

REMARKS OF SENATOR BOB DOLE
FIFTHIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
FOUNDING OF THE WICHITA VETERANS ADMINISTRATION MEDICAL CENTER
WICHITA, KANSAS
APRIL 29, 1983

I AM DELIGHTED TO BE HERE TODAY IN WICHITA TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS FIFTHIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VETERANS ADMINISTRATION MEDICAL CENTER. WHEN THIS CENTER FIRST OPENED IN 1933, THERE WERE STILL VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR ALIVE, ALTHOUGH THE YOUNGEST OF THEM WOULD HAVE BEEN IN THEIR EIGHTIES THEN. THE CENTER WOULD ALSO HAVE SEEN SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR VETERANS, AND MOST OF ALL - THOSE WHO HAD FOUGHT IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR, THAT WAR WHICH PEOPLE THOUGHT SO TERRIBLE THAT IT WOULD END ALL WARS. ALL OF US ARE OLDER AND WISER TODAY. THREE MORE WARS HAVE COME ALONG TO SWELL THE CEMETERIES, AND THE RANKS OF VETERANS, AND ADD TO THE NUMBERS WHO SEEK ASSISTANCE HERE. THAT ASSISTANCE HAS BEEN GIVEN, AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE GIVEN TO KEEP FAITH WITH THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO SERVE IN OUR COUNTRY'S ARMED SERVICES IN PEACETIME AND WARTIME.

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TWO TRAGIC EVENTS OF THE PAST FEW WEEKS REMIND US THAT IT IS NOT ONLY IN WARTIME THAT CASUALTIES OCCUR. RECENTLY AIR FORCE COLONEL CAROLL GUNTHER OF SALINA WAS KILLED IN THE CRASH IN UTAH OF A B-52, WHICH WENT DOWN WHILE EXERCISING AT AN AIR FORCE WEAPONS RANGE. LAST WEEK YOU ALL READ OR SAW ON TELEVISION THE SHOCKING NEWS OF THE TERRORIST BOMBING OF OUR EMBASSY IN BEIRUT. AMONG THE VICTIMS OF THAT ATTACK WERE MARINES AND ARMY PERSONNEL. IT IS SAD BUT TRUE THAT THE NEED FOR A FACILITY SUCH AS THIS IS UNLIKELY TO VANISH.

I NOTE WITH INTEREST AND SATISFACTION THAT THE MEDICAL CENTER HAS THREE MAJOR CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS IN PROGRESS TO IMPROVE HEALTH CARE SERVICES FOR VETERANS. THE ADDITIONAL AND IMPROVED FACILITIES WHICH WILL RESULT FROM THESE PROJECTS WILL BENEFIT ALL THOSE VETERANS WHO ARE SERVED BY THESE FACILITIES. BUT IT WOULD BE USELESS TO ADD NEW BRICK AND MORTAR TO THE EXISTING BUILDINGS IF THERE WERE NOT WELL QUALIFIED AND DEDICATED DOCTORS, NURSES, THERAPISTS, COUNSELORS,

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AND OTHER SUPPORT PEOPLE TO GIVE LIFE TO THE INSTITUTION, AND TO MAKE IT A PLACE OF HELP AND HEALING FOR THOSE IN DISTRESS. I WOULD LIKE TO NOTE, WITH GREAT APPRECIATION, THE UNSTINTING AND VITAL SERVICE, YOU, WHO MAN THE MEDICAL CENTER, GIVE TO THE VETERANS YOU SERVE. HAVING SPENT A NUMBER OF YEARS IN HOSPITALS AND THERAPY FOLLOWING WORLD WAR TWO, I HAVE A DEEP PERSONAL APPRECIATION FOR THE WORK OF THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO VETERANS.

THE PROFESSIONAL CONNECTION OF THE MEDICAL CENTER WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS SCHOOL OF MEDICINE, AND THE COLLEGE OF HEALTH-RELATED PROFESSIONS AT WICHITA STATE UNIVERSITY, SERVE TO KEEP THE CENTER IN THE MAINSTREAM OF THE MEDICAL PROFESSION. SUCH RELATIONSHIPS HELP TO ENSURE THAT VETERANS BENEFIT FROM ADVANCES IN MEDICAL SCIENCE. IN EXCHANGE THE KNOWLEDGE THAT MEDICAL STUDENTS ACQUIRE HERE NOT ONLY ASSISTS THEM PROFESSIONALLY, BUT WILL IN THE LONG RUN BENEFIT MANY OTHERS.

