

# Dole reverses on gay contribution

By CURT ANDERSON  
The Associated Press

“Any time a politician flip-flops like this, it really backfires on him.”

WASHINGTON — Reversing course, Sen. Bob Dole said Tuesday it was a mistake for his presidential campaign to return a \$1,000 contribution from a gay Republican group.

He blamed his campaign for not clearing the decision with him. “I think if they had consulted me they wouldn’t have done that,” the Senate majority leader told reporters in response to a question. “I just didn’t agree with what happened.”

Dole previously had defended his campaign’s August decision to return a contribution from the Log Cabin Republicans. At the time, campaign officials said the Log Cabin agenda didn’t jibe with Dole’s views.

Dole himself said last month he didn’t subscribe to the Log Cabin agenda, adding, “I don’t know who all

contributes to my campaign. But if it’s somebody with a special agenda we’re not going to accept their money.”

On Tuesday, Dole had a different response. “My view is, (just) because you accept money from them, you don’t agree with their agenda,” he said.

Rich Tafel, executive director of the Washington-based Log Cabin Republicans, said the Dole campaign’s initial move to return the contribution reflected the senator’s effort to appease GOP conservatives.

Since then, Tafel said, Dole has been slowly backing away from the decision.

“Clearly it was a political mistake,” Tafel said. “Across the political spectrum, no one has defended that decision.”

One conservative group, the Family Research Council, said Dole’s about-face on the issue is sending mixed

signals to people interested in so-called “family values.”

“Traditional values do not include the homosexual agenda,” said Robert H. Knight, director of cultural studies for the organization. “Any time a politician flip-flops like this, it really backfires on him.”

Tafel said his 10,000-member group had contributed to three GOP presidential candidates: Dole, Pennsylvania Sen. Arlen Specter and California Gov. Pete Wilson, who has dropped out of the race.

In Dole’s case, Tafel said, the contribution was prompted by the Kansas senator’s office non-discrimination policy and his support for such legislation as the Ryan White Act, which provides money for AIDS sufferers.

One critic of the refund, Republican Rep. Steve Gunderson of Wisconsin, said Dole last month assured him he had never “advocated discrimination against any American.”

Gunderson, who is gay, said Dole sought and obtained his continued “active and visible support” for his presidential campaign.

“I have no doubt that the Dole campaign regrets the impression” left by the incident, Gunderson added. “Perhaps, in the end, something like this has some benefit because it provides a healthy dose of sensitivity training in the midst of a hectic political campaign.”

Dole said he wouldn’t solicit contributions from the Log Cabin group. “I don’t want to open it all up again. It’s all over,” he said.

# Gay group’s donation causes headaches for Dole campaign

By Jake Thompson  
Kansas City Star

WASHINGTON — As Bob Dole strode away from a news conference on the budget, a subject involving billions of dollars, the last question he wanted to field was one about a meager \$1,000.

“Oohhhhhhh! No more,” the Senate majority leader groaned, rolling his eyes in exasperation at a reporter who followed him along to the “Senators Only” elevator.

Dole ducked into the car and away from the question about the freshly stirred fuss over the contribution from the Log Cabin Republicans, a gay group. He then offered an observation and advice: “For \$1,000, you guys must be obsessed with this thing. Try again.”

Then the door slid shut.

But it was the Kansas who had reopened the Log Cabin issue. He reversed himself Tuesday when he said his campaign staff should not have returned the Log Cabin contribution.

Suddenly his opposition in the presidential sweepstakes and the media pundits watching for the front-runner’s stumble had something new to talk about — or actually, something old to talk about again.

Critics already had characterized recent shifts on other subjects — tax cuts and term limits — as wavering on the conservative agenda in Congress.

Two GOP challengers, Sens. Phil Gramm of Texas and Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania, quickly

took aim after Dole’s Log Cabin reversal.

Gramm painted it as more flip-flopping. Specter characterized it as Dole’s belatedly acknowledging a moderate belief that the Republican Party should be more inclusive.

Some moderates had complained about the decision to return the gay group’s money, which some had seen as a clumsy effort by the Dole camp to gain the blessing of social conservatives.

Now the complaints are coming from the religious right, already wondering about Dole’s refusal to sign a pledge to keep anti-abortion language in the party platform.

The Rev. Lou Sheldon, chairman of the Traditional Values Coalition, said he thought Dole would lose votes over the Log Cabin switch.

“This is an issue of character with Bob Dole,” Sheldon said. “The man’s character has come through loud and clear, and we don’t need this kind of flipping and flopping in the White House. I disagree with Arlen Specter, but I respect him for staying on his sheet of music.”

“The homosexual agenda is not acceptable, so you cannot accept money from the messenger of the agenda.”

It isn’t the first self-inflicted punch Dole ever landed, but it comes at a time of nagging questions about the depth of party enthusiasm for Dole, especially as retired Gen. Colin Powell and House Speaker Newt Gingrich continue to nibble at the idea of a presidential bid.

“He can’t afford too many more gaffes like this,” Clemson University political scientist Charles Dunn said of Dole. “He’s in the center of a firing squad with his rivals, and he’s got to stop giving them ammunition.”

