

Bob Dole



NEWS

U. S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER

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**COMMENCEMENT REMARKS OF SENATOR BOB DOLE
BROWN-MACKIE COLLEGE
SALINA, KANSAS**

THANK YOU. IT'S A PRIVILEGE TO BE HERE ON THIS VERY SPECIAL AFTERNOON. TODAY WE CELEBRATE NOT JUST THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE GRADUATES, BUT WE ALSO CELEBRATE THE CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY OF BROWN-MACKIE COLLEGE.

THE WORLD AND KANSAS HAVE TURNED OVER MANY TIMES IN THE PAST CENTURY, BUT ONE THING HAS REMAINED THE SAME: THE FACT THAT THE GRADUATES AND FRIENDS OF BROWN-MACKIE HAVE PLAYED AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN COMMUNITIES ACROSS OUR STATE AND BEYOND.

HONORING DEAN EVANS

AND, CERTAINLY, BROWN-MACKIE, THE CITY OF SALINA, AND I SUSPECT MANY HERE IN THE AUDIENCE, COULD NOT HAVE FOUND A BETTER FRIEND THAN DEAN EVANS. AND IT'S VERY FITTING THAT YOU HONOR DEAN TODAY WITH THE CREATION OF A SCHOLARSHIP IN HIS NAME.

DEAN HAS LEFT A PERMANENT IMPRINT ON SALINA AND ON KANSAS WITH HIS COMMITMENT TO THE WELL BEING OF THE MANY INDIVIDUALS TO WHOM HE WAS DEEPLY COMMITTED TO HELPING AND TO THE MANY PROGRAMS IN WHICH HE BELIEVED. I JOIN YOU IN HONORING HIS LEGACY WITH A GREAT DEAL OF RESPECT AND APPRECIATION.

I KNOW HOW MUCH DEAN WOULD HAVE ENJOYED TODAY'S CEREMONY, AND HE WOULD HAVE RECOGNIZED THE TRUE HISTORIC NATURE OF THIS GRADUATING CLASS. YOU ARE HISTORIC BECAUSE YOU ARE THE FIRST GRADUATING CLASS OF THE POST COLD-WAR ERA.

THE CHANGING WORLD

THE WORLD YOU FACE IS NOT ONLY VASTLY DIFFERENT THAN THE WORLD OF YOUR PARENTS AND GRANDPARENTS. IT IS ALSO VASTLY DIFFERENT FROM THE WORLD WHICH GREETED THE GRADUATING CLASSES OF 1990 AND 1991.

IN INTERNATIONAL TERMS, MORE HAS HAPPENED IN THE STILL YOUNG DECADE OF THE 1990'S THAN HAPPENED IN THE PREVIOUS HALF CENTURY.

ALL THAT CHANGE BRINGS EXCITEMENT, TO BE SURE, BUT IT ALSO PRODUCES UNCERTAINTY AND EVEN ANXIETY. HERE AT HOME, THAT SHOWS UP IN MANY WAYS. WE SEE IT IN THE POLLS, RECORDING UNPRECEDENTED PESSIMISM ABOUT THE STATE OF OUR NATION. WE SEE IT IN THE POPULARITY OF POLITICAL CANDIDATES REPRESENTING SOMETHING-- ANYTHING--OTHER THAN THE STATUS QUO.

REJECT "SIREN SONG OF ISOLATIONISM"

REGRETTABLY, SOME ALSO SEE THE CHANGES BROUGHT BY THE END OF THE COLD WAR AS AN INVITATION FOR AMERICA TO RETREAT FROM THE ROLE OF WORLD LEADER THAT WE HAVE PLAYED.

INDEED, AFTER DECADES OF MULTIBILLION DOLLAR DEFENSE BUDGETS; WITH THE IMMEDIATE MILITARY THREAT TO AMERICA SEEMING TO FADE AWAY; AND IN THE FACE OF OUR SERIOUS DOMESTIC PROBLEMS -- THE SIREN SONG OF ISOLATIONISM SOUNDS OH-SO-SWEET TO MANY, MANY AMERICANS.

