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THE ELLSWORTH REPORTER • THURSDAY, AUGUST 8, 1991

Dole in Ellsworth on whirlwind tour

ELLSWORTH — Sen. Bob Dole addressed a variety of public issues facing United States citizens and specifically citizens of Ellsworth County, at a question and answer session Monday at the Ellsworth County Courthouse.

Dole was in Ellsworth on the first of a six-day whirlwind tour that will encompass visits to 33 Kansas communities.

With such a large number of constituents to represent, the duties of congressmen like Senator Dole are many and diverse in nature. Even so, the economic stability and development of his hometown area is still high on his political agenda.

"I'm trying to do a little something to help out some of the folks around my hometown area. For example, just recently, about one million dollars was appropriated to improve Lake Wilson," Dole said. "That money will go toward building a new amphitheater and making a variety of other structural improvements. I assume these improvements will go into effect within the next 12 months."

"Some people have asked me, why are you spending so much money on Lake Wilson? My answer is that I want more people to visit and to live in our part of the state. A lot of people will move into an area if good recreational facilities are available," he said. "This could also create some good jobs for people. You have some pretty good job opportunities here in Ellsworth, compared to many of the communities I will visit this week. To many towns the jobs provided by something like the lake could make a big difference."

Just last year a concerted effort



ANSWERS — Sen. Bob Dole from Russell answers questions from the audience during a stop in Ellsworth Monday on a tour of the state. The large turnout moved the meeting from the

meeting room to the courtroom, where Dole addressed several issues affecting Ellsworth County residents.

Photo by Joel K. Smith

was made to improve the quality of drinkable water through organization of the Post Rock Rural Water District. But, unless changes are made, district members will soon be paying higher service rates for their higher quality water.

"An interest rate reduction is needed on the loan that was issued to build the Post Rock District. Right now we're paying around 6-8 percent interest, but would like a rate around 4 percent," said Post Rock Board Member, Adolf Vopat.

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B-2 The Kansas City Star Sunday, August 11, 1991

Dole's whirlwind felt like a campaign

ST. FRANCIS, Kan. — Bob Dole doesn't tolerate fools or foes gladly.

But the senior senator from Kansas found few in either category last week during a marathon trek through most of the 26 counties that made up his original congressional district.

In fact, a special chemistry was on display as the 68-year-old Republican lawmaker revisited the wind-swept prairie towns he first stumped 40 years ago.

"A lot of you helped me get started," Dole said repeatedly. "I want to thank you. You drank a lot of pineapple juice."

That was a reference to the Dole pineapple juice he gave away as a gimmick during his early campaigning.

At the Senior Center in St. Francis, 10 miles east of the Colorado border, Dole praised Bonnie Cram, the first county campaign coordinator when he decided to run for state representative in 1951.

Cram, who organized the town-hall meeting for Dole that drew 74 people, beamed at Dole's recognition, especially when the senator noted that both the candidate and the coordinator "were babies at the time."

Cram said she remembers typing 800 letters for that first Dole campaign. "I consider that and every other campaign that we've worked for Dole time well spent," she said in an interview.

In Oakley, Dole took note of Barbara Bishop, one of the first staff members he hired after he was elected to Congress. "I used to think she worked 24 hours a day at our office in Colby," Dole said. "No matter what time of the day or night I called the office, she always answered. A long time later I learned that she had had a telephone extension put in to her home, and she did go home at night."

In Atwood, the senator brought greetings from that town's most



RICH HOOD

famous hometown boy, former Gov. Mike Hayden, whom Dole helped land a job in Washington in charge of the nation's park system.

And Dole took the initiative in attempting to defuse complaints about the \$23,200 pay raise senators recently voted themselves.

Most of the 55 people in the community room at Atwood nodded acceptance, but later a farmer in dirty blue jeans and a grease-stained yellow cap walked in. The farmer verbally accosted Dole on the pay raise. Dole said if the farmer didn't think Dole was worth it, he shouldn't vote for him.

Later, Dole and the farmer huddled in the corner. "He's a nice guy. He said he didn't like the raise, but he might vote for me after all," Dole said afterward with a broad grin.

That raised the essential question of this eight-day trip: Is Dole going to seek re-election next year?

