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## Bob Dole's late-night maneuvering frees crop insurance from politics

By CURT ANDERSON  
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — One senator with an anti-homosexual agenda almost cost thousands of farmers their crop insurance, which would have played havoc with fall planting.

It took last-minute, late-night maneuvering from Senate Republican Leader Bob Dole to free legislation that had been blocked by Sen. Jesse Helms for weeks. As a result, farmers aren't being denied their crop insurance.

But it wasn't easy. Helms, R-N.C., put what's called a "hold" on the crop insurance bill because he objected to a U.S. Department of Agriculture job action taken against an employee who spoke out against homosexuality.

"This is where Senator Helms and other get their power, the power to bring government to a screeching halt," said Rep. Dan Glickman, D-Kan. "This is one of the reasons people think the system doesn't work very well."

Helms has taken up the cause of Karl C. Mertz, a USDA manager based in Georgia who was reassigned after making this statement March 4 to a television reporter:

"We need to be moving toward Camelot, not Sodom and Gomorrah, and I'm afraid that's where our leadership is taking us."

Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy said Mertz, senior manager of a 10-state regional office, was reassigned and had some perks taken away because the comments indicated he couldn't carry out the agency's civil rights policy.

In protest, Helms decided to use his Senate powers to unilaterally block the crop insurance reform bill from passing. While the legislation languished, companies that insure crops got nervous.

According to the Federal Crop Insurance Corp., commercial insurers made it known that if the Senate didn't move on the bill, it might not renew policies with a Sept. 30 expiration date.

There are 105,273 such policies nationwide. Kansas, one of the main winter wheat states, had by far the most at more than 38,000, according to the agency's figures.

Without crop insurance, farmers would have to depend solely on the government if disaster wiped them out. In addition, many banks won't make operating loans unless the crops are insured.

The crop insurance reform bill would, among other things, make it mandatory for farmers to buy catastrophic insurance at a cost of at least \$50 per

crop in order to participate in federal farm programs or get government farm loans.

For weeks, Helms kept the legislation from moving. By the end of August, insurance companies were preparing notices to thousands of farmers that their policies wouldn't be renewed.

The week of Aug. 22, the Senate was mired in debate over the crime bill. Behind the scenes, Dole and Glickman were working to obtain a release on the crop insurance bill from Helms. They sought help from House Speaker Tom Foley, D-Wash., whose state had nearly 3,000 wheat insurance policies in jeopardy.

Glickman wrote a strongly worded letter to "implore" Helms to release his hold. And Dole, on the night of the crucial crime bill vote Aug. 25, began negotiating with the North Carolina senator on the Senate floor.

But it wasn't until 10:30 p.m., after the crime bill had passed, that a deal was struck: Helms would get to introduce his amendment and the Senate would approve crop insurance reform.

Dole had planned to deliver a stinging floor speech if a deal wasn't struck, but he decided instead to insert the written comments into the Congressional Record.

Those comments put blame for the delay on Espy, not Dole's GOP colleague Helms.

The last-minute maneuvering, Dole said, "would not be necessary if the Secretary of Agriculture had not refused to work with Senator Helms in resolving a personnel problem at USDA. It is truly unfortunate that America's farmers are being held hostage by the Secretary of Agriculture."

Sen. Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., added Helms' amendment to the crop insurance bill. It says no USDA employee can be reassigned without a hearing for comments made during personal time about any agency policy, including "proposed policies regarding homosexuals."

Finally, late into the night, the bill passed on a voice vote and was sent to a House-Senate conference committee. Crop insurance companies didn't move to cancel anyone.

Dole said the Helms amendment likely will be taken out in the conference committee, which could place crop insurance reform in new jeopardy. Dole has been talking with Espy about how to resolve the issue.

"My recommendation would be to take this guy (Mertz) back while he is being investigated," Dole said. "I think that would satisfy Senator Helms."

## Mitchell rejects Dole's health summit plan

Associated Press



Dole Says people don't want reform now.

WASHINGTON — Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell says he still hopes a good health care reform bill can be passed when Congress returns to work today, but he discounted an idea from his Republican counterpart for a leadership summit on the issue.

Sen. Minority Leader Bob Dole has suggested that leaders of the two parties negotiate a very limited package including measures barring insurance companies from refusing coverage to those with existing conditions or seeking to switch jobs. The leaders would each have power to veto any part of the package they opposed.

Dole, appearing on CBS' "Face the Nation," said that there are about 20 areas of agreement on health care reform but that each leader "would have to have a veto" in working out the package.

