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What next for Dole?

WASHINGTON (UPI) — The Republican vice presidential candidate was always looking for places to go — from Darlington, S.C., at the beginning of the campaign to Herkimer, N.Y., and Vallejo, Calif., near the end.

After 44 states and 62,000 miles in a losing effort, the question is where Robert Dole is looking now as he vacations in South America.

Throughout the campaign, he dropped sly hints that he might like to run for president in four years, but mostly he shied away from the question.

As the vice presidential candidate on a ticket that did not embarrass itself at the polls, the Kansas senator should have an early claim on the right to challenge Jimmy Carter in 1980.

Dole has enough experience, ambition and political IOUs from the past campaign and his previous chairmanship of the Republican National Committee to make a credible run for the 1980 GOP nomination. But his physical stamina, grasp of the issues and personality were, in this campaign, less than presidential.

He spent the entire 74-day

election campaign slashing at Carter for his "three positions on every issue," the Playboy interview, his slipup on taxing those with above-average incomes, his support from organized labor, his choice of Walter Mondale, the free spending Democratic Congress.

While President Ford stayed in the Rose Garden for the month of September, Dole was out leading the Republican charge from 38 poll points behind. While Dole was drawing crowds counted in the dozens, Ford was beaming at crowds of thousands — using words and issues that Dole had market tested for him.

As ranking minority member of the Senate Agriculture Committee, Dole did his best to repair the damage in the farm heartland that Ford did by imposing grain embargoes after he assumed the presidency.

But while he was successful in winning farmers' allegiances and the entire western half of the nation, Dole was also coming across to the rest of the country as the acid-tongued campaign "hatchet man" Mondale and others said he was.

His casual sarcasm and snappy answers during the vice presidential debate damaged him in the eyes of many, according to polls and postdebate commentaries. And while he had his share of flounders during the campaign, none was as striking or politically loaded as his accusation that World War II, in which he lost the use of his right arm, and the Vietnam war, which he supported all the way, were "Democrat wars."

His constant use of "Democrat" as an adjective instead of a noun — epitomizing his partisanship and his political coming of age in the 1950s — turned off some of the very people the GOP needed to have in order to overcome the Democrats' inherent edge in registration.

Dole and those close to him disclaim any responsibility for Ford's loss, arguing it was they who helped the President make a race out of it.

Those who argue the opposite point out that had Ford chosen a less strident, more moderate running mate, the GOP might have lost Kansas' seven electoral votes or Montana's four or Oklahoma's eight.

Will Dole try for top spot in 1980?

WASHINGTON (UPI) — Robert Dole, defeated vice presidential candidate, is vacationing in South America. And because he will come back to his Senate seat in January, he may be considering whether to aim for the presidency in 1980.

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A running mate less partisan and less controversial, they contend, might have given Ford Ohio's 25 or Pennsylvania's 27 or New York's 41 electoral votes and possibly the election.

and carry the campaign against Carter and point out the contradictions. The President was to remain in the White House. Had it worked we would have been geniuses and won the greatest victory in the history of politics."

Dole says everyone looks for a scapegoat and noted he has seen the blame placed not only on himself, but on John Connally and Ronald Reagan.

At that point in the interview, Dole showed a letter from Vice President Nelson Rockefeller that said, in part, "I am one who believes that the success of the Ford-Dole ticket in uniting the party in traditionally Republican areas, in carrying the West and the farm states, was due in no small part to your hardhitting, articulate efforts."

Still, Dole said he is willing to absorb some of the blame.

"I knew I would have to take some of the heat," he said. "I was the point man, the lightning rod. I would take some of the heat and get the heat off the President. I think we probably made some points around that nettled Carter, some and maybe Mondale."

The Kansas senator also pulled out some election results that showed he carried his hometown of Russell by a 1,734-600 margin while Mondale lost in his hometown of Afton, Minn., by a 650-580 tally.

"It was a good campaign, but it's hard to lose when it's so close," he says. "I wish them (Carter-Mondale) well for the sake of the country, but I think President Ford would have been the best President."

Dole says Democrats cannot blame anyone else for whatever problems occur. The Democrats will control the White House, Congress and the federal agencies.

"Maybe the American people need a dose of that kind of government," he said. "Maybe they'll like it. It's easy for the out's to run against the in's, as the Democrats did by blaming Ford for everything."

The Republican party is weak now, he said, but added he is not discouraged about the party's future. Millions of Americans didn't vote for either Carter or Ford, he said. Republicans definitely are a minority party and the tendency may be to become more conservative, he said.

Mary Louise Smith, who Monday announced her resignation effective in

January, warned against the party taking any "fatal lurch" toward a conservative extreme.

Dole said the Republican task now is to attract the disinterested into the party ranks, but he says he has no idea how to do that.

"We've got to assume that a lot of Americans, particularly organized labor and leaders of organized labor, are pretty much part and parcel of the Democratic party," he said, in a repeat of an oft-stated comment during the campaign. "We've got to figure out how to bring the working man and woman and the blacks who didn't vote into the party. Half the people who could didn't vote this year."

