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Dole's measure moves ahead for jobless pay

By The Associated Press
WASHINGTON — Senate Republicans on Thursday readied a White House-backed plan to help the long-term unemployed, as Democrats continued lambasting President Bush for opposing their more generous proposal.

The Senate prepared to consider a \$5.8 billion Democratic measure providing up to 20 extra weeks of jobless benefits for people who have used up the standard 26 weeks of payments. The debate was coming just days after the House resoundingly approved a similar bill, and a month after Bush killed an earlier version lawmakers had sent him.

"The president is quick with generosity when the need comes from abroad," said Sen. Lloyd Bentsen, D-Texas, referring to U.S. aid sent recently to the Kurds, Bangladesh, Israel and elsewhere. "But when the well-being of hundreds of thousands of hard-working Americans hangs in the balance, the cupboard is bare."

Facing repeated taunts such as Bentsen's, as well as the possibility that Congress could override a presidential veto, the administration rallied behind an alternative prepared by Senate Minority Leader Bob Dole, R-Kan.

"We at the department and in the Bush administration understand the plight of unemployment," Labor Secretary Lynn Martin said in a speech at the National Press Club. "We are looking at an unemployment insurance bill that does not break the budget and does not raise taxes. The Dole bill fulfills those requirements."

Dole's proposal would provide up to 10 weeks of additional benefits for the long-term unemployed, with a minimum of six extra weeks available in every state.

Its \$2.5 billion cost would be paid for by a federal auction of radio frequencies and by toughening the government's debt-collection efforts.

Administration officials renewed their veto threat against Bentsen's bill, and White House budget chief Richard Darman said the Dole measure wasn't the beginning of an effort to strike a compromise.

Dole warns Bush to do more to help farmers or GOP will be hurt

By The Associated Press
WASHINGTON — Senate Minority Leader Bob Dole, R-Kan., is warning the White House that a sour farm economy and depressed grain exports could cost Republicans in House and Senate elections next year.

Dole, in a letter sent last week to President Bush, urged the administration to adopt a more aggressive farm export policy to counter subsidies by the European Community and other overseas competitors. Without a change by the administration, farm policy will emerge as a hot political issue next year, Dole said.

Dole said the farm issue would not likely affect Bush's re-election in 1992 but that "the stakes are high" for congressional Republicans.

"A high-visibility farm policy debate — pitting the Republican farm policy against the Harkin-Gephardt-Kerrey school of supply-management and isolationism —



"A farm policy debate would possibly reduce Republican strength in Congress."

— Sen. Bob Dole

would fan the flames of populism and possibly reduce Republican strength in Congress," Dole wrote.

Dole referred to Sen. Tom Harkin, an Iowa Democrat who is running for president; Sen. Bob Kerrey, a Nebraska Democrat who is considering a presidential bid, and House Majority Leader Richard Gephardt, D-Mo. Kerrey said Dole's letter was "a rather startling confession."

A copy of the letter was obtained Tuesday by The Associated Press. Dole's office declined to release it, describing it as a private letter to Bush.

Harkin and Gephardt once proposed legislation for strict govern-

ment controls on production and marketing of commodities by farmers in hopes of boosting crop prices and farmer incomes.

Since 1985, U.S. farm policy has been "market-oriented" — aimed at permitting commodity prices to drop low enough to become competitive in world markets, while paying farmers subsidies to protect them from the effects of lower prices.

Dole said he supported the market-oriented approach but complained that the Reagan and Bush administrations have not adequately countered increased export subsidies by the European Community and others in the past five years.

Dole Warns of Farm Worries for GOP

By CHARLES J. ABBOTT
UPI Farm Editor
WASHINGTON (UPI) — Farmers could punish Republican congressmen in next year's elections unless the White House acts aggressively to boost grain exports and, in turn, farm income, Sen. Robert Dole, R-Kan., warned in a letter to President Bush.

