

Bob Dole



**NEWS
FROM:**

**U. S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS
SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MARCH 26, 1993

CONTACT: WALT RIKER
(202) 224-5358

HEARINGS ON "MARCH MASSACRE"

DOLE URGES JUDICIARY COMMITTEE PROBE OF UNPRECEDENTED DISMISSAL OF US ATTORNEYS; FORD, CARTER & REAGAN TOOK ONE-AT-A-TIME APPROACH

WASHINGTON -- Citing "serious questions to which the American people deserve answers," Senate Republican Leader Bob Dole today urged the leaders of the Senate Judiciary Committee to hold hearings on Attorney General Janet Reno's unprecedented simultaneous dismissal of all 93 U.S. Attorneys.

In a letter to Chairman Joe Biden and Ranking Republican Orrin Hatch, Dole argued that the "March Massacre" house cleaning "is a severe blow to the administration of justice in this country," and that "the American people deserve a Justice Department that takes a back-seat to politics, and one that functions efficiently." The text of the letter follows:

Dear Joe and Orrin:

I am writing to urge you to convene hearings to review Attorney General Janet Reno's unprecedented decision to dismiss all 93 U.S. Attorneys.

No one questions the President's right to select members of his own Administration. That's a given. In the past, however, Presidents have replaced U.S. Attorneys gradually, recognizing their unique role as the nation's top federal prosecutors. Presidents Ford, Carter and Reagan, for example, all chose to replace U.S. Attorneys one-at-a-time, as their four-year terms expired or as replacements were found.

Quite simply, the simultaneous dismissal of all 93 U.S. Attorneys raises some serious questions to which the American people deserve answers:

1. Who authorized the dismissal? Was it the Attorney General acting alone, or were White House officials involved as well?
2. In light of the inevitable disruption to pending investigations and prosecutions, why was the decision made in the first place? Were political considerations paramount? Were the institutional needs of the Department of Justice taken into consideration?
3. Will the temporary replacements be career prosecutors? Other political appointees? Will they be subject to Senate confirmation? If not, will there be an opportunity for the Senate to review the backgrounds of the temporary replacements, who will be given the enormous responsibility of dispensing justice, handing down indictments, and yes, maybe ruining a few innocent lives in the process?
4. Does the Attorney General herself know who the temporary replacements will be? And when does she expect to name permanent replacements? Does she have a timetable in place?

This is serious business. The American people deserve a Justice Department that takes a back-seat to politics, and one that functions efficiently. In this Senator's view, the Attorney General's decision to clean house last Tuesday--at a time when there is no Deputy Attorney General, no Solicitor General, no Assistant Attorneys General for any of the Department's major divisions--is a severe blow to the administration of justice in this country.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Bob Dole

BOB DOLE