

REMARKS OF SENATOR BOB DOLE
TO SCIENTIFIC APPARATUS MAKERS ASSOCIATION
BOCA RATON, FLORIDA
APRIL 18, 1977

HERE IN THE BEAUTY AND COMFORT OF SOUTHERN FLORIDA,
IT IS EASY TO BECOME QUICKLY DISTRACTED FROM ISSUES
OF PUBLIC POLICY. WEIGHTY AFFAIRS SEEM A WORLD AWAY.
THE TUG AND PULL OF OUR POLITICAL SYSTEM IS NEVER EASY TO
UNDERSTAND, UNDER THE BEST OF CONDITIONS. YET, WHAT
I WOULD LIKE TO TALK ABOUT TODAY -- WITHOUT, I HOPE,
BEING OVERLY PARTISAN -- IS THE FUTURE OF THE TWO-PARTY
SYSTEM. FOR, WITHOUT WISHING TO SOUND TOO MANY ALARMS,
I BELIEVE THE VIABILITY OF THE TWO-PARTY SYSTEM MAY BE
IN MORE DANGER THAN MANY OF US REALIZE.

*Changing
the
system
is
the
key*

*No
Party
By*

*By
1/18/77*

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I BEGIN WITH AN ASSUMPTION THAT ALL OF US CAN
ACCEPT -- REPUBLICANS AND DEMOCRATS ALIKE. AND THAT IS
THAT THE COMPETITION BETWEEN TWO STRONG PARTIES HAS
SERVED THIS NATION WELL IN THE PAST. JUST AS ONE-PARTY
DOMINATION WOULD REMOVE THE CHECKS AND BALANCES THAT
USUALLY MAKE IT EASIER FOR THE TRUTH TO FIND ITS WAY TO
THE SURFACE -- SO TOO A PROLIFERATION OF MANY PARTIES
WOULD TAKE AWAY A UNIQUE FEATURE OF OUR POLITICS THAT HAS
WORKED WELL IN THE PAST. FOR BOTH PARTIES TO BE STRONG,
THEY MUST EACH BE A CROSS-SECTION OF THE ELECTORATE AND
NOT REPRESENT SOME NARROW SEGMENT OF THE POPULATION,
WHETHER THAT BE A REGION OR A SOCIAL CLASS.

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GOP MUST BROADEN ITS APPEAL

THAT HAS BEEN ONE OF THE PROBLEMS OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY. DURING A PERIOD WHEN MANY NEW AND YOUNGER VOTERS WERE NOT INTERESTED IN AFFILIATING WITH EITHER PARTY, THE REPUBLICAN PARTY BECAME IDENTIFIED AS A PARTY THAT CARES FOR THE COUNTRY CLUB SET AND NOT THE PATRONS OF THE CORNER TAVERN; THE BUSINESSMAN AND NOT THE CONSUMER; THE INDUSTRIALIST AND NOT THE HOUSEWIFE WORRIED ABOUT POLLUTION; THOSE WHO CAN HELP THEMSELVES AND NOT THOSE WHO NEED HELP. WE WERE ACCUSED OF WRITING OFF ENTIRE GROUPS OF AMERICANS -- THE TEN MILLION BLACKS AND HISPANIC CITIZENS. I HAPPEN TO BELIEVE WE CAN REMAIN TRUE TO OUR PARTY PRINCIPLES AND APPEAL TO MINORITY GROUPS AND ALL WORKING-CLASS AMERICANS. WE CAN DO THIS WITH MORE EFFECTIVE GRASS-ROOTS ORGANIZATION. WE CAN DO THIS BY RUNNING GOOD YOUNG CANDIDATES. WE CAN DO THIS BY MAKING OUR CASE IN TERMS THAT HAVE MORE MEANING FOR THE EVERYDAY LIVES OF EVERYDAY PEOPLE. I AM OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY. BUT WE DO HAVE TO REACH OUT TO INDEPENDENT AND NORMALLY DEMOCRATIC VOTERS. WE CANNOT AFFORD TO BE PICKY ABOUT WHO WE LET INTO OUR PARTY. WE CANNOT IMPOSE ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS.

