

Pg. 143 - 1994

# 'Converted' Dole proposes program to buy back guns

By The Associated Press  
WASHINGTON — Seeing the success of local efforts to buy back handguns, Senate Republican leader Bob Dole proposed a \$30 million federal program Tuesday to support such endeavors.



Sen. Bob Dole

"The jury is still out on whether these gun buy-back efforts actually reduce crime," Dole said, but noted that the idea of buying back guns with cash, toys, clothes and tickets for sports events "has taken off at the local level."

Dole has been a longtime opponent of gun-control measures.

But Dole pointed out that another skeptic — New York City Police Chief Raymond Kelly — recently said he'd become "converted" by the success of the programs and become "a believer."

"I'm prepared to be a convert and a believer, too," Dole told the National Governors Association.

A congressional gun-control advocate lauded the idea behind the plan if not the plan itself.

"I'm pleasantly surprised that even Bob Dole thinks there's too many guns out there," said Rep. Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., and chairman of the House Judiciary Committee's crime panel. He stopped short of wholeheartedly endorsing the plan but said, "It's sure a lot better than nothing."

Dole said his proposal would create a fund administered by the attorney general through which the federal government would match, up to certain limits, local money spent to create such buy-back programs.

His legislation requests an appropriation of \$15 million in fiscal 1994 and another \$15 million next year. Dole said the program could be reauthorized and expanded if successful.

"If my numbers add up," Dole said, "the federal gun buy-back initiative — working together with state and local initiatives — could result in removing more than 1 million guns from our streets within the next two years."

However, he cautioned, the initiative "will not stop crime, not by a long shot."

Schumer said he preferred the effort outlined in legislation he and Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., have introduced: It would let companies that participate in gun buy-back programs deduct the expenses as charitable donations.

"That has worked better than direct grants through the cities and states," Schumer said. "I would hope that Dole would look at that proposal."

# U.S. action in Bosnia unlikely

By Robert A. Rankin and Jennifer Lin  
Eagle Washington bureau

## ANALYSIS

WASHINGTON — The bloody massacre of 68 civilians Saturday in Sarajevo has put new pressure on President Clinton to do something to stop the carnage in Bosnia while highlighting that U.S. military action remains quite unlikely.

On Sunday, Clinton conferred with top aides as renewed calls for air strikes were heard from within the United States and without. And while the North Atlantic Treaty Organization may go down the path toward involvement in the war this week, U.S. policy has not changed and it is unlikely to.

Once again, Washington has threatened to consider air strikes and called for new diplomatic efforts to arrange a negotiated settlement in Bosnia.

While that policy appears increasingly hollow in light of the bloodshed on the ground, it is unlikely to change for three reasons: Americans display no desire to send their sons and daughters into a distant civil war; European allies remain bitterly divided over what to do; and any U.S. military involvement in Bosnia — even air strikes — would increase very real risks that U.S. forces could end up trapped in a quagmire as difficult to exit as the Vietnam War.

Senate Minority Leader Bob Dole on Sunday repeated his call for air strikes but noted that strikes could lead to dangerous escalation and emphasized that the United States should not act alone.

Urging Clinton to assert more forceful leadership, the Kansas Republican said the president at least should end the U.S. embargo against sending arms to Bosnia so that Muslims there could defend themselves

better against Serbian aggression. "Just lifting the embargo would send a powerful message all the way to Belgrade," Dole said. "That's the minimal step."

Clinton's ambivalence over U.S. military action was evident in separate statements Sunday from two of his Cabinet secretaries.

Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen denounced the Sarajevo shelling as "a bloody outrage" and said "some kind of a message has to be sent to make them understand that that kind of cruelty, stupidity will not be condoned."

Asked on NBC-TV's "Meet the Press" if air strikes might deliver the message, Bentsen said "that's certainly on the table as one of the options."

Meanwhile, Defense Secretary William Perry was voicing reservations about air strikes even as he denounced the Sarajevo attack as an "unforgivable incident."

"If air strikes are Act One in a new melodrama, what is Act Two, Act Three and the conclusion?" Perry asked at a conference in Munich, Germany.

Those questions speak to fears that have haunted military planners in both the Bush and Clinton administrations. U.S. air strikes would constitute a U.S. commitment to Bosnia; if the strikes failed, what next? Once we're in, how do we get out?

Robert Zoellick, a former under-secretary of state for the Bush administration, also was wary of air strikes.

"What happens if the bombing doesn't work? What happens to your diplomacy if you're unwilling to take the next step, which is the use



Sen. Bob Dole

of troops?" Zoellick asked. Subduing Serbian forces would not be easy in Bosnia's mountainous terrain, military strategists say. Air strikes might knock out gun emplacements, but Perry's questions speak to fears that ground troops might be needed next.

Hundreds of thousands of troops might be required to impose a peace, military planners say.

Sen. Claiborne Pell, D-R.I., chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, cautioned against military action.

