

Bob Dole



NEWS

U.S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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U.S. NATIONAL SECURITY & AMERICA'S ROLE IN THE WORLD:  
DOLE ACCEPTS DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD AT 71ST ANNUAL CONVENTION  
OF THE MILITARY ORDER OF THE WORLD WARS  
HYATT REGENCY, KANSAS CITY

I AM VERY PLEASED AND HONORED TO BE HERE TONIGHT TO RECEIVE THIS AWARD. IN REVIEWING THE LIST OF PAST RECIPIENTS, GOING BACK 28 YEARS, TWO THINGS STRIKE ME.

ONE IS THAT I AM IN PRETTY IMPRESSIVE COMPANY -- FORMER PRESIDENT NIXON, A WHOLE LIST OF FORMER SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE, AND SOME TRULY OUTSTANDING MILITARY LEADERS. FOR THE HONOR OF LISTING ME WITH THEM, I EXPRESS MY SINCERE THANKS.

THE OTHER THING THAT STRIKES ME CONCERNS ONE OF MY COLLEAGUES IN THE SENATE, SENATOR THURMOND. HE WAS THE SECOND RECIPIENT OF THIS AWARD, BACK IN 1964 -- 27 YEARS AGO.

ALREADY A SENATE VETERAN WHEN YOU HONORED HIM, STROM THURMOND IS THE ONLY RECIPIENT, EXCEPTING LAST YEAR'S, SECRETARY DERWINSKI, WHO REMAINS IN THE POSITION HE HELD WHEN HE WAS HONORED. FOR MORE THAN FOUR DECADES, HE HAS BEEN A "ROCK" IN THE WALL OF OUR NATIONAL DEFENSE. AND YOU KNOW, 27 YEARS FROM NOW, BOB DOLE WILL NOT BE IN THE SENATE -- BUT I WOULDN'T BET, ONE WAY OR THE OTHER, ON STROM.

SO I AM PLEASED TO BE HERE, AND TO HAVE A FEW MOMENTS TO DISCUSS OUR NATION'S SECURITY AND ROLE IN THE WORLD.

NEW SENATE FORCE RESOLUTION: AN ANNIVERSARY GIFT FOR SADDAM

YESTERDAY, AUGUST 2ND, WAS AN IMPORTANT ANNIVERSARY. IT WAS ONE YEAR AGO, TO THE DAY, WHEN SADDAM HUSSEIN SENT HIS TANKS AND TROOPS INTO KUWAIT.

AND I THOUGHT WE SHOULDN'T LET THE DAY PASS WITHOUT A LITTLE "PRESENT" FOR SADDAM. SO I OFFERED AN AMENDMENT TO THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT AUTHORIZATION BILL, SUPPORTING THE USE OF, QUOTE, "ALL NECESSARY MEANS," UNQUOTE, TO MAKE SURE WE WIPE OUT SADDAM'S CHEMICAL, BIOLOGICAL AND CHEMICAL WEAPONS.

YOU KNOW THAT WE HAVE TO BE POLITE ON THE FLOOR OF THE SENATE. SO "ALL NECESSARY MEANS" IS A KIND OF A EUPHEMISM. IT MEANS EITHER HE GETS RID OF HIS ADVANCED WEAPONS -- OR WE KICK HIM IN HIS BACKSIDE, AND DO IT FOR HIM.

THE RECORD IS NOT VERY GOOD ON SADDAM UNDERSTANDING OUR MESSAGES. BUT I HOPE THAT THIS ONE SOMEHOW PENETRATES HIS BRAIN. BECAUSE WE MEAN BUSINESS -- JUST LIKE WE DID LAST JANUARY, WHEN WE LAUNCHED DESERT STORM.

WE ARE NOT GOING TO STAND BY AND LET A MADMAN LIKE SADDAM HUSSEIN GET THE "BOMB," OR GET BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS, OR BUILD UP AND IMPROVE HIS STOCK OF CRUDE CHEMICAL WEAPONS.

THANK GOD, HIS SCUDS TURNED OUT TO BE DUDS. BUT WE'RE NOT GOING TO GIVE HIM ANOTHER CHANCE TO DO BETTER. THIS TIME, WE'RE GOING TO WIPE OUT THOSE WEAPONS, ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, ONCE AND FOR ALL.

MIDDLE EAST PEACE CONFERENCE

AND, OF COURSE, THERE IS SOME OTHER GOOD NEWS FROM THAT REGION. AFTER AN INTENSIVE FEW MONTHS OF DIPLOMACY AND, I SUSPECT, A LITTLE BACKROOM ARM-TWISTING, ALL THE MAJOR PARTIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST HAVE AGREED TO PARTICIPATE IN A TWO-STAGE PEACE PROCESS -- AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, FOLLOWED BY BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS INVOLVING ISRAEL AND ITS ADVERSARIES.

