

DEATH OF A CHAMPION:

DICK HOWSER, 1936 -- 1987

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER BOB DOLE

THURSDAY, JUNE 18, 1987

MR. DOLE. MR. PRESIDENT, WITH THE
DEATH YESTERDAY OF FORMER KANSAS CITY
ROYALS MANAGER DICK HOWSER, THE SPORTS
WORLD HAS LOST A FIRST CLASS CHAMPION.

DICK'S COURAGEOUS YEAR-LONG BATTLE
AGAINST CANCER INSPIRED THE NATION. JUST
AS HE FACED TOUGH TIMES ON THE BASEBALL
DIAMOND, DICK HOWSER DIDN'T BAIL-OUT WHEN

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LIFE TOSSED A HIGH HARD ONE HIS WAY. HE ACCEPTED THE CHALLENGE HEAD ON, WITH CLASS AND UNFORGETTABLE DIGNITY.

MANY OF US HAD THE PLEASURE OF KNOWING DICK HOWSER. I RECALL A VISIT TO CAPITOL HILL THE ROYALS MADE IN 1982. ALWAYS THE GENTLEMAN, IT WAS CLEAR FROM OUR FIRST MEETING THAT THIS WAS A MAN WHO HAD BOTH FEET ON THE GROUND. HE WAS A MANAGER WHO PUT A HIGH PRICE ON WINNING, BUT AN EVEN HIGHER PREMIUM ON FRIENDSHIP, LOYALTY AND HUMILITY.

OF COURSE, WE REMEMBER WELL THE TRIUMPHANT RETURN DICK MADE TO WASHINGTON IN 1985 AS MANAGER OF THE WORLD CHAMPION

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KANSAS CITY ROYALS. I HAD THE HONOR OF HOSTING A RECEPTION FOR THE TEAM AND ONCE AGAIN -- WITH HIS COURTESY, GOOD HUMOR AND GRACE -- DICK HOWSER DEMONSTRATED WHY HE WAS HELD IN SUCH HIGH REGARD BY THE BASEBALL WORLD.

IN FACT, THE WAY THE ROYALS BECAME CHAMPIONS WAS A REFLECTION OF THE GUTSY DETERMINATION OF THEIR LEADER. THEY WERE DOWN THREE-GAMES-TO-ONE IN BOTH THE AMERICAN LEAGUE PLAYOFFS AND THE WORLD SERIES, BUT THEY STORMED BACK IN EACH SERIES TO COMPLETE THE MOST DRAMATIC COMEBACK IN BASEBALL HISTORY.

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THE CRITICS HAD HAD A FILED DAY
SECOND-GUESSING DICK HOWSER WHEN THE TEAM
WAS DOWN. AND THEY REPEATED THE CLICHE
THAT HE "COULDN'T WIN THE BIG ONE". WELL,
DICK HOWSER BLEW THE CRITICS AWAY. HE
NEVER RATTLED AND HE NEVER GAVE UP.

BUT IN THE AFTERGLOW OF VICTORY DICK
DIDN'T GLOAT. AND HE NEVER FIRED BACK AT
THE CRITICS, EVEN THOUGH HE HAD PLENTY OF
AMMUNITION. HE JUST WON...AND LEFT IT AT
THAT. AT OUR RECEPTION, HE STAYED OUT OF
THE LIMELIGHT, HAPPY TO LET THE PLAYERS
SOAK UP THE SPOTLIGHT. THAT WAS DICK'S
WAY. IT'S SPELLED "C-L-A-S-S" -- CLASS.

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I KNOW MY SENATE COLLEAGUES JOIN ME IN
SENDING OUR CONDOLENCES TO THE HOWSER
FAMILY. WE WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER HIS
COURAGE. AND WE WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER HIM
AS A WINNER.

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