

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



(R - Kansas)

2213 Dirksen Building, Washington, D.C. 20510

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
THURSDAY, AUGUST 6, 1981

CONTACT: BILL KATS
(202) 224-6521

BLISS 'A REPUBLICAN STATESMAN OF THE FIRST RANK,' DOLE SAYS

WASHINGTON -- Senator Bob Dole (R-Kan.) today praised former Republican National Committee Chairman Ray Bliss as "a Republican statesman of the first rank." Dole, himself once chairman of the RNC, issued the following statement on learning of the death of his long-time friend:

"A political party is many things: ideas, candidates, slogans and solutions. But most of all, it is people -- people who care about their country and who are willing to express their concern in a hundred ways, from ringing doorbells to running for office.

"Ray Bliss's party belonged to those people. He never forgot that a party's first obligation is to serve their needs and raise their hopes. He was called a 'nuts and bolts' politician -- which was just another way of saying that he cared passionately about making the Republican Party a champion of average Americans.

"He came by his organizational gifts naturally, as a political manager in his native Ohio. But he built much more than a formidable organization. He won for his party the allegiance of tens of thousands of Ohio voters who might not otherwise have known how important they were to the Grand Old Party. In 1965, he took command of a shattered party. He quieted our internal disputes, and guided us back to stunning victories in 1966 and 1968. No party in my lifetime has ever achieved so much in so little time. And much of the credit for that will always belong to Ray Bliss.

"His death removes a Republican statesman of the first rank. But at least he lived to see his party on the brink of a lifetime goal. Ray Bliss died at the dawn of a Republican majority. Who among us can forget how he led us through the dark hours just before this new beginning. He was called a technician -- a word he was proud to repeat. Because if Ray Bliss was a technician, then Einstein was one more scientist. He reflected his own brand of honor on all of us who practice politics for a living. And all of us looked a little better for standing in his light."