

The Topeka Capital-Journal, Monday, February 20, 1995

Dole: Clinton using Foster to split GOP

By JIM ABRAMS
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Clinton is making a tremendous mistake in using the troubled nomination of Dr. Henry Foster as surgeon general to brand anti-abortion groups as extremists, Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole said Sunday.

Dole, speaking on ABC's "This Week with David Brinkley," urged the president to drop the nomination if it becomes clear Foster doesn't have enough votes in the Senate to be confirmed. He said President Clinton is using the nomination to divide Republicans via the abortion issue.



Surgeon General nominee Henry Foster met with Sen. Nancy Kassebaum, R-Kan., last week in Washington. Kassebaum chairs the Senate Labor Committee, which plans to hold hearings in March on Foster's nomination.

Clinton "makes a grave mis-

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Dole charges Clinton using Foster nomination to split GOP

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take when he refers to pro-life supporters as extremists," Dole added. Foster ran into trouble after it was revealed the Tennessee obstetrician-gynecologist performed abortions during a nearly 40-year career.

The president, in an interview scheduled for broadcast Monday, reiterated his support for Foster. "I don't think that he has done anything that disqualifies him," Clinton

told CBS's "This Morning." "I don't think it's dead," he said of Foster's nomination. "I wouldn't be surprised if he did get confirmed."

Senate Republicans opposed to Foster have sought to avoid a showdown over abortion, pointing instead to the issue of credibility resulting from conflicting statements from Foster and the White House on the number of abortions he had performed.

The White House, however, is asserting that Republicans are

opposing Foster, a man with a long career in reducing teen-age pregnancies, in order to stay in the good graces of the anti-abortion right.

Dole said the Senate Republican whip is trying to ascertain how senators will vote on Foster.

"When I make that determination, I'll pass the information on to the president," Dole said. "If he doesn't have the votes, I don't see any reason to bring up the nomination."

Lamar Alexander said he knows

Foster well: "I think he's a good man." As governor of Tennessee, Alexander appointed Foster chairman of a commission on infant mortality.

But Alexander, also appearing on ABC, said: "Putting an ob-gyn into the surgeon general's position right now is a very bad idea unless all you are trying to do is introduce a huge debate in this country over abortion rights, which you really don't need." Senate hearings on the nomination are expected to begin in mid-March.

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GOP hopefuls campaign in New Hampshire

State poll shows Dole ahead of Republicans

By The Associated Press
MANCHESTER, N.H. — The three leading Republican presidential candidates competed Sunday to cast themselves as disciples of Ronald Reagan.

First on the national Sunday news shows, then on a New Hampshire TV forum and finally at a state Republican dinner that drew 1,400 people, the GOP prospects sought to position themselves as best suited to take on President Clinton and reduce the size and power of the federal government.

New Hampshire's leadoff primary is a year from Monday, but the candidates

were acting as if they were any day now, scooting from table to table to greet those who paid \$100 to hear from nine GOP hopefuls, several of them considerable long shots.

The dinner and weekend campaigning served as the ceremonial start of the 1996 race, and weekend polls put the stakes in perspective.

They showed Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole of Kansas was far and away the early favorite of New Hampshire Republicans, the very voters who dashed his White House hopes in 1988.



File photo
Bob Dole says his age, 71, can be an advantage.

Dole, 71, seemed determined to turn questions about his age to his advantage, suggesting his World War II generation "knows what made America great in the first place. I want to be your president for the right reason — because I can provide the leadership America needs now and into the next century."

Dole said it was past time to grant Reagan's wish and give the president the line-item veto and said his mandate as president would be "reining in government."

Front-runner status doesn't always

mean much in quirky New Hampshire, especially a year out. Still, Dole's rivals were clearly in a mood to counter his aggressive early organizing.

Texas Sen. Phil Gramm, for example, announced that he had won the endorsement of New Hampshire GOP Sen. Bob Smith.

And Gramm sought to position himself as the candidate most in touch with New Hampshire's anti-tax, small government traditions, noting that he helped write Reagan's 1981 tax cuts and was a long-time backer of a balanced budget amendment.

Along with Gramm and Dole, the most organized of the GOP prospects is former Tennessee Gov. Lamar Alexander, whose suggested it was time for the party to turn

again, a la Reagan in 1980, to a former governor suspicious of Washington

"We are losing our optimism in this country and the way to get it back, number one, is to move the decision making out of Washington, D.C.," he said.

But while Dole, Gramm and Alexander sought to focus on their perceived strengths, others in the field squared off in a debate those three would prefer to avoid because of its divisive history.

