

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
TUESDAY, JANUARY 10, 1978

CONTACT: JANET ANDERSON

DOLE TELLS CARTER, TORRIJOS FLEXIBLE

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Senator Bob Dole today told President Carter that following Dole's meeting with Torrijos, "It was my impression from General Torrijos ... that Panama could look favorably upon certain Treaty Amendments, such as those relating to American defense and passage rights." Following is the text of Dole's letter to Carter:

During my recent visit to Panama and the Canal Zone, I had the opportunity to visit with General Omar Torrijos about the pending Panama Canal Treaty proposals. Our conversation was frank and to the point.

In the course of that discussion, I advised General Torrijos of my concerns about the Treaties in their present form and informed him of the several Amendments I will propose to the Treaty language during Senate ratification proceedings. I suggested that it would be useful to the interests of both our countries if the text of the October 14 "joint understanding" was incorporated directly into the language of the Neutrality Treaty itself.

It was my impression from General Torrijos' response that Panama could look favorably upon certain Treaty Amendments, such as those relating to American defense and passage rights. The General advised me that he would not take a position of "intransigence" should the Senate adopt Amendments, but instead would feel it useful to "keep talking" with the United States in that event.

In view of this flexibility on the part of Panama's government, I would appreciate knowing of your own current position on the acceptability of Senate Amendments or Reservations to the pending Treaties, such as those incorporating the October 14 "understanding" into Treaty language.

Thank you for your comments in this regard.