

REMARKS BY SENATOR BOB DOLE
CAMPAIGN KICK-OFF DINNER
CONGRESSMAN MATTHEW RINALDO
West Orange, New Jersey
April 14, 1978

I am delighted to be in West Orange this evening to help the people of the 12th District pay tribute to Matt Rinaldo, an outstanding Representative for New Jersey in Congress, and a man whose independence of thought, clarity of expression on major issues, and public candor have earned him the utmost respect from his colleagues on both sides of the aisle.

TWO-PARTY DEMOCRACY

As a Republican, I am especially proud that men like Matt Rinaldo and Cliff Case are in the Congress. Though we occasionally disagree on the issues, we know that the existence of two broadly-based political parties is essential to stability in a Democratic society. Because only when there is a reasonable balance between the two great American political parties is government truly responsive to the needs of all its citizens. In Trenton and in Washington, the Republicans are considerably outnumbered by the Democrats. I don't think that's good for New Jersey. And it is not good for America.

But numbers alone do not tell the whole story. Republicans often join with like-minded Democrats to fight for fiscally responsible government, for government which is responsive to the needs of its citizens, for government which lets us lead our lives as we see fit, not as a faceless, impersonal bureaucracy would dictate. And that philosophy -- of limited, compassionate, and responsive government -- attracts support all across the political spectrum.

BIPARTISAN SUPPORT

I know there are many Democrats and Independents in tonight's audience. And that's a testament to Matt Rinaldo's commitment to good government, to his record of responsiveness to the people of the 12th District. Naturally, his electoral success and his many legislative victories are good for the Republican Party. And I think that's good for everyone. Not just because I'm a Republican, but because the importance of the two-party system is not first that it keeps the Republican Party alive, but that it keeps our system of Democratic -- with a little "d" -- government alive.

THE RINALDO RECORD

In his three terms in Congress, Matt Rinaldo has built a solid reputation among his constituents and his colleagues in Congress for his votes to promote economic growth and jobs, for meaningful tax relief for the people of Union County and America, and for a strong national defense. Matt knows that we need creative, constructive, positive initiatives if government is to be responsive to the people that it is designed to serve. He knows that as a member of the opposition party he must do more than criticize the incumbent Administration. And while he doesn't hesitate to call the Administration to account, he's always prepared to be positive in proposing alternative solutions to the problems that face America.

ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

I think everyone here tonight would agree that the economy -- problems of inflation, high taxation, unemployment, and excessive government regulations -- is the most perplexing problem confronting our nation today. There's still not enough jobs for people who need them, especially in our densely populated cities and among the young, the black, the Hispanic. Some progress has been made, but slight gains in employment have been off-set

by resurging inflation and unwieldy government red tape. We are all searching for the right answer, for the proper mix of economic policies which will restore the economic health of our cities, prevent the financial collapse of our farmers, sharply reduce the rate of unemployment among the disadvantaged, lend a helping hand to those who can't take care of themselves, protect the American consumer, and reduce costly government economic regulation.

We've simply got to get the American economy back on a steady track. We've got to do everything we can to relieve the unconscionably high tax burden on the American people. And we've got to do it in a way which will not further fuel the resurging fires of inflation.

TAX REDUCTION

Matt Rinaldo and I think a good place to start is by reducing federal taxes. We believe a properly focused tax cut, coupled with tax incentives for the creation of new jobs, will not only ease the burden of tax inflation on the American people, but also lead to the creation of rewarding, productive jobs for Americans who need them. Put quite simply, we want to put more money in the hands of the people who earn it and less in the grubby paws of government. Because we happen to think that the people in Union County know better how to spend their money than do the Washington Bureaucrats.

A vigorous growing national economy -- stimulated by meaningful tax reductions -- can actually yield government more revenue and enable us to close the inflation-producing budget deficit.

