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Texans look at Bob Dole



foray into George Bush territory
last week before a surprisingly
large and receptive audience.
Well over 1,000 people tried to
cram into a ballroom at Lowes
Annual to see and hear the Anatole to see and hear the "power couple" — Dole and his wife Elizabeth, the secretary of

transportation.
Since most political observers have simply conceded Texas to Bush, the question is whether the Dole

onse means anything. Dole backers say it means Bush's support is soft (even in his home state) and that some Republicans — and Democrats and independents — are shopping chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, on the fact that some chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, on the senate that some chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, on the senate that some chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, on the senate that some chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, on the senate that some chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, on the senate that some chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, on the senate that some chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, on the senate that some chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, on the senate that some chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, on the senate that some chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, on the senate that some chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, on the senate that some chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, on the senate that some chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, on the senate that some chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, on the senate that some chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, on the senate that some chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, on the senate that some chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, on the senate that some chairman of the Senate Finance Committee that s the fact that some showed up to see Dole's wife, frequently mentioned as a vice presidential candidate.

As ever, the master of the quip, Dole began: "I say right upfront, I know I am in Texas. But the bottom line is to elect a Republican in 1988. (pause) If Elizabeth runs, I'll support her."

There's no question that Vice President George Bush is the lead Republican in the 1988 presidential sweepstakes in Texas. He has an extensive organization

and name identification. According to the Texas Poll just released, Bush is recognized by all but 10 percent of Texans interviewed. Despite

since the Iran/contra story broke), Dole's name wasn't recognized by 33 percent in that poll. "Obviously, he is well ahead," Dole agreed. "But he

was well ahead everywhere a year ago. Now in some of the early states (such as lowa)," Dole notes, it's rather close. "He's got to try to hold on. I've got to try Two weeks ago. Dole named a state campaign mon-

ager, operating out of Dallas, and began enlisting sup-port so that he will be in a position to capitalize should Bush's support erode in the states that have the early primaries. Hugh Akin, a Dallas public relations executive who

served as an advance mon for the Ford-Dole campaign in 1976, says: "Bush's support is two miles wide and two inches deep in Texas." If Bush falters in the early states, there could be an effect in Texas. In his own right. Dole is drawing support from Re-

publicans who feel he is a stronger leader than Bush and those who think Bush can get the nomination but can't win in November. He's also drawing support from among the more social-issue (anti-abortion, prohome school) conservatives. His state campaign mana-ger, James Meadows, is a former state chairman in the iltraconservative Young Americans for Freedom.

Why Dole? "Because he is the most conservative condidate that is electable in 1988," said Tom Pauken. a former congressional candidate and director of AC-

Richard Collins of Dallas, one of 100 national cochairmen for Dole, feels a "lot of people are looking for an alternative to Bush."

The image of Dole seems to have changed since he was regarded as the batchet man for President Gerald Ford in 1976. Some thought Dole self-destructed in

Bob Dole, Senate minority leader and unannounced presidential candidate, made his first foray into George Bush territory last week before a surprisingly large and receptive audience. The surprise of the principle of the princip of Jimmy Carter. The difference in 1988 is that Dole is setting the

tone, deciding what to stress and how to stress it.

And what he's stressing are these qualities: leadership, hands-on experience in dealing with the issues, competence, a totally different background from Bush, an ability to bring people from both sides to the bargaining table, and an ability to draw Demograts

At 63, he's spent 27 years in Congress (in both the

His biggest selling point, when he tarts talking about issues like the deficit, is that he's been there and worked out previous solutions. "If we're going to olve the deficit problem, you have to have someone who can work with those on both sides of the aisle. I've been doing

Where is the deficit on his priority list, now? "One." he said simply. It's No. 1. Dole and his wife also are trying to

stress his "human-ness." He tells about growing up in Kansas, his mother selling vacuum cleaners and sewing machines, his father selling dairy products and operbeing Senate Republican leader and a vice presiden- ating a grain elevator. Wounded in World War II, Dole tial candidate (and being on television extensively spent three years in hospitals and lost the use of his right arm and hand.

