



NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, January 21, 1977

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BLANKET PARDON DISAPPOINTS DOLE

Following the announcement of President Carter's plans to pardon all draft evaders, Senator Dole issued the following statement:

I am disappointed but not surprised to learn that President Carter has issued a blanket pardon for Vietnam-era draft evaders. In effect, the pardon overshadows the more critical problem of uncertainty about missing Americans who never returned from the war. It represents a ironic and ill-advised misplacement of national priorities. It is a campaign promise President Carter has kept to appease the ultra-liberals who supported him.

The fates of 2500 American servicemen who disappeared in Southeast Asia remain in question. More than one-half million veterans under the age of 34 are out of work. These are pressing problems which weigh on the minds of the American people, and which demand early attention by the new Administration. Instead, these matters are placed on the back burner while those who consciously resisted a lawful duty receive the red carpet treatment.

Ours is a democracy based on obedience to the law, and it is distressing to see conscious disobedience condoned on a blanket basis. This is not an attitude of vindictiveness, but one of commitment to equal treatment for all.

Each of those who consciously evaded this responsibility during the Vietnam war did so for his own very personal reasons. I don't doubt that some of those reasons were well founded and justified. I am not opposed to a compassionate review of such circumstances on a case-by-case basis, but do object to a sweeping pardon without attention to specific cases.

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