

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



(R - Kansas)

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ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE ASSURES DOLE OF TITAN II EFFORTS

WASHINGTON -- Senator Bob Dole (R-Kan.) said today that the Senate Armed Services Committee has assured him that it is studying the Titan II missile system during the Congressional recess and is still actively considering conducting committee hearings later this year.

While in Washington today, Senator Dole contacted the Armed Services Committee to ensure that it follows through on earlier pledges to conduct a thorough investigation of the safety and effectiveness of the missile system, which has been plagued by accidents in recent years.

"I have been assured that the committee staff is using the pre-election recess to conduct a safety review and investigate options for replacing the Titan missiles. It is not a formal study, but is needed before the Committee members can determine the appropriateness of hearings once Congress reconvenes on November 12," said Senator Dole. The staff review apparently includes visits to accident sites, discussions with the Strategic Air Command and a thorough review of options, questions Senator Dole had asked the committee to look into during the recess in an October 2 letter to Chairman Stennis.

"I am afraid that the need for these hearings and a complete re-evaluation of the aging system will be forgotten as time passes. We had the same flurry of concern after the accidents in Kansas, but the Armed Services Committee failed to act. I contacted the Committee today to urge continued study and remind them that the concern in Kansas has not disappeared."

Senator Dole has been the leading critic of the Titan II missile system. He has repeatedly asked that hearings be held on the weapons system to determine both its military effectiveness and its safety. Specific requests on October 1, 1979, April 23, 1980, and September 19, 1980, have been referred to staff at the Armed Services Committee.