

BOB DOLE



(R - Kansas)

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DOLE PRAISES RETIRING MAJORITY LEADER HOWARD BAKER

WASHINGTON -- In a statement today on the Senate floor, Kansas Senator Bob Dole praised retiring Majority Leader Howard Baker:

LONG AGO, A VERY WISE MAN ANNOUNCED THAT THE RIGHT OF COMMAND WAS NO LONGER AN ADVANTAGE TRANSMITTED BY NATURE; LIKE AN INHERITANCE, HE SAID, IT IS THE FRUIT OF LABORS, AND THE PRICE OF COURAGE.

NOW AS THEN, ANYONE WHO WOULD PRESUME TO LEAD MUST BE WILLING TO ASSUME THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHANGE. HE MUST TAKE THE RISK AND SHOULD THE BLAME. HE MUST BE WILLING TO SUBMERGE HIS OWN PREFERENCES WHILE NEVER YIELDING HIS BASIC PRINCIPLES. HE MUST FIND SOME WAY TO WELD TOGETHER THE FRAGMENTS OF OPINION THAT SURROUND HIM, WITHOUT BECOMING PARALYZED BY CONFLICTING VIEWS AND DIFFERING PRIORITIES. HE MUST SPEAK THE LANGUAGE OF HIS COLLEAGUES, WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY RAISING THEIR SIGHTS.

FOR FOUR MEMORABLE YEARS, HOWARD BAKER HAS DONE ALL THIS AND MORE. HE HAS INTRODUCED BIPARTISANSHIP WHERE THE NATIONAL GOOD OUTWEIGHED MERE POLITICS AS USUAL. HE HAS SERVED AS RONALD REAGAN'S INDISPENSABLE RIGHT HAND IN CHANNELING THE IMPULSES OF LESS GOVERNMENT AND MORE FREEDOM INTO THE BOOK OF LAW. HE HAS MADE EVEN THIS OLD INSTITUTION A LITTLE MORE EFFICIENT. AND HE BEQUEATHED TO FUTURE MEMBERS, AS WELL AS STUDENTS OF PUBLIC POLICY, AN EXAMPLE OF LEADERSHIP THAT BELONGS IN THE COMPANY OF CLAY AND WEBSTER AND TAFT AND JOHNSON.

EVERY LEADER LEAVES HIS MARK, AND HOWARD BAKER'S IMPRINT ON THE EVENTS OF OUR TIME IS IMPRESSIVE INDEED. LARGE AS IT MAY BE IN THE HEADLINES, IT WILL LOOM STILL LARGER IN THE HISTORY BOOKS. FOR NOW, LET ME SIMPLY SAY WHAT A PRIVILEGE IT HAS BEEN TO WORK WITH YOU, HOWARD. OUR PATHS HAVE CROSSED OFTEN - IN THE COMMITTEE ROOMS, HERE ON THE FLOOR, IN THE SNOWS OF NEW HAMPSHIRE...

OUR PATHS HAVE CROSSED - BUT NEVER OUR SWORDS. AND I AM GRATEFUL INDEED TO HAVE HAD SUCH A COMMANDER AT THE HEAD OF OUR TROOPS. I FULLY EXPECT HOWARD TO REFUTE GENERAL MacARTHUR'S DICTUM ABOUT OLD SOLDIERS FADING AWAY - ON THE OTHER HAND, I WOULDN'T MIND IF HE DECIDED TO TAKE UP THE GENERAL'S EXAMPLE AND TELL US "HE SHALL RETURN."

BUT WHATEVER THE FUTURE MAY HOLD, THE PAST IS MAGNIFICENTLY CLEAR. AND HOWEVER MUCH THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES HAS GAINED FROM HOWARD BAKER'S LEADERSHIP, THE AMERICAN PEOPLE HAVE GAINED STILL MORE. I CANNOT IMAGINE A GREATER CONTRIBUTION, NOR A MORE GENEROUS VERDICT ON ANYONE WHO MAKES HIS LIFE PUBLIC PROPERTY. WE'LL MISS YOU, HOWARD. I CAN ONLY HOPE THAT WE'LL ALSO EMULATE YOU.