

BOB DOLE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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STATEMENT OF SENATE MAJORITY LEADER BOB DOLE PRESIDENT'S VETO OF SOUTH AFRICA BILL

WHAT THE ISSUES ARE, AND ARE NOT

AS WE APPROACH THE VOTE ON THE PRESIDENT'S VETO OF THE SOUTH AFRICA BILL, I'M AFRAID THAT SOME OF US -- AND SOME IN THE MEDIA -- HAVE LOST SIGHT OF EXACTLY WHAT IT IS WE ARE REALLY VOTING ON, AND WHAT IT IS WE ARE NOT VOTING ON.

THIS IS NOT A VOTE FOR OR AGAINST APARTHEID. IF IT WAS, THE VOTE WOULD BE 100-0. WE ALL OPPOSE APARTHEID. AND THOUGH SOME OF US WILL VOTE ONE WAY AND SOME THE OTHER ON THE VETO QUESTION, I AM CONVINCED EACH ONE OF US SINCERELY BELIEVES THEIR OWN VOTE -- WHICHEVER WAY IT GOES -- IS THE BEST THING THEY CAN PERSONALLY DO, IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, TO SPEED THE END OF APARTHEID.

THIS IS NOT A VOTE ON THE QUESTION OF WHETHER THERE SHOULD BE SANCTIONS OR NOT. AN OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF US ON BOTH SIDES OF THE AISLE BELIEVE THE TIME HAS COME TO IMPOSE NEW SANCTIONS. ALTHOUGH I PERSONALLY SEE SANCTIONS AS A "LAST RESORT" FOREIGN POLICY TACTIC, I AM CONVINCED THAT WE ARE CLOSE TO THAT LAST RESORT SITUATION IN SOUTH AFRICA NOW AND SO DO NEED SOME SANCTIONS. THAT'S WHY I VOTED FOR THIS BILL IN THE FIRST PLACE.

AND, VERY CLEARLY, THE PRESIDENT HOLDS THAT VIEW, TOO. HE HAS ALREADY EXTENDED THE SANCTIONS WE HAVE HAD IN PLACE AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA. HE HAS CATEGORICALLY STATED HIS INTENTION TO PUT NEW SANCTIONS INTO EFFECT -- ALMOST THE SAME ONES AS THERE WERE IN THE BILL CRAFTED BY THE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE, UNDER SENATOR LUGAR'S LEADERSHIP.

SO, FOR ALMOST ALL OF US, AT LEAST, THIS IS NOT A DEBATE OR VOTE ABOUT WHETHER WE HAVE SANCTIONS.

THE REAL ISSUES HAVE BECOME OBSCURED

IN FACT, IF YOU STAND BACK AND LOOK AT IT, YOU HAVE TO WONDER WHAT THE SHARP DEBATE AND HARSH RHETORIC IS REALLY ALL ABOUT. THE PRESIDENT ABHORS AND CONDEMNS APARTHEID. IF ANYONE HERE DOUBTS THAT, THEY OUGHT TO STAND UP AND SAY SO. AND THAT'S JUST THE STANCE THE CONGRESS WANTS THE PRESIDENT TO TAKE.

THE PRESIDENT HAS IMPOSED SANCTIONS AND WILL IMPOSE TOUGHER ONES. AND THAT'S JUST WHAT THE CONGRESS WANTS THE PRESIDENT TO DO.

THE PRESIDENT IS PREPARED TO UNDERTAKE NEW DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVES -- TO DIALOGUE WITH THE FRONT LINE STATES, TO REACH OUT TO OPPOSITION BLACKS INSIDE AND OUTSIDE SOUTH AFRICA, TO HELP ALL ELEMENTS OF THE POLITICAL SCENE OF SOUTH AFRICA GET TOGETHER TO WORK OUT A RAPID, PEACEFUL TRANSITION TO A POST-APARTHEID SOCIETY. AND THAT IS JUST WHAT THE CONGRESS WANTS THE PRESIDENT TO DO.

THE PRESIDENT IS PREPARED TO RETHINK, REDIRECT AND REINVIGORATE AMERICAN POLICY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA. AND THAT IS EXACTLY WHAT THE CONGRESS WANTS THE PRESIDENT TO DO.

THE PRESIDENT, FINALLY, WANTS TO DO ALL OF THIS IN COOPERATION WITH -- NOT IN DEFIANCE OF -- THE CONGRESS. HE HAS REACHED OUT TO US AND ASKED US TO JOIN HIM IN JOINT EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE THE GOALS WE ALL SHARE IN SOUTH AFRICA.

THAT IS THE CLEAR MESSAGE OF HIS LETTER TO ME, WHICH I THINK ALL SENATORS HAVE SEEN. THAT IS THE MESSAGE IN HIS VETO STATEMENT. AND, IN FACT, WHETHER YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT SOUTH AFRICA OR ANY OTHER ISSUE INVOLVING OUR NATIONAL SECURITY, THAT IS THE MESSAGE OF HIS ENTIRE PRESIDENCY.

AND -- WHILE SOME OF THE DEBATE WE'VE HEARD MIGHT RAISE SOME DOUBTS ABOUT THIS -- ALL OF THIS IS WHAT I HOPE THE MAJORITY OF CONGRESS WANTS THE PRESIDENT TO DO -- WORK WITH US, NOT AT ODDS.

