

News

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**SECRETARY ELIZABETH DOLE
REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP LUNCHEON
DALLAS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
JANUARY 30, 1990**

What a pleasure it is to return to Dallas--a city which holds some very fond memories for me. I well remember your hospitality in 1984, when Republicans gathered to re-nominate the Reagan-Bush ticket, and I was also fortunate to make a number of trips to Texas during my service as Secretary of Transportation.

The beauty and size of your state reminds me of the story about the Texas politician who started a speech by talking about the beautiful piney woods of east Texas, and then he moved on through the bluebonnets and out to the plains and down through the hill country to the Gulf Coast and then he got back to the piney woods and started all over again. And when he got all around the state that time, he started in again about those beautiful piney woods and bluebonnets.

Right then, a little old fellow rose up in the back of the room and yelled out, "**The next time you pass Lubbock, how about letting me off?**"

Well, whether it's Lubbock, Houston, or Dallas, Texans can be justifiably proud of the progress and economic expansion taking place throughout your state.

Over the past few years, the Dallas/Fort Worth area has been recognized as a premier location for business and corporate headquarters. Much of the credit for achievement goes to the Greater Dallas Chamber, which has been the area's top business leadership organization for 80 years.

Special thanks to the Chamber, the Charter 100, and the Executive Women of Dallas for their sponsorship of today's Women in Leadership Luncheon.

Both Bob Dole and I share your commitment to issues important to women--critical issues such as economic and political equity, pension reform and tough enforcement of child support laws.

We also understand the value of shared leadership between men and women at all levels. Bob's chief-of-staff is a woman, and both of us have consistently appointed women to top leadership positions.

This afternoon, I would like to speak to the challenges and opportunities facing women in leadership positions--both in public service and in private enterprise.

As the Department of Labor pursues the opening of doors for women in non-traditional roles in industries such as construction and aerospace, I can't help but think back over my own career--beginning with my days as a student at Harvard Law School.

There were 550 members of the class of 1965, and only 24 were women. On the first day of class, a male student came up to me and asked what I was doing there. In what can only be described as tones of moral outrage, he said, **"Don't you realize that there are men who would give their right arm to be in this law school--men who would use their legal education?"**

That man is now a senior partner in a Washington law firm. And every so often, I share this little story around town. You'd be amazed at the number of my male classmates who've called me to say "Please tell me I'm not the one! Tell me I didn't say that, Elizabeth."

We can all take heart in the words of Frances Perkins, who, as Franklin Roosevelt's Secretary of Labor, was the first woman to serve in a President's Cabinet. The amazing Miss Perkins was once asked whether being a woman was a disadvantage in public life. **"Only,"** she answered, **"when I am climbing trees."**

For far too long, the progress of women in public life was a bit like climbing trees--with many of the branches placed just out of reach.

But the last few years have been especially good ones for women in American government. More and more we're gaining the confidence to reach out, grab the branches--and pull ourselves up.

I've always believed that a nation is like a tree--strongest at its grassroots. And in Texas and throughout America, the seeds of lasting success for women in public life are being planted at the grass roots.

True, only 5% of Congress is female, but the numbers increase at local levels, where females comprise 11% of our mayors and 15% of our state legislators. Indeed, the number of women in elected office has tripled since 1975.

And Texans can take great pride in the fact that your state is truly leading the way for American women in positions of power.

As you know, your four largest cities--Dallas, Houston, San Antonio, and El Paso--all have women mayors. And All of these

women succeeded in politics only after long histories of grassroots service in their communities.

Women have always been active in organizations important to the fabric of community life--churches, the Parent-Teacher Association, charities, and hospital, library, and school boards.

It is in these activities where many women learn valuable skills of leadership--consensus building, mediating, moderating, and a commitment to good government.

A woman who personifies this path to success is another Texan, Anne Armstrong. Anne began her career as a volunteer for civic and charitable causes and then toiled in the vineyards as a volunteer in Republican campaigns. Anne would use all these skills and more when my husband recognized her leadership and asked her to serve as Co-chair of the Republican National Committee, and when President Ford appointed her as Ambassador to the Court of St. James.

