

FROM: THE OFFICE OF U.S. SENATOR BOB DOLE
NE SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510
(202) 225-8946

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STATEMENT BY U.S. SENATOR BOB DOLE

DOLE SAYS, "PEACE LIES WITH PEOPLE"

TOPEKA, KANSAS -- Senator Bob Dole, Republican National Committee Chairman, made the following statement today in Topeka where he was attending the Annual Kansas Day Activities:

The President's speech last Tuesday night made clear that we are poised on the brink of the best possibility for achieving peace that has occurred since the war in Southeast Asia began. A decision for peace is now up to North Vietnam and its puppet forces in the South.

I do not expect Hanoi to make any hasty decisions, however. They have delayed settlement because they have been led to believe the American people would cave in and surrender. In a political year, there is an especially strong tendency on their part to cling to that hope.

I do not think the American people are going to surrender.

I have talked to the President and I know he isn't going to surrender.

We are not going to break our agreements, give up our interests, and sell out our allies. But we are willing to negotiate an honorable settlement. And Hanoi will accept that if and when it feels that there is no other alternative to an honorable settlement -- when it feels that the American people are not going to capitulate, but are going to support their President in his effort to win the peace.

So, in a very real sense, the question of peace or war now lies with the people of this nation. If we are to have peace abroad, we must have unity at home. If we are to bring home our prisoners of war, give our allies in Southeast Asia the opportunity to determine their own future, and if we are to redeem the loss of so many, many American lives, then we must stand behind the President and demonstrate that he is taking the strong and courageous and honorable stand because he

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represents a strong and courageous and honorable people.

A long time ago, the North Vietnamese Defense Minister, General Giap, said his nation would defeat the American people because the American people didn't have the stomach to stand in a long war for freedom. I believe by our actions now we can write an end both to that delusion and to this long and tragic war.