At every stop he gave every indication that he is indeed going to seek re-election next year. But he always told people that he had not made the final decision.

In a lengthy interview with *The Kansas City Star*, Dole talked about his future plans and his special feeling for the people of his state.

"I'm leaning toward running, but I haven't made the final decision," Dole said.

One big factor nudging him toward running is U.S. Rep. Dan

Glickman, a Wichita Democrat who has considered running for the Senate several times and is doing so again.

Dole said he wasn't sure if Glickman would challenge the senator. "He would be a very tough contender. And obviously he's going to run if I don't run."

Dole said if he doesn't run, several Republicans could make good Senate candidates, but it could be a tough race because Glickman has a following outside his 4th Congressional District. "I have a loyalty problem giving up my seat to a member of the other party," Dole said.

He said when Howard Baker and Paul Laxalt retired, both seats went to Democrats. "You could almost have a Republican majority in the Senate just with the seats we have lost when Republicans retired."

On the other hand, Dole said, he should have the right to retire whenever he chooses, regardless of party considerations. He said Baker told him he has never been happier than he has been since leaving the Senate in January 1985.

While he repeated Baker's comments, Dole didn't really sound convinced.

Dole said Glickman had the potential to raise millions in campaign contributions. The senator estimated that he would have to raise and spend at least \$4 million in a Dole-Glickman race, far and away the largest amount ever raised for a Kansas contest.

Dole's toughest re-election race was the 1974 battle with Bill Roy. Adjusted for inflation, the costs in that campaign would be about \$3 million in today's dollars, Dole said.

He quickly moved on to note that in a recent poll he conducted in Kansas, he had a 76 percent approval rating and 17 percent negative rating.

"We did heavy sampling in the 4th District," Dole said. He

declined to disclose the results there where Glickman would be expected to do best.

In any case, Dole said he doesn't really trust polls anymore. "My numbers were good in New Hampshire," he said ruefully, referring to polls that showed him defeating George Bush there in the 1988 presidential primary.

The real test is getting out among the people and listening to their comments, Dole said.

"You can tell if people are hostile, and it's important to get the Washington beltway cobwebs out of your head."

The senator, who frequently spent more time last week listening to and answering questions than he did in giving a standard stump speech, said it was important for him to stop talking and start listening.

"These people are plugged in. They read newspapers and magazines. They watch TV and listen to radio. They know what's going on."

Here in St. Francis, as the sun scorches and the wind roars, what's apparently going on is the beginning of Dole's re-election campaign.

Dole in Ellsworth...

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beginning September 1."

Although sympathetic to their plight, Dole noted that in Ellsworth County, people on Post Rock Water pay very little compared to buyers in other areas of the state.

"You guys are paying some of the lowest (water) rates around. Members of a newly started water district in Morris County are willing to pay \$45 dollars just to haul water," said Dole. "We'll do the best we can, but we can't promise much."

Dole also noted that for those placed in financial difficulty due to the prolonged lack of moisture, help is on the way.

"Two billion dollars in disaster assistance will be issued in September. The Russians have also promised to buy \$500 million of wheat in three different installments," he said. "Another option is to get some of that CRP ground released so you can put up some of your own grass."

An issue Dole believes to be of great importance to all Americans, urban and rural alike, is the need for quality medical care at a reasonable price.

"We spend \$660 billion a year in health coverage, more than any other industrialized nation. Yet our medical care isn't the best in the world. We're sixth in our infant mortality rate and the average life span of our citizens is seventh or

eighth," said Dole.

