

The Topeka Capital-Journal, Saturday, November 30, 1991

Dole presses Bush on economy

By MERRILL HARTSON
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Senate Republican leader Bob Dole said Friday that President Bush should "start right now" on a plan to resuscitate the economy and questioned Bush's endorsement of a tax cut plan pushed by House GOP Whip Newt Gingrich.

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Just a day after Bush reiterated that strategy, Dole urged the president to call congressional leaders to the White House soon and said he should "seek a consensus" on how to spur business growth and create jobs.

At the same time, Dole said he was puzzled by Bush's belated endorsement of Gingrich's plan, which the Georgia Republican advanced in the waning days of Congress.

Gingrich called for a sharp cut in the capital gains tax rate, to 20 percent from 28 percent, and a tax cut for people who make under \$50,000 a year and earn interest on savings accounts. After he won Bush's endorsement, Gingrich pushed for Congress to return after a Thanksgiving recess and take up the proposals.

House Speaker Thomas S. Foley,

D-Wash., threatened to do just that, and said Democrats would be prepared to offer their own tax plans. But Congress voted to adjourn until Jan. 3, subject to recall, and instead scheduled a series of December hearings on economic policy.

Dole defended Bush against accusations he has flip-flopped on a host of domestic policy issues in recent months, but did question one Bush move.

Conceding that economic hard times have caused ruptures within the Republican Party, Dole said: "I think the president probably went too far in enthusiastically supporting it (the Gingrich plan). I think the president is in rough shape right now."

Dole said he and Bush still had a good relationship and he wasn't considering another run against Bush in the presidential race.

—Staff writer Barbara Joseph contributed to this report.



Dole willing to use his power.

Dole makes sure Kansas gets its share and more

By Angella Herrin
Eagle Washington bureau

WASHINGTON — After weeks of trying to pass an unemployment compensation bill, tempers were short on the floor of the U.S. Senate.

Some senators thought the final compromise was fair, others complained the complicated formula provided fewer weeks of benefits for some states than others.

And more than one senator griped that Kansas, with a relatively low 4.7 percent rate of unemployment, showed up in the bill with a hefty 13 weeks of new payments — more than other states like Louisiana, where unemployment was almost double.

"This formula is a fraud. . . . It seems if your state begins with the letter K and you have the Republican leader from that state, you are in on the deal," fumed Sen. Kent Conrad, D-N.D.

The Senate Republican leader from Kansas, Bob Dole, feigned surprise when told of Conrad's remarks.

"I didn't hear that statement. . . . but I would have complimented him," Dole joked. "We're happy to have 13 more weeks of unemployment in Kansas."

Afterwards, Dole said it was actually House leaders who juggled the formula so that Kansas and four

other states got a better deal in the final bill. But as Conrad, other members of the Senate and constituents back home know, Dole is not shy about exercising his considerable clout when he decides to procure federal dollars for Kansas.

And while some complain that Dole is helping himself to the pork barrel — and the publicity that goes with the grants he inserts in bills — no one denies that the senior senator from Kansas is deft at directing millions back home.

For instance, over the weekend Dole and other senators drew the ire of Sen. Sam Nunn, D-Ga., head of the Senate Appropriations Committee, for special projects that suddenly turned up in the defense appropriations bill. Dole had placed \$7.6 million for Kansas State University into the bill in a House-Senate conference committee.

The \$7.6 million will help finance a new aircraft maintenance and pilot training program on K-State's Salina campus.

Without a hearing or a vote before a committee in either house of Congress, Dole and about a dozen other senators had managed to place the K-State program and other special projects in the massive defense spending bill — and made certain they could not be stripped from it.

"What makes this most objectionable is the explicit direction by the conferees to waive existing federal statutes that require these type of awards to be made on the basis of a fair and open competition," Nunn said on the Senate floor.

"In fact the appropriation conference report specifically prohibits competition for this \$94.6 million in funding that is being directed to 16 colleges and universities in just 12 states."

Dole defends the project as a defense-related training center that will have pay-offs for the state and for aviation. "This outstanding Salina project is a sound investment in the future. It will bring the latest high-tech aviation education to our state, along with the latest technology that students will get the best in training and hands-on learning," Dole said.

Five years ago, Dole and six other senators created a similar uproar with a provision in an emergency spending bill that directed the Pentagon to bypass its usual competitive bid process for research and instead award \$55.6 million directly to 10 colleges and universities — including Wichita State and K-State.

Dole placed several projects in spending bills this year for Kansas, projects that also skipped the committee hearing and review process. In one Interior bill, Dole inserted \$950,000 for improvements at Wilson Lake — the site where he asked the National Park Service to review as a possible National Recreation Area.

Another bill carried \$9.9 million for a major remodeling project at the Federal Courthouse in Wichita. The project had been given no publicity in the city before Dole announced he had procured the funds. Rep. Dan Glickman, D-Wichita, had not been approached about seeking federal funds for the project and was unaware of the plans until Dole's announcement.

Aside from major grants, Dole also plays a role in backing up requests for federal programs that have a major impact in Kansas, such as defense projects built at Boeing, Beech or Cessna.

In the defense bill, for instance, Dole pushed for bigger increases in a number of Pentagon programs such as the retooling of the KC-135 tanker, which is done in Wichita.

A flurry of Dole-backed projects like the K-State grant and the Wichita courthouse money led to speculation this year that Dole was gearing up for his re-election bid in 1992.

Dole, who has campaigned frequently on the need to cut the federal deficit, has not earned a reputation in the Senate as a member who routinely goes after the kind of "pork barrel projects" that are hard to defend outside his home state. In fact, a few years ago, Dole said that a Democrat, Senate Appropriations Committee chairman Robert Byrd, had taken him aside and advised him that he hadn't asked for enough for himself and his home state.

