



MR. SABATO: And I'm just so thrilled to finish off the day with one of my very favorite people with one of the best senses of humor that you will find anywhere in America or elsewhere. And that, of course, is Senator Bob Dole. Just one word comes to mind in introducing Bob Dole, and that word is "statesman." He's recognized as one of the most prominent political figures of our time, with a distinguished record of service, not least his extraordinary World War II heroism.

Bob Dole continues to make a difference in the lives of the American people. In fact, just this week he was at the White House with Former Secretary Shalala delivering a bipartisan report on veterans' needs to President Bush and had, I think, a great influence on the President in what the President's likely to do.

Senator Dole is just plain fun to listen to. I've been back chatting with him for a while. And I learned a great deal just in those few minutes. Senator Dole was one of the most effective Senate majority leaders in modern times in the mid 1990s. He was the Republican Vice presidential nominee in 1976. He was the party's presidential candidate in 1996.

Senator Dole is literally well-known in every American home. In 1997, he was awarded the presidential Medal of Freedom by his former opponent, Bill Clinton, as a tribute to his character and his enormous contributions to this nation.

Senator Dole has earned national acclaim for his leadership on behalf of the disadvantaged and also Americans with disabilities and for his mastery of both domestic and foreign policy. There just isn't a major challenge facing the country that Senator Dole hasn't tackled in his long and productive career.

He has much to offer us in every sphere of this discussion about the Constitution. As he's going to tell you, despite what you think, he was not there in 1787. But he did know people who were, and that will help.

More to the point, I want you to know this. Senator Dole keeps an index card in his pocket often, on which is printed the Tenth Amendment, which reserves for the states all powers not expressly granted to the federal government.

I'm not too sure there are many of those left. Senator Dole would probably agree. But Senator Dole may talk about that and have some other important advice to give us about the Constitution. It really is a very special pleasure and a great honor for me to introduce to you Senator Bob Dole.

(Applause.)



SENATOR DOLE: Thank you. I brought a copy with me of the Constitution, in case you haven't seen it. I'm sure everybody here has. And I've looked at some of the numbers of some of the votes cast -- not the, what, a half a million votes that were cast nationwide but the votes cast here today. And I find myself in pretty much agreement with the majority of different votes cast.

But I want to thank Larry for that kind introduction. It's pretty much the way I'd sent it to him, and he got it right.

(Laughter.)

SENATOR DOLE: But I was a bit surprised when Larry first invited me to be part of this very historic sequel to the original Miracle of Philadelphia. I never claimed to be a constitutional scholar. In fact, back in 1996, you may recall, I flunked out of the Electoral College. But Larry can be pretty persuasive. And he says all these great things. And he's already sort of stolen my joke that, you know, I wasn't here for the first convention. I'm not that old. But I did talk to Senator Thurmond who was here, and he said they had a great time and that I should have been there. But I can't make them all.

But, you know, I've taken a look at all the things that Larry has suggested. And I've tried to look back. And, in fact, I had the Senate historian go back and look at all the amendments -- constitutional amendments offered during the time I was in the Senate, which was a long time. And there's a very young audience here. I came to the Senate in 1968 and left voluntarily on June the 11th, 1996. So I think during that time -- I don't know, 25, 30 -- 30 some amendments -- 18-year-old vote, for example, was one amendment which passed. And so you sort of say, "Well, do we need to have a constitutional convention?" Or if it's something that really needs to be addressed, would two-thirds of Congress approve it? And will three-fourths the states, you know, ratify it?

I also supported a constitutional amendment statehood for the District of Columbia, which made it through the Congress. But only I think 16 states out of 38 ratified. So I've had a lot of experience dealing with all kinds of constitutional amendments, whether it's voluntary prayer in school, whether it's abortion, whether it's a line-item veto, whether it's a balanced budget amendment. I mean, the list goes on and on, which leads me to believe -- as Larry Sabato and I were talking earlier about, you know, we -- should we have a constitutional convention? Or is there some other way we can make some of these things that should be done happen?