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THIS IS NOT THE PLACE FOR A DETAILED DISCUSSION OF THE SUBSTANTIVE DIFFERENCES SEPARATING THE TWO PARTIES -- OR WHY EVERYONE OUGHT TO PASSIONATELY EMBRACE THE DOCTRINE OF REPUBLICANISM -- BUT I DO MAINTAIN THAT THE NATIONAL NEED WAS NEVER GREATER FOR A PARTY THAT STANDS AS A CHECK AGAINST THE GROWTH OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT -- A PARTY THAT STANDS FOR INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY -- A PARTY THAT WILL SPEAK UP FOR THE STRENGTHS OF THE PRIVATE ENTERPRISE SYSTEM,

ELECTORAL REFORM

IN THE BLAND NAME OF "ELECTORAL REFORM", THE NEW DEMOCRATIC ADMINISTRATION IS PROPOSING A SERIES OF CHANGES THAT ARE INTENDED, IN MY OPINION, TO DO NO LESS THAN DESTROY THE REPUBLICAN PARTY AS A STRONG, VIABLE SECOND PARTY,

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ALL WHO BELIEVE IN A COMPETITIVE TWO-PARTY SYSTEM SHOULD BE APPALLED AT THE GRAND DESIGN BEHIND SUCH A PLAN. UNFORTUNATELY, SOME REPUBLICAN LEADERS IN WASHINGTON WERE SUCKERED INTO AN ENDORSEMENT OF THE FIRST OF THESE "REFORM PROPOSALS" -- INSTANT, ON-THE-SPOT VOTER REGISTRATION. THE PRESIDENT AND A GREAT MANY OTHER DEMOCRATS WOULD LIKE TO MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR ANYONE TO VOTE IN A PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION JUST BY WALKING IN OFF THE STREET AND PRESENTING SOME KIND OF PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION.

THIS WOULD BE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR FRAUD ON A SCALE THAT THE BOSSES IN COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS, COULD NEVER HAVE DARED DREAM OF.

I WANT TO MAKE IT AS EASY AS POSSIBLE FOR EVERYONE WHO WANTS TO VOTE TO VOTE -- BUT ONLY ONCE IN ANY ONE ELECTION.

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THE PROBLEMS OF POLICING SUCH A DUAL SYSTEM OF REGISTRATION WOULD BE ALMOST INSURMOUNTABLE. THE STATE OF WISCONSIN HAS EXPERIMENTED WITH A SIMILAR PLAN. IN LAST NOVEMBER'S ELECTION, OVER 63,000 NEW VOTERS IN MILWAUKEE ALONE WERE REGISTERED ON ELECTION DAY AND PARTICIPATED IN THAT ELECTION. THE MILWAUKEE JOURNAL LATER FOUND WIDESPREAD EVIDENCE OF FRAUD. THE WISCONSIN SYSTEM REQUIRES THAT THE COUNTY CLERK ATTEMPT TO VERIFY THE ACTUAL EXISTENCE OF THE NEW VOTERS BY POSTCARD AFTER THE ELECTION. BUT BY THE TIME ANY DISCREPANCIES ARE IRONED OUT, INAUGURATION DAY WILL HAVE COME AND GONE.

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IN ORDER TO JUSTIFY THE NEED FOR SUCH A DRASTIC PROPOSAL, IT FIRST HAS TO BE ESTABLISHED THAT THE STATE REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS -- BACKED UP, AS THEY ARE, BY THE FEDERAL VOTER RIGHTS ACT -- MAKE IT TOO DIFFICULT FOR AMERICANS WHO ARE ELIGIBLE TO VOTE AND WHO WANT TO VOTE -- TO VOTE. I AM NOT AWARE THAT THIS EVIDENCE EXISTS. THE REAL REASON FOR THE PROPOSAL, AS REPORTED BY SOME NEWSPAPER ACCOUNTS, IS THE PRESIDENT'S FEELING THAT THE ADDITION OF MANY MORE VOTERS IN THE SOUTH AND IN THE NORTHEAST IS THE KEY TO HIS RE-ELECTION PREPARATIONS.

