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## Dole delays amendment vote

Flag protectors want a little more time

By STEVE LANGDON  
Congressional Quarterly

WASHINGTON — While Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole took some political heat for delaying a vote on term limits until next year, he has escaped flak for postponing a vote on another controversial constitutional measure: the flag amendment.

According to grassroots organizers backing a constitutional amendment to allow states and Congress to prohibit flag desecration, Dole was prepared to schedule a Senate floor vote last week but held off at their request.

"We asked, and they were good

enough to take us off the schedule," said Jim McAvoy, campaign manager for the Citizens Flag Alliance, which is working to rally public support for the measure.

Dole's delay on the term limits vote was also at the request of pro-term limits lobbyists and Senate sponsors, but his competitors for the GOP presidential nomination, notably Steve Forbes, attacked him for it anyway.

McAvoy's group wanted a delay until later this fall because it has more than \$1 million in television, radio and print ads it wants to roll out before the vote to pressure un-

decided senators.

Although 56 senators are current cosponsors of the amendment, 63 or 64 senators are solid "yes" votes, says McAvoy. Since Bob Packwood's resignation, the Senate membership stands at 99, making 66 the magic number for amendment supporters.

The House passed its version on June 28 by 312-120, or 22 votes more than the two-thirds majority needed. McAvoy said 49 states have passed resolutions urging adoption of the amendment, and he predicted easy ratification if the Senate approves it.

TV ads began running in North Dakota last week as amendment backers turned up the heat on Democratic Sens. Kent Conrad, who is undecided, and Byron Dorgan, who voted no as a House member.



Dole

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### Dole campaign happy with Florida straw poll

ORLANDO, Fla. — After months of calling presidential straw polls meaningless, Bob Dole won one in Florida Sunday and his campaign was quick to trumpet it as proof of grassroots support.

Dole received 119 votes, or 45 percent of the vote at the Florida Federation of Republican Women event. Former Tennessee Gov. Lamar Alexander placed second with 26 percent, or 69 votes.

Texas Sen. Phil Gramm was third at 15 percent, or 38 votes. Gramm won a handful of early straw polls, and Dole campaign officials were quick to dismiss the Texan's claim that the results proved he had the most support among GOP activists.



Dole

## Lessons from Bob Dole's Log Cabin fiasco

By FRANK RICH  
N.Y. Times News Service

Bob Dole wishes that his less-than-excellent adventure with the Log Cabin Republicans would just go away, and no wonder.

This farcical affair — during which Dole accepted a campaign contribution from Log Cabin, then returned it, then last week said returning it had been a mistake — branded him not only as a flip-flopper but also as a hypocrite (why didn't he return any contributions to Time Warner?), a buck-passer (he blamed all the pratfalls on his staff) and a procrastinator (he let the embarrassing mess drag on for two months).

It's hard to imagine how anyone could make a worse case for himself as a potential chief executive of anything, let alone the U.S.A.

BUT IT WOULD BE A MISTAKE to view this only as a story about Dole. As Rich Tafel, executive director of Log Cabin, said to me in a post-mortem interview this week, the story is "not really about homosexuality" either, but "about the soul of the party."

Specifically, it's about the role of the religious right in the GOP — and how its clout in the presidential primary process is luring even the party's best leaders to reverse their own principles and strike Faustian bargains with Pat Robertson and Ralph Reed for votes.

If, as inside-the-Beltway talk has it, Colin Powell is really going to seek the Republican nomination for president — and if he is giving any serious consideration to pandering to the Christian Coalition as a means to that end — he

might look at the Dole-Log Cabin fiasco as a case study and think again.

Bob Dole, it must be recalled, is no homophobe. As recently as this year, he was on record as an unambiguous opponent of anti-gay discrimination. Prior to returning Log Cabin's check, the senator's office had been in steady contact with Tafel and other gay Republicans, who implored the senator to steer crucial AIDS legislation (the Ryan White Care Act) past the dangerous shoals of Jesse Helms on the floor. And Dole did exactly that.

SO WHY DID HE THEN so abruptly sell out his own history, even allowing his handlers to lie and say there had been no tie between Log Cabin and his campaign?

The smoking gun can be found in the timing. On Aug. 19, Dole was thrown into shock when Phil Gramm unexpectedly tied him in an Iowa straw poll; Gramm, Dole could not help but notice, had vocally joined the local religious right's ugly crusade to unseat a gay member of the Des Moines school board.

On Sept. 8, Dole was scheduled to compete with Gramm for the Christian Coalition's favor again by speaking at its "Road to Victory" panderthon in Washington.

It was right between these two events — on Aug. 26 — that Dole's campaign, not to be out-pandered once more by Gramm, returned Log Cabin's check.

Tafel argues that Dole's betrayal of his own principles in this incident was not only morally wrong but politically wrong — and, given the grief the senator has endured since, who can

disagree? Dole hasn't persuaded the religious right he's one of them, though he has persuaded everyone else of his spinelessness.

Yet the notion persists that a Republican cannot get the presidential nomination without the Christian Coalition's blessing.

"Republicans have bought into the conventional wisdom that Ralph Reed created — that you've got to kowtow to the religious right to be elected," says Rich Tafel.

