

REMARKS OF SENATOR BOB DOLE
1978 CAMPAIGN KICK-OFF
MECKLENBURG COUNTY EXECUTIVE REPUBLICAN COMMITTEE
CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA
FRIDAY, MAY 12, 1978

NOT LONG AGO, THE REINS OF NATIONAL LEADERSHIP WERE TURNED OVER TO A NEW PRESIDENT, A MAN WHO CAPTURED HIS PARTY'S NOMINATION AND SURVIVED A CLOSE ELECTION WITH A PLEDGE TO SHAKE UP THE WASHINGTON ESTABLISHMENT, TO MAKE GOVERNMENT AS GOOD AS THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, TO ALTER THE TRADITIONAL WAY OF DOING THINGS IN THE NATION'S CAPITOL. THAT TRANSITION BROUGHT WITH IT A BREATH OF HOPE FOR MANY AMERICANS, A FLEETING MOOD OF OPTIMISM WHICH SEEMS TO ENGULF OUR NATION AT THE BEGINNING OF ANY NEW ADMINISTRATION. AND, TOO, IT SERVED TO REMIND REPUBLICANS EVERYWHERE -- ESPECIALLY HERE IN THE SOUTH -- OF THE NARROWNESS OF OUR POLITICAL BASE, OF THE VITALITY OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY, OF THE DESPERATE NEED FOR OUR PARTY TO REGAIN THE CONFIDENCE OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, TO CONVINCE THEM THAT WHAT WE STAND FOR BEST SERVES THEIR INTERESTS.

-2-

AMERICANS ARE DISILLUSIONED

TODAY -- BARELY SIXTEEN MONTHS LATER -- THE BREATH OF HOPE HAS BEEN SUFFOCATED, THE MOOD OF OPTIMISM HAS VANISHED, AND THE TRADITIONAL WAY OF DOING THINGS IS STILL VERY MUCH ALIVE IN WASHINGTON. THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ARE APPREHENSIVE, DISILLUSIONED WITH THEIR PRESIDENT, SKEPTICAL OF THEIR GOVERNMENT, UNSURE ABOUT THEIR FUTURE. THE RENEWED CONFIDENCE IN AMERICA AT HOME AND ABROAD IS FADING. AND THE PROSPECTS FOR OUR PARTY -- IN CHARLOTTE, IN NORTH CAROLINA, AND AROUND THIS NATION -- ARE ONCE AGAIN ON THE RISE.

AS REPUBLICANS, WE SHOULD BE ELATED. WE SHOULD BE THANKFUL THAT THE LACK OF LEADERSHIP IN THE WHITE HOUSE AND ON CAPITOL HILL HAS GIVEN US A NEW LEASE ON LIFE AND OPENED UP TREMENDOUS OPPORTUNITIES

-3-

THIS YEAR AND IN 1980.

BUT WE MUST RECOGNIZE THAT OUR IMPROVED PROSPECTS REFLECT NOT JUST WHAT WE'VE BEEN DOING TO STRENGTHEN OUR PARTY BUT, PERHAPS MORE IMPORTANTLY, WHAT THE DEMOCRATS HAVE FAILED TO DO FOR OUR COUNTRY.

SO WHILE WE, AS REPUBLICANS, MAY REAP POLITICAL BENEFITS IN 1978, IT IS DIFFICULT FOR ME TO RISE THIS EVENING WITH ANY SENSE OF POLITICAL SATISFACTION OR JUBILATION.

RATHER, I COME BEFORE YOU AS A VERY TROUBLED AMERICAN -- YOUR PARTISAN ALLY -- WITH A GROWING SENSE OF SADNESS AND DISMAY AT WHAT IS HAPPENING IN WASHINGTON, HAPPENING TO OUR COUNTRY, HAPPENING TO OUR NATION IN THE EYES OF THE WORLD.

