

Pg. 141 - 1994

Dole still hopes to be 'SNL' host

Show appearance may take too much time, senator says

By The Associated Press
TOPEKA — Sen. Bob Dole said Thursday that he's still talking with the people who run the "Saturday Night Live" television comedy on NBC about doing the show.

The time involved in his serving as host for the show, which the producer wants him to do, is the hang-up, Dole said during a news conference as he wound up a two-day visit to his home state.

"I talked to Lorne Michaels, the producer, myself," said Dole, R-Kan.

"The problem is you've got to go up there and spend from Wednesday through Saturday. And you've got to work every day, and rehearse to know what you're doing, which is normally not a requirement in our job."

"And then on Saturday you have to do three programs — one and then you do a dress rehearsal and then you do the real thing."

The Senate minority leader, who



File photo
Sen. Bob Dole says he would like to serve as host for "Saturday Night Live" if it doesn't take too much time.

gram with some off-color ...," he said, trailing off. "So they said I could have control of that."

"We've done Murphy Brown and some MTV stuff and Jay Leno and some of those things."

Asked if he watches "Saturday Night Live," Dole said, "Oh, yes. Not all the time. My wife and I watched it about six weeks ago, just to sort of get a feel of it."

"Generally you watch a little of it and then you go to bed. That's what I do. We watched it all the way through."

The problem with doing the show, Dole said, is, "They want me to be the master of ceremonies, not just have a little skit, but I'm not sure."

"I'd be willing to do a cameo, but they want me to do the whole nine yards."

He said he wants to know in advance, "What kind of skits do they see me in?"

He said he doesn't get upset when TV comedians take shots at him.

"I get whacked by Jay Leno a lot, too," he said.

"But he's got to pick on us. Some people get upset, but I think it's funny. It beats working."



CHARLIE RIEDEL / Hays Daily News

Dr. Babu Prasad jokingly offers to give Sen. Bob Dole an examination during Dole's speech on health-care reform Wednesday at Hays Medical Center.

Dole offers health care questions, not answers

By MARY CLARKIN
Hays Daily News

Veteran Sen. Robert Dole cannot recall any other legislation as all-encompassing as proposed health-care reform.

"We're talking about legislation that affects 250 million people ... so you better insist we get it right," Dole told a Hays audience Wednesday afternoon.

The dual roles Dole fills — senator from Kansas and Senate minority leader/leading spokesman for the Republican opposition — had him juggling time zones and topics Wednesday.

He began the morning in Washington, hitting two television network talk shows to douse Bobby Ray Inman's claim that columnist Bill Safire and Dole had plotted against Inman's pending nomination for secretary of defense.

Dole flew to Kansas, visiting the Rotary Club in Wichita before arriving in Hays at mid-afternoon — about 50 minutes behind schedule.

A standing ovation greeted Dole as he walked into the packed conference center room at Hays Medical Center's St. Anthony Campus. Numerous invitations had gone out

to a ceremony recognizing area involvement in a new buddy program for hospitals.

Dole had backed the federal funding, and Ransom's Grisell Memorial Hospital, working with Hays Medical Center, had become the first rural hospital in the U.S. certified under the program.

Arriving at the podium without his health care speech, Dole asked an aide to bring it up — and not the Boy Scout speech, he quipped.

Even with the speech before him, Dole admitted he did not have the answers.

Senate committee hearings on health care

proposals will start in February. A Boston Globe reporter was traveling with Dole on the Kansas swing, trying to gauge the degree of Dole's wariness toward the Clinton health plan.

"There'll be something passed probably in 1994," Dole said, but currently neither Republicans nor Democrats have the votes to pass a partisan health care plan, he said.

Affordability and accessibility must be the benchmarks for any national health care system adopted, he believes.

"I don't think we can go all the way," he said, saying that "there's been a lot of reality set in" since the Clinton plan was announced in 1993.

The popularity of that plan probably peaked with the first announcement, he said.

"Maybe we have to use the incremental approach," said Dole, favoring caution.

When mistakes occur in major legislation, "it takes forever sometimes to correct it," he said.

Dole cited the projected health care cost for Pizza Hut — \$100 million to \$150 million annually — and mentioned the many small employers in Kansas who would be affected.

Dole is uncertain how proposed reforms would affect him personally. "If I live in Russell ... can I go to Mayo Clinic?" is a question that arose during a recent checkup at the Minnesota clinic, and Dole said he does not know the answer.

Dole said he and Sen. Nancy Kassebaum, R-Kan., want testimony from "real people" when committee hearings get under way. Physicians, nurses and consumers interested in testifying should "let (Hays Medical Center executive) Steve (Ronstrom) know," said Dole.

