

180, 1982

Page 4

THE GAZETTE

William Allen White, 1895 - 1944

William Lindsay White, 1944 - 1973

Ray James Beals,
Systems Manager

Glenn Edward Johnson,
Pressroom Foreman

Glen Albert Bradshaw,
Production Manager

Terry Cecil Morris,
Circulation Manager

Everett Ray Call,
Managing Editor

Elizabeth Thomas Robinson,
Advertising Manager

The Lord God said, "The land is mine; for you are strangers and sojourners with me." — Leviticus 23:23

Riding High

AS the old saying goes, he came out smelling like a rose.

When Robert Dole lost the presidential nomination to Ronald Reagan in 1980, most Americans probably expected him to settle back quietly into his Senate seat and fade from national view. The people of Kansas knew better. Senator Dole has drive and ambition and a sense of duty.

Opportunity knocked when Ronald Reagan led a Republican landslide that eventually made Senator Dole chairman of the Senate Finance Committee. It was just the kind of opportunity that Senator Dole savors. He since has become one of the most important men in the land.

And if publicity is a measure of political success, Senator Dole is riding high. Shown at right is a section of the New York Times's front page for May 4. Dominating that corner of the page is a picture of Senator Dole, looking a bit older and more distinguished. Under the picture is a story that tells about Senator Dole's successful efforts to save the

Voting Rights Act.

Just below the Times clipping is a column by Mary McGrory, a columnist of the liberal persuasion. She has some flattering things to say about the Voting Rights Act too. The column is worthwhile reading for any Kansan.

Almost every night, Senator Dole is pictured on the network news telecasts.

In short, he has become a major national newsmaker.

As Miss McGrory points out in her column, Senator Dole's critics accuse him of "playing to the left in the interests of a 1984 presidential candidacy." That is a sleazy slap. If ever Senator Dole displayed statesman-like stature it was in his handling of the Voting Rights Act. Most Kansans — indeed, most Americans — respect him for finding a way to resolve a deadlock that seemed hopeless.

As for presidential aspirations, well, why not? Senator Dole has matured politically to become one of the nation's more capable and respected leaders. — R.C.

WASHINGTON

Bob Dole Rides High

In the fickle world of Washington, stars rise and fall with the political tides. But right now, one of the brightest lights in the capital's firmament is clearly Robert Dole, the quick-on-the-quip chairman of the powerful Senate Finance Committee. Long known as a hard-driving conservative hatchet man, the Kansas Republican is now basking in his new image as the savvy statesman who single-handedly pushed through a jittery election-year Congress the \$89 billion tax hike that helped ease interest rates and set the financial markets rallying. "The bill wouldn't have had a chance without Bob Dole," contends Texas Democratic Congressman J. J. Pickle, a key member of the tax-writing Ways and Means Committee. Adds Wayne Valls, President Reagan's liaison with business: "Dole wasn't a front man for the White House; he was the master of the orchestra."

Dole's rise to political stardom stems from his mastery of the art of consensus-building at a time when the White House and Congress seemed at permanent loggerheads. Stepping into the much-needed role of mediator, the pragmatic Dole has been able to strike difficult compromises this year, not only on taxes, but on the extension of the voting rights bill, Medicare, food stamps and farm legislation.

And now, while the President and most Congressmen are shying away from such politically explosive issues as taxes and Social Security, the gutsy Dole is out front, calling for yet more tax reform—perhaps a flat tax—and for this month's lame duck session to face up to the problem of the financially troubled Social Security system. "If you want to be a leader, you've got

to stick your neck out," the hard-charging Dole told DUN'S BUSINESS MONTHLY.

What's more, like a racehorse chomping at the bit, the indomitable Dole is now setting his sights on the White House itself—that is, if Ronald Reagan decides to step down in 1984. And both Republican and Democratic strategists are for the first time taking his candidacy seriously. Indeed, in a rare show of interest, the Metal Workers Union invited the 59-year-old Kansan to address its recent convention, making him the only Republican to compete in what was widely viewed as labor's first Presidential try-out.

Dole's new role as a legislative powerhouse and serious Presidential contender, of course, starkly contrasts with his former image as an aggressive, mud-slinging, right-wing partisan. In the early 1970s, when he

Nixon's Doberman

chaired the Republican National Committee, the sharp-tongued conservative was known as Richard Nixon's Doberman pinscher. Indeed, former Senator George McGovern, the 1972 Democratic Presidential nominee, often griped that Dole ate him for breakfast. And in 1976, when then-President Gerald Ford chose Dole as his running mate, he took to the hustings with such partisan zeal that many Republicans later blamed him for Ford's narrow defeat.

