

Dole, Gramm Present Opinions As They Vie for GOP Nomination

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole is threatening to block a vote on Dr. Henry Foster's bid to be surgeon general and says the nomination is in such deep trouble that it may not even emerge from committee.

Dole, a leading candidate for the Republican presidential nomination, also singled out the controversial movie "Priest" for criticism. He suggested political leaders have a responsibility to engage the entertainment industry in debate about the content of movies and television programs.

"If I'm the president of the United States, I'm going to encourage people to turn off their TV sets and not patronize these movies," he said in comments broadcast Sunday on NBC's "Meet the Press."

Dole's comments appeared aimed at conservatives who are angered by what they see as America's moral decline.

On the Foster nomination, Dole said it may not even get out of the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee which plans hearings beginning May 2. "If it does, I'm not certain that I'll call it up," Dole said.

"I'd say the nomination is in extremis. It's not very viable right now," he said.

Foster has run into opposition on Capitol Hill for understating the number of

abortions he has performed. "Things dribbled out about Foster's past record that has nothing to do with abortion. In fact, he didn't tell the truth," Dole said.

Another contender for the GOP presidential nomination, Sen. Phil Gramm of Texas, reiterated his pledge Sunday to end affirmative action and balance the federal budget by the end of his first term if elected president.

Gramm appeared Sunday on CBS's "Face the Nation."

Dole on NBC said he did want to be a censor, but that people should express their views if they have concerns about the movies shown in theaters and on television screens.

"My view is that shame is still an important tool in America," he said.

The film "Priest" has generated controversy for its portrayal of some troubled Roman Catholic clerics.

"It's about a gay priest, an alcoholic



Senate Majority Leader **BOB DOLE** says he might block the vote on Clinton's surgeon general nominee.

priest. It gives the impression that all Catholic priests are like these two," said Dole, a Methodist from Kansas. He noted that protests by Catholic groups forced the film's distributor to delay its national release, which had been slated for Good Friday.

On other Senate business, Dole said that while he still hoped to repeal a ban on 19 types of assault weapons, he has no immediate plan to try to reverse the Brady Law, which requires a waiting period for handgun purchases.

Both Dole and Gramm said they did not believe there are enough votes in Congress to pass a constitutional amendment to ban abortion.

But both suggested that if elected president, they would use the executive power to limit access to abortion.

"We all know that the there is not a consensus in the party or in the country to reform the Constitution," Gramm said. "But that doesn't mean there aren't things we can do."

Gramm refused to support the Clinton administration's review of affirmative action, saying "the facts are in," and vowing to end "quotas and set-asides."

Gramm said, "I think it is fundamentally divisive to have Americans judged on their ethnic group rather than on how hard they work or on their merit."

Experts React to Charges Against Lab

BY WENDY GOODMAN
STAFF WRITER

Reactions from several medical groups have varied as to whether homicide charges were appropriate in the case of a laboratory that failed to diagnose two patients with cervical cancer.

Reckless homicide charges were filed against a Chem-Bio Corp. laboratory in Milwaukee following the deaths of two women whose test results for cervical cancer were misread.

The two women belonged to the same health maintenance organization and had both had several Pap smears there. Pap smears are used to detect signs of cervical cancer in women.

Both women received clean bills of health after their tests, but later learned they had been misdiagnosed and actually had cervical cancer. The misdiagnoses by the laboratory and doctor, according to statements by the Milwaukee district attorney, were blatant errors and should not have happened.

Arnold Collins, a spokesman for the American Medical Association, said cervical cancer was often curable if detected by tests.

"You can't guess about the individual person, but if found early enough, it is quite curable," Collins said.

Carlan Graves, a National Cancer Institute spokeswoman, said she agreed with Collins, adding that the deaths of the two women were unwarranted.

Cervical Cancer

According to the American Cancer Society, cervical cancer is one of the leading causes of death in women in the United States.