-4-

REPUBLICAN RESPONSIBILITY

WE FIND AMERICA DIVIDED, UNEASY ABOUT OUR PRESIDENT'S COMMITMENT TO PREEMINENCE IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA, UNSURE AND DISILLUSIONED ABOUT THE LACK OF DIRECTION HERE AT HOME, AND UTTERLY FRUSTRATED BY A FEDERAL GOVERNMENT INCREASINGLY OUT OF TOUCH WITH THE REAL WORLD PROBLEMS OF OUR PEOPLE. IN NORTH CAROLINA AND AROUND THIS NATION, WE REPUBLICANS HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO PROMOTE POLICIES WHICH WILL RESTORE OUR NATION'S COMMITMENT TO NATIONAL STRENGTH, STABILIZE OUR DOMESTIC ECONOMY, FEED THOSE WHO CANNOT FEED THEMSELVES, FIND JOBS FOR THOSE WHO NEED THEM, AND PERHAPS MOST IMPORTANTLY, GIVE THE AMERICAN PEOPLE LESS REASON TO BE CYNICAL ABOUT THE PERSONALITIES AND PROCESSES OF STATECRAFT.

-5-

I THINK THE REPUBLICAN APRTY CAN MEASURE UP TO THIS TASK. WE CAN GIVE THE AMERICAN PEOPLE THE KIND OF GOVERNMENT THEY WANT, IF WE WILL. IF WE ASPIRE TO LEADERSHIP, WE CAN'T AFFORD TO BE NEGATIVE. WE MUST TAKE THE INITIATIVE. WE MUST PROPOSE RESPONSIVE AND RESPONSIBLE PROGRAMS AND POLICIES WHICH WILL RESTORE OUR POSITION OF WORLD LEADERSHIP, STRENGTHEN OUR CITIES, OUR STATES, AND OUR NATION, AND GIVE THE AMERICAN PEOPLE A GOVERNMENT THEY CAN BE PROUD OF.

WE REPUBLICANS CAN DO THESE THINGS IF WE ACT TOGETHER, MOTIVATED BY WHAT UNITES US AND NOT INHIBITED BY WHAT DIVIDES US.

-6-

ERASING THE NEGATIVE IMAGE

SHORTLY AFTER THE 1976 ELECTION, I SAID I THOUGHT WE NEEDED TO BE MORE RESPONSIVE TO ALL SEGMENTS OF OUR POPULATION -- TO BLACKS, TO BLUE COLLAR WORKERS, TO SPANISH SPEAKING AMERICANS, THAT WE COULDN'T AFFORD TO SIT BACK TAKING STIFF-NECKED PRIDE IN OUR REFUSAL TO EXPLORE NEW AVENUES OF APPROACH TO THE AFFECTIONS OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.

I SAID THEN AND I BELIEVE EVEN MORE FIRMLY TODAY THAT WE SHOULD BE MORE INTERESTED IN WINNING ELECTIONS AND SURVIVING THAN IN SEEING OUR PARTY FADE INTO HISTORY, PROUDLY CLINGING TO SOME NARROW NOTION OF IDEOLOGICAL PURITY. WE SIMPLY CANNOT AFFORD TO KEEP WINNING MORAL VICTORIES AND SUSTAINING POLITICAL DEFEATS.

-7-

IF THE SEVENTEEN MONTHS SINCE THE LAST ELECTION ARE ANY INDICATION, WE HAVE EVERY REASON TO BE OPTIMISTIC ABOUT OUR FUTURE. WE'VE GONE A LONG WAY TOWARDS ERASING THE NEGATIVE IMAGE OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY AS A PARTY WHICH CARES ONLY FOR THE RICH AND NOT THE POOR, THE BUSINESSMAN AND NOT THE WORKING MAN, THOSE WHO CAN HELP THEMSELVES AND NOT THOSE WHO NEED HELP.

POSITIVE CANDIDATES WITH A POSITIVE PHILOSOPHY

IN 1978, WE'RE DOING MORE THAN CRITICIZING A VULNERABLE PRESIDENT. WE'RE OFFERING POSITIVE CANDIDATES WITH A POSITIVE PHILOSOPHY.

