

REMARKS OF SENATOR BOB DOLE
ANNOUNCEMENT FOR THE PRESIDENCY

RUSSELL, KANSAS

MAY 14, 1979

I THANK YOU ALL FOR BEING WITH US TODAY. I ESPECIALLY THANK THE MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL MEDIA WHO HAVE COME SO FAR OUT OF THEIR WAY TO BE HERE. WE ARE VERY PROUD OF RUSSELL, BUT WE RECOGNIZE THAT IT IS NOT A MAJOR MEDIA CENTER. ON THE OTHER HAND, IT IS VERY NEARLY THE CENTER OF THE UNITED STATES -- SO THOSE OF YOU WHO LIKE TO BE IN THE MIDDLE OF THINGS ARE PRETTY WELL SITUATED.

REASSERTING A COMMON FAITH

I AM ANNOUNCING TODAY THAT I SHALL SEEK MY PARTY'S NOMINATION TO THE OFFICE OF PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

I HAVE NO ILLUSIONS ABOUT THE MAGNITUDE OF THE UNDERTAKING; NEITHER HAVE I ANY UNDUE CONCERN FOR THE MAGNITUDE OF THE PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH IT. FINANCING, LOGISTICS, SIMPLE HUMAN EFFORT OR THE LACK OF THESE MAY CONSPIRE IN TIME TO DEFEAT A CANDIDACY, BUT THEY CANNOT DETER IT AT THE OUTSET. THE MAGNITUDE OF THE ENDEAVOR RESTS NOT IN THE INSTITUTIONAL NECESSITIES WHICH MUST CARRY IT FORWARD, BUT RATHER IN THE EXPECTATIONS WHICH ANY CANDIDATE MUST ENGENDER AND THEN SATISFY IN THE MINDS AND THE HEARTS OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. THIS IS THE GREAT TASK.

IT IS THE TASK OF REASSERTING A COMMON FAITH IN ALL THAT WE
ONCE SET OUT TO BE AS A NATION, A SHARED CONFIDENCE IN THOSE
MEANS ESTABLISHED TO HELP US GROW AND PROSPER IN FREEDOM,
AND A COMMON CONVICTION THAT WE ARE IN TRUTH WHAT WE SAY
WE ARE: A NATION THAT HEWS TO THE SELF-EVIDENT TRUTH
THAT "ALL MEN ARE CREATED EQUAL."

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TODAY, IN AMERICA, NO TRUTH IS SELF-EVIDENT ANY LONGER.
INSTEAD, SELF-DOUBT INCREASINGLY CHARACTERIZES OUR PUBLIC
LIFE AND OUR PRIVATE LIVES AS WELL.

IT IS EVIDENT IN THE DWINDLING NUMBERS OF AMERICANS WHO GO TO THE POLLS TO VOTE. WE SAY THAT THE FRANCHISE IS A RIGHT -- BUT THAT ALONE DOES NOT DESCRIBE IT; RATHER, IT REDUCES ITS SIGNIFICANCE. THE FRANCHISE IS A GREAT GIFT PAID FOR AGAIN AND AGAIN BY THE COURAGE AND SACRIFICE OF PREVIOUS GENERATIONS. YET, TODAY SO MANY OF OUR PEOPLE IGNORE IT. THEY DOUBT THAT IT MATTERS -- WHICH IS TO SAY THEY DOUBT THAT THEY HAVE ANY CONTROL OVER EVENTS, OVER OUR NATION'S BUSINESS, ITS DIRECTION AND ITS DESTINY.

IT IS EVIDENT IN THE GROWTH OF SINGLE-ISSUE CONSTITUENCIES. OVERWHELMED BY THE RANGE OF ISSUES WHICH CONFRONT THE NATION, MANY OF OUR PEOPLE DOUBT THEIR CAPACITY TO UNDERSTAND THEM AND DEAL WITH THEM. MANY RETREAT TO NARROW CONCERNS WHICH THEY FEEL THEY CAN GRASP AND WHICH THEY BELIEVE THEY CAN INFLUENCE: SHOULD WE USE NUCLEAR POWER? SHOULD WE HAVE THE RIGHT TO BEAR ARMS?

OCCASION FOR HOPE

I DO NOT SEE THIS AS AN OCCASION FOR DESPAIR, BUT AS AN OCCASION FOR HOPE. I SEE IT AS A DAWNING REALIZATION OF THE CONTRADICTION WHICH HAS SHAPED AND MISSHAPED OUR NATIONAL LIFE FOR FORTY YEARS, — THAT A NATION CONSTITUTED FOR, AND CONSECRATED TO, THE INDIVIDUAL SHOULD HAVE BEEN LED TO BELIEVE THAT THE INDIVIDUAL COULD BEST BENEFIT BY RELINQUISHING HIS HOPES, HIS RESPONSIBILITIES AND HIS VERY INDIVIDUALITY TO GOVERNMENT.