Dole has said repeatedly that he doesn't like pork barrel politics — but he doesn't intend to see Kansas shortchanged.

"I think we have to cut back spending. But as long as they are dividing up federal dollars, I want to see that Kansas gets a fair share of those dollars," Dole said.

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B-2 hopes realistic or ridiculous?

■ Dole says second wing still alive; Slatery calls it close to impossible

By BARBARA JOSEPH
The Capital-Journal

Sen. Bob Dole, R-Kan., said Friday the idea for a second wing of the B-2 stealth bomber was still alive and he remained hopeful a Kansas site would be chosen for it.

But Rep. Jim Slatery, D-Kan., called that statement ridiculous and said any study of the former Forbes Air Force Base as a potential site for a second wing was a waste of taxpayers' money, based on his conversations with the U.S. Air Force.

"A lot of people are crowing inaccurately about having killed the B-2 bomber," Dole said in a telephone conference with reporters from Washington.

Dole said Congress this year agreed to provide more than \$3 billion for the production, research and development, and testing of the B-2.

Dole said there was money in place to produce 21 to 25 B-2s and although House Democrats would

hold that number down to 15, there are still more than 20 B-2s ready to assemble.

"That could put us over the hump for this so-called second wing, a wing I'm hopeful can be placed somewhere in Kansas — at Forbes, McConnell (Air Force Base in Wichita), or somewhere," Dole said.

Slatery, reached in Topeka, said Congress next year could authorize production of up to 20 more B-2s, but that wouldn't be enough for a second wing.

"I think that Bob is being really unrealistic in suggesting there's, one, going to be two wings of the B-2s, and, two, any suggestion Forbes is going to be site of the second wing," Slatery said. "Nothing is impossible in Washington, but that's about as close as you can get."

Slatery said Congress this year authorized the completion of 15 of the bombers. And for the second year in a row, Congress refused to authorize production of any more B-2s, he said. He said the chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, Les Aspin, D-Wis., had called this year's action tantamount to termination of the B-2 program.

But Slatery predicted there will be a very "hot and contentious" vote in the spring on whether to build more B-2s. He predicted President

Bush would propose additional cuts in the Pentagon's budget, which will make it difficult to justify more B-2 production.

Slatery said announcements earlier this year that Forbes was being considered as a second wing site were designed to put pressure on him to back off from his opposition to the bomber. Slatery said the plan was unneeded, too expensive and inadequately tested.

Just a day after Bush reiterated that strategy, Dole urged the president to call congressional leaders to the White House soon and said he should "seek a consensus" on how to spur business growth and create jobs.

At the same time, Dole said he was puzzled by Bush's belated endorsement of Gingrich's plan, which the Georgia Republican advanced in the waning days of Congress.

Gingrich called for a sharp cut in the capital gains tax rate, from 28 percent to 20 percent, and a tax cut for people who make under \$50,000 a year and pay taxes on interest on savings accounts. After he won Bush's endorsement, Gingrich pushed for Congress to return after a Thanksgiving recess and take up the proposals.

House Speaker Thomas Foley, D-Wash., threatened to do just that, and said Democrats would be prepared to offer their own tax plans. But Congress voted to adjourn until Jan. 3, subject to recall if necessary, and instead scheduled a series of December hearings on economic policy.

Dole defended Bush against accusations he has flip-flopped on a host of domestic policy issues in recent months, but did question one Bush move.

Conceding that economic hard times have caused ruptures within the Republican Party, Dole said: "I think the president probably went too far in enthusiastically supporting it (the Gingrich plan). . . . I think the president is in rough shape right now."

The Salina Journal, Saturday, November 30, 1991

Dole urges Bush to act on economy

Move while Congress is gone, Dole says

By The Associated Press
WASHINGTON — Senate Republican leader Bob Dole said Friday that President Bush should "start right now" on a plan to resuscitate the economy and questioned Bush's endorsement of a tax cut plan pushed by House GOP Whip Newt Gingrich.



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Dole challenges Bush to take lead on economy

Associated Press

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But the Senate Republican leader said he wished lawmakers had done more about the ailing economy.

"We didn't deal with one problem — to get the economy moving again," he said in a conference call with Kansas reporters.

Legislation passed that will provide up to 13 weeks of additional unemployment benefits for the long-term jobless will be particularly helpful for Kansans, Dole said.

"And those checks are already in the mail," he said, adding that he thought between 19,000 and 20,000 unemployed Kansans would benefit.

Another measure passed that would accelerate deficiency payments could mean millions of dollars in the pockets of state wheat farmers, Dole said.

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Top GOP senator critiques government

Dole urges Bush to confront economy

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Session helped Kansas, senator says

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the past, he said.

The state already has suffered severe drought losses this year, possibly affecting up to 25 percent of the crop.

Of the newly passed \$151 billion, six-year highway authorization bill, which Bush said he would sign, Dole said that Kansas came off well and that new jobs would be created.

The state will get \$1.03 back for every dollar it pays into the highway trust fund, compared with as low as 86 cents a dollar contributed five years ago, he said.

Road projects in Hutchinson, Leavenworth and Concordia will be helped by the new highway bill, as well, Dole said.

The senator also noted he had inserted language in an appropriations bill to improve prospects that Forbes Air Force base might become a "second wing" for B-2 bombers produced for the Pentagon.

Kansas often is underrated, Dole said. However, up to 60,000 jobs in the state are directly related to the defense industry, he said.