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**ST. PETERSBURG
TIMES**

ST. PETERSBURG

DAILY - 447,200

OCT 19, 1996

**Claude Pepper's brother:
Dole wouldn't get vote**

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But Frank Pepper, brother of the Democratic congressman and former U.S. senator from Florida who died in 1989, is asking the Republican nominee for president to keep Claude Pepper's name out of the campaign.

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Pepper's brother tells Dole to lay off

By MARK SILVA
Capital Bureau Chief

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In pledges to protect Medicare, Dole's proof of sincerity is a 1983 letter from Pepper, the late Miami congressman and champion of the elderly. But now Dole has another Pepper letter he won't be so proud of.

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"I know he doesn't go around kicking old people in the back or the groin," Pepper says of Dole. "But I think he's trying to give the impression that he's a great friend of the elderly, and the record doesn't show that."

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Dole pulled the letter from his pocket during a tour of a South Florida nursing home last month and invoked Pepper's name from the podium of a stump speech in Tampa in August. The candidate's wife, Elizabeth Dole, read from the letter at the Republican National Convention in San Diego.

Pepper was an author of Medicare legislation, the national program of health care for the elderly that has become a point of contention in the 1996 presidential race. In their debates, Clinton has challenged Dole for backing a Republican plan that would have more sharply curtailed increases in Medicare spending over the next few years than cutbacks that Clinton has supported.

Frank Pepper says Dole is using the letter on Social Security to support his claim that he "would never do anything to hurt Medicare or other senior programs . . . Applying it to the current Medicare debate is wrong."

Sounding a bit like Clinton himself, Frank Pepper's letter to Dole concluded: "My brother respected your decades of service to our nation. However, I must ask you to please resist what must be advice from political advisers to inappropriately use your relationship with Claude."

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Dole's May 11, 1983 letter from Claude Pepper is a two-page note of thanks for working with Pepper that year on a commission formed to keep Social Security from financial ruin. "We could never have produced the package without your skill and sincerest desire to see that our commission make a meaningful contribution to the saving of Social Security without the wholesome influence you exerted

Frank Pepper
1020 Merritt Drive
Tallahassee, Florida 32301
October 16, 1996

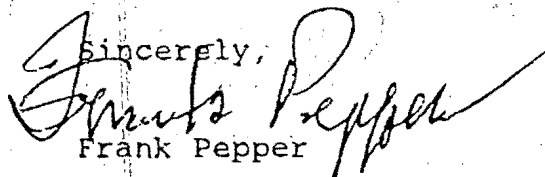
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"USA TODAY hopes to serve as a forum for better understanding and unity to help make the USA truly one nation."

—Allen H. Neuharth
 Founder, Sept. 15, 1982



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Today's debate: **SAVING MEDICARE**

Clinton rhetoric masks scope of Medicare ills

OUR VIEW The president is demagoguing Medicare, misleading voters on what needs to be done to fix it.

More than 37 million elderly Americans depend on Medicare for their health care. More than 110 million workers pay thousands in taxes every year to support them.

But with two weeks to go until Election Day, neither Bill Clinton nor Bob Dole has done much to help either group understand the crisis the nearly broke Medicare system faces. Both say a bipartisan commission will be needed to overcome inevitable temptations to exploit the issue politically. But, meanwhile, the exploitation is well under way with Clinton well ahead in misleading Medicare charges.

His ads in Florida and other states with large elderly populations say, "Dole-Gingrich tried to cut \$270 billion."

In last week's debate, Clinton said the American Hospital Association found the GOP's Medicare savings could have "closed 700 hospitals."

And he keeps saying his own package of \$124 billion in Medicare savings would maintain the hospital insurance trust fund, now on the road to insolvency in 2001, flush for the next decade.

Each claim is misleading in three ways: First, each is wrong factually.

As Dole has noted in two debates, the \$270 billion "cuts" in Medicare Clinton attacks were actually proposed cuts in rapidly increasing Medicare spending. Never enacted and since revised at reduced savings, that Dole-supported plan would have increased spending per recipient nearly 40%. That's much faster than the anticipated overall rate of inflation. And while health-care inflation has been greater, Clinton himself has pointed out that controlling it is vital to controlling government costs.

Meanwhile, the hospital association told the White House before Wednesday's debate that Clinton was misrepresenting its report about closings. It has said the GOP plan could lead to some inner-city and ru-

"This is a political year. And the president's playing politics with Medicare. But after this year's over, we'll resolve it."



ral hospital closings — a serious concern — but not 700. It also says many hospitals would close under any Medicare reform.