TODAY, THERE ARE THOSE WHO INSIST THAT OUR GREAT DIFFICULTY IS THAT AMERICANS DON'T BELIEVE IN THEIR GOVERNMENT. THAT MAY NOT BE TRUE. THE GREAT DIFFICULTY MIGHT BE THAT AMERICANS NO LONGER BELIEVE SUFFICIENTLY IN THEMSELVES.

TODAY, WE HAVE A PRESIDENT WHO GOES ABOUT INSISTING THAT HE WILL BE "PERSONALLY" RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS, AND "PERSONALLY" RESPONSIBLE FOR THAT. HE MEANS WELL, NO DOUBT, BUT WHAT HE SAYS IS WITHOUT MEANING. WE DON'T NEED A PRESIDENT WHO SAYS HE WILL BE "PERSONALLY" RESPONSIBLE FOR THINGS HE CAN'T DO ANYTHING ABOUT. WE NEED INDIVIDUAL AMERICANS TO BE "PERSONALLY" RESPONSIBLE AGAIN FOR THEIR OWN LIVES, AND THE LIFE OF THIS NATION.

BIG GOVERNMENT--SOURCE OF CYNICISM

I DO NOT INTEND TO CAMPAIGN AGAINST THOSE WHO SERVE IN
GOVERNMENT. THEY ARE NO BETTER AND NO WORSE THAN THE REST
OF THE AMERICAN PUBLIC -- THEY ARE A PART OF IT. IT IS
ABSURD TO SAY WE MUST HAVE A GOVERNMENT AS GOOD AS OUR
PEOPLE. THIS ASSUMES THAT THE PEOPLE, WHOEVER THEY ARE,
ARE WISE AND GENEROUS AND GOOD, AND THAT THOSE IN
GOVERNMENT ARE ALL STUPID, STINGY, AND BAD. IT ISN'T SO.
THOSE WHO SERVE IN GOVERNMENT REFLECT THE NATION:
HUMAN, WITH HUMAN STRENGTHS AND HUMAN FAILINGS.

BUT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, IN ITS SIZE, COST AND REACH IS TOO LARGE FOR THIS NATION AND, IN ITS CAPACITIES, TOO SMALL. THE SIZE OF GOVERNMENT TODAY REFLECTS SOME PEOPLE'S MISTAKEN BELIEF THAT GOVERNMENT HAS MAGICAL POWERS WHICH THE INDIVIDUAL DOES NOT POSSESS, AND IGNORES THE FACT THAT THERE IS NO POWER ON EARTH GREATER THAN THAT OF THE INDIVIDUAL IN A FREE SOCIETY.

IN GOVERNMENT WE HAVE INSTITUTIONALIZED COMPASSION, FORGETTING THAT COMPASSION IS A HUMAN VIRTUE THAT COMES FROM THE HEART, AND THAT INSTITUTIONS LACK THESE ATTRIBUTES, AND SO THEY FAIL IN DOING THE COMPASSIONATE THING -- IN HELPING TO SEE THAT CHILDREN ARE ADEQUATELY CLOTHED AND FED AND EDUCATED; IN **ENSURING** ~~THAT~~ THAT THE ELDERLY ARE CARED FOR AND LOVED RATHER THAN WAREHOUSED AND TOLERATED, IN SEEING THAT THE NEEDY ARE HELPED TO PROVIDE FOR THEMSELVES. IN THE FACE OF THESE FAILURES, THE INSTITUTION -- THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND THOSE WHO EXALT ITS CAPACITIES -- INSISTS THAT SUCCESS WILL COME WITH INCREASED EXPENDITURES, WITH INCREASED SIZE, AND WITH INCREASED AUTHORITY.

NEVER MIND THAT AS A PEOPLE WE ARE POORER BECAUSE GOVERNMENT TAKES OUR MONEY, AND ITS PURCHASING POWER, AND OUR INCENTIVE; THAT WE ARE ENDANGERED BECAUSE GOVERNMENT CONSTANTLY INCREASES ITS CONTROL OVER US. THESE ARE SECOND ORDER CONSEQUENCES. THE REAL TRAGEDY IS THAT WE ARE POORER AND WE ARE ENDANGERED BECAUSE GOVERNMENT TAKES AWAY OUR NEED AND OUR OBLIGATION AND OUR OPPORTUNITY TO BEHAVE AS INDIVIDUALS, AS HUMAN BEINGS, TOWARD EACH OTHER.

THIS IS THE MAJOR PROBLEM WHICH CONFRONTS US IN THIS GREAT LAND. IT IS THE SOURCE OF CYNICISM IN A COUNTRY THAT WAS NOT BORN OUT OF CYNICISM BUT OUT OF HOPE. IT IS AT THE ROOT OF THE DESPERATION WHICH CAUSES SO MANY OF OUR PEOPLE TO THRASH ABOUT FOR SOMETHING TO BELIEVE IN, SOMETHING TO HOLD ON TO, SOMETHING TO SHAPE LIVES THEY NO LONGER BELIEVE THEY CAN SHAPE THEMSELVES.

