

*1. 11/11/71  
Dole's  
Chap*

REMARKS OF HONORABLE BOB DOLE  
SECOND ANNUAL FIREFIGHTERS RECOGNITION SUNDAY  
WEST SIDE CHRISTIAN CHURCH  
WICHITA, KANSAS  
SUNDAY, JULY 25, 1971

IT IS AN HONOR FOR ME TO BE A PART OF THIS APPRECIATION DAY FOR THE BRAVE MEN WHO PROTECT WICHITA -- ITS PEOPLE AND ITS PROPERTY -- FROM DEATH AND DESTRUCTION BY FIRE.

AND I WANT TO THANK REVEREND GREENLEE FOR THE INVITATION TO BE HERE THIS EVENING. HIS VOLUNTARY WORK WITH THE WICHITA FIRE DEPARTMENT FOR THE PAST TWO-AND-ONE-HALF YEARS, AS FIRE CHAPLAIN, HAS EARNED HIM THE AFFECTION AND RESPECT OF THE MEN WE HONOR HERE TONIGHT.

I SHOULD POINT OUT THAT WE ARE ALSO HONORING THE MEN OF THE SEDGWICK COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT AND THE McCONNELL AIR FORCE BASE FIRE UNIT, WHO ALSO HELP TO PROTECT THE WICHITA AREA.

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FAMILY SACRIFICE

THERE IS YET ANOTHER BRAVE AND GENEROUS GROUP OF PEOPLE HERE THIS EVENING, WHOSE SACRIFICE IS NOT AS PUBLIC, BUT IS JUST AS REAL. I REFER TO THE WIVES AND FAMILIES OF THESE MEN. AS THE POET MILTON WROTE MORE THAN THREE CENTURIES AGO, "THEY ALSO SERVE WHO ONLY STAND AND WAIT," AND FOR THE WIFE, PARENT OR CHILD OF A FIREFIGHTER, THE WAITING AND THE UNCERTAINTY ARE GREAT. IT IS A QUIET, PRIVATE SACRIFICE THAT EACH OF THEM MAKES FOR THE WELFARE OF OUR COMMUNITY. AND TODAY WE EXPRESS OUR GRATITUDE TO THEM, AS WELL AS THE MEN THEY STAND BEHIND.

THIS IS THE SECOND OF THESE ANNUAL OBSERVANCES -- THE SECOND IN WHAT I HOPE WILL BE A LONG LINE. FOR BESIDES THE PEOPLE WE ARE HONORING TODAY, WE ARE ALSO HONORING A PRINCIPLE -- A PRINCIPLE THAT IS AS OLD AS AMERICA HERSELF AND HELPED TO BUILD THIS GREAT NATION OF FREE MEN.

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PRINCIPLE OF COMMUNITY SERVICE

I REFER TO THE PRINCIPLE OF COMMUNITY SERVICE, AND TO THE COMMUNITY SPIRIT THAT ENABLES PEOPLE TO LIVE AND WORK TOGETHER FOR THE COMMON GOOD AND BETTERMENT. IT IS THE SPIRIT THAT BUILT THE FIRST LOG SETTLEMENTS ALONG THE EAST COAST AND ON INTO THE FRONTIER; AND IT IS THE SPIRIT THAT FORMED THE FIRST BUCKET BRIGADES THAT FOUGHT THE FIRES IN THOSE PRIMITIVE SETTLEMENTS.

IT IS THE SPIRIT, NOT OF ANY SINGLE ERA OR SINGLE GROUP THAT CAME TO THESE SHORES, BUT RATHER THE SPIRIT OF ALL OF THEM.

AND AS LONG AS THAT SPIRIT REMAINS ALIVE, AMERICA WILL LIVE. AND IF WE EVER LOSE IT, WE, TOO, ARE LOST. NO AMOUNT OF TECHNOLOGICAL PROGRESS -- NO AMOUNT OF MATERIAL WEALTH AND SECURITY -- CAN MAKE UP FOR THIS QUALITY WHICH THE MEN OF OUR FIRE DEPARTMENTS, AND THEIR FAMILIES, EXEMPLIFY.

MEN OF COURAGE NEEDED

WHAT IS TRUE OF AN EFFECTIVE FIRE DEPARTMENT IS ALSO TRUE OF A GREAT NATION. THE BEST ENGINES AND THE MOST SOPHISTICATED ALARM SYSTEM <sup>N</sup> IS THE WORLD ARE USELESS AND WASTED, UNLESS THERE ARE MEN OF COURAGE AND PURPOSE AT THE CONTROLS.