CAN CONGRESS ACT EFFECTIVELY ALONE?

NOW WE WILL FIND OUT IF THE CONGRESS RESPONDS POSITIVELY TO THE PRESIDENT'S APPEAL TO WORK COOPERATIVELY TOGETHER -- OR WHETHER THE CONGRESS IS DETERMINED TO STRIKE OUT, IRRETRIEVABLY, ON ITS OWN.

IS THAT THE WAY TO SEND A CLEAR, STRONG MESSAGE TO SOUTH AFRICA -- FOR CONGRESS TO GO IT ALONE? CAN CONGRESS DO THAT WITHOUT THE PRESIDENT? MAYBE. BUT CERTAINLY WE CAN SEND A STRONGER MESSAGE WITH HIM.

IF WE STRIKE OUT ON OUR OWN, IS THAT THE WAY TO COME UP WITH A SOUTH AFRICA POLICY THAT IS COHERENT, COMPREHENSIVE, SUSTAINABLE -- AND LET ME STRESS THAT LAST POINT: SUSTAINABLE OVER THE LONG TERM? CAN CONGRESS DO THAT ON ITS OWN? I DON'T THINK SO.

THE CONGRESS IS EQUIPPED, I GUESS, TO DECIDE IF WE WANT SANCTIONS. BUT ARE WE ALL GOING TO BE AROUND HERE, READY TO DO WHAT IS NECESSARY, WHEN THOSE SANCTIONS STRIKE HOME -- AND STRIKE HOME MOST FORCEFULLY AGAINST THE VERY BLACKS WHOSE FORTUNES WE ALL CLAIM TO CHAMPION? ARE WE ALL GOING TO BE AROUND TO DEAL WITH THE BACKLASH AGAINST THE BLACK FRONT LINE STATES, WHO ARE GOING TO BEAR THE BRUNT OF SOUTH AFRICA'S RETALIATION AGAINST US? ARE WE GOING TO BE READY TO SPEND MORE MONEY TO HELP OUR OWN COUNTRYMEN -- OUR FARMERS, OUR BUSINESSMEN, OUR UNEMPLOYED -- WHO ARE GOING TO SUFFER DIRECTLY FROM THE SANCTIONS WE IMPOSE OR FROM THE SOUTH AFRICAN RETALIATION FOR THE SANCTIONS?

OR WILL THE PROBLEMS JUST BE DUMPED ON THE PRESIDENT LATER?

ARE WE ALL GOING TO BE HERE TO TAKE CARE OF THOSE PROBLEMS WE'VE CREATED? OR ARE WE GOING TO TURN THOSE BURDENS OVER TO THE PRESIDENT -- TELL HIM TO FIGURE OUT SOME WAY TO HELP THE BLACKS IN SOUTH AFRICA WHO LOSE THEIR JOBS WHEN AMERICAN COMPANIES WITHDRAW; TELL HIM TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO DEAL WITH THE ECONOMIC CRISIS IN MOZAMBIQUE, AND ZIMBABWE, AND BOTSWANA AND THE OTHER STATES WHO CAN BE CUT OFF AT THE KNEES BY SOUTH AFRICA; TELL HIM TO FIND MONEY SOMEWHERE -- WE'RE NOT GOING TO APPROPRIATE ANYMORE, OF COURSE -- TO HELP AMERICAN BUSINESSES THAT ARE HURTING, AMERICAN WORKERS WITHOUT JOBS, AMERICAN FARMERS WHO CAN'T EVEN GIVE AWAY THEIR GRAIN.

ARE WE GOING TO BE TAKING CARE OF THOSE PROBLEMS? NO. WE'RE ALL GOING TO BE OUT TELLING OUR CONSTITUENTS WHAT A TOUGH STAND WE TOOK AGAINST APARTHEID.

CONGRESS CAN'T MAKE AND IMPLEMENT FOREIGN POLICY WITHOUT THE PRESIDENT, PERIOD. ONLY THE PRESIDENT HAS THE RESOURCES, THE ABILITY TO MAKE QUICK DECISIONS AND -- LET'S NOT FORGET THIS SMALL POINT -- THE CONSTITUTIONAL MANDATE TO DO THE JOB.

A UNITED AMERICA CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

THE UNITED STATES IS NOT GOING TO END APARTHEID. BUT WE CAN HELP.

WE CAN HELP IF WE TAKE A STRONG POSITION AGAINST APARTHEID, IF WE BACK IT UP WITH STRONG ACTION -- AND IF WE STAND TOGETHER. IF WE DO LESS THAN THIS, THEN WE END UP DOING VERY LITTLE, IF ANYTHING.

SO, FINALLY, THAT'S OUR CHOICE. DO WE WANT TO DO SOMETHING EFFECTIVE AGAINST APARTHEID, WITH THE PRESIDENT? OR DO WE JUST WANT TO DO SOMETHING, ANYTHING, SO WE CAN SAY WE DID?

THAT'S WHAT THIS VOTE IS REALLY ALL ABOUT. THAT'S WHY I AM GOING TO VOTE TO SUSTAIN THE PRESIDENT'S VETO.

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