

Bob Dole



NEWS

U. S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER

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SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER BOB DOLE REMARKS TO THE C-PAC '94 CONFERENCE OMNI SHOREHAM HOTEL, WASHINGTON, DC

Thank you, David, and thanks to the American Conservative Union, Human Events, and everyone else involved with bringing this group together.

It's an honor to serve as the kick-off speaker of what I'm told is the largest C-PAC conference in history.

It struck me as I looked over the list of conference speakers that if all the speeches you'll hear between now and Sunday were combined, they wouldn't last as long as President Clinton's State of the Union address.

The Reagan Revolution

Last week was an exciting week. It was the week that Ronald Reagan came back to Washington. I know that many of you were at his birthday dinner. And I am confident that objective historians will conclude that just as Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill saved democracy in the 1940's, Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher saved democracy in the 1980's.

President Reagan gave a great speech last week. And he gave a great speech thirteen years ago, when he spoke at this conference soon after he was sworn in as President.

And I want to share some of those words with you now.

President Reagan said, and I quote:

"The conservative movement in 20th century America held fast through hard and difficult years to its vision of the truth. And...our victory...was not so much a victory of politics as it was a victory of ideas; not so much a victory for any one man or party, as it was a victory for a set of principles."

A lot of things have happened between 1981 and today. We conservatives had some outstanding years. No doubt about it--our ideas and principles turned America around, and changed the world for the better.

But now we're out of power. Liberals control the White House, the Senate, and the House of Representatives. And we may have three more difficult years ahead of us.

Fundamental Differences in Philosophy

But our mission remains the same as it was before the Reagan Revolution.

We must continue to hold fast to our vision of the truth, and we must continue to share our ideas and our principles with the American people.

That's precisely what we did in 1993--and we swept every major election. And it's exactly what we must do this year if we are to take advantage of all the opportunities 1994 offers.

We must let Americans know that we are more than just the opposition party. We are the party of new and better ideas. We are the party that stands on common sense principles: principles like less taxes, less spending, less government, fewer criminals on our streets and more behind bars, and a strong America.

We must let Americans know that conservatives do not just want to cut the Democrats programs in half, or meet them somewhere in the middle.

Rather, we are a completely different way of doing business. We have a basic and fundamental disagreement in philosophy with President Clinton and the Democrat party.

And no matter how hard the President tries to sound like a Republican, that fundamental disagreement still exists.

Republicans believe that the first three words of the Constitution are still "We, the people." President Clinton and his liberal majority believe that our forefathers were mistaken--

(more)

they believe the first three words should be "We, the government."

Their agenda is to raise taxes, increase government spending, increase government mandates, increase government regulations, and increase the role that government has in the day to day life of every American.

Who should decide where your child should go to school?

President Clinton and the liberals say the government. Conservatives say that decision belongs with you.

Who should decide the leave policies of your business?

President Clinton and the liberals say the government. Conservatives say that decision belongs with you.

Who should decide what doctor you see, what treatment you receive, and what your health insurance plan should be?

President Clinton and the liberals say the government. Conservatives say that decision belongs with you.

The Health Care Debate

The health care debate will last for much of this year. And make no mistake about it, President and Mrs. Clinton are going to marshal all of their resources on behalf of their plan. They will continue to attack pharmaceutical companies, insurance companies, the AMA, or anyone else who might have the nerve to disagree.

The White House is also attacking the plan written by Congressman Cooper. And conservatives shouldn't be lulled into believing those are the only two alternatives. Because if it comes down to the Clinton plan and the Cooper plan, then Americans will be left without a true choice.

And that's what our position in the health care debate is all about.

We're about creating a system that creates a maximum amount of choice for the maximum amount of people.

We're about helping people gain access to the best system in the world.

We're about a market system that includes true competition--and not a system of alliances managed and mandated by the government.

The Clinton plan is not about any of those priorities. It's not about choice. It's not about free markets. It's not about competition. And it's certainly not about the best system in the world. And neither is the Cooper plan.

Don't get me wrong. Conservatives know that our health care system is not perfect, and that there are real Americans in need. But we can meet their needs and fix what needs to be fixed without more taxes, more bureaucracy, or denying you the right to choose your own doctor.

Foreign Policy: North Korea, Bosnia

Whatever the issue--health care, crime, welfare reform, education--conservatives and Republicans must continue to advance ideas that are true to our principles.

And one idea that is true to our principles is an America that is respected around the world.

Unfortunately, our image and position abroad is on the same downward spiral as during the Carter years when the United States was feared by none, respected by few, and ignored by many.

Despite its rhetorical toughness, this administration is telegraphing its timidity around the globe, by appeasing dictators and subcontracting American policy to multi-lateral bureaucracies.

North Korea, determined to possess a nuclear capability, is offered an ever-expanding bundle of concessions--as if it is another poor, third world country misunderstood by the west.

Instead of taking firm action to strengthen deterrence on the Korean peninsula, U.S.-South Korean exercises are canceled, and missed deadlines are ignored. Meanwhile, the North Koreans continue to work on building nuclear bombs.

The new democracies in eastern Europe, having recently emerged from the tyranny of communism, seek greater economic and security ties with the United States and western Europe.

Yet, at the NATO summit, we let these countries down by failing to establish criteria and set milestones for expanded membership in NATO--because Russia objected. It seems to me that we have supported Russia--to the tune of \$2.5 billion--and we should be able to expect greater cooperation in foreign policy, not more Soviet-style vetoes.

And, of course, in Bosnia, a country and its people are being destroyed by aggression, as the United States adheres religiously to a U.N. arms embargo against the Bosnian government--violating Bosnia's right to self-defense under the U.N. charter.

The announcement by NATO last night was welcome. But I hope that it is not just more talk. That it not just another cry of "wolf"--a cry we have heard far too often from NATO and from the White House.

I don't usually quote the Washington Post--especially to this audience--but let me read from an editorial this morning:

"At this point in the dying of Bosnia, more talk policy is an obscenity. If the government isn't conducting a serious policy, it should just shut up."

In my view, the President should not wait one more day to unilaterally lift the arms embargo, and to allow the Bosnian people to defend themselves from the ongoing slaughter.

Don't Subordinate U.S. Interests to U.N. Agenda

Perhaps the greatest failing of this administration in the foreign policy arena, is its obsession with the United Nations and its willingness to subordinate U.S. interests to the U.N. agenda.

Boutros Boutros Ghali, an unelected international bureaucrat, seems to have more power than the Secretary of State or the Secretary of Defense--he can veto airstrikes in Bosnia, change the mission of U.S. troops in Somalia, and place American forces under foreign command.

The American taxpayer is being asked to pay at least \$3.2 billion for U.N. peacekeeping in the first two years of the Clinton administration. U.N. peacekeeping is the fastest growing international entitlement program, with operations in more than 20 countries--most having no strategic importance to the United States.

The bottom line is that America, under the Clinton administration, is abdicating leadership--at the United Nations, at NATO, and around the globe. If there is one thing the cold war taught us, it was that only American leadership can ensure the protection of American interests.

The world is still a dangerous place, but, in my view--and I've been there--it is just as dangerous to embrace unguided multilateralism as it is to retreat into isolationism. America is still the world's only superpower and the leader of the free world.

In closing, as Senate Republican Leader, let me thank you for all you have done these past years for our party. Thank you for the stamps you have licked, the precincts you have walked, the votes you have cast, the money you have donated, the articles you have written, and the difference you have made.

And thank you for the work I know you will be doing in the months ahead to make gains in the House, the Senate, and Governor's offices across the country...and to ensure that it will be our ideas and our principles that will lead American into the 21st century.

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