

Sen. Bob Dole listens to the problems expressed by people from flood areas during a meeting Monday night in Minneapolis.

Dole listens to flood victims' plight

By LINDA MOWERY-DENNING
The Salina Journal

MINNEAPOLIS — Sen. Bob Dole, the man who hardly stopped talking in recent weeks as he stomped against a Clinton Administration deficit-reduction plan, had little to say Monday.

Mostly, the Kansas Republican listened as he heard from north-central Kansas residents who suffered flood damage this spring and summer. He offered his sympathy — and support.

"You have to tell us what the problem is before we can change it, and that's why we're here," Dole said. "The buck has to stop somewhere."

Almost 100 people crowded into the basement meeting room in the Ottawa County Courthouse to ask questions and tell the senator from Russell about their flood-related problems. They came from Culver, Tescott and other areas of Ottawa County hard hit by flood damage, and Ellsworth and Lincoln counties.

With Dole were John McKay of the Federal Emergency Management Agency in Washington, D.C., and John Dupre of the Small

Business Administration in Dallas.

"You may not believe it, but we're from the government and we're here to help," McKay said.

In terms of losses, he said Kansas so far ranks fourth among the 10 Midwestern states raked by floodwaters. Dupre said the business administration had received 3,000 applications for economic injury and property damage.

States ahead of Kansas are Iowa, Illinois and Missouri.

Monday's meeting gave Dole and the federal officials a glimpse of the human problems the flood left in its wake.

"We just saw a combine on the way in. Are you still trying to cut wheat?" asked Dole.

Responded Jay Cromwell, director of the Lincoln County Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service: "We're in the middle of harvest."

Wheat harvest normally would be finished by late June or early July, but relentless rains in those months kept many farmers from their

fields until recently.

Bob Crangle, a Lincoln attorney and chairman of the economic development and planning commission, said the flood's effects will be felt for some time — especially by farmers, many of whom also suffered livestock losses this past winter.

Crangle said producers need grant money — they can't borrow their way out of their flood losses.

"We're looking at a liquidity crisis that's going to be chronic," he said. "This is a kind of quiet thing that is going to stretch well into the next two years."

Ottawa County rancher Don Koster said funds also are needed to repair terraces, waterways and county roads badly damaged by the floodwaters.

Dole said help was on the way in the form of \$5.7 billion in federal disaster relief approved

last week by Congress.

He said almost \$1 billion was added to the legislation to provide more generous relief to farmers.

The decision to include the additional money came after the White House agreed to support a Senate plan to use a crop loss formula contained in the 1990 farm bill. The formula computed losses for that year's disaster-related crop losses at a rate amounting to about 42 cents on the dollar.

However, budget concerns caused the Bush Administration to cut the payment rate in half for disasters in 1991 and 1992, thus reducing the average payment to about 21 cents.

The administration proposed to apply that reduced rate to this year's flood victims, but farm state senators argued the action was unfair because no other flood victims were subject to such cuts.

A farmer must have at least 35 percent in crop losses to receive a disaster payment.

The senator is to continue his flood tour this morning with stops at Culver, Ellsworth and other damaged north-central Kansas towns.

Files show how Dole used PAC to launch campaign

Campaign America served as a shadow committee in Iowa.

By ANDREW C. MILLER
Washington Correspondent

WASHINGTON — In October 1986, the corn had been harvested in Iowa, and it's safe to say that the 1988 presidential campaign was far from the thoughts of most people there.

Not so for U.S. Sen. Bob Dole. With an unremitting intensity, the Kansas Republican focused on the Iowa caucuses, then 16 months away.

But Dole launched his Iowa campaign by using Campaign



Dole

America, a political action committee, rather than a presidential campaign committee. It was a decision that Dole officials now concede violated campaign laws.

Federal Election Commission records, including early investigative files obtained by *The Kansas City Star* under a Freedom of Information Act request, provide a glimpse at the early stages of a presidential campaign.

Committees such as Campaign America are limited by law to

helping other candidates — offering direct contributions, say, or helping build up the party. Campaign America had been set up with Dole as its "honorary chairman" years ago and was limited in the amount of money it could contribute to him.

Investigators' files, however, show how Campaign America actually kicked into high gear as a type of shadow presidential campaign committee for Dole in 1986 and 1987.

Dole, in a statement when the FEC announced fines against his campaign Aug. 6, said the campaign committee "strongly disputed many of the FEC's claims"

then," Baran said.

But reform advocates charge that candidates intentionally use leadership PACs as early, auxiliary presidential campaigns, winking all along because they know that small fines will be levied years later.

"These leadership PACs get used and abused," said Elizabeth Hedlund, director of FEC Watch, a project of the Center for Responsive Politics, which has been critical of lax FEC enforcement.

Analyzing such documents as telephone records and mailings, FEC auditors studied Dole's Iowa activities. Iowa, a must-win showdown for Dole, was where he needed to wound then-Vice President George Bush. Months before he formed his exploratory presidential committee in March 1987, Dole hit Iowa early and hard with the help of Campaign America.

Like officials of any leadership PAC, Campaign America officials at the time said their Iowa activities were solely to build support for other Republicans and the party in general. But in the settlement announced this month, organization officials conceded that some activities actually helped Dole's presidential effort.

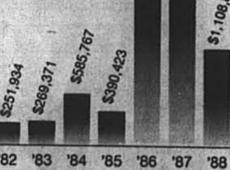
Campaign America sponsored at least four Dole trips into Iowa. FEC auditors initially identified 17 Dole trips but later sim-

ply cited "a series of events" in 1986 and 1987 before Dole's exploratory presidential committee was formed. The four cited in the settlement were Feb. 7, 12, 22 and 23 in 1987, just days before Dole formed his exploratory presidential committee on March 13.

