

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



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DOLE FLOOR STATEMENT BLASTS CAFETERIA PLAN OF BUDGETING

"TODAY I WOULD LIKE TO DISCUSS THE 1988 BUDGET JUST APPROVED BY THE SENATE BUDGET COMMITTEE. UNFORTUNATELY, I CAN'T DECIDE WHICH OF THE FOUR TO TALK ABOUT.

I'VE BEEN AROUND HERE SINCE WE BEGAN THE CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET PROCESS IN THE MID 1970'S. AND THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I CAN REMEMBER WHEN THE SENATE WILL BE TREATED, AT THE OUTSET, TO THE CAFETERIA PLAN OF BUDGETING.

THE SO-CALLED CHILES PLAN, WHICH I THINK WE CAN ASSUME IS THE COMMITTEE'S "REAL" BUDGET DOES NOT PROVIDE ADEQUATE FUNDS FOR DEFENSE AND CALLS FOR \$18.5 BILLION IN ADDITIONAL REVENUES. THE OTHER THREE CHOICES INCLUDE THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET, ONE THAT MAKES DEEP AND SWEEPING CUTS IN DOMESTIC PROGRAMS, AND A THIRD THAT RELIES SO HEAVILY ON NEW TAXES THAT EVEN THE MOST ARDENT "TAX-AND-SPENDERS" WOULD HAVE TROUBLE SUPPORTING IT.

WE ALL KNOW THE SENATE WILL NOT ACCEPT, AND NEITHER WILL THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, A BUDGET THAT DOES NOT PROVIDE ADEQUATELY FOR OUR COUNTRY'S SECURITY. AND NO ONE, NO ONE, IS GOING TO STAND BY AND ALLOW US TO BREAK THE COMPACT WE MADE LAST YEAR WITH TAXPAYERS TO SIMULTANEOUSLY TAKE AWAY TAX BREAKS AND LOWER TAX RATES. THERE MAY BE WAYS TO FIND SOME REVENUES -- BY CLOSING LOOPHOLES, OR USER FEES, OR ASSET SALES -- BUT TOUCHING THE RATES IS VERBOTEN.

IT SEEMS TO ME WHAT THE SENATE HAS AWAITING IT AFTER THE EASTER RECESS IS A PRESCRIPTION FOR ONE OF TWO THINGS: BUDGET CHAOS OR BUDGET PARALYSIS. IF WE ACTUALLY BEGIN CONSIDERATION OF THE 1988 BUDGET WITH FOUR BUDGETS BEFORE US -- PROBABLY NONE OF WHICH CAN MUSTER A MAJORITY OF VOTES -- WE MAY AS WELL STAY HOME, OR DEBATE SOMETHING ELSE.

IT'S TIME TO GET THIS PROCESS MOVING -- BUT MOVING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY CONGRESS WILL DEAL WITH THE DEFICIT THIS YEAR -- AND THAT IS FOR REPUBLICANS AND DEMOCRATS TO JOIN TOGETHER WITH THE PRESIDENT, TO FORGE A REASONABLE, WORKABLE BUDGET PLAN -- A PLAN THAT FOCUSES ON SPENDING CUTS -- DOMESTIC AS WELL AS DEFENSE -- COUPLED WITH REVENUE INCREASES SIMILAR TO THOSE IN THE PRESIDENT'S OWN BUDGET.

AT THE SAME TIME WE NEED TO BEGIN FOCUSING ON WAYS TO PUT SOME SANITY INTO THE BUDGET PROCESS -- MAKE IT RATIONAL AND MEANINGFUL. THE BUDGET PROCESS REFORM PACKAGE DEVELOPED BY SENATOR DOMENICI PROVIDES AN EXCELLENT GUIDELINE.

IF WE JOIN TOGETHER -- WE JUST MIGHT SUCCEED. WE JUST MIGHT KEEP THIS ECONOMIC RECOVERY GOING, AND AT THE SAME TIME KEEP OUR PLEDGE TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE TO BALANCE THE BUDGET IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS."

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