



# NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

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REMARKS OF SENATOR BOB DOLE

PRESS CONFERENCE

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My colleagues and I are releasing an open letter to our colleagues this afternoon on SALT. We have not yet learned the final terms of the agreement but the essentials have been released for our study over the past several months. All the signatories have reserved judgment and remain open-minded on the merits of SALT II as it is finally signed. Our purpose now is to voice the concerns we have on various aspects of the treaty as they are already being debated. Those Senators who have taken a stance on SALT--either pro or con--were not asked to participate in this effort.

The Senators signing this letter of concern were part of an ongoing seminar I helped organize, begun several months ago and held on a frequent basis, to discuss America's strategic posture in general and SALT concepts in particular. We invited renowned experts from the U.S. and abroad to analyze these momentous issues with us.

Experts such as Dr. Fred Ikle, former head of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency; General Alexander Haig, Commander-in-Chief of NATO; Dr. Fritz Kraemer, Chief Strategic Analyst to the Joint Chiefs of Staff for 25 years; Lord Chalfont, Disarmament Minister in Prime Minister Wilson's Labour Government and a defense advisor to Margaret Thatcher; and former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger.

Last week, we decided it would be beneficial to share some of what we have learned with our colleagues. It was in this vein that our rather spontaneous idea first arose, to release a statement on some major points.

It was also in the belief that Republican Senators must contribute to a new bipartisan foreign policy, one that is positive and constructive rather than negative and critical. In that way, we can best add to a sensible and intelligent debate on these important issues at the outset, rather than taking pot-shots on various provisions after the treaty is signed.

The points we will watch for in SALT II are explained, I hope with clarity, in the statement itself.

We will issue more statements of this type as we continue our seminars, but our concerns at this time include: verification--whether we can monitor what the closed system in the Soviet Union is doing on strategic arms adequately, not according to criteria of those who negotiated the treaty, but according to those who will be charged with its implementation and our ultimate security; treaty ambiguities--even now, provisions are interpreted in one way by the Soviets and another way by the Americans--these must be clarified if SALT is to aid, as it is designed to do, rather than aggravate U.S.-Soviet relations. ICBM survivability--whether the treaty allows the U.S. to redress as promptly as possible a terribly dangerous ICBM vulnerability which will unfold in the 1980's. Backfire--whether the treaty includes all strategic systems capable of striking the United States. Intermediate range missiles--weapons which bear upon the Eurostrategic balance, and go to the heart of NATO alliance cohesion; the durability of the protocol--which may be scheduled to last only 3 years but would inevitably lead to a decrease in R & D from which we might never catch up. And the principle of equality of strategic arms in various categories.

Each of these issues, members of our seminar group soon learned, is extremely complicated. Our statement just mentions a portion of our thoughts and views on these and many other issues.

Nonetheless, I believe it begins to address the primary question of SALT II: whether the treaty would contribute to American national security or whether it would endanger our national security by further lulling us into complacency. A treaty between competing super powers cannot be based on trust alone. We hope to be able to reason intelligently and in a cooperating spirit with the Russians, but we must be able to reason with them from a posture of strength. The treaty must address the merits of such an agreement itself, and not just the psychological impact of a treaty-signing ceremony.