LET AMERICA BE AMERICA AGAIN

THIS IS MY CONCERN IN THE CAMPAIGN AHEAD. IT IS, IN THE WORDS OF AN AMERICAN POET, TO LET AMERICA BE AMERICA AGAIN. IT MUST BE AN AMERICA WHICH UNDERSTANDS WHAT IT MEANS WHEN IT SPEAKS OF RIGHTS -- CIVIL RIGHTS, HUMAN RIGHTS, INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS, EQUAL RIGHTS. IT IS TRUE AS BURKE SAID, THAT "ALL MEN HAVE EQUAL RIGHTS, BUT NOT TO EQUAL THINGS." THE MAN WHO LIVES IN A ROW HOUSE AND RIDES THE BUS HAS THE SAME CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS AS THE MAN WHO LIVES IN A MANSION AND RIDES IN A LIMOUSINE. YET, THE ONE HAS NO RIGHT TO THE WEALTH OF THE OTHER, AND THE OTHER HAS NO RIGHT TO PREVENT THE FIRST FROM ACHIEVING WHATEVER HE MAY WITHIN THE CONFINES OF THE LAW AND HIS OWN ABILITIES. THEY ARE EQUAL BEFORE GOD, BEFORE THE CONSTITUTION AND BEFORE THE LAW. BUT IT IS ARRANT NONSENSE TO SUPPOSE THAT BECAUSE THEY MAY NOT BE EQUAL IN ABILITY AND AMBITION GOVERNMENT SHOULD EQUALIZE THEIR PORTION OF THE MATERIAL ADVANTAGES WHICH FLOW FROM THE UNFETTERED EXERCISE OF ABILITY AND AMBITION.

IF WE CAN ELIMINATE THIS AND SIMILAR MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT THE PURPOSE OF GOVERNMENT, THEN WE CAN GET AWAY FROM BUILDING THE FEDERAL BUDGET AND THE FEDERAL BUREAUCRACY AND GET BACK TO BUILDING THE NATION.

THIS IS MY MESSAGE IN THE CAMPAIGN AHEAD.

I WILL NEITHER ATTACK MY OPPONENTS IN THE REPUBLICAN PARTY,
NOR THE INCUMBENT PRESIDENT, MY FELLOW REPUBLICANS HAVE VIEWS WHICH THE AMERICAN PEOPLE MUST WEIGH, AND THE PRESIDENT HAS A RECORD WHICH MUST BE CONSIDERED AND ACCOUNTED FOR. I AM SURE WE WILL BE DILIGENT IN HELPING TO CONSIDER THE RECORD, AND I AM SURE THE PRESIDENT WILL BE EQUALLY DILIGENT IN ACCOUNTING FOR IT.

THERE ARE, OF COURSE, A NUMBER OF CONCERNS WHICH CONFRONT US AND I MEAN TO ADDRESS THEM IN THE MONTHS AHEAD, THOUGH I GIVE LITTLE ATTENTION TO THEM HERE TODAY.

CONFUSION OF GOALS, METHODS

ONE IS THE STATE OF THE ECONOMY. SINCE OUR ECONOMY TODAY IS MANAGED LARGELY BY GOVERNMENT, ITS FAILURE IS SIMPLY ONE MORE FAILURE OF GOVERNMENT. WE HAVE REJECTED HARD WISDOM, SHORT-TERM SACRIFICE AND LONG-TERM PROSPERITY FOR IMMEDIATE POLITICAL ADVANTAGE AND IMMEDIATE PERSONAL GRATIFICATION. OUR LEADERS HAVE PERSISTED IN THE VIEW THAT WE COULD SPEND OURSELVES RICH; THAT WE COULD GROW FAT BY DEVOURING OURSELVES.

WITH THAT PLAN DISCREDITED, WE SEEM UNCERTAIN WHERE TO TURN NEXT. I DON'T MEAN THIS AS A CRITICISM, BUT I SIMPLY POINT OUT AS AN EXAMPLE OF THE CONFUSION OF GOALS AND METHODS THAT ONE OF THE FIRST OFFICIAL ACTS OF THE PRESENT ADMINISTRATION WAS TO INCREASE THE SALARIES OF SOME OF THEIR STAFF BY SUMS IN EXCESS OF 100%, SOMETIMES REACHING 150 TO 200%, AND THEY NOW INSIST THAT THE AVERAGE AMERICAN WORKER SHOULD FOREGO PAY INCREASES IN EXCESS OF SEVEN PERCENT. OUR ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES ARE BROADER AND DEEPER THAN THIS EXAMPLE, BUT THE WILL TO COPE WITH THEM IS FAIRLY REFLECTED THERE, I THINK.

