



NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

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STATEMENT BY U.S. SENATOR BOB DOLE BEFORE POLLUTION SUBCOMMITTEE

RUCKLESHAUS KNOWS LAW AND ENFORCES IT

I believe Administrator Ruckleshaus' testimony yesterday effectively responded to the series of erroneous, misinformed and misleading charges which have been directed at the record of the Administration in carrying out its responsibilities under various environmental protection statutes -- particularly the Clean Air Act.

Mr. Ruckleshaus made it abundantly clear, first, that he knows the law he is charged with enforcing. He knows what it says, and, just as important, he knows what it does not say. Second, he demonstrated his full dedication to thorough, complete and wise enforcement of the law. I was particularly pleased to note that when the choice is available he believes the law should be enforced at the lowest possible cost to industry and the public rather than by the most expensive means. And, third, he made it evident that he has not violated the law by allowing other agencies or individuals to exercise his statutory powers and authorities.

It is to be expected, I believe, that there will be some confusion among the many parties involved in the application of a complex highly technical statute, such as the Clean Air Act. Administrative field offices, state officials, industry spokesmen and private citizens somewhere along the line may receive poor information, may make mistakes. All this is to be expected, and no member of Congress and no individual with experience in working on joint state-federal efforts could expect otherwise.

But I do believe the public -- especially those concerned as so many are today with the job of restoring and preserving our environment -- can expect and should expect that every body and group concerned with this statute to avoid spreading doubts, distorting facts and groundlessly attempting to question the good faith of those charged with enforcing it.

One of the great pleasures of serving on this committee and this subcommittee and a major reason for their effectiveness have been the overriding and continuing bipartisanship and spirit of cooperation among the members. It has always been a matter of committee members -- not Democrats or Republicans -- working together to formulate the most effective and fair approaches to environmental problems. I believe that spirit has paid handsome dividends for the American people. This subcommittee and committee have put together some significant pieces of legislation, the Clean Air Act being one of them.

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DOLE STATEMENT BEFORE POLLUTION SUBCOMMITTEE -- 2

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There are, and I am sure Mr. Ruckleshaus would agree, enough problems involved in the application of this and other environmental laws without having to spend valuable time and energy refuting fabricated charges and contending with dummy problems.

I would only submit my hope that today and in the future we can work together as we have in the past and continue the valuable and highly important role of this subcommittee.

And just so the record may be clear on the point I would request that Administrator Ruckleshaus submit a written response to the so-called briefing paper which has apparently given rise to so many of the recent charges and accusations about the implementation of the Clean Air Act.