

ALSTON + BIRD NEWS

For Immediate Release
June 4, 2009

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SENATOR BOB DOLE TRAVELS TO NORMANDY

AS GUEST OF PRESIDENT OBAMA

WASHINGTON, June 4, 2009 -- Former U.S. Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole, special counsel in the Washington office of the law firm Alston and Bird, has been invited by President Obama to travel with him to France this week for the 65th anniversary of D-Day, the allied invasion of the Normandy coast on June 6, 1944.

President Obama invited Senator Dole to represent the World War II generation in recognition of his wartime service, his long and distinguished career in public service, and his continued commitment to veterans.

Senator Dole was chairman of the National World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C., helping raise nearly \$175 million for its construction, almost all through private contributions.

He continues to be active as a volunteer for the "Honor Flight" program, which flies World War II veterans from across the U.S. without charge to view the memorial on the national mall. He personally greets almost all of the flights.

"It is an immense honor to take part in saluting and remembering all those who gave their lives at Normandy," Senator Dole said. "D-Day was the beginning of the end of World War II, and the sacrifices of so many brave soldiers that day will forever be burned in my memory and, I believe, of all Americans and all peace-loving and freedom-loving peoples throughout the world."

Senator Dole was seriously injured in World War II in the Italian campaign. He had enlisted in the U.S. Army from his native Kansas in 1942 and rose to the rank of second lieutenant, serving in the Tenth Mountain Division and fighting in Italy's Po valley.

In 1945, he was leading his platoon through heavy enemy shelling when his radioman was struck. He crawled from his foxhole to help rescue the injured man, only to be hit himself by Nazi machine-gun fire. His lifelong injuries were so severe he was evacuated to the U.S. for three years of recovery in hospitals.

Senator Dole was decorated three times for heroism, receiving two Purple Hearts and the Bronze Star with Combat V for Valor.

Elected to the U.S. House of Representatives and then to the U.S. Senate, Senator Dole served as Senate leader longer than any other Republican in history. He was instrumental in passage of numerous veterans bills and successfully sponsored the Americans with Disabilities Act, along with other legislation assisting veterans and others with injuries. President George W. Bush appointed Senator Dole as co-chair of the Commission on Care for America's Returning Veterans.

Speaking at the dedication of the Robert J. Dole Institute of Politics at the University of Kansas, Senator Dole said: "No honor that has come my way has surpassed the pride I felt in wearing my country's uniform."

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