ANOTHER CONCERN IS PEACE. WE HAVE ENJOYED A PEACE ESTABLISHED IN 1973, AND SQUANDERED IT IN SOME MEASURE, AND IT IS BECOMING AN INCREASINGLY UNEASY PEACE MAINTAINED LARGELY BY RETREATING IN THE FACE OF SOVIET AND SOVIET-SPONSORED AGGRESSION AROUND THE WORLD. IT IS A DIFFICULT THING TO MAKE A PEACE -- BUT IT WAS DONE; IT IS A DIFFICULT THING TO KEEP THE PEACE, AND I THINK WE ARE FAILING IN THAT REGARD. OUR ECONOMIC POSITION, OUR DEFENSE POSITION, AND OUR PRESTIGE ARE BEING RAPIDLY ERODED AROUND THE WORLD.

WE PREACH INTERNATIONAL MORALITY, BUT WE DON'T PRACTICE IT, AND THE WORLD KNOWS IT.

IN THE MIDDLE EAST, WE HAVE TRIED TO COMPROMISE ISRAEL TO BUY ARAB OIL, AND THAT EFFORT IS NOT OVER YET.

IN THE FAR EAST, WE WALKED OUT ON TAIWAN FOR A PUBLIC RELATIONS SUCCESS; TO SUGGEST MASTERY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS WE ACCEPTED AN ARRANGEMENT WITH CHINA WHICH HAD BEEN AVAILABLE TO US SINCE 1973 WHEN THE DOOR TO CHINA WAS FIRST OPENED.

IF ANY OR ALL OF THESE INCIDENTS, AND MANY MORE, COULD BE STRUCTURED INTO A COMPREHENSIBLE PATTERN THAT WE MIGHT CALL U.S. FOREIGN POLICY THEN, WHETHER WE AGREED OR DISAGREED WITH THE POLICY, WE AND THE WORLD WOULD HAVE CONFIDENCE THAT AT LEAST A POLICY AND A UNIFYING VISION EXISTED. THERE IS NO SUCH CONFIDENCE, AND THE NEXT STEP AWAY FROM CONFIDENCE IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS IS GRAVE, DANGEROUS DOUBT. THIS IS NOT A TIME FOR GRAVE DOUBTS ABOUT THE U.S.' ABILITY TO CONCEIVE AND MANAGE A FOREIGN POLICY.

SO WE WILL BE DISCUSSING THESE THINGS AND MORE IN THE DAYS AHEAD.

RECOVERING OLD TRUTHS

I WILL OFFER NO SLOGANS; SLOGANS ARE NO SUBSTITUTE FOR
IDEAS, AND NOVELTY CANNOT REPLACE HARD, PAINFUL THOUGHT
IF, AS WE HOPE, GOVERNMENT IS TO BE A SHARED NATIONAL
ENDEAVOR ONCE AGAIN RATHER THAN A COSTLY ENTERTAINMENT.

I INTEND TO PROMISE ONLY THE POSSIBLE, SO THAT WHEN I AM
SUCCESSFUL IN MY AIMS I SHALL NOT DISAPPOINT YOU.

I DO NOT PROPOSE JUST TO MAKE PEOPLE BELIEVE IN GOVERNMENT AGAIN; BUT RATHER TO URGE THAT THEY BELIEVE IN THEMSELVES AGAIN. I DO MEAN TO REMIND PEOPLE THAT OUR FOUNDING THINKERS AND OUR CONSTITUTIVE DOCUMENTS ALL AIMED AT INSTITUTIONALIZING DOUBT ABOUT GOVERNMENT, ■ KEEPING THAT DOUBT FOREMOST IN THE PUBLIC MIND, AND ■ PROVIDING THE MEANS TO LIMIT THE POWER OF GOVERNMENT AND TO PROTECT THE INDIVIDUAL AGAINST IT. AND NONE OF THAT HAS TO DO WITH THE CALIBRE OR CHARACTER OF PEOPLE WHO MAKE UP THE GOVERNMENT.

I DO NOT URGE THAT WE TURN OUR BACKS ON THE FUTURE. I URGE THAT WE RECOVER SOME OLD TRUTHS ABOUT OURSELVES AS A PEOPLE, AND THAT WE BE GUIDED BY THESE AS WE FACE THE FUTURE. THE TRUTH IS THAT TODAY MANY AMERICANS HAVE DOUBTS ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THIS NATION. WE HAVE TO ELIMINATE THOSE DOUBTS. I BELIEVE WE CAN.

