

REMARKS OF SENATOR BOB DOLE
TESTIMONIAL LUNCHEON FOR COLSTON LEWIS
Statler-Hilton Hotel, Washington, D.C.
Wednesday, September 21, 1977

1-46-77
Dole

AND, AS EVERYONE HERE TODAY WELL KNOWS, COLSTON (CHOKE) LEWIS IS ONE OF A LARGE GROUP OF OUTSTANDING BLACK PUBLIC SERVANTS IN THE NIXON AND FORD ADMINISTRATIONS.

HE HAS THE DISTINCTION OF HAVING SERVED LONGER THAN ANY OTHER BLACK MEMBER OF THE COMMISSION, AND WAS THE FIRST BLACK PRESIDENTIAL APPOINTEE AT THE SUB-CABINET LEVEL FROM THE SOUTH. HIS YEARS OF PUBLIC SERVICE HAVE NOT, HOWEVER, DIMINISHED HIS ACTIVE ROLE IN A VARIETY OF CIVIC AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS.

COLSTON LEWIS HAS BEEN HONORED FOR HIS MANY CONTRIBUTIONS BY THE NAACP AND THE NATIONAL BAR ASSOCIATION, AND HE HAS BEEN NOTABLY ACTIVE IN ORGANIZING LOCAL VOTER LEAGUES IN VIRGINIA. HIS LIST OF ACHIEVEMENTS AND HONORS COULD GO ON AND ON.

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ALL THROUGHOUT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, IN FEDERAL EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS, ON BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS OF IMPORTANT REGULATORY AGENCIES, AND AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF THE WHITE HOUSE, BLACKS, HELPED SHAPE NATIONAL POLICY. UNFORTUNATELY, THE NEW ADMINISTRATION WAS QUICK TO REPLACE THESE HIGHLY COMPETENT BLACK AND EXPERIENCED INDIVIDUALS WITH IN MOST CASES, NON-BLACK APPOINTEES.

YOU STILL HAVE MUCH TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE BETTERMENT OF LIFE IN AMERICA. AND I PLEDGE TO DO WHATEVER I CAN TO HELP IN SECURING PROMINENT POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY, BOTH IN THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS FOR ANY HERE, OR ELSEWHERE, WHO MAY BE LOOKING AROUND. THE DOORS OF MY OFFICE ARE OPEN, AND I WANT TO DO EVERYTHING I CAN TO HELP.

IF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY HAS BEEN RESPONSIVE TO THE CONCERNS OF BLACK AMERICANS, THE 1976 ELECTIONS MADE IT ABUNDANTLY CLEAR THAT THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF BLACKS WERE NOT AWARE OF IT.

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DESPITE THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS, DESPITE THE RECORD OF COMMITMENT THROUGH EIGHT YEARS OF REPUBLICAN ADMINISTRATION, BLACK AMERICANS PERCEIVE US AS A PARTY OF POLITICAL "AGAINSTERS".

REPUBLICANS HAVE BEEN GIVEN LITTLE CREDIT FOR THE CONSIDERABLE ACHIEVEMENTS REALIZED UNDER REPUBLICAN ADMINISTRATIONS. THE FACTS ARE: SPENDING FOR CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVITIES INCREASED FOUR-FOLD UNDER EIGHT YEARS OF REPUBLICAN RULE; TOTAL FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT FOR MINORITY GROUPS INCREASED NEARLY 10%; EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION OUTLAYS INCREASED MORE THAN SEVEN-FOLD, THAT THE BUDGET OF THE OFFICE OF MINORITY BUSINESS ENTERPRISE WENT FROM \$1½ MILLION TO OVER \$50 MILLION IN JUST EIGHT YEARS, THAT SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION LOANS FOR MINORITY ENTERPRISES MORE THAN DOUBLED, THAT THERE WERE MORE TOP BLACK FEDERAL EXECUTIVES IN HIGH GOVERNMENT OFFICES THAN IN ANY PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION, REPUBLICAN OR DEMOCRAT.