Dole speculated that a loss may be necessary to get people involved in politics. Voters were turned off by Watergate, the Nixon pardon and the Vietnam War, he said.

"We were in bad shape in 1964 (when Sen. Barry Goldwater of Arizona was smothered by Lyndon B. Johnson) and we recovered to win in 1968 (after Johnson did not seek re-election and the Republicans nominated Richard Nixon)," he said. "We're going to have to build the party from the bottom up. Maybe that's the challenge."

Dole says he has no personal candidate in mind, but said the party cannot afford to choose a new chairman who is regarded as a representative for any individuals in the party.

"I just haven't thought of anyone who would represent a true compromise of all the hopes and aspirations of individuals and the party," he said.

Dole will not say if he is interested in seeking the presidential nomination in 1980, but notes, "I do believe that I have a lot of friends in the country who want me to remain active because they believe in a two-party system. Anything which looks ahead to 1980 makes a good item in the whisper section of U.S. News, but the party is going to determine that (the Republican presidential candidate), not some combatator."

Dole said he will return to the Senate.

"I'm going to be working for Kansas," he said. "There's no doubt about it, the recognition is there and I hope it can be helpful for Kansas; I think we have brought a certain amount of recognition to Kansas."

Dole sensed loss of election early

By KEN PETERSON
Capital Journal

WASHINGTON Correspondent

WASHINGTON — When Bob Dole went to the White House on election night, he felt even then he would not emerge as the vice president-elect.

The first inkling that President Ford was in trouble came three days earlier when Bob, the Kansas junior senator, talked to a Republican pollster who lacked the bouncy enthusiasm he once displayed. The pollster said the Ford-Dole ticket would have to carry three of the four large states, almost an impos-

sible task in Dole's mind.

"It just didn't sound good to me," Dole says now, exactly three weeks after the election. "I was hopeful on election day, but it didn't seem to me we could pull it off. I didn't go to the White House that night expecting to be the vice president-elect when I left."

Dole made the comments in an interview Tuesday with The Daily Capital, the first interview he has granted since he returned this week from a brief South American vacation with his wife, Elizabeth. Mrs. Dole has since re-

turned to her job as a federal trade commissioner.

So Dole is now just Sen. Robert J. Dole, R-Kan., and he concedes he feels a deep disappointment.

He still seems angered at the treatment his campaign received from what he called the "liberal bent" of the news media. He says it would be interesting if an independent organization compiled the stories filed by news organizations and compared the favorable or unfavorable coverage given to him and Vice President-elect Walter F. Mondale of Minnesota. He says he can-

not recall a single negative story written about Mondale.

And, he adds, "It's no secret. The New York Times was after me since I was nominated. There's nothing wrong with that, but oftentimes it was a little undeserved."

Several columnists blame Dole for the President's election loss, a treatment, Dole says, that shows his part of the campaign received attention.

"Most vice presidents you never hear from after they are nominated," Dole says. "I was to go out and hit the road

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'Republicans Are Still Alive and Kicking': Dole

WASHINGTON (UPI) — Sen. Robert Dole says the Republicans, despite their election losses at all levels of government, are "still alive and kicking" and must now go out and find good candidates to rebuild from the bottoms up.

In an interview after his return from a South American vacation, the defeated GOP vice presidential candidate talked about the party's future and the kind of chairman it needs to replace Mary Louise Smith, who is resigning in January.

A former Republican National

Committee chairman himself, Dole said the leading candidates appear to be John Connally, Ronald Reagan, defeated Tennessee Sen. William Brock and possibly Utah Republican leader Nick Richards.

"I've been visiting around trying to make certain we have someone who wants to take the job," the Kansas senator said. "It's a fulltime job with a lot of speaking. I haven't suggested anyone and don't know if I will."

No one has announced for the job, but a Brock spokesman said the Tennessee "is interested in

it." Neither Connally nor Reagan, despite support from some local politicians, has publicized interest.

"I don't think anybody knows who's going to be around in 1980," Dole said, but as a party "we're still alive and kicking. We just can't afford to kick each other. There are not enough of us around."

Asked about possible attempts by the conservative wing to win the chairmanship through Connally or Reagan, Dole cautioned: "I'm not certain we can afford to have any one

of view. We need a strong chairman or chairwoman.

"It's a fulltime job, which would preclude someone on Congress. What we need is another Ray Bliss type who can sort of put everything back together and build the party from the bottom up."

Bliss, the senior member of the national committee, took over the RNC chairmanship after the GOP's 1964 debacle.

He said the party must find new talent, especially among minorities.

Asked how, Dole said: "You go

out and find black candidates and then you go to work for them and try to get them elected. I never thought you could attract blacks with all white spokesmen. The same is true in Spanish-speaking areas."

"While Carter is trying to fill up the government, we can find some good candidates," particularly at the state level.

"The first step is to go out and really find outstanding men and women who will run as Republicans. Build from the bottom up...I don't want to exclude anyone from our party."