And it seems to me that if the issue is there and the desire is there and the American people understand it, we can do it -- you know, the one way that's provided. There are two ways provided. We can do it with Congress and then the states' ratification.



And one thing that I found in most constitutional amendments, they're not partisan. I mean, you can pick any -- well, maybe there's some that might be partisan but very few, put it that way, whether it's the line-item veto -- when I was a member of Congress, I think I -- when I support that, which I did, I'm giving up a little legislative power to the Executive, to the President, whether he or she be a Democrat or a Republican. But I still think it's a good idea. And whether it's a balanced budget amendment -- I can tell you a true story that happened when I tried to have a balanced -- when I was leader of the Senate trying to get a balanced budget amendment through the Senate with a two-thirds vote, which is 67 to 33. And I had -- I needed one more vote. And the one more vote was a Senator named Hatfield from the State of Oregon. And he came to me, and he said, I just can't do it.

Now, he was a member of the powerful Appropriations Committee. And the chairman was Senator Robert Bird, who was violently opposed to the amendment. But I remember my wife, Elizabeth, even calling Senator Hatfield and praying with him over the phone that he would see the light. And apparently he didn't but -- and I did everything but get on my knees to Senator Hatfield.

I said, Mark, you know, this is an opportunity that will probably never happen again in our lifetime, to send to the states for ratification an amendment that requires us to balance our budget. And I note that was favorably received by most people here.

The difficulty is in drafting it. And I never was certain we drafted one that would stand the test of time. But the bottom line is that Senator Hatfield was a good friend of mine. We were the same age, same generation, World War II. And he didn't want to disappoint me as the leader, but he just couldn't bring himself to vote. So he said to me, with all the sincerity he could muster, I'll resign from the Senate. So if there are 99 Senators, two-thirds would be 66. And I had 66 votes.

Now, that's how -- you know, how things happen. And it's a true story. And some of my Republican friends said, "Well, he ought to resign." But I always said that, as leader, maybe the next time I'll be that guy who made that comment who will be jumping ship, and I'll -- Hatfield will be saying, He ought to resign.

But, in any event, it's very, very important when you start tinkering with the Constitution -- and there are a lot of great ideas out there. And I've looked at -- you know, one of them I think particularly ought to happen is that they put some age limit on members of the Supreme Court. And some say, Well, that's great, Senator. Why not put age limits on members of the Senate? Well, if I could do it -- you know, if I could pick out the ones, I'd be for it.

But we're elected for six-year terms. And, of course, Supreme Court nominees are life tenures, so there's quite a basic -- basic difference. But, you know, you don't tinker with the Constitution easily. But I think more importantly is the dialog that's been going, that's going



to continue to go on and probably get heated up a little -- again, this is a -- you know, we can bring -- we can have a town meeting in any state in America and invite the citizens -- not the Democrats or Republicans -- to come to the meeting and have discussion about a constitutional convention. If you read Larry's book, you know that more people know the name of The Three Stooges than the three executive branches of government. In fact, some think The Three Stooges are the three branches of government. And very few people knew the opening words of the Constitution.

They did a poll in a small place in Kansas recently where 44 percent of the high school seniors thought Germany was on our side in World War II. So we need some -- you know, we need some education. We need to show some interest. We need to find out what's going on.

So I think today, it seems to me, that if we look at campaigns -- and I'm not here on any part of them since I've been out of politics. But if we look at -- and I'll go back to my campaign. You hire these high-priced consultants. You look at the spin doctors. And you try to figure out through focus groups and all this stuff what you ought to say and what we shouldn't say. And every election cycle becomes a spin cycle wherein candidates without ideas hire consultants without convictions to stage campaigns without content. And, increasingly, the result is elections without voters. I think about half the people voted for President of the United States the last time -- half the eligible people voted for President of the United States. And when we compare that to other emerging democracies around the world, you know, we don't do very well.

Is it our fault, the candidates? Maybe so. Is it the media's fault? Is it your fault? Is it everybody has the feeling, They're all alike; they're all the same; it doesn't make any difference? I don't think so.

