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Is Dole Too Old To Lead?

By ROYAL FORD
The Boston Globe

DERRY, N.H. — Doug McKay does not hesitate: Bob Dole, he says, is too old to be the next president.

"His age is a big factor," McKay said at his appliance repair shop. "I've seen them go in looking young and come out looking old. I'd hate to see Dole go in at 73. He'd start looking 90 right away."

Leo Belliveau agreed with McKay. "Look at Reagan," Belliveau said. "He got too old and we didn't find out until later."

The issue of Dole's age was raised last week when a Dartmouth College poll, conducted for WMUR-TV, found an undercurrent of negative comments about Dole's age.

Not everyone, of course, thinks age should disqualify a candidate from serving as president. In interviews around Derry last week, some said age should not be a factor, while others said it should be a factor not in and of itself, but because of what it might say about a candidate.

Anne McMackin, who had stopped by the Derry Exchange, a curio shop, questioned youth rather than advanced years in considering presidential candidates.

"I don't think his age should disqualify him," she said. "Look at Bill Clinton, look at what he's done — he's young and foolish."

Gregory Mann, the shop's owner, said that although he is a Clinton supporter and appreciates Clinton's concern for young Americans, Dole's age should not be held against him.

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Dana Langley, a barber and self-described conservative, said Dole's age raises a secondary issue.

"I believe it's a factor, but not necessarily an overriding factor," Langley said. "It does mean his choice of a vice president would be more important than in other presidential elections."

But despite this intimation of mortality, Langley said he looks at Dole as remarkably fit.

"In a fist fight, I bet he could take Bill Clinton in a minute," Langley said, chuckling.

Bob Viens, owner of a local communications company, and others worried that with the world undergoing rapid social, political and technological change, lessons learned 10, 20 and 30 years ago may have lost their value.

"Past experience doesn't necessarily help these days," Viens said. "The world's changing so fast that past experience may not apply anymore."

THE WICHITA EAGLE 3A
Tuesday, December 12, 1995 EF

Whitman endorses Dole for president

EDISON, N.J. — Gov. Christie Whitman endorsed Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole for president on Monday, saying "he is the candidate who stands ahead of the rest."

Whitman and Dole, appearing together at a warehouse here being refurbished with state help, side-stepped inevitable questions as to whether the popular New Jersey governor would be Dole's running mate.

New Jersey governor endorses Dole for office

By Thomas Martello

Associated Press Writer

EDISON, N.J. — Gov. Christie Whitman Monday endorsed Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole for president, calling him the only candidate who has "the message, the stature and the experience to beat Bill Clinton in 1996."

Dole said the endorsement sends a powerful message because Whitman stands for tax cuts, reducing government, lessening regulation of business and creating jobs.

Whitman, a social moderate, became the 17th of 30 Republican governors to endorse Dole.

Whitman said she will actively campaign for Dole. Dole supporters say they expect most party activists in the state to follow her lead.

Dole has actively sought support from Whitman, who was the GOP's choice to deliver the rebuttal to President Clinton's State of the Union speech earlier this year.

Whitman's decision to back Dole is a blow to New Jersey GOP presidential hopeful Steve Forbes, the magazine publisher who has known Whitman since childhood. Forbes was instrumental in persuading Whitman to make a campaign promise to slash New Jersey income taxes. Making good on that vow helped make Whitman a rising star in the national party.

Whitman said she told Forbes of her decision in a telephone call last week. "It's difficult," she said. "I respect him a great deal."

The Salina Journal Tuesday, December 12, 1995

New Jersey governor backs Bob Dole

By The Associated Press

EDISON, N.J. — Gov. Christie Whitman endorsed Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole for president Monday, saying the Kansas Republican is the candidate who "stands ahead of the rest."

Whitman and Dole, appearing together at a warehouse being refurbished with state help, side-stepped questions about whether the popular New Jersey governor would be Dole's running mate.