During a brief question-answer session, a Fort Hays State University student interested in entering medical school asked about student aid.

When Dole inquired if he was interested in primary care training, the student said he didn't know yet — he might find he can't stand the sight of blood.

"Can't stand the sight of blood? Maybe you ought to get into politics," said Dole.

Local radiation oncologist Dr. Babu Prasad was a friendly picketer, holding up one sign urging Dole for president in 1996 and another asking "Need a prostate check — Bend over" — a humorous reference to Dole's well-publicized bout with prostate cancer.

Questions about the Bobby Ray Inman nomination did not come up during the session, although Dole later said he would be writing a letter to Inman.

Dole considered it "a big break for Clinton that he (Inman) didn't get confirmed."



Dan Robison, Wichita, discusses issues with Dole after the speech.

Dole: Congressional panel should probe Whitewater

In addition to special prosecutor's inquiry

By LEW FERGUSON
The Associated Press

Sen. Bob Dole said Thursday he's willing to abandon his quest for a select committee to investigate President Clinton's investment in a real estate venture and ties to a failed Arkansas savings and loan if an existing congressional committee will do it.

Dole also said during a news conference as he concluded a two-day trip to his home state that he is ready to give newly appointed Whitewater investigator Robert Fiske the benefit of the doubt and "see what he can do."



Sen. Bob Dole

"What I'm hoping is that, rather than pursuing a select committee, that one of the committees will do it on their own — the banking committee on the House side or the banking committee on the Senate side," the Senate minority leader told reporters at the Carlson Federal Building in downtown Topeka.

"If we have an objective hearing, there is no reason to have another hearing. We don't need two hearings," he said.

However, he said, there needs to be a congressional inquiry in addition to Fiske's investigation of the president's dealings in regard to the Whitewater Development Corp. and the failed Madison Guaranty Savings & Loan.

"Let's face it," he said. "Taxpayers lost \$60 million — 47 to 60 — and it seems to me Congress should have some interest because it was taxpayers' money because of a failed S&L."

Dole continues push for hearings on Clinton involvement

By LEW FERGUSON
Associated Press

TOPEKA — Sen. Bob Dole still wants a congressional committee to hold hearings on President Clinton's involvement in an Arkansas land deal and circumstances of failure of a savings and loan, but it doesn't have to be a select committee like the one for Watergate.

Dole said at a news conference here Thursday, as he finished a two-day trip to the state, that he's willing to abandon his quest for the select committee if the Senate or House banking committee will do it.

Dole also said he's willing to give newly-appointed Whitewater investigator Robert Fiske the benefit

of the doubt and "see what he can do."

"What I'm hoping is that, rather than pursuing a select committee, that one of the committees will do it on their own — the banking committee on the House side or the banking committee on the Senate side," the Senate minority leader told reporters at the Carlson Federal Building in downtown Topeka.

"If we have an objective hearing, there is no reason to have another hearing. We don't need two hearings. If we can get the committees to do what they ought to do, then there wouldn't be any reason for me to proceed with my select committee."

However, Dole added, there needs to be a congressional inquiry in addition to Fiske's investigation of the president's dealings in regard to the Whitewater Development Corp. and the failed Madison Guaranty Savings & Loan.

"Let's face it," he said. "Taxpayers lost \$60 million — 47 to 60 — and it seems to me Congress should have some interest because it was taxpayers' money because of a failed S&L."

"It doesn't necessarily have to parallel (Fiske's) probe. It could be more limited from the standpoint of Congress, looking into the S&L part."

Asked how he plans to proceed,

Dole said, "Let the independent counsel get under way, just keep our powder dry for a while and hope that he does a good job and that one of the committee's will fulfill its responsibility."

Dole said he doesn't personally know Fiske, a 63-year-old Wall Street attorney, but others who know Fiske rate him highly and he is willing to see what he does.

"They've chosen someone. That's what we asked them to do," Dole said. "I submitted some names, but there are other good people. Robert Fiske may be one of them."

"He's been selected by Janet Reno. She said she would find a good, independent person. As far as

I know, he fits that category. As far as I know he's a credible, outstanding attorney. It's not going to be limited. It's going to be a broad investigation."

Dole also said the "last thing we need is anybody saying, well this is a bad choice, not a good choice."

"If there's any effort to limit it," Dole continued, "I might have some objection. But from what I know, what I've read, he's going to have complete jurisdiction. If something develops in the next few days, obviously we might have a different view. But my view is, he's been chosen, let's see what he can do."

Dole also said he has no firm plans for seeking the presidency.