

Elizabeth Dole Oral History Interview

October 5, 2016

Interviewed by Kenneth Clarke, President & CEO

C: Today I'm with Senator Elizabeth Dole at the historic Watergate complex where her and her husband, Senator Bob Dole live and where the offices of the Elizabeth Dole Foundation are located. We will be talking about the focal point of her foundation's work, Hidden Heroes, the long-term caregivers of wounded military service members. And in particular, the reasons why she started a foundation that is so devoted to help such good-hearted, crucial, and often forgotten people. We'll also be talking about her stories of working with the armed services during her long public service career. Senator Dole, thank you so much for having us as your guest today here.

D: Oh, it's my pleasure and privilege.

C: I would like to ask you what inspired you to devote so much time, energy, and money and resources to helping America's hidden heroes.

D: You know, about five years ago my husband Bob was hospitalized at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center for almost eleven months, and I was in and out of that hospital on a daily basis. And what I saw was just unbelievable. A young spouse sleeping on a pallet by her husband's bed month after month. Her husband had had a double amputation, and she was right there with him constantly, sleeping on the floor. And then just down the hall from Bob's hospital room was Mrs. Stewart from Mississippi. Her son had had thirty-nine operations and was getting prepared for his fortieth operation. And it was incredible. She was putting Bible verses on the walls of his hospital room just to encourage him every day. And we became friends, a number of us, as I was moving around the hospital. And so I began to take them down to Washington to Bethesda where the hospital is located to have dinner just to get them out of the hospital room for a night. And I began to learn more and more about what was happening. For example they were very concerned about trying to coordinate across medical systems with different structures. Many of the wounded had multiple injuries, illnesses, and they were being treated in different ways, so they were trying to coordinate across these systems with differing structures. They were very concerned about trying to prevent triggers that could set off an emotional response in many cases that could last for a long period of time. Many of them were worrying about how they were gonna manage the legal, the financial matter for their family. These were young spouses in many cases in their twenties and thirties. They didn't know that much about handling legal matters, financial matters. They were also worrying about trying to find some sort of part time work because many of them knew when they got home from the hospital they were going to be handling the daily activities of living like bathing, feeding, dressing the wounded, and they would be the sole bread winner for the family, so obviously they were gonna need some sort of flexible work to bring an income for the family. And they were-- they were really trying to wrestle with, "How can I be a

good caregiver? I don't know that much about caregiving." And of course they were going to be caregiving for serious injuries and for very complex invisible wounds as well. So all of this was really on my heart as well as I listened to all of their concerns, and they felt so alone trying to deal with all of this. And so when Bob left the hospital and returned home we invited the caregivers from Walter Reed to our home for dinner one night, and of course we learned even more about what was happening. And I'd felt a sense of mission-- that I needed to start a foundation and try to raise awareness because Americans are just not aware of what's happening in military families today. You know, less than one percent is protecting our freedom and security today, and so we're more separated from the military really. So I established the foundation, and it was clear to me very early on that we needed evidence-based research to move forward to really understand all the issues and the problems. I commissioned the RAND Corporation, and they spent two years doing the first comprehensive national evidence based research ever done on this population, military and veteran caregivers. What they came up with was incredible. They found there are 5.5 million military and veteran caregivers looking at all war eras. They said these caregivers are providing on average about 13.6 billion dollars a year as an unpaid workforce that our society would otherwise have to be supporting, and they're unpaid. Because we know so little about what's happening in military families, they're not being provided resources. Almost no resources available to these caregivers. And RAND said this is a societal crisis that requires a holistic national solution. So at that point we began looking at how my organization could bring organizations and caring individuals together. We announced from the east room of the White House the Hidden Heroes National Coalition, my foundation's coalition, and in that coalition were many different organizations and people that I'll describe in just a moment. And it's now three hundred strong, the coalition, foundation's coalition. On Capitol Hill I went to John McCann, Senator John McCann, to leader Nancy Pelosi, and they agreed along with Jack Reed, Senator Reed, and Jeff Miller who's a congressman who heads the Veterans Affairs Committee, the four of them said, "Yes, we will chair a Hidden Heroes Congressional Caucus."