Dole also points to the need for a Republican to have support from Democrats and independents. Indeed, there were Democrats and former Democrats in the Dallas audience. A former Democratic county chairman who now votes in the Republican primary and supports candidates in both parties in November said he's supporting Dole. Why? "In a word, convic-tion," Earl Luna said. Susan Collins, wife of the national co-chairman.

picks Dole because "he's the only one who seems presidential and truly understands power — the only one I felt in his presence I was in the presence of a president." Also, she added, "I think its exciting that he has a competent wife." What about the prospects for a Dole-Dole ticket?

"We kid about it a lot, but its not very realistic," he said. Then he added, "Maybe Bush will look that way." That prospect would depend, of course, on the col-lapsing of his first course of action, which is catching

"Texas right now is his. But he won't get all the delegates. It's a big, big, diverse state. There is oppor-tunity for others," he said, "including Bob Dole."

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VIEWPOINTS

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PROFILE

AS HE REACHES FOR THE PRESIDENCY. CAN THE NEW BOB DOLÉ PUT THE OLD ONE BEHIND HIM?

by George Gilder

speech draft were strewn about the carpet of the hotel suite, and Senator Robert Dole. his features skewed into a scowl, loomed over the

Pointing to each sheet of paper as if it were an especially noisome dog's mistake, he roared out, "Bad ... Bad ... Bad ... " at the startled author-myself. Then. without any more specific complaints, he told me to "pick up the

papers and get out." So began my stint in 1976 as a speech writer for Senator Dole, then running for Vice President with Gerald Ford. I considered the possibility of resigning then and there, in that Des Moines hotel, and skulking back home with my tail between my legs. But as a speech writer I previously had endured benign neglect from Richard Nixon, scorn from Jacob Javits and dyslexia from Nelson Rockefeller. My final 1967 paycheck 'from Governor George Romney was still in the mail. I felt I could endure two more well-paid weeks in Bob Dole's traveling doghouse.

I had signed on because Dole's quicksilver wit and abrasive partisanship appealed to me. He was the man who had called Jimmy Carter "Southern-fried McGovern." About the Watergate tapes he had quipped, "Thank goodness, whenever I was in the Oval Office I only nodded." Even as I left the hotel suite. I had to admit there might have been an element of madcap fun in his treatment of

Thinking I had a sensational story to regale the troops with, I joined a group of other staff members down at the bar. To my surprise, several responded with similar tales of abuse. "That's our man Bob," was the typical reaction. Dole had been as caustic toward their rhetoric and ideas as toward mine. Yet what he wanted, why he lashed out, remained a mystery to most of the people who could be entertaining, but the

who could entertain him in turn, such as the salty racont Lyn Nofziger and his old cong sional crony Robert Ellsworth

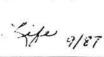
I was fascinated by strange stormy figure who, in proaching the pinnacle of Arr. can politics, made little effor control his temper, relate to staff, research his positions or lift his rhetoric. In this age of c glomerate campaigns caterec scores of specialists providing sition papers, image cosmet polling data and fund-rais grease. Dole was a lone ran Shrewd and resourceful, he e had the deep voice and dark g looks of Clayton Moore, TV's L Ranger. And he surely had fastest draw in American polit

Dole's mood deteriorated the '76 Election Day approacl Even his wit began wearing t He reached his nadir in a los debate with Walter Mond Against his rival's mastery of issues. Dole essentially escher both facts and philosophy tried to get by on one-liners : mean jokes. He said that la leader George Meany was "pro bly Mondale's makeup ma Dole seemed at last to have out of silver bullets.

In 1980, still a lone ranger grandly announced his cand cy for President and promptly raveled. In the farm state of Ic next to his home constituence Kansas, he won less than 2] cent of the vote in the Republi party caucuses. Then, after t ing a total of 607 votes in the ! Hampshire primary-behind e Lyndon LaRouche-Dole ig miniously dropped out.

I thought he was through. \ see that the press has discove a "new" Bob Dole, running o again for the presidency. A r. who has "matured in office" r receives a "new respect" in Wa ington from observers across political spectrum. Indeed, for Democratic national chairn Robert Strauss says Dole "grown more than anybody servative activist Paul Weyr declares the change to be "o" whelming, almost impossible describe.

