

REMARKS BY SENATOR BOB DOLE  
DIVISIONAL POST REVIEW  
FORT RILEY, KANSAS  
MAY 18, 1985

IT IS BOTH AN HONOR AND A PLEASURE FOR ME TO BE HERE AT FORT RILEY TO CELEBRATE ARMED FORCES DAY. I ALSO APPRECIATE GENERAL WATT'S KIND INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DIVISIONAL-POST REVIEW. THE CONGRESS AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE--ESPECIALLY THE CITIZENS OF KANSAS, SHOULD TAKE GREAT SATISFACTION IN THE 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION AND THE CONTRIBUTION IT HAS MADE ON BEHALF OF OUR NATIONAL DEFENSE.

THE 1ST HAS AN IMPRESSIVE PAST

THE HISTORY OF THE "BIG RED ONE" IS AN IMPRESSIVE ONE. DATING BACK TO WORLD WAR I, THE FIGHTING FIRST WAS COMMANDED BY NONE OTHER THAN JOHN J. PERSHING. AND, WITHOUT A DOUBT, THE ARGON FOREST BATTLE PROVED THAT THE "FIGHTING FIRST." WAS A FORCE TO BE RECKONED WITH. WHILE THIS SECOND LT. WAS FIGHTING IN ITALY, THE FIRST INFANTRY WAS PARTICIPATING IN D-DAY THEN WENT ON TO PARTICIPATE IN THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE WHERE THE GERMANS SUFFERED MORE THAN 100,000 CASUALTIES, THE ALLIES 81,000. FROM THEN ON, THE GERMAN RETREAT NEVER REALLY STOPPED.

- 2 -

THE 1ST INFANTRY'S WORK WAS NOT DONE. THE "BIG RED" WAS THE FIRST DIVISION TO BE SENT TO VIETNAM IN THE SUMMER OF 1965. WE MAY NOT HAVE RESOLVED OUR NATIONAL DEBATE ABOUT THE VIETNAM WAR AND OUR INVOLVEMENT IN IT. BUT THERE IS ONE ASPECT OF THAT WAR ON WHICH THERE SHOULD BE UNANIMOUS AGREEMENT--THAT THE MORE THAN THREE MILLION AMERICAN WHO SERVED OUR COUNTRY IN THE VIETNAM THEATER DID SO WITH HONOR, WITH DISTINCTION, AND IN A MANNER CONSISTENT WITH THE HIGHEST TRADITIONS OF OUR MILITARY SERVICE.

A MILITARY THAT IS BETTER PREPARED

AS THE FIRST INFANTRY PREPARES FOR THE "REFORGER" EXERCISE IN WEST GERMANY NEXT YEAR, YOU SHOULD DO SO KNOWING THAT TODAY, WE HAVE A STRONGER, PROUDER, AND BETTER EQUIPPED MILITARY FORCE THAN WE HAVE HAD IN OVER A DECADE. MILITARY MORALE, WHICH IS SO EVIDENT HERE TODAY, IS HIGH, US SERVICEMEN AND WOMEN ARE HELD IN HIGH ESTEEM BY THE PUBLIC, AND AMERICA'S GLOBAL PRESTIGE AS THE LEADER AND CREDIBLE DEFENDER OF FREEDOM HAS BEEN RESTORED. THIS DID NOT COME EASILY NOR WITHOUT PAIN. I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT TOUGH DECISIONS AND CHOICES WILL HAVE TO BE MADE IN THE FUTURE ABOUT HOW WE ACHIEVE BOTH A COST EFFECTIVE AND COST EFFICIENT DEFENSE.

- 3 -

NEVERTHELESS, ONE THING SHOULD BE CLEAR AS ARMED FORCES WEEK COMES TO AND END -- WE MUST NEVER SLOW THE PROGRESS ACHIEVED OVER THE LAST FOUR YEARS BY SLIDING BACK INTO THE PATTERN OF THE 1970'S OF INEFFICIENT AND UNSTABLE PROGRAMS--IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT WE CONTINUE TO BUILD UPON THE PROGRESS WE HAVE MADE. WITH OUR AMERICAN IDEALS AND COMMON SENSE, WE CAN FIND A NATIONAL STRATEGY THAT IS APPROPRIATE TO OUR ECONOMY, OUR LIBERTIES, AND THE CHARACTER OF AMERICAN SOCIETY. THAT IS A FORMIDABLE CHALLENGE. BUT REST ASSURED, THE FIRST INFANTRY WILL HAVE A ROLE IN MEETING THAT CHALLENGE.

THANK YOU AND GOOD LUCK.