

pg. 197-1995

Republicans blast Clinton's baseball efforts

Congress unlikely to intervene

By Ronald Blum
Associated Press
WASHINGTON — Congress had a message Wednesday for baseball players and owners: Leave us alone. President Clinton's special legislation to settle the strike with a three-member panel of independent arbitrators seemed doomed even before it arrived in Capitol Hill. House Speaker Newt Gingrich and Senate Majority Leader Bob

Presidential gamble: But loss might not hurt Clinton. 1A

Dole said they had no intention of moving quickly to force an end to the six-month strike. "I'm not sure that Congress has the wisdom, or should have the ability, to intervene in a single industry that's not a matter of national safety," Gingrich said.

The Republican leaders, who have the power to bottle up any bill, met with mediator W.J. Usery for about 40 minutes in Dole's ornate Senate office. Usery met separately with union head Donald Fehr. Clinton, speaking in the Roosevelt Room where talks were held the night before, said he had no regrets about trying to end the strike. "I'll send the legislation up. They'll hear from the American people and they'll make their own decision," he said. "If we had a baseball commissioner, maybe none

of us would have been in here." Dole said his office received about 1,400 telephone calls about the strike by mid-afternoon and that they ran 5-to-1 against intervention. "I'm afraid the president has ratcheted up the issue in an almost incredible fashion," said Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz. Clinton's bill, sponsored by Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, D-Mass., and Rep. Pat Williams, D-Mont., would give the president authority to appoint a three-person "national baseball dispute resolution panel." It

would accept proposals and arguments from both sides and formulate a settlement. Neither side could go to court to overturn any decision. The proposed legislation doesn't contain a provision that would force an end to the strike. The bill directs the panel to issue its plan "as soon as possible." Players and owners, who spent four hours at the White House with Clinton and his staff on Tuesday, returned home. No talks are scheduled, and it appears they won't meet again until next Wednesday.



Dole Gingrich

Quayle decides against '96 run

Dole campaign gets unexpected boost

Eagle news services

WASHINGTON — Former Vice President Dan Quayle abruptly and unexpectedly withdrew Thursday from the contest for the 1996 presidential nomination, a move that many strategists said would benefit Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole, at least in the short term.

In dropping out of the race, Quayle joins several other prominent Republicans who said they were put off by the vastly escalating demands to solicit donations early.

For all his image problems in the electorate at large, Quayle was a favorite of cultural and religious conservatives who are active in GOP affairs and particularly influential in several early primary states. Dole and other Republican presidential contenders scrambled Thursday to become these voters' candidate.

Many party strategists said Dole would benefit most in the short-term, because front-runners generally do when another major candidate bows out. Hoping to prove that true, Dole saluted Quayle on Thursday as a "courageous voice for mainstream American values."

Neil Newhouse, a GOP pollster whose firm has done work for Dole's exploratory committee, said a survey his firm conducted in December found that a plurality of Quayle supporters preferred Dole as their second choice. But despite a solid, conservative voting record on abortion and other social issues, Dole is considered suspect by many religious conservative leaders. Pat Buchanan is a favorite of this group, but not considered by most analysts to be a serious prospect for the nomination.

Dole, Sen. Phil Gramm of Texas and former Tennessee Gov. Lamar Alexander have locked up most of the party's major fund-raisers and are busy courting GOP elected officials and key-state activists. Just Thursday, for example, Dole met with New Hampshire Gov. Stephen Merrill, an influential GOP voice in the first primary state.

Ralph Reed, executive director of the Christian Coalition, said Gramm had an enormous opportunity, if he would add social issues to his conservative economic message. In an interview, Gramm said he already was stressing such themes in his call for welfare reform and family tax cuts. With Quayle out, he asserted that "now there is no doubt that I am the conservative in the race."

Alexander, for his part, said Quayle's decision leaves him as the most formidable candidate from outside Washington against "insiders" Dole and Gramm. The most tangible effect of Quayle's departure, though, may be to intensify speculation about other potential entries to the race. "I think the race will be bigger than it is right now," Jack Kemp said at a conservative political conference in Washington.

