

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 7, 1993

Dear Mr. Leader:

I believe it is very important to share with you the reasons I decided to withdraw the nomination of Lani Guinier to be Assistant Attorney General, and to emphasize my strong conviction that we not allow this difficult decision to be exploited by the foes of civil rights. Special attention must be paid to protecting the Voting Rights Act of which Ms. Guinier has been a constant champion.

You and your colleagues in the Congress -- and all the American people -- need to know we must not and we will not turn back the clock on civil rights, especially in reference to the Voting Rights Act on which Ms. Guinier has been such a leader. Those who oppose the civil rights movement make a major mistake if they try to take comfort from the withdrawal of Ms. Guinier's nomination. Those who believe in civil rights and equal opportunity may be reassured the principles to which I have adhered through my professional career and in my personal conduct are undiminished.

All my life, as the Governor of Arkansas, as a candidate for President, and since January 20, I have consistently and forthrightly spoken out in behalf of the rights of minorities, and in opposition to discrimination against any individual or group of people. My long-held, widely known views will not change.

Over time it became obvious to me that Ms. Guinier's confirmation hearing would engender a sustained and bitter debate over civil rights; a debate that would have been divisive and polarizing at a time when our nation needs healing.

It became clear that Ms. Guinier's nomination would be decided on the basis of her legal writings, not her qualifications. Moreover, I realized that Ms. Guinier had adopted positions in her legal writings with which I did not agree. In the face of this situation, and despite my great respect for Ms. Guinier, I concluded that I could not ask for her confirmation.

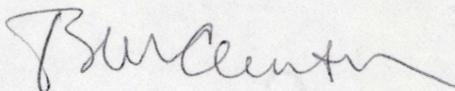
I decided it would be best to withdraw Ms. Guinier's nomination, and, at the same time, pursue the key objective of not letting that decision become a victory for civil rights opponents.

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Ms. Guinier is an extremely bright and distinguished civil rights lawyer whose background prepared her for the position for which she had been nominated. I regret the pain that has been caused to Ms. Guinier, who bears none of the responsibility for the situation in which we find ourselves. I regret also the hurt that is felt by her supporters in the Congress and elsewhere.

As we go forward we need to remain true to our convictions, and by our deeds demonstrate we are not retreating from forward movement for civil rights for all Americans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Bob Dole".

The Honorable Robert Dole  
Republican Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510