I DO NOT AGREE WITH HENRY ADAMS THAT POLITICS IS "THE SYSTEMATIC ORGANIZATION OF HATREDS." WE FOUGHT A TERRIBLE WAR -- AND THESE PLAINS WHICH SURROUND US TODAY WERE DRENCHED WITH THE FIRST BLOOD OF IT -- FOR THE PROPOSITION THAT A HOUSE DIVIDED AGAINST ITSELF COULD NOT STAND. THAT TRUTH IS NO LESS COMPELLING TODAY. WHEN YOU DIVIDE A PEOPLE TO CONQUER AN OFFICE, THE DIVISION IS MAINTAINED IN ORDER TO HOLD THE OFFICE -- AND A DIVIDED PEOPLE ARE A WEAKENED PEOPLE. THERE ARE NATURAL ADVERSARY RELATIONSHIPS IN AMERICA; IT IS IRRESPONSIBLE TO EXACERBATE THE ADVERSARIAL NATURE OF THESE RELATIONS FOR POLITICAL ADVANTAGE -- TO SINGLE OUT THE BUSINESSMAN OR BUSINESSWOMAN, OR THE WORKING MAN OR WOMAN, AS SCAPE-GOATS, OR THE FARMER, OR THE POOR, TO SET ONE REGION AGAINST ANOTHER, ONE ECONOMIC GROUP AGAINST ANOTHER. THIS IS DEMAGOGUERY. THIS WE MUST NOT DO.

SEEKING THE CORRECT APPROACH

AND SO I MEAN TO WAGE A WHOLE CAMPAIGN. I WILL BE SPEAKING WITH OUR FRIENDS IN THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY AS WELL AS REPUBLICANS AND INDEPENDENTS, BELIEVING THAT NEITHER PARTY HAS A CORNER ON WISDOM. WE SEEK NOT A DEMOCRATIC APPROACH OR A REPUBLICAN APPROACH TO THE NATION'S FUTURE, BUT WE SEEK THE CORRECT APPROACH AND IT WILL COMBINE THE BEST THINKING AND THE BEST EFFORTS OF ALL.

I WILL BE MEETING WITH BLACK AND BROWN AND RED AND YELLOW AND WHITE. EVENTS IN THE WORLD ARE FORCING OUR NATION'S DOORS OPEN AGAIN, AND THEY SHOULD BE OPEN IF WE ARE TO CALL OURSELVES MOTHER OF EXILES. WE MUST NOT FEAR THAT NEW AMERICANS THREATEN TO DIMINISH A FINITE NATIONAL WEALTH. WE MUST RATHER WORK TO INCREASE THAT WEALTH. NEW BLOOD, NEW BRAINS, NEW ENERGY WILL HELP. JOSEPH'S COAT WAS A COAT OF MANY COLORS, DISTINCTIVE THREADS WOVEN TOGETHER IN ONE STRONG FABRIC. IT IS AN IDEAL WE HAVE SOUGHT THROUGH ⁹⁴OUR NATIONAL HISTORY. WE MUST CONTINUE, CONFIDENT THAT WE WILL BE JUDGED NOT BY WHETHER WE SUCCEEDED, BUT BY WHETHER WE TRIED.

I WILL BE REACHING OUT TO WOMEN AND MEN -- WHETHER IN POLITICS, IN BUSINESS, IN THE LABOR MARKET OR IN THE HOME. WHEN WE INSIST THAT WOMEN "TELL US WHAT THEY REALLY WANT," WE CAST OURSELVES IN THE MASTER'S ROLE -- BENEVOLENT, PERHAPS, BUT SUPERIOR NONETHELESS. WE ARE NOT PATRONS, WE ARE PARTNERS. THAT IS NOT A SENTIMENT, IT IS A REALITY. IT IS NOT A REALITY WHICH WE HAVE FULLY ACCEPTED AND ASSIMILATED, AND THIS WE MUST DO.

I WILL BE MEETING WITH LABOR AS WELL AS BUSINESS. SO OFTEN WE SEE THEM AS SEPARATE AND DISTINCT ENTITIES, ENEMIES IN CONSTANT CONFLICT; AND SOME HAVE FOUND IT USEFUL AT TIMES TO ENCOURAGE THAT FALSE PERSPECTIVE AND GENERATE HOSTILITY FOR POLITICAL GAIN. LABOR AND BUSINESS ARE JOINED TOGETHER LIKE SIAMESE TWINS. EACH MAY HAVE ITS OWN GOALS AND INTERESTS, BUT NEITHER CAN ACCOMPLISH ANYTHING WITHOUT THE OTHER. WE MUST REDUCE GOVERNMENT'S ROLE AS A THIRD PARTY IN THE LABOR-BUSINESS RELATIONSHIP, AS A COURT OF FIRST AND LAST RESORT. EACH HAVE THEIR OWN STRENGTHS AND THEIR OWN CAPACITIES TO CONTEND WITH THE OTHER. LET THEM DO IT WITHOUT INTERVENTION IN ANY BUT THE MOST GRAVE CIRCUMSTANCES.

AND I WILL SPEAK TO THE YOUNG AS WELL AS THE ADULT AND THE ELDERLY. THOSE TOO YOUNG TO VOTE ARE NONETHELESS AMERICAN CITIZENS, WITH A STAKE IN OUR NATION'S FUTURE AND WITH A CAPACITY TO GRASP -- IF WE TROUBLE TO EXPLAIN -- WHAT ARE THE CONCERNS WHICH AFFECT US ALL. IT SEEMS TO ME FOOLISH TO WORK TO BUILD A NATION FOR OUR CHILDREN, AND NEVER TELL THEM WHAT WE ARE DOING OR WHAT ARE THE REAL DIFFICULTIES INVOLVED.

