



# NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

(R.-Kans.)

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Remarks of Senator Bob Dole

GOP Dinner

Hilton Inn

Bixoli, Mississippi

March 3, 1978

I have covered a lot of ground recently, addressing Republican audiences and other groups. I have found time and again that Republicans are alive and well -- we are looking to the future with a strong spirit of vigor and optimism.

But the health of the Republican Party is a topic that continues to tantalize some in the media. Our demise has been predicted often over the last forty years -- but here we are -- working -- as we should be to give Americans -- all Americans -- another choice.

The health of the Party is perceived as being in question because we too often fail to do an effective job of communicating the beliefs and concerns we share with the everyday interests of the vast majority of Americans. The positions, we take are sound -- based on sound principles -- and in tune with the values and the aspirations of most of the American people. But we fail to get our message across:

#### G.O.P. Must Reach Out

Let's Face It: Among an all too sizeable group of Americans, Republicans are still perceived as "againers" -- a Party that cares only for the rich, big business -- if you will.

Let's Face It: We cannot ignore any group of Americans -- I'm thinking now of millions of young and minority citizens -- Blacks and Hispanics -- Ethnic Americans -- and other groups, we must reach out. We must have well qualified candidates and organize neighborhoods that have never understood Republicans before.

Let's Face It: The Democratic Party and its leadership are not without fault. The new Administration lacks a sense of direction -- and the American people are becoming aware of it. But we cannot rely solely on their shortcomings -- we must overcome our own -- if we are to be a strong, viable second Party.

Tonight, I'd like to tell you part of today's Republican story -- I want to talk about Republican initiatives being taken in Congress and elsewhere.

A good place to start with that story is agriculture. The Republican Party has traditionally been concerned with the plight of the family farmer. That family farmer has never faced a greater crisis than he faces today. Farmers in Mississippi, in Kansas, and across the nation are caught in a vicious cost-price squeeze. Unable to recover even his cost of production the family farmer is in the worst financial shape since the great depression.

#### Crisis in American Agriculture

The crisis in American agriculture is a good case in point. Today, farmers in Mississippi, in Kansas, and across the nation are caught in a vicious cost-price squeeze. Unable to recover even his cost of production, the family farmer is in the worst financial shape since the great depression. Yet President Carter has adamantly refused to consider bold new initiatives to restore the economic viability of the family farm. Last year, the President fought us every step of the way in our attempts to enact higher price supports. And he has shown little willingness to yield to necessary new initiatives this year.

In peanuts, the Administration has refused to implement the resolution passed by the Senate that would increase the loan level on non-quota peanuts from \$250 to \$420 per ton.

I heard testimony yesterday from peanut producers calling for changes in the peanut program simply to rectify problems created by the poor administration of the present program.

The farm problem is not just a regional problem for the South or Midwest. It is a national problem, an economic crisis which is spreading from the farm to agribusiness enterprises to industrial cities. We need to do something about it now.

I have introduced an amendment to the present farm bill which has the potential to save the farm economy. "The flexible Parity Act of 1978" would adjust target prices for grains and cotton, and perhaps rice and soybeans. Individual farmers here in Mississippi could choose the target price they need up to 100% of parity if they are willing to scale down production accordingly.

This proposal, which is attracting bipartisan support, would not interfere with exports, and costs would be reasonable since scaled down production will result in higher market prices. If "The Flexible Parity Act of 1978" is passed, for the first time, farmers will have a mechanism under which they can collectively control their production and each individual may select the target level and set aside that is best for his or her farm operation.

We need to provide additional funding for the food for peace program to help bolster our exports and increase domestic farm prices. I am sponsoring legislation to tighten up on the Meat Import Act of 1964, and to extend credits to the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union so that we can sell more American agricultural products there.

I have sponsored legislation to raise the farm loan ceilings and modernize the loan requirements of the Farmers Home Administration. I also introduced a bill to create a new economic loss emergency loan program for farmers who have suffered losses due to low prices.

The Farmers Home Administration does not have a loan program to cover economic losses due to low prices. The disaster programs today only cover natural disasters.

More farm credit is not the answer to the farm problem but many farmers need adequate financing even if new farm legislation is passed.

