

News from Senator

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Remarks of Senator Bob Dole
National Forum Foundation Seminar
on the Reagan Doctrine

THE WONDERFUL EPIDEMIC OF FREEDOM

I WANT TO BEGIN BY SAYING FOUR WORDS TO SOMEONE NOT HERE IN PERSON TODAY, BUT VERY MUCH HERE IN SPIRIT; FOUR WORDS THAT I KNOW ARE DEEPLY FELT BY EVERYONE SITTING BEFORE ME.

PRESIDENT REAGAN, THANK YOU.

WITHOUT RONALD REAGAN, WE MIGHT WELL ALL BE HERE TODAY, TALKING ABOUT FREEDOM. BUT OUR WORDS WOULD BE VERY DIFFERENT, AND OUR SPIRITS VERY MUCH LOWER.

ONLY A FEW YEARS AGO, WHEN RONALD REAGAN WAS SWORN IN AS PRESIDENT, DEMOCRACY SEEMED TO MANY A SHRINKING ISLAND, BATTERED BY SWELLING SEAS OF TOTALITARIANISM. THE SOVIET EMPIRE WAS ON THE MOVE, SWALLOWING UP NEIGHBORS LIKE AFGHANISTAN, AND GREEDILY ACQUIRING CLIENTS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, THE MIDDLE EAST, THE HORN OF AFRICA. AND IT WAS NOT JUST SOVIET EXPANSION THAT WAS THE PROBLEM. IT WAS OUR OWN MORAL PARALYSIS; OUR LACK OF FAITH IN AMERICA'S WILL TO ACT, AND POWER TO DO GOOD IN THE WORLD.

TODAY, SUCH DOUBTS SEEM FAR AWAY. DEMOCRACY IS THE WATCHWORD ALL OVER THE GLOBE -- FROM EASTERN EUROPE TO ASIA, FROM SOUTH AMERICA TO THE INDIAN SUB-CONTINENT. LITERALLY AND FIGURATIVELY, PEOPLE EVERYWHERE ARE DYING FOR DEMOCRACY.

THIRTY YEARS AGO KHRUSCHEV BOASTED THAT COMMUNISM WOULD BURY US. TODAY THE FREE WORLD POURS OUT AID TO HELP GORBAHCEV RESCUE SURVIVORS FROM THE RUBBLE OF NATURAL DISASTERS WHICH OVERWHELM THE CAPACITIES OF THE SOVIET STATE.

JUST LAST WEEK, IN MY OFFICE, I HEARD FROM A GROUP OF LATVIAN AMERICANS ABOUT THE TRAGEDY OF THEIR HOMELAND -- ITS ECONOMIC RESOURCES HAVE BEEN SIPHONED OFF TO SERVE THE SOVIET STATE; ITS CITIZENRY FORCED TO WEAR GAS-MASKS TO ESCAPE THE POLLUTION OF CRUDE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT; ITS NEW-BORN BABIES -- 40% OF THEM; 40% -- AFFLICTED WITH BIRTH DEFECTS, BECAUSE OF THE ABYSMAL STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT, AND THE INADEQUACIES OF SOCIALIST HEALTH CARE.

TODAY WE SEE MANY THINGS MORE CLEARLY THAN WE DID A FEW YEARS AGO. WE SEE THAT DEMOCRACY IS NOT ONLY ALIVE, BUT WELL AND THRIVING. WE SEE THAT THE FUTURE BELONGS NOT TO THE BOLSHIEVIK

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REVOLUTION, BUT TO OUR OWN. WE SEE THAT THE TRUE PROPHETS WERE NOT MARX AND LENIN AND STALIN; BUT WASHINGTON AND JEFFERSON AND LINCOLN; AND THAT THE TRUE PROPHECY IS SUMMED UP IN THESE WORDS: THAT ALL MEN ARE CREATED EQUAL, AND ARE ENDOWED BY THEIR CREATOR WITH CERTAIN INALIENABLE RIGHTS -- LIFE, LIBERTY, AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS.