JOB CREATION

But tax reductions won't be enough. If we are to cope with inflation and unemployment, it is going to take a redoubling of government's efforts to focus our limited resources on programs which encourage job creation, especially in the private sector. Within the past few weeks, President Carter has announced some tentative first steps to fight inflation and encourage the addition of new jobs in our metropolitan areas. On the jobs front, I am pleased that the President is placing more emphasis on mechanisms such as the jobs tax credit and on federal tax incentives for business to encourage employment in areas where joblessness is especially high -- an idea that Matt Rinaldo has already introduced in the House of Representatives.

Of course, we won't ever have a stable, growing economy, we won't ever deal with chronic unemployment and underemployment, unless we get a handle on inflation -- that insidious force which destroys consumer confidence, cuts purchasing power, and destroys jobs. I think President Carter is showing signs of taking a lesson from his predecessor on this front. President Ford beat double-digit into single-digit inflation by applying an old-fashioned American virtue called discipline. He minimized government interference in the economy. He disciplined himself and his Administration against all the special forces which drive up the cost of government, drive up the amount of money in circulation, drive up our debt and the interest which goes with it, and thereby drive up the cost of everything we buy in Union County, in New Jersey, in America.

Frankly, his discipline may have cost him the election. But President Ford drove down inflation from over 10 percent to under 6 percent. And he gave us the formula to do it again.

TOKEN LEADERSHIP

By contrast, the present Administration has offered only token leadership on this front. Despite its package of proposals to reform everything in sight -- the bureaucracy, welfare, taxation, civil service, social security, and urban affairs -- until now the Administration has been unable, or unwilling, to come to grips with inflation. There are, in fact, economists who claim that the Administration's policies on wages, prices, and imports already have increased inflation by at least one percent this year.

I think it's time we put a stop to windfall profits. And the only steady recipient of windfall profits over the past few years has been government, because government is inflation's most satisfied constituent.

Did you know, for instance, that it will be May 15 before the average American will stop working for government -- state, federal, or local -- and start working for himself. It takes that long, that many months worth of wages, for the average family to earn enough money just to pay all the federal, state, and local sales, income, property, gasoline, and other taxes.

THE TAX TREADMILL

In other words, we're in a kind of quicksand, like the man ascending a ladder who finds it sinking deeper with each rung he climbs.

Too often our taxpayers find that everytime they receive a pay increase it turns out to be an illusion because it pushes them into a higher tax bracket, and floods them with higher taxes still. Either they end up losing money, or what little is left of their raises is eaten up by inflation.

It's like the Red Queen told Alice in Wonderland: "Here it takes all the running you can do to keep in the same place. If you want to go somewhere else, you must run twice as fast." Well, today, the American taxpayer is Alice. The Internal Revenue Service is Wonderland and the taxpayers don't seem to be making much progress.

As political leaders, as men and women interested in fair taxation and good government, we have an obligation to respond, to institute the policies necessary to cope with inflation, to get the American taxpayer off the treadmill.

REFORMING GOVERNMENT SPENDING

I think we can do it. And we can do it without destroying Government's commendable efforts to help the poor, feed the hungry, to provide for a strong national defense, to encourage energy conservation and production. Government simply doesn't have to be as big as it is to be good. Realistically speaking, we're not going to make drastic cuts in government services. I, for one, don't think we should. But we must slow the never-ending growth of government. We must respond to the hard-pressed American taxpayer. I think Matt Rinaldo understands that, and I think the people of Union County appreciate his concern.

MATT RINALDO UNDERSTANDS

The list of reasons why Matt Rinaldo should be elected goes far beyond his understanding of the pocketbook realities of the American Taxpayer. Sure, he's fighting for tax relief, for a strong national defense, for a fair share of federal dollars in Union County, but he does a lot more than that. You know when you call or write Matt Rinaldo, you'll get a quick response. Your letters aren't going to wind up in the lost file. You know he's a Congressman who cares about all the people in his District, Republican or Democrat, Liberal or Conservative, rich or poor.

That's why Matt Rinaldo has the trust of the people of the 12th District. He gets results right here at the grass roots and in Washington. When we get more people like Matt Rinaldo in Congress -- and in state and local government too -- the American people will again have faith that they control their government and not the other way around.

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