

The Salina Journal A8 Tuesday, July 11, 1995

Battle brews over Vietnam relations

Lawmakers might block federal aid

By The Associated Press
WASHINGTON — The path toward normalizing relations with Vietnam began four years ago when the United States offered a road map toward diplomatic ties. Desperate to heal its sickly economy, Hanoi responded by intensifying efforts to locate the remains of missing U.S. servicemen.

The reward comes today when President Clinton announces the United States will establish full relations with a nation where 58,000 Americans lost their lives in a failed effort to defeat a communist regime.

"I think it's been our judgment that there's been considerable progress in achieving the fullest possible accounting for POWs and MIAs," White House press secretary Mike McCurry said. "One argument in favor of closer relations with Vietnam is to continue that progress."

But Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole, R-Kan., said now is not the time for the United States to

normalize relations with Vietnam. The Vietnamese have cooperated on issues related to American soldiers missing from the Vietnam War only under pressure, Dole said in a Senate floor speech.

The possibility of normalization remains the "strongest bargaining chip" available to the United States in determining the fate of prisoners of war and those missing in action, he said.

"The historical record shows that Vietnam cooperates with the United States on POW-MIA issues only when pressured by the United States," Dole said.

Twenty years after the fall of Saigon, Vietnam remains a painful subject that sharply divides Americans.

Trying to soften the blow, the administration invited POW and MIA families to a White House briefing a few hours before Clinton's announcement.

On Capitol Hill, Rep. Ben Gilman, R-N.Y., chairman of the House International Relations Committee, said he would seek legislation barring the use of federal funds to advance diplomatic or economic relations with Vietnam.

"It is painfully obvious that the administration's large-carrot-no-stick policy has not worked so far," said Gilman, who has scheduled hearings on the POW-MIA issue for Wednesday.



Dole

GOP contenders hit Dole on welfare, age

The Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — White House hopefuls tried Saturday to chip into Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole's lead in the GOP presidential contest, suggesting to party leaders that the front-runner is vulnerable on welfare reform and his age.

Dole, a Kansas Republican, told the Republican National Committee meeting in Philadelphia that he was "willing to be another Ronald Reagan" if that's what they want.

"Ronald Reagan provided strong leadership. America needs strong leadership," said Dole, who holds a substantial lead in GOP public opinion polls, fund-raising and political endorsements.

Dole sparred with Sen. Phil Gramm of Texas and former Tennessee Gov. Lamar Alexander over welfare, with Gramm saying he will introduce a reform package this week to compete with Dole-backed legislation that "does not get the job done."

For the first time, Dole's age also emerged as a campaign issue when Alexander, 55, raised it indirectly by talking about "generational" leadership. Alexander's aides said the comments were based on their research showing age concerns resonate with voters. Dole is 71, the oldest in the field.

"We are at a crossroads and in the midst of a period of generational change in our leadership," Alexander told the party leaders.

"We are electing a president in 1996 who will be the president in the year 2000, literally the first president of the next century."

Asked later by reporters whether Dole is too old, Alexander said: "I never mention age. I'm talking about generation, thinking and ability to paint the picture of the future — the energy, the skills, the vision to implement the Republican agenda."

He said the nomination should not be based on "a thank-you for a long-serving senator."

Dole said in a speech that party officials he knew as Republican National Committee chairman in 1972 "still look very young, and we are. We've only just begun. Don't worry about it."

LOCAL/KANSAS

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Dole aide under fire for being too liberal

Conservatives worry she'll steer Dole to left

By The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — It's rare for a congressional aide to be at the center of a political brawl, but that's where Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole's chief of staff finds herself.

A steady stream of criticism has been flowing from conservative activists and columnists who argue that Sheila Burke is undermining the Republican revolution by advocating a moderate-to-liberal social policy agenda.

She has recently irritated conservatives by pushing a version of the welfare-reform bill they found objectionable — notably for its failure to stress ways to stop out-of-wedlock births.

"Her approach to this issue is more liberal than the voters who gave the Republicans the congressional majority last November," said Gary Bauer, executive director of the Family Research Council.

Last year, Burke tried to fashion compromise on health-care reform, drawing praise from Democrats such as Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan of New York for supporting President Clinton's goal of government intervention.

But her actions infuriated conservatives. And they say her reputation as a GOP moderate is no longer a Beltway secret.

"It used to be an inside Washington story. Now, I'm beginning to get letters from around the country from activists raising her name," Bauer says.

The criticism of Burke, a former Democrat, has become an issue in Dole's campaign for the 1996 presidential nomination. If the Kansas Republican wins the presi-

dency, Burke is a strong candidate to call the shots as his White House chief of staff.

Some conservatives wonder if she might steer a Dole presidency too far to the left.

"I can see the questions about Ms. Burke looming larger," Bauer said.

Scott Reed, Dole's campaign manager, disputes published reports that the campaign is disenchanted with Burke.

Reed credits Burke with devising the strategy that derailed Dr. Henry Foster's nomination to be surgeon general. He also credited her with helping engineer passage of the executive line-item veto and the balanced budget resolution, all issues dear to the hearts of conservatives.

Reed said no one should assume she is pursuing an agenda different from Dole's.

"People are wildly wrong if they think she tells Dole what to do," Reed said. "She is an extremely capable tactician."

Burke, 44, came to Dole's office in 1977

after working as a nurse in California and New York. She rose quickly through the ranks to become chief of staff after nine years, and is now Dole's most trusted aide.