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EACH OF THE PEOPLE WE HONOR TODAY HAS THESE TWO PRECIOUS COMMODITIES -- COURAGE AND PURPOSE. AND THAT IS WHAT MAKES THEIR LIVES FULL, NOT JUST FOR THEMSELVES, BUT FOR THEIR FRIENDS AND FELLOW CITIZENS, AS WELL.

THEY HAVE A MISSION IN LIFE, AND THEY HAVE THE BRAVERY, THE SKILL AND THE WILL POWER TO MEET ITS CHALLENGE.

WITH THAT SPIRIT, NO TASK IS TOO GREAT. WITHOUT IT, NO JOB CAN BE DONE WELL, NO MATTER HOW SIMPLE IT IS.

I SOMETIMES THINK THAT THIS IS THE INNER QUALITY THAT IS MISSING IN THAT SMALL NUMBER OF AMERICANS WHO FIND IT SO EASY TO CAVE IN TO DESPAIR TODAY -- OR TO GO EVEN FURTHER AND TURN AGAINST THE VALUES AND BELIEFS THAT OUR NATION WAS FOUNDED ON.

#### COURAGEOUS VISION

IF ONLY THEY COULD SEE LIFE WITH THE SAME CLEAR, COURAGEOUS VISION AS THE FIREFIGHTER, THE PHYSICIAN, THE TEACHER, THE PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEER, OR THE LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER, THEY COULD TURN THEIR NEGATIVE EMOTIONS AND THEIR FRUSTRATIONS INTO PRODUCTIVE ACTION.

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INSTEAD OF TEARING DOWN AMERICA, THEY, TOO, COULD HELP TO BUILD HER UP -- AND IN THE PROCESS, THEY WOULD FIND THAT THEY WERE GETTING A LOT MORE OUT OF LIFE PERSONALLY.

BUT TODAY IT IS ALL TOO EASY TO LOSE SIGHT OF THIS BASIC TRUTH. CHILDREN BROUGHT UP ON TELEVISION, TAUGHT TO SEARCH FOR HAPPINESS THROUGH MORE AND MORE MATERIAL GRATIFICATION; HOUSEWIVES TOLD THAT THE ANSWER TO THEIR DAILY ANNOYANCES AND FRUSTRATIONS LIES IN A NEW WONDER DRUG OR TRANQUILIZER; POLITICIANS WHO THINK THE ONLY ANSWER TO EVERY PROBLEM IS TO SPEND MORE, TAX MORE AND TALK MORE -- ALL TOO EASILY THEY LOSE THEIR GRIP ON THE REALITIES OF A DECENT, SATISFYING LIFE.

#### A DECENT SOCIETY

AND, COLLECTIVELY, THAT MEANS THAT WE ALL LOSE SOME OF THE BENEFITS THAT CAN ONLY COME WITH A DECENT, SATISFYING SOCIETY.

PERSONALLY, I AM INCLINED TO BE OPTIMISTIC. I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT A TIDAL WAVE OF MATERIALISM OR CYNICISM CAN DROWN THE TRULY GOOD LIFE IN AMERICA. I SEE TOO MUCH EVIDENCE TO THE CONTRARY -- TOO MANY AMERICANS OF ALL RACES AND AGES WHO SHARE AND PRACTICE THE IDEALS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE.

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### ORIGINAL ECOLOGISTS

THE GROWING CONCERN FOR ECOLOGY SHARED BY SO MANY YOUNG AMERICANS TODAY IS ONLY ONE SYMPTOM OF A RENEWED INTEREST IN PRESERVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN THE UNITED STATES. INCIDENTALLY, WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT IT, FIREMEN ARE PROBABLY THE ORIGINAL ECOLOGISTS. LONG BEFORE ANY OF US WERE FAMILIAR WITH THE WORD, FIREMEN WERE PUTTING THEIR LIVES ON THE LINE TO PROTECT THE WORKS OF NATURE AND MAN FROM WANTON DESTRUCTION -- AND THEY WILL CONTINUE DOING SO LONG AFTER THE FADDISH ASPECT OF THE ECOLOGY MOVEMENT HAS BEEN LAID TO REST.

THINK OF THE MILES OF BEAUTIFUL FOREST LAND THAT WOULD BE CHARRED WASTELAND TODAY IF IT WERE NOT FOR THE COURAGE AND SKILL OF AMERICAN FIREFIGHTERS.

### FACE DANGER

NOR SHOULD WE FORGET THE BRAVERY OF FIREMEN IN SOME TROUBLED CITIES, WHO HAVE SOMETIMES HAD TO BRAVE A HAIL OF ROCKS, BOTTLES, AND EVEN BULLETS, WHILE PURSUING THEIR LINE OF DUTY.