IT IS A BREAKTHROUGH, AND AN IMPORTANT ONE. THE CREDIT GOES TO PRESIDENT BUSH, FOR HIS LEADERSHIP AND PERSEVERANCE. AND THE EXPLANATION GROWS OUT OF OUR GREAT VICTORY IN DESERT STORM.

WE EMERGED FROM THAT WAR AS THE ONLY TRUE SUPERPOWER IN THIS WORLD; AND THE ONLY POWER WITH CLOUT AND CREDIBILITY WITH ALL THE MAJOR PLAYERS IN THE REGION.

WE DEMONSTRATED TO SAUDI ARABIA AND KUWAIT AND THE OTHER MODERATE ARAB STATES OUR CAPACITY TO LEAD AND TO STAY THE COURSE.

WE DEMONSTRATED TO ISRAEL THE STEADFASTNESS OF OUR COMMITMENTS, AND THE WILL TO GET THE JOB DONE.

WE DEMONSTRATED TO LONG-TIME ADVERSARIES SUCH AS SYRIA'S ASSAD THAT WE CAN BE BOTH TOUGH YET OPEN-MINDED.

AND WE PROVED TO ALL -- FRIEND AND FOE ALIKE -- THAT AMERICA, BEYOND DOUBT, IS WILLING TO DO WHAT IT MUST, TO GET THE JOB DONE.

(MORE)

THAT'S WHY, AFTER DECADES OF "ONE STEP FORWARD AND TWO BACK" -- WE MAY NOW HAVE TAKEN A DECISIVE STRIDE FORWARD ON THE ROAD TO PEACE. WE HAVE A LONG, LONG WAY TO GO -- AND WITHOUT DOUBT SOMETIMES THE ROAD IS GOING TO BE VERY, VERY BUMPY.

BUT WE HAVE MADE A BEGINNING, AND I AM CONVINCED THAT PRESIDENT BUSH IS NOT GOING TO TURN BACK OR LET UP.

THE START TREATY, THE REAGAN LEGACY & THE COLLAPSE OF COMMUNISM

AND, REMARKABLY, EVEN AS WE TOOK THIS BIG STEP FORWARD IN THE MIDDLE EAST, WE TOOK AN ALMOST SIMULTANEOUS GIANT STEP TOWARD A MORE STABLE AND SAFE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SOVIET UNION -- BY SIGNING THE STRATEGIC ARMS REDUCTION TREATY, START.

AS WE SIGN THAT AGREEMENT AND MOVE FORWARD ON BETTER AND MORE COOPERATIVE RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION -- AND AS WE GIVE PRESIDENT BUSH ALL THE CREDIT HE DESERVES FOR HIS REMARKABLE LEADERSHIP IN THIS AREA, TOO -- I HOPE ALL OF US IN THIS ROOM, AND ALL AMERICANS, WILL ALSO PAUSE FOR A MOMENT, TO REMEMBER THE INCREDIBLE CONTRIBUTIONS MADE BY FORMER PRESIDENT REAGAN.

A DECADE AGO, PRESIDENT REAGAN DECLARED THE SOVIET UNION AN "EVIL EMPIRE," AND LAID OUT A REALISTIC AND FORWARD-LOOKING COURSE FOR MANAGING OUR MOST IMPORTANT BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP, OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SOVIET UNION.

OVER THE YEARS -- WHILE APPEASERS SOUGHT TO GIVE AWAY THE STORE TO THE KREMLIN, AND EXTREME LIBERALS SOUGHT TO PULL THE PLUG ON AMERICA'S DEFENSES IN THE CONGRESS -- PRESIDENT REAGAN STOOD STRONG AND FIRM.

AND FINALLY THE COMBINED WEIGHT OF OUR AMERICA'S STRENGTH AND WILL, AND THE INCREDIBLE PROBLEMS THAT INHERENTLY PLAGUE COMMUNIST DICTATORSHIPS, TOOK ITS TOLL ON THE KREMLIN, AND ON THE KREMLIN'S COMMUNIST ALLIES IN EASTERN EUROPE. THE WARSAW PACT COLLAPSED, THE SOVIET STATE WENT INTO MELT-DOWN, AND THE SOVIET ECONOMY NEARLY WENT BELLY-UP.

RONALD REAGAN TURNED OUT TO BE DEAD RIGHT. AND THE APPEASERS AND THE EXTREME LIBERALS TURNED OUT TO BE DEAD WRONG.

