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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

April 16, 1976

ADMINISTRATIVELY CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM FOR:

MAX FRIEDERSDORF

FROM:

JAMES E. CONNOR *JEC*

SUBJECT:

Senator Bob Dole

The President reviewed your memorandum of April 15 concerning Senator Bob Dole's press release and made the following notation:

"Excellent/Letter of Thanks - Give to Stu Spencer"

Please follow-up with appropriate action.

cc: Dick Cheney

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN....

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 15, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: MAX FRIEDERSDORF

M.F.

SUBJECT: Senator Bob Dole

Senator Bob Dole has issued a strong press release in support of the President's defense policy and requested that his remarks be brought to the attention of the President.

*Excellent / the I thanks
Nice to the Speaker*



NOTICE: This is a corrected version
of the release issued at
1:00 p.m. today.

NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

(R.—Kans.)

New Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510 (202) 224-6521

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, April 12, 1976

CONTACT: Janet Anderson

DOLE CRITICIZES FORD DEFENSE POLICY CRITICS

Senator Bob Dole, in a Senate floor speech today, said attacks on President Ford's commitment to a strong national defense policy "are, at best, misdirected, and, at worst, selfishly and politically motivated." Dole's remarks were made during floor debate on the First Budget Resolution for 1977.

Following is the complete text of Dole's statement:

"Mr. President, in recent years, the American public has become increasingly concerned about the relative defense capabilities of the Soviet Union and the United States. Voices which in recent years have advocated substantial cuts in the defense budget today are advocating a beefed-up U.S. military posture -- at least "roughly equivalent" to the Soviet Union. It is precisely this policy which President Ford seeks to implement through his defense budget requests.

UNWARRANTED POLITICAL CRITICISM

"Despite the Administration's clear, prudent policy direction, the President is accused of soft-pedaling U.S. military strength in an effort to maintain the mood of relaxed tensions between our two nations. The not-so-subtle implication is that our national security is being risked to gain minimal trade and strategic arms concessions from the Soviet Union. Some have openly accused the Administration of pursuing a military policy of "second best" with respect to the Soviet Union. In my view, such attacks are, at best, misdirected, and, at worst, selfishly and politically motivated.

"For the facts simply do not support the charges and innuendoes which are advanced almost daily in this election year. As a Congressman, Vice President, and President, Gerald Ford has been keenly aware of the steady growth in Soviet military power. He recognizes that the further expansion of Soviet power in the world can be checked only if there is a countervailing strength. And he has sent to Congress defense budget requests which will ensure that U.S. military capability exists to maintain this balance.

PRESIDENT FORD'S DEFENSE RECORD

"Through 25 years in Congress, no one has advocated a stronger or more prudent defense posture than Gerald Ford. As a member of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense, he opposed arbitrary and unwarranted attacks on the defense budget. As Minority Leader, he was strongly opposed to ill-advised proposals to trim defense authorizations and appropriations. In fact, one of his final votes as a member of Congress -- just a week before he assumed the Vice Presidency -- was against an unsuccessful floor amendment to reduce overall defense expenditures by \$3.5 billion.

"Clearly, this is not the record of a man blind to the realities of world balance of power in the 1970's. And if his unblemished pro-defense record is not enough evidence for critics of President Ford's commitment to a strong national security policy, this year's Defense Department budget request should be proof positive. The President has proposed a budget which allows for a 14% rate of growth in defense expenditures. Largely as a result of President Ford's leadership, both the House and Senate Budget Committees have recommended budget authority almost equal to the \$113.3 billion requested by the President. With the strong urging of the Administration, both the House and Senate Budget Committees rejected proposals to reduce budget authority by over \$3 billion.

"If those who question President Ford's commitment to a strong national defense wish to persist with such rhetoric, they are obviously free to do so. And I suspect they will. For their criticism amounts to only so much campaign rhetoric. President Ford's commitment to a defense capability second to none is, and has been, real."

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

April 19, 1976

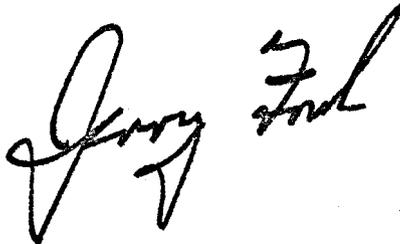
Dear Bob:

I have just had an opportunity to read the text of your April 12 Senate floor speech relative to my commitment to a strong national defense policy.

Both the content and purpose of your remarks are deeply appreciated. In a hard-hitting, totally accurate and succinct way, you have helped to set the record straight on one of the most critical issues of the day.

Thank you again for not only your words in my own behalf, but also for the courageous position you have taken in an effort to assure the peace and security of our nation.

With warmest personal regards, I remain,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jerry Ford". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "J" and "F".

The Honorable Robert Dole
United States Senate
Washington, D. C.

*Prepared by Jack March.
c.e.m.f.*