



NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

(R.-Kans.)

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FOR RELEASE: Saturday AM's

SCHEDULED FOR DELIVERY: 8:00 (CST)
Friday, April 1, 1977

DOLE RAPS CARTER'S "ELECTORAL REFORMS"

Westfield, Indiana -- Some features of President Carter's electoral reform program are designed to "destroy the Republican party as a viable second party," Senator Bob Dole (R-Kan) declared Friday.

The 1976 Republican Vice Presidential nominee and former Republican national chairman made the charge in a speech to a Hamilton County Republican dinner audience.

Dole attacked the President's proposals for universal voter registration in Presidential elections; repeal of the Hatch Act prohibition against political activity by federal employees; and public financing of Congressional election campaigns.

Closer to One-Party Rule

"In the name of electoral reform, the changes (proposed by Mr. Carter) would move us closer to a one-party nation," the Senator asserted. "All who believe, as I do, that the competition between two strong parties has served this country well should be appalled at the grand design behind such a plan."

He said it was unfortunate that some Republican spokesmen in Washington had been "sucked into" a premature endorsement of on-the-spot voter registration.

Mr. Carter's recommendation that the necessity for prior registration be abolished would be an open invitation for fraud "on a scale that the bosses in Cook County, Illinois, never dared dream of," Dole alleged. The problems of policing such a dual federal-state system of registration would be almost insurmountable, he added.

"I want to make it as easy as possible for everyone who wants to vote to vote -- but only once in any one election," the Kansas Senator said.

Voting Ought To Be Positive Decision

But he suggested that voting ought to be a deliberate, positive decision. "We don't want political bosses dragooning real or imagined citizens to the polls -- citizens who don't have the foggiest notion who the candidates are," Dole continued. Both parties would be better advised to dwell on how they can communicate more effectively with the people and reactivate their interest in public affairs.

Turning to the Hatch Act, Dole said its repeal would make it possible to "mobilize the federal bureaucracy into a powerful political machine."

Civil servants would no longer be protected from the political pressures of their bosses, he contended. "The battle to control the growth and influence of the bureaucracy would be even more difficult if that bureaucracy were turned into a giant political organization."

Congressional Campaign Subsidy

Discussing another of the President's requests -- a federal subsidy for the cost of campaigning for the House or Senate -- Dole said public financing would free labor unions to contribute their vast human and financial resources in campaign activities that would be outside the legal limitations.

"All these proposals," the Senator declared, "are intended by the President to strengthen his party's hold on the political system. Partisan disadvantage is not reason enough to be against these plans, I know. To the extent that they also encourage the splintering away of third parties, they would lead to the disintegration of our strong two-party system -- at a time, I submit, when more than ever before, America needs a revival of two strong parties. Taken together, these 'reforms' would, in fact, bring about a major transformation of the U.S. political system. A Democratic President and a Democratic Congress would like to preside over this readjustment, and further tip the balance of power -- all in the name of 'reform'."

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Dole said he supported the objective behind another reform proposal, the direct popular election of the President. But he said he was seriously concerned about how this could be provided without encouraging splinter parties and making possible the election of a President with far less than a majority of the votes.

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REMARKS OF SENATOR BOB DOLE

Hamilton County Republican Dinner
Westfield, Indiana
Friday, April 1, 1977

One state that President Ford and I knew would be in the Republican column last November was the Hoosier State. You did not fail us. Jerry Ford and I will never forget your resounding support in that election. Somehow, the funeral notices that have been published so frequently for the Republican party never seem to reach the Wabash River. Your success underscores the importance of running good candidates, maintaining an effective organization from the grass roots up -- not something that is ordained from the top down -- avoiding factional splits, and being in tune with the interests and attitudes of all voters in your state. Dick Lugar's arrival in the Senate is a happy event, not just for Indiana and the Republican party, but for the venerable institution in which we serve. He represents your state well and has a most promising future ahead of him. He is Exhibit A of what I'm talking about -- an attractive, dynamic candidate who understands party organization -- and understands how to win.

Republican Enthusiasm

These past few weeks -- a prolonged Lincoln Day season which seems to come closer to the Fourth of July -- are the traditional occasions for Republicans to come together, consider their common roots as a party, and reflect on what we can offer the nation -- what course we should take in the future. Traveling and speaking in many different sections of the country at affairs such as this, I found Republicans who are enthusiastic and full of hope. The Republican party was founded here in the Midwest on Mr. Lincoln's timeless principles of human liberty.