Dole, the Senate Republican leader, said the farm economy is in precarious shape due to low grain prices and a weakening in livestock prices. Exports, a key source of farm income, are slipping because U.S. competitors are offering huge subsidies, he said.

"Given this, we will have a farm-policy debate next year, and very likely, we need one. While such a debate would not likely impact your re-election, the stakes are high for congressional Republicans," Dole wrote.

The letter was sent to the White House late last week. United Press International obtained a

copy Tuesday. In it, Dole said the "market-oriented" farm policy adopted in 1985 "doesn't fly in farm country or in the grain markets without the aggressive use of export tools such as the Export Enhancement Program." The government was forecast to spend \$900 million on the export-subsidy program this fiscal year.

"There is time to turn this around," he said, recommending the White House amend the program so that discount prices would be available to all customers, not just targeted nations, and so that it would allow farmers to plant more of their crop-land. The changes would take effect June 1.

"In essence, assure farmers and ranchers that, if the (stalled) General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade world trade talks fail, your administration will support them notwithstanding the added cost," Dole wrote.

Congress voted last year to require the government, if trade

talks fail, to put an additional \$1 billion into export programs and to adopt so-called marketing loans, which encourage exports, for wheat and feed grains beginning in July 1992. Dole's recommendations amounted to a broader range of action.

Without action, Dole said, Republicans could be caught in a debate between their policies and those espoused by pollsters who would offer larger subsidies to farmers in exchange for quotas on production.

Sen. Bob Kerrey, D-Nebr., who tried last year to increase crop-subsidy rates, called Dole's letter "a cynical but accurate assessment of the skepticism and mistrust" felt by farmers.

The Agriculture Department has until Sept. 30 to announce how much feed-grain land farmers must idle in order to qualify for crop subsidies. The set-aside requirement can be adjusted until Nov. 15. The set-aside this year was 7.5 percent for corn, sorghum and barley.

Dole offers alternative plan on unemployment benefits

Proposal is more modest than Democratic bill seeking 20-week extension on aid to the jobless.

By JAKE THOMPSON
Washington Correspondent

WASHINGTON — Jackie Jackson keeps hearing about economic recovery, yet each workday when her Downtown Kansas City office opens, 80 somber persons file in seeking unemployment insurance benefits.

"If it's getting better, it sure hasn't reached the people who come into our office," Jackson, the local manager for the Missouri Division of Employment Security, said Friday afternoon. "There are still a lot of people unemployed."



Many who show up at Jackson's office are not deadbeats. "They're serious job seekers," she said, adding that she thought they deserved to have their unemployment benefits extended by Congress soon.

Democrats are challenging President Bush to do just that in a politically sensitive bill likely to be voted on Tuesday. It would offer 20 weeks of additional benefits to those who have exhausted their regular 26 weeks of unemployment benefits.

The Bush administration has characterized the \$5.8 billion plan pushed by Senate Democrats as too costly and wants lawmakers to back a more modest alternative to be offered Tuesday by Sen. Bob Dole of Kansas.

The Senate minority leader's proposal would grant six weeks of additional unemployment benefits for all states. It would give four more weeks of coverage for states with insured unemployment rates above 5 percent.

The Democratic bill, backed by Sen. Lloyd Bentsen of Texas, would require Bush to declare an emergency for the benefits to be paid and would increase the federal deficit by tapping into a special unemployment insurance fund.

"Why is it the president can see emergencies beyond our shores?" said Sen. Paul Sarbanes, a Maryland Democrat. "What about the 8.5 million Americans unemployed? It's time for President Bush to recognize the emergency here at home."

Dole's plan would not require a declaration of emergency. It would be financed by auctioning certain government-held radio frequencies and by enabling the Internal Revenue Service to recoup unpaid student loans by withholding tax refunds for people holding the loans.