-8-

WE'RE PROPOSING POSITIVE PROGRAMS WHICH RESPOND TO THE PUBLIC'S CRY FOR TAX RELIEF, FOR LESS BURDENSOME GOVERNMENT, FOR AN AMERICA WHICH REWARDS INITIATIVE AND HARD WORK.

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ARE DESPERATELY SEARCHING FOR LEADERS WHO SHARE THEIR SENSE OF FRUSTRATION, WHO WANT GOVERNMENT OFF THEIR BACKS AND OUT OF THEIR POCKETS, WHO BELIEVE THAT THE PROPER ROLE OF GOVERNMENT AS SERVANT, NOT MASTER, OF THE PEOPLE IS NOT AN OUTDATED NOTION. THEY WANT MORE THAN INSPIRED RHETORIC ABOUT INDIVIDUALITY AND FREE ENTERPRISE AND NATIONAL STRENGTH. THE VAST MAJORITY OF THE PEOPLE OF NORTH CAROLINA -- AND PEOPLE EVERYWHERE-- ALREADY SHARE OUR BASIC VALUES, OUR PHILOSOPHY. WHAT THEY WANT FROM US ARE CANDIDATES AND PUBLIC OFFICIALS WHO WILL PUT THAT PHILOSOPHY TO WORK IN CHARLOTTE, IN RALEIGH, AND IN WASHINGTON.

-9-

I CAN TELL YOU TONIGHT THAT REPUBLICANS IN WASHINGTON ARE DOING JUST THAT. WE'RE OUT FRONT WITH POSITIVE PROGRAMS TO REDUCE TAXES, TO INCREASE DOMESTIC ENERGY SUPPLIES, TO PROVIDE TUITION RELIEF FOR PARENTS OF COLLEGE STUDENTS, TO REFORM OUR NATION'S ANTIQUATED WELFARE SYSTEM, TO INSURE AN AMERICAN DEFENSE POSTURE SECOND TO NONE.

AND WE'RE STANDING FIRM AGAINST FURTHER INCURSIONS OF FEDERAL POWER AND TO DECISIONS WHICH OUGHT PROPERLY BE LEFT TO INDIVIDUALS, TO PRIVATE ENTERPRISE, OR TO LOCAL UNITS OF GOVERNMENT.

-10-

LABOR REFORM BILL ONE-SIDED

JESSE HELMS AND I ARE GOING TO FIGHT THE ADMINISTRATION'S SO-CALLED "LABOR REFORM BILL", A ONE-SIDED PIECE OF LEGISLATION DESIGNED TO PROMOTE THE INTERESTS OF UNION LEADERS AT THE EXPENSE OF THE RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS OF INDIVIDUAL UNION AND NON-UNION WORKERS.

WE KNOW THAT ORGANIZED LABOR, STILL REELING FROM DEFEATS OF COMMON SITUUS PICKETING AND CARGO PREFERENCE LEGISLATION, IS DESPERATE FOR A VICTORY, THAT UNION MEMBERSHIP HAS DROPPED TO 25% OF THE NON-FARM LABOR FORCE, THAT UNIONS LOST MORE THAN HALF OF ALL CERTIFICATION ELECTIONS LAST YEAR. BUT WE DON'T THINK THAT JUSTIFIES SO-CALLED "REFORMS" WHICH WOULD MAKE GOVERNMENT THE ENFORCER OF UNION DEMANDS. WE DON'T THINK UNION BOSSES SHOULD GO OVER THE HEADS OF THE WORKING MEN AND WOMEN OF THIS NATION BY PUSHING ILL-CONCEIVED

-11-

LEGISLATION WITH ONLY ONE GOAL IN MIND: TO MAKE ORGANIZING IN
NON-UNION STATES SUCH AS NORTH CAROLINA EASIER FOR LABOR LEADERS.

