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Honorary Chairman Senator Bob Dole

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THE CHALLENGE FOR THE 100th CONGRESS

by Senator Bob Dole



On November 4, 1980, the American people—at least the 55% of eligible voters who turned out—made their choice. To Republicans, that election brought some good news and some bad news. The good news is that we did well in the governorships and held our own in the House. But the bad news is that we took it on the chin in the Senate.

And even more ominous, those new members in the Senate also mean that the 100th Congress—even more than the 99th—is likely to turn into a battleground for many issues of vital importance to our nation. Some of the toughest fights in prospect for the 100th Congress—and specifically for the Senate—could be over national security issues.

Will the 100th Congress turn into the kind of "confrontational" Congress some are now predicting? Will the President be forced to go head to head with Congress, and Republicans with Democrats? Will that be the norm, or the exception?

I can't answer that for sure, but I will offer these two observations: One, I am convinced that the President does not want to see his last two years in office marked by a series of showdowns with Congress (especially on national security issues), because that's not good for the country and,

even on the simplest political level, it's not good for the Republican Party.

Two, the performance of this last Congress doesn't convince me that we have a never-ending series of partisan votes and vetoes ahead of us in the next Congress. Whatever the perception, the record does not indicate that Ronald Reagan has been strictly partisan in his foreign and defense policies or that he is likely to be a more partisan president in his final two years in office. Nor does experience in the 99th Congress convince me that compromise is impossible between Republicans and Democrats in the Senate.

At the same time, neither the President nor I, nor my Republican colleagues, are willing to abandon our national security objectives simply because we have eight fewer seats on our side of the Senate aisle. We're not rolling over and playing dead; we're not running up the white flag; we're going to continue to fight for what we believe in. We'll continue to push for aid to freedom fighters; for a strong national defense; for SDI; and for many other programs

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that, in my view, are critical to the security of this nation. That means we are very likely to see some downybrooks in the 100th Congress—not "governing by confrontation" or "unbridled partisanship," but simply, democracy in action.

When we Republicans win support for our policies, it will be because we have the facts behind us. It will be because a strong and persuasive President stands behind us. And we will win because some Democrats are going to vote with us—as eleven did last year on Contra aid.

Still, the new party ratios—even if they don't add up to permanent confrontation and multiple vetoes—raise some very real concerns in the national security area, and two in particular.

First, will we be able to keep defense spending at a level necessary to meet our legitimate defense needs? Even as spending for entitlements continues to grow, Gramm-Rudman-Hollings limits are still very much with us. The budget axe is going to fall somewhere, but we cannot have it pointed directly at the heart of our national defense.

Second, I am concerned about arms control—and there are really two issues at stake. One concerns a President's constitutional responsibility for negotiating treaties and submitting them for Congressional approval. Congress' role is to ratify treaties, but Congress (primarily the House in these last sessions) seems to want to do it all, the Constitution notwithstanding.

We are almost certain to see a renewal of efforts to force U.S. compliance with SALT II, a treaty that was never ratified, that would have expired by now if it had been ratified, and which the Soviets have repeatedly violated. If this issue is resurrected, I am prepared to bring SALT II

to the floor and see who really is prepared to vote for it. If this occurs, it will be an indication of our failure. Then we can stop fighting this dead horse and give it the burial it deserves.

Through a compromise reached on the continuing resolution, Congress has essentially forced the President to agree to submit for approval the threshold test ban treaty and the peaceful nuclear explosions treaty. As we debate these treaties, the Republican leadership will do its best to ensure that, on the vital question of verification, the US position—and our national security—is not compromised. In addition to the important constitutional question, the arms control issue also raises some substantive policy questions. We have made the progress we have in arms control because of the President's strong policies: renewing our military strength, being willing to negotiate but unwilling to abandon our vital interests, aggressively pursuing the potential of new technologies, and effectively coordinating with our allies. It is these policies that have led to the Geneva talks, to the Reykjavik summit, and to the prospect of real, meaningful nuclear arms reductions. But we risk seeing these gains unravel unless the 100th Congress continues to support the policies we have pursued over the past six years.

The decisions we make in the 100th Congress will be critical, and Senators and Congressmen from both parties will have to stand up and be held accountable. With one party controlling both houses, the accounting may be a little more clear-cut than it was in the 99th Congress.

Entering the 100th Congress as leader of the minority party, I am fully aware that my 44 Republican Senate colleagues and I face many challenges. We will meet those challenges with hard work and a commitment to building a better America.

The Washington Post

MONDAY, DECEMBER 15, 1986

Rowland Evans and Robert Novak

Dole's Strategy on SALT

With his political enemies barely concealing their glee over the perceived demise of the Reagan Revolution, President Reagan has received a private note from Senate Republican leader Robert J. Dole outlining his intentions to force a Senate vote on the seven-year-old, never-ratified SALT II.

