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Cantor Statement on “Taliban wing of the Republican Party” Remarks made at the South Dakota Democrat Rally for Herseth

Washington — Chief Deputy Majority Whip Eric Cantor (R-VA) released the following statement in response to Democrat Senator Tim Johnson’s (D-SD) comments made at a Stephanie Herseth (D-SD) rally. According to the *Sioux Falls Argus Leader*, Senator Johnson said, “how sweet it’s going to be on June 2 when the Taliban wing of the Republican Party finds out what’s happened in South Dakota.”

“By comparing Republicans to the Taliban, Senator Johnson’s comments are clearly outside the realm of appropriate campaign speech. In the past week, we have seen Senator Hollings’ anti-Semitic claims that Jews are the reason we invaded Iraq and now Senator Johnson has compared Republicans to terrorists. These calculated and callous attacks on their fellow Americans are inexcusable. To attack the patriotism of Americans with whom you disagree is just plain wrong.

“Once again, the silence coming from the Democrat party—from rally host Stephanie Herseth to Senator Tom Daschle—is deafening. This silence can only lead me to believe that these comments are acceptable to Democrats. Americans are worthy of a better debate on the future of our nation. These insensitive and hate-filled remarks cheapen our political dialogue and encourage divisions.

“I am confident that if Republicans uttered similar remarks, Democrat leaders would demand retraction—not because of partisanship, but because these statements are morally wrong. Senator Tom Daschle and the leaders of the Democrat party owe the American public either a rationale for their silence or a clear refutation of these hateful remarks.”

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Congressman Eric Cantor is a Republican representing Virginia’s Seventh district. He is the highest-ranking Jewish member of Congress, serving as Chief Majority Deputy Whip. Cantor serves on the Ways and Means committee and as the Chairman of the House Taskforce on Terrorism and Unconventional Warfare.