



All the Best Podcast

77. Service to Country

Featuring former U.S. Senator from Kansas Bob Dole

Senator Dole: March 1st, 1991. Dear Bob, today I sent to the Congress my request for an extension of the Fast Track Procedures on implementing trade agreements, along with my report supporting that request. I'm also writing to each member of Congress to underscore the importance I attached to that request and to urge your support. Events in the Gulf show how much the world continues to look to the United States for leadership. Continuation of Fast Track Procedures is crucial to the U.S. leadership in the global economy. Our trade policy is to open U.S. markets worldwide, for U.S. goods and services. Indeed, our economic growth is hinged to the success of these market-opening initiatives. Over the last three years, export expansion accounted for 57% of our GNP growth. But without the certainty, the Fast Track guarantees an up or down vote on implementing legislation within a limited time, we could not complete or even negotiate trade agreements to sustain such growth.

When Congress reenacted the Fast Track Procedures in the Omnibus Trade and Competitiveness Act of 1988, it anticipated that an extension beyond the upcoming expiration might be needed and important. We do need an extension of these Fast Track Procedures to pursue important initiatives such as the completion of the Uruguay Round negotiations, the negotiation of a North

ATB Podcast - Barbara Bush

American Free Trade Agreement, and the pursuit of our trade objectives in the Enterprise for the Americas Initiative. I know that some may have concerns about these initiatives, but your support now, for continuation of Fast Track Procedures does not commit you in advance to endorse any particular agreement. Moreover, the Fast Track Procedure is a partnership. And my administration will do its part to make that partnership work.

Fast Track Procedures call for, and I am committed to, close consultations to ensure that the negotiations are deliberate, and that ultimately, we achieve agreements in which we can all take pride. However, a vote against extending these procedures now deprives us of the prospect of negotiating any agreements. I am asking for your support, for our continued efforts to liberalize trade and open markets. No country stands to gain more from an open global economy than the United States. We are today engaged in trade initiatives that hold unprecedented promise for the advancement of our economic interests. With such important initiatives in the balance, we need more than ever to maintain U.S. leadership and the legislative executive partnership that has endured for years. Sincerely, George H.W. Bush.

George: In the first place, I believe that character is a part of being President.

Barbara: And life really must have joy.

Sam: This is "All the Best." The official podcast of the George and Barbara Bush Foundation. I'm your host, Sam LeBlond, one of their many grandchildren. Here, we celebrate the legacy of these two incredible Americans through friends, family, and the foundation. This is "All the Best."

George: I remember something my dad taught me. He said, write your mother, serve your country, and he said, tell the truth. And I've tried to do that in public life. All through it.

Barbara: You are a human being first and those human connections with children, with friends are the most important investments you will ever make.

George: We stand tonight before a new world of hope and possibilities for our children. A world we could not have contemplated a few years ago.

Sam: On behalf of our family and the George and Barbara Bush Foundation. This is "All the Best."

Senator Bob Dole served as special counsel in Alston & Bird's legislative and public policy group in Washington D.C. As the 1996 Republican nominee for president and former U.S. Senate Majority Leader, Senator Dole is one of the most sought after advisors in the public policy arena. A renowned statesman, who spent 35 and a half years in Congress. Senator Dole was first elected to

ATB Podcast - Barbara Bush

Congress from his home state of Kansas in 1960, and to the U.S. Senate in 1968. He gained national prominence as Chairman of the Republican National Committee from 1971 to 1973. He was elected Senate Majority Leader in 1984. And he held the record as the nation's longest serving Republican leader. A record he held for 22 and half years.

Senator Dole has received national acclaim for his leadership on behalf of the disadvantaged and disabled. He is a major spokesman on issues involving veterans, hunger and nutrition, agriculture, and men's health. He is respected on both sides of the aisle for his views on bipartisanship, deficit reduction, economic growth, and health care, and for his mastery of foreign affairs. Senator Dole, thank you so much. It's an honor to have you with us today on "All the Best."

Senator Dole: Oh, well, thank you. Happy to do it.

Sam: We're happy to have you on sir. Senator, our podcast is based on the legacy of service that both of my grandparents, George and Barbara Bush, who you knew very well, lived every single day. Sir, you are the very definition of service to country, with your lifelong dedication, serving the American people in many roles. Can you talk about why service is important to you?

Senator Dole: Well, as your grandparents have indicated through their service, it's very important. But this pretty much the same applies to me. I mean, I never in my early days, in high school or even a couple of years in college, didn't know what public service was. But I found out as I got just a little older, that public service means trying to do something to create good in someone's life, or some community, or whatever, to make things better for whoever you were talking with.

Sam: Senator, I want to go back to 2018, when my grandfather was lying in state at the Capitol. You gave a moving and incredibly powerful tribute, standing and saluting in front of his casket. Can you talk about that moment, and what it meant to you?

Senator Dole: You know, we were very close friends at that time, and I wanted to pay my respects. So I stood up, and I was going to bow out of respect and sit down. But when I got up, some invisible force moved my left hand, I don't use my right arm, but moved my left hand into a hand salute. And it was a very, very powerful moment, because somebody got a picture of it and it went around the world, I guess. You know, I just paid my respects and I didn't know it was going to cause any big deal.