Dole's plan would raise about \$4 billion, \$2.5 billion of which would go toward unemployment benefits. The rest would be used to reduce the federal deficit. The Senate rejected a similar proposal by Dole in August.

Dole acknowledged Friday on the Senate floor that the Senate, controlled 57-43 by Democrats, probably would pass Bentsen's bill Tuesday. But he said the Senate also should pass his bill. If Bush vetoes the Bentsen bill, then Bush could consider the alternative bill immediately, Dole said.

"I think sooner or later we ought to stop the charades, the games, the politics and the speeches," Dole said Friday, "and make a deal with the president and the unemployed workers."

Bush vetoed a similar version of the 20-week bill in August. Democrats recently pushed another attempt through the House, and Bentsen quickly offered his bill.

Thursday, U.S. Labor Secretary Lynn Martin endorsed Dole's

proposal. "We are looking at an unemployment insurance bill which does not break the budget and does not raise taxes," Martin said in a speech at the National Press Club. "The Dole bill fulfills those requirements."

Dole and other Republicans say that if Democrats really want to help the unemployed they should back Dole's plan because Bush would sign it into law and the money could be released almost immediately.

Jackson said unemployed workers were experiencing a growing sense of desperation because they cannot find work and their benefits have expired or soon will. In Kansas City, the unemployment rate was 5.6 percent in July. A year earlier it was 4.9 percent. Jackson's office paid out \$31.7 million to unemployed workers in July. The figure for July 1990 was \$20.9 million.

"Things are a lot worse than they were this time last year," Jackson said.

Nationally, the picture is similar. The unemployment rate has risen from 5.3 percent in early 1990 to 6.8 percent recently.

Democrats contended in debate Friday that in reality about 10 percent of the work force is unemployed, if one counts part-time workers who can't find full-time work and those who have simply given up their job search.

"I think the president owes it to the American people to take a trip down to the unemployment office," said Sen. Don Riegle, a Michigan Democrat. "That's part of the American story."

Dole vows to push for Senate vote soon on Texas airport restriction

WASHINGTON (AP) — Senate Minority Leader Bob Dole, R-Kan., says he will ask the Senate in the coming weeks to repeal a law limiting airline service from an airport near downtown Dallas.

Dole made the comments Tuesday after backing off of an attempt on the Senate floor to force consideration of the repeal proposal.

A 1979 law, known as the Wright amendment, prohibits airlines from providing service between Dallas Love Field and destinations outside of Texas and its four surrounding states — Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana and New Mexico.

Former House Speaker Jim Wright, a Texas Democrat, sponsored the provision to ensure that Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport would become the region's primary airport.

Dole and other Kansas lawmakers have pushed for repeal of the airport restriction, contending that it has led to

The Wright amendment has become a "hammer to beat out competition and beat up the traveling public."
— Sen. Bob Dole

higher fares for flights into Dallas from Kansas and some nearby states.

Currently, only Southwest Airlines operates out of Love Field, which is about 10 miles closer to downtown Dallas than the Dallas-Forth Worth airport.

If the restriction is appealed, Kansas lawmakers hope to attract Southwest's low-fare service to airports such as Wichita

or Kansas City, Mo. Dole, during debate in the Senate on a transportation spending bill, complained that the Wright amendment has become a "hammer to beat out competition and beat up the traveling public."

Dole ran into opposition from Texas Sens. Lloyd Bentsen and Phil Gramm, and withdrew his amendment. Lifting the restrictions, Texans contend, would hurt the Dallas-Fort Worth airport and congest Love Field.

Dole said he would renew his repeal proposal after the Transportation Department releases a study of the Love Field restrictions. The study, which is expected in the next several weeks, was requested last year by Rep. Dan Glickman, D-Kan., who has spearheaded repeal efforts in the House.

Bentsen, in a statement, said he expected "a tough fight but I don't think it will be repeated" when the Senate considers the issue in the future.

