

Talking With Kansans Senator Bob Dole



Independence Day

Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole made the following statement on the floor of the U.S. Senate on Friday in commemoration of Independence Day.

"Next Tuesday, in homes, neighborhoods, and communities across the country, Americans will celebrate Independence Day.

And since the Senate will not be in session on America's birthday, I wanted to take a minute today to share some very meaningful words with my colleagues.

The words are not mine. Rather, they were first written in 1955, as a public relations advertisement for what is now the Norfolk Southern Corporation. The words have been updated slightly since then, and they eloquently encompass what America is all about:

I was born on July 4, 1776, and the Declaration of Independence is my birth certificate. The bloodlines of the world run in my veins, because I offered freedom to the oppressed. I am many things, and many people. I am the nation...

I am Nathan Hale and Paul Revere. I stood at Lexington and fired the shot heard around the world. I am Washington, Jefferson and Patrick Henry. I am John Paul Jones, the Green Mountain Boys and Davy Crockett. I am Lee and Grant and Lincoln.

I remember the Alamo, the Maine, and Pearl Harbor. When freedom called, I answered and stayed until it was over, over there. I left my heroic dead in Flanders Fields, on the rock of Corregidor, on the bleak slopes of Korea, and in the steaming jungles of Vietnam.

I am the Brooklyn Bridge, the wheat fields of Kansas, and the granite hills of Vermont. I am the coal fields of the Virginias and Pennsylvania, the fertile lands of the West, the Golden Gate and the Grand Canyon. I am Independence Hall, the Monitor and the Merimac.

I am big. I sprawl from the Atlantic to the Pacific. My arms reach out to embrace Alaska and Hawaii, three million square miles throbbing with industry. I am millions of farms. I am forest, field, mountain and desert. I am quiet villages — and cities that never sleep.

You can look at me and see Ben Franklin walking the streets of Philadelphia with a bread loaf under his arm. you can see Betsy Ross with her needle. You can see the lights of Christmas, and hear the strains of "Auld Lang Syne" as the calendar turns.

I am Babe Ruth and the World Series. I am 110,000 schools and colleges, and 330,000 churches where my people worship God as they think best. I am a ballot dropped in a box, the roar of a crowd in a stadium, and the voice of a choir in a cathedral. I am an editorial in a newspaper and a letter to a congressman.

I am Eli Whitney and Stephen Foster. I am Tom Edison, Albert Einstein, and Billy Graham. I am Horace Greeley, Will Rogers, and the Wright brothers. I am George Washington Carver, Jonas Salk, and Martin Luther King.

I am Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Walt Whitman and Thomas Paine.

Yes, I am the nation, and these are the things that I am. I was conceived in freedom, and, God willing, in freedom I will spend the rest of my days.

May I possess always the integrity, the courage, and the strength to keep myself unshackled, to remain a citadel of freedom, and a beacon of hope to the world.

I know all senators join me in wishing America a happy 219th birthday."

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Japan Trade Update

Victory was declared on Wednesday in the trade negotiations with Japan. But I think a lot of Americans are wondering "in favor of which side?"

A lot of Americans are wondering exactly what did the United States get after years of tough talk and threats?

A closer look reveals that after 2 1/2 years of negotiations, the final agreement is vague, unenforceable, non-binding — in short, it is virtually empty.

Japanese car manufacturers apparently promised to increase production at their transplant operations in the U.S. But for the most part, the promised increases may be no more than what was already planned. It is hard to see why the threat of a major trade war was necessary to persuade the Japanese to do what they already had announced.

The U.S. negotiators claimed to have reached landmark agreements in the areas of auto parts and dealerships. But the Japanese immediately issued disclaimers, emphasizing that any commitments were not government commitments, carry no government backing, and are not enforceable.

The U.S. negotiators announced an estimate of expected increases in sales of auto parts under the agreement. Incredibly, the Japanese negotiator then specifically disavowed the U.S. estimate. He said the U.S. estimate was shared "neither by the minister himself nor by the government of Japan."