WHAT MATTERED IN LAST YEAR'S ELECTION -- AND WHAT ULTIMATELY CONTRIBUTED TO THE REPUBLICAN PARTY'S LOSS OF THE WHITE HOUSE -- WERE THE HUMAN FACTORS:

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(1) BLACK UNEMPLOYMENT NEARLY DOUBLED THE WHITE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE, ONE OUT OF EVERY THREE BLACK TEENAGERS UNABLE TO FIND WORK, (2) HOUSING, (3) THE CONTINUING DECAY OF AMERICA'S INNER CITIES, AND (4) LACK OF BLACK PARTICIPATION IN THE CAMPAIGN.

IN DESPERATION, THE BLACK VOTERS OF THIS NATION TURNED OVERWHELMINGLY TO THE CANDIDATES AND PARTY WHICH SEEMED TO DEMONSTRATE A REAL SENSITIVITY TO THE PROBLEMS WHICH CONFRONT THE BLACK COMMUNITY, WHICH ADVOCATED GOVERNMENT ACTION TO SOLVE THESE PROBLEMS, AND NOT THE PARTY WHICH WAS PERCEIVED TO ADVOCATE THE STATUS QUO.

I HAVE ASKED MYSELF MANY TIMES SINCE NOVEMBER: WHAT DOES THIS PORTEND FOR THE REPUBLICAN PARTY?

FIRST, IT DEMONSTRATES THAT A MAJORITY OF THE ELECTORATE HAS NOT LOST FAITH IN OUR POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS, IN THE ABILITY OF GOVERNMENT TO HELP REMEDY NATIONAL PROBLEMS. BLACK AMERICANS, LIKE AMERICANS GENERALLY, RIGHTFULLY BELIEVE THAT GOVERNMENT HAS AN OBLIGATION TO TRY. AND THEY ARE LOOKING FOR POLITICAL LEADERS WHO SHARE THEIR VIEWS, WHO OPENLY PROFESS THEIR INTEREST IN FINDING WORKABLE SOLUTIONS TO OUR PROBLEMS.

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THE REPUBLICAN PARTY IS CONCERNED ABOUT THE PROBLEMS WHICH CONFRONT BLACKS IN AMERICA. WE ARE JUST AS ALARMED AS ANY DEMOCRAT ABOUT THE UNCONSCIONABLY HIGH RATE OF UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY, ABOUT THE LINGERING BUT MORE SUBTLE DISCRIMINATION WHICH STILL CONFRONTS OUR BLACK CITIZENS, AND ABOUT THE NEED FOR GOVERNMENT TO HELP. WE ARE NOT INSENSITIVE. REPUBLICANS DO CARE. WE CARE FOR THE POOR FAMILY TRAPPED IN THE GHETTO OF THE SOUTH BRONX JUST AS MUCH AS WE CARE ABOUT THE NEED FOR JOB CREATING INVESTMENT CAPITAL FOR A MANUFACTURING PLANT IN THE MIDWEST. WE MAY HAVE A DIFFERENT APPROACH -- MAYBE A BETTER SOLUTION -- BUT OUR RESPONSIBILITY NOW AND IN THE FUTURE IS TO DEMONSTRATE THAT CONCERN TO BLACKS AND ALL OTHER AMERICANS WHO DOUBT OUR SINCERITY.

IF WE ARE TO SURVIVE AS A PARTY, WE NEED BLACK VOTES JUST AS WE NEED SUPPORT FROM THE YOUNG, THE HISPANICS, THE BLUE-COLLAR WORKERS. THESE GROUPS HAVE NOT BEEN EASY TO REACH. OR PERHAPS -- WE HAVEN'T'T REALLY AND EFFECTIVELY TRIED. BUT HOW BETTER TO TEST THE VITALITY OF OUR REPUBLICAN BELIEFS THAN BY PERSUADING ALL AMERICANS, FACE-TO-FACE AS INDIVIDUALS, THAT WHAT WE STAND FOR BEST SERVES THEIR INTERESTS. HOW BETTER TO DEMONSTRATE THAT WE STAND FOR THE INTEREST OF ALL AMERICANS BY REACHING OUT ACROSS THE WHOLE BROAD SPECTRUM OF OUR POPULATION FOR SUPPORT.

