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U. S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS



NEWS

FROM:

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BOEING COMPANY

WASHINGTON - SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER BOB DOLE (R-KS) ISSUED THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT TODAY ON THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BOEING COMPANY, WICHITA:

TODAY, IS BOEING'S 75TH ANNIVERSARY, A REMARKABLE SUCCESS STORY IN WHICH KANSAS HAS PROUDLY PLAYED A MAJOR ROLE. WHILE THE SEATTLE-BASED AEROSPACE GIANT BECAME FAMOUS FOR ITS UNRIVALED PRODUCTION OF COMMERCIAL AIRCRAFT, IT IS BOEING'S WICHITA PLANT THAT LED THE WAY WHEN IT CAME TIME TO ROLL OUT AMERICA'S AIRBORNE ARSENAL OF DEMOCRACY.

THE SUPERB WICHITA WORK FORCE HAS BUILT MORE THAN 15,000 AIRCRAFT DURING THE PAST 50 YEARS, MANY OF THEM DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR DEFEATING THE FORCES OF TYRANNY AROUND THE GLOBE. FOR MOST OF THE 20TH CENTURY, THE WORST LETTER IN THE ALPHABET FOR AMERICA'S ENEMIES HAS BEEN THE LETTER "B" -- AS IN B-17, B-29, AND B-52.

WHEN AMERICA WENT TO WAR IN 1941, MOST OF OUR YOUNG PILOTS LEARNED TO FLY IN BI-PLANE TRAINERS BUILT IN WICHITA. LATER, THESE SAME PILOTS WOULD BE TAKING OFF FROM AIR BASES IN EVERY CORNER OF THE WORLD, FLYING THE FAMOUS BOEING BOMBERS THAT HELPED WIN THE WAR IN EUROPE AND THE PACIFIC. BY THE END OF WORLD WAR II, WICHITA WAS CRANKING OUT MORE THAN FOUR BOMBERS A DAY, SETTING SKY-HIGH STANDARDS FOR PRODUCTION EFFICIENCY.

BUT THE END OF THE WAR DID NOT SIGNAL THE END OF WICHITA'S FRONT LINE DEFENSE ROLE. BY THE EARLY 1950'S, THERE WERE DISTURBING NEW CHALLENGES -- KOREA, THE COLD WAR, AND THE GROWING SOVIET THREAT. THE MEN AND WOMEN ON BOEING'S PRODUCTION LINE IN WICHITA RESPONDED BY TOOLING UP TO BUILD THE B-47 BOMBER, AMERICA'S FIRST STRATEGIC JET BOMBER. TWO YEARS LATER IT LAUNCHED AN HISTORIC NEW PROJECT, THE B-52, THE MIGHTY BACKBONE OF OUR AIRBORNE STRATEGIC DETERRENT -- THEN AND NOW.

WHEN AMERICA HAD TO GO TO WAR IN THE PERSIAN GULF, THE GOOD WORK AT WICHITA'S BOEING PLANT AGAIN PAID BIG DIVIDENDS AS THE B-52 AND THE KC-135 TANKER BECAME REAL HEAVYWEIGHTS IN THE SMASHING ALLIED VICTORY OVER SADDAM HUSSEIN'S VAUNTED MILITARY MACHINE. THE KC-135, THANKS TO AN AMBITIOUS 5-YEAR MODERNIZATION PROGRAM IN WICHITA, BECAME THE MIDDLE EASTERN BACKBONE FOR HISTORY'S GREATEST DISPLAY OF AIR POWER, KEEPING OUR FIGHTERS IN THE AIR, AND IN SADDAM'S FACE, 24 HOURS-A-DAY.

MEANWHILE, THERE HAS BEEN PLENTY OF TOP-NOTCH COMMERCIAL JETLINER WORK ALSO GOING ON IN THE AIR CAPITAL. IN FACT, BOEING OF WICHITA RECENTLY COMPLETED WORK ON A VERY SPECIAL 747 -- IT'S CALLED AIR FORCE ONE.

KANSAS IS PROUD OF ITS STATUS AS HEADQUARTERS TO AMERICA'S AIRCRAFT INDUSTRY AND THE THOUSANDS OF HIGHLY-SKILLED WORKERS WHO GET THE JOB DONE DAY AFTER DAY -- YEAR AFTER YEAR -- BUILDING EVERYTHING FROM PRIVATE PLANES TO HIGH-TECH BOMBERS.

IN BOTH PEACE AND WAR, BOEING AND KANSAS HAVE BEEN A WINNING COMBINATION. ON BOEING'S 75TH ANNIVERSARY, I KNOW ALL MY COLLEAGUES JOIN ME TODAY IN SAYING THANKS FOR A JOB WELL DONE -- KEEP FLYING HIGH.

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