

The Kansas City Star Sunday, March 13, 1994

Dole's PAC feeds his political base

It's paving the road for a possible campaign in '96 for White House.

By JAKE THOMPSON
Washington Correspondent



chines was running smoothly. So smoothly that a cool half-million dollars would be pumped that February evening into Campaign America, Sen. Bob Dole's political action committee.

Campaign America, which helped Dole launch his 1988 presidential bid, charges ahead these days, flying its honorary chairman across the nation, financing a large direct-mail operation and generously donating to other Re-

WASHINGTON — Plain white meant \$1,000. Green trimming meant \$5,000. At the Willard Hotel, just around the corner from the White House, ranks of color-denominated name tags waited for the private fund-raising reception and dinner. The tags, soon to be affixed to lobbyists and business executives, signaled that in a town that thinks big in money and power, one of the most powerful money ma-

publican candidates.

And very subtly it is pouring the foundation for a 1996 presidential bid by Dole, should ambition and political conditions intersect for the 70-year-old Kansan.

"Committees like Campaign America are enormously helpful to a potential presidential candidate like Dole," said Larry Sabato, a campaign-finance expert at the University of Virginia. "They can pay expenses for campaign jaunts, give contributions to party candidates all over the country and sponsor conferences."

"That enables people like Dole to build up a lot of chits."

Republican Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison is one who appreciates Campaign America. Last year it donated \$8,000 to the Texan's successful campaign for the seat vacated by Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen with two years of his term remaining.

Dole's organization also brought in an additional \$135,000 in pass-through contributions earmarked to Hutchison's campaign, according to Federal Election Commission reports.

More recently, Campaign America gave \$5,000 to Hutchison's legal defense fund. It had been set up to fight an indictment, later dismissed, that she illegally made her state Treasury employees work on her Senate campaign.

And there's more where that came from when Hutchison runs again this fall.

"She's one of our stars," said Jo-Anne Coe, Campaign America's executive director.

As a result of Dole's help, Hutchison is very loyal to him, said Dave Beckwith, her press secretary. "I think she would be, anyway," he added.

Besides Hutchison, Campaign America helped two successful GOP candidates for governor, Christine Todd Whitman of New Jersey and George Allen of Virginia.

Among the biggest PACs

Even before the recent fund-raising infusion, Campaign America was among the 50 largest political action committees in the nation with \$1.9 million in the bank.

It ranks first among "leadership PACs," which are committees led by prominent members of Congress, in donations to candidates.

Since 1991, Campaign America has given \$428,000 to more than 100 Republican candidates for the House and Senate, according to a study by the Center for Responsive Politics, a watchdog group in Washington.

In contrast, House Speaker Tom Foley's leadership committee donated \$266,500 to House and Senate candidates, House Majority Leader Richard Gephardt's committee gave \$217,000, and Sen. Edward M. Kennedy's committee gave \$196,000.

Dole's committee, Coe said, is avoiding the kinds of "pre-presidential activities" it planned in 1986 and 1987 that led to a \$12,000 fine last summer from the Federal Election Commission.

Dole, who is Campaign America's honorary chairman, disputed the findings. But his presidential committee reached a conciliation agreement that said Campaign America improperly conducted a telephone survey and sponsored several events in Iowa for Dole, serving as a shadow presidential committee.

In the settlement, the Dole for President Committee separately was 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.

Audits of several other presidential campaign committees still had not been completed and could result in similar fines.

Of the \$1.7 million Campaign America spent last year for travel, donations and other expenses, about \$500,000 went to two

direct-mail firms in Virginia. Campaign America uses direct mail to send out fund-raising solicitations and informational letters.

Hillard Selck, a Republican national committeeman from Boonville, Mo., has received, and tossed, direct mail from Campaign America and from others.

"Everybody's got a gimmick," Selck said. "Lamar Alexander's got one; Jack Kemp's got one; Bob Dole's got one. And they're going to be more of them soon."

Alexander and Kemp served in President Bush's Cabinet.