C: Do you mind if I ask you a question here?

D: Sure. Oh, yeah.

C: There's been so much about the PTSD and traumatic brain injury and all the focus on soldiers dealing with these problems, but I'm taken aback by the fact that there really is no focus or even conversation in any kind of media, outside of what you guys are doing, on the caregivers.

D: They're absolutely...

C: 'Cause they're right there with them.

D: That's right. They're hidden heroes for sure. No question about it. And one of the goals of my foundation is to raise awareness across this nation about what's happening in these families. Once they're home from the hospital, you know, they are truly hidden, and many of them are just alone, so they're experiencing

according to RAND a great deal of isolation and just feeling that no one's there to help them, you know.

C: Your work, what you're doing, it's drawing attention to a fact that is known in military families, is that when one person serves a whole family goes with them.

D: Exactly.

C: And this has been known for a long time.

D: Right.

C: So...and there are stories about this going back to the nineteenth century and earlier, so it's amazing that we almost forgot about this.

D: Exactly.

C: If you hadn't have done this research with the RAND Corporation--that's amazing.

D: Isn't it amazing? And I stumbled across it because my husband was hospitalized for eleven months, and what I saw I just could not believe what was happening.

C: Right in front of your eyes.

D: Right. And when you see that and you become close to a lot of the families, you've got to do something about it.

C: And it's not a blip on the radar...

D: No.

C: ...it's actually something that's 5.5 million strong.

D: Right, exactly, so--and with the Hidden Heroes Congressional Caucus, you know, legislation's going through right now--bipartisan legislation. In fact this is a very bipartisan issue. And I think people delight in being a part of something that can make such a difference for so many people in a bipartisan way. So we--the legislation that Senator Murray and Senator Collins cosponsored has now passed the senate, and that legislation fills many of the gaps that RAND Corporation pointed out, gaps and services, that are so needed by these military caregivers. Nancy Pelosi has been one of our strongest advocates. She's already had events on Capitol Hill to help her fellow congressmen and women understand what's going on. The Chamber of Commerce is fully on board. Tom Donahue, the chairman of the Chamber of Commerce, the president, is working across the nation to help us find flexible work for caregivers so they can work from home, they can work part time, if they have an emergency they can leave for several days. So it's a caregiver-friendly work place. Easter seals. Easter seals is now training caregivers on how to be a caregiver. So they are holding webinars, training thousands of caregivers, and doing on-site caregiving as well in many places across America. We have a group called Lawyers for Heroes,

