

Dole courts Florida

Front-runner moves quickly to duplicate success in New York

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

With two of the nation's big four states likely to have their own GOP candidates for president, Sen. Bob Dole locked up support of key New York Republicans early and has moved quickly to do the same in vote-rich Florida.

The Senate majority leader, who says he wants official U.S. policy aimed at running Fidel Castro out of Cuba, has gotten a promise of endorsements from a group of top Republicans, including four South Florida congressmen.

The 71-year-old senator from Kansas attended a fund-raiser Wednesday in Fort Lauderdale that raised \$500,000 after raising a similar amount in Texas in what campaign press aide Nelson Warfield called a "million dollar day."

More significantly, all four South Florida members of the U.S. House agreed to back Dole. And two key statewide Republicans — former state Senate President Ander Crenshaw and former Secretary of State Jim Smith — will head his state campaign.

Meanwhile, Bob Dornan, the fiery congressman from California, joined the GOP presidential field today, urging other candidates to focus on social issues because "moral decay is rotting the heart and soul of our country."

Dornan is known for his venomous denunciations of President Clinton's character and draft record.

And Colin Powell, who has tantalized both Democrats and Republicans as a potential 1996 presidential candidate, remains undecided about his future. Spokesman Bill Smullen denied a report today that Powell had agreed to advise Dole in his presidential bid.

At the same time he declined to say, as has Powell, whether the former Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman is even considering a presidential bid.



CHARLIE RIEDEL / Hays Daily News

After unfurling banners in a downtown building Wednesday afternoon, Russell residents Barney Roberts, left, and Dean Banker discuss plans to hang the signs for Sen. Bob Dole's presidential announcement Friday. The banners are left over from Dole's 1988 presidential bid.

Dole's schedule

Sen. Bob Dole, R-Kan., will arrive at Hays Municipal Airport shortly after 5 p.m. today and drive to Russell. He will attend a private dinner with his family.

A pancake breakfast will be held from 8 to 11 a.m. Friday at Memorial Park next to the Russell VFW, located about a half-mile east of U.S. 281 and Old U.S. 40. Dole will address the crowd sometime during the morning after a dedication of a monument in his honor.

After the pancake breakfast, he will attend a community Good Friday service at the Otterbein United Methodist Church, at Sixth and Maple streets.

No public events are planned for Friday afternoon and evening.

On Saturday, Dole will appear on NBC's "Meet the Press," which will be taped in Ruppenthal Middle School.

Admission is by ticket only, and all tickets have been distributed.

After the taping, Dole will return to Washington.

Russell abuzz with Dole preparations

Hometown spruces up for influx of visitors, press

By KEVIN ANDERSON

Hays Daily News

RUSSELL — Like a big family preparing for a reunion, Russell has busied itself this week getting ready for the homecoming of its favorite son, Senate majority leader and presidential candidate Bob Dole.

Crews with the city public works department constructed a stage behind a limestone monument honoring Dole in front of the VFW building in Russell Thursday.

The monument, a piece of limestone more than 6 feet tall, bears a plaque with Dole's name and recognition of his position as charter member of the post and as Senate majority leader.

The plaque also marks the passing of 50 years since Dole received near-fatal wounds in the mountains of Italy on April 14, 1945, during World War II.

Dole announced his third bid for the Republican presidential nomination Monday in Topeka. He will wind up his week-long announcement tour here in Russell.

According to Susan NeuPoth Cadoret, director of the Russell Chamber of Commerce, Dole will address his hometown from the stage sometime during the community pancake breakfast Friday.

Public works crews were also moving portable platforms into place to accommodate cameras from local, state and national television crews.

The public works department has been preparing for Dole's visit for two weeks.

Apart from construction of the stages, the public works department is also responsible for blocking off streets during both the pancake breakfast and the taping of NBC's "Meet the Press," which will take place in Ruppenthal Middle School at 11 a.m. Saturday, said Frank Peirano, public works director.

During the pancake breakfast, West Second Street from Copeland Street to the recently dedicated Dole Drive will be blocked off. West

Fourth from Kansas to Elm streets will be blocked off during the taping of the television show.

Crews from NBC will be constructing camera platforms and setting up electronic equipment in Ruppenthal auditorium beginning this afternoon, said Russell USD 407 Superintendent Don Degenhardt.

The district will also provide shuttle bus service from the high school parking lot to the VFW building Friday.