Most important, the new ! Dole is adjudged by many exp to be the most likely nomine the Republican party. I won-



dered, has Bob Dole really

changed? "Of course," says Dorothy Sarnoff, an image consultant in New York who previously worked for Rockefeller family executives. "I changed him. He was the best student I ever had. A nice, nice man. I took away his snide."

Dole's willingness to go to Sarnoff revealed to me the intensity of his desire to be President and his recognition that the old Dole would never make it. Moreover, Sarnoff clearly has had an impact. The candidate no longer crouches over the podium to hide the arm withered from his wartime injury, thus calling attention to it. Instead, he stands tall, and no one notices his handicap. There was more to change,

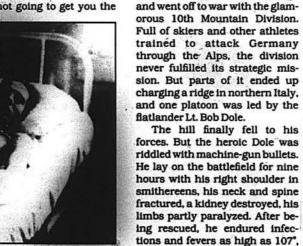
seemed nothing in Dole's psychology so deep as his resistance to intellectual ideals, strategic themes or inspirational rhetoric. He was bored with what he called the

however, than his speaking pos-

ture. When I worked for him, there

current Dole campaign is whether he has overcome this hostility to ideas and affirmative visions. He must do more than point to his sterling record in Congress. Political consultant John Sears, the architect of Ronald Reagania early victories in 1980, has tried to give Dole's campaign a similar inspirational quality. "Mere competence is not going to get you the

a major psychological shift. His "ish-shoes." The undercurrent of self-sufficiency, his cynicism, his gloomy view of the world, have his lokes revealed a negativism and pessimism in his politics. roots far back in his past. The pivotal question of the An elegantly athletic youth, six foot three, Dole was brought up in the barrens of Depression-era Kansas. In the small town of Russell, he shone chiefly in sports, starring on the high school basketball team, and going on to the University of Kansas to excel in football, basketball and track. In 1943 he dropped out of college



struggled back to health in a senomination," says Sears. "If he ries of hospitals. can convince people he has a vi-sion that's credible and that's bet-In talking about his ordeal, ter than the other candidates',

he'll be nominated and elected."

But for Dole to do this will require

and lost some 70 pounds. For

nearly three and a half years he

Dole tends to use the second person to distance himself from the pain. "You were alive. You didn't feel good about it sometimes," he told LIFE's Marsha Dubrow. "You didn't like to look in the mirror. You didn't like to see anyone with your shirt off. In the whole process you learn how to endure pain and suffering, loneliness, inability to do things for yourself. You're totally dependent." In the first person, he sums up the lesson with a quip: "After the war I decided I wasn't going to be able to use my hands as well as before, so I'd better use my head."

With no use of his right arm, it still is a chore for him to write, cut meat, close his zipper, button his shirt or tie his shoes. George Mc-Govern, his longtime ally and adversary from the farm belt, recalls Dole stumbling in the Capitol subway and crashing to the floor, unable to break his fall.

According to Peggy Pinder, an Iowa lawyer who as a student seconded his vice presidential nomination at the 1976 GOP convention, Dole's behavior is typical of handicapped persons. Herself blind, Pinder says that Dole's unwillingness to rely on otherseven on his staff-stems from "the impatience of many handicapped people toward outside aid. He wants to do it all himself."

Dole has spoken out strongly on behalf of the disabled. But to become President, he himself would have to learn dependence, including depending on those he would mobilize for his campaign. I set out once again for Iowa, where the Senator would be speaking. Here amid the rolling corn fields, and among farmers and other voters very like those in Kansas, Dole would presumably feel at home.

On his weekend schedule were four town meetings with local Republicans and a major address to a Midwest GOP convention in Des Moines. I caught up with him in Ames. Some 200 people, cheering and waving flags, greeted Dole. The crowd laughed uproariously when he said, "I wanted Oral Roberts to be my finance chairman. but he was tied up." They murmured approval when he denounced the federal deficit, and they clapped when he announced a proposal for a new billion-dollar rural development program that he would be cosponsoring with Iowa's Senator Charles Grassley. He seemed more calm and authoritative than in previous campaigns. But he showed no prophetic fire; perhaps there



In this faded photo from 1945, the wounded Dole languished in a