

## News from Senator

# BOB DOLE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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### APRIL 14 -- AN ANNIVERSARY SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER BOB DOLE

EVERYONE HAS CALENDAR DATES THAT MARK IMPORTANT EVENTS IN THEIR LIVES. WELL, TODAY IS ONE OF MINE. ON AN ITALIAN BATTLEFIELD 43 YEARS AGO -- APRIL 14, 1945 -- MY LIFE CHANGED FOREVER.

#### OPERATION CRAFTSMAN

43 YEARS AGO, I WAS A YOUNG SECOND-LIEUTENANT IN THE TENTH MOUNTAIN DIVISION, LEADING A PLATOON OF SOLDIERS AGAINST SOME HEAVILY-ENTRENCHED GERMAN FORCES. IT WAS BUT ONE SMALL STORY IN A LARGE-SCALE ALLIED OFFENSIVE CALLED "OPERATION CRAFTSMAN". WE WERE SUPPOSEDLY DRIVING THE NAZIS BACK TO BERLIN THROUGH "THE SOFT UNDERBELLY" OF EUROPE, BUT THOSE OF US WHO HAD BEEN FIGHTING THROUGH THE MUD AND THE MOUNTAINS KNEW FIRSTHAND THAT THE ITALIAN "UNDERBELLY" WAS ANYTHING BUT SOFT.

MY PLATOON WAS PINNED DOWN BY FIERCE ENEMY FIRE. AHEAD LAY A DEADLY MINEFIELD. ALL AROUND ME, MEN WERE GOING DOWN. I TRIED TO BRING ONE OF THEM BACK TO THE SAFETY OF A FOXHOLE. IN DOING SO, I TOO BECAME A CASUALTY.

#### AN ANNIVERSARY FOR REVIEW

NOW, MR. PRESIDENT, I AM NOT HERE TODAY TO TELL OLD WAR STORIES. WHAT HAPPENED TO ME 43 YEARS AGO TODAY IS NOT NEARLY AS IMPORTANT AS WHAT HAS HAPPENED SINCE.

AS A DISABLED AMERICAN -- AND THERE ARE 37 MILLION OF US -- I CHOOSE TO USE THIS ANNIVERSARY TO REVIEW HOW FAR THIS COUNTRY HAS COME WITH RESPECT TO THE LIVES OF THE DISABLED -- AND HOW FAR IT HAS TO GO.

MR. PRESIDENT, ON THIS DATE FIVE YEARS AGO I STOOD BEFORE THIS BODY AND ANNOUNCED THE FORMATION OF A FOUNDATION DEDICATED TO EXPANDING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES.

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## THE DOLE FOUNDATION

A FEW YEARS AGO, THE DOLE FOUNDATION WAS JUST AN IDEA. AN IDEA BORN OUT OF THE REHABILITATION OF ONE MAN AND THE SUPPORT HE RECEIVED FROM HIS HOMETOWN OF RUSSELL, KANSAS. BUT ONE FOUNDATION CAN'T DO IT ALONE. I WOULD LIKE TO BELIEVE THAT AMERICA STANDS ON THE BRINK OF A NEW FRONTIER. A FRONTIER WHERE DISABLED INDIVIDUALS WILL BE JUDGED NOT BY THEIR DISABILITIES BUT BY THEIR ABILITIES.

UNFORTUNATELY, 67 PERCENT OF WORKING-AGE PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES WHO WANT TO WORK CANNOT FIND EMPLOYMENT. IN AMERICA TODAY, 25 PERCENT OF ALL OF OUR UNEMPLOYED ARE DISABLED. ONLY ONE DISABLED WOMAN IN FIVE WORKS, AND 82 PERCENT OF BLACK DISABLED AMERICANS ARE UNEMPLOYED.

THE DOLE FOUNDATION FOR EMPLOYMENT OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IS WORKING TO CHANGE THOSE STATISTICS. IN ITS SHORT HISTORY, THE DOLE FOUNDATION HAS AWARDED 75 GRANTS TOTALING \$2 MILLION TO GRASSROOTS NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS ALL OVER AMERICA. THESE LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS PROVIDE JOB TRAINING AND JOB PLACEMENT TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES.

