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Editorials

# Other Editors Say: Dole on Board

North Carolina-born Elizabeth Dole made one of those hard choices that confronts the modern professional woman: Whether to put a greater priority on her own job and ambitions than on her husband's.

In Elizabeth Dole's case, the stakes were unusually high. She is secretary of transportation and the only woman in President Reagan's Cabinet. Her husband, Senate Minority Leader Robert Dole of Kansas, is running for president of the United States — a campaign that could be energized, particularly in the South, by Elizabeth Dole's presence at his side.

On Monday, Elizabeth Dole announced her decision. She will resign, effective Oct. 1, and devote herself to her husband's campaign.

A Duke University graduate with a Harvard law degree, Elizabeth Dole has served as transportation secretary for five years, a tenure longer than any previous occupant of that post. Her name has occasionally been mentioned as a GOP vice-presidential candidate.

Privately, she was said to have been in considerable personal turmoil about whether to resign her cabinet job. She reportedly found it "curious" that candidates could campaign for public office and still keep their jobs while she felt forced to step down. She said, however, that her husband put no pressure on her to resign.

But it was becoming increasingly obvious that she could not wear two hats, at least not comfortably. Her job was time-consuming, and she was currently embroiled in controversy over the air travel crisis. The campaign image of a wife holding powerful Cabinet rank, moreover, might not be

as appealing to the American voter as a wife who is, well, just a wife.

Her talents on the campaign trail will be formidable. She is regarded as a compelling public speaker with plenty of charm and political smarts. In the South, where Bob Dole trails Vice-President Bush in the polls and where the 12 "Super Tuesday" primaries could boost her husband's prospects, Elizabeth Dole's presence and acumen are needed.

Bob Dole's campaign staff was ecstatic over her decision. Southern political experts immediately gave her high marks as a campaigner. "She comes across as an accomplished woman who doesn't violate the Southern sense of how a woman should behave," remarked Hastings Wyman, publisher of Southern Political Report. "She's smart and able — without sounding like Gloria Steinem."

Back in Washington, where Congress is rightly fretful about the air travel crisis, Elizabeth Dole was drawing both praise and criticism for her job performance as secretary of transportation. Some congressmen say she has not been assertive enough in improving America's aviation system, while others call her "dedicated and tireless." The answer is probably a combination of both.

But come Oct. 1, Elizabeth Dole will clean out her office and re-pack for her husband's campaign trail. She is saying, at least implicitly, that she'd rather be First Lady than secretary of transportation. There's nothing wrong with that career choice, either. Greensboro News and Record, Greensboro, Sept. 16, 1987.

## Elizabeth Dole's Good Direction

Elizabeth Dole has been, in many respects, a solid secretary of transportation.

This fact is being lost in the swirl of attention about her future campaigning for her husband, Bob Dole, in his presidential bid. That's a shame, because it trivializes the importance of the job she held.

Critics gripe that she was good only at public relations. The record belies this claim, especially in the area of aviation problems.

When complaints were made about mechanical inspections and the lack of them, she made sure a white-glove inspection team was formed at the federal level to improve things. When the need for more air traffic controllers became obvious, she fought to get more in the towers. When complaints were made about flight delays and lack of service, she forced the airlines to negotiate changes in their schedules and told them to comply with new regulations governing their service records.

Her work has been almost drowned out by vociferous criticism from the Congress and from consumers. Much of it has been undeserved.

Congress has little credibility on this issue. Members haven't been able

to approve spending money from the bloated Aviation Trust Fund for airport improvements or get through a year without slashing Federal Aviation Administration budget requests.

As for consumers, Mrs. Dole was not in charge when the aviation system was deregulated in 1978. To her credit, she has seen some of the abuses that can occur under deregulation, such as skimping on inspections, and tried to correct them.

She handled other matters during the last five years. One was the sale of Conrail. She took a wrong course here, trying to sell it to private industry. After a two-year battle, though, Conrail was sold to a group of investors and the public.

It's unfortunate so much attention has been focused this week on Mrs. Dole's political plans with her husband. She has directed a department that affects the lives of millions of Americans. The new secretary of transportation is going to have to be someone who can work tirelessly to provide safe airline travel and shipments by rail throughout the country. It is a very tough job.

Elizabeth Dole handled it well. — The Kansas City Star, Sept. 16, 1987.

## Dumping on Dole

Sen. Bob Dole recently suggested, probably correctly, that much of Central America wouldn't be unhappy if "a little three-day invasion" took place in Communist-held Nicaragua, with the resulting overthrow of its Marxist boss, Daniel Ortega.

Dole said, though, that Central American leaders are not going to say that publicly. He was careful to say the speculation was just his guess.

Again, he was correct. Central Americans, like others around the globe, are wondering whether they dare criticize their Communist neighbors if their only support is United States assurances.

When we heard, however, that Dole was being criticized for his remarks, we assumed the criticism came from the likes of Teddy Kennedy and other liberal Senate Democrats who want the anti-Communist Nicaraguan Contra forces tied and gift-wrapped for the Reds.

Not so. The criticism came from fellow Republican presidential candidates Jack Kemp and George Bush, whose campaigns seized upon Dole's remarks as dangerous hyperbole.