Other Senate aides, who spoke only if their names weren't used, described Burke as efficient, effective and occasionally intimidating in negotiating sessions. One said she was an "easy target" because of her high profile.

Burke on Friday called the criticism "absurd" and suggested she is being targeted by Dole's presidential rivals as an indirect way of undermining his campaign.

She said her job is to "process information and help him make decisions," not set an agenda herself.

"Dole is not somebody who is going to tolerate a staff person running amok," Burke said. "Anyone who has ever worked for him would attest to the fact that there are none of us who lead Dole blindly."

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Hutchinson News Sunday, July 16, 1995

Going after Dole

GOP presidential hopefuls attack party's front-runner

By Rita Beamish
Associated Press Writer

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Bob Dole is 'willing to be another Ronald Reagan,' should that be his party's desire.

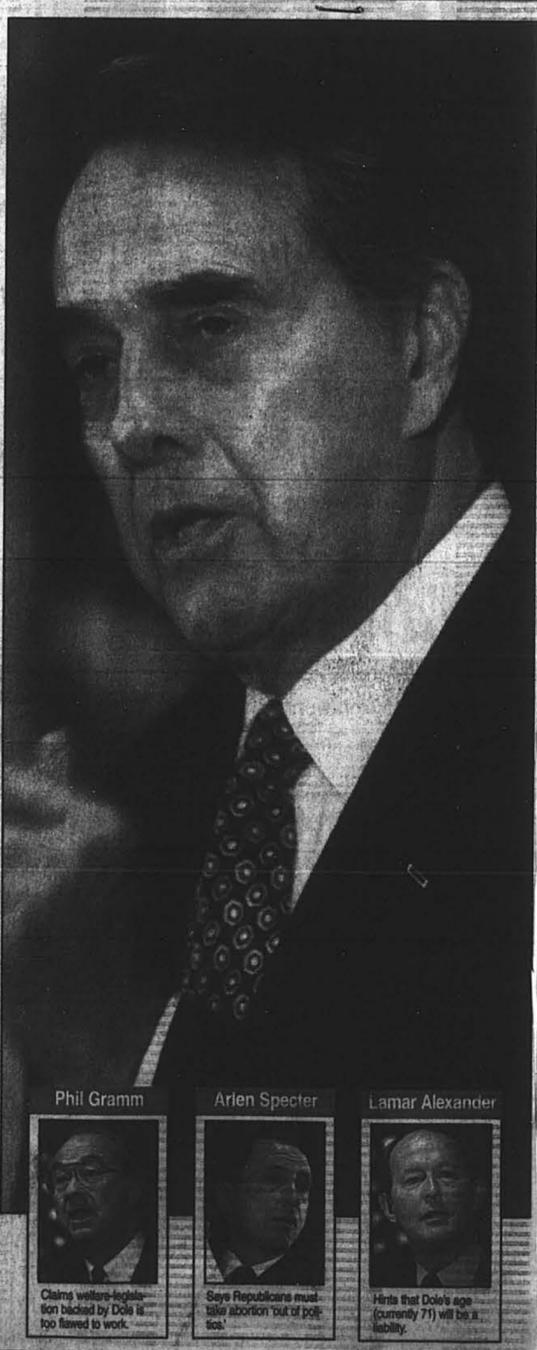
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Other presidential hopefuls attack Dole

They claim he's vulnerable because of age, issues

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picture of the future — the energy, the skills, the vision to implement the Republican agenda."

He said the nomination should not be based on "a thank-you for a long-serving senator."

Dole said party officials he knew as RNC chairman in 1972 "still look very young, and we are. We've only just begun. Don't worry about it."

He described himself as "someone who has been tested and tested and tested and made tough decisions every day," and attacked President Clinton as a politics-driven person who is providing no leadership in the world.

On welfare reform, Dole took a swipe at Gramm and the conservatives whose legislation competes with the bill passed by the Senate Finance Committee and which he supports. He said crafting a bill that can pass is not easy.

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Dole

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But Gramm called for "real welfare reform" to fulfill GOP promises from the 1994 congressional election.

"We cannot let the commitment we made in the election perish on the ramparts of compromise and status quo and deal-cutting in Washington, D.C.," Gramm said. His bill would shift key welfare

programs to state control, bar welfare for immigrants unless they become citizens, and bar added aid to mothers on welfare who have additional children.

It also sends Aid to Families with Dependent Children, food stamps, and the Women, Infants and Children nutrition program to the states.

The Dole-backed bill would send only one major welfare program, AFDC, to the states as a block grant, and let states decide whether aid goes to immigrant families, unmarried teen-age mothers and welfare mothers who have more children.

Alexander said Washington should turn over all welfare programs to the states, and Medicaid

should shift to the federal government so the states would have sufficient welfare resources.

Among other GOP candidates who have addressed the three-day party meeting, Sen. Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania made a small splash when he entered the lobby of the conference hotel and was surrounded by a knot of supporters carrying abortion-rights placards. Specter, who supports abortion rights, received modest applause when he said the party should take abortion "out of politics."

Rep. Bob Dornan of California was greeted by whoops and applause when he praised "the new Bob Dole, back on the trail and fighting."

Phil Gramm



Claims welfare-legislation backed by Dole is too liberal to work.

Arlen Specter



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Lamar Alexander



Hints that Dole's age (currently 71) will be a liability.

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