and this involves public council, which is the largest pro bono law firm in America, along with the American Bar Association, the Military Officers Association of America. The three have joined together for those who are so financially stressed that they cannot afford a lawyer. They'll get free legal aid. So that's active. There are many other projects of that sort under the foundation's umbrella. Now along the way I felt if we are gonna really raise awareness and come up with solutions to these caregiver problems we need a person who can really draw attention to all of this. I was in California, I met with Tom Hanks, and he said--he was amazing. In fact he got up very quickly after we were discussing this at the table, went to a blackboard, and started coming up with different ideas. And he said, "Elizabeth," he said, "I get it." He said, "I'm in it for the long haul. Just tell me what to do and I'll do it." So I ask him if he would chair a Hidden Heroes initiative so that we could raise awareness, a campaign. He agreed to do that. Tom has actually provided financial resources, his own financial resources, to us to help the foundation, to raise awareness, and he agreed to do public service announcements. So American Airlines has been wonderful. We have caregiver fellows from all the fifty states, and for three years as we select these caregivers each year American Airlines flies them into Washington for an annual event, a summit. And this September 2016 Tom Hanks came in to Washington, he flew into Washington, as well as Tom Brokaw who's one of our ambassadors for this Hidden Heroes awareness campaign. And we brought in the caregivers from all fifty states, thanks to American Airlines, and had a great event. The focus of this particular event was to unveil the Hidden Heroes website hiddenheroes.org. This was carefully constructed, a state of the art website, to encourage caregivers to raise their hands, to come to that website and find many carefully vetted resources, a hundred and sixty right now on the website which have been very, very carefully checked out so that we know they're quality. The caregivers will have a place that they can really discuss issues and exchange ideas, a strong shoulder to lean on if they need--you know, they're in a particularly difficult situation. It's a safe, secure environment for the meeting of these caregivers through the web. Also for a person who wants to help, someone just says, "Elizabeth, how can I help?" go to hiddenheroes.org. That individual will find ways to help. If you're a part of a church that wants to help or maybe it's a business or a nonprofit organization or even a city, you can find ways to help on that website. So we unveiled the website at this annual event. We unveiled the PSAs from Tom Hanks and also a new undertaking called Hidden Heroes Cities. I was proud that we could announce that even though it was just being launched at our summit we already had fifty-four cities on board ready to really scour their community to find out, okay, what resources do we have now that could make a difference for caregivers. We could expand those resources to include caregivers. Where are their gaps in the services in our local community and what are the ways that we could go about strategically filling those gaps. Another important part of the Hidden Heroes Cities is to help us locate caregivers in that community, and we're gonna do this all across America; I think that's an important way to get this to the grassroots so that it's not just a national campaign, it's a campaign taking place locally all across America. So that's in summary what we've been doing for the last few years since I was visiting Walter Reed every day. (Laughs)

C: You had no idea that was the outcome of your visit...

- D: Oh my goodness. It has just grown and expanded. And so many wonderful people helping us. You know, when you think about all the different individuals-- Joel Osteen for example. I visited with Joel. I did not know him but he was very kind to--he was coming to Washington to do an interview-- one of the national shows. And so I ask if he could meet. We met, and he said at the end of the meeting, "I want to be your leader in the faith community." Now why is the faith community important? Because RAND told us when our caregivers become terribly depressed--and obviously they're experiencing problems: immune system problems, heart problems and depression because of the enormous responsibilities they're tending to every single day--and when they become depressed they turn to the clergy for support. The clergy has no idea, again, what's happening in these military families. They don't know. They can't really be responsive. So we have a toolkit for the faith community, and this is interfaith. This includes Muslims, the national association of evangelicals, the National Cathedral, the Jewish chaplains council. They're all involved, and they are providing these toolkits so that clergy can understand what's going on and be responsive. So that's another part of what we're doing as well. It really covers the public sector, private sector, nonprofit organizations and the faith community in a holistic national response.
- C: One thing that we hear sometimes is that only veterans can talk to veterans, and one thing that one thing that we sometimes hear is only military families can talk to military families. Our work at the Museum and Library seems to disprove that an awful lot as civilians and military interact and as people who are civilians talk to veterans and they provide that meeting ground. Do you see the work of your foundation as helping kind of break down some of the walls in society and allow us to kind of cross those boundaries that have been established by, I don't know who, but that notion that--'cause I don't know how somebody who's a military veteran or caregiver, even a spouse of somebody who's serving, gets the help they need if they can't talk to the wide array of sources that are out there.
- D: Right, right. Yes, I see that constantly. And the way that Americans--you know, as I bring this up with different people the first words they say are, "What can I do to help?" You know, and they want to help. They love to meet the caregivers. When they come in to Washington the caregivers actually storm the hill. And we've done that for three years. They go up, and they meet with their congressmen, their senators. They talk about legislation they think would be really important, they advocate, and we help prepare them for those visits. And there's no question, the interaction back and forth between the civilians and the military caregivers is terrific. So our experience is just the opposite; we find it's working beautifully.
- C: That's very important.
- D: ...across many different areas.
- C: Well, and it helps the stories be told. Do you have any stories that you would like to like to share about best-case examples? And you can also share ones where there was a struggle as well or they overcame struggles.