Postcards advertising Dole meetings used the same format and picture of Dole as the post-

COMMITTEE'S EXPENDITURES

Here's how Campaign America spending escalated in the years before Bob Dole ran for president in 1988.



Source: FEC audit The Star

PACs set up by congressional leaders.

Jan Baran, a longtime Republican campaign finance lawyer, said the Dole penalty typified the way the FEC hounds and nipsicks candidates over minor violations.

"People who ultimately run for president generally are associated with large political enterprises be-

but wanted to settle the matter.

In the conciliation agreement, however, Campaign America officials admitted violating campaign law by financing several Iowa appearances by Dole, helping pay for staff members who later became campaign officials and mailing meeting invitations that used the same format Dole's presidential campaign later used.

Campaign America officials also paid for a telephone survey "designed in part to create a list of supporters of Senator Dole," according to the settlement.

Based on those findings, the Federal Election Commission fined Campaign America \$12,000.

In the settlement, the Dole for President Committee was separately fined \$100,000. It acknowledged taking illegal corporate contributions, exceeding spending limits in Iowa and New Hampshire and accepting more than the legal limit from individual contributors.

As Congress debates campaign finance reform, the findings against Dole's 1988 presidential campaign provide fodder for every side of the debate — those who attack the FEC for zealous, lengthy audits and those who want to abolish so-called leadership

Dole knows how to play his politics

By JAKE THOMPSON
Washington Correspondent

WASHINGTON — After touring Kansas last week, fresh from the cliffhanger budget battle in Congress, Senate Minority Leader Bob Dole this week wings off to New Hampshire for a few days of "vacation."

The Kansas Republican says coyly he's going to be "meeting a lot of old friends and trying to make new ones."

For the currently undisputed leader of the Republican Party, there can be only one agenda: keep President Clinton on his toes.

It's great political theater, the battle between the smart Democratic newcomer straining to get his presidency and a new agenda for the nation on track, and the Republican veteran legislator with renowned powers for counting votes, marshaling his troops and playing hardball.

The question is: Is it good for the country?

Dole's trips are indeed politically shrewd moves. Even before Clinton signed the budget bill he barely won over Dole's dark, harsh critique and defections from his own party, Dole was back home, dodging the obstructionist label.

In Kansas, just as he did after defeating Clinton's economic stimulus package earlier this year, Dole promised the GOP will work with Clinton on other issues. There will be more cooperation not detouring on ratifying the North American Free Trade Agreement, crime, welfare reform and health care reform, Dole promised.

He predicted a period of "tranquility" ahead in Washington when Congress re-

See DOLE, K-5, Col. 4



Sen. Bob Dole

Dole didn't hold back in the budget battle

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turns after Labor Day.

Dole, 69, now heads to the home of the first primary for the 1996 presidential race, which he may join. As he tours New Hampshire, his criticisms that Clinton's budget taxes too much and cuts spending too little are likely to be warmly received in the legendarily anti-tax state.

To win the last few votes needed to pass the budget bill, Clinton was forced to promise to seek another measure cutting federal spending this fall.

Dole suggested last week that it's up to Democrats to come up with a proposal first, signaling that Republicans might support across-the-board freezes or caps on entitlement spending, possibly for Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid.

Clinton may have asked for Dole's continued tough line. In crafting his budget bill, Clinton wrote off all 44 Senate Republicans and all 175 House Republicans, focusing his attentions on wayward Democrats. And he hasn't shown any distinct signs he plans to court Republicans soon.

Instead, last week he indirectly chastised them as he signed the budget bill into law. "We cannot succeed in an endless season of partisan bitterness and rancor and bickering," Clinton said.

True, Dole's demeanor throughout the budget battle ranged from stern to angry.

On the Senate floor before the 51-50 passage vote, Dole dismissed the budget plan and attacked Clinton by reprising a line used by former President Bush in the campaign last year:

He warned those watching to put down their television remote controls "and grab your wallet, because your taxes are about to go up."

Dole complained Clinton's budget, with retroactive tax hikes and spending cuts later, means Clinton may go down in history as one who raised taxes before he took office and cut spending after he left.

To Republicans and several other analysts Dole pursued the

right strategy for the moment.

Glen Bolger, who heads the Republican polling firm Public Opinion Strategies, said Dole's critics are mainly Democrats disgruntled he plays the political game so well.

Dole's success has rallied his party, which nine months ago was beleaguered. Now Republicans are increasingly confident about their chances to take back House and Senate seats next year, Bolger said.

"Sen. Dole wasn't elected to be a rubber stamp for the president," Bolger said. "Where we have fundamental differences we're going to offer alternatives."

But in the months ahead he said Republicans must offer positive alternatives and ideas in the debate on health care reform for the good of the nation.

Kevin Phillips, a political analyst who predicted the rise of the Republican Party in the 1980s and has chronicled its decline, also praised Dole's leadership.

"The most effective thing Republicans can do is be a very effective opposition, especially when you're up against a Clinton who

happens to shoot his boot full of holes from time to time," said Phillips.

Clinton's economic program shifted so many times — lemon in March, grape in May and cherry in June was how Phillips characterized it — that Dole was justified in helping to raise doubts about Clinton's ability to lead the nation on a new course.

Particularly because Clinton barely won his budget, Dole is not required to concede territory when the health care debate gets down to the nitty gritty of cutting health care services and raising spending to reform the system, Phillips said.

But if Republicans win some Senate seats next year, Phillips observed, Dole and his party will have to stand for "something more affirmative."

At this point, though, the public is clearly seeing more of the fiery partisan Old Bob Dole of the 1970s, than the softer, conciliatory New Bob Dole he has tried to project in the last dozen years.

It's a good way to win support today, but not how to lead the country tomorrow.