

Bob Dole



NEWS

U. S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER

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WHITEWATER UPDATE

MUCH OF WHITEWATER CONTROVERSY CAUSED BY WHITE HOUSE:
VICE PRESIDENT SHOULD REVIEW OWN PAST STATEMENTS
BEFORE QUESTIONING MOTIVES OF REPUBLICANS

WASHINGTON -- Senate Republican Leader Bob Dole today released the following statement regarding the Whitewater controversy and Vice President Gore's appearance on CBS's "Face the Nation":

"I know it's been a tough week for the White House 'damage control' experts, but no matter how hard they try, they can't obscure this fact: much of the Whitewater controversy to date has been caused by their own blunders. Misstatements, omissions of fact, and contradictory public announcements coming from the White House have served to fuel public skepticism and heighten press scrutiny.

"Needless to say, newspapers like *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *USA Today*, and *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, which have all editorialized in support of the appointment of a special counsel, are hardly Republican in orientation. And at least two Democratic Senators, Daniel Patrick Moynihan and Bill Bradley, have publicly stated that Attorney General Reno should appoint a special counsel to examine the Whitewater allegations.

"It has been my position that the Attorney General should appoint a special counsel because it is in the interest of both President Clinton and Mrs. Clinton and in the interest of the American people, who deserve a full accounting of the facts behind the Whitewater controversy. If the President and Mrs. Clinton have done nothing wrong, which may indeed be the case, they deserve to have their names cleared in a manner in which the public will have complete confidence.

"I am saddened that Vice President Gore has stooped to suggesting that Republican calls for a special counsel are somehow inappropriate or unseemly, particularly during a week in which the President suffered the loss of his mother. As I said this past Thursday, 'I admired Mrs. Kelley as a woman of great courage and perseverance who deeply loved her family.' I know how close the President was to his mother, and my sympathies go out to him and his family.

"Before questioning the motivations of those who have requested the appointment of a Whitewater special counsel, I would suggest to the Vice President that he review his own past statements on the so-called October Surprise and Iraq-gate affairs. As these statements will demonstrate, and there are more, the Vice President has never been shy in pulling the special counsel trigger or calling for a Congressional investigation."

Excerpts of the statements by then Senator Gore to which Senator Dole referred are attached:

Investigations

"The evidence which has thus far trickled into the public domain is still fragmentary. Much of it is circumstantial, but it is compelling. If the allegations are not true, the country needs to know they are not true. If they are true, the country needs to know that as well. ...

"I believe the air needs to be cleared. So, I am today calling for a formal investigation of these charges and allegations without prejudging what that investigation might find, but believing deeply that it needs to take place in order to establish the truth or falsehood of the allegations that have been made."

-- Senator Al Gore
Senate floor speech on
1980 "October Surprise"
June 24, 1991

Special Counsels

In addition, the Tennessee Senator criticized Mr. Bush for the decision by Attorney General William P. Barr not to appoint a special prosecutor to investigate charges that Administration officials hampered efforts to prosecute people who helped the Iraqi Government illegally use American agricultural credits to purchase arms.

"The similarities between the two crises are overwhelming," Mr. Gore said after his speech, referring to the Iran-contra affair and the illegal methods that were used to allow Iraq to purchase weapons. "If he refuses to answer questions about the first and refuses to comply with the law and establish a special prosecutor in the second, then it raises extremely serious questions of credibility."

-- The New York Times
September 4, 1992

Gore also called for a special prosecutor to investigate allegations that the administration had tried to cover up evidence that the United States was promoting loan guarantees to Saddam Hussein just before Iraq invaded Kuwait. Gore said that a Justice Department decision this year to reject a special prosecutor was "a political decision."

-- The Boston Globe
September 4, 1992

Documents

Gore urged Bush to release documents related to his dealings with Iraq prior to that nation's August 1990 invasion of Kuwait and for the White House to make public transcripts of Bush's testimony to the Iran-Contra independent counsel and to a special commission that investigated the affair.

"There is not a single excuse for classifying as sensitive any of these documents," Gore told the National Conference of Editorial Writers. "The only reason he refuses to release them is because he knows they will be politically damaging to him."

"What we are seeing now is President Bush presiding over a coverup significantly larger than the Watergate coverup," he said.

-- Minneapolis Star-Tribune
October 16, 1992

Gore said Bush's sworn testimony needed to be made public to see how it meshed with Bush's public statements over the last six years. Gore also referred to Bush's campaign focus on trust by borrowing one of Bush's favorite lines against Bill Clinton. Gore said that the president "should come clean to the American people" about his actions.

-- St. Louis Post-Dispatch
November 1, 1992

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