Whitman said she would campaign for Dole.

"There is only one Republican who has the message, the stature and the experience to beat Bill Clinton in 1996," Whitman said. "And that person is Bob Dole."

She is the 18th of 30 Republican governors to back Dole.

Whitman said Dole, a World War II veteran, "knows America. Born in its heartland, wounded in its service and dedicated to its

success. He stands ahead of the rest."

She chose Dole over longtime friend and fellow New Jersey resident Steve Forbes, the multimillionaire publisher who helped convince her to make tax cuts a campaign priority in her gubernatorial run.

Dole said New Jersey will be a critical state next year. The state has sided with the winner in 17 of the past 19 presidential elections.

The Salina Journal

Monday, December 11, 1995

Is Dole too old to lead?

Some voters say no; others say maybe so

By ROYAL FORD

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Dole

Hutchinson News Monday, December 11, 1995

Dole bends over backward for prostate policy

By David Willman

Los Angeles Times

WASHINGTON — Not long ago, Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole launched a personal war against prostate cancer, the disease that kills 40,000 American men a year. The Republican from Kansas spoke frankly about his recovery from the disease — and struggled to widen the government's commitment against it.

Today, the policy fight Dole started so resolutely is nearing fruition. Legislation now pending in Congress, which supporters hope to attach to the massive federal budget-balancing measure, would guarantee coverage under

Medicare for an acclaimed, yet controversial, prostate cancer blood test.

It is a test that Dole has credited with saving his own life.

But Dole faces a double quandary: First, requiring the government to pay for the prostate test would cost at least \$2 billion a year — at a time when Dole and the rest of the Republican congressional leadership are pledging to reduce Medicare's costs by billions of dollars each year. Broad use of the test also is fiercely debated by health experts, who disagree over whether it would cause more harm than good.

Secondly, taking a high-profile role in pushing the legislation — while consistent with Dole's past efforts — would draw renewed attention to his age and health.

Now 72, Dole would be the oldest man elected to a first presidential term, and the only one to win after acknowledging having had cancer. While Dole has not hidden either his age or his 1991 cancer surgery, neither has he called attention to them. Polls indicate that his age and health remain campaign danger areas.

As a result, the fate of the prostate cancer legislation has become an example of the pressures Dole faces as he balances

the job he has as Senate majority leader with his pursuit of the job he wants — the presidency.

The prostate cancer legislation is being sponsored in the Senate by a handful of lawmakers who, like Dole, are survivors of the disease. Among the backers are Republican Sens. Richard C. Shelby of Alabama and Ted Stevens of Alaska.

Dole, in addition to his efforts to change federal policy, has hosted meetings of a prostate cancer support group, sharing his experiences of recovery.

The contrast between trying to cut Medicare's overall costs while providing new coverage for prostate cancer drug treatments

has not gone unnoticed. "I think this amendment has a virtuous purpose," Sen. John D. Rockefeller IV, D-W.Va., said in October when the Senate unanimously voted to attach the prostate drug coverage to the federal budget bill.

The PSA test itself is controversial, not only because of its cost, but also because some health experts believe that it could do more harm than good.

Prostate cancer primarily affects men older than 60. In many cases, however, those men carry tumors that are not aggressive and do not spread beyond the prostate.

10-A / THE TOPEKA CAPITAL-JOURNAL Monday, December 11, 1995

Commitment poses dilemmas for Dole

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As a result, the fate of the prostate cancer legislation has become an example of the pressures Dole faces as he balances the job he has as Senate majority leader with his pursuit of the job he wants — president.

According to congressional aides and friends, Dole has decided that because of the sensitivity it poses for his candidacy, he will publicly say as little as possible about prostate cancer.