IT HAS BEEN ESTIMATED THAT SOME 25 MILLION ADDITIONAL VOTERS WOULD TAKE PART IN THE ELECTION IF ALL ADVANCE REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS WERE ELIMINATED. ALL REAL LIVE AMERICANS WHO ARE OLD ENOUGH TO VOTE -- AND WANT TO VOTE -- SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO SO -- ONCE. WHETHER THE SUDDENLY INSPIRED VOTERS WOULD VOTE DEMOCRATIC OR REPUBLICAN IS BESIDE THE POINT. IF THE CHANGE IS NEEDED -- AND IF IT IS RIGHT -- THEN IT OUGHT TO BE APPROVED. BUT IT SEEMS TO ME THAT VOTING OUGHT TO BE A POSITIVE DECISION. WE DON'T

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WANT POLITICAL BOSSES DRAGOONING REAL OR IMAGINED CITIZENS TO THE POLLS -- CITIZENS WHO PROBABLY WON'T HAVE THE FOGGIEST NOTION WHO THE CANDIDATES ARE.

THE ACT OF NON-VOTING IS ITSELF OFTEN A DELIBERATE DECISION, THE EXPERTS TELL US. BOTH OF OUR PARTIES SHOULD DWELL ON HOW BETTER TO COMMUNICATE WITH THESE POLITICALLY DISINTERESTED AMERICANS. WE SHOULD TRY TO GET THEM INTERESTED IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS. HAVING LABOR UNIONS AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS ROUND THEM UP AND HERD THEM OFF TO THE POLLS ON ELECTION DAY IS NO ANSWER TO THE POLITICAL APATHY OF MANY OF OUR PEOPLE.

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HATCH ACT REPEAL

ANOTHER OF THE CARTER "REFORMS" HAS PARTISAN IMPLICATIONS. THE PRESIDENT HAS CALLED FOR THE REPEAL OF THE HATCH ACT PROTECTION AGAINST POLITICAL ACTIVITY BY FEDERAL EMPLOYEES. THIS WOULD MAKE IT POSSIBLE TO MOBILIZE THE FEDERAL BUREAUCRACY INTO A POWERFUL POLITICAL MACHINE. THE HATCH ACT WAS DESIGNED TO PROTECT THE INTEGRITY OF THE CIVIL SERVICE FROM POLITICAL ABUSE. IT WAS DESIGNED TO PROTECT CIVIL SERVANTS FROM THE POLITICAL PRESSURES OF THEIR BOSSES. UNDER THE PRESIDENT'S PLAN, POLITICAL CONFORMITY COULD BE ENFORCED. THE BATTLE TO CONTROL THE GROWTH AND INFLUENCE OF THE BUREAUCRACY WOULD BE EVEN MORE DIFFICULT IF THAT BUREAUCRACY WERE TURNED INTO A GIANT POLITICAL ORGANIZATION. GIVEN THE REPUBLICAN OPPOSITION TO THE GROWTH OF BIG GOVERNMENT, SUCH A POLITICAL ORGANIZATION WOULD NOT BE TRYING TO HELP US.

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PUBLIC FINANCING

THE THIRD REQUEST IS TO PROVIDE FOR PUBLIC FINANCING OF CONGRESSIONAL CAMPAIGNS. THIS WOULD INVOLVE LIMITATIONS ON PRIVATE SPENDING IN CAMPAIGNS. THE TROUBLE WITH THAT IS THE DIFFICULTY IN RESTRICTING ALL PRIVATE CONTRIBUTIONS. A PUBLIC SUBSIDY WOULD FREE THE LABOR UNIONS TO INVEST THEIR ENORMOUS HUMAN AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES IN THE KIND OF CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES THAT WOULD NOT BE COVERED BY LIMITATION.

AS YOU KNOW, PUBLIC FINANCING OF THE LAST GENERAL ELECTION WAS SUPPOSED TO SHUT OFF PRIVATE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE TWO MAJOR PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES.

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ACCORDING TO NATIONAL JOURNAL, LABOR SPENT AT LEAST HALF AS MUCH TO HELP ELECT PRESIDENT CARTER AS PRESIDENT CARTER WAS ABLE TO SPEND HIMSELF OUT OF PUBLIC FUNDS -- WHICH WAS \$21.8 MILLION. THE MAGAZINE WENT ON TO SAY: "PUBLIC FINANCING COULD LEAVE LABOR IN AS DOMINATE A POSITION ON CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS AS IT WAS IN 1976 ON THE PRESIDENTIAL. UNIVERSAL REGISTRATION WOULD PERMIT LABOR TO DIVERT THE RESOURCES IT NOW APPLIES TO REGISTRATION TO SUCH PURPOSES AS BEEFING UP ITS COMMUNICATIONS AND VOTER PARTICIPATION PROGRAMS. WHEN LABOR UNITES BEHIND ONE CANDIDATE, AS IT DID IN 1976, A FLAT-GRANT SYSTEM OF PUBLIC FINANCING IN WHICH PRIVATE CONTRIBUTIONS ARE PROHIBITED LEAVES IT IN A POSITION NO OTHER GROUPS CAN MATCH."

