

The Washington Times

WASHINGTON, D.C., FRIDAY, JUNE 7, 1996 **

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Dole platform to be 'tolerant' about abortion

But Republicans will keep 1992's pro-life language

By Ralph Z. Hallow
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Bob Dole will include a "declaration of tolerance" for pro-choice Republicans in the party's 1996 platform, but he also reassured abortion foes by not permitting any changes in the pro-life plank.

"Since 1980, the platform has included a statement of pro-life principles and supported a pro-life constitutional amendment," Mr. Dole said in a statement released last night. "In the 1996 platform, I will not seek or accept a retreat from those commitments."

The presumptive Republican presidential nominee, with the agreement of pro-life leaders, said a statement would be included in the platform recognizing that Republicans have divergent views on a variety of issues, from term limits to taxes to abortion.

Pro-choice forces wanted abortion dropped from the platform, but some were willing to settle for the addition of "big tent" language, preferably in the abortion plank.

"I expect to run for president with the existing pro-life language from our 1992 platform and with the declaration of tolerance for divergent views on issues such as abortion," Mr. Dole's statement said. "There are a number of such issues, including term limits, on which Republicans of good will disagree."

The timing and manner of the release of Mr. Dole's statement by his campaign provoked confusion in the media but little division among pro-life forces.

"Bob Dole said Republicans who support abortion are still welcome in the party, but it is being played in the media as Dole wanting to change the platform," said Carol Long, political action director for the National Right to Life Committee, which has more than 3,000 chapters in 50 states.

"This is not going to start a fight with pro-life groups," Miss Long said.

She noted that Rep. Henry J. Hyde, Illinois Republican and staunch pro-lifer, introduced a similar statement of tolerance before the 1992 platform committee, where it passed unanimously.

Miss Long said she received a faxed copy of the statement about the time ABC News reported the statement and predicted it would cause GOP infighting. The Associated Press sent out an article last



Photo by Kenneth Lambert/The Washington Times
A familiar walk: Majority Leader Bob Dole leaves the Senate floor with fellow Kansan and fellow Republican Nancy Landon Kassebaum after giving a speech on the amendment.

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From page A1

night with the same prediction.

"The media got it wrong. Senator Dole made it clear he would not support a weakening of the pro-life plank," Miss Long said.

Mr. Dole's approach would appear to satisfy the demands of Pat Buchanan, who sought the GOP presidential nomination. Mr. Buchanan said that he would not accept any change in the abortion

plank and that it must preserve the call for a constitutional amendment outlawing abortion.

Ralph Reed, executive director of Pat Robertson's Christian Coalition, gave the Dole statement cautious approval, saying "I doubt there will be serious objections" as long as the declaration of tolerance is confined to the platform's preamble and does not appear in the pro-life plank.

Mr. Reed received a call from the Dole campaign last night giving him that assurance.

A dissenting voice came from

Phyllis Schlafly, who heads the National Republican Coalition for Life. She said she first heard of the statement when a network news show called her for comment last night. "I wonder if Christie Whitman heard of it ahead of me," Mrs. Schlafly said, referring to the pro-choice Republican governor of New Jersey.

"This statement is designed to make Whitman feel good about her pro-abortion view and does not show the same feeling of inclusion toward Pat Buchanan's people on NAFTA, GATT, immigration, the

Mexico bailout and trade with China," Mrs. Schlafly said.

Mr. Dole's statement also was a challenge to Democrats. He noted that the 1992 Democratic National Convention excluded pro-life speaker Bob Casey, who was Pennsylvania's governor.

"We Republicans must avoid the bitterness and intolerance of the Democratic Party that leads them to silence those who oppose their hard-line views," the Kansan said. "In the long term, I believe that only in this tolerant spirit can Americans ever come together to

end the abortion tragedy — not with anger and hatred, but with hope, compassion and humanity.

"Our convention must reflect not only our strong pro-life convictions but a decent regard for the opinions of those who disagree. This is not compromise, it is civility."

The Washington Times also has learned that two religious conservatives will help shepherd the pro-life plank through the convention unchanged.

Kay Coles James, who was Vir-

ginia's secretary of health and human resources and now is the dean of the school of government at Mr. Robertson's Regent University, will be chairman of the abortion subcommittee.

The abortion subcommittee's executive director will be David Gribbon, who was administrative assistant to Sen. Daniel R. Coats, Indiana Republican, and was chief of staff to Dick Cheney when he was defense secretary. Mr. Gribbon's son is the Christian Coalition's national field director.

Rumsfeld to help direct policy for Dole's presidential campaign

By Ralph Z. Hallow
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Former Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld will serve as co-policy director for Bob Dole's presidential campaign, Scott Reed, the campaign manager, said yesterday.

Mr. Rumsfeld, 64, will share policy coordination with former Rep. Vin Weber, 43, of Minnesota, Mr. Reed said.

Some veteran GOP activists and operatives were greatly relieved to learn that Mr. Rumsfeld, whose active participation in the Dole campaign was personally negotiated

with Mr. Reed over several days, will join the Dole organization.

"He brings stature, credibility, experience," GOP campaign consultant Eddie Mahe said of Mr. Rumsfeld, a former congressman from Illinois who at one time presided over President Nixon's wage-and-price-control program and was President Ford's chief of staff. "He is a



Rumsfeld

proven manager — very successful in the private sector and in the White House."

Other Republicans were skeptical. "I think it brings an adult into the campaign in a way that doesn't really change anything, which may be why the people in the campaign did it," said a longtime GOP strategist who expects to do contract work for the campaign and thus asked for anonymity. "It sounds so weak that unless you want it to be weak you wouldn't do it."

"A lot of Bob Dole's friends have been arguing with him to bring adult supervision into the cam-

paign," the strategist said. "And the young people running it have been resisting."

Mr. Rumsfeld and Mr. Weber will coordinate the campaign's three policy teams: foreign policy and national security, economic growth and trade, and domestic policy. Mr. Weber and Mr. Rumsfeld will appoint the teams' members.

Asked why such a relatively young man as Mr. Weber was given equal status with Mr. Rumsfeld, who has served in virtually every top position as a Republican except president, Mr. Reed said: "Weber has very strong ties to the

conservative wing of the party and both have been actively involved in Empower America, the leading conservative think tank in America.

"Both Weber and Rumsfeld are committed to retiring Bill Clinton."

Mr. Weber was a director of Empower America, which former Housing and Urban Development Secretary Jack Kemp had helped found. Mr. Reed was Mr. Kemp's chief of staff at HUD.

A Dole campaign official said the arrangement that Mr. Weber and Mr. Rumsfeld share leadership on policy "is being designed as the model for how the Dole

White House will be run. It's the Rumsfeld model."

Mr. Rumsfeld was chairman and chief executive of General Instrument Corp. and before that headed G.D. Searle & Co. He also spent a few years in investment banking.

Some Republicans remember Mr. Rumsfeld as being a political "moderate," even a liberal.

Donald J. Devine, a Dole campaign adviser, said Mr. Rumsfeld "has moved to the right over the years."

"He has definitely been a conservative. I don't consider him any kind of [ideological] enemy."