

THE WICHITA EAGLE Friday, December 29, 1995

Pay pinch hits Wichita's VA center staff

Eagle staff and wire reports

While House Speaker Newt Gingrich ruled out reopening parts of the government until a seven-year budget deal is forged with the president, the employees of the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Wichita shut down Thursday that the partial government shutdown means they are going to get only partial pay.

Gingrich said he understood the personal cost of the shutdown to federal employees, who beginning today will receive truncated paychecks if they work for an unfunded agency.

About 635 employees are on the job at the VA hospital in Wichita, because they are considered crucial to the protection of life. But they are being paid only for their work time up to Dec. 15, the day the continuing resolution to finance the government expired. Meanwhile, all mandatory and voluntary deductions for the two-week period are being withheld, which means that some employees will get little or no pay, said Rhonda Edens, hospital spokeswoman.

Efforts are being made to help employees make it through the crunch. VA Social Work Service has compiled a list of services available in the community, most utility companies have

Clinton vetoes defense bill. 7A

agreed to work with individual employees, and the VA Credit Union will delay loan payments and process emergency loans within 48 hours. About 100 "non-essential" hospital employees have been on furlough since Dec. 16.

In Washington, Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole, at a news conference with Gingrich, said talks beginning at the White House today are expected to last into the weekend.

Gingrich said he thinks it would be at least Wednesday, the day the House is due back from its break, before the government could reopen.

"The minute we have a budget agreement we should be able to get something through the House in hours," Gingrich said.

At a news conference earlier in the day, five Republican House freshmen — who said they represented their entire class — said that they were willing to negotiate on virtually all parts of the balanced budget plan. And they chided Gingrich and Dole as well as Clinton over the stagnant negotiations.

Contributing: Stan Finger of The Eagle



House Speaker Newt Gingrich, left, said Thursday that the government shutdown would have to continue until a budget deal is forged with the president. Gingrich and Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole, right, will meet with President Clinton today.

▼ CAMPAIGN '96

GOP candidates flock to Iowa

State's caucus first stop in campaign for White House

By MIKE GLOVER
The Associated Press

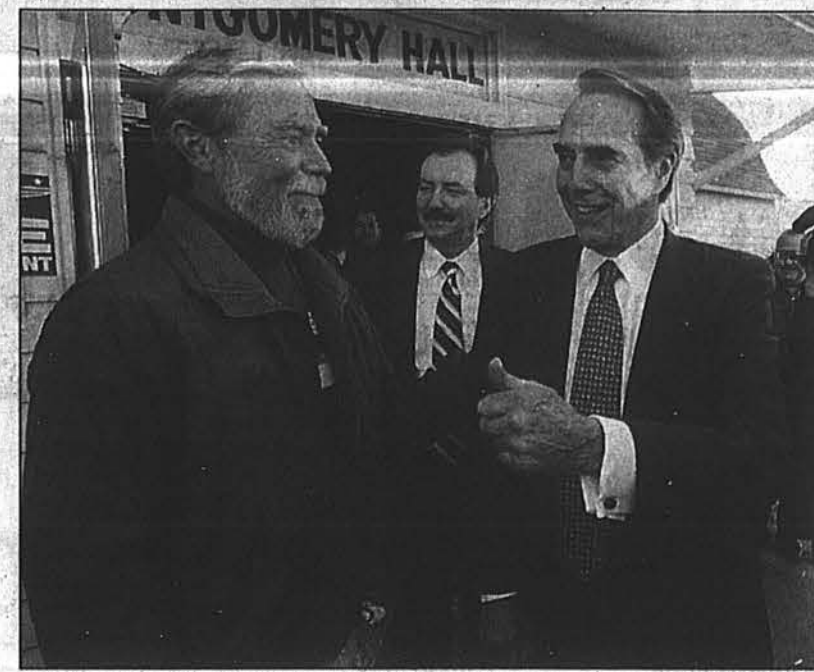
IOWA CITY, Iowa — With the holidays ending, Republican presidential hopefuls are swarming over Iowa, the first stop in the long campaign for the White House in 1996.

Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole, on a break from the Washington budget wars, squeezed in time Wednesday for a three-city bus tour of Iowa. Texas Sen. Phil Gramm's talked economics in a Des Moines hardware store while Pat Buchanan held forth on abortion.

Iowa's Feb. 12 precinct caucuses marks the traditional start of the quadrennial presidential nominating process, followed by New Hampshire's Feb. 20 presidential primary. Complicating the already jammed campaign schedule this year are earlier than usual caucuses in Louisiana Feb. 6, Delaware's primary on Feb. 24 and primaries in Arizona, North Dakota and South Dakota on Feb. 27.

