

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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REMARKS OF SENATOR BOB DOLE
GEORGIA STATE REPUBLICAN CONVENTION
FRIDAY, MAY 22, 1987

ON MONDAY, THE NATION CELEBRATES MEMORIAL DAY. MAKE NO MISTAKE -- WITH THE LOSS OF 37 AMERICAN LIVES IN THE PERSIAN GULF THIS WEEK -- MEMORIAL DAY 1987 WILL BE EXTRA POIGNANT.

THE SHOCKING, UNPROVOKED ATTACK ON THE U.S.S. STARK REMINDS US AGAIN THAT THE COST OF FREEDOM IS HIGH. AS THE LEADER OF THE FREE WORLD OUR RESPONSIBILITIES ARE HEAVY: IT ISN'T EASY. IT IS OFTEN PAINFUL. AND WE PRAY FOR PEACE. BUT THE REAL WORLD IS A DANGEROUS PLACE, WITH TYRANNY ON THE MARCH. IT IS A CHALLENGE THAT WE HAVE ALWAYS MET, WITH COURAGE, DETERMINATION AND YES, SACRIFICE. TIME AND TIME AGAIN, AMERICAN SERVICEMEN AND WOMEN HAVE PUT THEIR LIVES ON THE LINE TO KEEP THE FLAME OF FREEDOM BURNING AROUND THE GLOBE.

NOW, I KNOW THAT MEMORIAL DAY IS A "HOLIDAY" -- A LONG WEEKEND FOR AMERICA. BUT LET US REMEMBER THE TRUE SPIRIT OF MEMORIAL DAY THIS YEAR. LET'S HONOR THE SACRIFICE OF THE 37 MEN OF THE U.S.S. STARK. THEY ARE THE LATEST ADDITIONS TO OUR LONG AND DISTINGUISHED HONOR ROLL OF HEROES: WE WILL NEVER FORGET THEM.

THE LESSONS OF THE STARK

WE CALL OUR COUNTRY -- WITH PRIDE AND WITH JUSTIFICATION -- THE LEADER OF THE FREE WORLD. WITH THAT POSITION COMES AWESOME RESPONSIBILITY AND -- SOMETIMES -- TERRIBLE COST. A FACT WE FACE ONCE AGAIN, IN THE TRAGIC ATTACK ON THE U.S.S. STARK.

WE'RE STILL SORTING OUT WHAT HAPPENED IN THAT TERRIBLE INCIDENT. WHY DID THAT IRAQI PLANE ATTACK? WHY DIDN'T THE SHIP DEFEND ITSELF? WE MUST HAVE THE ANSWERS TO THOSE QUESTIONS, URGENTLY.

BUT SOME THINGS CAN AND MUST BE SAID NOW.

WE HAVE VITAL INTERESTS IN THE PERSIAN GULF. WE'RE THERE TO DEFEND THOSE AMERICAN INTERESTS -- NOT THE INTERESTS OF SOME OTHER COUNTRY. THAT'S WHY THE AMERICAN NAVY IS THERE, IN FORCE. HAS BEEN FOR 40 YEARS. AND WHY WE'RE NOT GOING TO BE DRIVEN OUT, OR SCARED OUT NOW.

BUT WHAT HAPPENED TO THE STARK DOES DEMAND SOME ADDITIONAL ACTIONS NOW.

MAYBE THE IRAQI ATTACK WAS AN ACCIDENT. BUT -- EVEN IF IT WAS -- WE NEED MORE THAN JUST AN APOLOGY. AN APOLOGY DOESN'T HELP MUCH, WHEN 37 OF AMERICA'S FINEST LIE DEAD. IT WON'T BE MUCH CONSOLATION TO THE MOTHERS, AND FATHERS, AND WIVES, AND CHILDREN OF THOSE VICTIMS.

WE HAVE TO LAY DOWN SOME TOUGH, TOUGH MARKERS WITH IRAQ. IRAQ NEEDS TO KNOW THIS CAN NEVER HAPPEN AGAIN. NO MATTER WHAT THE CIRCUMSTANCES. AND IRAQ NEEDS TO BE TOLD, IN NO UNCERTAIN TERMS, THAT IF THERE IS EVER ANOTHER ATTACK ON AN AMERICAN VESSEL, IRAQ WILL PAY. AND IT WILL PAY MORE HEAVILY THAN IT CAN AFFORD.

WE HAVE TO MAKE SURE, TOO, THAT WE ARE BETTER PREPARED FOR THIS KIND OF INCIDENT. I'M NOT CASTING BLAME -- AS I SAID, WE DON'T KNOW ALL THE DETAILS YET OF WHAT REALLY HAPPENED.

