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FORD - DOLE CAMPAIGN MARKER DEDICATED

RUSSELL, KANSAS -- A native stone marker and commemorative plaque marking the spot on which President Gerald R. Ford and Senator Bob Dole made their first 1976 campaign appearance was dedicated today. The August 20, 1976 appearance was in Russell's courthouse square, and today's ceremony took place there also.

Following is the text of Senator Dole's remarks at the dedication:

Social scientists, demographers and statisticians all tell us that America has become a nation of people without roots. We move a lot; our jobs take us from one part of the nation to another; our children grow up as nomads -- learning never to establish close relationships, because they won't be lasting relationships. I guess that's true, if the experts say it is. It is a bad thing not to have a place that is always and forever home, no matter where life takes us; not to have a place where we belong, and know it -- a place where we are safe and secure in our surroundings.

Most of the important things in my life are bound up in this town. I have gone away, I have been in other lands, and I have lived away from Russell. But I have never lived apart from Russell and its people. Wherever I am and whatever I do, the town and the people that shaped me are a part of my life. And I have always come home. I have come home with success and in defeat; I have come in happiness and in difficulty. No success was ever something that separated us, and no defeat was ever transmuted into failure; I could share the happiness, and I was lifted up in difficulty. I guess that is the meaning and the measure of a man's roots.

After I was hurt and the doctors put the pieces back together and got everythings working pretty well, I came home and the people of Russell helped me put my life back together. I found out what the poet meant when he wrote that "No man is an island..."

CAREER BEGAN HERE

I went from here to begin my political career. I have had good fortune in that career. I hope I represent Kansas well. I work hard at it. But equally important, I hope I am a good representative of Russell, Kansas -- that I reflect credit on my parents and the people who are my people, as surely as I am theirs.

I was honored to be chosen as the Republican candidate for Vice-President. And that campaign began right here on the spot of this marker being dedicated today. We worked hard. We fought hard. It didn't turn out the way we hoped it would. We were not successful. But neither were we really defeated. We were just delayed a little. Real defeat is when you accept failure. I learned here in this town that I didn't have to accept failure or defeat. The things we worked for in that campaign -- the kind of America that we hoped to work for, we can still work for, and we do. That campaign ended here in Russell where it began. And when I came home, I came home to people who raised me up in pride, just as you once lifted me up in compassion.

EFFORT WILL CONTINUE

This marker commemorates something important that began here. And what began here is not yet finished. America wants leadership. She still doesn't have it. Until she does, the effort that began on this spot will not be finished.

Most of the speeches I am called on to give are political speeches, and they don't always come from the heart -- but, rather from the mind, from circumstances, from necessity. Today, I am happy for the rare opportunity to speak from the heart, to say it is good to come home again, and it is good to have such a home to come to.

I thank you.

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