We live in a far more complicated age today. But the quest for liberty and freedom is never-ending. The pressures of an over-regulated society, and senseless bureaucratic domination, reach into every corner of our lives.

Ours is still the party of principle. Our principles need not be bent this way and that either to win votes or to pacify the contrasting elements in the party's constituency. Ours is still the party of common sense. Ours is still the party of individual freedom and responsibility.

Freedom Issues

There are new freedom issues crowding the agenda in Washington these days.

-- Freedom from criminal terror. Our society is worse off than anyone could have imagined if we cannot devise methods for protecting ourselves against the fear of atrocities at the hands of terrorist gangs who threaten to murder hostages. There must be some clearly understood limitations in the future about what is and is not negotiable in such situations -- and the right of the ringleader to walk home immediately -- before the victims have hardly had time to be reunited with their loved ones -- on no more than his promise to show up for trial -- should not be on the table for bargaining. To do this is to hold our judicial system itself hostage.

One approach is a bill I introduced which would prevent the immediate pre-trial release without bail of anyone accused of threatening the lives of hostages. Too many criminals with records are turned loose to commit new crimes while awaiting trial. The bail system itself is in need of review. In our concern for the constitutional rights of defendants, we have forgotten the even more basic right of defenseless potential victims to be left alone -- not to be free game for muggers, armed robbers, rapists, and other violent criminals.

-- Another freedom is the freedom to join a union or not join a labor union, as the worker prefers. Some 20 states, as you know, have chosen to pass laws prohibiting compulsory union membership agreements. Other states have chosen not to. Once again this year, organized labor is trying to have the federal government supercede the states on this and flatly prohibit the states from prohibiting compulsory union shop agreements.

Electoral Reform

-- Another freedom is freedom of choice -- freedom of political choice. In the name of "electoral reform," President Carter has proposed some changes that could move us closer to a one-party nation. In the bland name of "reform," the new

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overlord of the Democratic party is blatantly trying to destroy the Republican party as a viable second party. All who believe, as I do, that the competition between two strong parties has served this country well should be appalled at the grand design behind such a plan.

Unfortunately, some Republican leaders in Washington were sucked into an endorsement of the first of these "reform" proposals: instant, on-the-spot voter registration. The President and a great many other Democrats would like to make it possible for anyone to vote in a Presidential election just by walking in off the street and presenting some kind of personal identification.

This would be an opportunity for fraud on a scale that the bosses in Cook County, Illinois, could never have dared dream of.

I want to make it as easy as possible for everyone who wants to vote to vote -- but only once in any one election.

Widespread Fraud

The problems of policing such a dual system of registration would be almost insurmountable. The state of Wisconsin has experimented with a similar plan. In last November's election, over 63,000 new voters in Milwaukee alone were registered on election day and participated in that election. The Milwaukee Journal later found widespread evidence of fraud. The Wisconsin system requires that the County Clerk attempt to verify the actual existence of the new voters by postcard after the election. But by the time any discrepancies are ironed out, Inauguration Day will have come and gone.

It has been estimated that some 25 million additional voters would take part in the election. All real life Americans who are old enough to vote -- and want to vote -- should be able to do so -- once. But voting ought to be a positive decision. We don't want political bosses dragooning real or imagined citizens to the polls -- citizens who probably won't have the foggiest notion who the candidates are.

The act of non-voting is itself often a deliberate decision, the experts tell us. Both of our parties should dwell on how better to communicate with these Americans and activate their interest in public affairs. Having labor unions and other organizations round them up and herd them off to the polls on election day is not the answer.

Another of the Carter "reforms" is motivated by partisan considerations. The President has called for the repeal of the Hatch Act protection against political activity by federal employees. This would make it possible to mobilize the federal bureaucracy into a powerful political machine. The Hatch Act was designed to protect the integrity of the Civil Service from political abuse. It was designed to protect Civil Servants from the political pressures of their bosses. Under the President's plan, political conformity could be enforced. The battle to control the growth and influence of the bureaucracy would be even more difficult if that bureaucracy were turned into a giant political organization.

Public Financing

The third request is to provide for public financing of Congressional campaigns. This would involve limitations on private spending in campaigns. The trouble with that is the difficulty in restricting all private contributions. A public subsidy would free the labor unions to invest their enormous human and financial resources in the kind of campaign activities that would not be covered by the limitation.

All of these proposals are intended by the President to strengthen his party's hold on the political system. Partisan disadvantage is not reason enough to be against these plans, I know. To the extent that they also encourage the splintering away of third parties, they would lead to the disintegration of our strong two-party system at a time, I submit, when more than ever before, America needs a revival of two strong parties. Taken together, these "reforms" would, in fact, bring about a major transformation of the U.S. political system. A Democratic President and a Democratic Congress would like to preside over this readjustment, and further tip the balance of political power -- all in the name of "reform."

Direct Election

I support the objective behind another electoral reform proposal -- namely, the popular election of the President. I agree that the candidate who gets the most votes ought to win, and that no electoral college technicality should interfere

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with that. But I am seriously concerned about how the direct election of the President can be provided without encouraging splinter parties and making it possible for a candidate to win with "the most votes," even if "the most" is only 35 or 40 percent. I hope a workable direct election constitutional amendment can be developed, one that would be likely to maintain our two-party system.

The ultimate freedom, of course, is the freedom to live in peace and security. As Republicans, we wish the Administration well in the strategic arms limitation discussions with the Soviet Union. We stand behind the President in his apparent determination to defend fundamental human rights and to settle for nothing that would endanger our national security.

Our position as Republicans in Congress should be -- and will be -- to support him when he is right. When he is wrong, we can serve our country best -- and merit the confidence of the voters -- by offering alternative ideas in a spirit of constructive criticism.

Saying "no" to more and bigger government is not enough. We've got to spell out how the forces of our private enterprise system can be harnessed to deal with problems that are of immediate concern to many of our citizens. And that it can be done more effectively that way than by expanding the government bureaucracy and raising taxes.

The new Administration has been in office now for two months. The new President and the members of his family have been our constant companions on the television screen, the radio, and the front pages of our newspapers and magazines. The transition from the easy rhetoric of the opposition candidate to the awesome responsibilities of governing this nation is always hard. It is natural for him to want to make a good impression and to delay making substantive decisions. But the American people have been treated to a public relations blitz unprecedented in the history of the Presidency. From tree houses and town meetings, we are bombarded with the image of a folksy American family that has our best interests at heart.

At the town meeting in Massachusetts, Mr. Carter said he expected to balance the federal budget within four years. That is a commendable objective. If we are to restore economic vitality without runaway inflation, federal spending must be brought under control. But the President is not starting off very well. The budget revisions that he recommended would add about \$10 billion to the final Ford budget, bringing the total projected deficit for the current fiscal year to \$68 billion.

He campaigned on a pledge to cut the White House staff by one-third. So what happened? The White House staff has grown by almost one-third since Mr. Carter took office. Most of the additions must have been public relations counselors.

If some of this creative energy that has been devoted to P.R. could be diverted to solving the nation's pressing problems -- if the White House team is half as imaginative governing the country as it has been marketing the Chief Executive -- I suppose we need not fear.

Arms control is one of those problems.

How to get the economy back in gear again -- and more people back to work -- without setting off a new surge of inflation -- is another concern of all of us. Consumer prices went up in February at an annual rate of 12.7 percent, an intolerable trend that we cannot permit to continue. Severe winter weather had a lot to do with the higher food prices. But it was clear from the Labor Department statistics that many of the increases were unrelated to the cold weather. We are in danger of being caught up in another inflation psychology that accepts the inevitability of creeping inflation. Throughout recent years, the government has been the fastest growing item in the family budget. This doesn't turn up in the Consumer Price Index, but the average American family knows it!

GOP Under Fewer Constraints

When it comes down to innovative solutions to nagging public problems, solutions that require down-to-earth thinking and not stage-managed gimmicks, the truth is our party is under fewer constraints and inhibitions than is the other party. We can offer fresh, exciting ideas that draw on the strength of the private sector, reverse the burgeoning growth of government, and wind up costing the taxpayers less.

These are positions consistent with Republican principles. These are positions consistent with the thinking of most of the American people -- in Gary and

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Indianapolis and South Bend, as well as on the farms and small towns. These are positions which Republicans of whatever subtitle and from whatever region of our country -- from New York or Indiana, or even Georgia -- can endorse enthusiastically.

Our roots as a party run deep. If we remain true to our principles, and take our case to the people, in terms that have meaning for their every-day lives, the two-party system will remain strong, and the future of the Republican party can and will be bright.

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