



NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

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AMERICANS WANT DECISION-MAKING, NOT IMAGE-MAKING, DOLE SAYS

EDISON, N.J. -- Sen. Bob Dole (R-Kan.) tonight said that President Carter's veto last week of the military authorization bill was an attempt to bolster his sagging ratings in the opinion polls.

"After suffering defeat after defeat in his major foreign and domestic policy initiatives," Dole said, "President Carter has been searching desperately for a vehicle by which he could reassert Presidential authority and regain some of the prestige he has lost with the voters over the past year and one-half.

"Last week, the Presidential image-makers latched onto the military procurement bill as the launching point for a new 'get tough' profile which they hope will reverse the President's sagging poll ratings.

"It didn't seem to matter that the President had no visible support from his top military and foreign policy advisers for the defense veto. It didn't seem to matter that the military procurement bill contained important authorizations for essential national security projects. It didn't seem to matter that no President had vetoed a carefully constructed military authorization bill in this century. It didn't seem to matter that the President's veto message itself contained several misleading assertions of fact. It didn't seem to matter that the President clearly confused the defense appropriations bill with the defense authorization bill he was vetoing.

"What seemed to matter most to President Carter was the image of a firm, decisive President standing up to a clear congressional majority. Frankly, I don't think that's the way the American people expect Presidential decisions on key national defense bills to be made. And I don't think that's the way to improve the President's prestige.

"If the Administration's actions on the defense procurement legislation are an indication of the future decision-making process at the White House on important legislation, I'm not sure how much image-making the nation can afford.

"It's bad for the country and won't serve the President's short-term political aims. Because the voters in New Jersey - and voters everywhere - won't be fooled by cosmetics."