BUT I AM SAYING THIS: THE NEXT TIME AN AMERICAN SHIP OPERATING IN OR NEAR A WAR ZONE SEES ANY SIGNS OF DANGER, IT BETTER BE READY TO DEFEND ITSELF -- AND TO RESPOND.

AND ANOTHER THING: THERE ARE NATIONS IN THE GULF REGION -- AND IN SURROUNDING AREAS -- THAT ARE SUPPOSED TO BE OUR FRIENDS. WELL, A REAL FRIEND IS THERE WHEN YOU NEED THEM. AGAIN, I'M NOT JUMPING TO ANY CONCLUSIONS. BUT IT BETTER TURN OUT THAT OUR "FRIENDS" DID NOT TURN A DEAF EAR TO ANY REQUESTS FOR OUR HELP.

FINALLY, WE MUST PUT ON HOLD, AT LEAST FOR A WHILE, ANY NEW AMERICAN COMMITMENTS IN THE PERSIAN GULF REGION. INCLUDING THE PLAN TO PUT AMERICAN FLAGS ON SOME KUWAITI TANKERS. MAYBE THAT WILL TURN OUT TO BE A GOOD IDEA. BUT LET'S THINK THROUGH MORE THOROUGHLY WHAT IT REALLY ENTAILS -- WHETHER THE REWARDS JUSTIFY THE RISKS -- BEFORE WE GO AHEAD.

THE PRESIDENT'S POWER AND THE ABM ISSUE

AMERICA WILL KEEP ITS COMMITMENTS. WE HAVE THE POWER, AND THIS PRESIDENT HAS THE WILL, TO DO WHAT HAS TO BE DONE -- TO DEFEND OUR SECURITY AND STAND UP TO THE SOVIET CHALLENGE AROUND THE WORLD.

BUT ALL THE POWER IN THE WORLD, AND ALL THE DETERMINATION IN THE OVAL OFFICE, IS POINTLESS -- IF THE PRESIDENT IS SO HAMSTRUNG THAT HE CAN'T APPLY AMERICAN POWER WHEN AND WHERE NEEDED.

I DEEPLY FEAR THAT WE ARE MOVING IN PRECISELY THAT TRAGIC DIRECTION.

LEGITIMATE CONCERN ABOUT THE IRAN-CONTRA FIASCO -- THAT'S FINE. I HAVE NO QUARREL WITH THAT. LEGITIMATE EXERCISES OF CONGRESSIONAL POWER -- FINE, TOO. I'VE BEEN A STRONG PROPONENT OF A STRONG CONGRESS, FOR 27 YEARS.

BUT WE NEED A STRONG PRESIDENT, TOO -- ESPECIALLY IN A CRISIS SUCH AS THE USS STARK TRAGEDY. AND WE HAVE A CONSTITUTION -- THAT'S SERVED US PRETTY WELL FOR 200 YEARS -- THAT SAYS THE PRESIDENT SETS OUR FOREIGN AND DEFENSE POLICIES.

THE ABM TREATY INTERPRETATION ISSUE

ALL LAST WEEK -- IN FACT FOR MANY WEEKS -- THE SENATE HAS BEEN DEBATING ABM TREATY -- A TREATY THE SOVIETS HAVE BEEN VIOLATING FOR YEARS. THE PRESIDENT IS LOOKING AT THE TREATY, TO SEE HOW WE CAN PROCEED ON SDI WITHOUT VIOLATING IT.

BUT THE DEMOCRATS WANT TO BLOCK HIM. THEY CLOSE THEIR EYES TO THE SOVIETS' VIOLATIONS; BUT THEY WANT TO KEEP THE PRESIDENT FROM EXERCISING HIS LEGITIMATE AUTHORITY. AND THEY'VE PUT A PROVISION IN OUR DEFENSE BILL TO DO JUST THAT -- A PROVISION THAT CAN KILL THE WHOLE BILL.

NOW THIS ABM QUESTION IS A PRETTY COMPLEX AND CONFUSING ISSUE. BUT THE WHOLE DEBATE BOILS DOWN TO SOME SIMPLE QUESTIONS.

THE REAL QUESTIONS

ARE WE GOING TO LET THE PRESIDENT BE THE PRESIDENT? OR DO WE TURN HIS POWERS OVER TO ANY SENATOR, OR SENATORS, WHO ASSERT THEIR AUTHORITY?

ARE WE GOING TO BARGAIN AS HARD AS POSSIBLE WITH THE SOVIETS, USING ALL THE LEVERAGE AND PILING UP ALL THE BARGAINING CHIPS WE POSSIBLY CAN? OR, FOR NO REASON THAT I'VE BEEN ABLE TO FIGURE OUT, ARE WE PURPOSELY GOING TO DEAL OURSELVES THE WORST HAND WE CAN; AND VOLUNTARILY GIVE THE SOVIETS THE BENEFIT OF EVERY DOUBT?

