

R. 42-1991

Dole pushes disaster relief through

Nine days ago a deadly tornado smashed through Kansas, killing 19, injuring scores and destroying millions of dollars worth of property.

The next day U.S. Sen. Bob Dole of Kansas was there, surveying the damage along with U.S. Sen. Nancy Landon Kassebaum, Gov. Joan Finney, U.S. Rep. Dan Glickman and other members of the congressional delegation. And Dole was on the phone to President Bush, alerting him of the need for federal disaster-relief and asking the president to call for additional relief from an even higher power at Sunday church services.

A week ago today, Bush summoned the nation to pray for the tornado victims in Kansas and elsewhere, giving credit to the Republican senator for alerting the president to the gravity of the disaster.

Also a week ago today, an emergency meeting was held in Dole's Senate office.

Dole invited other members of the Kansas congressional delegation. He summoned top staff aides and persuaded the top four officials of the federal emergency relief team to ditch their Sunday errands and gather for a pragmatic session on speeding up relief for Sunflower State residents.

U.S. Rep. Dick Nichols, a Republican rookie from McPherson, was surveying tornado damage for himself that day. Other members of the delegation had other reasons for not heeding Dole's last-minute summons.

Glickman, a Wichita Democrat, was back in Washington and would not have had a reason for missing Dole's session. Dole's



RICH HOOD

aides found him on a golf course, and Glickman left the links to attend the meeting.

Disaster declarations can take up to two weeks. Congressional staffers said Dole laid out the problems and insisted that paperwork be rammed through in record time to get help for the tornado victims.

On Monday, Bush declared battered Sedgwick and Butler counties a major disaster area, qualifying their residents for federal aid to help families and rebuild homes and businesses.

Also that day in Topeka, Finney called for the Kansas Legislature to appropriate \$643,000 to match the \$1.9 million in federal aid approved by Bush.

On Tuesday, Dole announced that the U.S. Agriculture Department had approved a request made by the state and his office for emergency food stamp aid for residents of the tornado-ravaged counties.

"This emergency food stamp assistance will provide a much-needed helping hand to many of our neighbors who have suffered as a result of Friday's twisters," Dole said in a prepared statement. "This aid is another example of the federal government's quick

response to the terrible tragedy that has devastated so many lives in our state. President Bush has personally assured me that the federal government will do everything it can to help, and no doubt about it, his administration is delivering."

So, it must be pointed out, was Dole.

In fact, the Dole response to the crisis illustrates why some federal bureaucrats call Dole "the 800-pound gorilla." You, know what that is — a creature who can sit anywhere he likes.

Who but Dole, with his ready access to the president, could have cut through federal red tape quicker?

Does anyone other than Dole know as many key federal officials with their fingers on the essential pressure points to budge the bureaucracy?

Although Dole continues to say he has not decided whether he will seek re-election next year, his performance in getting disaster relief flowing as he did in this instance clearly demonstrates his worth to the state.

And it's probably no accident that special care was taken to find Glickman to observe Dole doing all this heavy lifting without breaking a sweat.

In the past Glickman has toyed with the idea of challenging either Dole or Kassebaum. Now he says he is considering taking on Dole next year.

If Glickman decides to do that, it's a safe bet that Dole won't be shy about reminding Glickman and Kansas residents about how the senator spent four days in May after the Andover tornado.

Hood winks

Richard Pisani, a St. Louis businessman, says he is running for the Democratic nomination for lieutenant governor next year.

To prove it, he plastered campaign portraits of himself and his wife all over the convention hall last weekend at Jackson Day events in Springfield.

The Pisani portrait stickers also were affixed to each urinal in the convention center's restrooms.

Being lieutenant governor obviously isn't worth much, but isn't it worth more than that?

A week ago four members of the Kansas City Council staged an amusing show in front of the Board of Zoning Adjustment.

First the council members, interrupting the board's set schedule, trotted in to be heard on a landfill resolution.

Upon reading a few sentences of the resolution, Councilman Michael B. Hernandez realized he was reading the wrong document.

The council members retired in confusion and came back later to read what was supposed to be the right resolution. But that version, too, turned out to be incorrect.

In an interview, Councilman Chuck Weber groused that the city staff had deliberately tried to make the council members look foolish.

If true, that wouldn't be smart. If not true, it might have been unnecessary.