And I don't know whether we can do it by changing the Constitution. But there's hunger in America for some way to get people connected to what's happening and what can happen with people -- when people get involved. So I think more people -- a lot of people are spectators, and a lot of people are critics. But it's hard to roll up your sleeves and plunge into the messy and noisy and often frustrating business of democracy. Yet that is exactly what you and thousands of others like you are sort of going through the process and have been all day across the country. And about the -- and you're doing it about the world's oldest and most successful charter of government.

David McCollum, the great historian, has said that we can never know too much about America's founders. And the same holds true of the Constitution they crafted 220 years ago, a document that ever since has channeled our energies, protected our liberties, and evolved to meet our changing needs. And whoever said ignorance is bliss was no friend of democracy. Yet poll after poll reveals a stunning lack of knowledge about our constitutional system and its origin. And I've already indicated a couple of things that point that out.



So it's all the more reason we need this national conversation. And I don't know. I've looked at all the panel members. And I know some of them. I don't know all of them. I know some of their politics -- Conservative, Liberal, Independent, Democrat, Republican. And I assume they may have different views on different issues.

But I think the Founders that have drafted the Constitution were looking for -- for a more perfect union. They didn't indicate they had found it and that the document was perfect, but they knew that we were a work in progress. And I think that's very important.

So it just seems to me that as we look back at what happened with these 55 white men -- there were no women, no men and women of color, not many ethnic groups represented, of course -- and they came up with a -- not a bad system, but over time it's become more and more representative because people are willing to stand up for their rights, take to the streets if necessary in peaceful demonstrations, lobby the Congress of the United States or state governments. And it's worked out, you know, so that we've got a pretty good system over the period of time.

In some cases it's taken centuries to honor the promises we made to ourselves at the dawn of the Republic. Indeed, the history of America is a story of groups, once marginalized, who were gradually admitted to the same rights and responsibilities asserted by the Founders. And it goes without saying, It just doesn't happen. It happened because people were alert, and they were awake. And they understood that there were injustices and things that needed to be changed. And they brought it about in appropriate ways. And it required far-sighted leaders at the grass roots as well as in the White House.

And I think this is what makes America an experimental -- a constitutional experiment, a land that has never become but is always in the act of becoming. This is what reassures even the most jaded voters, that FDR was right when he said, Since the beginning of our America -- the beginning of our American history, we have been engaged in change, in a perpetual, peaceful revolution, a revolution which goes on steadily, quietly adjusting itself to changing conditions, without the concentration camp or the quick lime in the ditch.

This meeting is part of that peaceful revolution. The only weapons we bring to this meeting or other meetings like it are information, indignation, imagination, and aspiration. And some may wonder, "Well, why is this life-long Republican, moderate, conservative, whatever, even talking about a constitutional convention?" Well, as I said earlier, you know, I have my reservations about a constitutional convention today. But I think it's something we need to talk about. And it's something that if we're going to -- you know, when you have a convention, you're going to have these hot political buttons like gay marriage and abortion and voluntary prayer in school and other things that may divide people. But they had different kind of issues but still had divisive issues 220 years ago.



So I think -- my view is that we ought to be having a discussion like this in my state, in every state. We ought to be looking at whether we should actually have a constitutional convention. And I think there are ways, if there is a constitutional convention, that in the process of leading up to the convention itself, there can be certain guidelines and limitations.

But, to me, the thing that I learned in my 35 and a half years' in the Congress, the greatness of America lies not in the power of our government but in the goodness of our people. And that's not just a sound bite because I wouldn't be here today if it hadn't been for the good people in my home town of Russell, Kansas, who after World War II -- I was wounded late in World War II in April. And the war ended in Europe in May. And all the good doctors, of course, wanted to go home -- and they did -- from the hospitals. And I had -- people in my little hometown raised \$1800 with little cigar boxes, enough to send me to Chicago, to Wesley Hospital where I found another great individual named Hanbar Kalikian, an Armenian orthopedic doctor who came to this country with zilch, nothing, and who became one of the most successful orthopedic surgeons in America and, in fact, has written textbooks which are still being used by those who -- in medic school.