The Kemp camp went so far as to call Dole's comment "the dumbest thing he's said for a while."

Dole, truth to tell, may be taking a tougher stand on Central America as a presidential primary contender than he would as either party nominee or as president.

But his remarks in this case happen to ring true. It is just such frankness on this and other issues that America needs right now. It's too bad that Dole isn't likely to show such candor on other issues — including the Reagan-Soviet arms treaty.

As for the criticism from Kemp and Bush, however, it's about the dumbest thing either of them has had to say for a while. — J. W. McCq, New Hampshire Sunday News, Sept. 20, 1987.



DOLE FAMILY at the KU Medical Center in Kansas City, Kan., where they had been to visit Doran R. Dole, Bob Dole's father, who was a patient. From left are: Back row, Kenneth D. Dole, Russell; Norma Jean Steele, Derby; Tommy Steele, Derby; and Gloria Nelson, Russell; and front row, Nita Dole (Mrs. Kenneth), Russell; Bina Doran's wife, Russell; Elizabeth Dole, Bob Dole's wife; and Robert J. Dole. The Bob Dole's are of Washington, D.C., Tommy Steele and Bina Dole are deceased.

## Dole Angles for Support As GOP Fallback Candidate

By PAUL WEST  
Sun Staff Correspondent  
Baltimore, Md.

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Polls show Robert J. Dole surging to the front of the 1988 Republican presidential field, but the Kansas senator often sounds these days as if he's running for second place.

At campaign stops around the country, the Senate minority leader pleads with supporters of other GOP hopefuls to make him their backup choice.

"Some of us will fall by the wayside between now and the time we get to New Orleans," site of the 1988 Republican National Convention, Mr. Dole likes to say. "There are going to be a lot of people looking for horses some day, and I want to be there with the door open."

His second-choice strategy points up both the strength and the potential weakness of Mr. Dole's presidential bid.

It underscores his emergence as a leading contender in a race that many Republicans, including Mr. Dole, have come to see as a two-man affair between himself and Vice-President George Bush.

The 64-year-old senator has pulled into a statistical tie with Mr. Bush as the first choice of likely GOP voters, according to a new national poll by NBC News and the Wall Street Journal, which gives Mr. Bush 30 percent and Mr. Dole 29 percent.

White House pollster Richard Wirthlin believes the chances are now "about nine out of 10" that either Mr. Bush or Mr. Dole will win the Republican nomination next year. Other GOP aspirants include Rep. Jack F. Kemp of New York, Marion G. "Pat" Robertson, former Gov. Pierre S. du Pont IV of Delaware and former Secretary of State Alexander M. Haig Jr.

Mr. Dole says his campaign is organized in 37 states. He will announce next week that he has raised more than \$7 million, putting him better than halfway toward his 1987 goal of \$14 million.

Despite these encouraging signs for his campaign, Mr. Dole's "big vulnerability" is his reluctance to define his vision of America's future, relying instead on the collapse of other candidates, particularly Mr. Bush's, according to John Sears, a Republican political strategist and occasional Dole adviser.

"Dole needs to tell the country now what he'd do if he got elected," said Mr. Sears, echoing a familiar argument.

Unless Mr. Bush's candidacy were to self-destruct, according to this line of thinking, someone will have to wrest the nomination away from the vice-president by making a more persuasive appeal to Republican primary voters.

So far, the senator is providing few clues about what a Dole administration might seek to accomplish. While he plans to begin issuing position papers soon, he scoffs at the notion that he must articulate an overarching "vision."

What voters will be looking for next year, he tells Republican audiences, is simply this: A

"hands-on" president, someone "willing to say 'yes' at the appropriate time and 'no' at the appropriate time."

"I'm not intimidated," Mr. Dole told the California state Republican convention in a banquet speech Saturday night.

His remarks illustrated some of the ways that Mr. Dole is trying to chip away at the vice-president, who is seen by some Republicans, as indecisive and weak and whose campaign has suffered setbacks in recent weeks.

"I have to believe I'm going to be the Republican nominee," Mr. Dole said. "I know where the movement is. I know which ones are moving up, and which ones are not moving at all."

He paused. "And which ones may be slipping a bit," he said.

Mr. Dole emphasized his "elect-ability," noting that public opinion polls show Democrats and independent voters are more favorably disposed to him than to Mr. Bush.

He doesn't hesitate to contrast his role as Senate minority leader with Mr. Bush's insisting that,

unlike the vice-president, he hasn't merely been "standing by" Mr. Reagan's side.

"I've been up there getting the job done in the Senate," he said. "I don't have a ceremonial office. I think that's a difference in leadership."

Mr. Dole is frank in admitting that if he goes too far in attacking his rival, he risks reviving his image as a hatchet man, a reputation etched in the voters' minds in 1978 when he was President Gerald R. Ford's running mate.

Everywhere he goes, Mr. Dole is quick to argue that, as the loyal No. 2 to a popular president, Mr. Bush remains the front-runner on the GOP side.

"We can't say that enough," he said, in acknowledgment of the special hazards that front-runners face in today's volatile political environment.

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