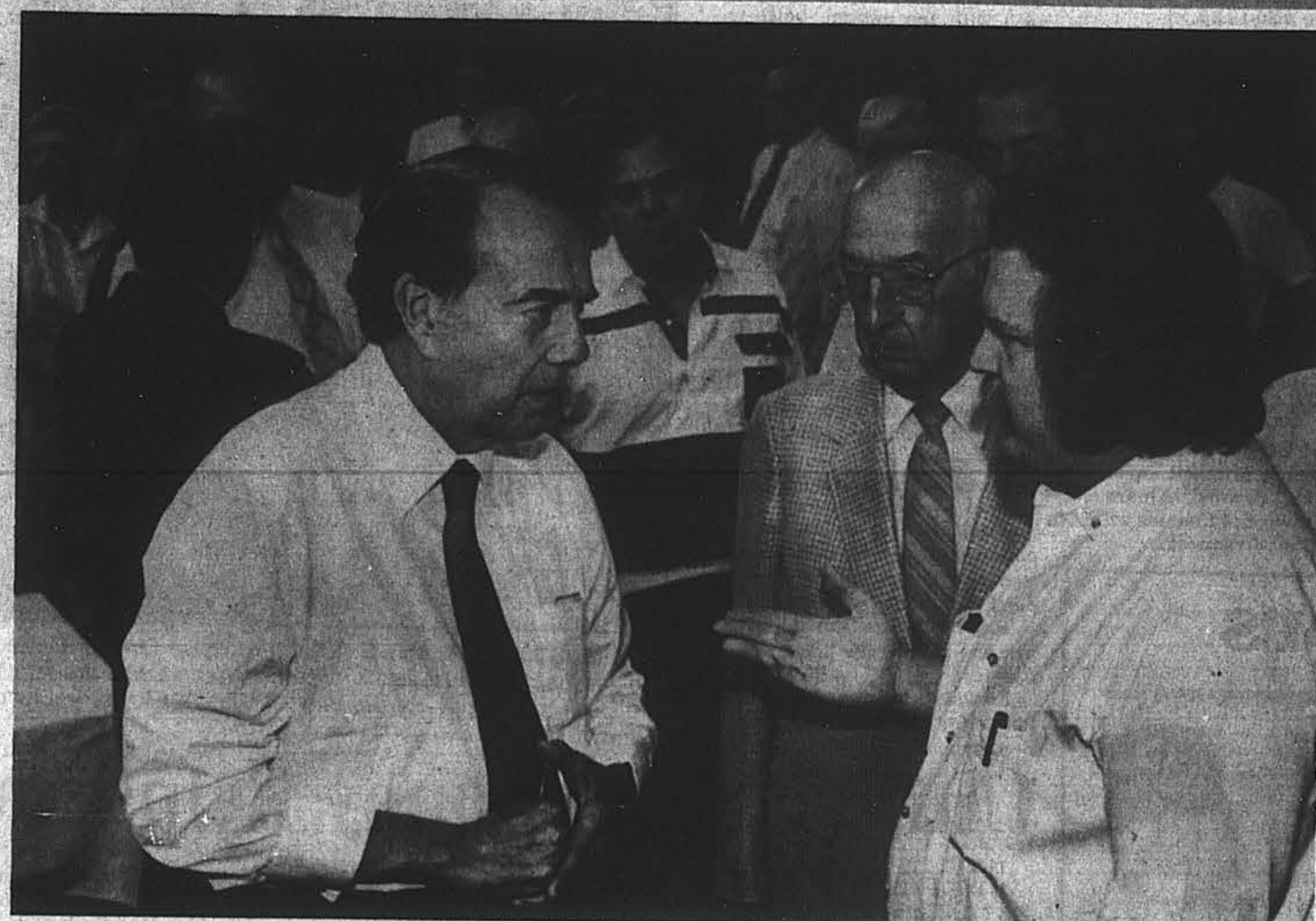
"Our health care costs keep rising and we keep having to shut down small rural hospitals in order to survive. Congress has increased reimbursements to small rural hospitals to offset some of the extra cost, but even that's not doing the job," he said. "Health care will be a big issue in the 1992 presidential election and will be the issue in the 1996 presidential election."

Despite all of the problems and challenges with which America is faced, Dole pointed out there are still a number of things about the United States that all Americans can take pride in.

"We all have complaints. But if you would visit with some of the people that come into my office from Bulgaria, Poland, Czechoslovakia as well as some people from the Soviet Republics, you would realize how lucky we are. Some of them come in with tears running out of their eyes, saying they would like to be like America."

"You have to keep in mind when they say that, they haven't had a chance to vote, pick up a telephone, or receive social security or veterans' benefits," he said. "The fact is that the Soviet Union is now second banana, they're looking to us for help like everyone else. In all of my 30 years in Congress I have yet to receive a letter from anyone who said they wanted to get out of this terrible place (America)."

