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NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

(R.—Kans.)

New Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510 (202) 224-6521

SCHEDULED FOR DELIVERY: 7:00 p.m. M.S.T
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 1977

FOR RELEASE: SUNDAY A.M.'s

DOLE RAPS DRAFT EVADER PARDON

FORT MORGAN, COLO. -- Senator Bob Dole (R-Kan) criticized President Carter's blanket pardon of Vietnam draft evaders in a Lincoln Day speech here Saturday evening.

The Senator charged that the across-the-board pardon action fell short of the standards of mercy and common sense exhibited in the proper combination by President Lincoln at the most divisive period in American history -- nearing the end of the Civil War.

Lincoln issued an amnesty proclamation for Confederate troops, but only on condition that the soldiers pledge their allegiance to the reformed Union.

Dole said the unconditional pardons were unfair in their application and created uncertainty about the response to any future conscription in time of national emergency.

There is no assurance that young men who fled rather than face the legal consequences of their decision will become lawful citizens upon their return, he pointed out.

Dole described the blanket pardon as an affront to the many Americans who answered the call to service in Southeast Asia, many of whom were killed, wounded, taken prisoner, or still missing.

He noted that the first American POWs had been released from Vietnamese prison camps four years ago, on Lincoln's birthday in 1973.

The 1976 Republican vice-presidential nominee also criticized President Carter for "persisting in appointing well-known doves" to some of the most important national security posts in the government. He mentioned the since withdrawn nomination of Ted Sorenson to be director of the Central Intelligence Agency and the choice of Paul Warnke to be the chief arms control negotiator with the Soviet Union. A Senate committee has been hearing testimony before deciding whether to recommend Warnke's confirmation.

(Full Text Attached)

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REMARKS BY
SENATOR BOB DOLE
LINCOLN DAY DINNER, FORT MORGAN, COLORADO
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 1977

Once again on this day a grateful nation observes the anniversary of Lincoln's birth. For Republicans it is a traditional special occasion for us to recognize and consider our roots as a party. At a time when many Americans are intensely interested in all the details of their ancestral origins, it is important that the Republican Party remember where it came from...and that it was founded on Lincoln's noble principles of human liberty during a trying stage in our history.

Like Alex Haley's forebearers -- who were freed from bondage in the cause that Mr. Lincoln led -- the Republican Party has endured misfortune in the recent past. We lost some elections last year. Keep in mind though, that if a few more Republican voters had turned out in a few key precincts in a few key states, the electoral vote outcome would have been different.

ROOM FOR MANY

We lost not because of the positions we took -- and certainly not because of the principles we share as Republicans -- but because we did not do a good enough job of getting our message across. Our image to some was that of "aginnners".

It is no time for Republicans to insist on uniformity of thought or style.

We cannot afford screening tests or entrance examinations.

So long as our roots are sound, there is room in the Republican garden for many varieties.

It is time for us to rediscover and reaffirm where we came from and what we stand for -- our common roots as a party. In an age of ever more complicated technology, the quest for human liberty is still unsatisfied. Today our people strain against the bonds of an over-regulated society. In agriculture, the economy, and -- most recently -- the supply of energy -- indeed in every corner of our lives -- Americans yearn for freedom from bureaucratic domination.

MERCY AND COMMON SENSE

For every American, Lincoln's Birthday also is an opportunity to measure the conduct of our leaders and the level-headed wisdom of their actions against his high standards.

President Lincoln taught us that a wise leader combines the very best qualities of mercy and common sense. Near the end of the Civil War, he faced the problem of healing our national wounds and reuniting a wartorn country. He issued a Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction for all Confederate soldiers -- a full pardon for all -- but only if each individual would take this oath --

"In presence of Almighty God, I will henceforth faithfully support, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States, and the Union of the States thereunder; and that I will, in like manner, abide by and faithfully support all acts of Congress -- and abide by and faithfully support all proclamations of the President."

This year our new President set out to do something about the divisions left by the Vietnam War. The day after he took office, President Carter granted a full, complete, and unconditional pardon to those who had violated the Selective Service laws. No oath of allegiance was required -- no assurance that the young men who fled rather than face the legal consequences of that action would become lawful citizens upon their return.

I am not comparing Confederate troops of the last century and Vietnam draft dodgers of the law few years. But there is a common thread. It is reasonable to expect a promise of loyalty from those who ducked out.

In my opinion, the blanket pardon failed to meet the standards of mercy and common sense so admirably combined in the person of Abraham Lincoln.

Rather than healing our wounds, the unwise action inflicted emotional wounds upon Americans who served their country honorably.

Many who dodged the draft did so for reasons remotely connected, if at all, with moral opposition to the war. Many of them knew only that it was a trip that could be hazardous to their well-being.

A blanket Presidential pardon of draft evaders in time of war is unprecedented in American history.

UNWISE AND UNFAIR

President Carter's blanket pardon was both unwise and unfair. The consequences for the future of our national security could be disastrous. It was a direct affront to the two-and-a-half million young Americans who served with dignity in Southeast Asia -- the next of kin of the 56,234 Americans who died in Vietnam -- the 303,000 wounded in action -- the families of hundreds of Americans still listed as missing -- and the thousands who were called and sent to Vietnam to take the place of those who chose to run away.