That's the second problem with the Medicare campaign: It obscures similarities between the GOP and the administration.

Seniors under either party can expect:
 ▶ Higher premiums for Medicare's insurance for doctor bills. Clinton in his 1996 budget proposals sought to increase premiums from \$46 a month to \$83 in 2002. The GOP would have raised them to \$87 and even higher for wealthier retirees.

▶ More incentives for seniors to leave Medicare's traditional, expensive, fee-for-service system. The GOP would have expanded the program that's already lured 10% of the Medicare population into managed care that costs less and offers more. And it would have let seniors opt for medical savings accounts in which they could buy coverage for themselves and pocket the savings. The administration opposes medical savings accounts as a sop to the healthy and wealthy. But it also would encourage seniors to move into managed-care plans. Neither party would force anyone into managed care, even though that's what's happening in the private sector.

▶ Payment cuts. Almost 70% of the savings in the initial and current GOP plans would come from cuts in payments to doctors, hospitals and other health-care providers. The same goes for Clinton's unenacted proposals, but at a level about a third to half that of GOP measures.

Which brings up the third problem with Clinton's attack on the level of GOP cuts. It implies the problem is less severe than it is.

In August, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office found nearly twice the level of Medicare savings as proposed by Clinton will be needed just to keep the Medicare trust fund for hospitals solvent until 2004. And the former chief actuary for the agency that oversees the trust fund says savings of as much as \$300 billion over seven years are needed to make it sound. And then it will be sound only until the baby boom starts retiring.

So the public is left to believe the problem is easily fixed.

Ultimately, an independent commission may prove to be the only way to resolve the system's problems. But this year's political games make that job even tougher for the commission, the next Congress and the next president.

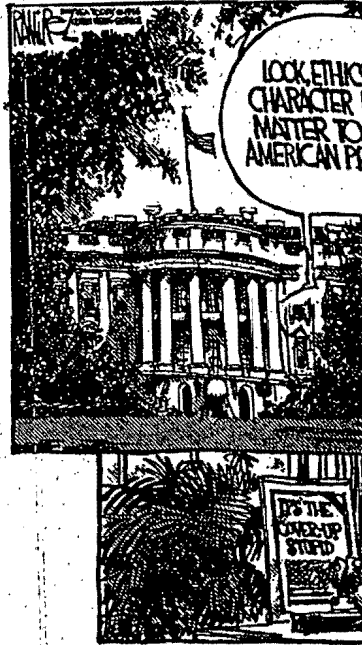
Rising costs

Year	Net federal outlays for Medicare over the next few years (in billions)
1996	\$179
1997	198
1998	217
1999	237
2000	258
2001	281
2002	305

Source: Congressional Budget Office



"Medicare needs help now. I have proposed (a) budget which... would save a lot of money through more managed care."



Technology can unlog airports

The capacity crunch at U.S. airports is certainly real, it is going to get worse, and it is important the public be made aware of this problem ("Airports search for ways to expand capacity," Money, Oct. 2).

However, the comment by George Doughty, former Denver aviation director, that "we've pushed the technology tweaks and fixes about as far as we can" could not be more wrong.

NASA is currently conducting a \$120 million terminal area productivity program to increase traffic-handling capacity at existing airports by using new and emerging technologies.

Some specific examples include reducing separation between aircraft, using advanced wake-vortex detection and avoidance methods, and developing computer algorithms to aid high-speed surface operations and reduce time on runways.

A further part of the program, aimed at achieving clear-weather levels of traffic throughout in low-visibility conditions, is a good example of how new and emerging technologies can be used to increase capacity. Using the Global Positioning System to locate the aircraft, NASA plans to provide pilots with an electronic, moving-map display showing the position of the aircraft and other traffic on the ground.

The same technology can be used to depict taxiway sidelines and center lines virtually on a sheet of glass superimposed between the pilot's eye and the forward windshield. The combination of displays is expected to allow pilots to taxi accurately and rapidly even when the natural out-the-window view is obscured by fog or snow.

The development and evaluation of these display systems is under way at a number of NASA centers.

Robert McCann, research associate
 San Jose State University Foundation
 NASA-Ames Research Center
 Moffett Field, Calif.

Smokers deserve their own smoke

In response to the recent proposal in Friendship Heights, Md., to ban smoking in public places, including outdoors, I am appalled and amazed at how egocentric and dumb smokers can be ("Village council approves plan to ban all smoking outdoors," News, Thursday).