But it tells you a little about America and about where people come from and about immigration and about how we need to address -- nothing to do with the Constitution, but we need to address the problem of immigration. It's not going to go away. 12 million people aren't going to get up tomorrow morning and leave the country and go back to where they came from. And so somewhere we've got to find leadership among Democrats and Republicans and the people to come to grips with this issue. It's one of the big issues of our time. It's going to be a big issue in the campaign, in the 2008 campaign. But that's -- I think what I just recited may be one definition of self-government wherein grass roots America takes responsibility for one another in a nation that feels like a neighborhood. And I don't want to lose that sort of sense of moral obligation. It didn't have it -- this is 1947. That's a long time ago.

But something that, you know, they could do that the bureaucracy couldn't do -- and I carried around -- I think as Larry had mentioned -- I couldn't hear it too well -- I carry around in my pocket this copy of the Constitution, which I just displayed when I stood up here and talked about the Tenth Amendment and all powers not granted to the government reserved to the states. And I'd remind people about this Tenth Amendment and what it meant to America and what it meant to states that individual rights -- you know, different people have different views of the Constitution. Theodore Roosevelt had a little different view. He thought it was sort of a -- he called it a stewardship theory. And he thought the President of the United States could do anything that wasn't prohibited. And he proceeded through the bully pulpit to do a lot of things. He's probably the first environmental President we had -- and did a lot of other good things because, you know, he was good a President. And he was uniquely qualified to define and defend the national interest and the stewardship that he talked about.



So in that case, you know, I think he was right. But as citizens of a democracy, we are naturally suspicious of any leader who claims a direct pipeline to heaven, or worse, confuses himself with the Almighty. Perhaps that's one reason why the Founders deliberately created a government in which it is hard to get very much done very fast. It's what we call a system of checks and balances. And I can tell you, having been in the Senate, you know, when I left in '96, I thought, you know, "How can they run this place without me?" I'd been there so long.

But I've discovered they're doing just about what we were doing, not very much, since I left. Now, that was designed by the Founders -- two-year terms for House member, six years for Senators -- because they wanted the Senate to be the deliberative body that would let the coffee cool; let the tea cool and -- you know, devoid of politics and address the issues.

And there may have been a time in history -- I don't think a very lengthy one -- where that was actually the case. And some would say today, the nation is divided right down the middle. There's too much polarization. We need more leadership. Well, I'm still an optimist. I think it's there. I think it's going to pop up one of these days. You may not recognize it.

But, you know, it's something like Dr. Doolittle and this mythical push may pull you, that two-headed beast that wanted to go each way. That's sort of how the Senate goes so they end up not going anywhere. And that happens too often. I see even today -- bring it up-to-date, the Speaker of the House sort of slightly nudging the United States Senate saying, We've passed all of our bills; they're all stuck in the Senate. And I remember we used to do the same when the House didn't quite do what we thought should happen.

So I think it's -- sometimes it's a challenge just to get yourself heard over the babble. There's a lot of babble in this town. And it's not limited to Washington DC, but its one thing we have a surplus of. But that's the price of liberty. And you have to remember that, today and as the debate goes forward, whether it's a proposal for campaign finance reform or making Former Presidents Senators for life, a six-year term for Presidents or Executive powers in time of war. You've got to be heard over the babble. And you happen to carry it in a long -- in a long and distinguished tradition, for the Founders themselves are anything but unanimous in determining the shape of their new government.

We have George Mason of Virginia who was wary of all the powers of the Executive. We have George Washington, who had a little different view. And Washington -- I think it is Mason or Franklin wanted to limit the size of the standing army to 3,000. And George Washington, That's fine with me if we limit the size of all other countries' standing armies to 3,000. Now, that would have been a great idea at the time. We'd probably all be better off today. But, you know, we can't impose our will on other sovereign nations.