Women who die each year	5,000
New cases among women each year	16,000
Estimated for 1995	
15,800 new cases	
4,800 deaths	

SOURCE: AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY DTH/CHRIS ANDERSON

"In theory, cervical cancer shouldn't even exist," Graves said. "You can find it before it turns cancerous by Pap smears because you can find abnormal cells, do follow-ups, and then it is virtually 100 percent curable."

Graves said these facts indicated that cervical cancer could be prevented in cases in which women were being tested on a regular basis.

The misread Pap smears for both women took place during the late 1980s.

"This was before some of the clinical reforms had taken place," said Alice Kirkman, a spokeswoman for the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

After being correctly diagnosed, both women filed and settled malpractice claims against the laboratory and doctor.

Reckless homicide charges were also filed by the district attorney last week against the laboratory accused of misreading the tests.

According to the AMA, this is the first such case in Wisconsin that has prompted criminal charges.

"The usual punishment for negligent doctors is for licensing boards to take away their credentials, and that is a pretty severe sanction," said a spokesman for the AMA in Washington, D.C. "The only stand that the AMA has taken is that criminal penalties are unusual and quite severe."

The Joint Commission in Wisconsin, which normally investigates claims of malpractice and the accreditations of medical institutes, is looking into the problems the case presents.

"If there is something going on that we believe is a threat to the patients and their care then we will immediately be on the case investigating," said Kathy Berry, a spokeswoman for the commission.

According to a press release from the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, Pap smears have reduced the number of deaths from cervical cancer by nearly 70 percent. Human error, like the one that took place in the laboratory in Milwaukee, can be common, though.

Human errors can include doctors either taking a sample with too few cells or the laboratory technician failing to see an abnormality on a slide. Kirkman said the cases of slides being misread like the one in Milwaukee did not occur often.

President to Open Security Documents

Under Clinton's Proposal, 25-Year-Old National Security Papers Would Be Declassified

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Relaxing government secrecy rules, President Clinton signed an executive order Monday stripping the classified label from millions of national security documents.

The order requires the automatic declassification of all top secret, secret and confidential information which is 25 years or older.

Unless it falls into a narrow exemption category, such as revealing the identity of a source of information, the information will be open.

Private experts said it would provide historians with a treasure trove of classified documents, principally from the Pentagon and State Department, about the making of past military and foreign policies.

But it would not prevent government officials from continuing to use the secrecy stamp despite Clinton's assertion to the contrary, they said.

"It will not fundamentally change the classification habits of current government officials," said Steven Aftergood, a government secrecy specialist at the Federation of American Scientists.

"While these rules sound good, it's not clear whether in practice they mean anything," Aftergood said.

For instance, he said, the order will not result in declassification of documents showing how much money is spent annually on intelligence.

Clinton's order eases the impact of a 1982 directive by then-President Reagan that vastly increased the scope of what would be classified.

No longer will the government presumptively classify certain categories of information.

"The order will lift the veil on millions of existing documents, keep a great many future documents from ever being classified, and still maintain necessary controls over information that legitimately needs to be guarded in the interests of national security," Clinton said in a statement.

For the first time, he said, government officials would be required to provide justification about why information is listed as classified.

Federal employees would be encouraged to challenge improper classification and would be protected from retribution for doing so.

The duration of secrecy of most newly classified information would be 10 years, subject to some limitations.

"We will no longer tolerate the excesses of the current system," the president said.

"For example, we will resolve doubtful calls about classification in favor of keeping the information unclassified," Clinton said.