D: Well, I could put you in touch with any of our caregiver fellows in terms of resiliency and the way they're-- they're so strong and yet they're faced with these issues so there are periods of depression, and there are physical ailments that occur. But they are so strong. But in terms of something that really was so difficult for me to become involved with was a caregiver who's husband was a West Point graduate-- a tall, good-looking, 6'2" guy who came back from Iraq-- was hospitalized at Walter Reed where he lost both legs above the knee, his right arm above the elbow, three fingers on his left hand. And of course she was involved in bathing and feeding and dressing, helping with the daily activities of living. And she and I did some speeches together where she would tell her story, and I would talk about the foundation and what we could do to help. And I'll never forget one day when we were doing an event together, she ended her comments by saying, "I am thirty years old, and I'll be a caregiver for the next fifty years." I mean, it just, you know-- to take that in, isn't that incredible? It's heart-rending really. And yet so strong and determined and wanted to help any way she could to alert people to their needs.

C: That's a long-term commitment.

D: Yeah, mm-hm. Yes. Speaking of long term needs, the day after we had our event with Tom Hanks and Tom Brokaw in September of 2016 the following day I joined forces with the Veterans Administration with Secretary Bob McDonald. And the idea of this particular caregiver seminar, full day seminar, was looking at the long-term issues. In other words, what do we need to be thinking about right now for caregivers who are going to be involved for the next five years, the next ten years, or even for a lifetime? We need longitudinal data, which we don't have now. How can we focus in on this? What additional information will we need? Is there something that can be done right now to start to prepare for those long-term issues? I was able to bring in Mayo Clinic to be a part of that caregiver seminar in September, and they did a wonderful job in speaking about the resiliency and the handling of post-traumatic stress, what can be done. But bringing Mayo in with the Veterans Administration and my foundation, we have a partnership there that I think is gonna go forward definitely, looking at these long-term issues, and I'm gonna commission the RAND Corporation once again to do the work to provide a research blueprint, because I have great faith in RAND helping us to focus on what the key issues are going to be. So that's underway. That's a project that we're proceeding on right now.

C: That's great. Let me ask you a question more close to home. Colonel Pritzker is the vice chair of your campaign.

D: Yes.

C: And she's provided private foundation support and individual-- basically helping something that is also being embraced by the government and being embraced by the media and being embraced by so many things. How important is that private support to you as far as you look at your array of support and how you tell your story to the American people.

D: It's very important. Individuals have made such a difference. And Colonel Pritzker I have such admiration for her, for the Pritzker Military Museum and Library,

which just provides an opportunity for everyone to have access to military treasures. Treasures of military history. And certainly an opportunity-- the library provides a great opportunity for individuals to exchange ideas, to have dialogue, who are involved as military leaders, as public service leaders, veterans, scholars, exchanging ideas. So to have Colonel Pritzker involved as our vice chair is outstanding. And certainly she has donated a very--a large amount to the Hidden Heroes caregivers. And also there are a number of other individuals who are providing funds. We are not receiving government funds; it's all private. And of course if an individual wants to donate they can go to hiddenheroes.org because the small donations mean a great deal, and they add up, no question. So that's one way to donate, through the website. But also just being in touch with a number of very caring individuals who have the resources to help, and certainly Colonel Pritzker has been right at the top of that list.

C: One of the reasons that we're involved at the Museum and Library is because we know there's a story behind every service member.

D: Yes.

C: And we know there's a story behind every family.

D: Right.

C: From the macro to the micro.

D: Bringing those stories to life.

C: How much do you get into those stories of history with your families?