In a statement Thursday, Quayle said he was confident he could have waged a winning campaign if he had subjected himself to a grueling fund-raising schedule this year. "However, we chose to put our fam-

ily first and to forgo the disruption to our lives that a third straight national campaign would create," he said. Quayle's statement did not touch on his recent medical problems. One top strategist, Mark Goodin, said that "health considerations played zero role in this decision."

Doctors removed a benign tumor from Quayle's appendix last month, soon after he was hospitalized for blood clots in his lungs that threatened his life. Thursday's announcement was even more stunning because it came less than three weeks after Quayle all but declared his candidacy at a rally in Indianapolis, saying he was "scanned, rested and ready to go."

His decision, which he said came "after careful thought and prayer," is the most dramatic demonstration of how the truncated schedule of primaries next year has transformed presidential politics. While the calendar shows that the first primary votes in New Hampshire are a year off, the first real votes are being cast now with \$1,000 checks. That's because several states, including delegate-rich California, have moved up their primaries to earlier dates so they can have more influence in the selection process. Next year, half of the delegates will



Dole GOP front-runner likely to benefit most, strategists say.

Dole: New act for 1996

Possible 'Saturday Night Live' gig just one sign of new campaign approach

By RICHARD L. BERKE
The New York Times

WASHINGTON — The majority leader of the U.S. Senate, the early front-runner for the Republican presidential nomination, sat by a fire in his Capitol office on Friday afternoon, wondering if he could carve out time for an important engagement: to be guest host of "Saturday Night Live."

It wasn't a question of whether Bob Dole should do it, but whether he could afford four nights of rehearsals and posing for promotional spots with the comedian Dan Ackroyd, whom he would want on the show. "I like Ackroyd," he said. "He plays me. I think he's great."

By his own reckoning, Dole, 71, would never have thought of doing such a program in his last three tries for national office. But if what politicians must do to get elected president has changed, so has Dole. Or so he says.

Dole's message, in essence, is this: Now is his time. While his is a record of missed opportunities for the White House — he ran with President Gerald R. Ford in 1976, and then sought the Republican nomination in his own right in 1980 and 1988 — he is for the first time running at the head of the pack.

"I want to be perceived as somebody who has earned the right to do this," the Kansan said in the interview.

Still, with the Iowa caucuses, the first actual contest for delegates, tentatively set for one year from Sunday, doubts linger among leading Republicans: Can Dole keep his temper in check, even as

Continued on page 8-A, col. 1

Dole: New act for 1996

Continued from page 1-A

he watches his longtime nemesis, Speaker Newt Gingrich, set the agenda on Capitol Hill?

Has Dole finally learned from the mistakes that doomed him before? Or do the qualities that often serve him well in the Senate — the compromising, the micro-managing, the acid wit — threaten what he called his last shot at the White House?

Has he learned from 1988, when his campaign was plagued by an unclear message, a series of misguided decisions, months of highly public feuding among his advisers and extravagant spending that left the campaign in debt? "A lot of people are trying to teach him," said former Sen. Warren Rudman, R-N.H., and a longtime Dole confidante. "We'll see."

Already, Dole said, he has attended to some of the problems of the past. Most important, he explained, is his changed attitude; he said he wasn't as obsessive or raging with ambition.

He contends that if people get a chance to see his lighter side on programs like "Saturday Night Live" — "as long as it's not off-color" — that might wipe out the brooding image of him telling George Bush on national television in 1988 to "stop lying about my record."

He said he was swamped with positive letters after his recent appearance on David Letterman's show.

"I'm trying to approach it differently," Dole said. "My own view is you can want something too much, you can be too ambitious or too focused or too self-centered."

He has begun putting a seasoned staff in place, led by Scott Reed, a former executive director of the Republican National Committee, who he said would "call the shots."

He is "insisting we have a green eye-shade person" to watch the money. He has been meeting with governors as part of a plan to line up early endorsements. And he said he was eager to jump into the process with a dozen town meetings scheduled for this weekend in New Hampshire.

But some Republican strategists point to potential trouble, including signs that Dole isn't completely comfortable with Gingrich's pre-eminence.