HOW DID WE GET HERE? WHY WAS THERE THIS AMAZING TURNAROUND IN OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD FREEDOM, AND IN THE FORTUNES OF FREEDOM ITSELF? THOSE WHO STILL DENY THE POWER OF THE AMERICAN EXAMPLE, AND THE IMPORTANCE OF AMERICAN POWER, WOULD SAY THAT WE HAD LITTLE TO DO WITH IT. FOR THEM, HISTORY IS INERTIAL; DEMOCRACY IS ON THE RISE ONLY BECAUSE OF SOME INEXPLICABLE SHIFT IN THE PENDULUM; THE SOVIET EMPIRE HAS GROUND TO A HALT ONLY BECAUSE OF THE HEAVY GRAVITY OF ITS OWN INCOMPETENCE.

WE KNOW BETTER. HISTORY IS MORAL RATHER THAN MECHANICAL. WE HAVE SUCCEEDED IN EXPORTING FREEDOM PRECISELY BECAUSE WE HAVE RECOVERED OUR FAITH IN OURSELVES, AS A NATION FOUNDED ON PRINCIPLES THAT APPLY EQUALLY TO ALL HUMAN BEINGS.

THE RECENT ROLLBACK IN TOTALITARIANISM HAS OCCURRED NOT JUST BECAUSE OF ITS OWN INNER CONTRADICTIONS -- BUT BECAUSE WE AGAIN ASSUMED OUR RESPONSIBILITY NOT JUST TO DEFEND OUR OWN FREEDOM, BUT TO ADVANCE ITS FRONTIERS. AS WE STOPPED SURRENDERING TO HOT FLASHES OF AMERICAN MALAISE AND ANXIETY, FREEDOM BEGAN TO FLOURISH ONCE AGAIN AROUND THE WORLD.

TODAY -- FEBRUARY 15 -- IS A MOMENTOUS DAY FOR FREEDOM; THE DAY ON WHICH THE SOVIET UNION IS TO REMOVE ITS LAST FORCES FROM AFGHANISTAN. THE FIRST DAY IN ALL OF HISTORY WHEN THE BORDERS OF SOVIET TYRANNY WILL BE SMALLER AT NIGHTFALL, THAN THEY WERE AT DAYBREAK.

TEN YEARS AGO, THE SOVIETS INVADED AFGHANISTAN. A THIRD OF THE AFGHAN POPULATION WAS DRIVEN FROM ITS HOME. MORE THAN A MILLION AFGHANS WERE KILLED. YET NOW IT IS THE MIGHTY CASEY HIMSELF WHO HAS STRUCK OUT; IT IS THE MIGHTY SOVIET RED ARMY WHICH HAS PACKED ITS BAGS AND GONE HOME. WHY? NOT BECAUSE OF SOME IRRESISTIBLE LAW OF "IMPERIAL OVERSTRETCH;" BUT BECAUSE AMERICA FINALLY DID SOMETHING MORE THAN PAY LIP-SERVICE TO ROLLING BACK SOVIET TYRANNY.

THE REPERCUSSIONS OF THIS DAY, AND WHAT LED UP TO IT, HAVE ONLY JUST BEGUN TO REVERBERATE. THE THING ABOUT FREEDOM AND INDEPENDENCE IS -- THEY'RE CONTAGIOUS. THE GERM IS SPREADING LIKE WILDFIRE; THE EPIDEMIC IS ALREADY UNDERWAY.

THOUSANDS OF MEN, AND WOMEN, AND CHILDREN ARE AFFLICTED IN LATVIA, AND ESTONIA AND LITHUANIA -- NATIONS BURIED FOR HALF A CENTURY UNDER THE PERMAFROST OF THE SOVIET GULAG, AND JUST NOW BEGINNING TO SENSE THE POSSIBILITY OF A NEW SPRING. THE PEOPLE THERE TALK AGAIN OF NATIONHOOD, AND SING THEIR NATIONAL ANTHEMS.

