

DOLE SAYS NETWORKS 'PLAYING FAST AND LOOSE' WITH INTERVIEW SHOWS

DES MOINES, IOWA-- Charging that the three major networks are "playing fast and loose with their Sunday interview programs," Senator Bob Dole (R.-Kansas) today asked the Presidents of ABC, NBC and CBS to review their guest selection process.

Dole, a candidate for the Republican presidential nomination, called Sunday's announced guest list for the three interview shows "the end result of the worst kind of media jockeying and cajoling. NBC found that President Carter could finally find the time to do 'Meet the Press' just before the Iowa caucuses. ABC found it convenient to dump the GOP candidates for Ted Kennedy. And CBS has apparently already selected their choice for the Republican nomination-- George Bush."

Dole noted that CBS has already featured Bush on its interview program, 'Face the Nation', and that the Texan was also featured in a segment of '60 Minutes' last Sunday.

"Apparently CBS has already picked the winner in Iowa. My only complaint is that it could become a self-fulfilling prophecy. I don't mind if Bill Paley has a favorite candidate-- but I do mind when Mr. Bush becomes the annointed leader and is projected repeatedly into millions of homes around America. CBS released a poll today which showed Bush and I roughly tied for Republican support, with Baker, Reagan and Connally ahead. Yet CBS has decided Mr. Bush is more 'newsworthy,'" said Dole.

"After each election the press bemoans the fact that its influence on people may skew the process. Articles appear in the Columbia Journalism Review and (MORE). But then all is forgotten as the next election year rolls around. I have asked the Presidents of the three networks to at least stop for a moment to contemplate the process by which selections are made for these programs," said Dole.