

## **Interview: Del Stromer**

**Unknown Date**

**Interviewer:** Lahoma Dennis Yates, longtime Dole staff member

**Transcribed By:** Sarah Stacy, January 13, 2007

Interviewer: Dale Stromer is a former legislator in the state of Iowa and speaker of the House of Representatives, and a real well known (inaudible). Dale, we are ready to hear from you now.

Dale Stromer: Okay. Well, I met Senator Dole the first time at a fundraiser in Clearlake, Iowa, and he was there for an icon H.R. Gross, who had been in Congress since 1948, and had always prided himself with never missing a vote. So, it was kind of unique to see ... (tape scratch). You would kind of read about him once in a while in the paper, but we went to the Republican Convention in Kansas City in 1976, and we had planned on going, but while the Convention was going on, a lot of people started talking about Bob Ray running for Vice President. So we put on Bob Ray for VP signs and went down to the Kemper Arena where the convention was being held (tape scratch). Actually, we were pretty strong for Regan at the time (tape scratch) as opposed (tape scratch). When we got there, we set up in boon docks, and I had to go to the restroom. While I was going to the restroom, I ran into Bob Dole again, started visiting with him and mentioned that I met him the first time up in Clearlake, Iowa, having no idea that the next day he would be selected for Vice President, because he was kind of a surprise factor in that whole thing.

Next time I had touched based with him was in 1979, he hadn't really announced that he was going to run for President (tape scratch).

Interviewer: ... (tape scratch) FullPAC, that stood for what Dale?

Dale Stromer: That stood for the (tape scratch) GOP.

Interviewer: Okay.

Dale Stromer: But anyway, he was up in Iowa, Clay and I were at a fundraiser, and a guy by the name of David Yepsen, who is now considered one of the better columnists was covering the story. That week we went into Washington D.C. stayed with the Grassley's, and Chad Grassley went home on Sunday, brought the Sunday paper back, and in the

Sunday paper was coverage of his visit to Clarion, Iowa. So the next day, Harriet and I were working the Hill, and among things we (tape scratch) went to see Senator Dole. Well we got in, and we asked, "Is Senator Dole here?" "No, he's in a conference." "Well, we are from Iowa, and we had a story about a fundraiser he attended in Clarion and we thought he might like to see the story." And she said, "Just one moment. Oh, well the conference just ended, you can go in and see Senator Dole." (laughing) So Harriet and I went in and we visited with Senator Dole.

Then later on we got involved with a rally that he had, and at that rally, we could go to about anybody, but you had to go to somebody's rally because you had to pay \$10 to get in, and of course all of the presidential candidates had tickets. So we went over to the Dole rally, and I can't remember it was even a voting process, but did a real good job, but we didn't stay around for the vote. If you remember, the vote that time ... Because Dole wasn't really a hard contender in 1979, because Regan was pretty popular, Bush was pretty popular, and a guy named Pat Robertson actually came in second in Iowa at that time.

Interviewer: And Regan came in first?

Dale Stromer: No, Bush came in first. Regan came in third.

Interviewer: That's right. I had forgotten.

Dale Stromer: After that, people didn't take Iowa quite as much for granted, because Regan thought he would automatically win, because he didn't have a lot of strong grass roots support, but it didn't reflect in any organization.

He (tape scratch) watched his career, and we would invite Senator Dole to Iowa anytime we needed someone to give us a Stem Winder speech. (tape scratch} Later on, got a real nice handwritten note from him.

We continued to be really involved in politics, and watched what everyone was doing. (tape scratch) In the 1988 (tape scratch) caucuses were really getting some notoriety, but a lot of people thought that the Iowa caucus was the right thing to do, and everybody was fighting to get ahead of Iowa. Who did well in Iowa, would probably reflect who had a good chance of become the next President of the United States. Bob Dole (tape scratch) got the support of (tape scratch), and our Governor Terry Brandstand at that time, and our former Governor Bob Ray. So he had some real heavy hitters working for him, and he even had, at a rally he spoke up one time... He brought up a couple of busloads of people who really believed in him, and one of them was a woman by the name of Lahoma Yates, and she happened to sit at the same table as we were {laughing}, and that's how we met her first. But he always did a good job of making sure that it was a pro-Dole that was attending those events. He ended doing extremely well in the 1988 January caucuses in fact, in fact he won the Iowa caucuses and he was President of Iowa there for a couple of weeks until the New Hampshire primary came along. And the New Hampshire primary came along.

[End of interview]