

White House-bound?

Dole rides high on voter support in Oakland County

BY PAT MURPHY
STAFF WRITER

As Bob Dole brought his never-say-die message to Troy, he emphasized the issues he believes will yet carry him into the White House.

Concluding a two-day campaign blitz in Michigan, Dole came to Firefighters Park Tuesday talking about character, his proposed 15 percent tax cut and touting American family values.

And he struck a chord. The crowd — estimated at about 2,000 by Troy police — responded with gusto, often cheering and occasionally interrupting with "Dole/Kemp" cheers.

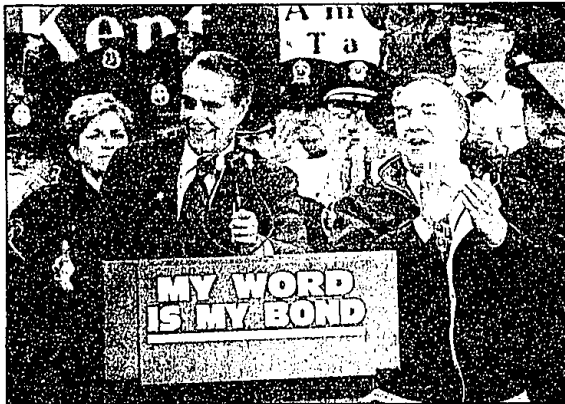
"This man is a savior," said Thana Merrick of Bloomfield Hills. "Dole can still save the country from going to the hell of socialism."

"I'm impressed," said Bob Ernewein of Southfield. "I still think we can win," he said, despite the polls (showing Dole trailing Clinton by 10 to 16 percentage points).

It was a near-perfect setting as Dole's charter bus, Asphalt 1, rolled into the park about 12:40 p.m. with flags flying. The campaign bus — with national media in tow — graced rallies in Frankenmuth and Grand Blanc earlier in the day. The next scheduled stop was Columbus, Ohio.

The sky was a little overcast most of the time. But occasionally the sun broke through, highlighting the

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Announcing endorsements: Dole tells the crowd he has received the support of the Police Officers' Association of Michigan and the Michigan Deputy Sheriffs' Association.

Crowd pleaser: Dole waves to his many fans.

Adoring fans: Gayle Shields from Troy, (left to right) Chris Sayer, of West Bloomfield, and Steve Muskovitz, of West Bloomfield were just three of the estimated 2,000 Dole fans in attendance Tuesday.



STAFF PHOTOS BY JOHN STORMELOAN

Presidential hopeful wins the support of area police agencies

Sheriff John F. Nichols and a host of police officers formed an impressive backdrop for presidential hopeful Bob Dole as he decried crime, including the increased use of illegal drugs.

The men and women in uniform respectfully stood at attention as Dole gratefully accepted endorsements from organizations including the Police Officers' Association of Michigan and the Michigan Deputy Sheriffs' Association.

But the voice of the law enforcement community isn't as

unanimous as Tuesday's setting at Troy's Firefighters Park might indicate.

A similar contingent of deputy sheriffs and police officers — minus Nichols, often the county's top Republican vote-getter — accompanied President Bill Clinton in August when his campaign stopped in Royal Oak en route to the Democratic convention in Chicago.

Furthermore, as Dole seemed to be basking in the warm glow

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