After the 1976 loss, Bob Dole worked consciously to soften his image. Turning his rapier wit on himself shortly after the defeat, he mused: "I'll never forget the Dole-Mondale debates, and don't think I haven't tried. If you remember, Presi-

dent Ford was supposed to take the high road, and I was supposed to go for the jugular. I did. My own!"

But while he toned down his rhetoric, Dole's cut-'em-up, slash-'em-up image continued to haunt him until this year, when time and circumstance combined to put him in the catbird seat on the key economic issues of the day. For one thing, the Senate had gone Republican the year before, thrusting him into the chairmanship of the powerful Senate Finance Committee, with jurisdiction over taxes, trade and entitlements ranging from Social Security to Medicare. For another, House Democrats, loathe to raise taxes in an election year, had forfeited their traditional lead role on tax and spending matters to the Senate.

Meanwhile, the President, who had just signed his much-ballyhooed three-year tax cut bill, was determined to avoid raising taxes as long as possible. So the only hope for winning the package of spending cuts and tax hikes necessary to ease Wall Street's budget blues was the Senate—and, more specifically, the Finance Committee.

Dole attributes his new standing to the chairmanship of that critical committee. "I'm still competitive, combative at times," he says. "But I think the 'new Bob Dole' may be confused with his new responsibilities. When you're in the majority, you've got to produce more than press releases, speeches and rhetoric. You've got to produce legislation. And you can't kick people in the teeth and then ask them to vote for you."

But Dole was also the right man at the right time. A poor boy from Russell, Kansas, he learned early in life the meaning of the long hard fight, and

More Taxes, More Cuts

Next to the president himself, the man most responsible for passage of the huge tax-increase bill last week may well have been Senate Finance Committee chairman Robert Dole—the Kansas Republican who did most to fashion it in the first place. In an interview with NEWSWEEK's Howard Fineman, Dole previewed to the next round of tax and spending-cut legislation. Excerpts:

FINEMAN: Will there be more tax changes next year?
DOLE: We're not looking for a new revenue bill. . . . But that doesn't mean we're not going to continue to scrutinize the tax code. . . . For example, we might want to take another look at the provisions that allow big contractors to deduct taxes on their profits for years. And the currently tax-exempt industrial bonds were barely touched. Then there's tax simplification—limiting some of the deductions for state sales taxes and putting a cap on what an employer can deduct for health-insurance costs. And there are the energy tax credits, which the president suggested looking at and Congress decided not to tackle. We need to continue to lower the basic tax rates for individuals [and] that puts the pressure on us to look at all the little benefits that have been bestowed on certain groups over the years.

Dole: Looking ahead



Q. What about further cuts in social programs?

A. The limit hasn't been reached, but we are reaching a point where we have to go very slowly and very carefully.

Q. What changes do you see in the social-security system?

A. I don't want to prejudge what the presidential commission on social security might do, but Dan Rostenkowski, the chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, is ready to go to work—and so am I. Unless there's a big shift of seats in the House . . . we could have a special session of Congress some time between November and January. We could put together a package that would not cut existing benefits but restrain the growth of benefits in the future. . . . A logical place to look would be the formula now used to figure the cost-of-living adjustment. Is it too generous? Should you continue to factor in housing costs? With 35 million people receiving benefits, you don't need to make major changes to have a significant impact.

Another logical place to look is the retirement age. Should it be gradually raised—month by month over a number of years—from 65 to, say, 66½? But the point to make, so that we don't frighten people and politicize the issue again, is this: we will not cut present benefits. As far as I'm concerned we will not raise social-security taxes. Neither can we fund social security with general tax revenues, so we have to reform the system.

NEWSWEEK/AUGUST 30, 1982

12 Topeka Capital-Journal, Thursday, October 14, 1982

11

Dole laying political groundwork for presidential nomination try

By ROGER MYERS
Capital-Journal Staffhouse writer

Sen. Bob Dole, R-Kan., said here Wednesday his presidential aspirations seem to be receiving more attention from Republicans this year as he campaigns around the country for GOP candidates.

Dole, who was in Topeka stumping for 2nd Congressional District GOP nominee Morris Kay, noted during a fund-raising luncheon for Kay and again at a news conference after the luncheon that when he sought the Republican presidential nomination in 1980, "no one noticed."

Dole told reporters during the news conference that "more seem to know it" this year as he campaigns country-wide in behalf of Republican candidates for United States Senator and the U.S. House of Representatives.