Aid for presidential hopes

Viewing such activities critically is Josh Goldstein, a project director at the Center for Responsive Politics. He sees three intriguing elements coming into play:

■ "What it shows is that they (leading lawmakers) recognize the power of the contributions, which says something about other PAC contributions, whether it's an environmental group or defense industry group.

■ "Leadership committees are a way for big political donors who may have already given to Dole's Senate committee to give even more money and in effect give it to Bob Dole.

■ "It can also be used possibly to indirectly help pay for his aspirations for higher office, the presidency."

Dole hasn't said whether he'll run a third time in 1996. He's busy as the de facto leader of his party and campaigning for a Republican majority in the Senate. The theme of the fund raiser at the Willard Hotel in Washington was "Seven More in '94." Republicans will gain a Senate majority this year if they take away seven seats from Democrats.

This weekend, Campaign America is helping Dole head for Ohio and Florida, and later this month for New Jersey, Washington state and Nevada, to bolster candidates.

To keep Dole "even more informed," Coe is considering hiring people in different regions of the country, essentially a field staff, to keep close tabs on dozens of races.

In recent months, pleas for visits by Dole have soared. Coe has just hired a full-time scheduler — a first for the committee.

"You ought to see the requests that just come pouring in here," Coe said. "It's like the floodgates have opened."

Dole ready to start Whitewater hearings

WASHINGTON — Sen. Bob Dole said Sunday he will meet with Senate Democratic leaders this week to begin planning hearings on the Whitewater affair.

"Let's do it. Let's get the facts out," Dole said on NBC's "Meet the Press."

But House Majority Leader Dick Gephardt, appearing on the same program, warned against doing anything that might damage the investigation being conducted by special counsel Robert Fiske.

Fiske is looking into President and Mrs. Clinton's involvement in an Arkansas land development corporation linked to a failed savings and loan. The special counsel also is probing White House contacts with Treasury officials regarding a federal investigation of the deal.

"He says he's going to get the Washington part of it done in three or four weeks. We can have hearings after that, if it's appropriate to do that," said Gephardt, D-Mo.

The Senate voted last Thursday to hold hearings on Whitewater, but it set no timetable. Dole said he plans to meet Tuesday with Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell, D-Maine, to begin working out a format and schedule.

"We don't want to interfere with

(Fiske's) investigation, but we don't believe we have to wait till he shoots the firing pistol and says, 'OK, you can start now,'" Dole said.

"You can't hide behind the special counsel," he added.

Asked if he knew of any wrongdoing that might have occurred in briefings that Treasury officials gave White House officials on an investigation of Whitewater, Dole said, "I'm not alleging anything. I'm alleging we have a responsibility to investigate the matter."

Sen. Alfonse D'Amato, R-N.Y., who has been leading the charge for a Senate investigation of Whitewater, said in a separate interview Sunday that there may be "little if anything" at its core.

"I never said I expected any substantial wrongdoing or any at all," D'Amato said on WNBC-TV in New York. He predicted that hearings would start in late April or early May, adding that the Clintons probably would be asked to give sworn statements, but not testify in person.

Gephardt said Republicans "want the Congress to do what Mr. Fiske can do, and that's investigate the facts. Democrats want Congress to do what Mr. Fiske can't do, and that's do health care."



U.S. Sen. Bob Dole pauses while touring facilities at KSU-Salina Thursday morning during a brief stop at the airport.

Dole eyes more aid for KSU-Salina

City is home to a 'world-class' facility

By LILLIAN ZIER
The Salina Journal

The \$7.7 million grant Sen. Bob Dole secured for Kansas State University-Salina's aeronautics department could be the start of much more, Dole said Thursday during a visit to the campus.

"In my view, we've only just begun," the Republican senator from Russell said Thursday during a speech to about 150 people in the new hangar at the aeronautics center. "This has great potential. The Department of Defense thinks it has great potential."

The grant was part of a \$270 million defense bill. The college received the money last fall after a lengthy battle to keep the funds from being cut from the legislation.

