

REMARKS OF CONGRESSMAN BOB DOLE, RUSSELL, KANSAS

KANSAS YOUNG AMERICANS FOR FREEDOM CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION, WICHITA,
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speech*

First of all, my thanks to Fred Coldren, Chairman of the Kansas Young Americans for Freedom, for inviting me. To be perfectly candid, it was with some reluctance I accepted this engagement, not because of lack of enthusiasm, or interest, but I have had a very heavy schedule, and have found myself on the run for nearly all the past three years trying to make commitments in an effort to actively represent my present Congressional district and, of course, to be elected and re-elected. Having just completed a tour of the 58 county First Congressional District, with the opportunity to visit with nearly 1200 constituents, you can well imagine the unfinished business which must be completed between now and January 9, the opening day of Congress. My reluctance, however, was offset by the urge and desire to encourage members of your group, and others, to become active in politics and government. It is also my firm belief that if those of us who are elected to public office give nothing but "lip service", then we are neglecting our responsibilities and should receive very little cooperation and consideration from those we publicly state should be most interested in the future of our country. With this in mind, let us visit briefly concerning a few of my observations and ideas.

First, let me state we are not in a completely hopeless position, for there are many men and women in government and Congress who share our concern about such things as the everincreasing national debt, the perennial deficit spending, and the grab for power by the Executive

Branch of our government, government by executive order, flouting of the Monroe Doctrine, and government by "One Man's Family." It occurs to me, however, that many of us talk only to ourselves, and in my humble opinion, one of the biggest failings of those of us who believe in sound, conservative, constitutional government, is that we spend too much time talking to "ourselves" instead of to each other. Doctors talk to doctors, farmers to farmers; but if all the farmers, businessmen, professional men and women, the wage-earner, and all others who have not only a present interest, but a regard for the future of freedom for our country, would unite, they would be a strong majority to stem the tide of not only "New Frontier" social programs, but others advocated by anyone which would lead to ultimate loss of our basic freedoms. I am perplexed at times when reading certain news releases, magazine stories, and other material about this-or-that conservative movement, this-or-that liberal movement, or this great effort being made by business or labor. I wonder sometimes about these groups which send out reams and reams of material to people throughout the country praising the Constitution, talking about constitutional rights and basic freedoms, and the need for the preservation of our free-enterprise system. In many instances one wonders whether some of these are really dedicated to preserving our freedoms or whether the dedication lies in "exploiting" those who rally to the cause of freedom. Without question the soundest way to turn the tide is by the election of men and women who believe and have the courage of their convictions. My voting has, I believe, reflected so-called "conservative views, but despite all the drum beating, the letters, petitions, the shouting, the conventions and cocktail parties of many

of these groups, only one or possibly two made any effort to assist in my recent campaign.

It disturbs me to have businessmen say, "I can't engage in politics for it might mean a loss in customers." It disturbs me to hear Chamber officials condemn Walter Reuther on the one hand, then sit idly by on the other, for labor leaders have succeeded and have a strong influence in Congress because they are active and effective in politics. It disturbed me last week to receive a letter from H. Ladd Plumley, President of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States. The letter, dated December 3, 1962, very correctly stated the fear of many, many people because of increased deficit spending and the rising national debt. It was mailed to members of Congress requesting them to submit a two or three hundred word statement indicating their views on a sound fiscal policy. This disturbs me because not once prior to November 6, 1962, did Mr. Plumley indicate any concern for my views or those of many other candidates for Congress throughout the country. In my reply to Mr. Plumley, I stated it was high time officials of the National Chamber of Commerce (and this is just one group of many) should concern themselves prior to, and not after the die is cast for two more years. I certainly recognize the tremendous effort made by many in business and other fields of free enterprise, but those of you who have been really active recognize that only a "handful", when considering the total number, really contribute anything. Until such time as we are as willing to "fight" for certain principles, as we are to "talk and complain," we will continue to have deficit spending, a rising national debt, increasing federal controls, bigger government and many, many undesirable programs pushed through Congress under the guise of "progress!"

It is not necessary for the total membership of any group to become a partisan and support only Republican or Democrat candidates, but it would seem it is high time some inquiries were made prior to election, and in the case of incumbent Congressmen, a check of voting records. Then if there is agreement, do something to assist, and if disagreement, do something to eliminate those who indicate adherence to the line of least resistance, the line of handouts, federal paternalism, and ultimately, federal domination.

I am hopeful that in the next decade there will be a noticeable switch in voting patterns among Union members. In most cases, Union members, through various ways, contribute more financially and otherwise in the field of politics, than do many very successful farmers or businessmen, and with this activity there are rays of hope that Union members are beginning to learn not everything that Walter Reuther may state is good for them, is necessarily so. As the tax burden increases and their families continue to grow, and as the demands become greater and greater, there must surely be a recognition that inflation is not the answer, nor some vast federal program which may be "sugar coated," but would ultimately increase the burden upon their children and grandchildren, either directly or indirectly, through loss of freedoms, higher and higher taxes, and an insurmountable national indebtedness.

Let me say, then, we must be dedicated, we must be forthright, and we must be tireless in efforts to convince our friends and our neighbors and our associates their participation in politics and government is necessary; that politics is no longer a game played by a few for the benefit of a few, that government can become so large as to stifle the initiative of anyone in any business profession or

occupation, and that there is reason to believe the majority of the people in our country still prefer to think and act for themselves, regardless of age, creed, or color. I do not mean to infer by this that by uniting we can stop the federal steam-roller and thus avoid our responsibilities and obligations as citizens. Those who oppose, as I do, federal control, whether it be in the field of education, medicine, agriculture, etc., must also willingly accept responsibility, where necessary, to handle these and the hundreds and hundreds of other related matters on a local or state basis, and if it means an increase in local or state taxes, then this is also our responsibility. For one, I am willing to trust my future, and the future of my child, in nearly every instance, to those who administer and govern on the very basic local levels, than to those far-removed bureaucrats who increase like rabbits along the Potomac.

I am far from pessimistic, but I am realistic, and know the job ahead in preparation for 1964 must begin now and be a never-ending one.

THE ABOVE PREPARED REMARKS FOLLOWED BY "OFF-THE-CUFF" REMARKS.