



NEWS from

U.S. Senator Bob Dole

(R.—Kans.)

New Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510 (202) 225-6521

Joe Reppert—Press Secretary

FOR RELEASE: 6:00 p.m.
Thurs., May 10, 1973

DOLE CITES LESSONS OF WATERGATE, URGES RULES STUDY

EVANSVILLE, INDIANA -- The following are excerpts of remarks prepared for delivery by Senator Bob Dole (R.Kans.) at the Lincoln-Eisenhower Republican Dinner tonight:

People like you are the last to need any reassurances from me about the Republican Party -- either about its future or its past.

There should be no doubt about it. We waged a good campaign in 1972. You know that. You were there.

And I know that we will run a better campaign in 1974, and one still better in 1976.

We will, that is, if we decide now -- if we determine now -- that we, the Republican Party, will really run the campaigns.

WINNING NOT THE SOLE TEST

The failure to follow that procedure was the fatal flaw of the last campaign. We won, of course, and we won big in the Presidential race. On the simple test of whether you win or lose -- the campaign result looks pretty good, incredibly successful, in fact. But as the polls and papers have shown in the last few weeks, winning and losing aren't the only consideration. How you play the game still means something -- to me and to the American people.

GOOD PEOPLE -- BAD IDEA

Hindsight always makes these analyses easier. It is the simplest thing in the world to be able to say, now, how the campaign should have been run, or to say that we should have known all along that the establishment of an autonomous campaign committee outside the regular Republican structure was a mistake.

The problems that have resulted from that initial decision, however, were never -- and could never have been -- fully foreseen a year or a year-and-a half ago. There were many good people involved in the CRP effort, and they tried to do a good job. But we know now, at least, that they could have done as good a job -- even better -- at the Republican National Committee or working through the state organizations.

And if they had, I am confident that many of the problems that have now surfaced might never have occurred.

SHOULD BE CORRECTED

But whatever the reasons, that outside committee was set up. It happened -- and knowing now what we know about the mistakes it led to, the Republican Party ought to resolve that it will never happen again.

It led to an unfortunate situation where a few political

amateurs, who were contemptuous of political processes, ignorant of party procedures, unconcerned about party requirements, and unwilling to listen to the advice of party professionals, managed to assume control of the Party's Presidential campaign.

And it led to other problems.

It led to needless friction between elements of the campaign effort.

And it led to the creation of a situation where Watergate could occur -- which has, in turn, led to what I believe is an undeserved crisis of confidence in the President.

PRESIDENT DESERVES SUPPORT

Those who now entertain some doubts about the President's role in the incident may do so understandably, but I believe they are wrong.

The President is a man of integrity. And he is a man immersed in our political process. I have said it before, and I say it now, that for me at least, it is not at all difficult to imagine that such an elaborate scheme as Watergate could have been hatched by certain persons within the campaign without his knowledge.

The best proof is this -- that the President could very well have been unaware of the scheme -- is the fact that Richard Nixon is so immersed in our political process and so committed to it that, had he known of such a scheme, he would have put an immediate stop to it.

Last night, in Washington, the President reiterated his commitment to get to the bottom of the Watergate situation. And he very properly reminded us that we must all take care that the rights of the accused, under our system, be preserved. With new speculative accounts in the newspapers everyday, with new stories and new rumors, it might be easy to make up our minds about who is guilty and who is not, even before any trials take place. But we must avoid that temptation at all costs. It is unfair to the men under suspicion. It is unfair to ourselves. And it is, after all, in its own way, violating the spirit of our traditional protection that men are innocent until proven otherwise.

Let us wait, then until all the facts are in.

And let us also look forward to achieving the great goals the President discussed last night. As he said, he is "not going to allow this deplorable incident to deter or detracts us from going ahead." There is much work to be done -- at home and abroad -- and the President is going to need our strong support if we expect him to succeed. He has already accomplished a great deal. He can do much more if we vow to help him do it.

There can be no minimizing the dimensions of the present crisis. But we must consider that out of this present difficulty, we can emerge -- as a country, certainly, and as a party -- stronger and with a still greater resolve to meet our goals as a result.

It will take a positive attitude on our part to do this, and it will take some positive action as well.

CALL FOR RULE REVISION

At the 1972 Republican Convention, the Party called for the establishment of a Party Rules Study Committee, designed in part, to 'review the relationships between the Republican National Committee, Republican State Committees and other Republican Organizations.'

I would suggest a revision of GOP rules to make it clear and binding on all future Republican Presidential nominees that -- since the nomination is bestowed by the Party on the candidate -- then the nominee who accepts it, accepts along with it the requirement that he coordinate his campaign through established regular Republican channels.

I have said, several times, that the Republican Party has nothing to hide and nothing to fear from Watergate. But we have a lot we can learn from it. We should begin now.