AMERICA -- AND THE PRINCIPLES AMERICA HOLDS DEAR, DEMOCRACY AND FREE ENTERPRISE -- WE ALL TURNED OUT TO BE THE BIG WINNERS.

AND COMMUNISM TURNED OUT TO BE THE BIG LOSER.

SO IT IS A WHOLE NEW WORLD OUT THERE. DANGEROUS STILL, AS THE HEAVILY ARMED SOVIET STATE GOES THROUGH THE THROES OF TRANSITION. TROUBLED STILL, IN SPOTS FROM BEIJING TO BEIRUT.

BUT A WHOLE NEW WORLD OF OPPORTUNITY AND HOPE. THANKS TO AMERICA'S STRENGTH AND LEADERSHIP. THANKS TO THE STEADFAST SUPPORT OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE FOR OUR PRESIDENT, AND FOR OUR AGENDA OF STRENGTH AND PEACE.

AND THANKS -- SPECIAL THANKS -- TO GROUPS LIKE THIS ONE, THAT PUT THEIR COUNTRY ABOVE NARROW INTEREST; AND ARE AS READY TODAY TO STAND UP AND BE COUNTED FOR AMERICA, AS THEY WERE WHEN THEY WENT TO WAR, READY TO MAKE EVEN THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE, TO KEEP OUR COUNTRY FREE.

RESOLVING THE FATE OF AMERICA'S POWs & MIAs

LET ME CONCLUDE WITH ONE FINAL WORD.

THIS IS A ROOM FULL OF HEROES. AND DESERT STORM PRODUCED A WHOLE NEW ROSTER OF HEROES -- EVERY ONE OF THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO SERVED WITH DISTINCTION, AND DEDICATION, AND BRAVERY, AND SKILL IN THE DESERTS OF THE MIDDLE EAST.

BUT SO, TOO, DID KOREA, AND VIETNAM. AND, YES, PANAMA, AND GRENADA, AND BEIRUT -- AND EVERY CONFLICT IN WHICH YOUNG AMERICANS HAVE HAD TO RISK THEIR LIVES AND MAKE UNTOLD SACRIFICES FOR THIS COUNTRY.

WE CAN NEVER FORGET ANY OF THESE HEROES. WE CANNOT FORGET TO THANK THOSE WHO RETURN. WE CANNOT FORGET TO HONOR THE MEMORY AND THE SACRIFICE OF THOSE WHO DIE, OR ARE WOUNDED.

AND WE CANNOT FORGET, IN ANY SENSE, THOSE WHOSE FATE REMAINS UNKNOWN -- OUR POW'S AND MIA'S FROM ALL OUR WARS.

RECENT HEADLINES HAVE SHAKEN US ALL. NO ONE KNOWS, YET, WHETHER THE PHOTOS WE SEE ON THE FRONT PAGES AND ON THE EVENING NEWS ARE REAL, OR SOME CRUEL HOAX. BUT WE MUST FIND OUT, ONCE AND FOR ALL.

WE MUST KNOW, AS FIRMLY AS IS HUMANLY POSSIBLE, OF THE FATE OF AMERICA'S POW'S AND MIA'S.

I HAVE URGED THE PRESIDENT TO CREATE A COMMISSION -- A COMMISSION OF UNCHALLENGED INTEGRITY AND WITH ALL THE INVESTIGATIVE POWERS IT NEEDS -- TO GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THIS TERRIBLE AND PAINFUL MYSTERY. TO GET TO THE BOTTOM OF IT NOW, AT LONG LAST.

WE OWE THAT TO OUR MISSING HEROES. WE OWE IT TO THEIR FAMILIES, HEROES IN THEIR OWN RIGHT.

THE WARS IN WHICH THESE HEROES FOUGHT ARE OVER FOR EVERYONE ELSE. BUT NOT FOR THEM, AND NOT FOR THEIR FAMILIES. IT IS TIME FOR THEM, TOO, TO ENJOY THE PEACE THAT THEIR LOVED ONES HELPED BRING TO ALL OF US.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: I MENTIONED AT THE OUTSET THE LONG AND DISTINGUISHED ROSTER OF AMERICANS YOU HAVE HONORED. LET ME PLEDGE TONIGHT TO DO ALL THAT I CAN TO INSURE THAT NEXT YEAR'S RECIPIENT, WHOEVER IT MAY BE, CAN SPEAK OF THIS ISSUE, THE FATE OF OUR POW'S AND MIA'S, AS ONE AT LONG LAST RESOLVED HONORABLY, AND IN THE GREAT TRADITION OF AMERICA.

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