RIGHT TO CHOOSE

I'M NOT OPPOSING LABOR "REFORM" BECAUSE I'M AGAINST UNIONS. I HAPPEN
TO BELIEVE THAT ORGANIZED LABOR SERVES A VERY USEFUL PURPOSE,
THAT MANY NEEDED LABOR REFORMS CAME ABOUT THROUGH THE EFFORTS OF
WORKING MEN AND WOMEN ORGANIZED INTO LABOR UNIONS. BUT THE TOP
LABOR LEADERS HAVE GOTTEN OUT OF TOUCH WITH THE RANK AND FILE.
THEY WANT TO DISCARD ALTOGETHER THE FUNDAMENTAL NOTION THAT EVERY
AMERICAN WORKER WOULD BE ABLE TO CHOOSE FOR HIMSELF OR HERSELF
WHETHER OR NOT TO BELONG TO A LABOR UNION.

OF COURSE, LABOR LAW "REFORM" IS JUST ONE OF THE WAYS GOVERNMENT
SEEKS TO FORCE ITSELF UPON UN, OR SEEKS TO COERCE A COURSE OF ACTION

-12-

IT DEEMS SOCIALLY PRUDENT. PRESIDENT CARTER'S ENERGY AND ECONOMIC PROPOSALS ARE ANOTHER.

TAX "REFORM" PLAN INFLATIONARY

IN THE NAME OF "REFORM" , THE ADMINISTRATION WOULD ELIMINATE MANY OF THE TAX DEDUCTIONS WHICH PROVIDE SOME MEASURE OF RELIEF FOR HARD-PRESSED MIDDLE INCOME TAXPAYERS. WHAT THE PRESIDENT FAILS TO REALIZE, OR HAS CHOSEN TO IGNORE, IS THAT HIS TAX REFORM PROGRAM WILL PILE ANOTHER TAX INCREASE ON TOP OF THE HIGHLY INFLATIONARY SOCIAL SECURITY TAX HIKE AND THE ADMINISTRATION'S \$125 BILLION ENERGY TAX PACKAGE.

MANY OF US IN CONGRESS THINK TAXES ARE TOO HIGH ALREADY. WE'D LIKE TO SEE TAX CUTS ALONG WITH REDUCTIONS IN FEDERAL SPENDING, NOT TAX INCREASES AND SPENDING ESCALATION.

-13-

RETURN TO DOUBLE-DIGIT INFLATION

I'M ALSO ALARMED BY THE GROUNDWORK BEING LAID BY THE ADMINISTRATION FOR THE REIMPOSITION OF CONTROLS ON WAGES AND PRICES. THE PRESIDENT HAS REPEATEDLY DISAVOWED HIS INTENTION TO SEEK SUCH MANDATORY AUTHORITY. BUT, AS ECONOMIST HERBERT STEIN RECENTLY POINTED OUT, FEW CAN PLACE MUCH CONFIDENCE IN THE PRESIDENT'S PROTESTATIONS THAT HE WILL NOT USE MANDATORY CONTROLS IN LIGHT OF THE FACT THAT HE IS ACTIVELY SEEKING SUCH RESTRAINTS ALREADY IN THE ENERGY AND HEALTH CARE FIELDS.

DR. STEIN, A FORMER MEMBER OF THE PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL OF ECONOMIC ADVISORS UNDER THE FORD ADMINISTRATION, CORRECTLY POINTS OUT THAT THE ADMINISTRATION IS CONSTANTLY MISEDUCATING THE PEOPLE IN A WAY WHICH HAS AS ITS LOGICAL END A STRONG POPULAR DEMAND FOR MANDATORY WAGE-PRICE CONTROLS. IT'S CLEAR THAT THE PRESIDENT'S ANTI-INFLATION EFFORTS TO DATE HAVE BEEN WEAK OR NON-EXISTENT.

