

# BOB DOLE



(R - Kansas)

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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REMARKS OF SENATOR BOB DOLE  
MARION HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION  
MARION, KANSAS -- MAY 20, 1984

YOU ALL DESERVE CONGRATULATIONS, AND YOU ALL HAVE A LOT TO LOOK FORWARD TO. THAT IS WHAT THIS OCCASION IS ALL ABOUT. AND MARION HIGH SCHOOL HAS A LOT TO BE PROUD OF, AS WELL: 100 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION! IT SURE DOESN'T SEEM LIKE A CENTURY AGO THAT I WAS INVITED TO LAY THE CORNERSTONE...

I WISH THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS COULD ALWAYS TAKE AS MUCH PRIDE IN ITS WORK AS YOU TAKE IN YOUR ACHIEVEMENTS TODAY. YOU GET YOUR DIPLOMAS THE OLD-FASHIONED WAY -- YOU EARNED THEM. SOMETIMES THE CONGRESS NEEDS TO BE REMINDED THAT IT IS OBLIGED TO EARN ITS WAY, AS WELL.

IN ALL FAIRNESS, MOST MEMBERS OF CONGRESS ARE HARD-WORKING AND SERIOUS ABOUT THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES. YET SOMEHOW CONGRESS AS A COLLECTIVE BODY, AS AN INSTITUTION, GETS BOGGED DOWN WHEN IT COMES TO CARRYING OUT SOME OF THE BASIC TASKS OF GOVERNMENT; THE KINDS OF THINGS THAT EVERY CITIZEN EXPECTS OF GOVERNMENT, BE THEY LIBERAL, CONSERVATIVE, PRO-LABOR, PRO-BUSINESS, OR WHATEVER. ONE OF THESE TASKS IS THE PROPER MANAGEMENT OF OUR PUBLIC FINANCES.

A DEBT YOU ALREADY OWE

NOW YOU ALL KNOW ABOUT THE DEFICIT, AND OF ALL THE CONCERN IN THIS COUNTRY AND OVERSEAS ABOUT WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN IF WE DON'T GET IT UNDER CONTROL. THE DEFICIT IS WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT YIELDS TO THE TEMPTATION TO BE TOO MANY THINGS TO TOO MANY PEOPLE. THE PROBLEM WITH THAT IS WE DON'T RAISE ENOUGH MONEY FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO PAY FOR ALL THOSE THINGS. WE -- THE UNITED STATES -- HAVE TO BORROW THE DIFFERENCE.

NOW THERE ARE A LOT OF PEOPLE WHO DON'T THINK IT MAKES ANY DIFFERENCE WHETHER WE IMPOSE TAXES TO PAY FOR GOVERNMENT SPENDING, OR WHETHER WE BORROW. BUT THERE IS A DIFFERENCE. WE COLLECT TAXES NOW TO COVER WHAT WE ARE SPENDING NOW. BUT BORROWING BRINGS A CONTINUING OBLIGATION, OVER A PERIOD OF MANY YEARS, THAT THE GOVERNMENT OWES TO ITS CREDITORS. AND NEVER FORGET THAT WHEN WE TALK ABOUT "GOVERNMENT OBLIGATIONS" WE ARE REALLY TALKING ABOUT TAXPAYERS -- THE WAGE EARNERS AND WEALTH PRODUCERS OF THIS GREAT NATION.

THAT IS WHY, HOWEVER DULL OR REMOTE THE ISSUE MAY SEEM, THE DEFICIT PROBLEM SHOULD CONCERN THOSE WHO, LIKE YOURSELVES, ARE PREPARING TO GET THEIR FIRST JOB AND ENTER THE WORK FORCE OR TO PURSUE FURTHER STUDIES IN PREPARATION FOR A FUTURE CAREER. A VERY SIGNIFICANT PART OF THE TAXES YOU WILL PAY WHILE EARNING A LIVING WILL GO TO PAY OFF INTEREST ON THE NATIONAL DEBT. AND THAT INTEREST BURDEN IS THREATENING TO ESCALATE ENORMOUSLY UNLESS SOMETHING IS DONE. RIGHT NOW WE ARE ADDING ABOUT \$200 BILLION TO THE NATIONAL DEBT EACH YEAR -- AND THAT ADDS \$15 BILLION TO THE INTEREST COSTS WE WILL HAVE TO PAY OFF NEXT YEAR.