D: Oh, all of them. Or telling their stories. In fact when they sign on they go through a process of competing to be a Dole Caregiver Fellow, and once they're on board there's no question they've already received the agreement of their spouse or their wounded daughter or son to tell their stories. So we get the approval to tell the stories and then they're all highlighted because that's what people care about; they want to hear the stories. That's what causes people to react and want to help. So that's a first and foremost, really, in terms of what we do. Making sure the wounded are comfortable and approve of their story being told and then help the caregivers, even some who might not have had communications training, help them to tell their story well. And then we send them to Capitol Hill. We have them take place in interviews on the national level, on the local level, to highlight what's happening in these families. And that's the best way to increase awareness is their stories. And that's another thing that's so special about the Pritzker Military Museum and Library, you're bringing to life the stories of what's happening in these military families and with regard to our military personnel and our veterans.

C: That's wonderful. In your public service throughout the course of your life there really probably hasn't been a day where you haven't interacted on some level with the military, military personnel, and their families. And you were the director of transportation, you were the civilian head of the coast guard, you directed the

Red Cross. There are so many stories that you must have. Would you mind sharing some of those?

D: Well, it really goes back, when you ask about my involvement with the military, it goes back to my childhood because I had a much older brother who finished Duke University at the age of nineteen and went in to WWII. And he was in the Navy, he was on the USS Saratoga, and I can recall when he came home on what they called survivors leave when the ship was hit by the Kamikaze, the Japanese suicide planes, and that ship was badly damaged, went back to, I think it was, Seattle for repairs, and John came home, and just hearing all about what was happening, you know, as a kid riding my bicycle around Salisbury, North Carolina. So from the earliest period of my life I was involved with the military. And then of course a number of years later I married Bob Dole who had been--when Bob was--when John was in the Pacific Bob was in Italy, and Bob was wounded near Castel di Annone in the Apennine Mountains north of Bologna. And actually he was hospitalized for almost four years. And of course this was long before I knew him. But we went back last year to Castel di Annone, and it was a wonderful trip just going back to the area where he was wounded, and the Italians had so much respect for our army because, you know, the 10th Mountain Division really saved that part of Italy, and there's a big monument to the 10th Mountain Division right there in the town square. So obviously Bob and I both have had great concern for our military and veterans in our public service careers. At the Department of Transportation, I did find my footnote in history as the first woman to head a branch of the armed services, the United States Coast Guard, and that was a tremendous experience. And then following that when I became president of the American Red Cross we had a great project--it was more than a project, it was one of our key areas--services to armed forces. Also we changed the way America collects, tests, and distributes half of America's blood supply because Red Cross was still using a system from WWII. And so we had to go in to a huge seven-year project to update the way blood is collected and tested and distributed. Then I went to the senate, and I was a member of the Armed Services Committee, and then my work with the foundation. So it really covers pretty much my lifetime. (Laughs) Involvement in one way or another.

C: What were some of your activities with the coast guard that you remember that other people might like to hear about?

D: Well, you know, the activities of the coast guard are incredibly diverse. It's amazing the array of responsibilities that the coast guard has. For example, enforcing maritime law, search and rescue at sea, all of the activities combating terrorism, protecting our harbors, aids to navigation on our inland waterways and at sea. They're responsible for overseeing oil spills and water pollution. They're providing maritime research. They're enforcing maritime protection of our marine life. And they're involved in something that I wish I could have done to go with them on an ice-breaking mission. They invited me to go, I think it was, to the North Pole, and I would love to have seen that mission but it required too many days away from Washington, from my other responsibilities as secretary of transportation. But to have this huge, diverse array of responsibilities--and of course they're the first--when other people are coming in when there's a huge storm, they're the first to be heading out into the storm, into the most diverse and harsh kinds of weather to protect folks at sea and to make sure that we're being