"Log Cabin says the opposite: If you want to lose the election, kowtow to the religious right. It's the only way to lose to Bill Clinton — go to the cattle call for the Christian Coalition and try to outdo each other in being pro-life. Ralph Reed's power is to destroy the party and make people lose."

TO SUPPORT HIS THESIS, Tafel points to extraordinary recent polling results in conservative New Hampshire — where the unnamed Powell now beats Dole, and the newly announced Steve Forbes is moving up faster than expected. Both Powell and Forbes have conspicuously remained aloof from the religious right's social-issues wish list.

Or such was the case until this week, when Powell abruptly took to fudging his pro-choice position on abortion by saying he opposed the federal funding that extends that right of choice to every woman.

Powell, the presumptive front-runner today, need merely look at Dole, the front-runner only yesterday, to see where following Ralph Reed's marching orders can lead.

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## Dole wins a straw poll

The Associated Press

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Texas Sen. Phil Gramm was third at 15 percent, or 38 votes, followed by Pennsylvania Sen. Arlen

Specter and commentator Pat Buchanan.

The GOP women's event drew Dole, Gramm, Buchanan, Alexander and Specter, all courting support for a much bigger straw poll of 3,500 Florida Republicans at a state GOP gathering next month.

Gramm won a handful of early straw polls, and Dole campaign officials were quick to dismiss the Texan's claim that the results proved he had the most support among GOP activists. But after Dole won Sunday, his campaign quickly promoted the same analysis.

Tuesday, October 24, 1995 THE WICHITA EAGLE 5A

## Pete Wilson endorses Dole in presidential race

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Three weeks after folding his own presidential campaign, California Gov. Pete Wilson endorsed Bob Dole on Monday as the Republican Party's best hope of beating President Clinton next year.

Wilson said he would turn down any offer for the No. 2 spot on the Republican ticket.

Dole trumpeted Wilson's backing as a major boost for his effort nationally and in delegate-rich California. However, Wilson's own short-lived campaign exposed the governor's

rocky standing with fellow Republicans back home.

Dole used the occasion to stress that if nominated, he would vigorously compete for California's 54 electoral votes, won by Clinton in 1992.

In a statement announcing the endorsement, Wilson had a not-so-veiled message to Republicans hoping that retired Gen. Colin Powell will enter the GOP race.

"Bill Clinton is one tough political fighter and defeating him is going to be a war," Wilson said in the statement. "... Bob Dole is clearly the best general to lead Republicans into battle against Bill Clinton."



LOSING PATIENCE: Newt wants Dole to get with the G.O.P. legislative program

■ CONGRESS

## Follow—or Move Over

Gingrich gains sway over Dole, but is it the White House he really wants?

By MICHAEL DUFFY

POLITICS ABHORS A VACUUM, AND Newt Gingrich last week was feeling its tug. Even before Senate majority leader Bob Dole's uninspired performance during Wednesday's televised forum in New Hampshire for G.O.P. presidential candidates, Gingrich had phoned key Republicans around the country and wondered aloud whether he should launch his own bid for the White House. Already on the previous Saturday, over dinner at the Connecticut home of Henry and Nancy Kissinger, Gingrich had fretted about Dole and launched into a detailed analysis of his own presidential chances.

Gingrich is clashing with two different

Bob Dole. The Speaker can't control Dole the campaigner, but he needs to have influence over Dole the Senator in order to push through the extensive collection of spending cuts and tax reductions promised in the Contract with America. So last week the Speaker took control of the legislative stream, persuading Dole to create a task force of House and Senate leaders designed in part to ensure that the Senate majority leader and other moderate Senate Republicans would not unilaterally trade away elements of Gingrich's revolution in the final days of congressional bargaining. The Speaker also anointed himself the Hill's master strategist and tactician. When the time came for Republicans to take a harder line toward Bill Clinton, it was Gin-

grich, not Dole, who set the tone. And when the time came to secure a powerful ally for the G.O.P.'s embattled overhaul of Medicare, it was Gingrich, not Dole, who cut the deal, by winning—some would say buying—the endorsement of the influential American Medical Association.

Gingrich's message to Dole is simple: Follow me, or get out of the way. In seeking to allies his latest presidential ambitions, the Speaker sought to make it appear that what worries him is a presidential run by Colin Powell, since the general is an avowed moderate who might threaten the Speaker's agenda. Of Powell's candidacy, Gingrich spokesman Tony Blankley says, "As long as the Speaker is reasonably assured that whoever the standard bearer is going to be is

willing and able to carry the message of the revolution through the campaign, then he is very happy being Speaker."

But those words are directed as much at Dole as at Powell. In public last week, Dole and Gingrich made unusually overt displays of cooperation—twice holding joint press conferences to castigate the White House for failing to negotiate in good faith. In private, hard feelings are hardening. Dole suggested two weeks ago on national television that Republicans might not be able to deliver all the \$245 billion in tax cuts they have promised. The admission so infuriated Gingrich that he telephoned three prominent Republican Governors and told them, in effect, "I've had it with this guy." Although the Senate Finance Committee unveiled a proposal for the full tax cut last Friday, Gingrich knows as well as Dole that it is unlikely to survive negotiations with the White House. What Gingrich couldn't believe was that Dole would show his cards in the middle of the poker game, thus panicking freshman Republican lawmakers and corporate interest groups.