Sam: Sir, so you know it was an amazing, amazing moment for us as a family. It's a lasting image that we'll always remember from that funeral week. As you know, it's a long week for us as a family. But that image and that amazing

ATB Podcast - Barbara Bush

tribute that you gave was really special. And so I hope that you know that we are so appreciative of that.

Senator Dole: I'm certain that's the case. And I hope I didn't upstage anything or anyone. But, you know, I just had to do it, and I did it. And I was proud that I did it.

Sam: We're glad you did it, sir. You and my grandfather started as political rivals, some would say fierce political rivals, campaigning against each other on multiple occasions. But later in life, you became close friends. What were some of your favorite moments with George and Barbara Bush?

Senator Dole: Well, they invited me to come to College Station, Texas. And we had about, I don't know, three or four days where we just had a good time together. And we had some graduating class. I know I shook hands with a lot of young people. So we were really living it up for four days, and we had already forgotten our, I guess you'd say fighting with each other. That was already passed, say, and we've been friends for some time, and I was happy to work on his legislation in the Senate. So we were good friends. And that was a lasting visit I had with your grandfather and grandmother.

Sam: Well, sir, another thing you and my grandfather had in common is marrying strong women. Barbara Bush was always by my grandfather's side, just like your wife was by yours. Do you have any remembrances of Barbara Bush?

Senator Dole: Oh, I remember your grandmother as this very effective campaigner. I remember in New Hampshire, she was particularly effective. I think I came out of there with a nickname that I was always going to raise your taxes. Much of that was due to your grandmother.

Sam: She was fiercely loyal to her husband like I know your wife was.

Senator Dole: All right, I should have answered, I'm going to raise your taxes, but I didn't.

Sam: Senator, while you and my grandfather were fierce rivals, you did work together to get a lot of things done, one of which was the American with Disabilities Act. You, alongside Senator Ted Kennedy and others drafted the act while my grandfather was vice president. This groundbreaking law changed the world in so many ways. What do you remember from that historic moment?

Senator Dole: I remember working with your grandfather, and Ted Kennedy, and Senator Durenberger from Minnesota, and a few others, to try to put together a program that would benefit America's disabled. And it was really the first big effort there was to deal with this problem, which is fairly significant.

ATB Podcast - Barbara Bush

And we worked on it, and worked on it, and worked on it, and finally got it into what we called SHIP. And then I remember the signing ceremony with your grandfather, I think was then president.

Sam: Yes, sir.

Senator Dole: The White House lawn was filled with gurneys, and wheelchairs, and canes, and everything. And it was a very meaningful moment in my life and I think your grandfather's life. And of course, your grandmother was there too.

Sam: What's amazing too, sir, is that you got to work on the bill, and now you've seen all the changes that have come from that in the 30-plus years. For someone younger like myself, it's amazing to think that over 30 years ago, there wasn't access for handicapped and disabled people in a lot of places in the United States. And now it's almost, if you don't, you're an outlier.

Senator Dole: That's true. And when we were considering legislation, we understood that there were people maybe in a wheelchair, would try to get into a restaurant, or there was a curb, and they couldn't get in. And unless somebody walked by to give them my hand, they just have to go some other place or just forget about it and go home to eat.

Sam: Sir, I have one more question for you. But before I ask it, I would love to say thank you. Thank you for being a part of the podcast. Thank you for your service to our country. And thank you for sharing your stories about my grandparents. I have to ask you this, because you are the epitome of service to others. What advice would you give to someone who wants to get involved in public service or who is just getting started?

Senator Dole: First, let me say, you sound like a Bush.

Sam: Thank you, sir. I'll take that as a compliment.

Senator Dole: Well, it is a complement because I can detect that voice. Well, I would advise any young person, young man or young woman, first, I'd tell them how important public service was, and what it could mean to their school, or their partner, or community, or their state, and what it would mean to them to be engaged in public service. So once I explained that, then if I were a young person, I would get involved in a campaign, whether it's Democrat or Republican, doesn't make much difference at that point. And I could learn a little about political public service. But beyond that, I wanted to learn more about non-political public service. And for that, you just have to get associated with some group who may be involved in charitable contributions, or helping the handicapped, or helping the mentally disabled. You know, real service. So that would be my answer. I hope it's okay.

ATB Podcast - Barbara Bush

Sam: Oh, it's okay. And I think there's a lot of people listening who take that to heart from someone with such vast experience as you. Senator, thank you so much for joining us on the podcast and sharing everything about service, and the importance of service, and also remembering times together with my grandparents. It means the most to us. Thanks for being on, sir.

Senator Dole: Well, thank you very much. It's always good to talk to a Bush.

Sam: I'm Sam LeBlond, reminding you to listen, share, and subscribe to "All the Best" on Apple podcasts, Spotify and everywhere great podcasts are found. Thank you for joining me as we celebrate All the Best.

Barbara: Both George and I believe that while the White House is important, the country's future is in your house. Every house, all over America.

George: Preparedness, strength, decency, and honor. Courage, sacrifice, the willingness to fight, even die for one's country. America, the land of the free and the brave. And God bless the United States of America. The greatest country on the face of the Earth.