properly cared for, those who are in danger on the seas. So I have so much respect for the coast guard, and I'm involved right now in a project to establish a national coast guard museum. This will be in New London, Connecticut where I visited the Coast Guard Academy, and of course I've been on many of their cutters throughout my time in public service. But this will be a great way to preserve the history, 226 years of history of the United States Coast Guard. So I'm taking a lead role in what we call the secretary circle. This will be every person who has served as secretary of transportation, which housed the coast guard, or later secretary of homeland security where the coast guard was moved. And that project is very much underway with activities and fundraising right now. And, you know, one story that was meaningful to me was visiting unfortunately the terrible, terrible site of the tragedy of 9/11. I was there, and in front of me was where personnel from the department of labor, where I had served as secretary, to my left was the building where the Red Cross was taking care of the families of victims in terms of providing mental health assistance, and then on my right was the coast guard guarding the port-- Port safety. So you look at those three parts of my career there at ground zero, which was a very memorable time for me. But I can't say enough about the coast guard. I think they are just a tremendous--I'll tell you one funny story that you would like to hear about coast guard. I was in New Orleans, and I was there for some sort of business, I'm not sure what, but I saw coast guard cutters, and I thought, "Oh, let's go visit the coast guard." and this was during my time as time as secretary of transportation. So I happen to have three-inch heels on. We get to the cutter, and there's a little ramp up with holes in the ramp, there's a space with water beneath, and then there's a little ramp down with little holes. There's no way that you can get up and over onto the coast guard cutter without hoisting yourself. I was holding a pocketbook, a purse. What do you do with it? They're standing at attention, all these young men, and the only thing I could do was say, "I'm sorry, but please hold my pocketbook." I thought I must have ruined his career. You know, this--here he was standing at attention, and he has to hold my purse. (Laughs) But I was able to hoist myself up and over and onto the ship, the cutter. And we had a great visit. But that's something that I'm sure he and I both would like to forget. (Laughs)

- C: Or he was honored to help you. One of the two. Senator Dole, you were the president of the American Red Cross and you have a lot of activities and stories that you can share would you mind telling me about some of those things.
- D: At the American Red Cross one of the key functions is services to armed forces as well as of course disaster relief, being on the scene to help when disaster strikes, providing one half of America's blood supply. And at the time that I got to the Red Cross, the blood program was very decentralized. It was still a WWII system. And it was very necessary with the Food and Drug Administration overseeing, regulating the Red Cross blood program to centralize so that we had standard operating procedures and so on. And so it was a massive undertaking to update-- I think it was almost 300 million dollars in seven years. And a very difficult change from the way the Red Cross had been working for so many years, so there were a lot of vested interests at the local level. And this had to be a centralizing of the system with FDA regulation, so that was a major initiative. Also we needed in terms of disaster relief to provide a system that would oversee all the equipment, which Red Cross began to position equipment in areas--local

areas where we know there are tornadoes-- we know there are gonna be hurricanes along the east coast for example--to get your equipment out there and stationed so that we can pull it in quickly. And we needed a disaster operation center that would be opened twenty-four hours day and night in touch with the press across America, in touch with those who were going to have to move this equipment where it's needed. So a lot of upgrading of different functions of the Red Cross occurred in the early Nineties. And services to armed forces, I think we had about a hundred and forty five different communications centers. We combined that into two state of the art technology systems to provide services to our men and women overseas. For example if a parent has died, they need to fly home immediately, Red Cross ensures they get the messages quickly, helps them with the transportation to get home, takes care of a lot of the personal needs. So this was a way of upgrading the technology instead of a hundred and forty five locations, two state of the art technical centers. So there was a lot going on in terms of just bringing the Red Cross into the Twenty first century, modernizing, upgrading so many of the activities. And it was a wonderful mission field. You know, you are dealing with people who are trying to help those across town or across the globe, people they had never met and would never see again. I made trips to battle zones, to Kuwait for example in the early 90s, and I could see where Saddam Hussein's troops had fired bullets through a hospital there, a huge hospital for disabled children and for the frail elderly. And when I saw that hospital I realized that the personnel, most of the personnel, had fled during the time of the war, and there were people literally tied to their beds. We came in and found all of this, and I said to Jose Aponte who was my assistant secretary for international affairs, I said, "Jose, we've got to call out doctors and nurses in the United States to come over here and help with this." He said, " Mrs. Dole, we don't do it that way at the Red Cross." I'd only been at Red Cross one month at that time. I said, "Well, Jose, we do now."