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CERTAINLY, WE CANNOT APPROACH THE TASK OF REBUILDING THE IMAGE OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY IN A TOTALLY PARTISAN MANNER. THAT MAY SOUND LIKE A STRANGE AND CONTRADICTIONARY STATEMENT. BUT WE MUST FACE THE REALITY OF A DEMOCRATIC WHITE HOUSE, A DEMOCRATIC CONGRESS, AND DEMOCRATIC CONTROL OF MOST GOVERNORSHIPS AND MOST STATE LEGISLATURES. WE MUST BE PREPARED TO WORK WITH OUR POLITICAL ADVERSARIES TO FASHION WORKABLE AND HUMANE GOVERNMENT POLICIES. AND, OF COURSE, WE SHOULD BE PREPARED TO OFFER ATTRACTIVE ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS WHEN THOSE ESPOUSED BY THE MAJORITY PARTY ARE NOT MERITORIOUS.

I HAVE NOT HESITATED IN THE PAST TO WORK WITH MY DEMOCRATIC COLLEAGUES TO FORMULATE NEW GOVERNMENT POLICIES WHICH RESPOND TO THE NEEDS OF SOME IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY.

I WAS INTERESTED TO NOTE THAT PRESIDENT CARTER, IN DEFENDING HIS ADMINISTRATION FROM ATTACKS BY PROMINENT BLACK LEADERS, LISTED ELIMINATION OF THE FOOD STAMP PURCHASE REQUIREMENT AS ONE OF THE THREE OR FOUR MAIN BLACK INITIATIVES OF HIS ADMINISTRATION. I AM PROUD TO SAY THAT THE ELIMINATION OF THE FOOD STAMP PURCHASE REQUIREMENT -- WHICH ENABLES MORE NEEDY AMERICANS TO RECEIVE FOOD ASSISTANCE -- IS AN IDEA WHICH I PIONEERED ALONG WITH MY DEMOCRATIC COLLEAGUE GEORGE MCGOVERN OVER TWO YEARS AGO. IT IS IMPORTANT, PROGRESSIVE REFORM FOR

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LOW INCOME AMERICANS, AND I AM PROUD THAT IT WAS A REPUBLICAN INITIATIVE IN WHICH PRESIDENT CARTER NOW TAKES PRIDE.

THAT'S JUST ONE EXAMPLE -- AN EXTREMELY IMPORTANT ONE, I MIGHT ADD -- THE CONCERN OF ONE REPUBLICAN SENATOR. AND THERE ARE MANY OTHERS, CAUSES WHICH HAVE BEEN CHAMPIONED BY BOTH LIBERALS AND CONSERVATIVES IN THE REPUBLICAN PARTY.

JUST THIS YEAR, OVER ADMINISTRATION OBJECTIONS, WE WERE ABLE TO SECURE PASSAGE OF AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT OF THE REPUBLICAN ECONOMIC STIMULUS PACKAGE -- THE JOBS TAX CREDIT. I THINK THIS INNOVATIVE CONCEPT, WHICH IS NOW PART OF OUR TAX LAWS, HOLDS GREAT PROMISE FOR LOWERING THE UNCOMMONLY HIGH RATE OF BLACK TEENAGE UNEMPLOYMENT. IF PROPERLY ADMINISTERED AND EXPANDED, IT WILL PERMIT PRIVATE BUSINESSES TO BE ABLE TO AFFORD TO HIRE MORE BLACK TEENAGERS, TEACH THEM A SKILL, AND MAKE THEM PRODUCTIVE IN THE ECONOMY.