Dole stopped in Salina Thursday morning after a visit Wednesday to Fort Riley, where he discussed the risk of the fort being closed because of defense cuts. He told the audience Thursday at KSU-Salina that



Dole recalled the trauma when Schilling Air Force Base closed.

the college provides opportunities for retraining of soldiers from Fort Riley, whether or not the fort closes.

He recalled that he was a freshman senator when Schilling Air Force Base — in the area where KSU-Salina now is located — was

closed in 1965. It fell to him to announce the closure.

The news was traumatic for the community, but the industrial growth in the area since then shows what can happen when the government and private sector work to rebuild, he said.

"That was 30 years ago, and we're still building at Schilling," Dole said.

Grant brings jobs

He said the economic effect of the grant has been the addition of 140 full-time and about 50 part-time jobs.

"That's what this is all about. It's not pork. This is a world-class place we have right here in Salina, Kansas."

He also commented on the joint effort between the KSU-Salina and British Aerospace Flying College of Perth, Scotland. The colleges have teamed to provide pilot training to international students; the first class of six students recently finished coursework here and returned for final training at Perth.

The program is the only one in the world to be certified by the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration and the Civil Aviation Authority, which is the European version of the FAA.

"There's no reason we can't make everybody proud of us, even the editor of the Salina Journal," Dole said in closing, drawing applause and a few laughs from the crowd.

Dole visited the campus Thursday to see equipment and planes purchased with the \$7.7 million grant, said Jack Henry, dean of the college. The purchases include 22 Beech aircraft, half used and half new. The funds also bought flight simulators, set up a computer flight lab, established a non-destructive composite materials lab and bought other equipment.

Other issues

Dole had hinted during a visit to the campus last fall that more aid might be coming to the college. He said Thursday in an interview that he hadn't yet heard specifics.

"We're spending millions on defense conversion, so our young people (leaving the military) don't end up back on the streets," he said.

Regarding the possible closure of Fort Riley, Dole said, "We haven't saved \$1 yet on base closings. ... It takes awhile to get the savings."

He said there likely will be a two-year delay to see if there is money available from base closings.

"I don't disagree with the fact some should be closed," he said. "The bigger picture is national security."

Dole defended the Republican Party's role in pressing the Whitewater issue, in which President Clinton and the first lady are facing questions about their dealings in the failed Whitewater real estate deal.

The pressure is coming from the New York Times, Washington Post and other news organizations that Dole said are not on the GOP side. The scandal is not delaying action on health care, he said.

"The president has made some indirect reference that people who opposed health care reform were stirring up Whitewater," he said. "The fact is, we're not going to buy his health care plan. It's too far reaching — too much government."

He said the system should take care of people with pre-existing conditions; provide tax savings vouchers for low-income people and establish medical savings accounts in which people can invest their money. He also said he favors small-business reforms and malpractice reform, and he pitched the idea of requiring individuals to buy health insurance.

"But that's about as unpopular as employer mandates" that would force employers to provide insurance, he said.

Hutchinson News Friday, April 1, 1994

Dole gives \$10,000 to Packwood defense fund

PARSONS — Senate Republican Leader Bob Dole has donated \$10,000 to the legal defense fund of Sen. Bob Packwood, saying Packwood deserves a fair hearing on charges of sexual misconduct.

"I think Sen. Packwood, like everyone else in America, is entitled to a fair hearing," Dole said Thursday. "He hasn't had it yet. ... Lawyers are very costly. We made a contribution so he could have a fair hearing. (There's) nothing wrong with it, and it's perfectly proper."

The contribution, among the largest the Oregon Republican's defense fund has received, was made Feb. 22 by Dole's political action committee, Campaign America, according to Federal Election Commission records



Dole Packwood

made public Wednesday.

Packwood has been accused of sexual misconduct by female employees, lobbyists and campaign workers. Dole has urged fellow senators to keep an open mind about accusations against Packwood since the Senate may have to decide his fate.