

*Kans. Builders Forum  
Hutch  
Sept 6, 1968*

REMARKS OF CONGRESSMAN BOB DOLE

-POLITICS: YOUR BUSINESS-

TODAY I'D LIKE TO DISCUSS THE FUTURE OF FREEDOM  
-- AND OUR ROLE IN THAT FUTURE.

IT IS AN ALL TOO COMMON OCCURRENCE THESE DAYS TO HEAR  
A FRIEND OF NEIGHBOR EXPRESS FEELINGS OF GLOOM AND  
PESSIMISM WHEN THE SUBJECT COMES UP. AND, ADMITTEDLY,  
THE DAILY PAPERS PROVIDE A LOT OF FUEL FOR ANYONE WHO  
HAS DOUBTS ABOUT THE STATE OF THE UNION TODAY.

NOW I CONSIDER MYSELF A CONSERVATIVE, TO USE A  
COMMON BUT AN OFTEN ABUSED LABEL. AND FOR ANYONE WHO  
BELIEVES IN CONSERVATIVE, RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT, IT'S  
OBVIOUS THAT THE SITUATION IS SERIOUS. BUT I DRAW A  
SHARP LINE BETWEEN BEING A CONSERVATIVE AND BEING A  
PESSIMIST. THERE ARE A NUMBER OF REASONS WHY.

IN THE FIRST PLACE, FROM A POLITICAL POINT OF VIEW, THE 1966 ELECTIONS ACHIEVED SOME VERY ENCOURAGING RESULTS. ALL OVER THE COUNTRY, IN A SWEEP THAT OVERCAME REGIONAL DIFFERENCES AND INGRAINED TRADITIONS, THE AMERICAN PEOPLE CAST A RESOUNDING VOTE FOR STABLE, RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP. I WAS IN A POSITION TO SEE THIS FIRST HAND. AS A MEMBER OF BOTH THE 89TH AND 90TH CONGRESSES, I WITNESSED THE CHANGE THAT CAME OVER THIS BODY AFTER THE 1966 ELECTIONS. I SAW AN INFLUX OF VITAL, RESPONSIBLE AND ENERGETIC "NEW FACES". AND, AT A TIME WHEN THE COUNTRY WAS BESET WITH TREMENDOUS PROBLEMS NATIONALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY, I CAN ASSUME YOU THAT THE REINFORCEMENTS WERE MOST WELCOME.

THE INDICATIONS ARE THAT AGAIN THIS YEAR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WILL OPT FOR BETTER, MORE EFFECTIVE GOVERNMENT THIS NOVEMBER WHEN THEY ELECT THEIR PRESIDENT AND REPRESENTATIVES.

THIS IS WHERE YOU COME IN.

-POLITICS AND PARTICIPATION-

THE VERY BASIS OF OUR NATION IS SUPPOSED TO BE THE PRINCIPLE OF SELF-GOVERNMENT. JUST WHAT DOES SELF-GOVERNMENT MEAN? TO ME, IT MEANS INDIVIDUAL, PERSONAL PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL ACTION AT ALL LEVELS -- AN IDEAL WITH WHICH I'M SURE YOU'LL ALL AGREE. BUT HOW MANY OF YOU CAN HONESTLY SAY THAT YOU, INDIVIDUALLY, HAVE DONE EVERYTHING YOU CAN TO PARTICIPATE IN POLITICAL ACTION?

IN TOO MANY CASES, MY EXPERIENCE IS THAT MANY MORE PEOPLE WILL APPLAUD SELF-GOVERNMENT IN PRINCIPLE THAN WILL PRACTICE THE PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT THAT MAKES THE SYSTEM WORK.



- THE FORGOTTEN AMERICAN -

A LOT HAS BEEN WRITTEN AND SPOKEN ABOUT THE "FORGOTTEN AMERICAN".  
I'M NOT TALKING ONLY ABOUT THE "POOR AMERICAN" -- HE'S PRETTY WELL  
ORGANIZED NOW.

I'M NOT TALKING ABOUT THE CRIMINAL MINORITY OF AMERICANS -- THEY  
SEEM TO HAVE MORE THAN THEIR SHARE OF APOLOGISTS TODAY, AND, IF THE GOING  
EVER DOES GET ROUGH, THEY CAN ALWAYS COUNT ON ANOTHER FAVORABLE SUPREME  
COURT DECISION TO TAKE THE HEAT OFF.

I'M NOT TALKING ABOUT THE BIG CITY LABORER. TODAY'S UNION MAN HAS  
TO "PARTICIPATE" IN POLITICS WHETHER HE LIKES IT OR NOT. PART OF HIS  
DUES GO INTO MASSIVE POLITICAL SLUSH FUNDS CONTROLLED BY HIS UNION BOSSES.