THE EPIDEMIC PERMEATES EASTERN EUROPE, WHERE THE SPOILS OF YALTA BEGIN TO SLIP FROM SOVIET HANDS, AND THE IDEA OF A MIDDLE EUROPE WITH PROFOUND AND RECIPROCAL CONNECTIONS TO THE WEST IS REBORN.

THE EPIDEMIC INVADES KAMPUCHEA, AND ETHIOPIA, AND ANGOLA -- WHERE NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENTS STRUGGLE ON, THEIR FUTURES UNCERTAIN, BUT THEIR HOPES STILL HIGH, AND THEIR SPIRITS UNQUENCHABLE.

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THIS WONDERFUL EPIDEMIC -- ITS "GERMS" CULTURED IN THE LABORATORIES OF INDEPENDENCE HALL IN PHILADELPHIA; ITS "DISEASE" SPREAD BY AGENTS LIKE RADIO FREE EUROPE AND RADIO MARTI -- THIS WONDERFUL EPIDEMIC SPREADS RELENTLESSLY AROUND THE WORLD.

AND THE MOST WONDERFUL THING OF ALL IS THAT THE SOVIET ANTIDOTE -- MORE TYRANNY, LESS FREEDOM -- JUST MAKES THE "GERM" ALL THE MORE POTENT, THE EPIDEMIC ALL THE MORE PERVASIVE.

THAT IS WHY WE MEET TODAY WITH SO MUCH HOPE. BUT WE MEET TODAY, TOO, AT A TIME OF TRANSITION. AT A TIME WHEN WE MUST DECIDE, AS A NATION, WHETHER TO CONTINUE CARRYING FORWARD AGGRESSIVELY THE TORCH OF FREEDOM; OR, INSTEAD, TO SET IT DOWN FOR A MOMENT, TO CONTEMPLATE WHETHER THE DANGERS FROM TYRANNY ARE RECEDING, IN FAVOR OF SOMETHING CALLED "GLASNOST."

45 YEARS AGO, GEORGE KENNAN WROTE THAT THE UNITED STATES "HAD IT IN ITS POWER TO INCREASE ENORMOUSLY THE STRAINS UNDER WHICH SOVIET POLICY OPERATES" AND TO PROMOTE "EITHER THE BREAK UP OR THE GRADUAL MELLOWING OF SOVIET POWER." THIS STRATEGY, WHICH BECAME KNOWN AS "CONTAINMENT," WAS IMPLEMENTED IN THE TRUMAN DOCTRINE -- THE CORNERSTONE OF AMERICAN POLICY DURING THE DARKEST DAYS OF THE COLD WAR. PRESIDENT TRUMAN MADE ITS OUTLINES CLEAR IN WORDS THAT WERE AS SIMPLE AS THEY WERE COURAGEOUS: "WE MUST ASSIST FREE PEOPLES TO WORK OUT THEIR OWN DESTINIES IN THEIR OWN WAY."

I REMEMBER THAT STATEMENT VERY WELL. AT THE TIME, I WAS A YOUNG MAN, WITH THE MARKS OF MY OWN MILITARY SERVICE STILL UPON ME. I REMEMBER HOW HARRY TRUMAN'S BRAVE WORDS WERE CONDEMNED -- AS TOO STRONG, BY THOSE WHO STILL SAW STALIN AS A WARTIME ALLY; AS TOO BOLD, BY THOSE WHO WANTED AMERICA TO CLOSE ITS DOORS AROUND OUR DEMOCRACY, AND LET THE REST OF THE WORLD FEND FOR ITSELF.

BUT MANY OF MY GENERATION, MEN AND WOMEN WHO HAD DEFENDED FREEDOM IN EUROPE AND IN THE PACIFIC, HAD LEARNED THAT STRENGTH IS THE ONLY REAL SECURITY, AND THAT IDEALISM ABOUT DEMOCRACY WAS THE TRUEST REALISM THERE WAS. WE UNDERSTOOD THAT CONTAINMENT MEANT THE WILLINGNESS TO TAKE THE RISKS OF VIGOROUSLY DEFENDING FREEDOM, EVEN ON THE BORDERS OF THE SOVIET EMPIRE.