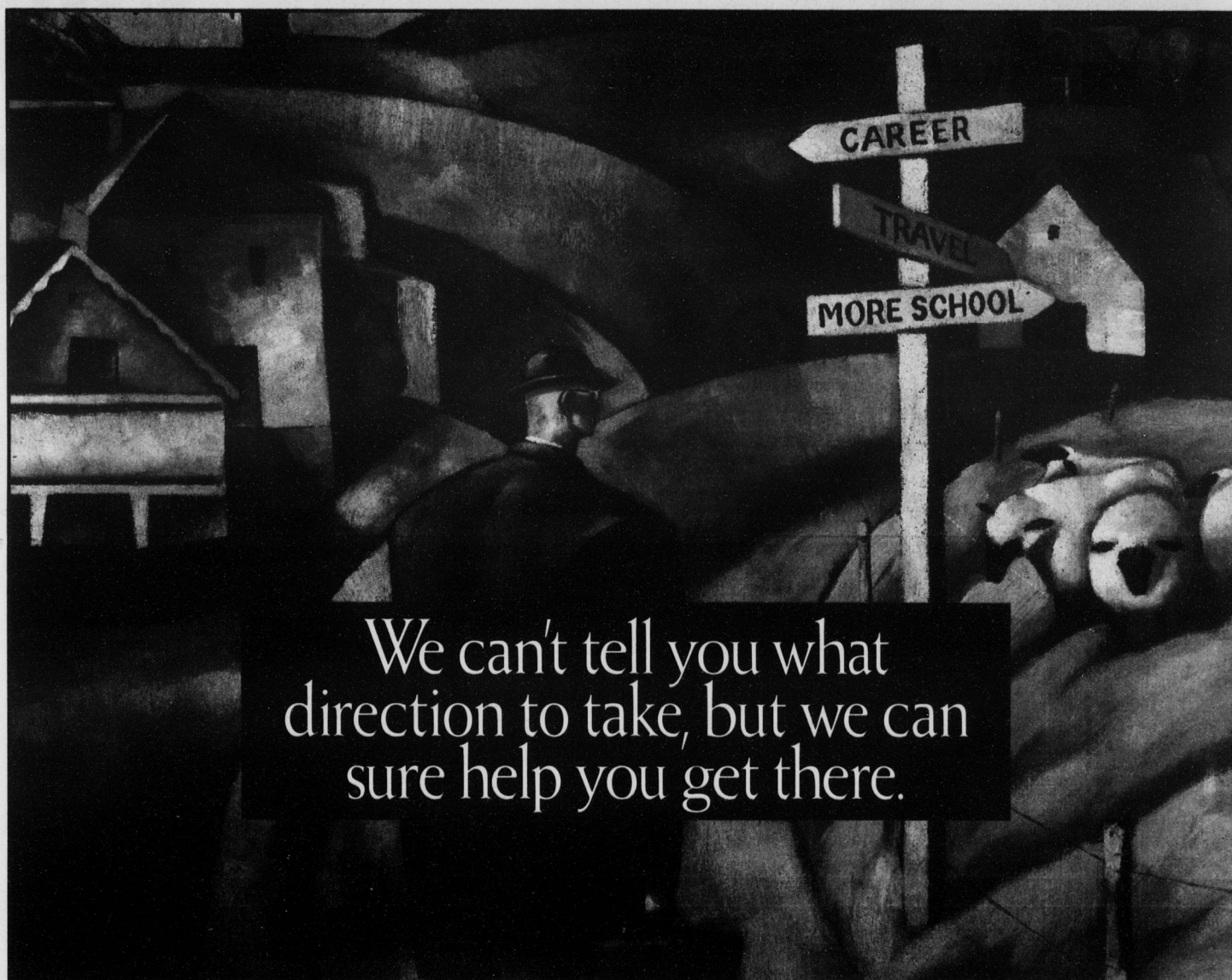
Two years in the drafting, the order omits a provision once included that would have required officials to use a balancing test before classifying documents, weighing any harm to the national security against the measure of public interest in disclosure.

Instead, it merely authorizes, rather than mandates, agency heads to apply the balancing test.

In that regard, "The order is a major disappointment to us," said Kate Martin, director of the Center for National Security Studies, a private group that lobbies on behalf of civil liberties and national security issues.

"When they took out the public interest balancing test," she said, "they did so in order to basically eliminate the role of the judiciary in looking at whether information should be kept secret."

"Recent events have shown that some kind of outside, independent accountability is necessary, otherwise the government is going to keep information secret that should be made public."



We can't tell you what direction to take, but we can sure help you get there.



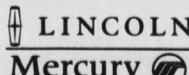
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