Asked if the extensive campaign swing is also part of a campaign for himself, Dole quipped, "There's nothing open."

The state's senior U.S. senator made no attempt to conceal that he is laying the political groundwork for what he hopes will be an opportunity to run again for president in 1984.

Dole has said he will not oppose Ronald Reagan if the incumbent president decides to seek re-election but he is clearly setting the stage for a renewed bid in 1984 if Reagan decides to retire.

Those for whom he campaigns in 1982 will owe him a political favor in two years.

Dole, a self-admitted conservative during most of his 14 years in the U.S. Senate, said during the news conference he is hoping to convince Republicans in all parts of the country that he has moderated and become a mainstream Republican.

"I'm hopefully in the middle," Dole told reporters.

He said he also is trying to convince Republicans nationwide as he stumps for GOP candidates that he is a credible and believable congressional leader.

Dole said he considers himself a party builder and added he has an obligation to the GOP to help the party.

Dole became chairman of the tax-writing Senate Finance Committee when Republicans won control of the U.S. Senate in 1980.

He has used that position to keep his

The Kansas senior senator is setting the stage for a new bid for the presidency in 1984 if Ronald Reagan decides to retire.

name before the public in columns written by nationally circulated writers and also as the basis for frequent invitations to appear on nationally televised interview shows.

Dole failed to receive 1 percent of the GOP vote in the 1980 New Hampshire presidential primary, and also fared poorly with Republicans in Iowa who select their delegates to the nominating conventions in local caucuses. His campaign never got off the ground and he abandoned the quest in the early spring of 1980.

Dole said it is uncertain whether there will be a lame duck session of Congress following the Nov. 2 general elections.

The Kansas Senator has suggested such a session to handle the politically sensitive issue of Social Security.

A special commission to study the national retirement system's financial problems and suggest remedies to keep it financially healthy is scheduled to

submit its report and recommendations to Reagan Nov. 15.

Dole said if there are few changes in Congress as a result of the election this fall, he believes Reagan and House Speaker Thomas "Tip" O'Neill, will be receptive to a special session.

But, he added, "if there's a big surge on either side, I don't think we'll have one."

Dole said he believes Congress should deal with Social Security changes now when the atmosphere will be less politically charged.

He said if Congress waits until the regular session which begins in 1980, "They'll say we're trying to balance the budget on the backs of the elderly."

Dole said he believes the special commission can achieve consensus on proposed Social Security funding questions, and he feels there is a good chance needed changes can be made during a lame duck session.

The Kansas senator said he believes there will be fewer Republican losses in Congress this election than are being predicted, even though the party which controls the White House traditionally loses strength during elections in non-presidential years.

Dole said Republicans may pad their slim margin in the U.S. Senate. He believes the GOP has a chance to pick up seats in Montana and Maine and has "good opportunities" in Nevada and Virginia.

Dole said he has no polling data to support his gut feeling that Republicans will be stronger than expected during this off-year election.

The Kansas senator said he senses no groundswell of sentiment in Congress to halt, or slow down, the decontrol of natural gas prices.

Decontrol was set in motion in 1978 with passage of the Natural Gas Policy Act, and all artificial price restraints are scheduled to be removed from the fuel by 1985.

vigorous defender of Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid and aid for veterans and the disabled. Similarly, unlike many right wingers, he's always had friends on both sides of the aisle. In fact, for years one of his best friends in the Senate was the ebullient liberal Hubert Humphrey, who served with Dole on the Agriculture Committee, where the two routinely took delight in trying to outtalk and outwit each other. "It was one of the best shows on the Hill," recalls one aide.

So when the great tax debate of 1982 erupted, Dole found himself well-positioned—institutionally, philosophically and personally—to serve as power-broker between the White House and Democratic Congressional leaders. He recognized early in the year that the President's supply-side prescription for the economy was just not working and that something had to be done to reduce the soaring deficits and bring down interest rates. With a bit of gallows humor, he delighted in telling audiences at the time: "The

Gallows humor

good news is that a busload of supply-siders just drove off a cliff. The bad news is that two seats were empty."

Keenly attuned to the political winds, however, Dole also realized that any deficit-cutting program would have to include taxes as well as spending cuts and that the taxes would have to hit business and the wealthy. "If we were going after people in the food stamp lines, we had to tighten up on some of the goodies for the wealthy—tax shelters, business deductions and a lot of other generous benefits," he explained. "The issue was fairness." (continued on page 31)

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE