

85a

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
FRIDAY, MARCH 31, 1978

CONTACT: JANET ANDERSON  
BOB DOWNEN

DOLE ASKS INVESTIGATION INTO ACTIVITIES OF U.S. AMBASSADOR TO SAUDI ARABIA

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Senator Bob Dole today asked that the Senate Foreign Relations Committee "initiate an immediate investigation" into recent media reports that the United States Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, John C. West, "has engaged in questionable activities unsuitable to his official diplomatic position."

Following is the text of a letter Dole sent to Senator John Sparkman, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee: *Copies went to*

Reports carried in the Washington Post during this past week indicate that the United States Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Mr. John C. West, has engaged in questionable activities unsuitable to his official diplomatic position. In particular, it is alleged that Ambassador West may have advocated or promoted the hiring of an American public relations firm to represent Saudi Arabian interests, specifically the proposed purchase of F-15 aircraft. The firm -- Cook, Ruef, Spann and Weiser -- apparently contains personal friends and political associates of the Ambassador.

It is alarming to think that an American Ambassador would consent to perform a liaison function between commercial interests in this country, and the government to which he has been assigned. It is clear that the situation, if accurate as reported, could have some bearing on Congressional consideration of the proposed "package" sale of arms to the Middle East.

Consequently, I urge the Foreign Relations Committee to initiate an immediate investigation of the circumstances, and to schedule early hearings on this matter. I believe that an absence of attention to this important matter could have detrimental effects on our future relations with the Saudi Arabian government. I look forward to your early response.