It makes one wonder, who were we negotiating with? One report this morning states that some Japanese officials "expressed amazement that the U.S. accepted the final deal."

Is this the "specific, measurable, concrete" deal the president promised?

If the estimated increases in parts purchases fail to occur, there are no consequences. If the number of dealerships does not increase, Japan faces no penalties. If the U.S. estimates in any of these categories do not materialize — well, the Japanese never acknowledged those U.S. estimates in the first place. And a joint U.S.-Japan statement adds the ultimate qualifier: Both sides agreed to recognize that "changes in market conditions may affect the fulfillment of these plans."

The bottom line is that this agreement does very little, if anything, to address the continuing problem of market access in Japan. After this agreement is in place, Japan will remain the most closed major industrial economy in the world. Japan will remain a sanctuary economy, with the lowest level among all industrial nations of import penetration across numerous industry sectors.

This agreement does nothing to address the continuing problem of Japanese cartel-like behavior in their home market. It does nothing to address the restrictive business practices that effectively block U.S. companies from penetrating the Japanese market. And it does nothing to encourage, not to mention require, the Japanese government to take any action against those practices.

We went to the brink of a trade war with one of our most important trading partners and wound up with vague promises that cannot be enforced. I hope this is not a model for future efforts to get tough against closed foreign markets

The GOP's Private War

Politics: Dole manages to please two clashing conservative camps—but can the peace last long?

By HOWARD FINEMAN

BOB DOLE LIKES TO PAGE people in airports. It's a leadership thing. The first call last week went to anti-abortion leader Gary Bauer, in Orlando on a Disney World family vacation. The message from Dole: he had scheduled a quick-strike vote against Dr. Henry Foster's surgeon-general nomination. Would Bauer's 250,000-member Family Research Council make another round of phone calls? Two days later the pager sounded at Washington's National Airport for House Budget chairman John Kasich, on his way home to Columbus, Ohio. The message: get back to the Capitol, fast. Dole had cajoled Sen. Pete Domenici, an old friend, into accepting a balanced-budget plan that included huge tax cuts. And there was time to announce the new deal on network news.

With skill and showmanship, Dole moved against abortion—Foster's nomination was killed—and in favor of tax cuts. The GOP's Senate leader and presidential front runner thus did the bidding and won the respect of the two factions that now dominate the Republican Party. But it took all of his legislative experience to pull it off. And the factions he pacified have just begun to make demands. They remain capable of undermining his candidacy—and tearing the party apart.

In label form, the GOP today has two factions: "cultural" conservatives and "economic" ones. Both see a war for the soul of man among three contending forces: the State, the Market and God. Government, they believe, has been discredited. But now comes the struggle between the freedom of markets and the absolutes of faith—between the floor of the New York Stock Exchange and the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel.

Defeating Foster was only an early skirmish for cultural conservatives. The anti-abortion forces plan to move ahead, inch by inch. Bills currently in the House



Bridging a chasm: On abortion and taxes last week, Dole skillfully pleased his party's dueling factions—while Gramm, losing ground, tried to recoup



Christian Coalition and other groups are pressing for a constitutional amendment that guarantees a right to voluntary expression of religious faith in public places, including schools. A new Republicans-only Congressional Family Caucus has been formed in the House to "protect the institution of the family, as ordained by God."

The economic conservatives worship growth of the gross domestic product and cuts in capital-gains-tax rates. Their social views tend to be light-years away from the cultural right. Most Republicans praised Dole's recent attack on Time Warner. Not Jude Wanniski, an influential investment adviser and founding pamphleteer of Reaganomics. Dole's move was "the first really serious mistake he has made in his presidential quest this time around," he said. It's "inappropriate to intermingle questions of private morality with public power." Literally finding his voice in time for "Larry King Live," California Gov. Pete Wilson last week agreed, emphasizing his support for abortion rights and gay rights.