(ABOVE ALL, I MEAN TO SAY WHAT I STAND FOR AND SPEAK PLAINLY SO THAT THE AMERICAN PEOPLE MAY KNOW WHICH WEAKNESSES OF MINE THEY WILL HAVE TO MAKE UP FOR OR ACCOMMODATE, AND SO THEY MAY KNOW WHICH STRENGTHS THEY CAN COUNT ON.

COMING HOME

FINALLY, THERE IS THIS: I KNOW I MIGHT HAVE CHOSEN A DIFFERENT FORUM FOR THIS OCCASION. THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB OFFERS SPLENDID HOSPITALITY. THE SENATE OFFICE BUILDINGS PROVIDE A BEAUTIFUL AND DRAMATIC SETTING. THERE ARE MANY PLACES EASIER TO REACH, CERTAINLY.

I CAME HOME SIMPLY BECAUSE THE STRENGTH I NEED FOR THE UNDERTAKING BEFORE ME IS HERE. I KNOW THAT AS I TRAVEL THE COUNTRY IN THE WEEKS AND MONTHS AHEAD, I WILL BE HEARD AND HELPED BY OTHERS WHO AGREE WITH ME, WHO WILL CONSIDER MY VIEWS AND EXAMINE MY RECORD AND JUDGE MY CAPACITIES AND THEY WILL DETERMINE, AS THEY SHOULD, WHETHER I SUCCEED OR FAIL.

BUT THERE OUGHT TO BE AT LEAST ONE PLACE FOR EVERY PERSON
WHERE HE OR SHE IS ACCEPTED WITH UNJUDGING LOVE AND
STRENGTHENED AND REASSURED BY IT, AND FOR ME THAT PLACE
IS HERE. I WAS BORN HERE, I LEFT FOR AWHILE, I WAS HURT
AND I CAME BACK. I WAS HELPED AND HEALED IN THIS PLACE
BY MY TOWNSMEN AND I BEGAN MY PUBLIC CAREER HERE. AND
WHENEVER I HAVE SET OUT ON A NEW PATH, I HAVE COME BACK
HERE TO BEGIN. NO FAILURE HAS EVER BEEN SO HURTFUL THAT
THIS PLACE COULD NOT EASE THE PAIN. AND NO SUCCESS HAS
EVER BEEN SO GREAT THAT ITS SATISFACTION EXCEEDED THE
SATISFACTION OF BEING A PART OF THE PEOPLE OF RUSSELL,
A CITIZEN OF KANSAS.

THANK YOU.

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Russell speech
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Jb
12/3/02

NEWS RELEASE!

Bob Dole. President.

Bill Goodwin
202-466-7580

EMBARGO UNTIL 9:30 A.M. May 14
FOR PM'S OF MAY 14

"Dole Presidential Announcement Speech"

I thank you all for being with us today. I especially thank the members of the national media who have come so far out of their way to be here. We are very proud of Russell, but we recognize that it is not a major media center. On the other hand, it is very nearly the center of the United States--so those of you who like to be in the middle of things are pretty well situated.

* * * * *

I am announcing today that I shall seek my Party's nomination to the office of President of the United States.

I have no illusions about the magnitude of the undertaking; neither have I any undue concern for the magnitude of the problems associated with it. Financing, logistics, simple human effort or the lack of these may conspire in time to defeat a candidacy, but they cannot deter it at the outset. The magnitude of the endeavor rests not in the institutional necessities which must carry it forward, but rather in the expectations which any candidate must engender and then satisfy in the minds and the hearts of the American people. This is the great task.

It is the task of reasserting a common faith in all that we once set out to be as a nation, a shared confidence in those means established to help us grow and prosper in freedom, and a common conviction that we are in truth what we say we are: a nation that hews to the self-evident truth that "all men are created equal."

Today, in America, no truth is self-evident any longer. Instead, self-doubt increasingly characterizes our public life and our private lives as well.

It is evident in the dwindling numbers of Americans who go to the polls to vote. We say that the franchise is a right--but that alone does not describe it; rather, it reduces its significance. The franchise is a great gift paid for again and again by the courage and sacrifice of previous generations. Yet, today so many of our people ignore it. They doubt that it matters--which is to say they doubt that they have any control over events, over our nation's business, its direction and its destiny.

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P.O. BOX 23092 WASHINGTON, D.C. 20024 202/466-7580

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It is evident in the growth of single-issue constituencies. Overwhelmed by the range of issues which confront the nation, many of our people doubt their capacity to understand them and deal with them. Many retreat to narrow concerns which they can grasp and which they believe they can influence: should we use nuclear power; should we have the right to bear arms?

