

Students ponder presidential picks

By KELLY JOHNSON
Senior Editor

Bill Clinton promises to protect education and entitlement programs, while balancing the budget. Bob Dole pledges a 15-percent across-the-board tax cut and a stronger economy. In seven days, the American public will elect the last president of the 20th century.

Many people say the decision is as important as any made in America this century. Yet the main issue of the 1996 presidential election "is not crime, the economy, or even character, but sheer crashing boredom among the electorate," The Economist said.

But this is no time to be bored with politics, says Chad Pekron, chairman of the UNL College Republicans. He says students should be concerned enough about their futures to get to the polls.

"Vote. What happens in 1996 will effect the rest of our lives," Pekron said. "Now is the best time to become involved in politics."

Marney Monson, president of UNL Democrats, agreed.

"Students aren't going to vote because they don't think they have time," Monson said. But "an education doesn't seem complete" if students don't become active in the world outside of university life, she said.

Tricia Bruning, executive director of the state Democratic Party, said Clinton's education policies should make him popular with college students.

"Education's expensive, but it's a great investment," Bruning said. "Clinton acknowledges that."

Education funding is a top priority of the Democrats, Monson said. And as a student and future educator, she says her vote will go to Clinton.

"What Clinton has to offer is what the Democratic Party has to offer," Monson said. She said she couldn't understand how students could "side with the Republican Party, who's cutting their federal aid and student loans."

Some students have already thought about voting. Nick Hohman, a freshman business major, is waiting for his absentee ballot to arrive from Omaha. He knows how he'll vote when it arrives.

"I'm voting Republican because I don't like Bill Clinton," Hohman said. "I'm more of a Republican supporter than a Bob Dole supporter."

Another student says she'll support Dole because of his stand on abortion.

"I'm going to vote for Dole," said Lisa Schulte, a sophomore journalism major from Lincoln. "The main reason is because he's pro-life."



Bill Clinton

Age: 50; Hoped, Ark., Aug. 19, 1946.
Occupation: President of the United States.
Family: Married in 1975 to Hillary Rodham. Daughter, Chelsea.
Education: Bachelor's degree, Georgetown University School of Foreign Service, 1969; Rhodes scholar, Oxford University, 1969-70; law degree, Yale Law School, 1972.
Military Experience: None.
Political Experience: Arkansas attorney general, 1977-79; Arkansas Governor, 1979-81, 1983-92; president, 1993-present.

Albert Gore Jr.

Age: 48; Washington D.C., March 31, 1948.
Occupation: Vice president of the United States.
Family: Married in 1970 to Mary Elizabeth "Tipper" Altheimer; four children.
Education: Bachelor's degree, Harvard University, 1969; attended Vanderbilt University Graduate School of Religion, 1971-72, and Vanderbilt Law School, 1974-76.
Military Experience: Army, 1969-71, newspaper reporter, 20th Engineering Battalion; Vietnam War veteran.
Political Experience: U.S. House, 1977-85; U.S. Senate, 1985-93; vice president, 1993-present.

Bob Dole

Age: 73; Russell, Kan., July 22, 1923.
Occupation: Former U.S. senator.
Family: Married in 1975 to Mary Elizabeth Hanford. Daughter, Robin, from a previous marriage.
Education: Bachelor's degree, Washburn University, Topeka, Kan., 1949; law degree, Washburn 1952.
Military Experience: Army, 1943-48; captain; World War II veteran; Bronze Star; Purple Heart (two).
Political Experience: Kansas House of Representatives, 1951-53; Russell County attorney, 1953-61; U.S. House, 1961-69; U.S. Senate, 1969-96; U.S. Senate Republican Leader, 1984-96.

Jack Kemp

Age: 61; Los Angeles, July 13, 1935.
Occupation: Director, Empower America, a public advocacy group; Republican vice presidential nominee.
Family: Married in 1958 to Joanne Main; four children.
Education: Bachelor's degree, Occidental College, Los Angeles, 1957; attended Long Beach State University, California Western University.
Military Experience: Army Reserve, 1958-62, private.
Political Experience: U.S. House, 1971-89.

Her friend, Melissa Zierke, a junior secondary education major, said Dole would get her vote, too. But she said she thought the Republican ticket would lose.