FRIGHTENING FIGURES

LET'S CONSIDER THIS IN TERMS THAT REALLY BRING THE ISSUE DOWN TO A PERSONAL LEVEL. IF DEFICITS ARE NOT REDUCED, BY 1989 ONE-HALF OF ALL AMERICANS' PERSONAL INCOME TAX PAYMENTS WILL BE

REQUIRED JUST TO PAY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S INTEREST BILL. BY THAT TIME FEDERAL DEBT WILL HAVE DOUBLED, OVER \$10,000 FOR EVERY MAN, WOMAN AND CHILD IN THIS NATION. THAT MEANS YOU THE GRADUATE, BY THE TIME YOU REACH YOUR MID 20'S, WILL BE WORKING PROBABLY PART OF THE YEAR JUST TO PAY YOUR TAXES. I DON'T THINK THAT'S FAIR. FEDERAL INTEREST COSTS COULD REACH \$250 BILLION, OR ABOUT \$1,100 FOR EVERY AMERICAN BY 1989.

I KNOW NUMBERS LIKE THESE SEEM A BIT ABSTRACT, A BIT REMOTE. BUT IF YOU STOP AND THINK ABOUT IT THEY ARE VERY IMMEDIATE, AND VERY REAL. AT STAKE IN THE DEFICIT DEBATE ARE QUESTIONS OF HOW HIGH YOUR TAXES WILL BE IN THE YEAR AHEAD; HOW MUCH YOU WILL HAVE TO PAY TO BORROW MONEY, WHETHER TO PURCHASE A CAR, YOUR FIRST HOME, OR TO INVEST; AND HOW MANY JOBS WILL BE CREATED OVER THE REMAINDER OF THIS DECADE. THESE ARE NOT MINOR MATTERS, AND THEY SHOW WHY ADDRESSING THE DEFICIT IS SO VITALLY IMPORTANT FOR EVERYONE, YOUNG AND OLD ALIKE, AND SHOULD NOT JUST BE A PREOCCUPATION OF POLITICIANS, ECONOMISTS, AND BANKERS. BELIEVE ME, IF WE MAKE A MISTAKE, OR SHRUG OFF OUR RESPONSIBILITIES, THE YOUNGER GENERATION WILL FEEL THE IMPACT FOR MANY YEARS.

#### GOOD NEWS -- A BEGINNING

SO MUCH FOR THE BAD NEWS. BUT THIS IS A GOOD NEWS DAY FOR ALL OF YOU, AND I WANT TO LEAVE WITH YOU SOME MORE POSITIVE THOUGHTS. AS IS OFTEN THE CASE, ALTHOUGH POLITICIANS SPEND A LOT OF TIME JUST CAMPAIGNING AND POSTURING AND ARGUING ABOUT THE ISSUES THAT REALLY MATTER, EVENTUALLY WE DO GET TO THE POINT. AND CONGRESS AND THE PRESIDENT ARE GETTING TO THE POINT ON THE DEFICIT PROBLEM. THIS WEEK THE SENATE APPROVED A \$142 BILLION DEFICIT REDUCTION PLAN TO TAKE EFFECT OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS. ONCE WE IRON OUT DIFFERENCES WITH THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, WE CAN PRESENT OUR PLAN TO PRESIDENT REAGAN FOR HIS APPROVAL -- AND THIS IS A PLAN HE HAS LARGELY ENDORSED.

THIS PLAN IS NOT ENOUGH TO AVERT SOME OF THE PROBLEMS I HAVE DISCUSSED. BUT IT IS A START, AND IN AN ELECTION YEAR, THAT IS A SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENT. NO ONE PRETENDS THAT WE HAVE TACKLED OUR RESPONSIBILITIES HEAD-ON, BUT AT THE SAME TIME EVERYONE ACKNOWLEDGES THAT WE CAN AND MUST DO MORE NEXT YEAR. CONGRESS CAN DO WHAT IS RIGHT WHEN INFORMED CITIZENS -- AND I BELIEVE THAT INCLUDES EVERYONE HERE TODAY -- LET THEM KNOW THAT THEY EXPECT FULL VALUE FOR THEIR TAX DOLLARS.