So -- but what is one person's war is another's fight against aggression. What you may regard as government accountability may strike others as a government statutory straightjacket. Case in point -- ever since the time of Ulysses S. Grant, we've been trying to get a line-item veto, which I discussed earlier. And I think I was surprised the results were opposed to the line-item veto in this group. So I think perhaps it's going to happen one of these days. And it will be after Senator Robert Bird of Virginia retires because he's violently opposed to the line-item veto. And I'm willing to believe that he's a great -- he knows more about -- in fact, I remember when I was majority leader and he was minority leader, I used to go to him and ask what he would do if he were me because he knew. And he knows the rules better than anybody. In fact, he probably wrote most of them. And he would give me honest advice. If I were your in [sic] position and I wanted to make something happen, I'd give you two options. That's the kind of relationship we had.

And I could go to Robert Bird -- don't call him Bob, Robert Bird -- and he would tell me straight up, You don't want to do that; I shouldn't be telling you this -- so, anyway -- and he never got me in trouble.

So I've gotten out of politics. And I'm not sure I agree with Larry's option where you have one -- where you have a two-tier lottery system. But today's system is totally unfair.

The one thing I'm glad you didn't consider was an amendment that says -- limits the number of times you can run for President because every four years I used to promise my wife we'd get a bigger house. And the one I had in mind, of course, was on Pennsylvania Avenue. So I did run quite a few times. But there's no limitation on that.

But I think -- the lottery may have some appeal. I think it does have some appeal, except what about the young man or young woman who has a great resume and maybe would be a great leader but doesn't have the name recognition or the money, but they'd have a chance if you didn't do this until, you know, January of election year? But I think Dr. Sabato tries to correct that with his two-tier system. But the present system, much too [sic] emphasis on Iowa, New Hampshire. And I've been to both states a lot. They're great people. And now they've added Nevada and South Carolina. The nominee will be known on February 5th, both parties, will be my guess, because they've moved everything up.

But I'll just close by giving you an example of some of the amendments that were probably ill-conceived. One was -- prohibited the manufacture and sale of intoxicating drink, the Prohibition Amendment. And it was widely supported in Kansas. The jokes used to be, People would stagger to the polls to vote dry in Kansas. It's probably true. People like to have a little fun out there. But it finally -- it finally ended up on the trash heap. And there had been some others.



Probably the worst most -- the worst amendment -- the worst part of the cont -- was where they counted a slave as a three-fifths of a person. That shows how egregious some of the mistakes were made in the original meeting.

And then there's the Twenty-second Amendment, which limits two terms in office. Republicans did that to slow down FDR. And it turned out, you know, it might have backfired. Sometimes these amendments have unintended consequences because maybe Eisenhower or Reagan could have been elected to a third term.

And, as I said, I'm glad they try to limit the number of times you can run but -- because I take my -- you know, I take my cue from W.C. Fields, who said, "If you first don't succeed, try, try again and then give up." No use being a damn fool about it. So that's sort of where I came out.

So I think the bottom line is that, you know, we do a lot of good things. A lot of people love our Constitution. Other countries adopt parts of it. And I'll just give you one story. When I came to Congress in 1961, Eisenhower was leaving, and all of us were coming. And one of the great days of our lives was the day they invited all of us, Democratic and Republican, freshman members of Congress, to Gettysburg and spent four hours with us on the battlefield. But the more I stayed around here, the more I learned that sometimes you can't have it your way. Ronald Reagan used to say -- he was known as a Conservative -- give me 80 percent and I'll take it -- or maybe even 70 percent. And I'm reminded of just one example. It's been my view for many, many years that anything that has staying power as far as legislation must be bipartisan.

Back in 1982 the Social Security system was about to go down the drain. They appoint a Presidential Commission. The chairman is Alan Greenspan. I don't think -- he hasn't been here today, has he? Good. Because the market was terrible. I thought maybe he said something. But, in any event, Senator Moynihan, a liberal Democrat, and Bob Dole were on that commission. And the commission is going nowhere. And on January 1983 when the Senate reconvened, we happened to meet on the Senate floor and almost simultaneously said to each other, "We can't let this happen." There are 31 million Americans not going to get their check on time unless the commission acts.