ARE WE GOING TO FIND OUT IF SDI HAS ANY POTENTIAL -- MILITARILY, AS BARGAINING CHIP, WHATEVER? OR ARE WE JUST GOING TO THROW IT IN THE TRASH CAN OURSELVES -- AN IDEA TOO REVOLUTIONARY FOR OUR STRATEGISTS; TOO CHALLENGING FOR OUR SCIENTISTS AND ENGINEERS? THAT'S WHAT WE'RE DEBATING.

SO I ASK YOU TO REMEMBER WHAT'S AT STAKE. AND IF YOU HEAR ANYONE TRYING TO CLAIM THAT THE REPUBLICAN PARTY IS AGAINST A DEFENSE BILL, OR AGAINST A STRONG DEFENSE -- AND I EVEN HEAR SOME DEMOCRATS WHO ARE STOOPING SO LOW THAT THEY'RE TRYING TO EXPLOIT THE STARK TRAGEDY IN THIS DEBATE -- WELL, KEEP THIS IN MIND: WE'RE NOT AGAINST A BILL. BUT WE ARE AGAINST PASSING A BILL -- THE ONE THE DEMOCRATS WANT -- THAT WILL TIE THE PRESIDENT'S HANDS, AND TRASH THE CONSTITUTION.

BUDGET DEFICIT, PUBLIC ENEMY NO.1

TO JUDGE FROM THE POLLS, AND FROM WHAT I HEAR EVERYWHERE I GO IN THE COUNTRY, THERE'S A GROWING CONSENSUS THAT AGREES WITH ME THAT THE DEFICIT IS THE BIGGEST THREAT TO AMERICA'S WELL BEING.

WE CAN'T GO ON MORTGAGING THE NATION'S FUTURE BY GOVERNMENT SPENDING OUT OF ALL PROPORTION TO ITS REVENUES.

A FEDERAL DEBT OF \$2.3 TRILLION, WHICH IS WHAT IT'S CURRENTLY PEGGED AT, IS UNLIVABLE. EVEN IF WE CAN LIVE WITH IT, WE KNOW THAT OUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN WILL HAVE TO PAY A TERRIBLE PRICE FOR OUR SQUANDERING IF WE DO.

THE ECONOMY: THAT'S THE BIG, BIG ISSUE! THAT'S THE ONE THAT'S NOT GOING TO GO AWAY. THAT'S THE BREAD AND BUTTER. THAT'S WHETHER I'VE GOT A JOB -- OR WHETHER THEY CLOSE DOWN MY PLANT, OR SOMETHING ELSE, IN GEORGIA, KANSAS, LOUISIANA, IDAHO, WHEREVER. THE ONLY WAY TO SOLVE THE DEFICIT PROBLEM IS TO HIT IT HEAD-ON BY MAKING THE TOUGH CHOICES; THAT'S THE ONLY WAY I KNOW HOW.

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DEFICIT NIGHTMARE

IF I'M ELECTED PRESIDENT, THE FIRST THING THAT I'M GOING TO DO WHEN I TAKE OFFICE IS TO SIT DOWN WITH THE LEADERSHIP IN THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES -- IF IT TAKES A WEEK, OR TWO WEEKS, OR THREE WEEKS, AND TRY TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT FEDERAL SPENDING, AND THE BUDGET.

IF YOU THINK ANYTHING ABOUT YOUR CHILDREN AND YOUR GRANDCHILDREN, YOU HAD BETTER HOPE THAT WE'RE ABLE TO DO SOMETHING.

1988

SO SOLVING THE DEFICIT MEANS MAKING THE TOUGH CHOICES. AND YOU'RE FACING ANOTHER TOUGH CHOICE IN 1988. I'M HERE TO SUGGEST THAT THERE WILL BE AN ELECTION NEXT YEAR FOR PRESIDENT. SOMEBODY'S GOING TO BE NOMINATED ON THE REPUBLICAN SIDE AND THE DEMOCRATIC SIDE, AND THERE WILL BE A GREAT BIG ELECTION IN NOVEMBER, AND SOMEBODY'S GOING TO TAKE RONALD REAGAN'S PLACE.

THEY'RE NOT GOING TO LEAVE IT VACANT. SO PEOPLE IN GEORGIA, AND ALL THE OTHER STATES, HAVE A VERY HEAVY RESPONSIBILITY TO MAKE CERTAIN THEY MAKE THE RIGHT DECISION.

WHEN IT'S ALL SAID AND DONE, THE BOTTOM LINE, AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, IS THAT WE KEEP A REPUBLICAN IN THE WHITE HOUSE. THAT IS THE BOTTOM LINE.

