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NEWS

U.S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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L.A./URBAN RENEWAL

TIME FOR BIPARTISAN ACTION, NOT FINGERPOINTING & EXCUSES:
TRY NEW POLICIES & NEW POLITICS; SAY "NO" TO THE STATUS QUO

IT'S BEEN 12 DAYS SINCE THE RODNEY KING VERDICT, 12 DAYS SINCE THE ONSET OF THE MOST HORRIFYING CIVIL UNREST OUR NATION HAS SEEN IN DECADES.

IN THE LOS ANGELES RIOTING, 5300 BUSINESSES WERE DAMAGED OR DESTROYED AND 40,000 JOBS WERE LOST. IN THE 12 DAYS SINCE, THE AMERICAN PEOPLE HAVE BEEN ASSAULTED WITH A BARRAGE OF EXCUSES AND FINGERPOINTING. IT'S PRESIDENT BUSH'S FAULT, WE ARE TOLD BY SOME. SOME BLAME PRESIDENT REAGAN -- OTHERS SAY THE "GREAT SOCIETY" HAS FAILED OUR CITIES. SOME BLAME F.D.R., AND SOME PROBABLY EVEN BLAME PRESIDENT NIXON. SOME BLAME WHITES, SOME BLAME BLACKS. AND IN THE RUSH TO BLAME, OR IN THE FRENZY TO POLARIZE, ONE CHILLING FACT IS OFTEN OVERLOOKED -- 54 PERSONS LOST THEIR LIVES -- WHITE AMERICANS, BLACK AMERICANS, HISPANIC AMERICANS, ASIAN AMERICANS, MEN, WOMEN, AND CHILDREN.

PERHAPS NO PROGRAM COULD HAVE PREVENTED VIOLENCE

I'M NOT CERTAIN WHAT ALL THE FINGERPOINTING ACCOMPLISHES, AND I'M NOT SURE THAT WE CAN LAY THE BLAME ON ANY ONE PERSON, OR ANY ONE POLICY. PERHAPS NO SOCIAL PROGRAM, NO MATTER HOW INNOVATIVE, HOW TARGETED OR HOW EXPENSIVE, COULD HAVE PREVENTED THE VIOLENCE THAT FOLLOWED THE STUNNING VERDICT IN THE KING CASE. IT MIGHT BE NO ONE'S FAULT BUT THOSE WHO ACTUALLY LIT THE FIRES, PULLED THE TRIGGERS, AND STRIPPED THE STORES BARE.

BUT IT'S NOT THE JOB OF CONGRESS TO ASSESS BLAME. IT'S OUR JOB TO ENACT SOLUTIONS. AND IN SEARCHING FOR SOLUTIONS, ONE THING IS CLEAR -- MERELY POURING MONEY INTO OUR CITIES WILL NOT PUT OUT THE FIRES, NO SOLUTION WILL TURN THINGS AROUND OVER NIGHT, AND NO GOVERNMENT CAN LEGISLATE MORALITY, PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY OR RESPECT FOR HUMAN LIFE AND PROPERTY.

THE PRESIDENT'S APPROACH

IT'S TIME TO TRY SOMETHING DIFFERENT. THAT MEANS NEW POLICIES, BUT IT ALSO MEANS NEW POLITICS.

LET'S GIVE THE AMERICAN PEOPLE SOMETHING THEY AREN'T USED TO IN AN ELECTION YEAR -- BIPARTISANSHIP. I MET THIS MORNING WITH PRESIDENT BUSH AND THE BIPARTISAN LEADERSHIP OF THE SENATE AND HOUSE, AND I AM HOPEFUL THAT WE CAN BUILD ON THIS MEETING AND WORK TOGETHER -- QUICKLY -- TO HELP REVITALIZE AMERICA'S CITIES, HEAL RACIAL DIVISIONS, AND PROMOTE SAFE COMMUNITIES WHERE CHILDREN CAN LEARN AND DREAM.

I AM ENCOURAGED THAT MANY IN THE OTHER PARTY ARE NOW EAGER TO TAKE A SECOND LOOK AT SOME OF THE PRESIDENT'S PROPOSALS, INCLUDING URBAN ENTERPRISE ZONES, TARGETED SMALL BUSINESS AND HOUSING ASSISTANCE, ANTI-CRIME AND ANTI-DRUG PROGRAMS, ECONOMIC GROWTH AND JOB CREATION INITIATIVES, AND EVEN PAYING FOR ADDITIONAL UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS. THESE CERTAINLY AREN'T ALL THE ANSWERS -- AND ALL THE ANSWERS WON'T COME FROM GOVERNMENT -- BUT THEY'RE A START.

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ARE SAYING "NO" TO THE STATUS QUO. WE CAN DO BETTER -- LET'S SHOW THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WE ARE UP TO THE CHALLENGE.

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