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Dole looks to war's end

By JAKE THOMPSON
Washington Correspondent

WASHINGTON — Once the conflict in the Persian Gulf turned from a frenzy of failed diplomacy to a massive commitment to war, the U.S. allies held their breath about Israel.

The day after bombing began on Iraq and Kuwait, the first Iraqi Scud missile landed in Israel and it did nothing.

More crashed into Tel Aviv, injuring more than 100 people, causing several deaths, and still Israel held back. Israeli leaders promised retaliation in the form of self-defense.

But Israel's uncustomary restraint quickly earned it an outpouring of praise in Congress and visibly warmer relations with the Bush administration, which had been chilly, even critical, until Iraq invaded Kuwait last August.

Yet, after the fighting and dying ends, the issue of a Palestinian homeland and the occupied territories will surface again, as will talk of a Mideast peace conference. Several Mideast experts have said Israel's bargaining power will be enhanced by its restraint.

Although he has said handling Iraq's invasion and the Palestinian issue should not be linked, Sen. Bob Dole said recently that a possible "bright side" to the war is that it is not overly long, "there is going to be an international conference on the Mideast."

As he did in December, the Senate minority leader from Kansas also faulted

the Israelis for mistreatment of Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"You can't kill people at Temple Mount and say, 'They're just Palestinians; they don't count.'"

Few doubt that Dole strongly backs Israel's right to exist as a nation, but they are concerned that his comments may prolong strife in the region by giving power to Israel's Arab adversaries.

"Sen. Dole will only be right if Israel agrees to an international conference," said David Harris, executive vice president of the American Jewish Committee, who spent several days in Israel during some of the Scud missile attacks.

"The Israeli public's attitude has hardened by the very real threat posed by Iraq's attacks and the support by Palestinians for Iraq," Harris said. "I don't think that creates a climate more conducive to the kind of leap that Sen. Dole is talking about."

Harris said the war has demonstrated clearly how endangered Israel is and why its obsession with border security inhibits it from withdrawing from the occupied territories until it can assure long-term safety for its people.

"It's troubling to hear at this moment in time, when it's least warranted and least appropriate, to have these kind of barbs directed at Israel," Harris said of Dole.

But Dole's comments were just another in a series of pointed comments aimed at

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Israel over the last year, causing worry among American Jews and Israelis.

Last January he proposed trimming foreign aid to Israel and the other four largest recipients by 5 percent to nurture emerging democracies in Eastern Europe and Latin America. In the spring he said \$400 million in U.S. housing loan guarantees shouldn't be used to settle newcomers in the occupied territories.

Last December, Dole suggested that, while not linked to the gulf crisis, there should some day be a peace conference to resolve disputes between Israel and the Palestinians. And two weeks ago, he said that Israel's suggestion it may need \$13 billion in foreign aid over the next five years to absorb 1 million Soviet Jewish immigrants and its war costs "seems like a lot of money."

Before the American people are asked to give Israel more than the \$3 billion they dole out annually in aid, Dole said the U.S. should insist on financial help for Israel from Japan, Germany, Saudi Arabia and other gulf nations.

A spokesman for the Palestine Affairs Center in Washington said he did not think Dole's views would help the Palestinian cause. Israel has developed bankable goodwill by initially staying on the sidelines that will make it harder for Palestinians to establish their own homeland in the West Bank and Gaza regions, he said.

"The Israelis are cashing in on their position by staying out of the war," the spokesman said. "Whatever they want after the war, the administration will say OK. Now Israel will be more stubborn and will be able to say, 'We want the prize. Leave us alone and give us more money.'"

But he argued, "The Palestinian issue is the key to peace in the Mideast."

Besides Dole, other congressional leaders have said that after the war Arab-Israeli and Palestinian-Israeli issues must be addressed.

"For the United States the challenge is to re-energize the peace process," Indiana Rep. Lee Hamilton, second ranking Democrat on the House Foreign Affairs Committee said recently.

In Harris' view, an international peace conference might be resisted by Israel because likely participants would be the U.S., Arab nations which, except for Egypt, have never formally recognized Israel's right to exist; the Chinese, with which Israel does not have diplomatic relations; the French, who traditionally have been sympathetic toward Arab countries; the Soviets, who are facing tremendous internal instability; and the Palestinians, possibly represented by the Palestine Liberation Organization, which has allied itself with Iraq.

"Israel has to ask itself why walk into such a situation," Harris said.

But he said Israel does desire peace in the region and would hope to explore all avenues to reduce tensions once the war is concluded.

Dole: More funding won't boost products in world marketplace

By Ray Hemman
The Hutchinson News
Farm Writer

Despite efforts by two Kansas lawmakers to increase funding for grain export subsidies, such measures will have limited impact on the markets, said Sen. Bob Dole, R-Kan.



Dole

Tuesday, Rep. Dan Glickman, D-Kan., introduced legislation to double the amount of money spent in the Export Enhancement Program to \$1 billion annually for the next five years and remove any spending limits on the program. Rep. Pat Roberts, R-Kan., has signed onto the bill as a cosponsor.

During a telephone press conference Friday, Roberts said a specific bill to increase EEP spending is not needed because the funding can be increased through a supplemental appropriation bill later this spring.