The long and short of it is that they acted. Payments are still made -- I think probably till the year 2017. And don't look for Congress to take any expedited action. Nobody wants to back into that buzz saw until it's absolutely necessary. But it's a good example of what can be done if people are willing to work together.

And I think perhaps Senator Moynihan has never gotten enough credit for the role he played for the millions and millions of people who have been -- your grandparents, your great grandparents have been receiving their checks on time because of his great -- great work on that particular legislation.



So there are a lot of cynics in this country. There are a lot of people who -- you know, my view has always been, If people don't like us, they ought to leave. And I can't recall ever receiving one single letter asking me how to get out of the country. But I had hundreds of letters. And I'd go around -- people would meet with me, "How can I get my son, my daughter, somebody to America?" because we are America. And because we are always trying to become better. And the issues today are going to be solved, whether it's SCHIP or whether it's health care. But then there will be some other issue, just as important to just as many people. And it will be another challenge for another generation, your generation, those of you who are here still.

And so I'm sort of like Everett Dirksen who liked to say, "I'm a man of fixed and unbending principle. And one of my principles is flexibility, which I think is the key to getting things done around here."

So I would think -- I know you've probably heard all the speeches you want to hear today. And I want to just quote how important it is when you -- if you have a convention -- I want to go back and quote Benjamin Franklin, when you talk about the spirit of compromise, which I just talked about, and his -- and humility upon his fellow delegates, and he said, I confess that there's several parts of this Constitution which I do not at present approve. He said near the end of that historic summer of 1787, But I'm not sure I shall never approve them. The older I grow, the more apt I am to doubt my own judgment and to pay attention to the judgment of others. He doubted, said Franklin, that another convention could do any better. For when you assemble a number of men, he said, to have the -- and he said "men," which would not be the case today -- to have the advantage of their joint wisdom, you inevitably assemble with those men and all their prejudices, their passions, their errors of opinion, their local interests, and their selfish views. I consent, sir, to this Constitution because I expect no better, because I'm not certain that it is not the best.

So I think today is the beginning of the recognition of that process, not the end. As you engage your fellow citizens and debate the mechanics of, you know, how it works and all those things, you can keep Franklin's words in mind -- a practicing member of the Congress for 35 and a half years and for having dealt with a number of these amendments -- only I think three were passed or maybe four. But it's a tough process. But I still believe if there's not a constitutional convention and we have the right attitude of the people and the help of the people and the determination and the conviction, we can make it happen.

So I just say to my younger friends here, if you're thinking about politics and it's certainly a very exciting thing to do -- I got into politics because of a law professor who talked four young law students into running for the state legislature. And it was a great experience way, way back there. And when I left politics in 1996 -- I really left because Clinton kept scheduling debates past my bedtime.



(Laughter.)

SENATOR DOLE: And then I -- near the end of the campaign, everything was, Dole in '96; Dole in '96. Well, my Democratic friends changed the wording so it read, "Dole is 96." And that was a little disquieting, you know. So I decided not to run again.

So I did a few books, had a lot of fun, wrote a couple of books on political wit, one great political wit, *Laughing Almost All the Way to the White House*. It became a best-seller so we tried another one, *Great Presidential Wit*. And the subtitle was, *I wish I was in this book*. And it did pretty well, too.

But I'll just tell you one story, which -- you've probably heard stories all day, then I'll leave and go to the reception. The story's attributed to Winston Churchill. It was at a big dinner one night in London seated next to Lady Aster. And they got in a big, big verbal fisticuffs back and forth, back and forth. And she finally turned to him and said, "Winston, if you were my husband, I would poison your coffee." He said, "If you were my wife, I would drink it."

(Laughter.)