Some of Dole’s bobbles have arisen partly from the expected trickiness of running the Senate and running for nomination at the same time.

A few weeks ago, Dole hinted that the Senate might not pass a full \$245 billion tax cut because some Senate conservatives had expressed reservations.

Gramm pounded away at Dole for backing down on a promise to American voters. And even last week, when the Senate finally approved tax cuts of \$245 billion, Gramm took credit for prodding Dole to lead his colleagues to that point.

# Dole would have kept gays’ money

## Log Cabin group not appeased

By Cox News Service

WASHINGTON — Republican presidential candidate Bob Dole said Tuesday that his campaign aides should not have rejected a \$1,000 contribution from an organization of homosexual Republicans in August.

But the declaration did not mend his fences with the organization, the Log Cabin Republicans.

“I think, if they’d have consulted me, we wouldn’t have done that,” Dole said at a meeting with a group of Washington correspondents. “I don’t believe in discrimination.”

“My view is, because you accept money from them doesn’t mean you agree with their agenda.”

Dole would not say whether he

would accept the contribution if it were sent again, however.

“It’s over as far as I’m concerned,” he said. “They’re not really in my corner.”

Asked about Dole’s Tuesday comments, Log Cabin Republicans spokesman David Greer said that “we have to question Mr. Dole’s sincerity.”

“This brings up a whole other issue,” Greer said. “Who’s running the Dole campaign? What is at the heart and the soul of the Dole campaign?”

“Is it just getting elected, or is it sending a message of an inclusive Republican Party and a party that doesn’t believe in discrimination?”

Log Cabin Republicans are “highly skeptical” of Dole’s motivations, Greer said.



Dole

# Graves campaign still owes Dole PAC

By Tom Webb  
Eagle Washington bureau

WASHINGTON — Kansas Gov. Bill Graves still hasn’t paid for a series of 1994 campaign trips that he took on private corporate jets, and a political watchdog group is wondering why not.

Bill Graves for Governor still owes \$8,400 for five campaign trips, even though the flights occurred nearly a year ago, and election laws require his campaign to pay his way. The debt was listed among campaign finance reports filed Oct. 13 in Washington.

So why hasn’t Graves paid his bills?

“Evidently it was one of those things that was placed on the back burner for a time,” Graves’ press secretary Mike Matson said Wednesday. But, Matson said emphatically, “it will be paid.”

Graves owes the money to Campaign America, the political action committee of Sen. Bob Dole, R-Kan. Dole gave Graves a great deal of help during the governor’s

race, but \$8,400 in airfare was one favor Dole couldn’t legally give. Dole’s PAC paid for the jet up front, and expected Graves’ campaign to later send a check.

But nearly a year later, with the flights not reimbursed, one campaign watchdog group says it’s starting to look suspicious.

The ultimate question is, how long does it take for a loan to a candidate to turn into a gift to a candidate? asked Josh Goldstein with the Center for Responsive Politics in Washington. “It seems to me that after a year has passed, and the governor has been in office for nine months, we are certainly at the point when a loan looks a whole lot like a campaign contribution.”

A gift of that size would plainly be illegal. Under Kansas law, PACs can legally give only \$2,000 per election to a candidate for governor.

Last fall, Dole repeatedly borrowed the private jets of large corporations as he criss-crossed the country campaigning for Republican candidates. Graves rode along during the Kansas portion of those trips,

and the law required him to reimburse his portion of the cost.

Other Kansas Republicans flew on Dole’s borrowed jets, too, but all of them paid their bills long ago. Lt. Gov. Sheila Frahm paid promptly. So did Rep. Todd Tiahrt, R-Goddard. As did Rep. Sam Brownback, R-Topeka.

Graves’ spokesman was asked about the reason for its delay.

“I don’t think there’s a delay involved at all, and I think it’s wrong to characterize it as such,” Matson replied. He also said there’s some discrepancy about the numbers.

“Evidently our numbers don’t jibe with their numbers, and we’re in the process of trying to figure out where the right numbers are. . . . No one disputes that the campaign owes Campaign America the money.”

The practice of borrowing corporate jets, a frequent activity for Dole, has drawn criticism from campaign watchdog groups. Politicians usually pay a bargain rate when they borrow a corporate jet — generally the cost of a first-class ticket — instead of the true cost of chartering a private airplane and paying

a pilot, which can cost ten times as much. But the practice is entirely legal.

During the last three weeks of the 1994 campaign, records show that Dole five times borrowed the U.S. Tobacco corporate jet, twice borrowed a jet from agribusiness giant Archer Daniels Midland, twice borrowed an AIG jet, and also borrowed jets belonging to Federal Express and drug maker Schering-Plough.

The Kansas Secretary of State’s office reports that Graves spent \$1.6 million last fall to defeat Democrat Jim Slattery. As of January, Graves’ campaign reported \$6,121 cash on hand.

