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REMARKS OF SENATOR BOB DOLE

REPUBLICAN HERITAGE GROUPS COUNCIL

BLACKSTONE HOTEL, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

I am delighted to be here tonight to have this opportunity to address the Republican Heritage Groups Council at your annual convention. You are a most important element within our party. In my mind, you and other Americans who strongly identify with an ethnic heritage represent that segment of the American population which offers the greatest potential for broadening the base of the Republican Party.

SIX YEARS AGO

As I look around this evening, I am reminded of a similar banquet I attended in Chicago in 1971. At the time, the Republican State Nationalities Council of Illinois was honoring Congressman Ed Derwinski as "man of the year", and I was here to join in the festivities as Chairman of the Republican National Committee. It was a magnificent affair. Over 1,000 people attended that banquet including Governor Ogilvie, Congressman Phil Crane, Mitchell Kobelinski, Aloysius Mazewski, John Spatuzza and a great supporter of your Republican Heritage efforts, W. Clement Stone. It was at that banquet that I stressed the fact that the Republican Party was more responsive to ethnic Americans and offered the better political alternative for recognition of your efforts. Nothing that has happened in the last six years has caused me to change my mind. On the contrary, I am now convinced more than ever that I was right.

MUCH HAS HAPPENED

Much has happened, of course, since 1971. Congressman Derwinski went on to become National Chairman of the Republican Heritage Groups Council and the leading spokesman for ethnic Americans within the Republican Party. Myron Kuropas, then Chairman of the Republican State Nationalities Council in Illinois, became a Special Assistant for Ethnic Affairs to President Ford. Mitchell Kobelinski was appointed a Director of the Export-Import Bank, and later, under President Ford, the Administrator of the Small Business Administration. Aloysius Mazewski became an ethnic Heritage Advisor with the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. John Spatuzza was appointed a member of the Board of Trustees of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

Since then, I won another election in Kansas in 1974, and then had the good fortune to serve as President Ford's running mate. I am convinced that our ability to win the states of Illinois, California, New Jersey, Michigan, Indiana, and Connecticut were due, in large measure, to the votes of ethnic Americans who realized the strength of President Ford and were uncertain about candidate Carter.

Even Pat Caddell, Carter's polling advisor and political guru, admits this in his now famous post-election memorandum to Jimmy Carter. Acknowledging the fact that Carter's pluralities in the traditionally Democratic urban centers were significantly less than those enjoyed by most recent Democratic candidates, Carter's pollster concluded that blue-collar ethnics are "one of the most vulnerable groups in the Democratic coalition". For Republicans, this is encouraging, especially since Mr. Carter's behavior in the White House thus far has been long on style, but short on substance.

CARTER AND HUMAN RIGHTS

As one who believes that Republicans should support the President when he is right, let me state at the outset that I am in agreement with Mr. Carter's human rights position. He is right in standing up to the Soviet Union and emphasizing our concern for humanitarian ideals. Human rights have long been a concern of the American people, and I am pleased that this important cause has apparently become a cornerstone of our foreign policy.

But the Democrats did not invent human rights. They were oblivious to it when a Democratic President agreed to recognize the Soviet Union in 1933, and there was no talk of human rights when the same Democratic President agreed to Soviet demands at Yalta.

At the same time, it was not a Democratic President who signed the Captive Nations Resolution into law, and it was not a Democratic President who developed a foreign policy based on the containment of Communist imperialism.

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FORD WAS RIGHT

Nor was it a Democratic President who signed the Helsinki Final Act providing the dissidents in Eastern Europe with just the lever they so desperately needed to call world attention to their plight. Helsinki was not a victory for Soviet diplomacy as some of President Ford's critics would have us believe. The Soviets miscalculated the human rights impact of the Helsinki Final Act and now, to their dismay, Helsinki Public Groups have been formed in Russia, Ukraine, Lithuania and Georgia to demand Soviet compliance. President Ford always believed that Helsinki was a victory for the West. In retrospect, we realize he was right.

THE HELSINKI COMMISSION

Finally, it was Republican initiative -- most notably that of Congresswoman Millicent Fenwick and Senator Clifford Case -- which made possible the creation of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe -- commonly called the Helsinki Commission -- to monitor compliance with the provisions of the Helsinki Final Act. Without the Helsinki Commission, it would not have been possible to compile the data we presently have in such an organized and professional manner.

NO REAL HUMAN RIGHTS PROGRESS

As a member of the Helsinki Commission since last January, I am keenly aware of the many violations of the Helsinki Final Act perpetrated by the Soviet Union and other Warsaw Pact nations. They have absolutely no respect for religious liberties and national rights. They totally disregard those provisions of the Helsinki Final Act which call for freer emigration and for reunification of families. The Commission hearings which I have attended have made clear to me the fact that regardless of the progress we may have made with the Soviet Union in certain areas of technological and economic cooperation, we have made little, if any, real headway in the human rights arena. The Soviet Union today is what it has always been: a totalitarian state committed to the obliteration of even the most mild resistance to its continuing policy of repression of individual, religious, and national rights.

COMMUNIST TOTALITARIANISM

What is true of the Soviet Union is true of other Communist regimes, and for that reason, I get very nervous whenever I hear Democrats talking about normalizing diplomatic relations with Cuba, Vietnam, and the People's Republic of China. It is nothing short of ironic that the Carter Administration proposes to establish relations with Communist countries -- whose violations of human freedom are common knowledge -- at the same time it suggests we reduce or restrict contact with traditional allies in Latin America who are accused of undemocratic policies. I know of no better way to undermine the worthy moral principles of our current foreign policy objectives than to demonstrate inconsistent attitudes concerning international human rights. We are in the driver's seat. Let us not embark on diplomatic ventures that do not represent the finest ideals of the American people. The governments of Cuba, Vietnam, and Communist China are among the most obvious offenders of individual human liberties, and our diplomatic policy should consistently reflect that fact.

