

THE WICHITA EAGLE Saturday, May 20, 1995

Ties with Vietnam pushed

GOP bill tries to thwart normalization efforts

By Steven Greenhouse
New York Times News Service

WASHINGTON — Senior Clinton administration officials have recommended that the United States establish full diplomatic ties with Vietnam, administration officials said Friday. But Sen. Bob Dole of Kansas, the majority leader, and other Republicans have introduced a bill to derail the proposal.

The question of normalizing relations with Vietnam flared anew this week after Vietnamese officials on Tuesday turned over a long-requested batch of documents about Americans missing in action.

Senior officials said there is increasing pressure in the administration, especially within the State Department, to recognize Vietnam. They said that position is being pushed hardest by Winston Lord, the assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs, but also by the president's economic advisers, especially Commerce Secretary Ron Brown.

These officials and several people lobbying on the issue noted, however, that some National Security Council aides, notably Nancy Soderberg, chief of staff to the national security adviser, Anthony Lake, oppose the move because they fear it could hurt Clinton politically. Lake is leaning against full diplomatic relations with Vietnam, the officials said.

Secretary of State Warren Christopher has not made up his mind on the issue, a senior aide said.

The question of recognition is one of the most emotional and delicate foreign policy issues the administration faces. On one side are business groups worried



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about losing opportunities in the world's fastest growing region and diplomats hoping to increase U.S. influence as a counterweight to China.

On the other are veterans groups, the families of U.S. servicemen missing since the war and White House advisers who worry about reviving criticism of Clinton's avoidance of the draft during the war.

The proposed Republican bill, co-sponsored by Sen. Phil Gramm of Texas, one of Dole's presidential rivals, says the president should not recognize Vietnam until it has provided full disclosure of all information about the 1,619 Americans missing in Vietnam.

Sen. Robert Smith, R-N.H., who introduced the bill, said: "I think the administration definitely wants to normalize. I think it's on a fast track within the administration."

Proponents of normalization have also been scrambling in recent days to thwart that attack. Two decorated Vietnam veterans — Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., and Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass. — maneuvered Friday to make it easier for Clinton to grant recognition by saying they would soon introduce a resolution calling on the president to recognize Vietnam, a step being pursued by many business groups as well.

Clinton lifted the 2-decade-old trade embargo against Vietnam last year, after the Senate approved a bill that those two senators had introduced calling for an end to the embargo.

"For the sake of America, maybe it's time we ended the war," McCain said in an interview. "I believe normalization would be an important part of the healing process."

Administration officials said no formal recommendation would be made to Clinton until a presidential delegation, comprised of officials from the Pentagon, State Department, National Security Council and Department of Veterans Affairs, returned next week from a trip to Vietnam and other Asian countries.

Several officials said the president might grant recognition before Secretary of State Warren Christopher visits Asia in July, well before the presidential campaign heats up. Others said they would not be surprised if the president played it safe politically and granted recognition after the elections in November 1996.

McCain and several administration officials asserted that normalization was the best strategy to pursue America's main goal with Vietnam: to gain the fullest possible accounting of missing Americans.

Opening an embassy, they say,

would insure continued cooperation from the Vietnamese on MIA cases and make it easier for U.S. diplomats to investigate such cases.

But Smith argues that the only way to gain the fullest possible accounting is by not granting Vietnam the biggest carrot — recognition — until it has provided full disclosure of all information on the MIAs.

Other sponsors of his bill include Strom Thurmond, R-S.C., who heads the Senate Armed Services Committee, and Jesse Helms, R-N.C., who heads the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Smith insists that Vietnam is not close to providing all the information it has. "It still refuses to release a lot of archival information," he said. "We know based on our own intelligence that there is still information they can provide us on a number of cases."

Under Smith's bill, the president could grant recognition only after certifying that Hanoi had been "fully forthcoming" with information about missing servicemen.

When the presidential delegation returns from Vietnam, it will analyze the more than 200 pages of analysis and documents that Vietnam provided about missing Americans.

A senior State Department official said Lord's view is that Vietnam deserves recognition because it has provided all the cooperation about missing servicemen that President George Bush asked of it four years ago when he laid out a road map of how it might win normalization.

"The Vietnamese are clearly trying to demonstrate as much cooperation as they can," a senior official said.

Gramm accuses Dole of being lax on tax cuts

Associated Press

GREEN BAY, Wis. — Taking sharp aim at the GOP presidential front-runner, Texas Sen. Phil Gramm said Saturday he saw "no evidence" that Bob Dole was committed to adding tax cuts to the Senate's balanced budget plans.

Firing back, Dole promised that the Senate budget would include a tax cut. And in a pointed rejoinder to Gramm, the Senate majority leader said: "He knows where I stand — I'm his leader."

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And it foreshadowed the high stakes of the week ahead for Dole, who has promised to add tax cuts to the Senate budget plan but faces stiff opposition from GOP deficit hawks who want to focus first on balancing the books.

In a speech to a Midwest GOP conference, Dole said: "We are going to give America's families the tax relief they need and deserve. It is going to be in the Senate bill."

As it now stands, the Senate's balanced budget has no tax cuts. During debate this week, Gramm plans to offer an amendment calling for the \$500-per-child tax credit included in the House GOP plan, and his intent Saturday appeared to be to set Dole up for the blame if there aren't enough votes.

The jockeying came as a handful of the GOP presidential prospects courted support for the giant "Big 10" primary planned for next March

19, when Wisconsin, Illinois, Ohio, Michigan and perhaps Pennsylvania will assess the GOP field.

The event attracted 600 GOP activists from 13 states. It also served as the campaign debut of California Gov. Pete Wilson, who made his first visit to a candidates' forum. But Wilson said nothing. He is recovering from throat surgery last month, so his wife, Gayle, delivered his speech and campaign advisers fielded questions from reporters and the

party activists.