LET'S FACE IT. WE ALL GET FED UP WHEN WE HEAR SOME FOREIGNER BAD-MOUTHING AMERICA. WE ALL GET FRUSTRATED WHEN SO-CALLED ALLIES AND FRIENDS -- ON WHOSE DEFENSE WE HAVE SPENT BILLIONS OF DOLLARS -- TURN AROUND AND TREAT US UNFAIRLY ON TRADE AND OTHER MATTERS. WE ALL SOMETIMES LOOK AROUND AND SAY: HEY, WE'RE THE MOST POWERFUL, RICHEST COUNTRY ON EARTH, AND WE DON'T NEED ANYONE ELSE -- WE CAN MAKE IT ON OUR OWN. BUT BUILDING A WALL AROUND AMERICA, AND PULLING BACK FROM OUR LEADERSHIP ROLE IN THE WORLD, IS NOT THE ANSWER TO ANYTHING.

IT'S A SHORT-TERM, "FEEL GOOD" REACTION, FOR WHICH AMERICA AND AMERICANS, IN THE LONG RUN, WILL PAY DEARLY.

WE'VE MADE THE MISTAKE OF ISOLATIONISM BEFORE. YOU'VE STUDIED IT IN YOUR HISTORY CLASSES. ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT REASONS WE HAD TO FIGHT WORLD WAR II WAS BECAUSE THE UNITED STATES, DURING THE 1920'S AND 1930'S, TRIED TO TAKE A "HOLIDAY"

FROM THE REST OF THE WORLD. WHILE NAZI GERMANY WAS BEING BORN, AND JAPAN WAS RE-ARMING, WE SAT BACK AND TRIED TO PRETEND IT WAS NONE OF OUR BUSINESS.

BUT STARTING IN 1941 IT BECAME VERY SERIOUS BUSINESS, INDEED, FOR THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. OUR ISOLATIONISM WAS A TRAGIC MISTAKE, AND MANY OF YOUR PARENTS AND GRANDPARENTS CARRY THE SCARS OF THAT MISTAKE TO THIS DAY.

THE FRUITS OF THE COLD WAR VICTORY

THE FACT IS, THE COLD WAR IS OVER -- AND IT ENDED IN A GREAT VICTORY -- BECAUSE AMERICA LEARNED FROM THE MISTAKE; BECAUSE AMERICA, FOR NEARLY A HALF CENTURY, WAS WILLING TO DEFEND FREEDOM WHEN IT WAS SERIOUSLY THREATENED. BECAUSE WE AMERICANS WERE WILLING, IN THE WORDS OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY, TO "PAY ANY PRICE, BEAR ANY BURDEN, ENDURE ANY HARDSHIP,...TO INSURE THE SURVIVAL AND THE SUCCESS OF LIBERTY."

SO WE WON THE COLD WAR, AND NOW WE CAN ENJOY SOME OF THE FRUITS OF THAT SUCCESS. WE CAN ASK OTHERS -- OUR ALLIES -- TO BEAR A HIGHER PORTION OF THE COST OF KEEPING INTERNATIONAL ORDER. WE CAN PAY MORE ATTENTION, AND DEVOTE MORE RESOURCES, TO PROBLEMS HERE AT HOME.

BUT WE CANNOT AFFORD TO LAY DOWN THE MANTLE OF WORLD LEADERSHIP. WE CANNOT ONCE AGAIN STICK OUR HEADS IN THE SAND, AND LET HISTORY PASS US BY.

TOO MUCH IS AT STAKE. OUR OWN SECURITY, OUR OWN PROSPERITY.

LIKE IT OR NOT, THE WORLD IS A LOT SMALLER THAN IT USED TO BE, MILITARILY, POLITICALLY AND ENVIRONMENTALLY. THANK GOD, IT ALSO HAPPENS TO BE A BIT SAFER THAN IT USED TO BE. THANKS TO THE COLLAPSE OF COMMUNISM, THE DEFEAT OF SADDAM HUSSEIN, AND THE BEGINNINGS OF WHAT IS NOW BEING CALLED THE "NEW WORLD ORDER."

