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NEWS

U. S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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MID-EAST PEACE TALKS

DOLE/MITCHELL RESOLUTION SUPPORTS PRESIDENT BUSH'S ROLE IN MADRID CONFERENCE

PRESIDENT BUSH WILL DEPART SHORTLY ON ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT JOURNEYS OF HIS PRESIDENCY. FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MANY YEARS, THERE IS A REAL PROSPECT FOR REAL PROGRESS TOWARD A COMPREHENSIVE MIDDLE EAST PEACE.

PRESIDENT BUSH'S PRESENCE IN MADRID REFLECTS THE FACT THAT THERE ARE HIGH STAKES ON THE LINE, NOT ONLY FOR THE MIDDLE EAST, BUT FOR AMERICA. WITH THE SANDS OF DESERT STORM STILL SETTLING, NONE OF US NEEDS ANY REMINDER THE IMPORTANCE OF AMERICA'S INTERESTS IN THAT REGION.

THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT PRESIDENT BUSH AND SECRETARY BAKER DESERVE THE LION'S SHARE OF THE CREDIT FOR MAKING THE MADRID TALKS A REALITY. UNDER THE PRESIDENT'S LEADERSHIP, AND WITH THE TIRELESS EFFORTS OF THE SECRETARY, AMERICAN DIPLOMACY HAS BEEN CREATIVE, DETERMINED AND PATIENT. ANY OTHER KIND OF DIPLOMACY WOULD HAVE FAILED -- AS SO MANY PAST ATTEMPTS TO GET TO THIS STAGE HAVE FAILED.

THIS IS NOT GOING TO BE AN EASY CONFERENCE. IT IS ONLY THE BEGINNING OF A PEACE PROCESS THAT, WITHOUT QUESTION, IS GOING TO EVOLVE OVER A LONG TIME. THIS IS LIKELY TO BE A DIPLOMATIC AND POLITICAL MARATHON -- NOT A SWIFT SPRINT. THERE ARE LIKELY TO BE MANY BUMPS IN THE ROAD. BUT THIS IS A VERY IMPORTANT BEGINNING.

IN HIS INAUGURAL ADDRESS, FORMER PRESIDENT KENNEDY QUOTED A CHINESE PROVERB THAT IS MOST APPROPRIATE HERE: "THE LONGEST JOURNEY BEGINS WITH THE FIRST STEP." IN MADRID, THE MIDDLE EAST TAKES A CRITICAL FIRST STEP ON THE ROAD TO PEACE.

I WOULD ALSO NOTE, AS THE RESOLUTION DOES, THAT PRESIDENT BUSH WILL USE THE OCCASION OF HIS MADRID VISIT FOR FURTHER TALKS WITH SOVIET PRESIDENT GORBACHEV. THERE WILL BE MANY MATTERS ON THEIR MUTUAL AGENDA -- INCLUDING FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSIONS ON THE PRESIDENT'S RECENT AND BOLD ARMS REDUCTION PROPOSAL, THE POSSIBILITY OF ADDITIONAL U.S. OR OTHER WESTERN ASSISTANCE TO HELP THE SOVIETS THROUGH THIS WINTER, AND THE CONTROL OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN THE SOVIET ARSENAL. SO THOSE TALKS, TOO, WILL BE VERY IMPORTANT TO AMERICA.

I HOPE AND EXPECT THAT THE CONGRESS WILL STRONGLY BACK THE PRESIDENT IN BOTH OF THESE ENDEAVORS -- THE MIDDLE EAST TALKS, AND IN OUR CHANGING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SOVIET UNION AND ITS CONSTITUENT REPUBLICS. HE DESERVES THAT BACKING, AND HE NEEDS IT.

SO I HOPE ALL SENATORS WILL JOIN THE MAJORITY LEADER AND I IN VOTING FOR THIS RESOLUTION, IN SENDING THE PRESIDENT OFFER WITH OUR UNANIMOUS BEST WISHES, AND IN BACKING HIM IN THESE IMPORTANT ENDEAVORS.

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