



NEWS from

U.S. Senator Bob Dole

(R.—Kans.)

New Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510 (202) 224-6521

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CONTACT: JANET ANDERSON
BOB DOWNEN

DOLE TO PROPOSE NEW AMENDMENTS TO CANAL TREATIES

SALINA, KANSAS -- SENATOR BOB DOLE said today that he will introduce additional amendments to the proposed Panama Canal Treaties when the Senate reconvenes on January 19. Speaking to a group of Republicans this morning in Salina, Kansas, Dole said his new amendments would include proposals to maintain American installations in Panama after the year 2000, and to prohibit any military presence other than Panamanian and American in Panama during the basic Treaty period. Both of these proposals relate to future defense of the Panama Canal, which Dole said is "the greatest point of concern among most United States Senators, and most Americans in general."

At present, the proposed Panama Canal Treaties provide for joint U.S. - Panamanian military presence to defend the Canal up to the year 2000, but do not rule out other foreign powers placing bases or troops in Panama during that period. However, the Treaties do prohibit any foreign bases or troops--including those of the United States--in Panama after the year 2000. Senator Dole's Amendments would insure, first, that no Soviet or Cuban military presence is established in Panama between now and the year 2000; and, second, that the United States is able to maintain at least a minimal military presence in the former Canal Zone after the year 2000.

"Both the Carter Administration and the Panamanian government claim that the United States will have the right to defend the Canal after the year 2000, but unless we have a 'home base' for defense operations, our capabilities would be uncertain at best," Dole said. He added that he has spoken with military representatives who share that concern.

Last fall, Senator Dole introduced a series of 8 Amendments and 2 Reservations to the proposed Panama Canal Treaties, which he also intends to offer during Senate debate on the Treaties. The Dole Amendments would clarify U.S. defense and priority passage rights through the Canal, preserve the U.S. right to negotiate with any country for construction of a new interoceanic Canal, reduce payments to Panama from Canal revenues, as well as other purposes.