-14-

AND UNLESS THE GOVERNMENT IS WILLING TO SET AN EXAMPLE, THE PROSPECTS ARE FOR A RETURN TO DOUBLE-DIGIT INFLATION IN THE NOT-TOO-DISTANT FUTURE.

ADMINISTRATION FLOUNDERING

THE ADMINISTRATION IS FLOUNDERING, DESPERATELY SEARCHING FOR AN ISSUE THAT WILL ENABLE THE PRESIDENT TO RECAPTURE THE POPULIST APPEAL OF HIS 1976 CAMPAIGN.

POLITICALLY SPEAKING, I GUESS THAT MAKES SENSE. IF YOU HAD BEEN IN OFFICE NEARLY A YEAR AND A HALF, IF YOU SHARED POWER WITH OVERWHELMING CONGRESSIONAL MAJORITIES OF YOUR OWN PARTY, AND IF YOUR ONLY SUBSTANTIAL LEGISLATIVE "VICTORY" WAS RATIFICATION OF THE PANAMA CANAL TREATY THAT THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE OPPOSED, YOU'D BE LOOKING FOR A POPULAR ISSUE, TOO. I THINK THAT'S HOW PRESIDENT CARTER IS REACTING.

-15-

UNABLE TO GET A SUBSTANTIVE ENERGY PROGRAM PASSED BY A DEMOCRATIC CONGRESS, THE PRESIDENT LEVELED A BROADSIDE ATTACK ON EVERYBODY'S FAVORITE TARGET, THE BIG OIL COMPANIES. SUCCESSFUL IN FORCING THE COAL COMPANIES TO ACCEPT A HUGE WAGE PACKAGE FROM THE MINERS, PRESIDENT CARTER TURNED AROUND AND BLASTED THE STEEL COMPANIES WHEN THEY ANNOUNCED PRICE INCREASES TO COMPENSATE FOR THE HIGHER ENERGY COSTS.

NOW, THE PREISDENT HAS AIMED HIS RHETORICAL BARRAGE TOWARDS PROFESSIONAL GROUPS.

ATTACK ON PROFESSIONAL GROUPS

FIRST, HE BLASTED THE LEGAL PROFESSION AS UNRESPONSIVE TO THE NEEDS OF THE AVERAGE AMERICAN, AND CARING ONLY ABOUT THE LEGAL MANEAUVERINGS OF BIG BUSINESS AND THE WEALTHY. WHAT THE PRESIDENT DIDN'T MENTION WAS THAT THE DEMAND FOR LEGAL SERVICES FROM BUSINESSMEN AND WOMEN IS A DIRECT RESULT OF THE BIG GOVERNMENT PHILOSOPHY

-16-

THE PRESIDENT HIMSELF EMBRACES. THE PRESIDENT'S OWN DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, HIS PROPOSED CONSUMER PROTECTION AGENCY, AND THE SCORES OF OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES, BUREAUS, AND DEPARTMENTS KEEP THOUSANDS OF LAWYERS ON THE GOVERNMENT PAYROLL AND FORCE BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY TO HIRE COUNTLESS MORE TO KEEP UP WITH THE WEB OF RULES AND REGULATIONS SPEWING FORTH FROM WASHINGTON DAY AFTER DAY.

AND HE WENT AFTER THE DOCTORS TOO, ACCUSING THE AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION OF THWARTING ALL THE GOOD IDEAS HE HAS FOR HEALTH CARE IN THE UNITED STATES -- IDEAS LIKE NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE, WHICH COULD COST UP TO \$200 BILLION A YEAR, AND ARBITRARY PRICE CONTROLS ON HOSPITAL SERVICES.

-17-

WHAT EARTHLY GOOD, OTHER THAN TO THE PRESIDENT'S OWN POPULARITY RATINGS, CAN SUCH DEMAGOGIC ATTACKS DO? WHY NOT DO SOMETHING RESPONSIVE LIKE REDUCING FEDERAL PAPERWORK BURDENS SO THAT MORE LAWYERS CAN CONCENTRATE ON PROBLEMS OF THE AVERAGE INDIVIDUAL, LIKE WORKING CONSTRUCTIVELY WITH CONGRESS FOR A CATASTROPHIC HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM WHICH WILL INSURE THAT NO AMERICAN FAMILY WILL BE FINANCIALLY WIPED OUT DUE TO SERIOUS ILLNESS?

