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Oddly enough, it comes down to Dole

By E.J. Dionne Jr.

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — There is something peculiar and unsettling about the battle for the 1996 Republican presidential nomination, kicked off at a big Republican dinner in New Hampshire last Sunday.

It is not a big deal that the contest has started so early. This journey is starting no earlier than did the long, strange trip toward the 1988 Democratic nomination. What's genuinely surprising is how many Republican and conservative activists are disengaged from the fight.

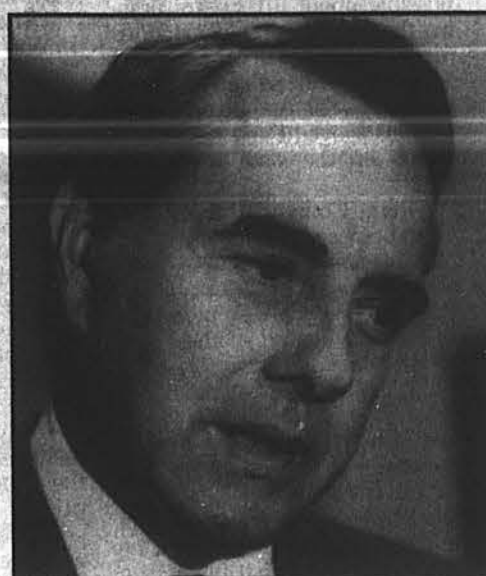
Part of this is explained easily: Many of the activists sense, accurately, that the future of their party and movement rests less on the identity of the 1996 presidential nominee than on what happens over the next year in the Republican Congress. "The real interest," said Adam Meyerson, editor of Policy Review, the magazine of the conservative Heritage Foundation, "is in how the new Republican congressional majority does."

Adds Pete Wehner, policy director for the conservative group Empower America and another shrewd student of Republican politics: "You don't need a person to start a revolution, you need someone to sustain it and deepen it. The revolution happened in '94. ... So this may be more about the prose of government than the poetry of government."

Last Sunday's performances certainly proved Wehner right about a shortage of poetry. The most stylistically interesting speeches came from Lynn Martin, the former labor secretary, and anti-tax, anti-abortion activist Alan Keyes. Neither of them is exactly a front-runner.

The most interesting tactical gambit of the night was Bob Dole's clever effort to turn attention to that most popular generation, the people who battled the Depression, won the war, confronted communism and helped build the United States into a world power. Not bad at all. Why not ask this able crowd, in the person of Bob Dole, to take on one last "mission"? It was, among other things, a brilliant way for Dole to contrast himself and his generation with Newt Gingrich, Phil Gramm and Bill Clinton all at the same time — and without ever having to mention their names.

Note that this move has nothing whatsoever to do with "issues," let alone a "revo-



Sen. Bob Dole

lution." Except at the edges of the contest — Pat Buchanan's protectionism and nationalism, Sen. Arlen Specter's defense of pro-choice Republicans — there is not much of an argument yet. "I want less government and more freedom," said Phil Gramm. That could have been said by any of these candidates.

But Dole's comments took on much more significance when they were contrasted with the most strongly expressed ideas of the night — and the most unvarnished reflection of what many Republicans really think. In a harsh speech, P.J. O'Rourke, Republicanism's favorite jokester, piled insult after insult upon the Clintons and all of government's works. He even offered a joke about Franklin Roosevelt being wheeled into hell; it was so tasteless that even the partisan Republican crowd groaned. Bless them for that.

O'Rourke, of course, is not running for president. Yet the difference between O'Rourke and Dole, the man who was wounded while FDR was his commander-in-chief, points, in only slightly exaggerated form, to one of the most important fault lines in the Republican Party: It is not so much a battle of ideas as a battle of sensibilities. It is a fight that will not be joined directly in the presidential primaries, and yet has everything to do with the future of

the Republican Party.

As O'Rourke argued, Republicans actually owe the Clintons a debt for mobilizing an angry reaction that has served Republicanism very well at the polls. But this animosity has spilled over into something else — a vengeful and often ugly hostility directed not only against the administration, but also at almost anything associated with government, liberalism and social action. This new style of conservatism attacks the '60s counterculture but apes some of its worst habits. This conservatism's favorite words have been widely noted, and they are decidedly un-conservative: "tear down," "smash" and "destroy."

Ronald Reagan, another child of the FDR generation, performed a singular service for his party and the conservative movement by identifying both with a spirited optimism. Jack Kemp represented the same sensibility, but he is out of the race.