U.S. may have to send food to aid Soviets, Dole says

By Harris News Service

The United States might need to consider sending special shipments of food to the Soviet Union to help that nation avoid a winter of discontent, Sen. Bob Dole, R-Kan., said Friday.

"Here it is, September's about gone," Dole said during a telephone press conference with Kansas journalists Friday. "It's getting cold right now in the Soviet Union. If we really are going to be helpful, as I assume we will be on an emergency basis, we're going to have to send chicken and flour and peanut butter and other items, as well as grain. I can even envision airlifts into certain cities, whether it's Moscow or Leningrad — some of the big cities."

Part of the problem with getting food aid to the Soviets is the cost of shipping. Federal law requires 75 percent subsidized or free food under the government's Food for Peace program to be shipped on U.S.-flagged carriers, a requirement known as cargo preference.

"But one of the drawbacks for most of these programs is the cargo preference. We have to pay too much to get our product over there. I think some of the deals we are making now with the Soviet Union, it's not all grain. We have to pay part of the shipping cost."

Proponents of cargo preference say the subsidy for the U.S. merchant marine is needed to keep it afloat. Opponents say that any subsidy for the merchant marine should be done directly.



Sen. Bob Dole says the Soviets may need special assistance.

The U.S. carriers typically charge two to four times the amount charged by foreign-flagged vessels carrying the same commodities the same distance.

For example, a recent shipment of grain to Zaire from the Gulf of Mexico cost \$92.40 a ton on U.S.-flagged vessels, said Fred Edlefsen, marketing specialist with U.S. Wheat Associates in Washington, D.C. The shipment was from the U.S. Aid program.

A similar private shipment of grain from the Gulf of Mexico to Morocco — a similar distance — by a foreign-flagged vessel cost \$16.05 a ton.

Dole: Soviets will soon need U.S. food aid

By Ray Hemman
The Hutchinson News

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"We are looking at PL-480 (Food for Peace)," Dole said. "But one of the drawbacks for most of these programs is the cargo preference. We have to pay too much to get our product over there. I think some of the deals we are making now with the Soviet Union, it's not all grain. We have to pay part of the shipping cost."

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indirectly through PL-480. The U.S. carriers typically charge two to four times the amount charged by foreign-flagged vessels carrying the same commodities the same distance.

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A similar private shipment of grain from the Gulf of Mexico to Morocco — a similar distance — by a foreign-flagged vessel cost \$16.05 a ton. The shipment on the U.S.-flagged vessel cost \$75 times as much the foreign-flagged vessel.

Also during the press conference, Dole said the Senate would be taking up a supplemental appropriation bill before Oct. 1. In that bill will be some disaster relief for farmers hurt by bad

weather this year. "It's not going to be as much as we had hoped," he said. "I think it's going to be in the neighborhood of \$1 billion. Since some of it's going to go to non-program crops, those who participate in programs are going to get less."

Philosophically, Dole said, he thinks that program crops should get preferential treatment in disaster aid bills. Farmers who participate in government programs often have to idle land or incur other costs that non-participants do not have.

A program crop would be something like wheat or corn that has a formal government supply management program. A non-program crop would be something such as vegetables.

The bill that contains the farm relief also is expected to have some money for tornado victims and communities damaged by last spring's twisters. Dole also discussed his letter to

President Bush earlier this month that gave the nation's chief executive some guidance on farm issues.

"Sometimes it's hard to get agriculture up very high on the pecking order in the White House," he said. "I don't care if it's a Republican or a Democrat. There are so many many other problems that seem to be so pressing."

In a meeting earlier this week with John Sununu, Bush's chief of staff, Dole told the president's aide, the agriculture secretary must be allowed to make farm policy.

"We need to let Secretary (Ed) Madigan make farm policy, and not the State Department or the U.S. trade representative or not the Commerce Department," he said. "It's not new to this administration, it's just that everyone wants to tell the secretary of agriculture what he can and can't do."