#### GRADUATION NIGHT REMINDER

AS MANY OF YOU PROBABLY KNOW, MY WIFE ELIZABETH IS PRESIDENT REAGAN'S SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION. A FEW MONTHS AGO, THE PRESIDENT GAVE HER THE TASK OF FINDING A SPOKESMAN POPULAR WITH YOUNG AMERICANS LIKE YOU TO HELP LEAD THE FIGHT AGAINST DRUNK DRIVING.

WELL, SHE FOUND A PERFORMER -- A SINGER AND DANCER WHO DOESN'T DRINK AT ALL, AND WHO WANTED TO OFFER HIS SERVICES TO AN ANTI-DRUNK DRIVING CAMPAIGN GEARED TOWARD STUDENTS AT GRADUATION TIME.

THE PERFORMER, OF COURSE, IS MICHAEL JACKSON, AND ELIZABETH HAD THE PLEASURE OF INTRODUCING MICHAEL TO PRESIDENT REAGAN AT A WHITE HOUSE CEREMONY LAST WEEK.

THE TELEVISION SPOTS THAT RESULT SHOULD HELP TO FOCUS ATTENTION ON THE PROBLEM. WITH LUCK, ONCE THAT ATTENTION IS PROPERLY FOCUSED, ACTION WILL FOLLOW.

AS A MEMBER OF PRESIDENT REAGAN'S COMMISSION ON DRUNK DRIVING, AND AS CHAIRMAN OF A SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE THAT HAS HANDLED LEGISLATION DEALING WITH THE PROBLEM, I AND OTHER CONCERNED LEGISLATORS HAVE BEEN SEEKING ANSWERS TO THE NATIONAL TRAGEDY OF DRUNK DRIVING. THE STATISTICS ARE INDEED SOBERING.

THE CURE MUST BEGIN WITH A CHANGE IN THE ATTITUDE THAT EACH OF US HAS TOWARD THE DRUNK DRIVER. YES, WE ARE OUTRAGED WHEN A DRUNK DRIVER KILLS. YES, OUR ANGER RISES WHEN THE COURTS HANDLE

THESE KILLERS WITH KID GLOVES. YES, WE ARE REPULSED AT THE HORRIFYING AUTO ACCIDENTS WE SEE ON THE EVENING NEWS. BUT WHY DO WE RARELY RAISE A VOICE WHEN WE SEE A FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER DRIVE DRUNK? THE SAD FACT IS THAT FRIENDS DO LET FRIENDS DRIVE DRUNK, AND TOO MANY OF THEM KILL AND ARE KILLED BECAUSE NO ONE DARES TO STOP THEM.

I DON'T MAKE IT A HABIT OF TELLING PEOPLE WHAT TO DO, BUT LET ME MAKE ONE SUGGESTION AS YOU BEGIN A WELL-DESERVED CELEBRATION -- DON'T DRIVE IF YOU'VE BEEN DRINKING.

ALL THE TALK MUST BE DOING SOME GOOD -- DURING THE 1984 NEW YEAR'S WEEKEND, AMERICA HAD LESS FATAL HIGHWAY ACCIDENTS THAN ANY YEAR SINCE 1949. LET'S HOPE 1984 GRADUATION NIGHTS ACROSS THE COUNTRY ARE SIMILARLY ACCIDENT-FREE.

TOMORROW MANY OF YOU WILL EMBARK ON DIVERGENT PATHS, BUT YOU WILL SHARE THIS IN COMMON: ALL OF YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE. WASHINGTON IS IMPORTANT, BUT WHAT HAPPENS IN WASHINGTON IS NOT NEARLY SO IMPORTANT AS WHAT EACH OF YOU DOES EVERY DAY FOR WORK, RECREATION, HOME, COMMUNITY, AND FAMILY. OUR JOB IS TO LISTEN TO YOU: THAT OUR ROLES HAPPEN TO BE REVERSED TODAY, I HOPE, HAS HAD SOME VALUE FOR YOU AS I KNOW IT HAS FOR ME.

CONGRATULATIONS.

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