For Democrats, the obvious question is how best to exploit the GOP's divisions. President Clinton last week warned ominously of the "chilling" prospect of a GOP in thrall to pro-lifers. Press spokesman Mike McCurry's new favorite word for the GOP is "extremist." Ironically, the White House has a temporary ally in Gov. Bill Weld of Massachusetts. He told NEWSWEEK that President Clinton can win reelection only if the GOP "gets too far off into the social issues." Not coincidentally, Weld and Clinton share an adviser: the shadowy Dick Morris, polltaker and rhetorical hit man.

For Republicans, bridging the chasm in their party won't be easy. Dole was skillful, but lucky. Texas Sen. Phil Gramm was neither. His record as a cultural conservative is solid. But he initially shied away from pursuing the cultural agenda as a candidate—in part to avoid the "extremist" label—and was accused of apostasy. To recoup, he vowed to filibuster Foster's nomination, but in the end got little credit for derailing it. "Basically, I'm an economic conservative," explained Gramm, holding forth in the ornate "President's Room" near the Senate floor.

The setting was ironic and symbolic of the GOP. The frescoed ceiling above depicted two mythic figures on opposite sides from each other: Liberty and Religion. The challenge for the GOP's presidential contender is to convince America, once again, that both can be honored in the same hallowed place.

With MARTHA BRANT in Washington

Rules on food safety might be revamped

By MARIAN BURROS The New York Times

WASHINGTON — In the next few weeks, Congress will consider legislation to alter rules on food safety drastically.

The changes, scattered throughout several bills, have been proposed by the Republicans to limit the federal government's authority to regulate not only food safety but also health and the environment.

Taken together, the bills would reduce the burden on businesses to prove that food is safe and would increase the bur-

den on government agencies to prove that proposed rules would reduce risks to the public and would be worth the cost.

The bills would also expand the food industry's chances to appeal the rules in court.

The centerpiece of the effort is a bill on regulatory reform sponsored by Sen. Bob Dole of Kansas, the majority leader, which would affect many food rules.

"It is clear that the American people are fed up with a regulatory state that is out of control," Dole said. "The bill simply asks that agencies use common sense to avoid unnecessary costs when pursuing important goals such as health and safety."

The changes, he said, would not foreclose tougher safety standards or over-

ride existing mandates.

But critics disagree and contend that the result would be a food supply that is much less safe.

"These proposals are an assault on 40 years of consumer protection," said Dr. David Kessler, commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration.

Kessler recently spoke out against the proposals for the first time, saying he had decided to do so because "there is an enormous amount at stake."

"It's one thing to eliminate unnecessary burdens on business," Kessler said. "It's another thing to compromise longstanding health and safety standards."

The bills, if approved, would have the following consequences:

■ Rules to modernize the meat inspection system, including microbial testing, scheduled to go into effect next year, would either be dropped or postponed.

The rules were proposed by the Agriculture Department in an effort to prevent an estimated 5 million illnesses and 4,000 deaths each year from meat and poultry tainted with harmful bacteria.

■ A major regulation intended to improve the testing of seafood by the end of year, would either be stopped or postponed several years.

■ The Delaney Clause, which forbids adding even the slightest trace of any known carcinogen to food, would be repealed. The Clinton administration opposes the move as part of regulatory reform.

■ Pesticides that are considered probable human carcinogens could continue to be used. The Environmental Protection Agency had been in the process of removing them from the market.

■ The Food and Drug Administration's plan to regulate the packaging of iron supplements — the leading cause of poisoning of children — would be dropped or delayed several years. The rule was scheduled to go into effect later this year.

Currently, most decisions on food regulations are based on their effect on health.

But under the proposed legislation, benefits to farmers and food processors would play a greater role in determining whether the Food and Drug Administration could issue new safety requirements for food companies or whether the Environmental Protection Agency would permit the use of a particular pesticide.

"If you want gridlock, they can delay, but in the House eventually they'll get some action," Dole said.

Dole said Republicans in the Senate have been dealing with filibusters and stalling since they got control of the chamber in the last election.

"The Democrats have been doing that in the Senate all year," he said. "It wouldn't be any big surprise to us on the Senate side."



Dole