GINGRICH WAS STILL CALMING THEM down last week. Dole's statement forced Gingrich to invite 150 lobbyists to a windowless room in the Capitol basement on Thursday to reassure them that the tax cuts were still on track. "We're approaching this as a team," Gingrich and other top Republicans told the lobbyists, who helped finance hundreds of G.O.P. campaigns and who were counting on fresh tax breaks. The 9 a.m. meetings of the newly created task force, the Speaker promised, would ensure that such mistakes did not take place again. Yet Dole did not attend the session.

Those closest to Gingrich insist he is unlikely to pursue the G.O.P. nomination. But party members who have spoken with him recently say he is fully briefed on the mechanics of a race, can recite filing deadlines for early primaries and confidently informs anyone who asks that 55% of convention delegates can break their pledges and vote for a favorite son. He has also bragged that Wisconsin Governor Tommy Thompson and Massachusetts Governor William Weld have urged him to run, and he believes an announcement would activate thousands of his supporters nationwide.

But at least partly to avoid the distraction from which Dole is suffering, Gingrich is unlikely to jump in while Congress is still in session this year. His major challenge as a budget cutter is getting \$270 billion out of projected Medicare spending over the next seven years, which became more difficult when polls this fall began to show that the public thinks the Republicans would penalize seniors to give tax breaks to the rich. The Speaker had been looking for a celebrity en-

dorser who could rally seniors to the cause, and last week he found one in the A.M.A. Who could be better than a family doctor? "Once the doctor says, 'Yes, we will be there to provide care,' that fills an important segment of doubt that seniors might have had about our policy," says Blankley. But what elderly patients are not likely to hear from their doctors is that in exchange for their support, they will actually receive higher Medicare payments than they could have expected under current law. When doctors argued that the present arrangement is unfair and does not reward



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—TONY BLANKLEY,  
Gingrich spokesman

them for practicing more economically, Republicans rewrote the complicated funding formulas to boost payments to doctors, even as their patients, hospitals and other groups with a stake in the program were feeling the pinch. Yet the peculiar math of federal budgeting will still allow both the House and Senate bills to claim "savings" of at least \$23 billion in those fees over the next seven years. The higher fees were among many bouquets Gingrich handed out to doctors during their long courtship. Among the others: new protection against malpractice suits, new approvals for referring patients to doctor-owned labs and a new opportunity for doctors to form their own managed-care networks under financially generous rules that do not apply to regular HMOs.

With the A.M.A. firmly at his side, Gingrich trained his guns on Clinton, threatening to send the President completed legislation in November and then immediately

adjourn to prevent Congress from "receiving" Clinton's inevitable vetoes. That drew a quick retort from the White House, where spokesman Michael McCurry said Clinton would respond to such a move by invoking the constitutional clause that enables the President to force Congress into session. Gingrich next suggested that Clinton wouldn't dare veto a balanced budget because he needed it to be re-elected, prompting Clinton to declare that he would rather face defeat in 1996 than sign legislation that would be a betrayal of his political career.

Such brinkmanship is anathema to Dole, who stayed above the fray, struggling to maintain his balance between running for President for the third time and running the Senate. As Dole shuttles—sometimes daily—between Washington and New Hampshire, the juggling act has begun to take a noticeable toll. In the Senate, Dole has made several unforced errors lately, puzzling lawmakers who have long relied on his dealmaking acumen and keen sense of timing.

On the campaign trail, Dole remains the clear front runner in the listless race for the G.O.P. nomination, but has inspired little excitement and fallen as many as 9 points behind Clinton in head-to-head matchups. Though none of Dole's rivals laid a glove on him at the New Hampshire forum last week, the man who has run for President twice before was unable to explain why he was in the race without referring to a text. The lapse wasn't lost on Team Gingrich: Newt booster Arianna Huffington appeared on CNN Friday night and lit into Dole as "this tired old man" who had to "read from note cards."

Clinton aides are delighted that Dole, 72, leads the G.O.P. field. As for Gingrich, they are convinced he is sure to get bogged down in taming revolts from his freshmen. White House chief of staff Leon Panetta opened secret negotiations with Gingrich in the beginning of October, hoping for an early agreement on a 1996 budget. Speaking only by telephone, Gingrich and Panetta discussed the broad outlines of a deal that would have balanced the budget, preserved the Medicare trust fund, included a welfare-reform measure and provided tax cuts for the middle class. Clinton was kept fully informed of the conversations, sometimes talking with Gingrich himself. But when word of the collaboration leaked on Oct. 6, angering House freshmen, Gingrich was forced to break off the talks.

As for Gingrich's presidential ambitions, the White House is salivating at the idea. Pointing to a poll indicating that 80% of Republicans oppose his running, a White House aide says, "Go ahead, make my day."

—With reporting by Jeffrey H. Birnbaum and Karen Tumulty/Washington and John F. Dickerson/Manchester