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE HAVE HEARD ALL THE RHETORIC BEFORE. I THINK THEY'D LIKE TO SEE THE ADMINISTRATION TALK LESS AND ACCOMPLISH MORE. THEY'D LIKE TO SEE GOVERNMENT WORK WITH BUSINESS AND UNIONS AND DOCTORS AND LAWYERS TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN AMERICA. THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WOULD LIKE TO SEE THEIR PRESIDENT SPEND MORE TIME ON GETTING HIS OWN HOUSE IN ORDER, AND LESS TIME CAMPAIGNING FOR THE JOB HE'S ALREADY SUPPOSED TO BE DOING.

-18-

FAITH IN THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

AS REPUBLICANS, WE DON'T THINK THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE THE ARBITER OF EVERY PRICE AND WAGE DECISION. WE DON'T BELIEVE THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD CONTINUE TO EXTRACT HIGHER AND HIGHER TAXES FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. WE DON'T THINK GOVERNMENT SHOULD FORCE UNIONISM ON UNWILLING WORKERS. WE PUT OUR FAITH IN THE AMERICAN PEOPLE AND THE FREE ENTERPRISE SYSTEM.

I KNOW THAT WHAT WE STAND FOR BEST SERVES THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. I THINK THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ARE TIRED OF MORE-OF-THE-SAME GOVERNMENT. THAT'S WHY THEY'RE RECEPTIVE TO OUR REPUBLICAN PROGRAMS. YET, NO MATTER HOW MERITORIOUS OUR INITIATIVES MAY BE, THEY FACE AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE AT BEST BECAUSE THERE IS A DEMOCRAT IN THE WHITE HOUSE AND A TWO-TO-ONE MAJORITY IN THE CONGRESS. UNLESS WE INCREASE OUR NUMBERS IT WILL BE DIFFICULT TO ADVANCE OUR OWN PROGRAMS BEYOND THE RHETORICAL STAGE.

-19-

NEED FOR RESPONSIBLE BALANCE

AND SO WE STAND AT A POINT IN THE POLITICAL HISTORY OF OUR NATION WHEN THE NEED FOR RESPONSIBLE BALANCE IN WASHINGTON IS GREATER THAN EVER BEFORE. THE PROBLEMS WE FACE TODAY ARE NOT PROBLEMS FOR A ONE-PARTY CONGRESS OR A ONE-PARTY GOVERNMENT. THAT'S WHY IT'S SO IMPORTANT THAT JESSE HELMS BE RE-ELECTED TO THE SENATE THIS YEAR. BECAUSE HE'S NOT JUST AN IMPORTANT NATIONAL SPOKESMAN BUT A MAN KEENLY INTERESTED IN MATTERS THAT CONCERN THE PEOPLE OF NORTH CAROLINA. HERE IN CAROLINA AND AROUND THIS NATION, REPUBLICANS HAVE TREMENDOUS OPPORTUNITIES IN 1978. OUR PHILOSOPHY IS SOUND, OUR IMAGE IMPROVING, OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE CONSISTENT WITH THE HOPES AND DREAMS OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.

WE NEED NOT REMAIN A MINORITY PARTY. NEITHER THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA NOR THE UNITED STATES HAS LEGISLATED OUR MINORITY STATUS.

-20-

BUT NEITHER HAVE THEY LEGISLATED OUR EXISTENCE. SO, WE HAVE
SACRIFICES TO MAKE, WE HAVE HARD WORK TO DO. IF WE WORK TOGETHER,
I THINK WE'LL BE QUITE SUCCESSFUL.

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