EXPERIENCE AND '88

AND FROM WHAT I HEAR AS I TRAVEL ABOUT THE COUNTRY, AND FROM WHAT I SEE IN THE LATEST POLLS, THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WILL PLACE A PREMIUM ON EXPERIENCE, COMPETENCE AND INTEGRITY WHEN THEY LOOK AT THE 1988 CANDIDATES. I WOULD JUST SAY THIS:

THERE IS NOTHING VERY COMPLICATED ABOUT BOB DOLE. I COME FROM A LITTLE TOWN IN KANSAS. 6500 PEOPLE. I AM ONE OF FOUR CHILDREN. THE ONLY ONE WHO GOT TO COMPLETE A COLLEGE EDUCATION.

MY MOTHER AND FATHER BOTH WORKED FOR A LIVING. MY MOTHER SOLD SEWING MACHINES, AND GAVE SEWING LESSONS. MY FATHER RAN A CREAM AND EGG STATION, AND LATER A GRAIN ELEVATOR.

WE DON'T COME FROM ANY FAMILY OF ANY WEALTH AT ALL. IN FACT, ONE OF THE HARDEST THINGS FOR ME TO DO WHILE I WAS COUNTY ATTORNEY OF RUSSELL WAS TO APPROVE WELFARE CLAIMS EVERY MONTH; AND TWO OF THOSE CLAIMS WERE MY GRANDPARENTS.

AND LIKE MANY OTHERS, I WENT OFF TO WORLD WAR II. AND LIKE OTHERS, I WAS AT THE RIGHT PLACE AT THE WRONG TIME, ON APRIL 14, 1945. I GOT TO SPEND ABOUT 39 MONTHS IN A HOSPITAL.

AND I JUST SAY THAT ALL THAT EXPERIENCE, I GUESS, PERSONAL EXPERIENCE, NOTHING VERY HEADY ABOUT IT, HAS MADE ME A VERY STRONG PERSON. AND A VERY SENSITIVE PERSON WHEN IT COMES TO THE HANDICAPPED AND OTHER VULNERABLE GROUPS IN AMERICA WHO HAVEN'T HAD IT "THEIR WAY" ALL OF THE TIME.

ON THE FIRING LINE

I WOULD ALSO SAY THIS. THERE IS SOMETHING ABOUT A RECOVERY OR A REHABILITATION THAT I THINK MAKES YOU STRONGER ANYWAY. YOU GET FRUSTRATED, YOU GET MAD SOMETIMES, THEN YOU LEARN HOW TO HAVE A LITTLE PATIENCE. AND YOU LEARN THAT OTHER PEOPLE HAVE REAL PROBLEMS. YOURS MAY NOT BE VERY MUCH, BUT OTHER PEOPLE HAVE REAL PROBLEMS.

AND SO I ADD THAT TOGETHER -- MY PERSONAL EXPERIENCES WITH MY LEGISLATIVE EXPERIENCES -- AND AGAIN I'M NOT PERFECT. I'LL BET I'VE CAST SOME VOTES THAT NOT EVERYBODY HERE WOULD LIKE. I'VE EVEN CAST A FEW THAT I'D LIKE TO GET BACK.

BUT I HAVE BEEN ON THE "FIRING LINE" EVERY DAY IN THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES, TRYING TO MAKE THE DECISIONS, TRYING TO SUPPORT THE PRESIDENT, AND TRYING TO DO WHAT I THOUGHT WAS RIGHT FOR AMERICA AND THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE HERE.

I THINK THAT BY AND LARGE, THE RECORD IS THERE. YOU CAN STUDY IT -- I THINK I VOTED 15 OR 20,000 TIMES IN THE LAST 27 YEARS, BUT IT IS THERE.

I THINK THE RECORD REFLECTS MY CONSERVATISM. I BELIEVE THE RECORD REFLECTS MY COMMON SENSE. I HOPE THE RECORDS ALSO REFLECT MY EXPERIENCE, LEADERSHIP, AND MY STRENGTH. BECAUSE I AM VERY PROUD TO BE AN AMERICAN.

I THINK WE'RE JUST BEGINNING.

CONCLUSION

WHEN ALL IS SAID AND DONE, WE ARE REPUBLICANS BECAUSE WE BELIEVE IN OUR PARTY. MAYBE IT'S BASED ON PERSONALITY, BUT ABOVE ALL, YOU BELIEVE IN THE REPUBLICAN PARTY BECAUSE YOU LIKE WHAT IT STANDS FOR: GOOD GOVERNMENT, EQUITY, FAIRNESS.

THAT'S WHAT IT'S REALLY ALL ABOUT. THAT'S WHAT THE FUTURE OF THE PARTY'S ALL ABOUT. THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

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