That is Dole's strategy for protecting Reagan's decision to abandon the 1979 arms control treaty in the face of escalating Soviet violations. If the Democrats try "to force" SALT II compliance by cutting defense appropriations, Dole told Reagan, he will counterattack by proposing formal treaty ratification in the Senate. Considering still-unrevealed new Soviet violations, chances are excellent for the one-third-plus-one vote needed to block approval.

That will test not only the extent to which the Iran-contra scandal has weakened Reagan's control of national security policy at a tense time in East-West relations. It also will be a symbol for the nation and the world of whether the Reagan presidency is functioning or ceased on Nov. 25—the day the contra connection to the Iranian arms deal was revealed.

That twilight of his presidency seemed at hand last Wednesday. The House Democratic Caucus, by overwhelming voice vote, passed a resolution to limit nuclear weapons authorized and funded by Congress to SALT II ceilings. The gesture of defiance seemed to fulfill the prediction of Democrats and premonition of Republicans that the current crisis, like Watergate, would limit presidential power.

Dole's move into the forefront of the arms control struggle puts him close to Republican conservatives, giving them the leader on that front they have lacked. They lobbied the president hard to get out of SALT II and won last spring when he overruled bureaucratic opposition in the State Department and from NATO allies to announce U.S. withdrawal.

He hammered in the final nail last month by ordering the 131st B-52 bomber to be equipped with cruise missiles—violating a treaty ceiling on MIRVed (carrying more than one warhead) launchers.

Supporting Dole's move is a minority of the Senate, about to be fortified with secret intelligence pointing to a major new Soviet violation. This finding, which is not yet fully completed, corroborates U.S. fears that the Soviets have breached another treaty limit: 820 MIRVed intercontinental ballistic missile launchers—an infinitely more serious violation than Reagan's decision to put cruise missiles on the 131st bomber.

The finding that the Soviets have exceeded the 820 limit on MIRVed ICBMs—blockbuster weapons designed to destroy ground-based U.S. offensive missiles—came to the United States in a remarkable way. It happened at the Reykjavik summit when Mikhail Gorbachev handed the president a sheet of white paper containing two lists of figures showing U.S. and Soviet nuclear arsenals. All the sublims, such as MIRVed ICBMs, were listed separately in English.

For the first time ever, the paper drafted by Gorbachev's own advisers showed Soviet MIRVed ICBMs at 820. That happens to be exactly the SALT II ceiling for Soviet heavy land-based launchers carrying MIRVed warheads. For years, the United States and the Soviets had carried that all-important figure at the 818 level, leaving a narrow margin of two missiles for upward movement.

U.S. intelligence believes the jump from 818 to 820 is a tacit Kremlin admission that it has deployed two new operational SS-24 ICBMs. No other explanation would suffice. Moreover, U.S. spy-satellite photographs clearly show the location of those two SS-24 launchers on camouflaged railway flatbed cars at the Plesetsk nuclear testing ground.

U.S. analysis of new Soviet missile testing proves they are indeed SS-24s. Three similar launchers at Kostroma also have been photographed and analyzed as SS-24s. That puts the Soviet total of MIRVed ICBMs at 823—three over the treaty limit in the most fatal category of nuclear weapons.

Neither Dole nor his Senate colleagues have yet been briefed on this latest U.S. intelligence finding that gives new high cards for Reagan to play against the Democrats on Capitol Hill in defense of his SALT withdrawal decision. But by the time Dole executes his plan to defeat the treaty on the floor, this latest Soviet violation will be well-known.

In a White House paralyzed by uncontrolled scandal and seeking to save Reagan's last two years, there is no forward agenda. Presidential hopeful Dole has insisted there must be one for the party to survive in 1988. Now he has proposed how to show the world that congressional Democrats have not taken over foreign policy from the president.

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Bob Dole's Our Choice in 1988; He Could Be a Great President

ON an awful April day in 1945, three weeks before the war in Europe ended, Lt. Bob Dole lay in a shell hole in the slime and muck of Hill 913 in the Po Valley of Italy. His right shoulder was shattered and all four limbs were hanging useless. A long, painful process of recovery followed—a time of trial from which almost no one thought he would emerge victorious. But he did, due to the love of God and to his own determination and persistence, encouraged and helped by those around him.

Bob Dole has come a long, long way since then. And now, 41 years after he was given up for dead, we are ready to state our belief, before the people of Kansas and before the country, that Bob Dole should be the next President of the United States.

We say this not out of sympathy for Bob Dole, for many people have suffered disabilities and have overcome them. We say it not because he is a fellow Kansan, for the leader of these United States must address the needs of people far beyond the borders of his or her home state. We say it not because we owe Mr. Dole any "favours," for we do not; we have been as critical as anyone of Mr. Dole's missteps and mistakes (and he has made them; the man is not a saint).

We say it because we are convinced, after watching him grow and develop over the years, that Bob Dole not only is the most qualified person either party has to offer as president: He is superbly qualified to be one of the nation's genuinely great presidents.