Dole was unavailable for comment, and his spokesman declined to speak on his behalf. Others who have talked with Dole about the subject, however, provide a consistent explanation. "Right now, he's got an election. I think he doesn't want to call too much attention to the fact that he is a prostate cancer (survivor)," said Dr. William J. Catalona, a leading prostate surgeon at Washington University in St. Louis who has conferred with Dole and was among the first to call for the expanded Medicare coverage. "But he's already done a lot. Behind the scenes, he's 100 percent behind us."

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Supporters of the proposed "Prostate Cancer Diagnosis and Treatment Act of 1995" have sought to attach parts of it to the various versions of the overall federal budget bill that are now the subject of intense negotiations between the White House and congressional leaders.

The legislation now pending in the Senate and the House would expand Medicare's coverage and pay for the blood test, called PSA (for prostate specific antigen) for all men 65 or older, regardless of whether they have symptoms. If the test discovers an elevated level of PSA, an enzyme found in the prostate, a patient is believed to be at greater risk.

The bill also would require Medicare to cover certain oral drug treatments for patients with advanced prostate cancer. An estimate by the Congressional Budget Office shows this provision would benefit two drug manufacturers, whose prescription treatments aren't now paid for by Medicare, and cost \$1.2 billion over seven years in addition to the \$2-billion annual cost for PSA blood tests.

The contrast between trying to cut Medicare's overall costs while providing new coverage for prostate cancer drug treatments hasn't gone unnoticed. "I think this amendment has a virtuous purpose," Sen. John D. Rockefeller IV, D-W.Va., said in

October when the Senate unanimously voted to attach the prostate drug coverage to the federal budget bill.

"But I would be very surprised, quite frankly, if we can in Medicare buy a single new aspirin — much less prostate cancer and breast cancer remedies" with the Medicare spending restraints Republicans have proposed, he added.

The PSA test itself is controversial, not only because of its cost, but also because some health experts believe that it could do more harm than good.

Prostate cancer primarily affects men older than 60. In many cases, however, those men carry tumors that are not aggressive and do not spread beyond the prostate. But wide-scale PSA testing, critics say, would cause many of those men to seek surgery — exposing them to side effects that can include impotence, incontinence or, in some cases, death.

Among those skeptical of the broad application of the test are experts at the National Cancer Institute. Dr. Barry Kramer, an associate director of the institute who is overseeing a long-term prostate study of 35,000 men, warned Dole at a March 1992 meeting "that the risk of dying from (unnecessary) clinical treatment for prostate cancer is higher than the risk of dying from the disease itself," according to a summary of the meeting prepared by the National Cancer Institute and obtained under the Freedom of Information Act. Kramer estimates it would cost \$12 billion to administer the PSA test to most American men older than 50.

A group of cancer specialists presented similar conclusions in a report this year to Congress' Office of Technology Assessment.

Yet even those who oppose expanding Medicare's coverage don't dispute that the PSA test is unsur-

passed at tracking the status of prostate cancer once a tumor has been diagnosed.

Proponents who are urging Dole and Congress to approve the increased Medicare coverage say the test is needed for early detection of the disease and to prevent unnecessary deaths. Backed by celebrities who have contracted the disease, they note that prostate cancer has trailed other maladies, including breast cancer, in winning federal funding.

The American Cancer Society estimates that there will be 244,000 new cases of prostate cancer diagnosed this year and that a man has a 1-in-6 chance of developing the disease. For men, it is the No. 2 cancer killer.

Dole introduced or co-sponsored legislation that would have provided millions of federal dollars for PSA testing in the United States and abroad.

Dole has enjoyed the manufacturers' backing during his Senate campaigns and his 1988 run for the presidency. Records show that Dole's No. 2 donor among drug makers has been Schering-Plough Corp., one of the two companies whose prostate drugs would be eligible for Medicare coverage under the pending legislation.

Dole also has a personal financial stake in Schering-Plough, according to his Senate income-disclosure statements, which show he purchased between \$1,000 and \$15,000 of Schering-Plough stock in both 1993 and 1994.