

*→ 7-13-71*

HONORABLE BOB DOLE  
DEDICATION WEEK LUNCHEON  
AMERICAN LEGION BUILDING  
ATCHISON, KANSAS  
AUGUST 13, 1971

IT IS A PLEASURE TO BE HERE IN ATCHISON TO TAKE PART IN DEDICATION WEEK. THESE CEREMONIES, AS WELL AS THE CITY'S HISTORY OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS, SERVE AS A VIVID REMINDER OF WHAT COOPERATION MEANS IN AMERICA. PERHAPS NOWHERE IN KANSAS CAN SO MANY EXAMPLES OF EFFECTIVE COOPERATION ON SO MANY DIFFERENT LEVELS BE SEEN THAN HERE IN YOUR TOWN.

COOPERATION BETWEEN INDIVIDUALS

ON THE MOST FUNDAMENTAL LEVEL THE COOPERATION WHICH INDIVIDUAL CITIZENS HAVE GIVEN EACH OTHER HAS BEEN REMARKABLE. SINCE THAT RAIN- AND FLOOD-SWEPT JULY NIGHT THIRTEEN YEARS AGO, WHEN PEOPLE FROM EVERY WALK OF LIFE PITCHED IN TO HELP THEIR NEIGHBORS DIG OUT THEIR HOMES AND BUSINESSES FROM THE MUD AND DEBRIS, YOU HAVE BEEN WORKING TOGETHER TO REBUILD AND RENEW YOUR CITY. SOMETIMES DISAGREEMENT HAS ARISEN OVER HOW TO GO ABOUT THE JOB, BUT ALWAYS THERE HAS BEEN A SPIRIT OF WILLINGNESS TO SHARE THE WORK AND AN EAGERNESS TO ACHIEVE THE GREATEST GOOD.

-2-

COOPERATION WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT

ON ANOTHER LEVEL, THE COOPERATION BETWEEN THE PEOPLE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS HAS BEEN SUPERB. TIME AND AGAIN CITY AND COUNTY COMMISSIONERS; WATERSHED, URBAN RENEWAL AND WATER BOARD MEMBERS HAVE WORKED WITH AND ALONG SIDE PRIVATE CITIZENS AND GROUPS IN A SHARING OF CONCERN AND EFFORT TO BUILD THE COMMUNITY YOU ALL WANTED TO SEE.

TEAMWORK BETWEEN GOVERNMENTS

AND FINALLY, THE COOPERATION AMONG THE VARIOUS GOVERNMENTS INVOLVED IN REBUILDING AND MODERNIZING ATCHISON HAS BEEN ONE OF THE FINEST EXAMPLES OF GOOD GOVERNMENT IN PRACTICE THAT I CAN RECALL. AN AMAZING VARIETY OF LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN THE WORK UNDERWAY HERE. THE VARIOUS OFFICES REPRESENTED AT OUR HEAD TABLE GIVE SOME IDEA OF HOW COMPLEX THE TASK HAS BEEN. BUT THROUGH IT ALL, COOPERATION AND TEAMWORK HAS BEEN THE STRONG AND FORTUNATE RULE.

-3-

A VALUABLE LESSON

THIS BIT OF ATCHISON HISTORY, I BELIEVE, HOLDS A GREAT LESSON, NOT ONLY FOR OTHER COMMUNITIES, BUT FOR THE ENTIRE NATION AS WELL. UNFORTUNATELY IN RECENT DECADES AMERICA HAS SEEN A DETERIORATION OF THE IDEA THAT YOU OR I OR OUR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ARE THE BEST JUDGES OF WHAT OUR PROBLEMS ARE AND HOW THEY OUGHT TO BE SOLVED. INSTEAD, THE TENDENCY HAS BEEN TO **CONCENTRATE** BOTH THE PROBLEM-IDENTIFYING, AND THE PROBLEM-SOLVING AUTHORITY AWAY FROM THE PROBLEMS AND AWAY FROM THE PEOPLE WITH THE PROBLEMS. THE RESULT HAS BEEN A HUGE, CONFUSING AND INEFFECTIVE BUREAUCRATIC TANGLE IN WASHINGTON, PARALYSIS AND NEAR STAGNATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, AND NOT MANY SOLUTIONS FOR THE PROBLEMS.

