

REMARKS OF SENATOR BOB DOLE  
DAVENPORT, IOWA  
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1979

I HAVE COME TO IOWA TODAY BECAUSE OF A CONCERN THAT IOWANS AND OTHER AMERICANS ARE BEING SHORTCHANGED BY THE MINIMAL DISCUSSION OF THE ISSUES BY THE CANDIDATES SEEKING THE REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATION. THIS IS NOT A CRITICISM OF THE CANDIDATES, BUT IT IS A COMMENTARY ON THE CURRENT TREND IN PRESIDENTIAL POLITICS.

PERSONALLY, I AM DISMAYED BY THE DESIRE OF SOME PEOPLE TO REDUCE THE IOWA PRECINCT CAUCUSES TO A POPULARITY CONTEST. I AM APPAULED BY THE LACK OF EMPHASIS ON THE ISSUES WHILE INCREASING WEIGHT HAS BEEN PLACED ON SLICK MEDIA SPOTS AND FANCY BROCHURES THAT HAVE BECOME TRAPPINGS OF THE QUADRENNIAL HAPPENING THAT HAS BECOME KNOWN AS THE GREAT AMERICAN PRESIDENTIAL SALE.

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FOR THESE REASONS, I HAVE BASED MY CANDIDACY ON MY STANDS ON THE ISSUES, EMPHASIZING THE NEEDS OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE AS I SEE THEM AND ADVOCATING THE SOLUTIONS THAT I WOULD IMPLEMENT IF ELECTED PRESIDENT. I AM NOT TRYING TO BE SOMETHING THAT I AM NOT DURING THIS CAMPAIGN - AND I BELIEVE AN HONEST DISCUSSION OF THE ISSUES IS CRITICAL IN DETERMINING THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES.

I ALSO BELIEVE THAT THE PEOPLE OF IOWA AND ELSEWHERE ACROSS THE NATION HAVE EVERY RIGHT TO EXPECT - AND DEMAND - THAT THE CANDIDATES ADDRESS THE ISSUES. SO FAR DURING THIS CAMPAIGN, WE HAVE HEARD A LOT OF POLITICAL RHETORIC BUT A VERY SMALL AMOUNT OF IT HAS HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH PICKING THE PERSON BEST QUALIFIED TO LEAD OUR NATION INTO THE '80'S.

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CERTAINLY, THE AMERICAN PUBLIC HAS DEVELOPED PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THE VARIOUS CANDIDATES VYING FOR THE PRESIDENCY. TED KENNEDY IS A LIBERAL, JIMMY CARTER IS UNQUALIFIED TO CONTINUE, RONALD REAGAN IS A CONSERVATIVE, AND GEORGE BUSH IS A MODERATE - THE LIST GOES ON. BUT, HOW ACCURATE ARE THESE PERCEPTIONS? THAT IS THE CENTRAL QUESTION THAT MUST BE ANSWERED BEFORE WE EMBARK ON THE SELECTION PROCESS.

I KNOW EACH OF THE CANDIDATES FOR THE PRESIDENCY IN BOTH PARTIES PERSONALLY AND, FRANKLY, I AM NOT SURE THAT THE PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS MATCH THE REALITIES. I BELIEVE THAT FOUR YEARS AGO WE ELECTED A PRESIDENT WHO WE PERCEIVED TO BE ONE THING, AND HE TURNED OUT TO BE DIFFERENT THAN WE ENVISIONED.

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PROPOSED CHALLENGE

IT IS TIME FOR THE CANDIDATES TO ADDRESS THE ISSUES - AND FOR THE PEOPLE TO DEMAND THAT THE CANDIDATES ADDRESS THE NATION'S NEEDS. THIS IS THE REASON I AM CHALLENGING EACH OF THE MAJOR CANDIDATES FOR THE REPUBLICAN NOMINATION TO DEBATE ME. I BELIEVE THAT VOTERS HAVE EVERY RIGHT TO EXPECT THAT THESE DEBATES OCCUR.

IT IS NOT MY INTENT TO RESTRICT OR DEFINE THE SCOPE OF THESE DEBATES, BUT I BELIEVE THEY SHOULD BE GENERAL IN NATURE. I AM EXTENDING AN INVITATION TO SEVERAL POTENTIAL SPONSORING ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING THE REPUBLICAN LEADERSHIP IN EACH PROPOSED DEBATE SITE, TO HELP STRUCTURE THE DEBATE FORMATS. MY STAFF IS PREPARED TO ASSIST.

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IN DAVENPORT, I AM EXTENDING THE CHALLENGE TO JOHN CONNALLY. WE WOULD DEBATE HERE IN DAVENPORT AND GET INTO SOME OF THE PRESSING ISSUES THAT FACE OUR NATION. WE WOULD FIND OUT WHERE HE STANDS ON THE ISSUES - HOW HE WOULD COMBAT INFLATION, HOW HE WOULD PROMOTE FUTURE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT. WHAT PROPOSALS HE HAS TO HELP THE HARD-PRESSED FARMERS. WHAT HE ENVISIONS AS THE FUTURE OF AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY. THESE ARE JUST A FEW OF THE ISSUES THAT COULD BE ADDRESSED.

THESE DEBATES ARE PROPOSED IN THE SPIRIT OF ENCOURAGING ALL CANDIDATES FOR REPUBLICAN NOMINATION TO COMMIT THEMSELVES TO A DISCUSSION OF THE ISSUES DURING THE REMAINING WEEKS UNTIL THE PRECINCT CAUCUSES. I ENCOURAGE JOHN CONNALLY TO ACCEPT THIS DEBATE WITHIN THE NEXT FEW DAYS SO THAT WE CAN PROCEED WITH PLANNING THE DEBATE IN DAVENPORT.

AND, FRANKLY, I BELIEVE THAT THESE DEBATES WILL BOLSTER MY CANDIDACY. I HAVE EVERY CONFIDENCE THAT MY SUPPORT FOR THE NOMINATION WILL INCREASE IF THE VOTERS HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO COMPARE THE CANDIDATES.