



NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

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DOLE PROPOSES PRESIDENTIAL MIA TASK FORCE

Senator Bob Dole today asked his colleagues in the Senate to give early consideration to his proposal for a Presidential Task Force on missing American servicemen in Southeast Asia. Dole cited recent reports that the Vietnamese may hold additional information on the fates of M.I.A.'s, and said the new President should give priority attention to this matter at the same time he issues a blanket pardon for draft evaders. "The new administration should focus its immediate attention on our 'forgotten Americans', instead of those who forgot America," he stated.

The Dole Resolution, introduced today, expresses the sense of Congress that President-elect Carter should create a new Presidential Task Force on MIA's simultaneously with his planned pardon for Vietnam-era draft evaders. Although Senator Dole said he is personally opposed to a blanket pardon, he cited Jimmy Carter's announcements that he will exercise his Executive authority to grant a pardon before the end of January.

"Immediate pardon of those who violated our nation's draft law and later refused executive clemency, if performed while ignoring the MIA question, will certainly represent a serious misplacement of priorities by the new Administration," Dole said. He urged both Houses of Congress to support his measure asking simultaneous establishment by the new President of a "Task Force" on missing U.S. servicemen in Southeast Asia.

Nine other Senators joined Dole in cosponsoring the resolution.

Earlier this month, the House Select Committee on Missing American Servicemen in Indochina said in its final report to Congress that it believed the Vietnamese government possessed some additional information and remains of U.S. servicemen still classified as "missing" or "body not recovered".