Gayle Wilson, as her husband sat nodding at her side, expressed the governor's support for cutting federal taxes and noted he was pushing a 15 percent cut in California. While other candidates make promises on taxes and other issues, "Pete is the only one who has done something," she said. "It is one thing to fill the pages of the Congressional Record with hot rhetoric. It is quite another to govern."

Hutchinson News Sunday, May 21, 1995 Page 16

Dole campaign adviser uses slur for Jewish congressmen

By Katharine Q. Seelye
N.Y. Times News Service

WASHINGTON — Edward Rollins Jr., a senior adviser to Sen. Bob Dole's campaign for the Republican nomination for president, has touched off a political furor by referring to two Jewish congressmen as "Hymie boys."

Rollins, who signed on with the Dole campaign 10 days ago, issued an abject apology Friday, and the Dole camp said it would stand by him.

Rollins made the offending comment Monday night at a San Francisco dinner for Speaker Willie Brown Jr. of the California State Assembly. His speech was part of the dinner's "roast" of Brown, who is considering a run for mayor of San Francisco.

Rollins said Brown actually wanted to be mayor of Los Angeles, according to The San Francisco Chronicle's account of the evening, and he added, "If elected mayor of L.A. he could show those Hymie boys, Berman and Waxman, who were always trying to make Willie feel inferior for not being Jewish."

He was referring to Reps. Howard Berman and Henry Waxman,

both California Democrats.

Rollins said in an interview Friday that there was "no justification" for his remarks, but that the context was humorous. Rollins said that "Hymie" was a word he had never used before, that the point was to be politically incorrect, but that, as a politician, he should have known better.

"It's a game I play, so I should be sure as hell have known better," he said. "I apologize profusely" for the "totally inappropriate remark."

"My lack of sensitivity is totally inexcusable," he said, adding that he realized his apology "may be unacceptable and inadequate, but I offer it with full repentance."

Three New York Democratic representatives, Nita Lowey of Westchester, Charles Schumer of Brooklyn and Major Owens of Brooklyn called on Dole Friday to sever all ties with Rollins.

"Bob Dole should send a clear message that hate speech will not be tolerated in American political life by dismissing Ed Rollins today," said Ms. Lowey, who is Jewish.

Schumer, who is also Jewish,

said, "Ed Rollins has once again shown a complete lack of judgment and sensitivity."

Scott Reed, Dole's campaign manager, called Rollins' remark "inexcusable" but noted his apology and added, "We hope this apology does something to heal the hurt his words have caused. Ed is a volunteer adviser, and he will continue in that role."

Rollins said he was waiting to see what sort of reaction ensued before determining whether he should quit his unpaid post. He said he had told Dole's campaign chiefs, "I'm trying to help you get elected president, but if I'm a liability, do what you have to do."

Rollins said that "no one was insulted" that night in San Francisco but that "me of all people needs to be more politically correct than anybody else."

Rollins got himself in hot water in the 1992 race for New Jersey governor when, as campaign director for Christie Whitman, he had paid off the members of the black clergy to suppress the black vote, presumed to be Democratic, to allow his Republican client to win.

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The Kansas City Star

Gramm chides Dole on his tax-cut support

Texas Republican's criticisms show more aggression for those who trail Kansan.

By JOHN KING
The Associated Press

GREEN BAY, Wis. — Taking aim at the GOP presidential front-runner, Texas Sen. Phil Gramm said Saturday he saw "no evidence" that Bob Dole was committed to adding tax cuts to the Senate's balanced-budget plans.

Firing back, Dole promised the Senate budget would include a tax cut. And in pointed rejoinder to Gramm, the Senate majority leader said: "He knows where I stand. I'm his leader."

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In a speech to a Midwest GOP conference, Dole said: "We are going to give America's families the tax relief they need and deserve. It is going to be in the Senate bill."

As it now stands, the Senate's balanced budget has no tax cuts. During debate this week, Gramm plans to offer an amendment calling for the \$500-per-child tax credit included in the House GOP plan, and his intent Saturday appeared to be to place the blame on Dole if there aren't enough votes.



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"We have some Republicans who have one foot firmly implanted in the dramatic change we committed to in the election, and they have the other foot firmly planted in business as usual in Washington," Gramm said in his speech. "This week, they are going to have to pick one of those feet up."

Speaking to reporters, the Texas Republican said Dole hasn't matched his public support for cuts

with any steps to make sure they are incorporated in the Senate budget this week.

"I have seen no evidence that he has taken a position on my amendment or on our efforts to further cut spending and reduce taxes," Gramm said.

"Maybe he hasn't been there," Dole said when told of that remark.

Dole's office has consulted with several senators on a package of tax cuts that is somewhat smaller than the \$189 billion House version.

The jockeying came as a handful of the GOP presidential prospects courted support for the giant "Big 10" primary planned for March 19, when Wisconsin, Illinois, Ohio, Michigan and perhaps Pennsylvania will assess the GOP field.

The event attracted about 600 GOP activists from 13 states. It

also served as the campaign debut of California Gov. Pete Wilson, who made his first visit to a candidate forum. Wilson is still recovering from throat surgery last month, so his wife, Gayle, delivered his speech and campaign advisers fielded questions from reporters and the party activists.

As Gramm and other Dole rivals get more aggressive, their selection of the tax issue is hardly accidental.

In the 1988 primaries, George Bush labeled Dole "Senator Straddle" after Dole refused to sign a no-new-taxes pledge. Dole has signed the pledge this time around, but rivals are clearly trying to reopen an old wound.

"The worst thing we Republicans could do is straddle on this issue," former Tennessee Gov. Lamar Alexander said last week.

Front-runner Dole under fire

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