NO, THE FORGOTTEN AMERICAN I'M TALKING ABOUT IS THE SOLID, MIDDLE CLASS TAXPAYER WHO, FOR THE PAST 30 YEARS, HAS BEEN QUIETLY SITTING ON THE SIDELINES WHILE THE BIG PARADE, BILLED SUCCESSIVELY AS THE NEW DEAL, THE FAIR DEAL, THE NEW FRONTIER AND THE GREAT SOCIETY PASSED BY HIM. AND THE IRONY OF IT ALL IS THAT THIS FORGOTTEN AMERICAN IS THE FELLOW WHO HAS BEEN PAYING MOST OF THE BILLS FOR THE BIG PARADE!

A FEW STATISTICS GIVE THE SITUATION IN A NUTSHELL:

BETWEEN 1959 AND 1967, 483,686 NEW FEDERAL EMPLOYEES WERE HIRED TO HELP THE GOVERNMENT SOLVE OUR PROBLEMS FOR US. THE RESULT: CORRUPTION SCANDALS IN GROWING NUMBERS, MORE GOVERNMENT INTERFERENCE IN OUR EVERYDAY LIVES, AND MAIL DELIVERY GOING FROM BAD TO WORSE, JUST TO MENTION A FEW

BETWEEN JUNE, 1960, AND JUNE, 1967, THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ESCALATED MASSIVE WELFARE SPENDING TO CURE UNEMPLOYMENT AND SLUM CONDITIONS. THE RESULT: AN INCREASE OF 23 PER CENT IN THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE ON PUBLIC WELFARE ROLLS WITH NO END IN SIGHT.

THE SAME DISMAL FAILURE APPLIES TO ALL THE OTHER ILLS WHICH FEDERAL "MEDICINE" HAS TRIED TO CURE, AT YOUR EXPENSE AND MINE.

YES, WE FORGOTTEN AMERICANS HAVE BEEN TAKEN FOR A RIDE. BUT HOW MUCH OF THIS HAS BEEN DUE TO OUR OWN APATHY AND INDIFFERENCE?

- FORGETFUL AMERICANS? -

HOW OFTEN HAVE WE BEEN "FORGETFUL" AMERICANS?

ONE OF THE GREAT THREATS TO OUR DEMOCRACY HAS BEEN THE UNWILLINGNESS OF MANY RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS TO PLAY A DIRECT ROLE IN WHAT SOME CALL THE DIRTY BUSINESS OF POLITICS. DIRTY BUSINESS? POLITICS ONLY GETS DIRTY WHEN PEOPLE ARE TOO BUSY TO BE BOTHERED WITH IT AND IT IS LEFT TO THE BOYS IN THE BACK ROOM. WHEN THAT HAPPENS, WE HAVE ONLY OURSELVES TO BLAME.

- YOUR RESPONSIBILITY -

THOSE OF YOU IN THIS ROOM HAVE A SPECIAL OBLIGATION, AND A SPECIAL OPPORTUNITY TO DO YOUR PART. YOUR LIVES ARE A PART OF THE SOCIAL MAINSTREAMS OF THE COMMUNITY. YOU COME INTO CONTACT WITH FELLOW CITIZENS FROM EVERY WALK OF LIFE, AND YOU HAVE A BACKGROUND THAT HAS TRAINED YOU TO ANALYZE AND SOLVE PROBLEMS.

THEREFORE, YOU HAVE AN IMPORTANT ROLE TO PLAY, IF YOU WILL ONLY TAKE THE TIME. THERE IS NOTHING NEW OR REVOLUTIONARY ABOUT DOING SO EITHER. IT IS PART OF A TRADITION AS OLD AS AMERICA ITSELF.



- HOW CAN YOU LEAD? -

HOW CAN YOU DO THIS? IN A HUNDRED DIFFERENT WAYS.

AS A BEGINNING, REGISTER AND VOTE.

FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF NOT ONLY WITH THE BROAD POLITICAL ISSUES AND THE VAGUE POLITICAL LABELS, BUT WITH THE SPECIFICS OF DAY-TO-DAY POLITICS -- NATIONALLY AND LOCALLY. KNOW YOUR STATE AND NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES, AND MAKE SURE THEY KNOW HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT PENDING LEGISLATION.

FIND OUT WHICH PARTY AND WHICH CANDIDATES MOST CLOSELY REFLECT YOUR OWN VIEWS, AND WHICH ONES OFFER REALISTIC SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEMS CONFRONTING US.

BECOME INVOLVED IN YOUR LOCAL AND STATE PARTY APPARATUS -- AND BEGIN IN YOUR OWN PRECINCT WHERE YOUR INFLUENCE COUNTS STRONGEST AND WHERE YOU CAN HELP BRING OTHERS AROUND TO YOUR WAY OF THINKING.



CONTRIBUTE TO THE PARTY AND CANDIDATE OF YOUR CHOICE. THIS IS JUST AS MUCH OF AN INVESTMENT IN AMERICA'S FUTURE AS BUYING SAVINGS BONDS, AND IT CAN DO MORE TO BRING ABOUT NEEDED CHANGES.

KNOW THE ISSUES WELL ENOUGH SO THAT YOU CAN PLEAD YOUR POLITICAL CASE OR JUSTIFY YOUR POLITICAL PRESCRIPTION TO THE UNDECIDED, AND THE UNINFORMED.