DANGEROUS UNCERTAINTIES REMAIN

BUT WE CAN'T AFFORD TO KID OURSELVES. THE WORLD CAN STILL BE A DIFFICULT AND DANGEROUS PLACE.

WE DON'T KNOW WHEN THE NEXT "SADDAM HUSSEIN" WILL POP UP, TO THREATEN BOTH HIS NEIGHBORS AND THE PEACE OF THE WORLD. WE DON'T KNOW JUST YET WHOSE FINGERS, AND EXACTLY HOW MANY FINGERS, STAND POISED OVER THE NUCLEAR BUTTONS WHICH CONTROL ALL OF THOSE THOUSANDS OF WARHEADS WHICH STILL EXIST, ARMED AND AIMED, IN THE FORMER SOVIET UNION. WE DON'T KNOW FOR SURE JUST WHICH IRRESPONSIBLE NATIONS AND RAPACIOUS ARMS MERCHANTS ARE OUT THERE RIGHT NOW, PEDDLING THE TECHNOLOGY AND HARDWARE OF MASS DESTRUCTION TO ANYONE WHO CAN PAY THE PRICE.

BUT IT'S NOT ONLY IN THE MILITARY AND POLITICAL FIELD WHERE AMERICA STILL FACES REAL DANGERS AND GRAPPLES WITH SERIOUS PROBLEMS. THE CONNECTION BETWEEN AMERICA'S WELL-BEING AND GLOBAL DEVELOPMENTS AND EVENTS IS JUST AS STRONG IN TERMS OF OUR ECONOMY.

AMERICA & THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

WE HAVE TO FACE UP TO SOME TOUGH FACTS. FOREIGN MONEY IS CRUCIAL TO FINANCING OUR HUGE DEFICITS. FOREIGN MARKETS ARE CRITICAL TO KEEPING OUR INDUSTRIAL AND AGRICULTURAL SECTORS STRONG. FOREIGN TECHNOLOGY IS INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT TO HELPING US TO KEEP A COMPETITIVE EDGE.

THE FACT IS, AMERICA HAS NEVER HAD A GREATER STAKE IN HELPING TO SHARE AND MANAGE EVENTS AROUND THE WORLD THAN WE HAVE TODAY. THE RESOURCES WE COMMIT TO ADVANCING AMERICA'S GOALS AND INTERESTS OVERSEAS CAN BE THE BEST INVESTMENT WE MAKE IN THE SECURITY AND WELL-BEING OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

YELTSIN FOUND "REAL AMERICA" IN KANSAS

THREE WEEKS AGO, I HAD THE HONOR OF HOSTING RUSSIAN PRESIDENT BORIS YELTSIN ON HIS HISTORIC VISIT TO KANSAS. I THINK EVERYONE WHO HAD THE CHANCE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE VISIT WOULD AGREE -- IT WAS QUITE A SHOW!

BUT IT WAS MORE THAN JUST A SHOW. IT WAS A CHANCE FOR PRESIDENT YELTSIN TO SEE THE "REAL AMERICA." IT WAS A CHANCE FOR HIM TO UNDERSTAND WHAT REALLY MAKES THIS A GREAT NATION. NOT OUR MILITARY FORCE, OR OUR BIG CITIES, OR OUR HUGE INDUSTRIAL FACILITIES. WHAT MAKES THIS COUNTRY GREAT IS OUR PEOPLE AND OUR DEMOCRATIC AND FREE MARKET WAY OF LIFE.

PRESIDENT YELTSIN SAW JUST THAT IN KANSAS. HE SAW, AND HE UNDERSTOOD.

AND HE WANTS FOR HIS PEOPLE WHAT THIS GREAT NATION PROVIDES FOR PEOPLE: SECURITY, JUSTICE, OPPORTUNITY, AND HOPE. AND HE WANTS OUR HELP IN ACHIEVING THOSE GREAT GOALS. HE MADE THAT CLEAR IN KANSAS, AND IN WASHINGTON, AND AGAIN THIS PAST WEEK AT THE ECONOMIC SUMMIT.