Mitchell, speaking after Dole on CBS, said he was

willing to talk to Dole, who has led the opposition that has frustrated the sweeping health care reform envisioned by the Clinton administration.

"But I don't like the idea of saying that four or five people have an absolute veto power over anything that passes in Congress," the Maine Democrat said. "That gives individual members of Congress even greater power than the president has. It's akin really to monarchy."

Many lawmakers on both sides of the aisle say it is futile to take up health care now, with only weeks remaining before Congress recesses for November elections and a full slate of other major bills to consider.

Dole said he was willing to keep trying, but given a proposal that Congress recess for the year on Oct. 7, he said, "I don't see how we can do much in health care."

Dole said Republicans "are not perceived as a negative force" in the health care debate because most

Americans don't want new legislation now. A Newsweek poll released Sunday found that two-thirds of Americans think Congress should wait until next year before passing health care reform.

But 18 percent of the 752 adults polled last week blamed Republicans for the failure to pass a bill this year, compared with 21 percent who blamed the insurance industry, 13 percent the medical industry and 9 percent the president.

Mitchell also said he was "deeply disappointed" that Dole had come out against Senate action this year on a world trade agreement under the auspices of the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs.

The GATT agreement reached earlier this year on reducing trade barriers worldwide would "strongly enhance America's economic future," Mitchell said, adding, "I'm going to try very hard to get it passed."

Monday, September 12, 1994 THE WICHITA EAGLE 3A

THE WICHITA EAGLE Tuesday, September 13, 1994

Associated Press

## Dole does his duty for North and party

By Richard L. Berke  
New York Times News Service

NORFOLK, Va. — As he campaigned all over Virginia on Monday alongside Oliver North, Sen. Bob Dole looked like a bridegroom stuck in a marriage of convenience: he went through all the motions, but his heart did not seem in it.

Dole, the Senate Republican leader, cooperated when a volunteer affixed an "Ollie" sticker to his lapel. He clasped hands with North as they raised their arms in a traditional victory pose. And he implored voters to support North, the Republican nominee in Virginia for U.S.



Senate, a man he once called "a loose cannon" who had "overstepped his bounds" in the Iran-Contra affair.

What was striking on Monday, however, was what Dole did not say at the four stops around the state: the senator did not offer particular praise for North, as he does with most candidates for whom he campaigns, and he did not say what qualities North would bring to the Senate.

Instead, he cited two reasons for people to vote for North: it would help the Republicans win back their majority in the Senate — and make Dole the majority leader. And North would provide a reliable Republican vote on major issues.

North, meanwhile, sought to make the most of the opportunity, to the point of calling the senator from Kansas a fellow war hero.

"Now some folks have asked, 'What do you all have in common?'" North said. "This is a real war hero."

However grudging, Dole's appearance also demonstrates how high the stakes are in this Senate race. President Clinton is scheduled to campaign in the state next month for the Democratic incumbent, Sen. Charles Robb, whose reputation has been sullied by disclosures of social-

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## Congressional delegation questions need for action

By CURT ANDERSON  
The Associated Press

The Kansas congressional delegation was united Thursday in opposing a military invasion of Haiti, with some lawmakers predicting a long, messy U.S. involvement in the impoverished Caribbean nation.

The delegation's Republicans and Democrats also were unanimous in supporting a congressional vote authorizing President Clinton to use military force.

"While I have full confidence in the ability of our armed forces to handle such an invasion, I believe the deeper and more difficult problem would come in dealing with the aftermath," said Republican Sen. Nancy Kassebaum.

"We must not allow ourselves to become mired in Haiti's internal affairs," said Kassebaum, a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. "This is what happened when the Marines landed in 1913

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Senate Minority Leader Bob Dole and other top Republicans sent a letter Wednesday to Clinton, saying there were no compelling American interests or lives at stake in Haiti and calling for a vote in Congress on military action.

"Such authorization would greatly strengthen your policy and greatly increase the likelihood of achieving American policy goals," the letter said.

But Dole, campaigning Wednesday for Republicans in Tennessee, said his office has received virtually no telephone calls in favor of a Haiti invasion.

"The American people don't want to risk a single American life to put (ousted Presi-

dent Jean Bertrand) Aristide back in power," he said.

Republican Rep. Pat Roberts said 79 percent of 400 Kansans he questioned on Haiti at the State Fair in Hutchinson opposed use of military force. Only 10 percent were in favor, with 11 percent undecided.

