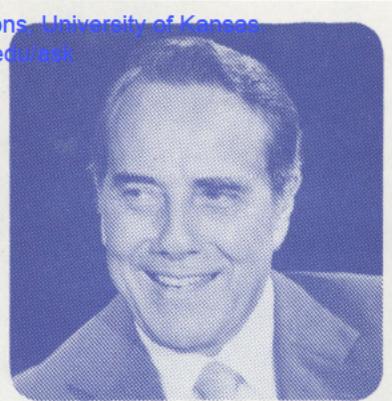


BOB DOLE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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STATEMENT OF SENATE MAJORITY LEADER BOB DOLE

DOLE: REHNQUIST ATTACKS "WON'T AMOUNT TO A HILL OF BEANS"

THE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE CONTINUES ITS HEARINGS TODAY ON THE NOMINATION OF ASSOCIATE JUSTICE WILLIAM REHNQUIST TO BE CHIEF JUSTICE OF THE SUPREME COURT. THIS NOMINATION IS IMPORTANT TO THE PRESIDENT AND IMPORTANT FOR THE COUNTRY, AND IT DESERVES PROMPT ACTION.

I HAD HOPED A SPIRIT OF BIPARTISANSHIP WOULD MARK THE SENATE'S REVIEW OF THE REHNQUIST NOMINATION. BUT ALREADY WE SEE SIGNS THAT SOME MEMBERS WOULD RATHER APPLY A POLITICAL LITMUS TEST TO EACH AND EVERY NOMINEE, INSTEAD OF AN OBJECTIVE REVIEW BASED ON THE MERITS. FORTUNATELY, THE PRESIDENT'S CANDIDATE IS SO WELL QUALIFIED THE ARGUMENTS WE HEARD YESTERDAY WON'T AMOUNT TO A HILL OF BEANS.

THERE IS NO DOUBT -- NO DOUBT AT ALL -- THAT ANY OBJECTIVE REVIEW OF THE CAREER OF JUSTICE REHNQUIST WILL LEAD TO HIS CONFIRMATION AS CHIEF JUSTICE BY AN OVERWHELMING VOTE.

UNDER THE CONSTITUTION, THE PRESIDENT IS EMPOWERED TO NOMINATE THE JUSTICES OF THE SUPREME COURT, BUT THE SENATE MUST GIVE ITS "ADVICE AND CONSENT" TO SUCH NOMINATIONS.

THAT IS A VERY SERIOUS OBLIGATION; IT IS NOT CAUSE FOR A GRAND JURY INVESTIGATION. IT IS NOT A LICENSE FOR A HUNTING EXPEDITION. IN THE SENATE, WE DO NOT "TRY" NOMINEES: WE GIVE THEM A FAIR AND IMPARTIAL HEARING.

I KNOW MY COLLEAGUES ARE AWARE OF THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES IN THIS REGARD. I AM TAKING THIS OPPORTUNITY TO RESTATE MY VIEW OF THOSE RESPONSIBILITIES ONLY BECAUSE THERE ARE SOME -- IN THE MEDIA, AND IN SOME PARTS OF THE POLITICAL ARENA -- WHO WOULD HAVE IT OTHERWISE.

THERE ARE SOME WHO WOULD JUDGE A MAN NOT BY HIS RECORD AND HIS ACCOMPLISHMENTS, BUT ON THE BASIS OF ASSOCIATIONS LONG-PAST AND UNSUBSTANTIATED HEARSAY.

IN THE RUSH TO PASS FINAL JUDGMENT -- IN ADVANCE OF THE FACTS -- THE INTENTION IS TO CLOUD THE RECORD SUFFICIENTLY WITH UNPROVEN ALLEGATIONS OF EVERY SORT THAT THE SENATE MIGHT HAVE SECOND THOUGHTS ABOUT A MAN WHO HAS SERVED HIS COUNTRY PROUDLY AND HONORABLY AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL: AND WHOSE RECORD AS A LEGAL SCHOLAR AND JUDICIAL THINKER IS NOT ONLY AN OPEN BOOK, BUT A MODEL FOR OTHERS TO FOLLOW.

I WOULD NEVER PRESUME A POLITICAL MOTIVE IN SUCH EFFORTS, BUT LET ME SAY THIS: WILLIAM REHNQUIST WILL BE OUR NEXT CHIEF JUSTICE, AND HE DESERVES TO BE. HE HAS A JUDICIAL PHILOSOPHY, ONE THAT PRESIDENT REAGAN AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE FIND VERY CONGENIAL. IN FACT, HE IS A REFLECTION OF MAINSTREAM AMERICA. HE HAS EARNED OUR RESPECT, AND OUR WHOLEHEARTED SUPPORT FOR HIS RIGHT TO BE JUDGED FAIRLY BY THE SENATE, AND NOT PREJUDGED BY THOSE WHO ARE DESPERATELY IN SEARCH OF AN ISSUE.

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