YOUNG BLACK MEN AND WOMEN DESPERATELY WANT JOBS. WE HAVE ALL HEARD OF THE 5,000 BLACK MEN AND WOMEN IN CHICAGO WHO SHOWED UP TO APPLY FOR 300 JOBS AT A NEW GROCERY STORE AND ABOUT 30,000 PEOPLE WHO APPLIED FOR 1,800 NEW JOBS IN DETROIT. THESE HEART-RENDING STORIES DO MORE THAN ANYTHING I

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CAN THINK OF TO PUNCTURE ONCE AND FOR ALL THE MYTH THAT LOW-INCOME FAMILIES AND MOST WELFARE RECIPIENTS PREFER THE PUBLIC TROUGH TO PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT.

AND SINCE IT IS SUCH AN URGENT PROBLEM, LET ME SAY ONE MORE WORD ABOUT UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY. WHEN PRESIDENT FORD LEFT OFFICE, THERE WERE NEARLY 1.4 MILLION BLACKS OUT OF WORK. TODAY, BLACK JOBLESSNESS HAS INCREASED BY NEARLY 100,000 NATIONWIDE. BLACK TEENAGE UNEMPLOYMENT ROSE FROM 36% TO OVER 40% DURING THE FIRST SIX MONTHS OF THE YEAR. IN FAIRNESS, THESE UNFORTUNATE STATISTICS ILLUSTRATE THE SERIOUS STRUCTURAL NATURE OF THE BLACK UNEMPLOYMENT PROBLEM RATHER THAN ANY INSENSITIVITY ON THE PART OF PRESIDENT CARTER. PRESIDENT CARTER IS CERTAINLY NO LESS SENSITIVE TO THIS PROBLEM THAN WAS PRESIDENT FORD BEFORE HIM. BUT THESE SAD STATISTICS DEMONSTRATE THAT CAMPAIGN PROMISES OF MORE JOBS, TO WHICH THE BLACK COMMUNITY RESPONDED AFFIRMATIVELY, ARE NOT SO EASILY TRANSLATABLE INTO ACTUAL JOBS FOR REAL PEOPLE. AND THIS APPARENT TREND IN BLACK UNEMPLOYMENT MAY ALSO EXPLAIN WHY PRESIDENT CARTER'S PUBLIC APPROVAL RATING AMONG BLACK AMERICANS HAS PLUNGED RATHER DRAMATICALLY IN RECENT WEEKS.

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CLEARLY, THE LONG-TERM NATURE OF THE UNEMPLOYMENT PROBLEM MANIFESTS THE NEED FOR NEW AND INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS -- APPROACHES SUCH AS THE EMPLOYMENT TAX CREDIT MECHANISM. IN VIEW OF THE INORDINATELY HIGH RATE OF BLACK TEENAGE UNEMPLOYMENT, THAT WILL NOT BE ENOUGH. IN THE SHORT TERM, WE WILL NEED TO RESORT TO MORE GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS TO PROVIDE TEMPORARY JOBS. THAT IS CERTAINLY NO PANACEA, BUT ONE I WOULD SUPPORT -- IF IT IS DRAFTED TO PROVIDE POSITIVE RESULTS. ULTIMATELY, THE WAY TO INSURE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FOR OUR BLACK, SPANISH-SPEAKING AND OTHER MINORITY CITIZENS IS TO INVOLVE THEM IN THE MAINSTREAM OF OUR FREE ENTERPRISE SYSTEM. WE REPUBLICANS RECOGNIZE THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS A DUTY TO NOT ONLY REMOVE THE BARRIERS THAT RESTRICT MINORITY BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, BUT ALSO TO PROVIDE A LITTLE ADDED HELP -- A FEW ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES -- TO ENCOURAGE THE EXPANSION OF MINORITY BUSINESS.

MY REPUBLICAN COLLEAGUE, SENATOR CHARLES MATHIAS OF MARYLAND, HAS JOINED ME IN INTRODUCING LEGISLATION WHICH WILL HELP PROVIDE THAT NEEDED BOOST--THE MINORITY BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1977 -- LEGISLATION WHICH WOULD DOUBLE THE BUDGET LEVEL ESTABLISHED BY PRESIDENT CARTER FOR MINORITY BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT.

