

REMARKS OF SENATOR BOB DOLE  
RENN MEMORIAL LIBRARY DEDICATION  
COWLEY COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND  
VOCATIONAL - TECHNICAL SCHOOL  
ARKANSAS CITY, KANSAS  
APRIL 28, 1974

IT IS FAR TOO SELDOM THAT THOSE OF US IN PUBLIC LIFE HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE IN OFFICIAL OCCASIONS WHICH -- IN ADDITION TO THEIR PUBLIC SIGNIFICANCE -- HOLD A DEEP AND PERSONAL MEANING. BUT TODAY'S CEREMONY IS ONE SUCH OCCASION FOR ME, AND I WISH TO EXPRESS MY GRATITUDE AND APPRECIATION TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES FOR THEIR INVITATION.

OUR GATHERING TODAY IS FOR THE PURPOSE OF DEDICATING AN OUT-STANDING NEW ADDITION TO THE CAMPUS OF THE COWLEY COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND VO-TECH SCHOOL. THIS LIBRARY BUILDING WILL SERVE AS THE CENTER FOR THE EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THIS FINE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION. AND WITHIN IT, STUDENTS WILL -- FOR YEARS TO COME -- FIND INFORMATION, ENLIGHTENMENT AND HOPEFULLY, CHALLENGE TO THEIR INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH.

POINT OF PRIDE

A LIBRARY IS THE HEART OF ANY INSTITUTION OF ADVANCED LEARNING, AND CERTAINLY THE BUILDING WE DEDICATE TODAY WILL PROVIDE THIS CAMPUS WITH A

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GREAT SHOWPIECE AND POINT OF VISIBLE PRIDE SYMBOLIZING ITS GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

AND I BELIEVE WE CAN ALL AGREE THAT IF THIS LIBRARY SERVES ALL OF THESE FUNCTIONS AND MEETS ALL OF THESE GOALS, IT WILL BE JUDGED A SUCCESS BY ALL WHO ARE HERE TODAY AND BY ALL THOSE FUTURE STUDENTS WHO WILL BENEFIT FROM IT.

BUT THERE IS ANOTHER ASPECT ~~TO~~ TODAY'S CEREMONIES, AND THERE IS ANOTHER DIMENSION TO THE ROLE THAT I FORESEE FOR THIS LIBRARY. AND BOTH OF THESE ADD AN EXTRA ELEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE TO OUR GATHERING AND OUR ACT OF DEDICATION.

- A FITTING MEMORIAL -

NOT ONLY ARE WE DEDICATING A STRUCTURE OF CONCRETE AND GLASS AND MASONRY, BUT WE ARE INAUGURATING A MOST FITTING MEMORIAL TO A PAIR OF

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INDIVIDUALS WHO SERVED COWLEY COUNTY, THE STATE OF KANSAS AND THEIR PEOPLE WITH GREAT DISTINCTION.

JACK RENN WAS A LAWYER, A CIVIC LEADER AND A PUBLIC SPIRITED CITIZEN WHO SERVED IN THE KANSAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES. PROBABLY MOST OF THOSE PRESENT HERE TODAY DID NOT KNOW JACK FOR HE DIED MORE THAN 22 YEARS AGO. AND I MUST ADMIT THAT I KNEW HIM ALL TOO BRIEFLY. BUT MANY MANY MORE OF US HAD MET, KNEW AND CAME TO REGARD NELL RENN WITH THE AFFECTION, RESPECT AND GREAT ADMIRATION WHICH SHE WAS DUE IN SUCH FULL MEASURE.

SEATMATE IN KANSAS HOUSE

PERHAPS THE MOST FORTUNATE AND REWARDING ASPECT OF MY FIRST ELECTIVE OFFICE, THAT OF STATE REPRESENTATIVE FROM RUSSELL COUNTY, WAS THE FACT THAT NELL RENN WAS MY SEATMATE ON THE HOUSE FLOOR.

GOVERNOR ED ARN~~N~~ HAD APPOINTED HER TO SERVE OUT THE REMAINDER OF JACK'S TERM, FOLLOWING HIS UNTIMELY DEATH IN JANUARY, 1951, AND I HAD THE GOOD FORTUNE

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OF HER BEING SEATED NEXT TO ME IN THE HOUSE CHAMBER. WE WERE BOTH LOW ON THE LADDER OF SENIORITY, SO THERE WERE MANY HOURS DURING DEBATES, ROLL CALLS AND RECESSES WHEN WE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO BECOME WELL ACQUAINTED AND TO DISCUSS EVERY VARIETY OF SUBJECT--ON AND OFF THE LEGISLATIVE CALENDAR. AFTER A WHILE WE BOTH LEFT THE LEGISLATURE. I GRADUATED FROM LAW SCHOOL AND RETURNED HOME TO RUSSELL TO ENTER PRACTICE. SHE REMAINED FOR ANOTHER TERM AND THEN CAME BACK TO ARK CITY AND MAINTAINED HER ACTIVE INTEREST IN EVERY FACET OF HER COMMUNITY'S LIFE.