I find it disgusting to smell the smoke of those desperate people when I enter a building and must hold my breath. I get irritated when a smoker has the window down in a car near me and tosses a still-burning cigarette out. Why do they assume

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President protects seniors

OPPOSING VIEW Clinton was right to veto the Republican plan. It was bad for seniors and for the program.

By Laura D'Andrea Tyson

In 1993, President Clinton acted responsibly to extend the life of the Medicare trust fund without a single Republican vote. In 1995 and 1996, the president continued to fight for a balanced budget that would extend the trust fund for a decade from now while protecting the integrity of Medicare.

The president also acted responsibly when he vetoed the \$270 billion Medicare reduction in the Sen. Bob Dole-Rep. Newt Gingrich budget — three times larger than any previous cut in history.

The Republican plan was bad policy for four reasons.

► The reductions arbitrarily capped Medicare spending per beneficiary to 20% below the projected growth of per-person private health insurance premiums. Medicare would have been forced to cut services per beneficiary, gradually undermining the program's status as a first-class health-care system. The combined impact of the Medicare and Medicaid cuts led the American Association of Retired Persons to urge a veto of the Dole-Gingrich plan last November.

► These excessive cuts threatened the 700 most vulnerable hospitals that are highly dependent on Medicare and Medicaid. The American Hospital Association wrote Dole last year stating that for hospitals, "reductions of that magnitude would result not in a reduction in the rate of

growth, but in a real cut" and ran earlier warnings that "needed hospitals in rural or inner-city communities would be forced to shut their doors, period." Nearly every state hospital association also jointly wrote that the Republican plan would "jeopardize the ability of hospitals and health systems to deliver quality care."

► The Dole-Gingrich plan proposed unnecessary structural changes that encourage the healthiest and wealthiest Medicare beneficiaries to exit the traditional program, leaving poorer and sicker beneficiaries in a riskier, costlier and ultimately less effective program.

► The Dole-Gingrich plan proposed increases in premiums that would have amounted to \$268 per couple this year and \$1,700 per couple by 2002. Elderly Americans would have been forced to pay more for less — a cut by anyone's definition.

Bob Dole is now proposing a \$550 billion campaign tax cut — twice as large as the Dole-Gingrich plan that necessitated a \$270 billion Medicare cut. If he were to pay for it the same way the Dole-Gingrich plan paid for its \$245 billion tax cut, the required cut to Medicare would top \$300 billion over six years. According to an August 1996 Congressional Budget Office analysis, cuts of this magnitude would be "draconian," would "lead to an actual reduction in hospital payments," and "overall quality of care in Medicare might be threatened."

It is responsible for this, president — or any leader — to warn Americans about an economic plan that would risk that degree of harm to the Medicare program.

Laura D'Andrea Tyson is President Clinton's national economic adviser.

President protects seniors

DOCUMENT 1 OF 1

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NEWS

President protects seniors

* Laura D'Andrea Tyson

446 Words

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USA Today

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DEBATE

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CAMPAIGN '96

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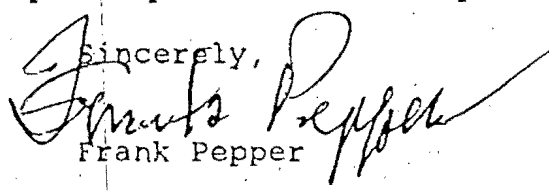
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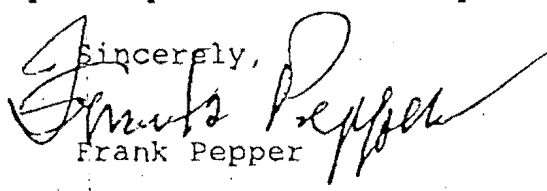
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PEPPER LETTER BACKGROUND

- o During the campaign -- including at the first Presidential debate, Senator Dole has frequently cited a note from Claude Pepper that thanked him for his work on the Social Security Commission. He used this note, and his past relationship with the deceased Claude Pepper, as proof that he would never do anything to hurt Medicare.
- o Senator Dole's reference to this note angered Claude Pepper's younger brother Frank. He was so concerned that he sent a letter to Senator Dole (ccing it to the President) saying, "using (Claude Pepper's) note about this experience and applying it to the current Medicare debate is wrong."
- o In the letter, Mr. Pepper said, "he (Claude Pepper) would have strongly rejected your past and current proposals for excessive cuts and detrimental policy changes...."
- o Reportedly, Mr. Pepper forwarded his letter to the Miami Herald today. It is expected that they will write a story on it tomorrow.

Gene ~~FYE~~ - Can be sent out Tuesday.

(GJ)

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P6/b(6)

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