Jack Kemp, U.S. secretary of housing and urban development, was pleased with a glowing introduction he received Friday in St. Louis. He said it contrasted with a previous introduction that described him as a "very important public serpent."

Dole optimistic about extending Soviet credits

By KENT STEWARD
Hays Daily News

Sen. Bob Dole expressed optimism this morning about the chances of extending export credit guarantees to the Soviet Union that could save U.S. taxpayers up to \$800 million in grain deficiency payments.

He said the resulting grain sales to the Soviet Union also could be expected to boost wheat prices.

In a telephone conference call from Washington with state editors and reporters, the Kansas Republican said he expected the Senate to take up the question of export credit guarantees Tuesday.

The Soviet Union has asked for \$1.5 billion in credit, but Dole said that figure was far from assured. Before the United States can extend any credit to the Soviet Union, it must be confident that the money can and will be repaid, he said.

The senator added, though, that the Soviet Union's record in repaying a previous \$1 billion in export credit guarantees had been perfect thus far, with another \$30 million interest payment due in July.

If the United States extended the full \$1.5 billion and if the Soviet Union repaid the full amount, U.S. taxpayers could expect to save \$800 million that would otherwise go to farmers as grain deficiency payments, Dole said.

Dole said he believed there were enough votes in the Senate to carry the measure in some form.

The senator was less certain about the prospects of the Brady Bill when it eventually reaches the Senate. That bill, which the House approved Wednesday, would require a seven-day waiting period for handgun purchases.

Dole said he considered the bill more symbolic than real because it only allows time for background checks on potential buyers but does not require the background checks. Noting that he voted for a waiting-period bill about a dozen years ago, Dole said his personal vote on the Brady Bill would depend on its final form.

He suggested that Democrats might have to make some concessions on President Bush's crime reduction package in order to win necessary support for the Brady Bill.

Dole conceded that endorsements of the bill by former Presidents Ford, Carter, Nixon and Reagan would improve its chances in the Senate. He also noted 90 percent public support for the bill and one report showing 87 percent support among gun owners, although he questioned whether those groups fully understood the bill's

symbolic nature. Dole insisted that Vice President Dan Quayle had solid support from both Democrats and Republicans on the question of his competence to replace President Bush in the unfortunate event that it should be necessary.

He conceded that the general public might not share that confidence in Quayle because the vice president got off to a shaky start and the subservient nature of the office does not avail him the opportunity to demonstrate his strengths.

The senator dismissed as speculation a question about his own willingness to accept the running-mate spot with Bush should Quayle be dumped. He said he must first decide whether he would run again for the Senate, a decision he expects to announce before Labor Day at the latest.

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Dole confident grain deal will pass

By Barry Massey
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Senate Minority Leader Bob Dole, R-Kan., said Friday he expected the Senate to endorse a resolution next week to encourage the Bush administration to extend more agricultural loan guarantees to the Soviet Union.



Dole

"I think we have more than enough votes to pass the resolution," Dole said in a telephone news conference with Kansas broadcasters and newspapers.

On another issue, Dole said he intended to announce by Labor Day whether he will seek re-election in 1992. Dole said he has been actively raising money for a campaign although he remained undecided on whether to run for another six-year term in the Senate.

Dole has been pushing for the agricultural export credits to the Soviets as a way to boost domestic grain prices.

The non-binding measure ran into opposition on the Senate floor earlier this week and further consideration of the proposal was postponed. Dole said he expected a vote on Tuesday.

The Soviets want an additional \$1.5 billion in financial guarantees from the United States through an Agriculture Department program to help buy American grain, mostly corn and soybeans.

Under the credit program, private lenders make loans to the Soviets to buy U.S. commodities and the government guarantees repayment in the event of a default. President Bush extended \$1 billion in agricultural credits last year to the Soviets but they have nearly exhausted that aid.

Dole said it would "probably be hard to get the full amount" or \$1.5 billion in additional credits sought by the Soviets. Opponents of the credits say the United States should not offer subsidized assistance to the Soviets because they have cracked down on independence-minded republics.

Another potential problem has been a provision in the 1990 farm law that allows export promotion programs to be used only for countries that do not pose a credit risk.

Dole said the resolution, and a similar one being developed in the House, would spell out factors for Agriculture Secretary Edward Madigan to use in determining that the Soviets were worthy of additional financial guarantees.

"I think we've got most everything worked out," said Dole.

