been spawned by the proposed troop cut in Europe. The stalemate of the Foreign Aid legislation, good sense, and American interest in maintaining the volatile balance of power in the Middle East strongly support the adoption of amendment # 750.

Therefore, as one who is concerned primarily with peace in the Middle East, a peace which I believe will be accomplished only when the parties involved understand that we will continue to support the State of Israel as long as her neighbors seek to overwhelm her. Our goal of peace in the Middle East requires a balance of power which must be preserved until Israel's right to exist is politically secure. I strongly urge the adoption of Amendment #750 as a necessary increment toward preserving this balance."