



NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

(R.—Kans.)

New Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510 (202) 224-6521

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CONTACT: JANET ANDERSON

DOLE DISCUSSES GOVERNMENT REORGANIZATION AND PAY RAISE

WASHINGTON, D.C.--Following are excerpts from remarks Senator Bob Dole delivered today at a luncheon meeting of the District of Columbia League of Republican Women:

On government reorganization, the President has his work cut out for him. I join with a number of my Republican colleagues in wishing him well. We have worked for government reorganization the last eight years, only to have our effort scuttled by Congressional Democrats who hold the key to reorganization.

President Carter has asked Congress for broad authority to reorganize the federal bureaucracy. Perhaps the authority he has requested is too broad. In the end, the true test of his ability to reorganize will be his capacity to work with and gain the support of the Democratic leaders in Congress whose bureaucratic fiefdoms he will be tearing down. Broad authority, or a more limited authority, it makes no difference. The question is: are the Democrats in both the executive and legislative branches really ready to bite the bullet on government reorganization? Is President Carter going to be able to assume the leadership role necessary to obtain both Congressional and public support for a reorganization effort, that must, if it is to be effective, abolish and consolidate programs, agencies and federal jobs?

I would make three suggestions in the area of government reorganization. First, if we're going to reform and reorganize government, let's do it from the top down. Let's analyze each and every need and each and every program with an eye to efficiency and cost savings. Nothing can be sacred. Nothing can escape the careful scrutiny all programs need and deserve. I have heard too much talk about reshuffling bureaucracy, retitling positions, and abolishing advisory councils and commissions.

This is all fine. But we also must take a look at unifying the big money programs. That's where the savings will occur. If federal jobs will be lost, so be it. Our goal is the efficient expenditure of tax dollars and nothing else.

Secondly, I feel it is essential that President Carter work with Congress in the reorganization effort. For meaningful reorganizations to occur, many laws will have to be changed. Congress will have to cooperate. And Congress should be made an early partner in the reorganization effort.

Thirdly, the savings realized through reorganization should be passed along to the taxpayer in the form of future permanent tax cuts. This will ensure broad public support for the program, support that will be needed to get Congress to act. In Georgia, President Carter's government reorganization brought about a savings in the sense that more money went into government services at the constituent level and less to administration and overhead. This is fine, but I feel we should make the fruit of reorganization tangible by actually reducing the cost of government and returning these savings directly to the American people in the form of lower taxes.

And speaking of fiscal responsibility, let me say a word about the proposed pay raise for Members of Congress and high Executive officials. I am against the current proposal, not because no one deserves a raise but because there are some who do not. Before we offer blanket increases, I feel a complete review of the entire federal pay structure should be undertaken.

As it now stands, the proposed pay raises will become effective February 20. The Senate failed in its effort to vote down the pay increase. The House has the issue bottled up in Committee so that it can't come to the floor before the Lincoln Day recess. So it appears the pay raise will go into effect unless a drastic action is taken.

As a Member of Congress, I guess I should be grateful. But I just don't see how we are going to be credible arguing against the price increases by the steel companies, and the wage demands of organized labor if we have just approved a 29% pay increase for ourselves.

Last December, I urged President Ford not to include the salary increase in his budget recommendation. I am today urging President Carter to rescind that budget request or, in the alternative, work with the majority in Congress to defeat it. A new recommendation could then be submitted in a later budget recommendation which reflects the salary adjustments needed in some positions, and also the need for fiscal responsibility.