I'm also trying to get the Export-Import Bank to start promoting the export of agricultural commodities. Last year they only financed a small amount of agricultural exports - in fact only one sale of cotton and that was only in response to political pressure.

The Republican Party has traditionally been concerned with the plight of the family farmer. This year, we have the opportunity to demonstrate that concern once again in concrete legislative terms. We must not miss the opportunity -- or the responsibility -- to free the family farmer from his economic plight.

#### Tax Inflation

Republicans have long led the fight against increased taxes and inflation -- the cruelest tax of all. The latest inflation figures show prices rising at an annual rate of 8.4%. As prices and wages rise, taxpayers are pushed into higher tax brackets. In effect, a greater percentage of tax is paid and real income declines. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that tax inflation will generate \$14 billion in new taxes in 1980 and a whopping \$45 billion in 1983.

The President has told the American people to expect a generous tax cut. However, he didn't tell them that tax inflation will nullify the cut for millions of Americans as early as 1979 only 9 months from now.

Last week, I introduced legislation to index that tax system. If enacted it would stop the roller coaster ride of tax inflation. It would allow Americans a chance to get ahead rather than just stay even.

Another attempt by Republicans to help curb the effect of skyrocketing costs is in the area of educational expenses. It is a Republican bill that would provide an educational tax credit for those who send their children to college. The proposal would grant relief in a simple and equitable manner without increasing the federal bureaucracy, while President Carter's weak substitute for this proposal would increase federal paperwork and Administrative costs.

#### Taxes

The Administration has finally unveiled its tax reform proposal. The tax package contains a mixed-bag of tax cuts and tax reforms. If I am correctly reading the mood of the Congress, little of the tax reform are likely to be enacted and the size of the cuts will undoubtedly be enlarged. Republicans are pushing for more substantial and meaningful tax relief for all Americans, not just a selected group.

## Energy

In fact, the only Administration tax proposal that would affect all Americans is the so-called Energy bill. Actually the so-called Energy bill is divided into 5 parts. The energy conferees have reached agreement on 3 parts -- utility regulations, energy conservation, and coal conversion. Natural gas pricing -- the fourth part -- is deadlocked. However, the natural gas pricing conferees have been meeting around the clock to arrive at an agreement.

The centerpiece and most important part of the energy legislation is the tax portion and this energy tax plan proposed by President Carter calls for \$125 billion in new energy taxes in the next 7 years.

As a member of the Senate Finance Committee, I heard opposition to the Administration's energy plan from such diverse groups as the AFL-CIO, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Consumer Federation of America. Recently, the energy tax bill experienced another setback when the NAACP attacked the Administration's energy program as "being seriously deficient". The chances of truly comprehensive legislation this year are slim. It is indeed unfortunate that we have been struggling with legislation that will inflate our economy, cause unemployment, and most important will do nothing to increase and develop new energy resources.

But agriculture, energy, and taxes are not the only areas in which President Carter and his Administration have failed to provide insightful leadership -- the list goes on.

## Foreign Policy Fumbles

An area that currently cries out for leadership is foreign policy -- but the present Administration maintains that this is a time for concession and retreat around the globe -- concession in Cuba, Panama, and China; retreat in Africa, South Korea, and Western Europe. Indeed, vital decisions about our nation's future course in foreign policy, defense, and trade matters are being decided right now. Major shifts in policy are underway. Only the restraining hand of Congress has prevented a wholesale reversal in the international image that brought this country respect and authority in the last three decades.

In some respects, the Panama Canal issue is a watershed decision in foreign policy. There are strong feelings on both sides of the issue. They spring from deep-seated personal convictions about the course this nation must follow in both foreign policy and national security matters in the years ahead.

The great debate is now underway in the Senate. Some say there is no need for a new treaty. Still others insist that we accept without question a new treaty that is based on apology and little security for the future. For my part, I have not taken the position that there must be no new agreements with Panama. I do not count myself among those whose positions begin with the word "never" and end with the word "never". We live in an evolving world and our credibility and our confidence as a great power are reflected in our ability to meet change and make it work to the benefit of freedom and justice in the world.