"Don't get me wrong, I'm not impervious to the horrors of what's going on," Pell said. "Events like this are horrible. ... But each of us has our own responsibility and my main concern is preserving the lives of young Americans."

History warns against such outside intervention. World War I ignited from ethnic violence between Serbs and Croats. In World War II, not even Hitler's vaunted Nazi army could subdue native fighters in Bosnia's rugged mountains.

Mindful of such lessons, West Europeans today are torn between their moral outrage at the horror of Bosnia's bloodshed and their reluctance to plunge their own people once again into the Balkan charnel house.

European division was evident again Sunday: Belgian, French and Turkish officials issued statements urging the United Nations and NATO to consider air strikes, but Britain's Defense Secretary Malcolm Rifkind voiced reservations about them.

Britain, Canada and France have thousands of troops in Bosnia as part of a U.N. peacekeeping mission. France argues that selective air strikes could help protect those forces as well as ease the threat to Sarajevo, but Britain and Canada fear such strikes could intensify fighting and lead to wider war.

Last month, Clinton and the European allies papered over their divisions at NATO's summit in Brussels, Belgium. They reiterated that NATO will consider air strikes to prevent the "strangulation" of Sarajevo and also if needed to relieve U.N. forces at two other sites.

"If we leave the sentence in the declaration, we have to mean it," Clinton warned his allies. Failure to back it up, Clinton said, would weaken NATO's credibility.

Clinton's critics made the same point Sunday.

"You cannot just go ahead with soft words and idle threats," former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher said on ABC-TV's "This Week with David Brinkley" show. She urged Clinton to consult NATO commanders in Bosnia "with the idea of taking effective action, not for finding excuses for inaction."

# Dole Hits Clinton on Health Care Program

WASHINGTON (UPI) — Senate Republican leader Robert Dole, rushing to preserve a GOP claim to prime election year issues embraced by President Clinton in his State of the Union address, said Tuesday the Democrats' effort to overhaul America's health care system are just plain wrong.



SEN. BOB DOLE

"We will have a crisis if we take the president's medicine — a massive overdose of government control," Dole, R-Kan., said after Clinton proposed health care reform as his chief legislative agenda of this congressional session.

Dole, considering seeking the Republican nomination to oppose Clinton in 1996, offered the official GOP response to the Democratic president's first State of the Union address. Republicans, by and large, said Clinton has made a campaign speech — though much of Dole's response was delivered in a similar style.

After briefly praising Clinton and his wife, Hillary Rodham Clinton, for opening a national debate on health care reform, Dole asked what is really wrong with the basic system, which he said is the best in the world. He said the proposed overhaul will "put a mountain of bureaucrats between you and your doctor." And he said it will compromise a patient's privacy.

"Clearly, the president is asking you to trust the government more than you trust your doctor and yourselves, with you lives and the lives of your loved ones," Dole said. "More cost. Less choice. More taxes. More government control. That's what the president's government-run plan is likely to give you."

Rep. Newt Gingrich, R-Ga., slated to be the next Republican leader of the House in 1995, said Clinton was offering interesting proposals centered on "much more government control."

Republicans, like Clinton, are reading national opinion surveys that show concern about crime is a major issue for Americans, edging the economy — which is steadily, if slowly, improving. Dole noted Clinton's endorsement for putting 100,000 more police officers on the streets and locking away criminals for life after three convictions of violent crimes.

But the Republican leader pointed out that the Senate had passed a tough anti-crime bill, and challenged the president to

pressure the House to adopt the measure.

"Will he insist on the tough provisions, like 10 new regional prisons, like truth in sentencing, like tough mandatory sentences for using a gun; and the death penalty for drug kingpins," Dole said.

The Republican leader also said Clinton must back up his rhetoric about "ending welfare as we know it." He said Democrats must rise to the challenge to make "work, self-sufficiency, and reducing illegitimacy top priorities."

Gingrich, a conservative Republican firebrand, generally had supportive words for Clinton's proposals — but challenged him to back the up with leadership.

Hailing the president's call for Americans "to join the churches and other good citizens who are saving kids, adopting schools and making streets safer," Gingrich said if Clinton is "serious about strengthening family values, he'll see a lot of Republican support."

"I think there's a potential, if his speech was sincere, for a tremendous bipartisan coalition," Democrats were quick to hail the president's speech and predicted that health care reform will become reality.

House Democratic leader Richard Gephardt of Missouri said the president delivered "a powerful testimonial to Democratic promise and progress."

On crime, he said congressional passage of the Brady bill was "a sane start," adding, "decades of Republican rhetoric haven't made a dent in the problem."

Gephardt also predicted passage of the "guaranteed health care Americans deserve and demand" and passage of a welfare reform.

Jerry Abramson, president of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, praised Clinton's speech and was impressed by his passion for the problems affecting U.S. cities.

"I was extremely impressed with his passionate advocacy that affected so many in cities today, more than any other president in recent history," said Abramson, mayor of Louisville, Ky.