So we put out the call, and we got fifty doctors over there to help clean out that hospital, help refugees up at a border site, and to really take care of these frail elderly. I mean, it was incredible what we saw. But I've been in many of those areas where battles have been fought as a Red Cross president who's gonna, you know, reach out. For example in Somalia, I was in Somalia at the time of starvation in the early Nineties, and it was just incredible. I remember being in Mogadishu and then Baidoa, and in Baidoa we found a little boy lying under a sack, and I thought he was dead. His brother pulled back the sack and sat him up, and he was so severely malnourished that he couldn't even eat the bowl of rice and beans that was right beside him. And so I asked for camel's milk. And they brought the camel's milk, I put my arm around that little boy, and you could feel his bones--it was like they were just piercing through his body. I mean, it was-- he was so thin. And he drank that milk. And, you know, to walk away from that and think, "What is gonna happen to him?" You know? It was just heartbreaking. The military had arrived, the army had arrived in Mogadishu, and they were in Baidoa. And I recall visiting with the military, and I was told, "Do not go to Bardera because the military's not been there yet." But there was Red Cross personnel there. Well, of course you're going to go; you're the president of the American Red Cross. So we flew in, and we were told not to do it, but it worked out alright. But we found people lying on the ground. The hospital, you know, was on the ground there, trying to take care of people. And it was an

incredible situation, it really was, to be involved so directly. International Red Cross. I remember one of the doctors was from Australia.

C: Oh, okay.

D: So, but, you know, we went. (Laughs) And I think the plane that took us in didn't want to come back to pick us up.

C: I'll bet.

D: But, you know, you're fearless when you're over there. You just want to help these people, right. And then I remember going to Goma Zaire, which is now Goma Congo, and this was after the Rwandan situation. When a million Rwandans had left at the time of the civil war, they fled Rwanda; they stopped at the worst possible place, on volcanic rock in Goma. You could not dig for latrines. You could not dig for graves. Cholera was rampant in that area, and the people--I stepped over a dead body just lying there. They would haul these bodies off twice a day and just haul them to a place where they could bury them in a--one place where they were all buried, which was far on down the road. But to see this and to know that these people needed so much help, you know. And this was a part of my work at the Red Cross was going overseas to these areas where you could take donated food and water and whatever they needed and visit and try to provide some comfort to people who were suffering so much.

C: So the stories about the Red Cross remain the stories about the Red Cross where this is what the Red Cross does, it's in these tough places—

D: Right.

C: ...it's going to be in these tough places, and that's what you did when you were there.

D: Yeah.

C: That's amazing.

D: When I came back from the starvation in Somalia I could not even tell my board about it for about a month. It was just too painful to be able to articulate without tears, you know. It was just incredible what you bring back from experiences like that, you know.

C: Well, Senator Dole, you served in the Armed Services Committee while you were in the senate.

D: Right.

C: And what kind of stories can you tell me about your work there?

D: Well, one of the areas that I was promoting was that the Family and Medical Leave Act applied to military families. We achieved that and then also putting a cap on the interest that can be charged on loans. You know, the payday loans

that you so often hear about around military bases where members of the military are really taken advantage of in terms of enormous interest that's being charged, and so on. And so we were able to put a cap on the amount of interest that can be charged to the military families.

C: Well that just goes right to their bread and butter, literally.

D: Right.

C: Well, Senator Dole, thank you so much for having me here today to talk about your work with the Hidden Heroes Campaign through the Elizabeth Dole Foundation, and also for sharing some of your stories and the activities you did when you were, you know, in public service across so many different fronts. It really is just a pleasure and a blessing to be able to hear you talk about this stuff.

D: Thank you, Ken. Well, I've enjoyed our visit. Thanks so much for the tremendous work you're doing at the Military Museum and Library. Look forward to continuing our partnership.

C: Can't wait.

D: Thank you.

C: Thank you very much.