

DOLE GROWS TESTY ON FUND QUESTIONS

Asked Again About Donations to
1973 Campaign, He Urges Trial
in Court, 'Not in Newspapers'

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WASHINGTON, Sept. 12 — Senator Robert J. Dole, the Republican Vice-Presidential candidate, grew somewhat testy today over continued questioning as to whether he took unreported campaign contributions from the Gulf Oil Company in 1970 and 1973.

"I didn't take the money," he insisted, as he has since the allegations were reported in The New York Times early last week. "Bill Kats his administrative assistant at the time didn't take the money. If there's going to be a trial, let's have it. Let's not do it in the newspapers."

His apparent annoyance came as questions persisted after he had appeared on NBC's "Meet the Press," where he had been interrogated at some length about the Gulf money.

At one point on the television program, he declared impatiently: "If the prosecutor is leaking the information, or someone in The Washington Post or New York Times is dreaming it up, I can't control that."

The 53-year-old Kansan, who has been known in the past as a waspish campaigner but who has been relatively mild since his nomination three and a half weeks ago as President Ford's running mate, did not elaborate on his implied criticism of the Federal special prosecutor, who has been investigating possibly illegal contributions, and the newspapers.

The New York Times reported last Monday that sources close to that investigation had disclosed that Claude C. Wild Jr., a former Gulf lobbyist, had testified before a Federal grand jury that he had given Mr. Kats between \$5,000 and \$6,000 in illegal funds in 1973 to pass on to Mr. Dole for his 1974 re-election campaign in Kansas.

Later, Mr. Wild, who distributed \$4 million in legal and illegal contributions for Gulf, declined to discuss his testimony about the alleged 1973 gift, but said he had given Mr. Dole \$2,000 in 1970 for disbursement to others.

Senator Dole denied receiving money in either year from Mr. Wild or Gulf and Mr. Kats, now retired, said he had no memory of the alleged 1973 transaction. On Wednesday, Mr. Wild, still refusing



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Senator Robert J. Dole answering questions about campaign contributions during TV interview yesterday.

to comment on his alleged testimony about the 1973 gift, said that after checking his records he was "confident" he had been "in error" about the 1970 donation and apologized publicly to Mr. Dole. The Senator accepted the apology and called the matter an "unfortunate incident."

Asked by a panelist whether he could "see any way to definitely resolve the issue and get it out of the way," Mr. Dole replied that the "only way it might be resolved would be from some statement from the prosecutor."

Mr. Dole and many other politicians returned contributions to the Associated Milk Producers Inc. after Watergate investigators began investigating the milk fund.

"It just seems to me," Mr. Dole said later, that "we shouldn't be condemned and criticized and found guilty of anything without having the information—and I say it didn't happen."

Asked on "Meet the Press" whether he thought the acknowledged Republican strategy of having Mr. Ford remain in Washington "acting Presidential" would be effective during the campaign, Mr. Dole said that in his view Mr. Ford "is taking his case to the people from the White House, being the President, and I am doing what I can to help out in the field, but I think it has been very effective."

However, when he was pressed on the question, he said that he thought that Mr. Ford would take to the hustings in earnest after the expected early adjournment of Congress.