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I'M NOT GOING TO STAND HERE AND SUGGEST THAT OUR MINORITY BUSINESS BILL OR THE JOBS TAX CREDIT ARE GOING TO SOLVE ALL THE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY. THEY WON'T. NOR SHOULD THEY. IN MY VIEW, A GOVERNMENT PROGRAM BIG ENOUGH TO GUARANTEE SUCCESS CARRIES WITH IT THE SEEDS OF ITS OWN DESTRUCTION. A GOVERNMENT BIG ENOUGH TO PROVIDE EVERYTHING MUST ALSO TAKE BACK NEARLY EVERYTHING TO PAY FOR WHAT IT IS DOING.

UNLIKE OUR DEMOCRATIC FRIENDS, WE REPUBLICANS ARE NOT GOING TO OVER-PROMISE. WE ARE NOT INTERESTED IN A GOVERNMENT WHICH DIRECTS PEOPLE'S LIVES RATHER THAN GIVING THEM THE OPPORTUNITY TO ACHIEVE THEIR OWN GOALS AND MAKE THEIR OWN DECISIONS. BUT WE ARE CONCERNED. WE KNOW THAT OUR FAILURE TO TAKE THE 1976 CAMPAIGN TO THE BLACK VOTERS OF THIS COUNTRY COST US DEARLY. IT IS A LESSON THAT SHOULD NEVER BE FORGOTTEN BY OUR PARTY.

I'M PLEASED THAT BILL BROCK AND THE REPUBLICAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE HAVE COMMITTED A SUBSTANTIAL AMOUNT OF RESOURCES TO RECRUITMENT OF BLACK PARTY MEMBERS AND BLACK REPUBLICAN CANDIDATES FOR IMPORTANT STATE, LOCAL, AND FEDERAL OFFICES. LAST WEEKEND'S ELECTION OF A PROMINENT BLACK REPUBLICAN, DR. ARIS ALLEN, AS STATE PARTY CHAIRMAN IN MARYLAND, IS VISIBLE EVIDENCE OF THE COMMITMENT OF REPUBLICANS TO BRING MORE BLACKS INTO OUR PARTY.

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BUT THIS IS ONLY A BEGINNING. IT'S AN EFFORT WE MUST UNDERTAKE IF WE ARE TO CONVINCE BLACK AMERICANS THAT WE REALLY WANT THEIR SUPPORT.

WE HAVE SOMETHING TO OFFER BLACK AMERICANS AND THEY HAVE SOMETHING TO CONTRIBUTE TO OUR PARTY. THE PARTY OF LINCOLN IS STILL THE PARTY OF THE PEOPLE. OUR GOALS, OUR IDEALS, OUR HOPES AND DREAMS FOR THE FUTURE ARE GOOD FOR ALL AMERICANS, BLACK AND WHITE, RICH AND POOR, YOUNG AND OLD. AND I INTEND TO DO EVERYTHING I CAN TO CONVINCE BLACKS AND OTHERS WHO VIEW THE REPUBLICAN PARTY WITH DOUBT THAT THIS IS SO.

IN THE DAYS, MONTHS, AND YEARS AHEAD REPUBLICANS NEED TO MAKE THE EXTRA EFFORT TO ERASE THE LINGERING IMAGE OF OUR PARTY AS A CADRE OF THE ELITE, THE WEALTHY, THE INSENSITIVE. THIS GROUP HERE TODAY -- YES, EVEN OUR DEMOCRATIC FRIENDS IN THE AUDIENCE -- SHOULD BE AN INTEGRAL PART OF THIS EFFORT.

IT IS AN EFFORT WHICH MUST SUCCEED. NOTHING LESS THAN THE FUTURE OF THE TWO-PARTY SYSTEM -- THE CORNERSTONE OF THE STABLE AMERICAN DEMOCRACY WHICH HAS ENDURED FOR OVER TWO CENTURIES -- IS AT STAKE. IT IS NOT JUST A REPUBLICAN PROBLEM, AND IF WE WANT A TWO-PARTY SYSTEM IN AMERICA IT IS A PEOPLE PROBLEM AND WE MUST ACT.

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