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510
December 1, 1976

Mr. Russ Townsley
THE RUSSELL DAILY NEWS
802 North Maple
Russell, Kansas 67665

Dear Russ:

I just want to say thank you to all of my good friends in Russell County. I shall always cherish the visit to Russell with President Ford on August 20, for it was the highlight of our campaign.

The overwhelming support the Ford/Dole ticket received in Russell County was most gratifying. I know that literally hundreds were involved there in many of the arrangements — Democrats as well as Republicans — and while we were disappointed with the final outcome, I was personally heartened by the tremendous bipartisan response.

Since I do not have the names of everyone who assisted, I am taking the liberty of expressing my thanks in this manner.

If I may ever be of assistance to anyone who reads this letter, please contact me. Our office address is: 4213 Senate Office Building, Washington, D. C. 20510, and our office phone number is: (202) 224-6521.

Sincerely yours,
Bob Dole
BOB DOLE
U. S. Senate

KC Times 12-4

Washington on Review

Burden of Ford Defeat Placed on Dole

By Joseph A. Lastic
Chief of the Washington Bureau

Washington — Alf Landon, the Republican presidential nominee in 1936 who lost to President Franklin D. Roosevelt, once told Sen. Bob Dole (R-Kan.) about the morning after.

"When you carry only two states," Landon confided with a smile, "you don't have to worry about what went wrong."

Unfortunately for Dole, the Republican vice-presidential nominee this year, he cannot forget so easily. The race was so close that what might have been, what could have been done and what went wrong will forever haunt him. Some blame is being put on Dole, and he will have to become accustomed to living with such assertions.

Did Bob Dole hurt or help this year?

Dr. George Gallup said, "I don't know, we didn't take any soundings on that issue as you put it."

I asked Lou Harris. "Yes, he did hurt," Harris replied. "He cost the ticket two or three points in the North. He lost the debate to Mondale, 29 to 55. He came across as a negative heavy. I know he says he did what the strategy called for him to do, to be the point man, to go after Carter, but that says something about his lack of sensitivity."

An NBC poll a few days ago passed the question, "How would you vote if you could have voted for vice-president?" Forty-seven percent said they would have chosen Mondale, 24 per cent Dole. The others were not sure or chose other persons.

Dole has had a tough time from the beginning. His selection at Kansas City shocked the political reporters because they had dismissed any possibility that he would be



SEN. BOB DOLE
...haunted by negatives

House to see the President for their first meeting since the election, he found the President disappointed that they did not win, but no personal blame was placed on him, Dole said. The talk was of states where they came so close but lost, notably Ohio and Wisconsin.

Dole's comfort is in looking at the map of the election results, which shows the West and farm states for the Ford-Dole ticket — the areas where Dole campaigned the hardest. Iowa stands out because Dole went back there at the last minute. Sure enough, it tilted Republican. The South is a big disappointment, especially Louisiana and Mississippi, where Dole thought the ticket had a chance to win. He thinks Dixie will come back to Republicans, that Southerners voted this time out of loyalty to one of their own.

Political commentary since the election has been hard on Dole. Rowland Evans and Robert Novak found that Dole was emerging partisan Democrats, turning off liberal-moderate Republicans, that his selection was a blunder. They quote unnamed senior aides assigning blame for the defeat to Dole. When President Ford saw their column he reacted angrily: "Nobody in authority said that."

I talked to several men close to Ford who said they had never heard him blame Dole for the loss, that the agonizing was over the campaign efforts placed in certain states such as the time wasted campaigning in New York, where the chances were slim for victory, that should have been spent in Ohio.

Senator Dole spoke to the Republican governors Tuesday, and writers found him "depressed" or "subdued," but they reported what he had to say about the need to stop fighting and build the party. One of

them commented that what Dole had to say was widely reported and that "if he had stuck with his speeches in the campaign instead of tossing off liners, the country would have a different view of Bob Dole."

My conversations with political writers in this town shows eight out of 10 think Dole hurt the ticket. They have written it, and as the political picture of the future develops four years hence they will refer to the campaign and Dole will be described in negatives. So it will not pass away.

Sen. Thomas F. Eagleton (D-Mo.), pushed off the Democratic ticket by Sen. George McGovern in 1972, gets mentioned periodically whenever somebody writes a story about vice-presidential selection. Eagleton has learned to live with it. He did not let that wrenching episode in his life conquer him, moving ahead to establish his reputation as a most effective senator.

Those writers and politicians who see Dole as a positive contribution to the ticket say he fulfilled the role set out for him by campaign strategy: To woo farmers and ranchers, fire up Republicans and reach out for the fans of Ronald Reagan, who were reluctant to do much work for the ticket.

The voter ultimately makes his choice on who is running for President and this time chose between Ford and Carter, not Mondale and Dole.

Senator Dole received a lot of messages after the election wishing him well or commiserating in the loss. Once again Alf Landon gave Dole a boost when he needed it. Landon said succinctly, "If you win you receive a lot of credit you don't deserve, and if you lose you receive a lot of blame you don't deserve."

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