AND, WHATEVER YOU DO, DON'T JUST SIT AS A SPECULATOR AND WATCH THE PRINCIPLES YOU BELIEVE IN AND THE VALUES YOU LIVE BY GRADUALLY CRUMBLE BECAUSE OF YOUR APATHY!

- MORE ARE BECOMING ACTIVE -

FORTUNATELY, THERE ARE GROWING SIGNS THAT MORE AND MORE PEOPLE ARE TAKING THIS SORT OF INVOLVEMENT SERIOUSLY. FOR EXAMPLE, IN THE LAST PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION -- THERE WERE MORE INDIVIDUAL FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTORS THAN EVER BEFORE -- NOT JUST THE BIG PRESSURE GROUPS, BUT CONCERNED, INTERESTED INDIVIDUAL CITIZENS.

THERE WERE OVER 1 1/2 MILLION INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTORS TO REPUBLICAN CAMPAIGNS ALONE. AND THERE WERE MORE VOLUNTEER WORKERS THAN EVER BEFORE -- LITERALLY HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS.

- THE ENEMIES: IGNORANCE AND APATHY -

AS A PRACTICAL POLITICIAN, I AM INTERESTED IN WINNING ELECTIONS. BUT AS AN AMERICAN, I AM FAR MORE INTERESTED IN ENCOURAGING MAXIMUM PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT OF ALL AMERICANS IN THE ELECTORAL PROCESS.

I BELIEVE THAT IF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WILL TAKE THE TIME TO MAKE THEMSELVES AWARE OF THE ISSUES INVOLVED, THEY WILL MAINTAIN THEIR FREEDOM.

I AM CONVINCED THAT IGNORANCE AND APATHY ARE OUR GREATEST ENEMIES -- NOT SOCIALISM OR COMMUNISM. FOR IT IS THE LESS OBVIOUS DISEASE OF APATHY THAT THESE AND OTHER POLITICAL ILLS FEED UPON.

- KNOW THE FACTS -

I HAVE A DEEP BELIEVE IN THE HONOR, FAITH AND INTEGRITY OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, AND IN THEIR ABILITY TO GOVERN THEMSELVES WHEN THEY KNOW THE FACTS.

BUT IN THIS COMPLEX AGE, WITH THE TREMENDOUS FLOOD OF CONFLICTING IDEAS AND IDEOLOGIES AND THE ENORMOUS SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PRESSURES, IT BECOMES MORE AND MORE DIFFICULT FOR ALL OF US TO KEEP INFORMED.

AT THE SAME TIME, IT BECOMES MORE AND MORE IMPORTANT. FOR TODAY, THE STAKES ARE HIGHER THAN EVER. WE NO LONGER LIVE IN A PROTECTIVE VACUUM OF ISOLATION WITH PLENTY OF TIME AND TRANQUILITY IN WHICH TO SOLVE THE PROBLEMS CONFRONTING US.

TODAY, WE HAVE A FEDERAL GOVERNMENT THAT IS WILLING AND EAGER TO THRUST ITSELF INTO EVERY ASPECT OF AMERICAN LIFE. UNLESS WE ACT FIRST AND UNLESS WE ACT FIRMLY, SOLVING THESE PROBLEMS ON THE LOCAL LEVEL AND THROUGH SENDING LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES TO WASHINGTON TO KEEP A CLOSE WATCH OVER THE FEDERAL COLOSSUS, WE WILL HAVE LOST THE OPPORTUNITY FOREVER.

TO THOSE WHO SAY THAT IT CANNOT HAPPEN, I CAN ONLY REPLY: IT HAS HAPPENED BEFORE AND IT HAS HAPPENED TO MANY AFFLUENT, APATHETIC SOCIETIES.

FROM THE ANCIENT ROMAN EMPIRE TO THE ENGLAND OF TODAY -- BANKRUPT AND REDUCED TO THE STATUS OF A THIRD-RATE POWER -- WE SEE ALL TOO MANY EXAMPLES OF COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES WHO FAILED TO REALIZE, IN THE WORDS OF EDMUND BURKE, THAT "ALL THAT IS NECESSARY FOR THE TRIUMPH OF EVIL, IS THAT GOOD MEN REMAIN SILENT".



- THE CHOICE: PARTICIPATE OR PERISH -

AS AMERICANS, YOU KNOW THE VALUE OF THE SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT AND THE WAY OF LIFE WHOSE SURVIVAL DEPENDS ON YOU.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN DREW THIS CONCLUSION MORE THAN A CENTURY AGO WHEN HE WARNED THAT, "IF DESTRUCTION IS TO BE OUR LOT, WE MUST OURSELVES BE ITS AUTHOR AND FINISHER. AS A NATION OF FREEMEN WE MUST LIVE THROUGH ALL TIME OR DIE BY SUICIDE."

- 11 -

→ *Worshipful party - @ Pub*

→ *Leahy - ~~John~~*

*Hymn # 32*

→ *No one here in charge but we all - You all*

*look well*  
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