

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



(R - Kansas)

SH 141 Hart Building, Washington, D.C. 20510

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CONTACT: WALT RIKER,
DALE TATE 202/224-3135

STATEMENT OF SENATE MAJORITY LEADER BOB DOLE

REHNQUIST AND SCALIA

THIS MORNING THE SENATE BEGINS FINAL DELIBERATIONS ON THE PRESIDENT'S SUPREME COURT NOMINATIONS. HE HAS CHOSEN TWO MEN OF UNIMPEACHABLE CHARACTER AND CREDENTIALS TO SHOULDER THE TREMENDOUS RESPONSIBILITIES OF OUR NATION'S HIGHEST COURT.

THEY'VE ENDURED MICROSCOPIC INSPECTION IN THE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE. AND THEY'VE SEEN AND HEARD MORE THAN THEIR FAIR SHARE OF POLITICAL RHETORIC. BUT AS FAR AS THIS SENATOR IS CONCERNED, WILLIAM REHNQUIST AND ANTONIN SCALIA HAVE PASSED INSPECTION WITH FLYING COLORS.

SO, IN CASE THERE IS ANY DOUBT AT ALL -- OR IF THE CRITICS HARBOR ANY HOPES AT ALL -- LET ME SAY THIS LOUD AND CLEAR: JUSTICE REHNQUIST AND JUDGE SCALIA WILL BE CONFIRMED BY THE SENATE, AND THEY WILL BE CONFIRMED BY BIG NUMBERS.

GRAFFITI SMEAR

I AM AWARE OF THE LAST DITCH ATTEMPT BY SOME TO DERAIL WILLIAM REHNQUIST'S CONFIRMATION TO BE THE NEW CHIEF JUSTICE. IN TRUTH, HOWEVER, IT IS JUST ANOTHER ATTEMPT TO DEFACE A BRILLIANT CAREER WITH SPRAYPAINT GRAFFITI.

EVER SINCE THE PRESIDENT NOMINATED THESE TWO DEDICATED JURISTS, THE NEWSPAPERS, THE RADIO AND T.V. AND THE HALLS OF CONGRESS HAVE BEEN FILLED WITH ALL KINDS OF TECHNICAL LEGAL TALK. IT CAN BE CONFUSING AND ARCAIC FOR ANY OF US; AND CERTAINLY IT MAY NOT BE CLEAR TO MANY AMERICANS WHO ARE FOLLOWING THIS STORY. BUT IF YOU CUT THROUGH ALL THE 'LEGAL-ESE', THE CASE BOILS DOWN TO ONE SIMPLE FACT: THOSE WHO WOULD TORPEDO THESE NOMINATIONS ARE LIBERAL, AND THE PRESIDENT'S NOMINEES ARE CONSERVATIVE.

CARRYING OUT THE REAGAN MANDATE

BUT IT JUST SEEMS TO ME THAT THE PEOPLE VOTED FOR RONALD REAGAN BY LANDSLIDE PROPORTIONS IN 1980 AND 1984. AND THEY EXPECT THE PRESIDENT TO CARRY THEIR MANDATE ALL THE WAY TO THE SUPREME COURT. THAT MEANS THE COURT WILL BE A 'PEOPLE'S COURT', NOT A COURT FOR SPECIAL INTERESTS.

SALUTE TO THE CHAIRMAN

I WANT TO SALUTE THE CHAIRMAN OF THE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE, THE DISTINGUISHED SENIOR SENATOR FROM SOUTH CAROLINA, STROM THURMOND, FOR HIS SUPERB HANDLING OF THE PRESIDENT'S SUPREME COURT NOMINATIONS. HIS WORK IN THE COMMITTEE WAS EXEMPLARY: THE DELIBERATIONS MOVED QUICKLY, BUT NOT SO FAST AS TO DENY ANY MEMBER -- OR ANY POINT OF VIEW -- A FAIR CHANCE.

WE HAVE A TREMENDOUS AMOUNT OF WORK TO DO IN THE SENATE BEFORE WE ADJOURN ON OCTOBER THIRD. A SPEEDY RESOLUTION OF THE REHNQUIST AND SCALIA NOMINATIONS IS IN ORDER. THE ISSUE HAS BEEN MORE THAN EXPLORED BY COMMITTEE. IT IS TIME TO WRAP-UP THE SUPREME COURT FOR THE YEAR AND MOVE ON TO THE BUSINESS THAT AWAITS US.

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