At least half the violators of the Selective Service Act who later asked the President to pardon them never bothered to apply for the status of a conscientious objector before being called. Their moral objections to the war did not develop until they were called to service.

Then too, what of those who were granted C.O. status and then served as non-combatants -- and some of whom died in the war? What of those who were opposed to the war for their own reasons, refused to be inducted, and then -- instead of fleeing the country -- faced the charges in court and served prison sentences? The inequities are everywhere.

What it means is this: Young men who renounced their American citizenship and displayed their cowardice by fleeing the country to avoid paying the penalty are welcome to return without any explanation, any pledge of future allegiance, any demonstration that they will not selectively flaunt other laws.

FUTURE DANGER

Future generations are on notice that "freedom of choice" can apply to military conscription -- and the nation's Commander-in-Chief is willing to condone such action on a blanket basis. Mr. Carter may have severely undermined our ability to respond in time to a national emergency.

On this, as on so many other subjects, the President's course of action cannot possibly be acceptable to a fully-informed majority of the American people.

The new Administration in Washington is dedicated to a weakening of national defense, a continued high rate of government spending, and government programs that invariably extend controls of one sort or another over nearly every aspect of our lives.

For some of the most important national security posts in the government -- such as Director of the CIA and Chief Arms Control Negotiator with the Soviets -- the President persists in nominating well-known "doves" whose understanding of the realities of this dangerous world may be less than realistic.

Mr. Carter projects an engaging zest going about his new duties. His early decisions are coated with a thick covering of public relations syrup. We see a lot of sweaters and symbolic gestures around the White House.

In the end, whatever emerges from the Democratic Congress is certain to involve the hand of the federal government on your shoulder and in your pocket.

REPUBLICAN ALTERNATIVES

Republicans of whatever garden variety stand for less government, lower taxes, and problem-solving that draws on the strengths of the private enterprise system. It is possible to present more sensible concrete alternatives to Democratic proposals -- and the Republicans in Congress are doing that this year.

Much of the nation has been suffering from a severe shortage of natural gas. Schools, stores and other working places had to be shut down in many states. Although the warning signs were clear for all to see, the last Congress did nothing to increase production of fuel. Distortions in the market are created by unrealistic government regulation. Future supplies cannot be predicted. Depending on where they live, some consumers pay more, others pay less.

Meanwhile, the new Congress has responded to the winter crisis in a characteristic cosmetic fashion -- by sending the President a so-called Emergency Natural Gas Act that does nothing to increase badly needed supplies of natural gas. The legislation is merely intended to distribute the shortages more evenly around the country.

DEREGULATION OVERDUE

Deregulation of natural gas at the wellhead is long overdue, but the President's stand is unclear. As a candidate, he said one thing in the Southwest and another in the Northeast. As President.....we'll have to wait and see.

Under the circumstances, it is reasonable to suspect that any reorganization of the federal government to be undertaken by the Democratic Administration is likely to be a mere reshuffling of the bureaucracy. The need to make some sense out of the bureaucracy -- and to make the government more responsive to you -- is urgent. Republicans were fighting for efficient reorganization of the Executive branch long before Jimmy Carter ever saw the Statehouse in Atlanta. Congress should be a partner in working out the details of the reorganization plan. But we continue to support the objective -- particularly if the cost and complexity of the bureaucracy can be shrunk in size.

We can all agree, too, that economic stimulus is called for -- policies that are expansionary without being inflationary. The President has proposed a one-shot \$50 tax rebate and a big program of temporary federally financed jobs. Our alternative is a permanent tax cut and an employment tax credit.

As far back as 1965, I introduced a bill for an employment tax credit. Employers -- private employers -- would be encouraged to put more workers on their payrolls because the federal government, in effect, would be picking up part of the additional wage cost. Given a choice between raising prices and increasing production by hiring more workers, and thus creating more real jobs, employers would have every reason to choose the latter course.

This is an example of sensible, workable Republican alternatives to Democratic policies. The Party need not be perceived as obstructionist, if we come up with and dramatize better ways of solving public problems. In this instance, Republicans prefer to leave more tax money in the pockets of people to use as they see best; and to target an employment tax credit where it will do the most permanent good.

AGRICULTURE IGNORED

The new Administration's lack of attention to agriculture is distressing. Farmers are in dire financial straits. Though Candidate Carter talked often about the need for raising loan rates, you haven't heard anything lately. What happened to the President's campaign concerns for the economic plight of the farmers? The effect of loan rates on grain exports is only one of the problems that will be addressed by the Senate Agriculture Committee when we begin hearings in a few days on a new farm bill.

Many of the decisions that will be dictated by the Democratic Administration and the Democratic majorities in both Houses of Congress will probably not be in accord with the views of a majority of the American people. That is the reason Republicans need not be downcast on this Lincoln's Day weekend. The future of our Party can be bright, if we go out and convince the voters that we have their best interests at heart.

Ultimately, our cause will prevail because of our Party principles -- proud principles that were given us by the man whose birthday we celebrate this weekend.

Our roots as a party run deep. They will stand the test of today -- and tomorrow.