"But the bottom line, in my view is, don't look for any big jump in market prices even if we remove the cap," Dole said.

The main problem with increased funding is the budget deficit, Dole said. The Congressional Budget Office has said the \$1 billion measure would cost taxpayers \$500 million more a year than current programs. That \$500 million must be extracted from some other program or must receive a budget waiver from Congress.

Dole did say he would have no problem with a provision of Glickman's bill to allow the agriculture secretary to make direct

sales of government-owned grain to foreign buyers. In the past, the government has been forced to release the grain to private companies before it is sold to importing nations.

"I would have no problem with that," he said. "I'm certain he (Glickman) has some safeguard that we would sell it to Iraq, for example, or to some country that was guilty of human rights abuses or terrorism. But I'm sure he's talking about governments we have normal relations with. I don't see a problem with that. It might be a good idea."

"But I think the important thing is whether we can move enough of our commodity right now with all our wheat in the world to have enough impact on the market price to reduce the cost to the taxpayer and help the farmer. I don't see how with \$1 billion or more that can be done."

On a related matter, Dole said it was likely that the Soviets ultimately would pay off the \$1 billion in agriculture credits they were granted in December. Despite the economic problems the Soviets face, the nation has a good track record of repaying past import debts.

Dole reiterated his stand that U.S. companies would be better off in the long run if negotiations could take place directly with individual Soviet republics rather than the Kremlin.

"Gorbachev is using commodities as blackmail against the republics," he said. In the past, Dole has said Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev made imported commodities available to cooperative republics and denied commodities to the independence-minded states.

Dole, Mitchell caution against hasty land war

The Baltimore Sun
WASHINGTON — The Senate's top two leaders warned President Bush Sunday against engaging U.S.-led allied troops in a land battle against Iraqi forces any time soon — an action, they said, that could result in thousands of U.S. casualties and undermine domestic support for the Persian Gulf war.



Dole Mitchell

Their comments reflected Capitol Hill's general nervousness, one that has grown in response to rumors and reports of an imminent ground war between U.S. soldiers and entrenched, battle-hardened Iraqi divisions, and its reluctance to criticize Bush personally.

"I think we should continue to do what we're doing," said Senate Republican Leader Bob Dole of Kansas. "We're being very successful in the air... which I think we ought to continue until we decide that we can hasten the end by some limited ground action."

Dole, appearing on NBC-TV's "Meet the Press," implied that Bush could lose the political war for public support at home even if he wins the military war if too many American lives are claimed in combat.

"I don't think Americans are ready for war, period," he said. "So certainly if there's a ground offensive and there are thousands of casualties, support for this effort is going to drop, I think, rather sharply."

Senate Majority Leader George J. Mitchell, D-Maine, who followed Dole on the same program,

stressed that the decision to initiate a ground assault would be made by the president and implied that the political leadership of the Congress would support him, at least initially, regardless of his decision.

Nevertheless, Mitchell said, "I think the air war can continue successfully for some time," adding that he hoped the president would "err on the side of caution with respect to American lives."

Dole also said that "there's a bit of truth" to Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev's assertion that the U.S.-directed multinational force, with its extensive air attacks on targets deep within Iraq, had expanded on the U.N. mandate of liberating Kuwait from Iraqi forces.

"I think, to some extent, when we say... we're going to, in effect, destroy Iraq militarily, that was not one of the original objectives," he said, while hastening to add that he didn't "see anything wrong with it."

"I don't think President Bush has expanded anything," Dole said.

Dole says grain export bill would have limited effect

By Harris News Service
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Dole has \$1.4 million war chest

WASHINGTON (AP) — Senate Minority Leader Bob Dole, R-Kan., says he hasn't decided whether to seek re-election in 1992, but his main campaign committee keeps raising money for a possible race.



Dole

It collected nearly \$380,000 last year, according to the latest records.

At the start of 1991, Dole had nearly \$1.4 million stockpiled in two campaign accounts, according to reports filed with the Federal Election Commission.

Dole's main 1992 campaign committee had cash reserves of \$402,868 as of Dec. 31. In

addition, the senator had \$980,777 remaining in his 1986 campaign account.

According to a spokesman for the Federal Election Commission, the 1986 leftover monies generally could be used in a future political race, including a re-election campaign in 1992.

So far, no Democrats in Kansas have announced they will run for Dole's Senate seat.

Dole said earlier this month that he hasn't made a decision on whether to run for a fifth six-year term. He said it was "very early yet in the election cycle. I just haven't focused on it."

Dole spent \$1.5 million in his 1986 re-election campaign.

The senator's latest financial reports show expenditures and receipts during the last six months of 1990 for his two campaign committees.

The 1992 committee collected contributions of \$166,212 during the last half of 1990 from individuals and political action committees. The committee received \$8,325 in interest on campaign monies.

PACs, which Dole has proposed eliminating, were the largest source of campaign monies for the senator. They accounted for 73 percent of the contributions collected by his re-election committee during 1990.

PACs gave \$123,050 during the last half of 1990. Dole's campaign accepted \$5,000 each from PACs affiliated with the National Cable Television Association; the Fluor Corp., a California-based corporation with mining, construction and engineering operations; and the Federal Express Corp.