Some might say this is far too early to be making a presidential endorsement. We normally would agree, and customarily we make our endorsements just before an election. But these are extraordinary times, and they require an extraordinary leader. We have followed the life and career of Bob Dole more closely than any other newspaper, perhaps, and we have seen him develop into one of the most powerful political figures in the country. We have suffered with him, and argued with him—and, when the occasion called for it, rejoiced with him—through the good times and the bad. We feel now a responsibility to share our observations and feelings about him at a time, early on, when they might make a greater difference in the election process.

Bob Dole has given an indication of the leadership he would provide during his tenure as Senate majority leader, confronting the tough issues head on and crafting legislative compromises where most would have thought none was possible. He has brought a pragmatism to the conduct of the Senate's affairs that has not always been present; his Kansas heritage of common sense and incorruptible moral and personal values has served him well. He believes in hard work and fair play, and because of that, he is universally respected in the United States Senate—which is an incredible statement, given the partisan divisions and strong personalities of that body.

The Wichita Eagle-Beacon is an editorially independent and politically nonaligned newspaper. We have not always been a warm supporter of Mr. Dole. His reputation as a "slasher" in political debate, which reached its peak in his 1974 Senate campaign against Democratic challenger Bill Roy and his 1976 Republican vice-presidential campaign, was deserved at the time.

But something happened to change Bob Dole. Some say it began with his marriage to Elizabeth Hanford in December 1975. Whatever the catalyst, we believe the change to be genuine, as reflected in the tremendous body of work he has produced since, much of it requiring the closest cooperation with players on both sides of the political aisle. Former Sen. George McGovern, D-S.D., calls him "the most human man I know in the Senate," and adds: "I don't know of anyone who has grown more, in all phases, politically or spiritually, than he has."

We don't either.

Bob Dole has an innate sense of what the country needs, and he knows how to go about getting it. From the time the federal deficit started to balloon out of control, he knew the country could not survive if the situation were left unattended. Both as chairman of the Senate Finance Committee and later as majority leader, he made deficit

reduction his first priority, supporting the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings effort when it appeared nothing more would be possible.

Better than almost anyone, however, he knows that it alone will not suffice, and that the need for getting the deficit under control is more crucial than ever. Left to another president, it's doubtful it would be brought under control anytime soon. In the hands of Mr. Dole, drawing on his great strength as a consensus builder, the task still would be hard—but it would not be unachievable. On this critical issue as on perhaps no other, the country needs the leadership of Bob Dole.

It also needs his courage. While other politicians ran for cover when it became evident a series of unpopular changes would have to



Bob Dole: An extraordinary leader for extraordinary times

be made in Social Security in order to save the system, Bob Dole led the charge. Congress reluctantly went along. When the American Bankers Association tried to force repeal of President Reagan's plan to withhold taxes on interest and dividend income, Sen. Dole resisted. He became the target of a postcard campaign instigated by the bankers—with each postcard, he knew, representing a potential vote for president.

Bob Dole is a compassionate man. When it became popular to deride the food stamp program, he defended it—not because it was good for agriculture in the farm states, but because it was good for low-income Americans in every state. That feeling was intensified during field hearings he conducted with Mr. McGovern, then ranking Democrat on the Senate Agriculture Committee. "When we got out there and saw the real world . . ." he later said, "it was a real eye-opener. You see the need."

His concern for the handicapped is perhaps understandable, but he has gone beyond what might be expected of him in establishing the Dole Foundation to help people with disabilities become economically independent. A large portion of his outside income is channeled into that foundation.

Black Americans and other minorities have a friend in Bob Dole. It was he who engineered the extension of the Voting Rights Act in 1982 over the objections of the administration. He has been a steady supporter of the District of Columbia Voting Rights Amendment, extending voting representation in Congress to residents of the nation's capital. Many of the ideas and ideals of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. are embodied in the life and aspirations of the senior senator from Kansas.

In the important area of human rights, Mr. Dole properly sees the United States as taking a leadership role, speaking out against abuses wherever they may occur. His work on the Helsinki Review Commission has been marked by his determination to hold the Soviet Union to account for the violation of its human rights agreements under the Helsinki Final Act.

Experience has shown that Soviet officials respond most positively to someone who stands up to them, yet gives them their due as leaders of a major world power. This was one of the secrets of Richard Nixon's success with the Soviets, and Bob Dole shows the same mixture of firmness and realism.

Bob Dole has the potential to be not only one of the country's great presidents, but one of its most popular presidents. There hasn't been a platform performer like him since John F. Kennedy, nor one with such a keen wit and sense of humor.

For all these reasons, we do not flinch from recommending Bob Dole to the nation as its next president. He would be a leader for these critical times, a pragmatic, courageous, informed, sensitive president of whom every American could be proud, and to whom the rest of the world would look with admiration and respect.