

POLITICS

Wednesday, October 21, 1992

The Battalion

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Campaigners say Perot vote not wasted

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

DALLAS — Ross Perot's campaign, encouraged by his feisty performance in the final presidential debate, is gearing for a stretch run designed to convince supporters their votes won't be wasted on Election Day.

Still, Perot had no appearances scheduled except for three 30-minute television commercials later in the week, and several loyalists called for him to return to live

Supporters fear public might turn from candidate due to poor showing in polls

campaigning if he expects to gain ground from his third-place showing in the polls.

Perot himself expressed concern, at the end of Monday's debate, that voters might turn away from him simply because they view the odds as unsurmountable.

"You've got to stop letting these folks in the press tell you you're throwing your vote away,"

Perot said. "You've got to start using your own head."

In his stiffest attacks to date on his opponents, he chided Bush for contributing to the savings and loan crisis and helping build the regimes of Panama's Manuel Noriega and Iraq's Saddam Hussein before tearing them down. And he equated Clinton's 12 years as governor of Arkansas to the job of

running a corner drug store, saying it was "irrelevant" to the qualifications needed from a presidential candidate.

Perot said neither of his opponents' economic plans added up and blamed both for having foreign lobbyists in their campaigns.

"I guess my principal memory of tonight's debate is the things they ducked and the fact that they sure don't want to discuss the lobbyist situation because that's where they get all their money," he said afterward.

News Analysis: Bush begins campaign 'blitz'

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — President Bush will be trying in the final two-week campaign stretch to shore up his weakened base and sustain the aggressive stance he struck in the final debate. Bill Clinton's goal is to preserve his double-digit lead.

As Bush began a final blitz to save his presidency, the Arkansas governor, brimming with fresh confidence, worked the pivotal Midwest and plotted to extend his margin into Western states that have been traditional Republican turf.

The two will spend much of the campaign endgame fighting in the industrial battle-

ground states — where Clinton now enjoys a comfortable lead — and swamping the airwaves with their ads.

Many analysts have suggested there's not enough time left for Bush to mount a comeback and that the die may already be cast for a decisive Clinton win.

And even Republican strategists promoting a come-from-behind victory for Bush acknowledge it's a long shot.

With the three debates over, both major-party candidates on Tuesday signaled the likely course of the rest of the campaign.

Independent challenger Ross Perot, still the third man out, planned to stick to his strategy — spending tens of millions of dol-

lars of his own money buying television time but otherwise staying out of public view.

"I'm going to keep fighting," Clinton said as he campaigned in Michigan, Illinois and Wisconsin. "I have the best economic plan. That's what I'll hammer home these last two weeks."

Clinton campaigned in Illinois and Wisconsin before a swing through Western states that were once Republican bastions — including Wyoming and Nevada. The trip underscored the confidence that was spreading through the Clinton campaign.

"Bush is still stuck in his base. We'll campaign in his base, too," said Clinton communications director George Stephanopoulos.

Clinton working to hold lead in polls

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Bill Clinton summoned supporters Tuesday to "end trickle-down economics" by ousting the Republicans as he set out on the final lap of his marathon quest for the White House. President Bush stressed that character counted as much as the economy, adding that his rival was deficient on that count.

One day after their third and final debate, the campaign rivals

thus embarked on a two-week sprint to Election Day, the Democratic challenger working to hold a large lead in the polls while the Republican president hoped for a late turnaround in the race.

Independent Ross Perot was back home in Dallas, pledging fresh 30-minute televised appeals in his unconventional bid for the White House.

Republicans and Democrats alike studied the Electoral College map for closing strategies.

"We're still in a position where

we need to shift the race five to six to seven points and it will be competitive," conceded Bush campaign aide Charlie Black.

Clinton spokesman George Stephanopoulos conceded that Bush has probably shored up his strength in traditional Republican areas in the past two weeks, but said there was little GOP activity in about 10 states with 150 Electoral votes or more. It takes 270 electoral votes to win the White House.

Clinton, in Michigan and Illi-

nois, and Bush, on a Southern whistlestop tour, engaged in the customary charge, counter-charge of the campaign.

None of it would sound fresh to the tens of millions of voters who tuned in to the campaign debates.

The president conceded the country's economic difficulties, but said the nation was "caught up in something global." Clinton, he said, would raise taxes on the middle class, the Democrat's denials notwithstanding.



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