THE PROMISE OF BELGRADE

If there are reservations about President Carter's human rights crusade, it is the fear that it will not last. Given his reversals on a number of other important issues, it is possible that he may decide to soften his approach towards the Soviets at Belgrade, especially since some of our allies in Western Europe appear to be pushing him to that end. To insure that this will not happen, Congresswoman Fenwick and I introduced a joint Congressional resolution last week calling upon the official United States delegation at Belgrade to "reiterate in clear and unequivocal terms the commitment of the American people to human rights in the context of an ultimate enlargement of human freedom throughout the world and to insist that the full conference agenda include the presentation and thorough discussion of all violations of the Helsinki Final Act. America is a beacon of hope for those who resist totalitarian domination of their lives. We cannot abandon these brave people. We must take advantage of every opportunity to call the world's attention to their courageous struggle and for that reason we cannot -- we will not -- back down at Belgrade.

Given the Republican record and a 1976 Republican platform which succinctly articulated the nature of our ideological struggle with the Communists, we have no need to apologize. The Democrats have a long way to go before they can match our efforts on behalf of human rights.

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One test of Mr. Carter's resolve will come during the third week of July when the White House will be issuing the annual Captive Nations Proclamation. It will be interesting to see how forcefully the Democrats address that issue.

It will also be interesting to see how Mr. Carter deals with the Cyprus situation. Candidate Carter was able to win most of the Greek vote when he promised a tougher policy towards Turkey than that pursued by President Ford. President Carter has gone beyond Ford in his attempts to lift the arms embargo against Turkey prompting the Greek Press to accuse him of "campaign trickery".

CARTER'S REVERSALS

But the Cyprus issue is not the only time Mr. Carter has reversed himself since coming into office.

Candidate Carter promised to reduce the White House staff by 30%. President Carter has increased it.

Candidate Carter promised to stop the boycott of American business by Arab countries. President Carter approved a bill which would have weakened efforts to outlaw the boycott.

Candidate Carter promised a streamlined federal bureaucracy of 200 agencies. President Carter believes it is not productive to "talk numbers" when discussing the reorganization of 1900 federal agencies.

Candidate Carter promised to be sensitive to the fate of freedom in other countries. President Carter opposes what he has called "an overly rigid" proposal to curtail international loans to countries which regularly violate basic human rights.

Candidate Carter promised an "open" White House and a willingness to meet with all segments of the American population. President Ford met with over 400 ethnic leaders in the last nine months of his administration. How many ethnic Americans have been to the White House since President Ford left?

Candidate Carter promised to have an Administration that was truly representative of the American people. How many ethnic Americans has President Carter appointed?

PARDON FOR DRAFT EVADERS

Not all of Candidate Carter's proposals, of course, have been ignored by President Carter. He said he would pardon all Vietnam War draft evaders during his first week in office, and he did it. As I stated during the campaign, and again on the floor of the Senate, I do not believe it was a wise decision. President Ford offered draft evaders an opportunity to earn clemency by proving their right to resume their place in this nation. Some accepted. Some refused. That satisfied most Americans. There was no need for a blanket pardon.

THE FUTURE IS BRIGHT

Let me conclude with a word about the future. Especially the future role of ethnic Americans in the G.O.P. There are four main reasons why I believe the future is bright.

First, I agree with Pat Caddell that the weakest link in the Democratic chain are ethnic Americans. They are disappointed with the Democrats and ready to vote for our candidates if we are willing to cultivate their support.

Secondly, the values of the Republican Party are the values of ethnic Americans.

--You believe in the existence of a Supreme Being, the sanctity of the family, the integrity of the community, the value of heritage and tradition in everyday life and the need for individual initiative and sacrifice in attaining worthwhile goals.

--You love America and you want to see her willing and able to stand up to her enemies. Many of you have seen what a loss of freedom has meant to your ancestral homelands and you don't want a similar tragedy to befall the United States. For that reason you support a strong national defense.

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--You are opposed to big government because you realize that with bigger government comes less local control and a loss of rights and freedom.

--You are not insensitive to those less fortunate than you, but you realize we aid others best by helping them to help themselves.

--You are devoted to your ethnic heritage because you realize that America is not a melting pot but a mosaic of the best elements of national expression the world has to offer.

A third reason I'm optimistic about our future is related to your new executive board. I am delighted that you have elected Mitchell Kobelinski your new national chairman. He's following a tough act in taking over the reins from Ed Derwinski, but Mitch will do a great job. He was one of President Ford's tireless campaigners; he understands the ethnic American soul; he's a superb organizer; and he'll be supported by an exceptional executive team. I'm expecting great things from your council during the next two years.

Finally, I believe the G.O.P. has at long last realized the importance of the ethnic vote. You have strong supporters in Bill Brock and Mary Crisp who have demonstrated their interest in a very significant way -- increasing your budget!

Important elections are just around the corner. The Congressional elections of next year are especially critical because they will determine whether the President enters his re-election campaign on the upswing and with the support of top-heavy Democratic majorities in both Houses of Congress -- or whether our party is able to pick up some momentum -- and some seats -- which would surely give Republicans everywhere a lift as we begin getting ready for the Presidential year.

Ethnic Americans under your leadership can contribute to a G.O.P. victory in 1978. If we remain true to our principles and resist unwise pledges of ideological purity while remaining responsive to the needs of most Americans, we will once again have a Republican in the White House in 1980.

The road ahead will not be an easy one, but with your dedication, your enthusiasm, and your will to win, we will be victorious.

Tonight, I pledge to you my support -- every step of the way.

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