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TAKEN TOGETHER -- VOTING WITHOUT ADVANCE REGISTRATION, PUBLIC FINANCING OF CAMPAIGNS WITH A LIMIT ON PRIVATE CONTRIBUTIONS, THE POLITICAL ORGANIZATION OF THE FEDERAL BUREAUCRACY -- THESE PROPOSALS ARE INTENDED BY THE PRESIDENT TO STRENGTHEN HIS PARTY'S HOLD ON THE POLITICAL SYSTEM. PARTISAN DISADVANTAGE IS NOT REASON ENOUGH TO BE AGAINST THESE PLANS, I KNOW. TO THE EXTENT THAT THEY ALSO ENCOURAGE THE SPLINTERING AWAY OF THIRD PARTIES, THEY WOULD LEAD TO THE DISINTEGRATION OF OUR STRONG TWO-PARTY SYSTEM AT A TIME, I SUBMIT, WHEN MORE THAN EVER BEFORE, AMERICA NEEDS A REVIVAL OF TWO STRONG PARTIES. TAKEN TOGETHER, THESE "REFORMS" WOULD, IN FACT, BRING ABOUT A MAJOR TRANSFORMATION OF THE U.S. POLITICAL SYSTEM. A DEMOCRATIC PRESIDENT AND A DEMOCRATIC CONGRESS WOULD LIKE TO PRESIDE OVER THIS READJUSTMENT, AND FURTHER TIP THE BALANCE OF POLITICAL POWER -- ALL IN THE NAME OF "REFORM".

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DIRECT ELECTION

I SUPPORT THE OBJECTIVE BEHIND ANOTHER ELECTORAL REFORM PROPOSAL -- NAMELY, THE POPULAR ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT. I AGREE THAT THE CANDIDATE WHO GETS THE MOST VOTES OUGHT TO WIN, AND THAT NO ELECTORAL COLLEGE TECHNICALITY SHOULD INTERFERE WITH THAT. BUT I AM SERIOUSLY CONCERNED ABOUT HOW THE DIRECT ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT CAN BE PROVIDED WITHOUT ENCOURAGING SPLINTER PARTIES AND MAKING IT POSSIBLE FOR A CANDIDATE TO WIN IF "THE MOST VOTES" IS ONLY 34 OR 40 PERCENT. I HOPE A WORKABLE DIRECT ELECTION CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT CAN BE DEVELOPED, ONE THAT WOULD BE LIKELY TO MAINTAIN OUR TWO-PARTY SYSTEM.

YOU DIDN'T COME TO FLORIDA TO HEAR A REPUBLICAN SPEECH. GOODNESS KNOWS, IF THE ADMINISTRATION CAN GET ITS ACT TOGETHER AND JUGGLE ALL THE CONFLICTING CONSTITUENCES IN THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY, WE REPUBLICANS WILL HAVE PROBLEMS ENOUGH WITHOUT BEING LED DOWN THE PATH TO

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OUR OWN POLITICAL EXECUTION BY A PRESIDENT TALKING ABOUT
"REFORM". THESE QUESTIONS ARE IMPORTANT. THEY INVOLVE
THE BASIC POLITICAL STRUCTURE UNDER WHICH WE GOVERN
OURSELVES.

BECAUSE THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY IS SO COMMITTED TO
GOVERNMENT ACTION -- SO TRADITION-BOUND -- I HAPPEN TO
BELIEVE IT IS THE REPUBLICAN PARTY THAT OFFERS THE EXCITING
OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEW APPROACHES, THE DOWN-TO-EARTH
APPLICATION OF NEW IDEAS. PARTISAN CONSIDERATIONS ASIDE,
WE ALL HAVE A STAKE IN THE CONTINUATION OF TWO
COMPETITIVE PARTIES. WE REPUBLICANS CAN DO OUR BIT.
WE ONLY ASK THAT THE RULES BE FAIR.

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