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ONE OF THE MAJOR PROBLEMS WHICH AFFECTS ALL OF US IS THAT OF BUDGETS. WE HAVE PROBLEMS BALANCING OUR OWN CHECKBOOKS SOMETIMES, AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS HAVING SEVERE PROBLEMS IN BALANCING OUR COLLECTIVE TAXPAYERS' CHECKBOOK. WE NORMALLY REFER TO IT AS THE FEDERAL BUDGET. AS YOU KNOW, FEDERAL DEFICITS HAVE BEEN GROWING OVER THE PAST DECADE. SIMPLY PUT WE ARE CONTINUING TO SPEND EACH FISCAL YEAR MORE THAN WE RECEIVE IN TAXES AND REVENUES. THE DIFFERENCE HAS TO BE FINANCED BY ISSUING TREASURY BILLS AND BONDS, TO BORROW MONEY FROM THE PUBLIC IN ORDER TO CONTINUE TO PAY THE BILLS FOR THE MANY PROGRAMS WHICH WE IN THE CONGRESS HAVE AUTHORIZED IN RESPONSE TO THE PUBLIC'S REQUESTS. OF COURSE, NO ONE LOANS THEIR MONEY FOR NOTHING. SO THERE IS INTEREST TO BE PAID. THAT ADDS TO THE INCREASING LOAD OF DEBT. LET'S FACE IT, ALL DEBT ISN'T BAD. ALL OF US HAVE PROBABLY BORROWED MONEY TO BUY A CAR, TO PURCHASE A HOUSE, OR PERHAPS TO PAY FOR COLLEGE TUITION. AS LONG AS OUR INCOMES CONTINUE AND WE DON'T OVERLOAD OURSELVES WITH DEBT, WE CAN

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REMAIN SOLVENT AND IN FACT IMPROVE OUR LIVES. HOWEVER, WHEN WE LOOK AT THE FEDERAL DEBT PICTURE, ANOTHER FACTOR HAS TO BE CONSIDERED. THERE IS A LIMITED AMOUNT OF PRIVATE SAVINGS WHICH MUST FINANCE THE TOTAL BORROWINGS OF BOTH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR. AS THE DEMAND FOR BORROWING BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT INCREASES, THE AMOUNT OF MONEY AVAILABLE TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR DECREASES AND THE COST OF BORROWING GOES UP. IF WE CROWD THE PRIVATE SECTOR OUT OF THE FINANCIAL MARKET, IT WILL HAVE LONG-RANGE EFFECTS WHICH NONE OF US WANT. FOR IT IS THE PRIVATE SECTOR WHICH PROVIDES THE GOODS AND SERVICES AND EMPLOYMENT WHICH KEEPS OUR ECONOMY HEALTHY. IF THE PRIVATE SECTOR CAN'T BORROW THE FUNDS TO IMPROVE AND MODERNIZE ITS MANUFACTURING PLANTS AND FACILITIES, WE WILL GRADUALLY FALL BEHIND IN OUR ABILITY TO COMPETE BOTH IN THE AMERICAN AND WORLD MARKETS. THE END RESULT WILL BE A REDUCTION IN OUR STANDARD OF LIVING.

WE NEED TO REDUCE FEDERAL DEFICITS TO PREVENT THIS FROM HAPPENING. THAT MEANS WE NEED TO TAKE A CLOSE LOOK AT ALL OF OUR SPENDING, BOTH

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THAT GOING TO DEFENSE AND TO SOCIAL PROGRAMS. WE NEED TO MAXIMIZE THE EFFICIENCY OF EACH DOLLAR SPENT TO BE SURE WE AS TAXPAYERS GET OUR MONEY'S WORTH. IF WE CAN RESTRAIN OR CUT BACK ON FEDERAL DEFICITS WE CAN OBTAIN SOME REAL GROWTH IN OUR ECONOMY AND THUS HAVE A BIGGER PIE TO SHARE WITH EVERYONE. WE ALL KNOW HOW DIFFICULT IT IS TO DECIDE WHAT ITEMS TO CUT OUT OF OUR OWN BUDGETS WHEN WE SEE WE ARE OVERSPENDING. WE GET USED TO THINGS WHICH WE REALLY CAN'T AFFORD AT THE TIME. THE SAME HOLDS TRUE FOR US AS CITIZENS AND TAXPAYERS. WE AUTHORIZE ENTITLEMENT PROGRAMS WITHOUT REALIZING THAT SOONER OR LATER WE MUST PAY THE BILLS. IT IS DIFFICULT TO COME TO GRIPS WITH THE NEED TO CUT BACK ON THAT SPENDING. BUT IT IS VITAL IF THIS COUNTRY'S ECONOMY IS TO CONTINUE TO GROW.

IN CLOSING I WOULD LIKE TO COMMEND THE CENTER DIRECTOR, ROBERT PELKA, FOR THE FINE JOB WHICH HE AND ALL OF HIS STAFF ARE DOING HERE IN WICHITA TO MEET THE NEEDS OF VETERANS.