Street-sweepers cleaned streets Thursday, businesses posted "Dole for President" signs in their windows and painters touched up window sashes and store signs.

Mayor Neal Farmer, owner of Russell Flower and Gift, said that he would not be surprised to see several thousand people in attendance at the pancake breakfast Friday.

"We're probably witnessing history," he said. He remembers when then-President Gerald Ford came to Russell to announce his candidacy with his running mate, Dole, in 1976. Farmer was a high school student.

DOLE / See page 6

DOLE: KBI, police forces pool to provide security

Continued from page 1

In addition to the "Dole for President" signs already there, he planned to put up red, white and blue streamers and balloons in the windows of his Main Street business.

Two doors down from Farmer's flower shop is the Russell Republican Committee's headquarters, abuzz with last-minute preparations Wednesday afternoon.

Barney Roberts, who has worked on every Dole campaign announcement since his bid for the U.S. House of Representatives in 1960, was decorating the windows with campaign signs and red, white and blue crepe paper.

Roberts has passed the tradition onto her daughter, Lynn Holly, who

was gluing small crystals to spell "Dole '96" on American flag neckties, which she hoped to sell in the coming days to raise money for the Republican committee.

Roberts, Holly and fellow Republican Dean Banker then moved across the street to an empty storefront where huge 60-foot banners from Dole's past announcements were stored.

The banners, which were printed with slogans such as "Welcome Home Bob!" and "Russell's Gift to America, Bob Dole for President," will be hung over Main Street and at the VFW post.

Planning began a month ago for the Russell Police and Sheriff's Departments, according to Russell County Sheriff Tim Holmes.

The biggest challenge for the four-

man sheriff's department and the seven-man police department was manpower, Holmes and Police Chief Leo Thomas agreed.

To provide adequate levels of security, the two departments have had to work closely together, as well as coordinate activities with the Ellis County Sheriff's Department, the Kansas Bureau of Investigation and the Kansas Highway Patrol, Thomas said.

They also have worked with other law enforcement agencies to gather intelligence on possible security problems such as militant protest groups during Dole's visit.

Now the month of preparation will culminate in 16-hour days.

"After this is all over, I've promised to take the chief fishing," Holmes joked.

Were employees on the Dole?

By Ray Hemman
The Hutchinson News

State Democrats are asking how much Kansans paid for state and Topeka employees to attend Monday's presidential campaign announcement by Sen. Bob Dole.

State and Topeka officials say no Kansas or municipal money was spent. Employees who took off had to use break, compensation or vacation time.

Dole, R-Kan., kicked off his bid on Monday for the Republican nomination for president. Lyn Shaw, executive director of the Kansas Democratic Party, said on Wednesday employees of both Topeka and the state were given

State workers were encouraged to attend, some say

the impression they could attend Dole's gala without having to make up the time in some fashion.

Shaw pointed to a letter from Topeka Mayor Harry "Butch" Felker.

"I am encouraging all departments and divisions to invite their employees to attend this historic event," Felker wrote to city employees on April 6.

Felker said Wednesday the Democrats were not correct in their assessment of the letter.

"The Democrats are wrong," said Felker, a registered Repub-

lican who was elected mayor in a nonpartisan election. "No one has the authority to go without that person taking personal leave, vacation or comp time. We had the same thing in effect when President Clinton came a year ago."

Clinton visited the Kansas capital in April 1994 to push for his health reform package. While the same personnel policy was in effect at the time, no memo went out to employees, Felker said.

Shaw disagrees with Felker's characterization.

"The letter does not say that,"

Shaw said, referring to Felker's contention employees knew they would have to make up the time in some fashion. "Clearly, city employees were not under that impression."

If a major Democratic candidate were to come to Topeka, state Democratic officials wonder if state or Topeka employees would be given the option to attend the event.

State Democratic Chairman Dennis Langley of Hutchinson called on Gov. Bill Graves and Felker to "report to the citizens

the cost of their taxpayer-financed employee break Monday to allow state and city employees to attend Bob Dole's campaign rally."

Mike Matson, spokesman for Graves, said he labeled the press release from the state Democratic Party accusing his boss and Felker of preferential treatment for Dole as simply "politics." The event cost the state no money, the press secretary maintained.

"We are not concerned about Langley's comment," Matson said. "He has an ax to grind. We are not surprised. We're not worried."