But I have proposed fundamental changes in the proposed Canal Treaties that will help protect our national defense and economic interest -- without ambiguity, without uncertainty, without apology. And I would suggest that those who simply reject every amendment proposal to these Treaties do as much, and more, of a disservice as those who insist that there be no new Treaty at all.

## The Proper Perspective

America and Panama may not see exactly eye-to-eye on how our respective rights in that part of the world should be realized. The sensibilities of some of the more radical Panamanian nationalists may be offended and we may be accused of callousness and colonialism -- though I say we are falsely accused. But let the accusations stand for the moment, and put the outraged Nationalists of Hungary and Poland and East Germany and Czechoslovakia, who have been under the Soviet Communist thumb since the end of World War II, and let each compare their grievances.

Who continue to berate the United States as a "Colonialist" or "Imperialist" power, put our foreign policy role in proper perspective with regard to that of the Communist world.

I think the Carter Administration sees the writing on the wall when it says the Soviet interference in Africa is going to have a "spill-over" affect as Congress considers the Panama Canal Treaty, the Salt Treaty, and other vital security matter. And that is as it should be, for it would be short-sighted and irresponsible for Congress or the Administration to ignore these Soviet and Cuban provocations.

### Labor Law Reform

The Administration's stand on Labor Law Reform is another illustration of the lack of leadership in the Carter Administration. The Administration has rubber stamped every demand made by union officials in this bill. Almost every provision is designed to promote the interests of union leaders at the expense of the rights and freedoms of individual union and non-union workers.

For example, one section of the bill would make the government the enforcer of union demands. For certain violations of a union-management agreement, the entire business could be barred from having any government contracts for three years. Many feel that the recent coal strike has shown that unions now have the power to force their demands on the country without having the government act as their agent.

The reason that union leadership has pushed this bill so hard is clear. Union membership has dropped to 25 percent of the non-agricultural labor force and unions failed in more than half of all elections last year. Many sections of the bill would make organizing in the non-union areas like the south easier at the expense of worker's rights.

Having studied the major provisions of this "Union Recruitment bill", officially titled as the Labor Law Reform Bill, it seems the real issue involved here is freedom of choice -- namely, the right of employees to make up their own minds in a free, unhurried manner. Congress should be worrying about protecting the American worker from further coercion -- whether it comes from big labor leadership, big business, or, for that matter, big government.

In addition to a substantial increase in the tax burden, and restriction of employees freedom of choice, the passage of this bill in its present form will also mean that a stature which for more than forty years has been marked by voluntary compliance on the part of the public, and Administrative efficiency in its implementation, will be changed to a statute which discourages voluntary compliance and contains inflexible rules and unreasonable time limits.

The opposition of this so-called Labor Law Reform bill should not be construed as opposition to unions. In the past we have seen many needed labor reforms come about through their efforts, however, today with the labor law reform bill, we have a serious threat to the basic right of every American worker to choose for himself whether he wants to belong to a labor union.

It doesn't matter if we are Reagan Republicans, or Ford Republicans, or moderate Republicans or conservative. If we are to meet our responsibilities to Americans, we must do it as Lincoln's Republicans -- acting together, motivated by what united us and not inhibited by whatever differences we may have.

Because Mr. Carter speaks, at best, wishfully, when he describes our condition as one of "a growing sense of peace and common purpose": because our people do wish for and deserve to have restored to them a "sense of peace and common purpose", I believe our responsibility to help bring that about is as great today as anytime in the history of our party. If we do not move as one Party to meet it, however, I think we shall not be able to move at all, and we shall fail in that responsibility.

I ask for and work for unity in a common purpose, and if you will do the same, together we can achieve it. We can work, even as many of our friends in the Democratic Party now work, to make the purposes of American politics consistent with the purpose of the American people, and never again to see the great force of American politics diverted to serve the singular interests of a single individual.

I have outlined only a few of the issues facing the nation today, and it seems clear to me that the state of the Carter presidency -- and its handling of these issues -- presents us with both an opportunity and a challenge. Many Americans are becoming disillusioned, and this does present an opportunity if we act responsibly. Certainly the fuzzy policies of the Administration challenge us, as well as millions of Democrats and Independents, to work together preparing for a change in 1980.