BUT I BELIEVE WE ARE BEGINNING TO SEE A REVERSAL OF THIS TREND. LATELY, WE HAVE HEARD CONSIDERABLE DISCUSSION OF THE NEED TO PROVIDE GREATER FEDERAL SUPPORT TO STATES AND CITIES TO ENABLE THEM TO DO A BETTER JOB OF MEETING THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES. THERE HAS BEEN GROWING RECOGNITION THAT WE MUST REORDER THE BALANCE OF POWER BETWEEN WASHINGTON TO THE PEOPLE. THIS HAS BEEN CALLED REVENUE SHARING OR NEW FEDERALISM OR SEVERAL OTHER NAMES. BUT REGARDLESS OF THE TITLE, THE IDEA BEHIND IT IS AS OLD AS OUR NATION'S HISTORY. OVER AND OVER

-4-

IT HAS BEEN SHOWN THAT THE BEST, MOST RESPONSIVE AND MOST RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT IS THAT WHICH IS CLOSEST TO THE PEOPLE AND THEREFORE CAN REACH AND BE REACHED BY THEM. AND THIS IS TRUE.

BUT SOME COME BACK AND SAY THAT THE SMALLER GOVERNMENTAL UNITS CANNOT PLAN ADEQUATELY, THEY CANNOT COORDINATE PROPERLY, THEY CANNOT GET THE JOB DONE.

ATCHISON'S LESSON FOR AMERICA

I SAY THIS ATTITUDE IS WRONG, AND I SAY THE ATCHISON EXPERIENCE PROVES IT. HERE YOU HAVE HAD PEOPLE WITH IDEAS, DETERMINATION AND TALENT -- AND THERE ARE PEOPLE JUST LIKE THIS IN EVERY COMMUNITY AND STATE THROUGHOUT THE NATION. THEY ARE IN PRIVATE LIFE AND IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT. BUT THEY ARE THERE AND READY TO GO TO WORK SOLVING THEIR OWN PROBLEMS.

-5-

HERE YOU HAVE HAD A NEED FOR ASSISTANCE. AND SIMILAR NEEDS EXIST ACROSS THE COUNTRY. PERHAPS ANOTHER COMMUNITY DOES NOT NEED A CUT-AND-COVER CONDUIT FOR FLOOD PROTECTION. MOST PROBABLY DO NEED BETTER HOUSING FOR THEIR LOW-INCOME FAMILIES AND ELDERLY. MANY COULD PROBABLY PROFIT FROM MORE MODERN FIRE PROTECTION FACILITIES. BUT ALL HAVE NEEDS, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, THEY RECOGNIZE THEIR NEEDS AND KNOW THE PRIORITIES FOR MEETING THEM. THEY MAY NOT HAVE THE FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL RESOURCES FOR COPING WITH THESE PROBLEMS, BUT THEY HAVE THE MOST VITAL ELEMENT OF A SOLUTION: FIRST-HAND KNOWLEDGE.

HERE IN ATCHISON YOU HAVE PROVEN THE POTENTIAL OF LOCAL LEADERSHIP. HERE IN ATCHISON YOU HAVE PROVEN THE VALUE OF FEDERAL ASSISTANCE. BUT HERE IN ATCHISON YOU HAVE ALSO SHOWN THAT THE COMBINATION OF LOCAL LEADERSHIP AND FEDERAL RESOURCES IS A PARTNERSHIP WHICH CAN EFFECTIVELY MEET YOUR COMMUNITY'S NEEDS.

SO CALL IT NEW FEDERALISM OR REVENUE SHARING OR WHATEVER, BUT LET IT BE RECOGNIZED THAT HERE, WHERE THE PROBLEMS EXIST, ALSO LIES THE BEST HOPE FOR SOLUTIONS.

-6-

AND THIS IS WHY I FEEL THE ATCHISON STORY IS SO VALUABLE TO THE REST OF AMERICA AT THIS TIME. IT SHOWS WHAT CAN BE DONE, AND ABOVE ALL, IT SHOWS THAT IT CAN BE DONE.

CONCLUSION

ONE OF ATCHISON'S MOST FAMOUS PHILOSOPHERS ONCE SAID:

"WHEN A MAN SUCCEEDS, HE DOES IT IN SPITE OF EVERYBODY, AND NOT WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF EVERYBODY: .

ED HOWE MAY HAVE BEEN RIGHT ABOUT INDIVIDUALS; BUT, WHEN IT COMES TO COMMUNITIES, HIS TOWN -- YOUR TOWN -- HAS PROVEN THAT SUCCESS COMES IN SPITE OF NOBODY AND WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF EVERYBODY.

YOU HAVE EVERY REASON TO TAKE PRIDE IN THE SUCCESS WHICH ATCHISON HAS ACHIEVED AND I HOPE YOU WILL CONTINUE TO PRACTICE AND ENCOURAGE THE COOPERATION THAT HAS MADE THIS DEDICATION WEEK A REALITY.