

# News from Senator

# BOB DOLE



(R - Kansas)

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## STATEMENT OF SENATE MAJORITY LEADER BOB DOLE

### BACK TO TAX REFORM

WHOEVER SAID THAT TELEVISION CAMERAS WOULD REVOLUTIONIZE THE WAY THE SENATE DOES BUSINESS MUST BE RETHINKING HIS ASSERTION AFTER LAST WEEK'S MARATHON SESSION ON THE SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS BILL. SOME OF LAST WEEK'S VIEWERS MAY HAVE CONCLUDED THAT THIS DISTINGUISHED BODY REPRESENTS THE ULTIMATE TALK SHOW.

IN FACT, THE SUPPLEMENTAL BILL, WHILE NOT PERFECT, IS A GOOD ONE. AND NOW THAT WE'VE ADDRESSED IT, THERE'S AN EVEN MORE TIMELY ISSUE REQUIRING OUR ATTENTION. WE STEPPED UP TO THE MATTER OF TAX REFORM LAST WEEK. WE CIRCLED IT WARILY, DECLARED OUR BROAD SUPPORT FOR BROAD CONCEPTS, RAISED SOME QUESTIONS, HOISTED A FEW TRIAL BALLOONS. WE HEARD FROM THE PRESIDENT. NO LESS IMPORTANT, WE CONTINUE TO HEAR FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.

LET ME READ TO YOU A FEW PARAGRAPHS FROM LETTERS I'VE RECEIVED. A MAN IN WICHITA URGES IMMEDIATE ACTION TO REDUCE THE FEDERAL DEFICIT AND BALANCE THE BUDGET WITHOUT RESORT TO ADDITIONAL TAXES. HE GOES ON TO URGE A THIRD PRIORITY; "TAX REFORM THAT IS FAIR AND SIMPLE WITHOUT STRANGLING OUR ECONOMY. THE PRESENT UNFAIR, COMPLICATED INCOME TAX IS TERRIBLE, WASTEFUL, EXPENSIVE AND CANNOT BE DESCRIBED ADEQUATELY USING GOOD LANGUAGE."

A WOMAN FROM EUREKA, KANSAS, IS NO LESS OUTRAGED. "WE RECENTLY WENT TO A SEMINAR," SHE WRITES, "AND THE INVESTMENT SPECULATOR GIVING IT BRAGGED ABOUT NOT PAYING ANY TAXES BECAUSE OF THE LOOPHOLES IN THE TAX LAWS. IT MADE ME FURIOUS! WHY HAS CONGRESS MADE THIS POSSIBLE?"

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AND FINALLY, THERE IS THE WICHITA WOMAN WHO SIGNS HERSELF A "CONCERNED AND UPSET CITIZEN"; "ONCE AGAIN, I HAVE HAD MY TAXES FIGURED, AND FEEL THAT I AND EVERYONE ELSE THAT IS NOT RICH ARE PAYING TOO MUCH IN FEDERAL TAXES. IF YOU'RE RICH, YOU CAN AFFORD AN ACCOUNTANT THAT KNOWS ALL THE LOOPHOLES. IF YOU HAVE LOTS OF MONEY YOU CAN AFFORD TO PAY A BROKERS' COMMISSION AND BUY TAX-EXEMPT BONDS AND SUCH!"

IT'S NO WONDER MOST AMERICANS FEEL AS IF THEY'RE BEING SKINNED EVERY APRIL 15. ACCORDING TO THE WASHINGTON-BASED TAX FOUNDATION, THE AVERAGE AMERICAN WILL SPEND TWO HOURS AND THIRTY-NINE MINUTES OF AN EIGHT-HOUR WORK DAY JUST TO SATISFY HIS 1986 TAX OBLIGATIONS. THAT'S NEARLY TWICE AS LONG AS HE'LL WORK TO PAY HIS HOUSING BILL, AND THREE TIMES AS LONG AS IT TAKES TO FEED HIMSELF AND HIS FAMILY.

BUT IT ISN'T JUST THE LEVEL OF TAXES WHICH HAS OUR CONSTITUENTS UP IN ARMS. IT'S THE INEQUALITIES BUILT INTO THE CURRENT SYSTEM, INEQUALITIES WE SEEK TO REMOVE. REMEMBER THIS WHEN PONDERING THE VARIOUS AMENDMENTS PROPOSED TO THE FINANCE COMMITTEE PACKAGE. SOME WOULD LIKE TO RESTORE FULL DEDUCTABILITY FOR IRA'S. SOME WOULD LIKE TO DO THE SAME FOR SALES TAXES. BUT THE ISSUE IS LARGER THAN ANY ONE AMENDMENT, HOWEVER ATTRACTIVE, HOWEVER POLITICALLY ADVANTAGEOUS. FOR WE CANNOT HAVE TRUE, MEANINGFUL TAX REFORM WITHOUT SIGNIFICANTLY LOWER TAX RATES. THERE IS A PRINCIPAL BEING FOUGHT FOR HERE, A CODE OF VALUES MUCH OLDER THAN THE TAX CODE ITSELF.

IN THE FIRST SPRING I EVER SPENT IN THIS CITY, I HEARD JOHN KENNEDY DECLARE THAT "TO GOVERN IS TO CHOOSE". NOW WE, TOO, MUST CHOOSE. WE MUST CHOOSE BETWEEN SATISFYING A WEALTH OF SPECIAL INTERESTS -- OR SERVING THE PUBLIC INTEREST -- BETWEEN GENUINE REFORM AND SOME HALF-HEARTED TINKERING WITH A SYSTEM UNIVERSALLY REGARDED AS TOO COSTLY, TOO COMPLEX, TOO MUCH THE CAPTIVE OF SHARP OPERATORS LIKE THOSE COMPLAINED ABOUT IN MY CONSTITUENT LETTERS. IN BOTH STATUTE AND SPIRIT, WE CLAIM TO EMBODY DEMOCRATIC VALUES. THE TIME HAS COME FOR US TO PRACTICE SOME ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY AS WELL. THAT MEANS EVERYONE PAYING A FAIR SHARE, NO MORE, NO LESS; IT MEANS A SYSTEM SIMPLIFIED AND A GOVERNMENT ORDERED TO LIVE WITHIN ITS OWN MEANS. THAT'S WHAT THE PEOPLE WANT -- AND THAT'S WHAT WE SHOULD DELIVER.

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