So, oddly, it may fall to Bob Dole, whose problem is supposed to be "meanness," to represent the optimism that seems inherent in his generation. Conservative though he is — and he may get more so to win the Republican nomination — he doesn't feel the same imperative to smash the memory of Franklin Roosevelt or tear down the New Deal.

Sure, he's against "big government," too. Remember, this is about sensibility, not ideology. But Dole understands what anyone in his generation knows instinctively: that one of its achievements was to use government (starting with the GI Bill) to help build a prosperous, middle-class country. That's why the Eisenhower Republicanism of Dole's youth made its peace with the New Deal. The most strident of the new generation of conservative smashers and destroyers are the spoiled children of that achievement, no less than were the hippies of the 1960s. They don't remember what Dole's generation can't forget.

There's no reason to expect Dole (the man who attacked all those "Democrat wars") to take on the new conservative counterculture. But if he did, he would be joining a fight the Republicans need to have while also reminding us of why we admire the measured steadiness — call it New Deal conservatism — of the men and women of his age.

10-A The Topeka Capital-Journal, Saturday, February 25, 1995

Dole thinks Fort Riley 'will be there for a while'

By GENE SMITH
The Capital-Journal

"I think it'll be there for a while," Sen. Bob Dole said Friday when asked if Fort Riley would evade the latest and possibly last base closure list, due out next week.

Downsizing the military after the collapse of the Soviet Union brought an end to the Cold War, the Department of Defense has been closing hundreds of Army posts, air bases and Naval facilities throughout the United States. The last round saw the number of troops based at Fort Riley reduced by one brigade, leaving two.

The Senate majority leader and Republican presidential candidate said he has nominated "Gen. (Joe) Robles as his final choice for appointment to the Base Realignment Commission, and added he "should be appointed fairly quickly. Otherwise I may hold one of the other nominations, if they play games



Bob Dole

with mine" at the White House, Dole said.

By law, the list of facilities proposed for closure must be published in the Federal Register on March 1, along with the names of the commission members. The final list must be submitted to Congress by July 1, for a simple up or down vote.

Former Illinois Sen. Alan Dixon already has been chosen chairman of the eight-member BRAC commission, and is scheduled to visit Kansas on Monday to talk with Gov. Bill Graves and with Fort Riley boosters.

Turning to the issue of replacing the federal nutrition programs for women, infants and children and subsidized school lunches with block grants to the 50 states, Dole said the GOP Congress doesn't want to deprive the nation's needy, "but we want to get rid of the fraud. There's too much in there," and administrative costs also must be reduced.

Some cuts in the level of agricultural export subsidies can be expected this year, but not elimination of the program, Dole continued.

Finally, he said he expects the Senate to vote Tuesday on the balanced-budget amendment recently passed by the House.

The Topeka Capital-Journal,
Monday, February 27, 1995



Bob Dole



Frank Carafa

Lt. Dole's savior tells emotional rescue story

By STACY ST. CLAIR
Special to The Capital-Journal

WASHINGTON — In the middle of rocky Italian terrain, a machine gun slices through a war-hardened U.S. platoon led by Lt. Bob Dole. The sniper kills many and wounds more, including the 21-year-old officer from Russell, Kan.

After seeing his leader fall, Sgt. Frank Carafa, 23, ventures out among the dead to save a man he met less than two months before.

The date is April 14, 1945, and the seriously injured officer is now Senate majority leader and presidential front-runner.

Reliving the moment during an emotional interview, Carafa, a retired maintenance supervisor, stops often to regain his composure or to weep for the men he fought with. The men who would do anything for him. The men he'd do anything for.

The man whose life he saved, Bob Dole, one of the most powerful men in the country, hasn't forgotten, either.

"You're in the same platoon, you're in the same foxhole, you're in the same cold winter night in Italy or wherever and you make friends," Dole told The Capital-Journal last week. "You don't see each other for a long time, but you're still friends."

When Dole, a replacement officer in the 10th Mountain Division, arrived, the 2nd Platoon was battling its way through Italy with plans to drive the Pro Valley and cut off the German retreat. Sgt. Carafa was suspicious of Dole at first. As a tall, strong Midwestern college student who excelled in football, basketball and track, Dole was the antithesis of Carafa, a short, 10-year Army veteran who grew up in the big city and had already fought in the Pacific.

Carafa expected the worst. He'd been leading the platoon for more than a year, and a new guy could mean trouble. "Normally when these second lieutenants come, they think they're the Lord our God," Carafa

8-A The Topeka Capital-Journal, Monday, February 27, 1995

Lt. Dole's savior tells emotional rescue story of pulling wounded future politician to safety

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said. But Lt. Dole possessed none of that bravado.

"He came in and I told him just what was what. He told me to run the platoon as I'd been running it, and he'd fit himself in," Carafa said in an accent only a lifelong New Yorker can boast.

Slightly more than a month later on April 14, their company was advancing through a nearby field on a mission to secure Hill 913. As troops made their way along the rocky terrain, they tripped the mines waiting for them. The bombs jumped 18 inches into the air before exploding, showering the men with burning metal fragments. At that moment an enemy sniper hiding in a farmhouse opened fire.

The company commander informed Lt. Dole and Sgt. Carafa that the 2nd Platoon, weakened by recent engagements, needed to take that gunman out. According to Carafa, he was to lead the men, with the lieutenant giving cover. If Dole had carried out the instructions as Carafa understood them, things might be different today. But the

stubborn Kansan told his men he'd be the one out in front.

"They moved out up this ravine, not realizing that the machine gunner in house had perfect field of fire," Carafa recalls with a quivering voice. "As they were crossing over, the machine gun opened up and hit quite a few of his men and he got hurt pretty bad. I was off to the right with my other men from the platoon giving all the fire we can, but it didn't work the way we thought it would work."

For a few moments Carafa can't continue. The incident, in his memory, went on for hours.

"The next thing I heard was Lt. Dole calling my name. And of course, I just ignored him. I was just as scared as anyone else," he says between stifled sobs.

But Lt. Dole continued shouting for Carafa, and the enlisted men heard his pleas amid the rapid gunfire.

"Hey, Sarge," they yelled over and over and over. "The lieutenant's hit and he's calling for you."

"What the hell do you want me to do?" Carafa kept saying to himself, but he knew.

"I realized if I didn't do something, my men would not have any respect

for me whatsoever. They thought I was not afraid of anything."

So Carafa crawled out to the wounded men, to the dead men, to Lt. Dole. The sniper pounced on Carafa. Carafa could hear the bullets flying over his head, and he swears he could feel the heat. But he kept inching forward until he was about a yard away from Lt. Dole. Grabbing his leader's right arm, Carafa began dragging him back to the low, stone fence 60 feet away.

"He gave out a big groan and then I think he blanked out," he says, no longer trying to control the emotions. "I gave him to the second in command and told him to make sure he got him to the infirmary because he had lost quite a bit of blood."

The story serves as a source of pride and legend in the 10th Mountain Division and the U.S. Army, but don't tell that to Carafa, who earned a Bronze Star and a Purple Heart.

"It was no heroic act," he said. "Please don't think it was. I just had to do something so my men wouldn't lose respect."

In the half-century that followed, Dole, after years of hospitals, operations and near-death experiences,

Hutchinson News Monday, February 27, 1995

Turkish mayor slips on banana allegation

The Associated Press

IZMIR, Turkey — A Turkish mayor who doesn't like Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole banned the sale of Dole bananas in his town, claiming that the senator owns the fruit company.

Turks accuse Sen. Dole, R-Kan., of being anti-Turkish and blame him for an attempt in Congress to deny American aid to Turkey for refusing to allow relief supplies for Armenian refugees to pass through the country.

Mayor Burhanettin Ozfatura of this Aegean coast town claimed that Dole is the owner of the banana company, the private television channel Kanal D reported. His order covers several town-owned grocery stores, and it wasn't clear whether it would affect private stores.

Dole Food Co., based in Westlake Village, Calif., has no connection to the Senate majority leader, said company spokesman Tom Pernice. Company founder James Dole, who died in 1972, was no relation.



Dole

long ago, the emotions overwhelmed the two self-styled tough guys.

"Oh God, it was just wonderful to know that I had something to do with saving this man's life. It was a life well worth saving," Carafa says of the meeting. "We hugged. And he just said thanks."

Since that meeting Carafa has been in frequent contact with Dole, visiting him in Washington and sitting in the audience during Dole's appearance on "The Late Show with David Letterman."

Things didn't look as bright for the

73-year-old Carafa in 1993 when doctors told him he had terminal cancer. After refusing chemotherapy, he was recently given a clean bill of health.

With the 1996 presidential campaign already gearing up, Dole said he plans to accept his old friend's vow to campaign for him in New York.

"I'll do anything no matter what it is," Carafa said. "It's just a miracle from the good Lord. He wants me to stay around until Lt. Dole becomes president. Believe me."

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