"I think Clinton will win," Zierke said. "This campaign's based on economics more than anything else."

Schulte and Zierke both said they thought their friends would vote.

"We want to vote because it's our first opportunity," Zierke said. "We all just turned 19."

Student voting is important, echoed Pam Thompson, executive director of the state Republican Party.

"Politics and who leads this country and government affects everyone," Thompson said.

But making an informed decision at the polls takes some work, she said.

"I'd encourage people to take five minutes a day and look hard at the issues and what con-

cerns them and then compare that to the candidates," Thompson said. "It's easy to assume everything's going to be OK. This election is more important than that. You have to exercise your right to vote and encourage others to vote."

Thompson said a vote for Bob Dole would be in a student's best interest.

"He's interested in their futures," she said. "Young college graduates shouldn't be discouraged by high taxes."

"They should be able to put money back in their pockets," she said. "Bob Dole says, 'It's your money, not the government's money.'"

Bruning said she thinks Clinton is the best person to lead the government during the next four years.

Bruning said people should vote for Clinton "to protect education, Medicare, Social Security and to make sure the economy keeps growing."

Issues '96

Supports abortion rights?

Clinton: Yes

Dole: No

Supports affirmative action?

Clinton: Yes, but would reform

Dole: No, but has backed in the past

Supports gun control?

Clinton: Yes, but would reform

Dole: No, but has backed in the past

Advocates term limits?

Clinton: No

Dole: Yes

Major welfare proposals:

Clinton: Federal government would keep control; advocates "workfare"

Dole: States would control. Would freeze grants for five years at 1994 levels

Major tax proposals:

Clinton: Increased taxes on wealthy; major tax cuts in latest proposal

Dole: 15% across the board tax cut

Balanced budget amendment?

Clinton: Opposes

Dole: Favors

Deny social services to illegal immigrants?

Clinton: No

Dole: Yes

Source: AP

Federal Reserve may influence economy most

From The Associated Press

Greenspan given credit for robust election-year economy

WASHINGTON — Bill Clinton, the first president in decades to face the voters with no recession on his record, is working overtime to claim credit. Bob Dole counters that the economy isn't all that great and that Republicans are responsible for any success.

The most significant figure could well be a man whose name appears on no ballot and is hardly mentioned on the campaign trail — Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan.

"If you want to talk about anybody who helped the economy, it is Greenspan," says Charles Schultz, an

economist who served under Democrat Jimmy Carter. "The good record on inflation and the economy is the credit of the Federal Reserve."

A Republican economist, Michael Boskin, scoffs at Clinton's claim.

"I don't mean to be rude, but it is a huge stretch," he says. "No serious economist would give him very much credit for the cyclical upturn of the economy."

An economy measured in the trillions of dollars is pushed and pulled by a variety of forces, but economists agree that by far the biggest governmental influence comes from the Federal Reserve through its control over

interest rates.

The Fed has far more say on such matters as economic growth, recessions and inflation than any president.

Just as Clinton had the benefit of coming into office as a fledgling recovery was beginning to take hold, his predecessor, George Bush, was a victim of bad timing.

For much of Bush's term, the Fed was raising interest rates in an effort to slow the economy and keep inflation from getting out of hand. As often happens when the Fed is tightening credit, the economy did more than slow — it went into an actual recession in July 1990.

The downturn was over by March of 1991. But the initial upturn was so anemic that voters in 1992 were still feeling anxious, and Clinton attacked Bush's economic record as the worst since Herbert Hoover.

This year the economy gained a second wind that has led to surprisingly robust growth, pushing unemployment to a seven-year low.

"The best thing that presidents can do is get out of the way. There are lots of ways they can louse things up," said David Wyss, chief financial economist at DRI-McGraw Hill.

Clinton is praised for not interfering in 1994 when the Fed raised inter-

est rates. Indeed, Democrat Clinton has forged a remarkable partnership with Greenspan, himself a Republican. Over the howls of liberal Democrats, Clinton appointed Greenspan to a third term.

Dole has good things to say about Greenspan, too. He and other Republicans say any political credit for the economic revival belongs not to Clinton but to Bush, who was president when the recovery began, and to the Republican Congress.

"Presidents like to take credit for an economy that is doing well, but if you look more closely, you usually find a competent Fed chairman somewhere in the wings," New York economist David Jones said.