BUT, EVEN THOUGH WE WENT OUR SEPARATE WAYS, WE REMAINED IN CLOSE TOUCH THROUGHOUT THE YEARS. AND AS I ENTERED THE CONGRESS AND THE SENATE SHE STILL REMAINED A VALUED FRIEND, A TRUSTED ADVISER AND A WISE COUNSELLOR.

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GREAT INTEREST IN YOUNG PEOPLE

ONE THING WHICH STANDS OUT VIVIDLY IN MY RECOLLECTION OF NELL RENN IS HER GREAT INTEREST IN YOUNG PEOPLE. SHE WAS ALWAYS FOLLOWING WHAT THEY WERE UP TO, LISTENING TO THEIR IDEAS AND VISITING WITH THEM WHEREVER SHE HAPPENED TO BE. SHE ENJOYED THEM, AND IT WAS A MUTUAL EXPERIENCE. FOR SHE WAS FOREVER GOING OUT OF HER WAY TO BE CONSIDERATE, THOUGHTFUL AND KIND TO THEM. SHE PUT THIS INTEREST TO PRACTICAL AND EFFECTIVE USE DURING THE LEGISLATURE'S CONSIDERATION OF SCHOOL AND EDUCATIONAL MEASURES. SHE ALSO SERVED ON THE GOVERNOR'S COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, AND IT WAS NOT IN THE LEAST SURPRISING, THEREFORE, WHEN PRESIDENT EISENHOWER NAMED HER--AS SHE ENTERED HER 60's--TO THE WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON YOUTH IN 1954 and 1955.

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AN APPROPRIATE GIFT

SO I BELIEVE IT WAS ENTIRELY PREDICTABLE THAT NELL RENN WOULD CONTINUE HER INTEREST AND CONCERN FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, PARTICULARLY THOSE FROM HER HOME COMMUNITY. AND THE GENEROUS BEQUEST WHICH PLAYED THE MAJOR ROLE IN SUPPORTING CONSTRUCTION OF THIS LIBRARY WAS VERY MUCH IN CHARACTER FOR THIS GRACIOUS AND GOOD LADY.

IT IS EVEN MORE LIKE HER THAT SHE REQUESTED NO PERSONAL CREDIT OR RECOGNITION BUT INSTEAD ASKED THAT THE LIBRARY BE NAMED IN HONOR

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HER HUSBAND, JACK, WHO ONCE TAUGHT HERE.

BUT AS I SAID EARLIER, THESE CEREMONIES HAVE AN EXTRA ASPECT AND THIS LIBRARY'S ROLE HAS ANOTHER DIMENSION BEYOND THAT WE ORDINARILY ASSOCIATED WITH IT.

RENN FAMILY LEGACIES

FIRST, THIS CEREMONY RENEWS AND REFRESHES OUR MEMORY OF TWO WONDERFUL CITIZENS OF ARKANSAS CITY AND COWLEY COUNTY. AND THIS MEMORY OF JACK AND NELL RENN WILL BE STRENGTHENED AND REKINDLED WITH EACH CLASS AND GENERATION OF STUDENTS WHO PASS THROUGH AND BENEFIT FROM IT.

SECOND, BY SERVING AS A LIVING MEMORIAL TO JACK AND NELL RENN THIS LIBRARY CAN SERVE AS A SPECIAL SOURCE OF INSPIRATION AND ENCOURAGEMENT TO THE STUDENTS WHO USE IT. FOR THE LIVES OF JACK AND NELL RENN--IN THEIR FULLNESS AND RICH ACCOMPLISHMENT ON BEHALF OF THEIR FELLOW CITIZENS--ARE ONE OF THE FINEST AND MOST ENDURING EXAMPLES OF THIS COUNTRY'S IDEALS AND VALUES OF WHICH I AM AWARE.

HONESTY, INTEGRITY AND A DEEPLY HUMAN COMMITMENT TO THE BETTERMENT OF OUR HUMAN INSTITUTIONS AND GOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURES--THESE ARE THE REAL RENN FAMILY LEGACIES TO ARKANSAS CITY AND TO EACH OF US AS INDIVIDUALS.