In Iowa Dole said that voters "will be glad we hung in there" during the protracted fight with President Clinton over the federal budget.

But the budget wrangling has meant Dole has been largely absent from the battle for Iowa's February precinct caucuses, the first significant test of the presi-



Sen. Bob Dole, R-Kan. (right) chats with Iowa City Councilman Dean Thornberry on Wednesday at the Johnson County Fairgrounds in Iowa City.

dent election season.

"I'm going to lose some time because of the budget negotiations," Dole said. "People expect me to be a part of that. They want us to be working. They don't want us to be campaigning."

But with budget talks being conducted by staff, Dole sought to make up for lost time. But even that was scaled back.

His scheduled four days of campaigning in Iowa this week was trimmed to a single day, visiting Bettendorf, Iowa City and Cedar

Rapids. He said that only possible because of a break in budget negotiations.

"We'll be talking by phone all day with staff people," Dole said. "I thought about not coming ... but I talked with the president yesterday and nothing is going to happen today."

"I wouldn't be out here if there was anything going on there," Dole added.

Several of Dole's GOP rivals took advantage of the week between Christmas and New Year's

▼ CAMPAIGN '96

THE SALINA JOURNAL

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Dole's Minnesota pullout gives Gramm a foothold

But Dole aides say eyes focused on Iowa, New Hampshire primaries

By MIKE GLOVER
The Associated Press

ST. PAUL, Minn. — Republican front-runner Bob Dole, faced with tightly organized conservative opposition, has largely fallen off the radar screen in a state he won the last time he sought the GOP nomination.

What little presence he had in Minnesota disappeared completely this month when a small Dole office was shuttered. Dole aides dispute that it was even a campaign office, but backers see the move as virtually conceding the state's March 5 caucuses to Texas Sen. Phil Gramm.

"They have to prioritize where they put their efforts," said Steve Sviggum, a Republican legislative leader who backs Dole. "Minnesota is not one of their priorities. I'd like to see him in here fighting."

All sides agree that Gramm has the inside track to claim most of Minnesota's 33 delegates. That's an important Midwestern foothold in a region Dole claims as his base.

"There's no question that Gramm has got a very strong or organization built down to the lower echelons of the party," said Minn.



Sen. Bob Dole has given up his small presence in Minnesota

nesota Republican Chairman Chris Georgakas.

It's another standoff between increasingly powerful social conservatives and party moderates.

Two prominent conservative Iowa activists switched from Dole's camp to Gramm Thursday because of worries over Dole's views on abortion.

Peggy Hermann, a head of Dole's campaign in Dallas County, and Terri Hall, co-chairman of the Warren County Dole campaign, said they were upset with comments

Dole made earlier raising questions about his commitment to a constitutional amendment banning abortion. Dole has insisted he has maintained a consistent record in opposition to abortion except when the mother's life is in danger or in cases of rape or incest.

Dole also lost points with some conservatives over failing to call a Senate vote on repealing an automatic weapons ban and changing positions on a campaign contribution from a gay Republicans group.

Dole opened his office last summer, and made a few campaign trips to the state, but was hampered by Gramm in a GOP straw poll last fall. Since then it's been all Gramm in Minnesota.

Dole spokesman Nelson Warfield said any thought that Dole would bypass Minnesota was "wishful thinking on the part of a floundering Gramm campaign" but he agreed that campaign resources are being targeted.

"Our first priorities are Iowa and New Hampshire and we're going to make strategic decisions thereafter," Warfield said.

Gramm backers said it's simply evidence that Dole has work to do with the party's right wing.

"Conservatives are a strong force in Minnesota politics," said veteran conservative activist Allen Quist. "Dole does not receive much enthusiasm from conservatives."

March 5 caucuses will show if Dole's in trouble with Midwest conservatives

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Fewer than 50,000 hard-core party activists are likely to attend the March precinct caucuses where Minnesota Republicans will pick dele-

gates to the GOP National Convention.

Within that tiny group, highly motivated and organized social conservatives exert a huge influence.

"They are much better organized than the moderates and centrists," said state Senate Republican Leader Dean Johnson, another Dole backer.

Few question that Dole would win a traditional primary — with a much larger turnout — but he faces tougher sledding with the smaller group of caucus-goers.

Dole, Kassebaum, rising conservative tide top 1995 in Kansas politics

By LEW FERGUSON
Associated Press

TOPEKA — Three stories will stamp 1995 as a year of political change in Kansas.

Bob Dole, who tried twice before and got nowhere in his long crusade to become president of the United States, broke out of a pack of contenders for the Republican nomination to grab a commanding early lead this time. He heads into 1996 as the prohibitive party favorite.

