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Dole Suck-up Watch 2

Dole blocks Foster to gain right's favor

Continuing the radar track of Bob Dole's deliberate drift to the far right as he seeks the Republican presidential nomination:

In February, when President Clinton nominated Dr. Henry Foster to be U.S. surgeon general, Dole said the nomination might be hard to get through the Senate.

But, said the then-statesmanlike majority leader, he would reserve judgment until Foster had a chance to testify before the appropriate committee.

The Senate, Dole said, should not "shoot someone down before he has even had a hearing."

That was then. This is now. Presidential candidate Dole says he will use his considerable influence to kill the Foster nomination. He won't even let it come to a vote.

Dole pretends it has nothing to do with the abortion issue, just concerns about Foster's honesty. But

that is still no reason to kill the nomination now.

Not only is this an insult to Foster, it is an insult to the Senate, as Dole implies its members are too stupid to judge the issue and so must be prevented from voting.

It is a particular insult to his Kansas colleague, Sen. Nancy Kassebaum, who chairs the committee that is to examine Foster. If the Foster nomination is such a bad idea, why won't Dole allow Kassebaum and her committee to determine that in the usual, open manner?

There can only be one reason. Dole is sucking up to the radical right, which has made the defeat of the Foster nomination a primary goal of its political action for the year.

Dole's recent visit to his hometown of Russell should have pulled the senator back to the wide middle of America, where he belongs. Instead, he continues to flirt with the leaders of the radical right.

Much more of this, and Dole will no longer be worthy of Russell.



'Tie' race?

Presidential hopeful Sen. Bob Dole is given a tie by state GOP official Darrell Kearney, left, of Des Moines, Iowa, during a Republican fund-raiser Saturday in Des Moines.

CONTRACT WITH AMERICA

By STEPHEN E. WINN
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Congress promises to have a far different look in the next few months than it did in the first 100 days of Republican management.

The House GOP script, the Contract With America, has been tossed over to a more skeptical Senate.

After months of talking about fiscal responsibility and deficit reduction, Republican lawmakers will have to start delivering as they weigh concrete budget decisions.

A variety of issues that were shunted aside so the House could get through the contract now will have a chance to move into the spotlight.

"House leaders have been far from modest in reviewing their performance"

President Clinton and Democratic leaders, showing signs of recovering from the shock of last November's election, are taking a more combative approach toward the Republicans.

Kansas' Bob Dole and other Republican presidential hopefuls in the Senate are looking for more attention than they received in the first three months of the year.

And almost everyone seems to be getting a little bit tired of House Speaker Newt Gingrich, who recently said that fellow Republicans had cautioned him about "the limitations of my leadership."

It should prove to be an interesting period in which both the Republicans and the Democrats give voters a much better picture of where they think the country should be heading.

House leaders have been far from modest in reviewing their performance on the Contract With America. Seldom has a group of lawmakers demanded so much credit for approving their own list of pet projects.

Gingrich went so far as to compare the first 100 days in the House to Franklin D. Roosevelt's first 100 days as president, an exaggerated claim that received a far more respectful hearing in many quarters than it deserved.

The House did approve much of the legislation that was envisioned in the contract. But this legislation was far more detailed than the broad principles that were presented to voters last year.

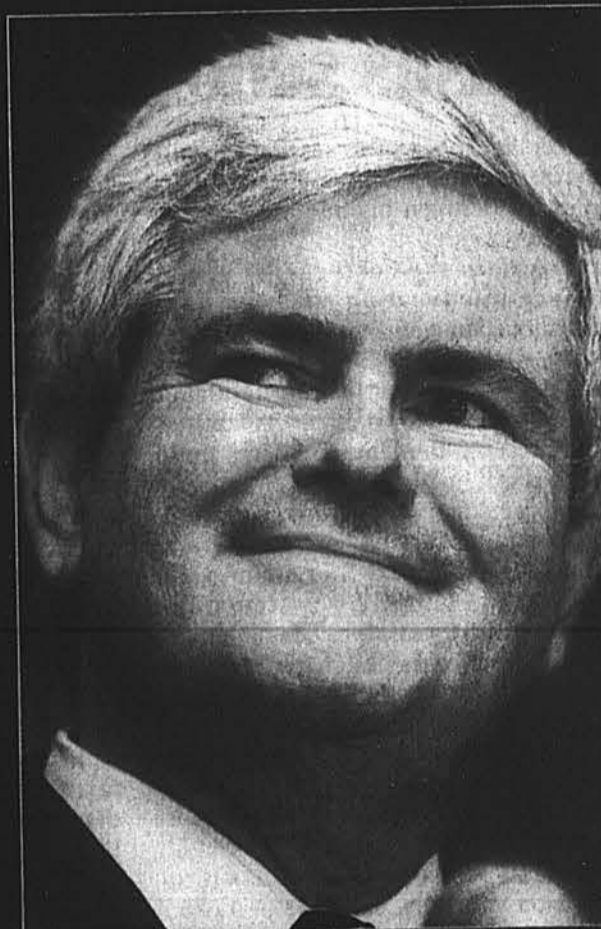
The House work on the contract was done in such haste that in many areas the public does not have a good sense of what it all means. Indeed, some House members aren't clear exactly what they did and are hoping their friends in the Senate eventually will be able to tell them.

See CONGRESS, I-5, Col.3

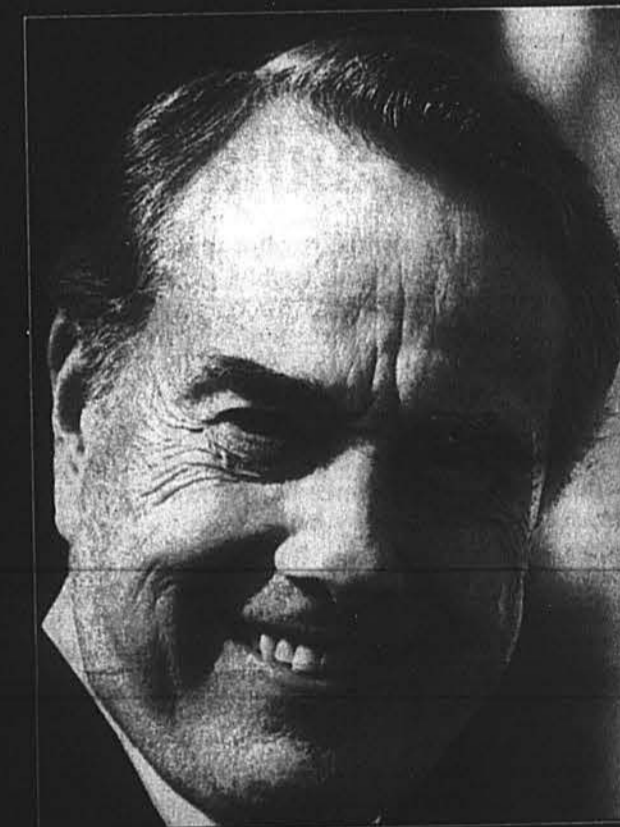
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IT'S TIME FOR CONGRESS TO GIVE VOTERS SOME SPECIFICS

Contract created a stir in the House; now it has to survive the Senate and the Democrats



Gingrich



Dole



Clinton