

Telegram

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Send the following message, subject to the Telegraph Company's conditions, rules and regulations, which are on file with regulatory authorities.

APRIL 20, 1982

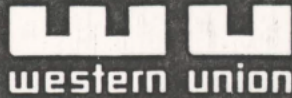
MR. ELTON RULE
 PRESIDENT
 ABC-TV
 1330 AVENUE OF THE AMERICAS
 NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10019

I HAVE JUST FINISHED READING A TRANSCRIPT OF THE APRIL 8th EDITION OF "20/20". YOUR NETWORK'S ACCOUNT OF CONGRESSIONAL TAX DEDUCTIONS IS AN UNRIVALED EXAMPLE OF HATCHET JOURNALISM: DISTORTED, UNBALANCED AND RECKLESS.

CONTRARY TO YOUR REPORT, I DID NOT TURN DOWN AN INTERVIEW ON THE DEDUCTION CONTROVERSY. AS YOU HAVE ALREADY BEEN INFORMED, TELEPHONE CALLS FROM MY PRESS SECRETARY TO A "20/20" PRODUCER WERE NEVER RETURNED.

SECONDLY, MY AMENDMENT CITED IN THE IRRESPONSIBLE "THE GREAT CAPITOL TAX GAIN" REPORT IN NO WAY "HOOKED A TAX BREAK AMENDMENT ONTO THE POPULAR BLACK LUNG BILL". THIS PAST OCTOBER, THE HOUSE FIRST REMOVED THE LONG STANDING \$3,000 LIMIT FOR MEMBERS' DEDUCTIONS, SO THAT WHEN THE APPROPRIATIONS MEASURE REACHED THE SENATE THERE WAS, IN FACT, NO LONGER ANY KIND OF DEDUCTION LIMITS.

BECAUSE THE CAP WAS OFF, THE DOLE AMENDMENT MERELY REQUESTED THE IRS TO SET GUIDELINES AND LIMITS FOR MEMBERS' DEDUCTIONS. WITHOUT MY CLARIFICATION AMENDMENT, THE IRS DID NOT HAVE THE STATUTORY AUTHORITY TO SET ANY LIMITS. THE DOLE AMENDMENT IS IN THE



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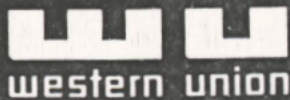
MR. ELTON RULE
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CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, BUT APPARENTLY YOUR STAFF WAS TOO LAZY TO CHECK THE FACTS IN THE RUSH TO SENSATIONALIZE. I UNDERSTAND YOUR DESIRE TO HANG THE \$75 PER DAY PRICE TAG ON SOMEONE, BUT YOU WILL NOT HANG IT ON ME.

"20/20" HAS LABELED THE TAX DEDUCTION AS A "BACKDOOR" MANEUVER -- HARDLY! THE FACTS SHOW THAT THE SENATE DEBATED THE ISSUE FOR ALMOST TWO HOURS ON THE FLOOR, A DEBATE THAT INVOLVED SEVERAL ROLL CALL VOTES IN FULL VIEW OF THE MEDIA. OF COURSE, THIS INFORMATION DOES NOT LEND ITSELF TO THE TABLOID SMEAR TACTICS PREFERRED BY ABC.

YOUR CHARACTERIZATION OF THE TAX DEDUCTION AS A "BIG REFUND" IS NOT ONLY INACCURATE, IT IS A LIE. IF THE NEW DEDUCTION IS A REFUND, PLEASE EXPLAIN IT TO ME BECAUSE I HAVE YET TO RECEIVE MY CHECK IN THE MAIL.

THE SLOPPY ABC REPORTERS ALSO FAILED TO MENTION THAT THERE ARE ACTUALLY THREE LEVELS OF DEDUCTIONS ESTABLISHED BY THE IRS FOR CONGRESS BASED ON 262 DAYS IN SESSION. DESPITE "20/20" REPORTS, MEMBERS DO NOT AUTOMATICALLY "GET TO DEDUCT \$75 FOR EACH OF THOSE DAYS, BRINGING THEIR TOTAL TAX BREAK TO A FIGURE OF \$19,650 PER MEMBER". FOR MY 1981 TAXES, I PICKED THE MINIMUM DEDUCTION OF \$50



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FOR EACH DAY IN SESSION, MINUS 23 DAYS WHEN I WAS IN THE HOSPITAL, AND 13 OTHER DAYS AWAY FROM CAPITOL HILL. AS A RESULT, THE NEW DEDUCTION TRANSLATED INTO A TAX SAVINGS OF \$4,400, HARDLY THE "WINDFALL" ADVERTISED BY THE SO-CALLED JOURNALISTS OF "20/20". FOR THE RECORD, I PAID \$43,250 IN FEDERAL TAXES ON 1981 INCOME, NOT EXACTLY THE "BIG REFUND" HYPED BY ABC.

I RESENT THE CARELESSNESS OF "20/20" AND DEMAND AN APOLOGY. UNFORTUNATELY, THE DAMAGE HAS ALREADY BEEN DONE. PERHAPS A MORE ACCURATE TITLE FOR YOUR TELEVISION SHOW WOULD BE "20/40". YOUR BRAND OF SHABBY JOURNALISM IS AN OUTRAGE.

BOB DOLE
UNITED STATES SENATE