A similar path of achievement has been used by my good friend, Kay Bailey Hutchison. As an attorney and a small businesswoman, Kay was involved in almost every community activity and civic organization, before serving as Press Secretary to Anne Armstrong. Kay then served two terms in the Texas legislature before her appointment as Vice Chair of the National Transportation Safety Board. I met Kay at that time, and can tell you from first hand experience what an outstanding job she did on the Board.

And let me mention another good friend, your Mayor--Annette Strauss. Annette had served on the Dallas City Council since 1983, and was Mayor Pro Tem before becoming Mayor. Annette has led many citywide fund raising projects, resulting in the collection of more than \$10 million for projects such as the Auction for the Performing Arts, the University of Texas Health Science Center Chair in Geriatrics, the Dallas Symphony Orchestra's 75th Anniversary Celebration, the Danny Kaye Benefit for the Orchestra's Pension Fund, and so much more.

By and large, the women who have succeeded in political life have succeeded because, like Anne Armstrong, Annette Strauss, and Kay Hutchison, they worked their way up. They started at the grass roots level, and developed a sense of mission, dedication, and commitment to causes based on the important values of communities.

And it's interesting to note that some of the women who rose through the ranks with this dedication to good government, have viewed the achievement of power with mixed emotions and sometimes even with distaste. They believed that concepts such as power and ambition are inconsistent with the mission guiding their steps and their conscience.

Over the years, though, women have more and more come to realize that power is a positive force if it is used for positive purposes. They've come to realize that they can not have an impact on the issues they care about, unless they obtain a place at the policy table, direct public attention to their cause by aggressive and creative promotion through the media and other outlets, and, in some instances, get out and raise the necessary money.

Perhaps no issue in American politics better illustrates the use of these principles than the debate on drunk driving--a debate elevated and transformed by women.

For too many years in too many American courtrooms, drunk driving was treated as no worse than a traffic violation. Judges and jurors tended to look past the dangers of drunk driving, by theorizing that they too, might have once had a drink or two before driving, and what's wrong with that?

What's wrong with that? Plenty. In 1988, over 23,000 Americans were killed in alcohol-related automobile accidents. Thankfully, this tragic loss of lives has decreased since we tightened up our laws and raised the consciousness level of the American people to this tragedy. As Secretary of Transportation, I worked to stiffen drunk driving laws throughout America. And my most important and effective ally was a volunteer organization that became a real political force.

That organization is called MADD--Mothers Against Drunk Driving. Using their moral force as mothers whose children had been killed or injured by drunk drivers, they orchestrated a dynamic campaign for stiffer penalties, mandatory sentences and a change in attitude. And they succeeded.

Women have also succeeded in changing the public debate on human resource and education issues. Once stereotyped as "women's concerns," these are now considered as economic issues which will define America's future.

President Bush pledged during the 1988 campaign to become the "Education President." And education has risen to the top of my priority list, as it has become increasingly apparent that improving our education system is absolutely vital to providing America with a quality workforce.

While jobs are becoming increasingly complex, requiring much higher skill levels, 25% of our youth are dropping out of high school each year. Businesses are facing difficulties in finding the skilled workers necessary to expand and grow. The equation is simple. If Suzie and Johnny can't read, write, or reason, then America can't compete.

The need to recruit and retain skilled workers has also made child care a national competitiveness issue. America's workforce

is growing at a rate of 1% annually--the slowest rate in 40 years. And we expect that slow growth to continue throughout this decade--a decade where fully two-thirds of new entrants into the workforce will be women.

In the tight labor markets of today and tomorrow, employers can't afford to discriminate; they can't afford to ignore workers needs, and their obligations to family. Employers who do will simply lose out to employers who don't.

And more and more employers are discovering that child care is a concern of their employees. Indeed, a recent poll by Time Magazine found that women think the most important goal for the women's movement today should be helping them to balance work and family.

At the Department of Labor, we are the lead agency responsible for ensuring that work and family are complimentary--and not conflicting goals. Child care, parental leave, flexible work schedules, and flexible benefit packages, are the major areas of our focus.

The Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor--which celebrates its 70th anniversary this year--has also established the Work and Family Clearinghouse. The Clearinghouse maintains a data base of successful employer-sponsored child care programs, and, through a toll-free number--1-800-827-5335--provides information on these programs free-of-charge to other interested businesses.