Great Bend Tribune, Sunday, August 11, 1991



SENATOR VISITS — Sen. Robert Dole, R-Kan., visits with constituents Friday afternoon after speaking to a group of people who gathered poolside at the Holiday Inn. — (photo by Marcus W. Stratton)

Dole touches base in Great Bend during 28-county whirlwind tour

By CHUCK SMITH

Editor

Sen. Bob Dole, R-Kan., touched on local flood control and various national topics, ranging from the future of oil production to the current abortion debate, when he stopped in Great Bend Friday afternoon. Dole was in town as a part of a 28-county spin through Kansas.

Speaking poolside at the Holiday Inn, Dole talked about the \$7 million that's been approved for the continuation of the local flood control project, and the \$50,000 that will help pay for the local station broadcasting the Hutchinson public radio.

The senator kicked off his discussion of national issues by discussing the controversy surrounding Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas.

"He's an outstanding judge," Dole said. "In addition to being a decent guy, he worked up the hard way. I think it's unfortunate the NAACP had to oppose Clarence Thomas."

But Dole said he's not surprised. "First he's a Republican, that's pretty bad, and second, he's a conservative and that's even worse" in some opinions, the senator said.

Dole looks for Thomas to be successful in his bid for the court and he expects Robert Gates to overcome critics and be named CIA chief.

POWs and MIAs

Dole calls for a national commission to study growing reports of Americans left in Southeast Asia and he wants Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf to lead the commission. The country's trust in Schwarzkopf would mean that the commission's findings would not be continually questioned, Dole said.

"If there's one American somewhere, we're going to continue to push and push and push" for his return.

abortion

Dole seemed uneasy when he was asked about his stand on the continuing abortion protests in Wichita, but he made it clear that he'd like those causing problems in his home state to settle down.

Calling Operation Rescue leader Randall Terry "one of the fringies," Dole said

Dole on Clarence Thomas:

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Dole on POWs and MIAs:

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Dole on Eastern Europe:

"There's no soap, there's no bread, there's nothing. But what they do have is a shot" at a democratic life.

the issue is in the courts and it should be decided there. "There are a lot of extremists on both sides of the issue," he said. "Until it is settled in court, he called for protesters to stop assailing patrons in front of the clinics. "Right now it's legal to have clinics."

health care

A lot of changes are needed in this area, as the country struggles to make health care available for all classes, but some of the federal mandates could make things worse.

Dole is especially concerned about the mandates affecting parental leave and health insurance, since they could do a lot of damage to small businesses.

senate pay raise

While Dole suggested the senators were due a raise that brought them in line with house members, he also said dealing with one is political trouble. "There ought to be somebody else (that would) set our pay."

Dole said he will explain the pay but not debate it. "I'm not sure I'm going to run again, but if I do" those who don't like the pay can choose to vote for someone else, Dole said.

Eastern Europe

Dole has been dealing a lot with representatives of the struggling Eastern European countries, including talking with a Russian couple who is visiting in Ness City.

From officials to people like the couple

he saw on this trip, Dole said one thing stands out — America is still the shining example of how a country can succeed. "They know they wouldn't have freedom today" without the efforts of America in the past. "Because of America they're getting to do things they never thought possible."

Regardless of infrastructure problems, the emerging democracies have hope for the first time, he added. "There's no soap, there's no bread, there's nothing. But what they do have is a shot" at a democratic life, Dole said.

oil policy

Stabilizing prices and politics in the Middle East is one of the more important goals in relation to the American oil industry, but Dole doesn't see the administration doing much on an energy bill that will make a major difference for producers in this area.

economy

Dole looks for increased hurdles for the U.S. economy as it attempts to come to grips with a swelling deficit, develop trade with Mexico and repair problems that have gotten worse with each administration. "The federal government's broke. Thirty-eight states are broke. Fifty cities are in trouble," he said.

Local businesses are often caught in the middle as various schemes are tried to make things better and Dole warned owners to watch out for federal mandates.

INSIDE

A special chemistry



Dole

was on display last week as Sen. Bob Dole revisited the wind-prairie towns he first stumped 40 years ago. "A lot of you helped me get started," Dole told the appreciative crowds. Rich Hood, B-2