"The American people and the U.S. Congress are opposed to his planned invasion of Haiti," Roberts said. "They simply do not believe that the United States' national security is at risk."

GOP Rep. Jan Meyers said President Clinton has not made a compelling case to justify military force.

"At this time we don't know the potential cost, both in human lives and in dollars, and

we don't know how we might extricate ourselves once American troops go ashore," she said.

Democrats Jim Slattery and Dan Glickman also questioned the need for an invasion.

Slattery, a Democratic candidate for governor of Kansas, flatly said this week the United States should not try to solve "the internal political struggles of other nations when vital national interests are not at stake."

Glickman, chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, urged Clinton in a recent letter to seek authorization from Congress for an invasion. But he questioned whether the situation there warrants such a drastic move.

"I am aware of the complexity of the Haitian situation, but I am not aware of any information by which that situation could legitimately be characterized as an emergency," Glickman wrote. "As a result, I could not support the use of United States forces without an authorization by Congress."

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izing and involvement with women. Two other contenders are running as independents: former Gov. Douglas Wilder, a Democrat, and Marshall Coleman, a Republican.

For Dole and North, this was a day of political pragmatism. North has struggled to wrest endorsements from leading Republicans, and Dole provided him a needed show of le-

gitimacy. Although Jack Kemp campaigned for him and former Vice President Dan Quayle will travel with him later this month, no party leader of Dole's stature had toured the state with North until Monday.

As was obvious in the words spoken, and not spoken, the benefits for Dole are more complicated. Even after North won the state Republican nomination in June, Dole hesitated to endorse the former Marine lieutenant colonel and met first with Coleman. At the time, he said in a

national television interview that North's nomination made it "very difficult for some in the Republican Party" to stay loyal.

Dole finally came around, not wanting to alienate the conservatives he will need if he runs for president in 1996 — and mindful that North could help the party win a Senate majority. But he was such a reluctant backer that his aides refused to let the two be photographed together after they met early this summer over the endorse-

ment.

On Monday, as Dole posed for the cameras, he avoided discussing his past criticism. And North's aides did their best at every appearance to shield the two men from reporters' questions. At the last stop in Richmond, a reporter asked Dole about the "loose cannon" quote.

"We all say things from time to time," he replied. "He's going to be a U.S. senator. That's the important thing."

## Kansas congressmen oppose invasion of Haiti

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Associated Press Writer

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The Salina Journal  
Wednesday, September 14, 1994

## GOP tries to slash programs

Bill aims to do what amendments failed

By The Associated Press  
WASHINGTON — Republicans sought to put a damper on President Clinton's signing of the crime bill Tuesday by introducing legislation to slash \$5 billion in social programs and enact tougher criminal penalties.

Senate Minority Leader Bob Dole of Kansas said the \$30 billion measure signed by Clinton was an "awful crime bill" that many Americans understood to contain billions in wasteful pork-barrel spending.

"Most Americans understand we didn't just buy a little pork, we bought the whole hog when this bill passed," Dole said.

The bill introduced by Dole is identical to the 10 amendments on which Republican senators tried to get votes when the crime bill was debated last month. They lost when six Republicans, including Sen. Nancy Kassebaum of Kansas, sided with Democrats in favor of the measure.

The GOP spending cuts would eliminate federal support for several crime prevention programs, including anti-gang efforts, midnight basketball, grants to cities and towns for drug treatment, jobs programs and education.

It would also focus corrections spending on "brick and mortar" prisons instead of alternative programs, beef up truth-in-sentencing provisions and toughen sentences for crimes with guns, selling drugs to minors and other offenses. The measure also makes it easier to deport criminal aliens.

"The bill makes no mention of the crime bill's ban on 19 assault-style weapons and copycat models, and does not change funding for thousands of new police officers across the country."

The Senate Judiciary Committee has estimated the crime bill could be worth up to \$236 million to Kansas over the next six years, including money to help cities and towns hire about 1,200 police officers.

But GOP lawmakers cast doubt on Clinton's claim that 100,000 police officers would be hired nationwide over the next few years, saying local governments would only be able to afford to find matching money for about 20,000.

"The American people aren't dumb," Dole said. "They know that the crime bill is more hype than tough-on-crime substance."

Dole said Republicans would offer parts of the bill as amendments over the next few weeks.

"One lost opportunity doesn't mean we shouldn't keep on trying," he said. "We haven't given up yet."



Dole