"I believe that if the abortion issue stays in the (GOP platform) we will be giving President Clinton his best and perhaps his only chance to be re-elected," said Sen. Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania.

"I think it is very important to take abortion out of politics."

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Associated Press photo

Presidential hopeful Bob Dole, R-Kan., to a group of surprised diners Monday in Concord, N.H.

Front-runner Dole trying to prove he's not too old for White House

Cox News Service
MANCHESTER, N.H. — After 35 years in politics, Bob Dole still has something to prove — that at 71, he is not too old to be president.

To prove it, the Senate majority leader began his campaign this holiday weekend by holding nine town meetings over three days in New Hampshire — a far more grueling schedule than any of his younger opponents.

At nearly ever stop, an enthusiastic and energetic-looking Dole reminded his listeners it was his generation — the one that won World War II — that made America great.

"Maybe there's one more call to serve for my generation," he said Sunday night at the state GOP's fundraising dinner. "I thought my generation might add something the country needs right now in her president — someone who knows what made America great in the first place, someone who knows what it is to sacrifice for America."

It was a not-so-subtle putdown not only of President Clinton, the first baby boomer to serve in the White House, but of the younger generation of GOP candidates, both in terms of experience and

sacrifice.

While neither Clinton nor any of his chief rivals for the GOP's 1996 presidential nomination served in the military during the Vietnam War, Dole suffered disabling war wounds.

Even so, the 52-year-old Sen. Phil Gramm of Texas, Dole's fiercest rival, suggested that Dole may be too old for the job.

"Maybe in 1960, Bob Dole would have been a better president than I would be," Gramm said. "But in 1996, when we have to face up to these problems that we've been in denial on for 25 years. I believe I am a better person to have taking on those problems."

Early on, Dole recognized that age would be a problem for him. If elected, he would be 73 years old at his inauguration and 77 at the end of his first term — older than any president in the nation's history.

Consequently, he has suggested — but not promised — that he would serve only one term as president, thereby raising the level of interest in the GOP vice presidential nomination.

"I have a long short list," he quipped Sunday when asked

about his choice of a running mate.

Dole encountered the age issue almost from the very beginning of his weekend stops. And he used his trademark humor to diffuse any concern that he is too old to be president.

"I'm not worried about it at all," he said in response to questions from an audience in Keene, N.H., on Saturday. "Some people think I'm too young. I've been willing to put Strom Thurmond on the ticket for balance."

Thurmond, the South Carolina senator and president pro tempore of the U.S. Senate, is 92.

Despite his war wounds, which bother him in cold weather, and a bout with prostate cancer several years ago, Dole proclaimed himself in "pretty good health."

He said his mornings include time on a treadmill — "if I get my wife off it," he added, referring to the popular Elizabeth Dole, president of the American Red Cross.

If anybody still had any doubts about his health, Dole extended an invitation. "If you follow me around for a day, I think you'd find that age is not an issue," he said.

The Topeka Capital-Journal, Tuesday, February 21, 1995

THE PRESIDENCY

Start here, Sen. Dole

Republicans couldn't wait to start the campaign to oust President Clinton. They're tripping over themselves to win votes in New Hampshire — a year before the state's primary.

It is tremendously significant, then, that the current frontrunner to unseat Clinton — Bob Dole — will officially kick off his campaign in Topeka April 10.

Dole clearly is looking for a successful launch to the most important race of his life — and this city will give it to him.

Logistically, Topeka makes sense for a campaign kickoff. As the seat of state government, it's the most political city in Dole's home state. And it is much more accessible to national press and other campaign entourage than Dole's hometown of Russell in western Kansas.

It should also be the spot where support for Dole is the firmest. If Bob Dole wins in 1996, Kansas wins — with a homegrown product in the White House, one who knows agriculture and who knows Kansas through and through.

Yes, it's already abundantly clear he's running. That doesn't make his

■ Topeka will be ready to send Bob Dole to the White House come April 10. Bank on it, senator.

official announcement any less exciting — anymore than a wedding is ruined by an engagement.

No, for the political of mind, this is as good as it gets: Dole, who leads all challengers in most polls — including Clinton — could very well be our next president. And his drive will start here April 10.

The most his detractors can say at this point is that Dole is 71. But he jokes that, while he certainly doesn't think he's too young, he'll consider adding 92-year-old Strom Thurmond to his ticket for balance.

And anyone who's tried following him around for a day knows age is no issue where Dole's concerned.

Fact is, his ties to the World War II generation — and his war wounds to prove it — could be a trump card.

So, enjoy wooing the all-important New Hampshire voter, Sen. Dole. But when you want a real sendoff, come back home.

We'll do it up right.