According to Campaign America’s most recent quarterly report, filed Oct. 13 at the Federal Election Commission, Bill Graves for Governor has five unpaid bills for “air travel.” The five amounts owed are \$2,530, \$2,148, \$594, \$2,164 and \$964.50.

Earlier reports show that the flights were all taken in the final three weeks of the 1994 campaign for governor.

# Dole’s cheap shots smack of hypocrisy



Greg NUCIFORA  
The Hutchinson News

I knew it was coming. It was just a matter of time. The real Bob Dole is beginning to re-emerge. You just can’t keep a bad temper down.

With a multitude of problems confronting this country, the fading leader among GOP presidential hopefuls took President Clinton head-on Monday night. Was this tough posturing directed at differences over welfare reform, restructuring Medicare or even foreign policy? Nahhh. It was over Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan.

That’s right — Louis Farrakhan. At a speech in a New York fund-raiser in which he raised another \$1 million, Dole lambasted Clinton for failing to mention Farrakhan by name in a speech in which the president said, “One million men are right to be standing up for personal responsibility. But one million men do not make right one man’s message of malice and division.”

Said Dole: “I am shocked and dismayed that President Clinton did not find the moral courage to denounce Louis Farrakhan by name in his speech today in Texas. Farrakhan is a racist and anti-Semite, unbridled by hate. He has no place in American public life, and all who lead must say so. And I resent the implication by the president of the United States that ours is a racist nation.”

If memory serves me right, the senator wasn’t this unbridled when David Duke, a good ‘ole boy from Louisiana whose resume boasted the leadership of the Ku Klux Klan, ran for governor, president and senator — all within this decade. Call me a cynic but I wonder whether any outrage — at least in the governor and senate races — was muted because Duke was a Republican.

Dole did say he liked “the talk about self-reliance, about picking yourself up, cleaning up our cities and getting kids off drugs. But I don’t think Farrakhan should be the leader of the march. He spreads suspicion, separatism and hate wherever he goes. No cloak can cover the ugliness of Farrakhan’s purpose.”

Give me a break, Senator. This is not about Farrakhan. This is about Clinton.

Had the president mentioned Farrakhan by name, Dole would’ve chastised Clinton for not criticizing the pattern on Farrakhan’s bow tie.

The senator’s allegations appear petty, at the very least. Much worse, they are potentially harmful. There’s no doubt Farrakhan’s version of “I Have a Dream” is far different than that espoused by the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. 30 years ago. Unlike King, Farrakhan makes no effort to embrace all races and religions. His record of intolerance toward Jews and whites is repugnant.



Sen. Bob Dole

But Dole’s comments do little to heal the strain between blacks and whites. In fact, he seems blind to the fact that most African-Americans attended the march for the message, not the messenger.

Eugene Kane, a columnist for The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, wrote: “The Million Man March was literally an ocean of black faces, a pilgrimage of black masculinity uniting to take a stand and make a statement. The statement to the world was that, contrary to popular opinion, black men are not the most violent, most unruly and most antisocial people in the country.”

“When we put our minds to it, we can come together in an impressive show of solidarity.”

Is that so bad, Senator? What if, in the long run, Monday’s event turns out to have been more than a Farrakhan

pep rally or a nice day off for more than 400,000 men? Why can’t we nurture the potential positives that may come from this march once the participants have returned to their communities? Can’t we take politics out of the rift between races? Guess I’m pretty naive.

Monday’s tantrum was little more than a display of Dole keeping in character. It appears Dole has been getting increasingly feisty as he continues to slip in the polls.

It must be frustrating to know that polls show none of the current Republican field beating Clinton. It must be additionally annoying for Dole to know he would place third in a three-way race with Clinton and former Gen. Colin Powell.

I mean, after all, it seems like yesterday that Dole was cruising along as everyone’s favorite. He could almost hear “Fail to the Chief” being played in his honor. The political world was his oyster. And then came Iowa.

Yes, the Iowa Straw Poll, perhaps the most useless money-making scheme since the Pet Rock. But was that meaningless event ever costly for Dole. Phil Gramm’s crafty campaign caught Dole’s people sleeping, and bought a tie with the Kansas senator.

Since that dreadful Saturday, Dole’s standing in the polls has headed south. But he shouldn’t take it out by firing cheap shots at Clinton. After all, there are plenty of significant issues on which Dole can challenge the president. No, Dole should direct his anger at his campaign people, including those in Kansas who failed to rally the troops to get their posteriors on the bus for Iowa.

Dole needs to focus more on Powell, who said he didn’t join the march because Farrakhan organized it. The former general poses a more immediate threat to Dole’s political future. We’ll know in weeks whether Powell is going to run. If so, Dole’s people better have a game plan prepared, or else he’ll get caught with his political pants around his ankles.

The strained relations between whites and blacks that followed the acquittal of O.J. Simpson haven’t dented Powell’s popularity. In fact, polls show him beating Clinton in a head-to-head election in which he was the Republican candidate.

So, Sen. Dole, you’ve fallen, and it appears you can’t get up. The question is, will you? Reverting to “the old Bob Dole” will once again leave you on the sidelines watching someone else get the nomination.

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