WHAT WERE THE FRUITS OF THIS COMMITMENT? WESTERN EUROPE -- LIBERATED BY AMERICAN ARMIES, AND THEN SAVED FROM SOVIET TYRANNY BY AMERICA'S PRESENCE -- WESTERN EUROPE PROSPERED, WHILE EASTERN EUROPE SLIPPED TRAGICALLY INTO DARKNESS AND DESPAIR. IN ASIA, NATIONS LIKE SOUTH KOREA, TAIWAN AND THAILAND -- AMONG THE MOST BACKWARD COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD IN 1950 -- DEVELOPED INTO SOME OF THE MOST ADVANCED; WHILE STATES LIKE CHINA HAVE FOUNDERED, AND OTHERS LIKE VIETNAM HAVE TURNED INTO BASKET CASES.

WERE THE RISKS WE TOOK, THE SACRIFICES WE MADE -- WERE THEY WORTH IT? VISIT WEST BERLIN, AND THEN CROSS INTO EAST BERLIN, AND YOU'LL HAVE THE ANSWER. HELICOPTER FROM SEOUL, KOREA, UP TO THE DMZ, AS I HAVE -- AND YOU'LL HAVE THE ANSWER. COUNT UP THE NUMBER OF REQUESTS YOU GET FROM PEOPLE BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN, WHO WANT TO COME TO AMERICA, AND THEN COUNT UP THOSE YOU GET FROM AMERICANS WHO WANT TO GO LIVE SOMEWHERE ELSE -- AND YOU'LL HAVE THE ANSWER.

OF COURSE IT WAS WORTH IT. FREEDOM IS WORTH IT.

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WHAT WE LEARN FROM THIS PIECE OF THE PAST IS THAT THOSE WHO SELL AMERICA SHORT, ALSO SELL THE POOR AND POWERLESS OF THE WORLD SHORT. WE LEARN, TOO, WHAT WITHOUT AN AMERICA CONFIDENT ENOUGH TO SHOULDER THE BURDEN, THE WORLD WILL WITNESS LOUD AND BLOODY REVOLUTIONS THAT LEAD TO TYRANNY AND BACKWARDNESS, RATHER THAN QUIET ONES THAT LEAD TO DEVELOPMENT AND FULFILLMENT.

HISTORY HAS MANY OBJECT LESSONS FOR US AS WE TALK ABOUT THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY. IT SHOWS US WHAT CAN HAPPEN WHEN AMERICA STANDS FAST. IT ALSO SHOWS WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE DOUBT OURSELVES, AS WE DID AFTER VIETNAM, AND AS WE CONTINUED TO DO, AGAIN AND AGAIN, UNTIL RONALD REAGAN LED US BACK TO OUR OWN HERITAGE. IN THE DECADE OF THE 80'S, AS THE REAGAN DOCTRINE PICKED UP WHERE THE TRUMAN DOCTRINE LEFT OFF, WE HAVE BEGUN TO TEST BOTH POSSIBILITIES FORESEEN BY GEORGE KENNAN 45 YEARS AGO -- THE BREAKUP OF SOVIET POWER AND THE MELLOWING OF THE SOVIET STATE.

HISTORY, FINALLY, SHOWS US THIS -- OR AT LEAST IT SHOULD: THAT WHILE WE HAVE ACCOMPLISHED A GREAT DEAL, THE JOB IS FAR FROM DONE. AND IF WE DON'T FINISH IT -- IF WE DON'T LIVE UP TO OUR HISTORY AND RHETORIC; IF WE DON'T DO WHAT IS RIGHT, IN ITS OWN RIGHT -- THEN IT IS NOT JUST FREEDOM, IN THE BROAD SENSE, THAT WILL LOSE; BUT IT IS AMERICA THAT WILL LOSE, TOO.