# Colleagues set their sights on Dole's seat

By Thomas Galvin  
Congressional Quarterly

WASHINGTON — It's no secret that Senate Minority Leader Bob Dole, R-Kan., may have his sights set on the White House. But it could be news that some of his colleagues already have their eyes on his current job.

Although Dole retained his Senate leadership post when he ran for president in 1988, some Republicans hint that they might not be so accommodating this time around. They note that Republicans won't hold the White House in 1996 as they did in 1988;

the party might feel the absence of its top congressional spokesman more keenly as a result.

After eight years in the House and 25 in the Senate, the 70-year-old Dole is unquestionably the dominant Republican in Congress. This year will be his 10th as the Senate GOP leader, matching Everett Dirksen of Illinois for the longest leadership tenure in the last 50 years.

"He is the glue that keeps us together," said Sen. Orrin G. Hatch, R-Utah. "He is a tremendous tactician. He lives and breathes politics."

But several senators say that even the indefatigable Dole couldn't run a presidential campaign and still perform his leadership duties effectively.

"What might be good politics for a presidential candidate in 1996 could be disastrous for us," said one GOP senator. "You simply can't be a good Republican leader and run for president," said another. The subject is so sensitive that most of Dole's colleagues will only speak privately.

"He may want to make the choice himself, because this will be his last chance to run for president," said Hatch.

Dole says that it is too early for him to make any decisions. "I have to make the first decision first," he said, insisting he does not yet know whether he will run for president in 1996.

That hasn't stopped speculation among Republicans over who might eventually replace him. Most of the talk centers on Trent Lott, 52, the junior senator from Mississippi, who was elected in 1988 after a 16-year House career, including eight years as minority whip. Lott served with 13 of his 43 Senate colleagues while in the

House. Lott's 1992 election as conference secretary, the No. 4 GOP leadership position, signaled the growing power of conservatives among Senate Republicans. After that election, Lott's staff made no secret that they thought their boss could capture the top job as early as 1996.

Other possible contenders mentioned include John McCain of Arizona, who disavows interest, and Phil Gramm of Texas, if he does not make his own presidential run in 1996.

Some suggest that lawmakers could go to Dole privately before the presidential campaign season gets under way and urge him to make a decision on the leadership post.

Dole's supporters say that no matter what others think, the final decision on whether to do both jobs rests solely with him. "It's his decision, no question," said Assistant Minority Leader Alan Simpson, Wyo.

Some attribute the early jockeying to restlessness among Republicans. After all, Dole and Simpson have both held their posts since late 1984, blocking the upward mobility of ambitious colleagues. "I think there are some people who would like to see the (job) open up. But I don't think that will happen," said Alfonso D'Amato, N.Y.

# Dole leads verbal attack on Clinton

Critics knock foreign policy performance

By John King  
AF Political Writer

WASHINGTON — Senate GOP leader Bob Dole rallied conservatives Thursday with a scathing attack on President Clinton's foreign policy, saying America was abdicating its global supremacy because it lacked "real leaders in the White House."

Opening the annual Conservative Political Action Conference, Dole said Clinton has repeatedly cried "wolf" in threatening Bosnian Serbs, has offered communist North Korea incentives even as it ignored demands for nuclear inspections and has let Russia veto allowing the new Eastern European democracies into NATO.

"Unfortunately, our image and

its timidity around the globe, by appeasing dictators and subcontracting American policy to multi-lateral bureaucracies."

In contrast, Dole said, "when Ronald Reagan and George Bush were around, people slept pretty well at night because, from a foreign policy standpoint, we had real leaders in the White House."

Dole urged Clinton to unilaterally lift the arms embargo against Bosnian Muslims and also to reverse his "willingness to subordinate U.S. interests to the United Nations' agenda."

Dole's rebuke of Clinton set the tone for the opening day of the 21st annual CPAC gathering, a session at which conservatives lamented their loss of power in Washington but credited Clinton with invigorating their movement across the country.

"A lot of our people out there decided it was time to go back to work," said David Keene, president of the American Conservative Union, who said Clinton's policies had "reinvigorated the right."

The conference features many of the GOP's potential 1996 candidates, from Dole and former Hous-

ing Secretary Jack Kemp to South Carolina Gov. Carroll Campbell, all eager to criticize Clinton and express their views before conservative activists who are influential in Republican primaries. One prominent conservative, former Delaware Gov. Pierre du Pont, used the opening day of the conference to announce he would not seek the party's 1996 nomination.

As things got underway Thursday, there was a recurring theme: that Clinton sounds like a conservative on such issues as deficit reduction, crime and welfare reform but doesn't back his words with deeds.

Yet even as they bashed Clinton, many conservatives at the gathering conceded they were worried that Clinton could solidify his political standing if Congress passed credible crime and welfare reform bills this year.

They said their movement is divided on several issues, including health care reform, and lacks a leader such as Reagan.

They were united, however, in their disdain for Clinton and the Democratic Congress — targets they set sights on with relish.



Dole



Clinton