

REMARKS OF SENATOR BOB DOLE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR EMPLOYMENT EQUITY
MAY 18, 1985 -- OVERLAND PARK, KANSAS

THANK YOU KAY. SOMEONE ASKED ME BEFORE I CAME HERE IF I DIDN'T FEEL A LITTLE LIKE DANIEL WALKING INTO THE LION'S DEN. I SAID YES, BUT LIKE DANIEL, I PLANNED TO ESCAPE WITHOUT BEING EATEN ALIVE, AND CONVERT A FEW SOULS IN THE PROCESS.

THE DEBATE OVER THE ROLE OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION IN OUR CIVIL RIGHTS ENFORCEMENT SCHEME HAS SIMMERED FOR MANY YEARS. IT HAS HEATED UP TO NEAR BOILING POINT IN THE WAKE OF THE STOTTS DECISION, AS THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT CHALLENGES COURT DECREES IT BELIEVES VIOLATE THE PRINCIPLES OF RACE-NEUTRALITY ARTICULATED IN THAT DECISION.

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DON'T LET RHETORIC KEEP US FROM OUR GOAL

THE RHETORIC HAS NOT ALWAYS SERVED THE DEBATE WELL. THE QUESTION OF HOW TO ENSURE TRUE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IN THE JOB MARKET CANNOT BE ANSWERED BY EITHER SIDE THROUGH PAT REFERENCES TO A COLOR BLIND SOCIETY OR ATONING FOR PAST SINS. WE MUST NOT LET EMOTIONAL RHETORIC DETER US FROM WORKING TOGETHER WHERE THERE IS COMMON GROUND. NO ONE DISPUTES THE CONTINUED NECESSITY OF COMBATING DISCRIMINATION WHEREVER IT EXISTS. AND NO ONE SHOULD DISPUTE THE WISDOM OF TAKING AFFIRMATIVE ACTION TO RECRUIT AND TRAIN MINORITIES, WOMEN, THE DISABLED AND AGED, EVEN IF THOSE STEPS FALL SHORT OF JOB PREFERENCES BECAUSE OF THEIR HISTORICALLY DISADVANTAGED STATUS.

ABOVE ALL, WE MUST NOT LOSE SIGHT OF THE FACT THAT EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY MEANS NOTHING IF THERE AREN'T ENOUGH JOBS TO GO AROUND. THAT IS ONE REASON I HAVE COMMITTED MOST OF MY ENERGIES TO DRAFTING AND PUSHING THROUGH THE SENATE A MASSIVE DEFICIT REDUCTION PACKAGE.

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DEFICIT PLAN WOULD CREATE 7 MILLION NEW JOBS

I'M SURE MOST OF YOU KNOW THE BROAD OUTLINES OF THE PLAN. OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS IT WOULD CUT PROJECTED FEDERAL DEFICITS A WHOPPING \$300 BILLION. THAT MEANS WE WOULD CUT THE DEFICITS IN HALF.

AND WHILE THOSE MIND-BOGGLING FIGURES, BY THEMSELVES DON'T SEEM TO HAVE MUCH MEANING, IF WE ACHIEVE OUR DEFICIT CUTTING GOAL, THE EXPERTS SAY WE WILL CREATE BETWEEN 7 AND 8 MILLION NEW JOBS BY 1988.

CONVERSELY, IF WE DO NOT ATTACK THE DEFICIT THIS YEAR WE ARE COURTING ECONOMIC DISASTER. IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS, WE HAVE DOUBLED THE NATIONAL DEBT, AND JUST MONTHS AGO THE UNITED STATES BECAME A NET DEBTOR NATION. WITHIN THE NEXT FOUR YEARS -- IF WE DO NOTHING DRAMATIC ON THE DEFICIT FRONT-- WE WILL HAVE A DEBT THAT TOTALS MORE THAN \$11,500 FOR EVERY MAN, WOMAN AND CHILD IN THE COUNTRY.

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BUT FAILING TO STEM THE FLOW OF RED INK WILL ALSO RESULT IN ALMOST IMMEDIATE CONSEQUENCES. THE ECONOMY WILL BEGIN TO DRAG AND UNEMPLOYMENT WILL BEGIN TO RISE AGAIN. MOST ECONOMISTS ESTIMATE THAT WE NEED GROWTH HIGHER THAN 2 1/2 PERCENT JUST TO KEEP PACE WITH GROWTH IN THE WORK FORCE AND KEEP UNEMPLOYMENT AS LOW AS IT IS -- AROUND 7 PERCENT. BUT IF A SIGNIFICANT BUDGET CUTTING PLAN WERE ADOPTED, UNEMPLOYMENT WOULD DROP TO ABOUT 6.4 PERCENT BY 1988.

SENATE ACTED RESPONSIBLY

THE SENATE ACTED RESPONSIBLY IN THE EARLY MORNING HOURS OF MAY 10. WE MADE CHOICES, DIFFICULT ONES, TO LIMIT SPENDING IN EVERY AREA OF FEDERAL INVOLVEMENT -- FROM NATIONAL DEFENSE TO HOUSING, AGRICULTURE, AND SPACE TECHNOLOGY. THE SAFETY NET WAS KEPT INTACT. BUT EVERYONE ELSE WOULD SHARE IN THE SACRIFICE UNDER OUR BUDGET PLAN.

I WISH I COULD SAY THE SAME FOR THE BUDGET PROPOSAL JUST ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE BUDGET COMMITTEE AND DUE TO COME UP FOR A VOTE IN THE HOUSE NEXT WEEK.

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I WAS DISAPPOINTED, TO SAY THE LEAST, IN THE DEMOCRATS' DECISION TO TAKE THE SAME OLD TIRED ROUTE -- TAKE A HUGE WHACK OUT OF DEFENSE AND SPARE EVERYTHING ELSE. THEIR "BLUE SMOKE AND MIRRORS" BUDGET IS FILLED WITH PHONY SAVINGS -- SAVINGS THAT WILL NEVER BE REALIZED.

I HOPE THAT PEOPLE HERE IN KANSAS -- PEOPLE THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY-- CAN HELP TURN THAT AROUND. IF YOU TELL YOUR REPRESENTATIVES THAT YOU BELIEVE THE BUDGET SHOULD BE FAIR...THAT OUR NATIONAL SECURITY SHOULD NOT BE ENDANGERED....THAT YOU DO NOT WANT TO SEE BUSINESS AS USUAL...I FEEL CERTAIN THE HOUSE WOULD RESPOND.

AFTER ALL, THE ACTION WE TAKE OR DO NOT TAKE THIS YEAR HAS MEANING FAR BEYOND THE PRESENT. IF WE WALK AWAY FROM THIS RESPONSIBILITY WE WILL BE MORTGAGING THE FUTURE AND THE WELL-BEING OF OUR CHILDREN AND THEIR CHILDREN. I FOR ONE, DO NOT WANT THAT TO BE MY LEGACY. I HOPE YOU FEEL THE SAME.