

REMARKS OF SENATOR BOB DOLE, REAGAN FOR PRESIDENT RALLY, OVERLAND PARK, KANSAS

America is in a mess. For three years, we have drifted along, rudderless, content with expedients and public relations gestures. We have in the White House a man who confuses personal goodness with administrative capacity, who has given us second place in the international arena, who waves a flag tarnished and abused abroad, and presides over a domestic economy that would do justice to a banana republic.

America is in a mess. And only a Republican Administration can set her straight. The question Jimmy Carter asked three years ago remains relevant tonight. Why Not the Best?

Ronald Reagan is the best, as some of us know first-hand. I don't say that simply because he has a virtual hammerlock on our party's nomination. I have known and worked with both George Bush and John Anderson, and I have both respect and admiration for most of their achievements.

But as I've travelled this country, as I've talked with thousands of Republicans about the shape of America, and the course she ought to take in the 1980's, I've realized more than ever before that grassroots Republicans want Ronald Reagan to be our next President. And they are not alone. In the cross-over primaries to date, Governor Reagan has displayed an impressive ability to attract Independent and Democratic voters, which any Republican must have for victory in November.

The issue then, my friends, is electability. Ronald Reagan can win. He can make his victory a mandate for a new approach to government. I've said it for years, and I'll say it again tonight: We aren't going anywhere as a party as long as we flog away at all the things we're against. People want to hear what we're for. They want to hear alternative ways of dealing with deep-rooted problems. They want to hear how a Republican economy would be more productive than a regulated, straight-jacketed Democratic one.

They want to hear how a Republican foreign policy would be more cohesive and courageous than the long string of surprises and disappointments of the Carter Administration.

We're supposed to be a great nation. Well, I say it's about time we start to act like one. And Ronald Reagan can help make that happen.

He believes in and understands words like profit and incentive. He believes that the only way to solve the energy crisis is to unleash the genius of private enterprise. He believes that the best way to create needed jobs is to free the private sector to do its job. He believes in a government that combines competence with compassion. His record as Governor of California for eight years demonstrated that convincingly.

He believes in a square deal for the American farmer and in preserving the future of the family farm. I know from my own conversations with Governor Reagan that he will bring to agricultural America a combination goal of faith, hope and parity in the market place.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it's time for a change. America needs a new direction, and a new President capable of holding to that direction. The Republican Party needs a chance to prove itself in power.

We have the man who can bring honor to America and our Party -- our next President, Ronald Reagan.