I'm proud to say that two Dallas-area companies are profiled in the data base. One is the Zale Corporation, headquartered in Irving, and the other is the Lomas Financial Group, here in Dallas. Lomas offers an on-site child care development center, company assistance with tuition costs, and even a parent education program.

For business, and for America, education and child care are pivotal issues of our time. They are issues that have been advanced by women, and that need the continuing contributions of women as policies are formed.

I am very proud to report that President Bush is working to see that women are in those policy positions. In his first year in office, he has appointed more women to senior positions that were appointed by any previous administration.

And speaking of women appointees, about twenty years ago, a group of us organized a club called "Executive Women in Government," which still flourishes today. Its purpose was twofold: To help younger women who wanted to follow our footsteps into government service with information and perhaps advice on how to avoid some pitfalls along the way, and to provide women in policy-making positions with an opportunity to

relate to one another across government.

Such networking is key as women enter public service, and it is also essential to the success of women in private enterprise. Organizations such as Executive Women of Dallas and Charter 100 are vital because decades of male domination of top corporate positions, have ensured that the existing informal network system is often for men only. Days at the golf course, weekends at the hunting lodge, and afternoons at the club still close out women.

True, changes in the law have forced many traditionally male-only clubs to open their doors to women. But just making a club co-ed doesn't automatically change attitudes or generations of thinking. I do believe, though, that attitudes are gradually changing as women make astounding gains in the public and private sectors.

And it is clear that our own attitudes are still very much a part of the continuing barriers to full equality of opportunity. Part of the change must continue to come from within us--in the way that we prepare ourselves to accept greater responsibilities and the risks that accompany them. And part of the change must also come in the way that we rear our children, ensuring that our daughters, as well as our sons, recognize they have a full range of choices before them, and that they are fully trained to make the right choice.

And more choices are available today than ever before, because of America's remarkable economic expansion--soon to enter its 87th consecutive month. Since 1982, we have created over 20 million new jobs--over half of which have been filled by women.

Among small businesses--responsible for three out of five new jobs created in America--women-owned businesses are growing at a rate five times that of male-owned--representing the largest increase in the most significant area of our economic expansion.

Today, women comprise the majority of workers in finance, insurance, real estate, banking, and health and legal services.

The number of women professionals--lawyers and doctors, for instance--has almost doubled since 1972. And the number of women in managerial jobs has almost tripled.

Despite this growth, who among us can say that discrimination has disappeared? Who among us can say that the prejudice I call the tyranny of perfection has been banished?

Social critic Marya Mannes put it best, I think, when she wrote "Nobody objects to a woman being a good writer or sculptor or geneticist if, at the same time, she manages to be a good wife, a good mother, good-looking, good-tempered, well-dressed, well-groomed, and unaggressive."

In other words, women, too, can be treated the same as a man--so long as we outperform them.

And who among us can deny the very real presence of a wage gap when the median weekly earnings of women working full time are only 70% of men's wages?

There can be little doubt that a woman, no matter how well schooled, what her age, or how thick her portfolio or credentials, enters many business organizations with limited or no hope of reaching the top. The positions of power and decision-making in business are still held primarily by men. For example, of the 500 largest companies in America, just two--two out of 500--have a woman Chief Executive Officer.

A woman manager may indeed have all the tools of the trade in her toolbox, and still not reach the top. There is a ceiling--a "glass ceiling," if you will--where women can see that top, but are blocked from reaching it by often invisible and impenetrable barriers.

My objective as Secretary of Labor is to look through this "glass ceiling," to see who is on the other side, and to serve as a catalyst for change in ensuring women equal access to senior management employment opportunities. We aim to give a "wake-up" call to businesses, to alert them to the fact that the next "fair-haired boy" of their organization just might be a woman.

As we prepare to remove that ceiling...as we prepare to open new doors...let us take inspiration from a woman who conquered incredible challenges. Unable to see or hear, she never ran for office, never raised a family, and never entered the job market. Yet, she inspired millions.

"One can never consent to creep," said Helen Keller, "when one feels an impulse to soar."

America's women share that impulse to soar. To go as far and rise as high as our skills and talents will take us.

And just as important, we also share an understanding that at the end of our days, our success will be judged not by the achievement of power for power's sake. Rather, we will be judged by how we used that power, what we stood for, and the difference--the positive difference--we made in the lives of others.

Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to share these thoughts this afternoon. God bless you all.