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THERE, IN THE MIDST OF A CLIMATE OF HATE AND CONFLICT, THEY HAVE GIVEN ALL AMERICANS AN EXAMPLE OF DEVOTION TO DUTY UNDER CONDITIONS COMPARABLE TO WARTIME COMBAT.

ESSENTIALS UNCHANGED

SLEEK STEEL ENGINES HAVE REPLACED THE LEATHER BUCKETS AND HORSE-DRAWN FIRE-WAGONS OF YEARS PAST, BUT THE BASIC INGREDIENTS OF COURAGE AND DISCIPLINE REMAIN INDISPENSABLE.

OTHER THINGS HAVE CHANGED IN OUR NATIONAL LIFE OVER THE YEARS. THE ONE ROOM SCHOOLHOUSE HAS BEEN REPLACED BY THE MOST MODERN, COMPLEX EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN THE WORLD; WALLS OF ISOLATION HAVE BEEN BROKEN DOWN BY TELEPHONE, TELEVISION AND AIR TRAVEL; MODERN MEDICINE HAS ADDED YEARS TO THE AVERAGE LIFE SPAN AND DEVELOPED REMEDIES FOR MANY ANCIENT HUMAN ILLS; WORLD LEADERS FROM NATIONS THAT WERE ONCE CONSIDERED MORTAL ENEMIES HAVE FOUND NEW GROUNDS FOR UNDERSTANDING AND EXCHANGE OF IDEAS.

BUT TO FULLY PROFIT FROM ANY OF THESE DEVELOPMENTS, AMERICANS STILL NEED THE COURAGE AND DISCIPLINE THEY LEARNED IN CLEARING THE WILDERNESS AND BUILDING A YOUNG LAND.

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IF THERE IS ONE QUALITY THAT IS MORE NECESSARY TODAY THAN EVER, IT IS THE OLDEST AMERICAN QUALITY OF ALL -- GOOD NEIGHBORLINESS. AND GOOD NEIGHBORLINESS, IN ESSENCE, IS MUTUAL RESPECT AND A SPIRIT OF COMMUNITY CONCERN.

#### PRESIDENT SALUTES FIREFIGHTERS

LAST OCTOBER, PRESIDENT NIXON PAID TRIBUTE TO VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS IN PROCLAIMING NATIONAL VOLUNTEER FIREMEN'S WEEK. MUCH OF WHAT HE SAID APPLIES TO ALL FIREMEN.

THE PRESIDENT TALKED OF THE "MANY COMMUNITIES THROUGHOUT THE NATION (THAT) ARE PROTECTED FROM THE SCOURGE OF FIRE ONLY BY THE COURAGE AND DEDICATION OF VOLUNTEER FIREMEN," BUT THE QUALITIES HE WAS SALUTING ARE FOUND IN ALL FIREFIGHTERS, NOT JUST THE VOLUNTEERS.

"THESE MEN," HE SAID, "GIVE COUNTLESS HOURS OF THEIR TIME NOT ONLY IN PREVENTING AND FIGHTING FIRES, BUT IN EDUCATING AND TRAINING THEMSELVES FOR THIS PURPOSE, IN MAINTAINING FIRE-FIGHTING EQUIPMENT, AND IN RENDERING OTHER EMERGENCY SERVICES."

"IT IS ONLY FITTING," HE SAID, THAT WE PAY TRIBUTE TO THESE MEN "WHO SERVE THEIR COMMUNITIES NIGHT AND DAY, OFTEN AT GREAT PERSONAL RISK AND SACRIFICE."

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AND IT IS ONLY FITTING THAT WE, TOO, PAY TRIBUTE TO THEM THIS EVENING. IT IS NO COINCIDENCE THAT ALMOST EVERY BOY AT SOME TIME IN HIS EARLY YEARS DECIDES THAT HE WANTS TO BE A FIREMAN. THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES, THE SIMPLE HEROISM OF THESE MEN IS CLEAR. AND THOUGH MOST OF US GROW UP TO BECOME SOMETHING ELSE, I BELIEVE THAT WE STILL HARBOR A SPECIAL RESPECT FOR THE FIREMAN AND HIS MISSION AS WE GO OUR SEPARATE WAYS.

THAT IS WHY I AM GRATEFUL TO BE HERE TONIGHT -- NOT JUST AS AN ELECTED REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PEOPLE HERE IN WICHITA, BUT AS A FELLOW KANSAN EXPRESSING MY PERSONAL GRATITUDE ALONG WITH THE REST OF YOU TO THIS FINE GROUP OF MEN AND THEIR FAMILIES.

WHILE THEY CONTINUE TO SERVE, THEY PROTECT MORE THAN OUR LIVES AND OUR PROPERTIES. THEY PROTECT AN IMPORTANT PART OF OUR PHILOSOPHY AS GOOD CITIZENS.