

## GEORGE BUSH FOR PRESIDENT

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The Honorable Robert Dole  
United States Senate  
2213 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D. C. 20510

Dear Bob:

I want to express to you my regrets about the misunderstandings relating to Saturday's debate. The Nashua Telegraph has issued a strong statement that has clarified some points that you may not have been familiar with. Please let me quote in part from The Telegraph statement.

"There have been suggestions by some candidates -- particularly some of those who were not invited to participate in The Telegraph-sponsored meeting -- that George Bush was a party to The Telegraph's insistence that the agreed upon format be observed. That suggestion and/or implication is totally without foundation. At no time did Ambassador Bush or any of his representatives take an intransigent or intractable position on the question of the meeting format. Mr. Bush's representatives, in fact, made a point of informing The Telegraph that if we chose to change the format their candidate would have no objection whatsoever; that he was there at the invitation of the newspaper and would abide by whatever the paper decided. The Telegraph -- the only sponsor of last night's meeting -- insisted that both candidates meet their commitment to participate under the terms of prior agreement."

It now occurs to me that you might not have been informed of this position held by the newspaper or of the position taken by the campaign. If you did not know of my willingness to have



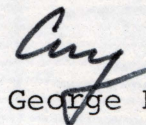
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you join the forum should The Telegraph have decided to alter its plans, that is partially my fault, and I express my regrets. I am sorry that in the course of the last couple of days we didn't have an opportunity to discuss this matter. I wish I had called you and I hope you know that if you at any time had personally asked to see me or speak with me I would have come to see you, or returned your call. You should know that Governor Reagan never contacted me on any of this even though he had been in contact with most of the other campaigns. The first we heard that Governor Reagan might not debate as planned was when the newspaper contacted my New Hampshire manager Saturday afternoon. Confusion reigned until debate time. The key point is Governor Reagan was talking with you and never had the courtesy to contact me. Frankly, I feel he used you to set me up.

Unlike Governor Reagan, I have not ducked joint debates, having joined you on many occasions in joint events in many states. For this one particular occasion I was challenged by Governor Reagan. I accepted his challenge for a one-on-one debate. I was anxious to have that debate in addition to the other debates, past and future, we have scheduled. But the record should show that, as The Telegraph clearly stated, our campaign advised them we were prepared to enlarge the field should the sponsor have determined that was the thing to do.

One last point. Twenty-five minutes after the program was to have started I received word to be on the stage. The Nashua Telegraph was anxious to commence the program. On the way to the stage, after this long delay, I was stopped by a prominent Reagan supporter who has been attacking me all across the State of New Hampshire. He asked me to have a joint meeting with you and the others and lectured me on the Republican Party. Now that I realize you might not have known that I was not blocking your participation, I wish in retrospect that I had met with you. A lot of misunderstanding might have been avoided. The producer was signaling me to the stage, the commitment that I had made was on my mind, and the emissary was not exactly the ideal choice. In addition, I felt that Governor Reagan had definitely not played fair with me. I wish we had been in personal touch. I'm certain that much of this unpleasantness could have been avoided.

Sincerely,



George Bush