On other issues, Dole said: — He was a "little uneasy" about raising money for a campaign when he's uncertain whether he'll seek re-election. Dole said he has told some contributors that he would donate campaign cash to the American Red Cross if he decided not to run for another term in the Senate.

— A proposal for a system of instant background checks for handgun purchases was "certainly better" than a House-passed measure to establish a national seven-day waiting period for handgun sales.

However, Dole said he would "wait and see" before deciding whether to vote for the so-called Brady Bill to establish the mandatory waiting period.

Dole expects Soviets to get grain credit

By The Associated Press

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"We believe this will give the president and Secretary Madigan some cover, in effect, in face of the 1990 provision."

— Sen. Bob Dole



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Dole said he has told some contributors that he would donate campaign cash to the American Red Cross if he decided not to run for another term in the Senate. Dole's wife, Elizabeth, is president of the national organization.

He estimated his campaign committee collected more than \$500,000 at a fund-raiser in Washington earlier this week. He has another fund-raiser scheduled on Monday in New York.

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Dole expressed doubts the Senate would consider the Brady Bill as a separate piece of legislation, but might be made part of a broader anti-crime package.

Credit measure likely to pass

Dole says could mean major Soviet grain buy

By GENE SMITH
The Capital-Journal

The Senate next week likely will approve a non-binding resolution calling on the president to extend up to \$1.5 billion in agricultural export credit guarantees for the Soviet Union, Sen. Bob Dole predicted Friday.

The Senate Republican leader said the resolution is scheduled for debate Tuesday afternoon, and "I think we have more than enough votes" for passage.

If the United States extends the full amount to the Soviets, it could mean the purchase of 4 billion bushels of U.S. grain, which is expected to be good for a 20-cents-a-bushel rise in wheat prices and a 15-cents-a-bushel increase in corn prices.

The sticking point has been a 1990 law that requires the administration to determine the credit worthiness of any foreign nation taking advantage of the program. The Soviets already have received \$1 billion in U.S. export credits. The Department of Agriculture has expressed doubt the Soviets can repay another \$1.5 billion.

"That's the big \$64 question, the one that's got the president in a box, because the law says if they can't pay it back, you don't guarantee the credit," Dole said.

Dole said he hopes the Senate resolution — to be matched by another in the House of Representatives —

will provide a "sense of Congress" that will enable the president to proceed despite the USDA reservations.

The Senate resolution will "try to spell out what we didn't do in the 1990 farm bill," enumerating the Soviets' repayment performance on previous debt, assess their national assets and whether U.S. credit guarantees would jeopardize foreign markets, he said.

Among other effects, Dole said the grain sale should produce an \$800 million savings in deficiency payments to grain farmers "and we also eliminate this big burden on the market."

So far, said Dole, the Soviets have always repaid such U.S. credits.

"There's an interest payment of \$31 million due in July from the last \$1 billion in guarantees, so we'll see," he said.

He also noted the Soviets already have similar credit guarantees from Canada and France.

Further, it is in the interest of the United States to encourage Mikhail Gorbachev and his supporters in their present course of action, Dole continued.

Dole recalled the Soviets backed the United States in the successful effort to kick Iraq out of Kuwait, noted Soviet foreign minister Alexander Bessmertnykh is in Israel to renew relations, and said Gorbachev has pledged to talk to dissident Baltic leaders.

Dole says U.S. wants stability in Soviet Union

The Capital-Journal

No one's interest is served by "an abrupt collapse of the Soviet state," Sen. Bob Dole, R-Kan., told an annual Foreign Policy Association dinner in Washington on Monday night.

The Senate Republican leader said that could well result in a new despotism and the "scary prospect" that radicals would seize nuclear, chemical or biological weapons that would threaten not only the people of the Soviet Union but the world.

A further result could be "an economic free-for-all in which the big losers would be the people."

Calling the present situation an unplanned but "very real" ongoing revolution, Dole said the situation is changing rapidly, and while dramatic change isn't necessarily bad, it's in America's interest to see stability maintained.

Because it is in U.S. interests to bolster Gorbachev, Dole favors another \$1.5 billion in agricultural credit guarantees, he said.

A vote is expected in the Senate today on a non-binding resolution encouraging President Bush to extend such guarantees, despite a U.S. Department of Agriculture assessment that an additional \$1.5 billion is beyond the Soviets' ability to repay.