THE JOB IS FAR FROM OVER.

WE CANNOT ABANDON THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS IN ANGOLA, UNTIL TRUE NATIONAL RECONCILIATION IS ACCOMPLISHED IN THAT COUNTRY.

WE CANNOT PERMIT THE ROLLBACK OF VIETNAMESE POWER IN KAMPUCHEA TO BE REPLACED BY A NEW GROWTH OF THE KILLING FIELDS OF KHMER ROUGE BARBARISM.

WE CANNOT TURN OUR BACKS ON THE CUBAN PEOPLE, IN THE INTEREST OF REACHING SOME KIND OF POLITICAL ACCOMODATION WITH ONE OF THE COMMUNIST WORLD'S LAST TRUE STALINISTS.

AND -- PERHAPS MOST URGENT OF ALL -- WE CANNOT EXPECT TO JUST PULL THE PLUG ON THE NICARAGUAN FREEDOM FIGHTERS, WITHOUT PAYING A PROFOUND PRICE. A PRICE NOT ONLY IN THE CONTINUED REPRESSION OF MILLIONS OF NICARAGUANS, BUT A PRICE, TOO, IN AMERICAN HONOR, AMERICAN PRESTIGE, AND AMERICA'S NATIONAL SECURITY INTERESTS IN CENTRAL AMERICA.

TODAY'S HEADLINES TELL OF A NEW "PEACE PLAN," COOKED UP BY ORTEGA AND ARIAS, AND SIGNED OFF ON BY THE OTHER CENTRAL AMERICAN PRESIDENTS. WELL, I'M ALL FOR PEACE, TOO. BUT WHAT I WOULD LIKE TO SEE IS NOT JUST A "PEACE PLAN," BUT A "PEACE WITH FREEDOM" PLAN. THE KIND THAT WOULD INCLUDE REAL ELECTIONS, TO PUT ORTEGA OUT OF BUSINESS; THE KIND THAT WOULD REALLY ALLOW THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS TO DISBAND AND GO HOME, BECAUSE THEIR CAUSE WAS WON; THE KIND THAT WOULD REALLY DESERVE A NOBEL PRIZE.

NICARAGUA, ANGOLA, CUBA AND THE REST -- THEY ARE THE CHALLENGES OF TODAY; THERE WILL BE MORE TOMORROW. THAT IS THE NATURE OF THE WORLD; THAT IS THE BURDEN OF LEADERSHIP; THAT IS THE COST OF FREEDOM.

THE REAGAN DOCTRINE SAYS, QUITE SIMPLY, THAT FREEDOM IS WORTH IT. I BELIEVE THAT. IT IS MY RESPONSIBILITY, AND YOURS, TO SEE THAT AMERICAN POLICY ALWAYS REFLECTS THAT PROFOUND TRUTH.

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Bob Dole

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER



Issues Update:

Speech:

THE WONDERFUL EPIDEMIC OF FREEDOM
NATIONAL FORUM FOUNDATION SEMINAR
WASHINGTON, D.C.
FEBRUARY 15, 1989

- "Thirty years ago Khrushchev boasted that Communism would bury us. Today the Free World pours out aid to help Gorbachev rescue survivors from the rubble of natural disasters which overwhelm the capacities of the Soviet State."
- "The thing about freedom and independence is -- they're contagious. The epidemic is already underway. Thousands of men and women, and children are afflicted in Latvia, and Estonia and Lithuania -- nations buried for half a century under the permafrost of the Soviet Gulag, and just now beginning to sense the possibility of a new spring."
- "... we cannot expect to just pull the plug on the Nicaraguan Freedom Fighters, without paying a profound price. Today's headlines tell of a new 'peace plan,' cooked up by Ortega and Arias But what I would like to see is not just a 'peace plan,' but a 'peace with freedom' plan; the kind that would really deserve a Nobel prize."

*I'm enclosing some information
that may be of interest to you.
We'll keep in touch,*

Bob Dole