Nancy Kassebaum, as popular a public office holder as the state has ever seen, announced she will retire from the U.S. Senate at the end of her present six-year term in January 1997. That means more change in the state's congressional delegation.

Perhaps the biggest upheaval of all

came in the politics of the Legislature and the state Republican Party.

Gains made in the 1994 elections by social conservatives brought about a union with fiscal conservatives that succeeded in ousting moderate Republican Bob Miller and installing Tim Shallenburger as speaker. Social conservatives also seized control of the state GOP, electing David Miller of Eudora as chairman.

There were other political changes: Republican Bill Graves succeeding Democrat Joan Finney as governor; the congressional delegation becoming all-Republican, with Sam Brownback and Todd Tiahrt taking away Democratic seats in the U.S. House; and Republican Jan Meyers deciding to retire from Congress after this term.

Dole, who has campaigned for the

presidency for most of two decades, formally declared his 1996 bid in Topeka in April. He stumbled briefly in an Iowa straw poll in September but recovered to virtually lap the GOP field by year's end. That was in sharp contrast to 1990 and 1998 when his bids against Ronald Reagan and George Bush collapsed early.

Kassebaum, who did not want to accept a third term in 1990 but did under party pressure, was not to be dissuaded from retirement this time around. She declared in Topeka in November that "the time has come" for her to spend more time with her grandchildren.

At age 63, she walks away from certain re-election and joins Frank Carlson, Arthur Capper, Andy Schoepel and Jim Pearson, who all retired undefeated from the Senate.

Shallenburger's selection as speaker of the Kansas House was a manifestation of the rise in political clout by the so-called religious right. While his politics hardly fit that description, his tough stands on fiscal matters enabled him to form an alliance with the social conservatives to win the speakership.

Miller's ascension to chairmanship of the state GOP meant even greater change for the party. With conservatives solidly in control of the GOP leadership in three of the state's four congressional districts, Miller, a former state representative, won without opposition.

He set the party on a more conservative course, adopting new party bylaws and rules and creating a new party platform reflecting that agenda. The platform, which the moderate Graves opposed, will be up for ratification at a

state GOP committee meeting in late January.

Democrats, who suffered massive election losses in 1994, were almost ushered to the sidelines — salvaging just two state offices in Insurance Commissioner Kathleen Sebelius, a rising party star, and State Treasurer Sally Thompson.

Dole's presidential run could face discord in his home state. Right to Life of Kansas already has criticized him for backing away from a constitutional amendment banning all abortions, and it is an uneasy relationship he has established with the religious right, even at home.

However, he should win the state's presidential primary in a breeze in April. In fact, he may have the GOP nomination locked up before then.

Kassebaum's retirement will set off a race to succeed her, with year-end speculation focusing on Lt. Gov. Sheila Frahm and Brownback as leading GOP contenders, and Thompson as the prime Democratic possibility.

Meyers' retirement already has candidates lining up to try to succeed her, with Overland Park Mayor Ed Eilert and state Rep. Vince Snowberger the top GOP contenders and Democrat Judy Hancock, who lost to Meyers in 1994, set to give it another try.

All 165 seats in the Legislature — 40 in the Senate and 125 in the House — are up for election in 1996. Most attention will focus on whether religious conservatives can gain control of the Senate.

Graves will be working to keep the Senate in the hands of moderates, his aides say.

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▼ BUDGET TALKS

Leaders report progress; talks continue today

Clinton will take break this afternoon to attend Renaissance Weekend

By The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Clinton and congressional leaders reported progress Saturday night after a long day of budget bargaining, but the president sent word that "we've got a ways to go."

"All sides said there was good progress," said White House press secretary Mike McCurry as the final meeting of the day broke up shortly late Saturday evening.

Another three-hour budget session was set for the Cabinet Room of the White House this morning, but no early agreement was expected, and McCurry said the talks would continue into the new year, beginning anew Tuesday.

Meanwhile, the federal government remained partially closed in an ever-deepening crisis.

President Clinton was to take a break this afternoon and fly to Hilton Head, S.C., for New Year's Eve, where he was to take part in a Renaissance Weekend session and play golf, McCurry said.



House Speaker Newt Gingrich, President Clinton and Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole continued talks into the evening.

Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole was scheduled for a series of political events in New Hampshire. House Speaker Newt Gingrich planned to travel to his congressional district in Georgia.

McCurry said Clinton encouraged Senate Democrats to break a procedural impasse preventing action on a plan by Dole to return all furloughed workers to their jobs without pay but with a guarantee they would be paid at a later date.