## OPPORTUNITIES, NOT HANDOUTS

IN FACT, THE DOLE FOUNDATION IS THE ONLY FOUNDATION IN AMERICA THAT IS SOLELY DEDICATED TO THE ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE OF PEOPLE WITH ALL TYPES OF DISABILITIES. I AM PROUD TO SAY THAT THE DOLE FOUNDATION IS THE NATIONAL LEADER IN PROVIDING GRANTS TO ORGANIZATIONS THAT TRAIN AND PLACE PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN JOBS.

MR. PRESIDENT. I AM CONVINCED THAT THE VAST MAJORITY OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES DON'T WANT HANDOUTS. THEY WANT THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK, TO TAKE CARE OF THEIR FAMILIES, AND TO PURSUE THE AMERICAN DREAM. BUT BARRIERS STILL PREVENT THEM FROM REACHING THAT GOAL. SADLY, MANY OF THESE OBSTACLES ONLY EXIST IN THE MINDS OF THOSE WHO ARE NOT DISABLED.

## REAFFIRMING THE COMMITMENT

WITH THE PASSAGE OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973, CONGRESS STATED LOUD AND CLEAR THAT PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES MUST HAVE AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE IN OUR SOCIETY. THIS YEAR WE REAFFIRMED THAT COMMITMENT WITH THE OVERWHELMING PASSAGE OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS RESTORATION ACT. I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN COMMITTED TO ENSURING THE RIGHTS OF THE DISABLED: I HAVE NOT -- AND WILL NOT -- VEER FROM THIS COMMITMENT.

WE NEED NEW INITIATIVES IN THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR TO HELP CREATE NEW EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND TO ELIMINATE AGE-OLD DISINCENTIVES.

## TRANSPORTATION

THE LACK OF ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION REMAINS A MAJOR CONCERN FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES. IN THE 99TH CONGRESS I INTRODUCED THE AIR CARRIER ACCESS ACT WHICH LATER BECAME LAW. THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION SHOULD BE ISSUING ITS RULES AND REGULATIONS WITHIN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS.

I LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING PROVISIONS THAT WILL FINALLY ELIMINATE DISCRIMINATION AGAINST PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND WILL ALSO END THE MISTREATMENT OF THE DISABLED BY SOME AIR CARRIERS.

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URBAN MASS TRANSIT IS ANOTHER AREA THAT MUST BE ADDRESSED. WHILE THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION HAS ISSUED NEW REGULATIONS TO MASS TRANSIT SYSTEMS, MANY TRANSIT AUTHORITIES ARE STILL NOT PROVIDING SERVICE THAT ALLOWS PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES TO GET TO WORK.

#### HOUSING

WHILE AFFORDABLE AND APPROPRIATE HOUSING IS A MAJOR CONCERN FOR MILLIONS OF AMERICANS, THE SITUATION IS EVEN WORSE FOR THE DISABLED. EVEN IF YOU ARE SELF-SUFFICIENT AND CAN AFFORD A HOUSE, IT'S ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE DISABLED TO FIND ONE THAT IS ACCESSIBLE. THE FAIR HOUSING BILL IS NOW IN THE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE WITH PROVISIONS THAT INCLUDE PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES. I THINK IT'S ABOUT TIME THAT THEY ARE COVERED UNDER THIS LEGISLATION.

#### VOTING

THIS YEAR AMERICAN CITIZENS CAN ONCE AGAIN EXERCISE THEIR FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS BY VOTING IN THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION. YET FOR MANY YEARS AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES WERE KEPT FROM VOTING BECAUSE REGISTRATION AND POLLING PLACES WERE INACCESSIBLE. I WAS PROUD TO BE AN ORIGINAL COSPONSOR OF THE "VOTING ACCESSIBILITY FOR THE ELDERLY AND HANDICAPPED ACT OF 1984" AND HOPE THAT IT TURNS OUT TO BE LANDMARK LEGISLATION. I EXPECT TO SEE RECORD NUMBERS OF THE DISABLED VOTE THIS YEAR.

#### CHANGE THE FUTURE

NO DOUBT ABOUT IT, DISABLED AMERICANS WILL BE HEARD FROM IN THE 1988 ELECTIONS. I URGE THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES FROM BOTH PARTIES TO LISTEN TO THEM AND TO REACH OUT TO THEM AS I TRIED TO DO THROUGHOUT MY CAMPAIGN.

APRIL 14, 1945 WAS A LONG TIME AGO. I CAN'T CHANGE THE PAST. BUT WORKING TOGETHER, I BELIEVE WE CAN CHANGE THE FUTURE FOR MILLIONS OF DISABLED AMERICANS.

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