



**REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY  
SENATOR BOB DOLE  
HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING  
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Ladies and gentlemen, one of the qualities of American politics that distinguishes us from other nations is that we judge our politicians as much by the manner in which they leave office as by the vigor with which they pursue it. You do not lay claim to the office you hold, it lays claim to you. Your obligation is to bring to it the gifts you can of labor and honesty, and then to depart with grace.

My time to leave this office has come. I will seek the presidency with nothing to fall back on but the judgement of the people of the United States, and nowhere to go but the White House or home.

Six times, I have run for Republican Leader of the United States Senate, and six times my colleagues, giving me their trust, have elected me. I am proud of that.

So my campaign for the presidency is not merely about attaining office. It is about fundamental things, consequential things, things that are real.

My campaign is about telling the truth. It's about doing what is right. It's about electing a president who is not attracted to the glories of the office, but rather to its difficulties.

It is about electing a president who, once he takes office, will keep his perspective, and remain -- by his deepest nature and inclination -- one of the people.

Therefore, as the campaign for the presidency begins in earnest, it is my obligation -- to the Senate, and to the people of America -- to leave behind all the trappings of power, all comfort, all security. Today I announce that I will forego the privileges not only of the office of the Majority Leader, but of the United States Senate itself, from which I resign effective on or before June 11th.

I will then stand before you without office or authority, a private citizen, a Kansan, an American, just a man.

But I will be the same man I was when I walked into this room, the same man I was yesterday, and the day before, and a long time ago, when I rose from my hospital bed, and was permitted, by the grace of God, to walk again in the world. I trust in the hard way, for

little has come to me except in the hard way.

Which is good, because we have a hard task ahead. We are gaining, but still behind in the polls, the press does not lean our way, and many Beltway pundits confidently dismiss my chances of victory.

I do not find this disheartening, and I do not find it discouraging, for this is where I touch the ground, and it is in touching the ground, in moments of difficulty, that I have always found my strength. I have been there before. I have done it the hard way. And I will do it the hard way once again.

For today I will begin to reconstitute our momentum until it is a great and agile force, clear in direction, and irresistible in effect. Our campaign will leave Washington behind to look to America. As summer nears, I will seek the bright light and open spaces of this beautiful country, and will ask for the wise counsel of its people -- from the seacoasts of Maine and California, to the old railroad towns in the Midwest, to the verdant South; from the mountains of Colorado, to the suburbs of Chicago, and places in between known mainly to you who call them home.

I have absolute confidence in the victory that to some may seem unattainable. This is because I have seen victory. And I have seen defeat. And I know when one is set to give way to the other.

To concentrate upon the campaign, giving all, risking all, I must leave the Congress that I have loved and in which I have been honored to serve. Some might find this surprising, given the view that Congress has been my life. But that is not so.

With all due respect to Congress, America has been my life. And the very least a presidential candidate owes America is his full attention, everything he can give, everything he has -- and that is what America shall receive from me.

I am privileged to be my party's presidential nominee, and I am content that my fate and my story are for the American people to decide. For the American people have always known, through our long and trying history, that God has blessed the hard way.

Because of this, as I say thank you and farewell to the Senate, as summer nears, and as the campaign begins, my heart is buoyant.

Thank you. And may God guide us to what is right.