SENATOR DOLE: So that's the kind of fun we had in our book. We didn't embarrass anybody. We didn't go after anybody. It wasn't partisan. But you've got to have a little fun in life. And I learned one trick as I leave from a Democrat named Steven Young from Ohio. When you're in politics -- and I'm certain some of you maybe experienced this -- sometimes people get mad and they write nasty letters. And you can tell when they're really mad is when they write -- they put it in the envelope and seal it and all that and then they write on the back of the envelope some more mean, nasty things.

So you get this mean, nasty, obscene letter. And you don't know what to do with it. You don't want to give it to somebody. One day I thought, Oh, I'll put it in the congressional record; nobody ever reads that. But that would have cost \$8,000. So I did what Steven Young told me one day. And I put this nasty letter -- I got a lot of them, but this is just one example -- in an envelope. And I addressed. And I sent it back to the sender. And the guy opens it up. He sees a little note. The little note says, "Some damn fool sent me this letter and signed your name."

(Laughter.)

SENATOR DOLE: And I never heard from him again. He never bothered me. He never voted for me anyway so -- but, anyway, I hope you've had a good day. And I think, you know, we live in a great country. We have our differences. We have differences today. But when all is said and done, we ought to be happy about it. And I thank you for being here.



(Applause.)

MR. SABATO: That was great. That was great.

I think now you see why we wanted to have Senator Bob Dole and particularly wanted to have him wrap up the day's activities. And, Senator, I want you to know with this book, proposing all these provocative changes to the Constitution, I've been getting a lot of those letters. And you've given me the answer I'm going to send to every one of them. I love that.

SENATOR DOLE: It always works.

MR. SABATO: It always works, "Some damn fool wrote me this letter and signed your name to it. I love it." We're going to do that.

Senator, that was fantastic. And, you know, you -- in listening to you, it reminds me that there's a lot of good in Washington. And we always criticize Washington, but there's a lot of good in Washington, a lot of institutional memory here. Again, I'm not referring to your age now. I'm talking about institutional memory. And we need to honor that, and we need to listen to it and make sure that we capitalize on it if we ever attempt something like a constitutional convention.

So I personally hope that you chair it. That's what I'm hoping. I want you to chair this thing. It's only a generation away. You'll be here with us. You'll be able to do it. I have full confidence in you.

SENATOR DOLE: My health is good.

MR. SABATO: Your health is excellent. I can tell that. Your mind is superb.

I'm just delighted we've had such an extraordinary day. I want to thank all of you for coming. I think we've had wonderful speakers. Senator Dole is certainly a highlight -- the highlight, as we conclude the day. I want to thank everybody who participated. I want to thank my staff at the Center for Politics at the University of Virginia for doing so much work -- literally for a year. This started in January, the planning for this, and the Youth Leadership Initiative surveys, 500,000 -- we had over 500,000 votes. And I want you to know, the young people across the country are much more reform-oriented than you all are. Boy, we got a bunch of high-bound people here, Senator. And, remember, they're not all from Washington. They've come in -- we've imported them for the day. And that's okay. We're happy to have your views because, as I told you this morning, we just want to start the discussion. That's all we want to do. And we did that today. We started the discussion. We started the debate about what needs to be changed in the Constitution, if anything. You know, I happen to think there are some things that need to be changed, and I'd like to see them done. But even if all we did was to stir up more interest in the Constitution, even if all



we did was to get you and your friends and your relatives and all Americans to go to the Constitution and read it, I'd be thrilled. It would be a better country if everybody read the Constitution with frequency. So let's start the discussion. Keep it moving. Continue it in your communities. And we're going to continue the discussion at our Center for Politics about how we can aid you in this debate.

I want to invite everybody here to the reception on the third floor. It's really good food. It ought to be, given the price. We want you to come. Senator Dole has been nice enough to volunteer to stick around for a brief while. And we'll go to the reception for a brief period of time. And we promise him first dibs on the buffet table in order to do that. But we want you to come up and mix with us. I think you'll enjoy it. And give yourselves a round of applause for a great time today.

(Applause.)

(Whereupon the convention adjourned.)