I do not see this as an occasion for despair, but as an occasion for hope. I see it as a dawning realization of the contradiction which has shaped and misshaped our national life for forty years: that a nation constituted for, and consecrated to, the individual should have been led to believe that the individual could best benefit by relinquishing his hopes, his responsibilities and his very individuality to government.

Today, there are those who insist that our great difficulty is that Americans don't believe in their government. That may not be true. The great difficulty might be that Americans no longer believe sufficiently in themselves.

Today, we have a President who goes about insisting that he will be "personally" responsible for this, and "personally" responsible for that. He means well, no doubt, but what he says is without meaning. We don't need a President who says he will be "personally" responsible for things he can't do anything about. We need individual Americans to be "personally" responsible again for their own lives, and the life of this nation.

I do not intend to campaign against those who serve in government. They are no better and no worse than the rest of the American public--they are a part of it. It is absurd to say we must have a government as good as our people. This assumes that the people, whoever they are, are wise and generous and good, and that those in government are all devious, dumb, and stingy. It isn't so. Those who serve in government reflect the nation: human, with human strengths and human failings.

But the federal government, in its size, cost and reach is too large for this nation and, in its capacities, too small. The size of government today reflects some people's mistaken belief that government has magical powers which the individual does not possess, and ignores the fact that there is no power on earth greater than that of the individual in a free society.

In government we have institutionalized compassion, forgetting that compassion is a human virtue that comes from the heart, and that institutions lack these attributes, and so they fail in doing the compassionate thing--in helping to see that children are adequately clothed and fed and educated; in assuring that the elderly

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are cared for and loved rather than warehoused and tolerated, in seeing that the needy are helped to provide for themselves. In the face of these failures, the institution--the federal government and those who exalt its capacities--insists that success will come with increased expenditures, with increased size, and with increased authority.

Never mind that as a people we are poorer because government takes our money and its purchasing power, and our incentive; that we are endangered because government constantly increases its control over us. These are second order consequences. The real tragedy is that we are poorer and we are endangered because government takes away our need and our obligation and our opportunity to behave as individuals, as human beings, toward each other.

This is the major problem which confronts us in this great land. It is the source of cynicism in a country that was not born out of cynicism but out of hope. It is at the root of the desperation which causes so many of our people to thrash about for something to believe in, something to hold on to, something to shape lives they no longer believe they can shape themselves.

This is my concern in the campaign ahead. It is, in the words of an American poet, to let America be America again. It must be an America which understands what it means when it speaks of rights--civil rights, human rights, individual rights, equal rights. It is true as Burke said, that "all men have equal rights, but not to equal things." The man who lives in a row house and rides the bus has the same constitutional rights as the man who lives in a mansion and rides in a limousine. Yet, the one has no right to the wealth of the other, and the other has no right to prevent the first from achieving whatever he may within the confines of the law and his own abilities. They are equal before God, before the Constitution and before the law. But it is arrant nonsense to suppose that because they may not be equal in ability and ambition government should equalize their portion of the material advantages which flow from the unfettered exercise of ability and ambition.

If we can eliminate this and similar misconceptions about the purpose of government then we can get away from building the federal budget and the federal bureaucracy and get back to building the nation.

This is my message in the campaign ahead.

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I will neither attack my opponents in the Republican Party, nor the incumbent President. My fellow Republicans have views which the American people must weigh, and the President has a record which must be considered and accounted for. I am sure we will be diligent in helping to consider the record, and I am sure the President will be equally diligent in accounting for it.

There are, of course, a number of concerns which confront us and I mean to address them in the months ahead, though I give little attention to them here today.

One is the state of the economy. Since our economy today is managed largely by government, its failure is simply one more failure of government. We have rejected hard wisdom, short-term sacrifice and long-term prosperity for immediate political advantage and immediate personal gratification. Our leaders have persisted in the view that we could spend ourselves rich; that we could grow fat by devouring ourselves.

With that plan discredited, we seem uncertain where to turn next. I don't mean this as a criticism, but I simply point out as an example of the confusion of goals and methods that one of the first official acts of the present Administration was to increase the salaries of some of their staff by sums in excess of 100%, sometimes reaching 150 to 200%, and they now insist that the average American workers should forego pay increases in excess of seven percent. Our economic difficulties are broader and deeper than this example, but the will to cope with them is fairly reflected there, I think.

Another concern is peace. We have enjoyed a peace established in 1973, and squandered it in some measure, and it is becoming an increasingly uneasy peace maintained largely by retreating in the face of Soviet and Soviet-sponsored aggression around the world. It is a difficult thing to make a peace--but it was done; it is a difficult thing to keep the peace, and I think we are failing in that regard. Our economic position, our defense position, and our prestige are being rapidly eroded around the world.

We preach international morality, but we don't practice it, and the world knows it.

In the Middle East, we have tried to compromise Israel to buy Arab oil, and that effort is not over yet.

In the Far East, we walked out on Taiwan for a public relations success; to suggest mastery of foreign affairs we accepted an arrangement with China which had been available to us since 1973 when the door to China was first opened.