The senator said publicly he didn't approve of Gingrich's initial plan to take a \$4.5 million advance on a book deal, and some of Dole's opponents say it will be only a matter of time before tensions between the two men surface — and endanger Dole's

efforts to be the reasoned leader.

Dole suggested that letting the speaker have center stage only made him appear mellow.

"I was sort of the lightning rod; I finally got a little relief this year," he said. "I've been on the bench since January. Everywhere, people go. 'This is the nice Bob Dole, the voice of reason.'"

He noted with satisfaction that the latest polls showed he was more popular than Gingrich as well as President Clinton.

Bob Dole the slasher will not resurface, said the man who became known as the "Republican hatchet man" in the 1976 campaign.

"I try to kind of watch it," Dole said. "I don't think I'm mean. I don't have anything to be mean about. I don't throw things at my wife or the staff."

Still, Dole has saved some sharp words for Sen. Phil Gramm of Texas, 52, a more conservative colleague who is seeking the nomination.

"He said he was conservative before it was cool or something," Dole said. "I was conservative before he was out of high school."

Suggesting Gramm was too fixed in his opinions, he said, "Maybe on some issues, I don't want to be as conservative as Phil Gramm."

Dole has said he has talked with his wife, Elizabeth Hanford Dole, about the worst-case scenario: that he might lose again. Yet he can't help but try one last time.

"I don't give up easily," Dole said. "You never know when your time is. Maybe it's never."

DOLE

From Page 1A

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THE 1996 GOP FIELD

Who's out, who's in and who's still undecided on the 1996 Republican presidential race:

THEY'RE IN

- Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole.
- Sen. Phil Gramm of Texas.
- Former Tennessee Gov. Lamar Alexander.

LEANING IN

- Sen. Richard Lugar of Indiana.
- Sen. Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania, the only likely candidate so far who favors abortion rights.
- Pat Buchanan.
- Rep. Robert Dornan of California.

THEY'RE OUT

- Dan Quayle.
- Dick Cheney.
- Jack Kemp.
- William Bennett.

THEY'RE UNDECIDED

- Wisconsin Gov. Tommy Thompson.
- California Gov. Pete Wilson.
- Massachusetts Gov. William Weld. Like Wilson, his support of abortion rights makes him a tough sell to conservatives.
- James Baker.

BIG QUESTION MARKS:

- House Speaker Newt Gingrich.
- Colin Powell, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

be selected by the end of March. And that means candidates no longer will have the relative luxury of winning a primary, then using that victory to raise more money, and moving on to the next states.

"We were never out there raising money," said Goodin, who had been advising Quayle. "In the end, he said, 'Look, I'm behind the curve; it would take an awful lot of energy and time to even catch up.'"

last week, Kemp, housing secretary in the Bush administration, dropped out of the race, citing the grueling requirements to raise money. Dick Cheney, who was Bush's defense secretary, bowed out for much the same reason.

Last year, William Bennett, drug policy director for Bush, cited financial concerns as overriding.

Contributing: New York Times News Service, Associated Press, The Eagle's Washington Bureau, Los Angeles Times/Washington Post Service

Dole questions viability of nomination

Eagle news services

WASHINGTON — Opposition to President Clinton's nominee for surgeon general began to harden Thursday among the Republican majority in the Senate, with some pledging an all-out fight to scuttle the nomination and Majority Leader Bob Dole suggesting the possibility that it will be withdrawn.

But Clinton again pledged to stand by Henry Foster, and the White House said the president would begin calling members of Congress to enlist their aid in the fight to save the nomination.

Dole said Clinton might have to withdraw Foster if the controversy doesn't die down.

"If it gets any worse, they probably shouldn't send it (the nomination) up here," Dole said.

Sen. Phil Gramm, R-Texas, who is challenging Dole for the GOP presidential nomination, said Foster

should be disqualified.

"The nomination of a physician whose medical practice has included the routine performance of abortion to serve as America's chief spokesman on public health is clearly inappropriate and divisive," Gramm said.

In a TV interview on "Nightline"

on Wednesday, Foster said he had aborted. But he also said that, after checking his records, he had determined he had performed 39, not "fewer than a dozen" as he had said last week.

White House officials said they were still working with Foster to make sure they have a complete picture.