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If any or all of these incidents, and many more, could be structured into a comprehensible pattern that we might call U.S. foreign policy then, whether we agreed or disagreed with the policy, we and the world would have confidence that at least a policy and a unifying vision existed. There is no such confidence, and the next step away from confidence in foreign affairs is grave, dangerous doubt. This is not a time for grave doubts about the U.S.' ability to conceive and manage a foreign policy.

So we will be discussing these things and more in the days ahead.

I will offer no slogans; slogans are no substitute for ideas, and novelty cannot replace hard, painful thought if, as we hope, government is to be a shared national endeavor once again rather than a costly entertainment.

I intend to promise only the possible, so that when I am successful in my aims I shall have occasion to disappoint as few as possible.

I do not propose just to make people believe in government again; but rather to urge that they believe in themselves again. I do mean to remind people that our founding thinkers and our constitutive documents all aimed at institutionalizing doubt about government, in keeping that doubt foremost in the public mind, and in providing the means to limit the power of government and to protect the individual against it. And none of that has to do with the calibre or character of people who make up the government.

I do not urge that we turn our backs on the future. I urge that we recover some old truths about ourselves as a people, and that we be guided by these as we face the future. The truth is that today many Americans have doubts about the future of this nation. We have to eliminate those doubts. I believe we can.

I do not agree with Henry Adams that politics is "the systematic organization of hatreds." We fought a terrible war--and these plains which surround us today were drenched with the first blood of it--for the proposition that a house divided against itself could not stand. That truth is no less compelling today. When you divide a people to conquer an office, the division is maintained in order to hold the office--and a divided people are a weakened people. There are natural adversary relationships in America; it is irresponsible to exacerbate the adversarial nature of these relations for political advantage--to single out the businessman or businesswoman or the working man or woman as scapegoats, or the farmer, or the poor, to set one region against another, one economic group against another. This is demagoguery. This we must not do.

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And so I mean to wage a whole campaign. I will be speaking with our friends in the Democratic Party as well as Republicans and Independents, believing that neither party has a corner on wisdom. We seek not a Democratic approach or a Republican approach to the nation's future, but we seek the correct approach and it will combine the best thinking and the best efforts of all.

I will be meeting with black and brown and red and yellow and white. Events in the world are forcing our nation's doors open again, and they should be open if we are to call ourselves Mother of Exiles. We must not fear that new Americans threaten to diminish a finite national wealth. We must rather work to increase that wealth. New blood, new brains, new energy will help. Joseph's coat was a coat of many colors, distinct threads woven together in one strong fabric. It is an ideal we have sought through our national history. We must continue, confident that we will be judged not by whether we succeeded, but by whether we tried.

I will be reaching out to women and to men--whether in politics, in business, in the labor market or in the home. When we insist that women "tell us what they really want," we cast ourselves in the master's role--benevolent, perhaps, but superior nonetheless. We are not patrons, we are partners. That is not a sentiment, it is a reality. It is not a reality which we have fully accepted and assimilated, and this we must do.

I will be meeting with labor as well as business. So often we see them as separate and distinct entities, enemies in constant conflict; and some have found it useful at times to encourage that false perspective and generate hostility for political gain. Labor and business are joined together like Siamese twins. Each may have its own goals and interests, but neither can accomplish anything without the other. We must reduce government's role as a third party in the labor-business relationship, as a court of first and last resort. Each have their own strengths and their own capacities to contend with the other. Let them do it without intervention in any but the most grave circumstances.

And I will speak to the young as well as the adult and the elderly. Those too young to vote are nonetheless American citizens, with a stake in our nation's future and with a capacity to grasp--if we trouble to explain--what are the concerns which effect us all. It seems to me foolish to work to build a nation for our children, and never tell them what we are doing or what are the real difficulties involved.

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Above all, I mean to say what I stand for and speak plainly so that the American people may know which weaknesses of mine they will have to make up for or accommodate, and so they may know which strengths they can count on.

Finally, there is this: I know I might have chosen a different forum for this occasion. The National Press Club offers splendid hospitality. The Senate Office Buildings provide a beautiful and dramatic setting. There are many places easier to reach, certainly.

I came home simply because the strength I need for the undertaking before me is here. I know that as I travel the country in the weeks and months ahead, I will be heard and helped by others who agree with me, who will consider my views and examine my record and judge my capacities and they will determine, as they should, whether I succeed or fail.

But there ought to be at least one place for every person where he or she is accepted with unjudging love and strengthened and reassured by it, and for me that place is here. I was born here, I left for awhile, I was hurt and I came back. I was helped and healed in this place by my townsmen and I began my public career here. And whenever I have set out on a new path, I have come back here to begin. No failure has ever been so hurtful that this place could not ease the pain. And no success has ever been so great that its satisfaction exceeded the satisfaction of being a part of the people of Russell, a citizen of Kansas.

Thank you.

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