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SENATOR ROBERT J. DOLE is speaking to members of the Chamber of Commerce at the organization's Annual Meeting in the Russell Elks Lodge March 31, 1983. Joe Glassman, owner of Glass-

man Climate Control and then president of the Chamber, is listening to Dole's remarks. (Staff Photo)



DOLE BEGAN TO SURFACE during the Nixon years in the White House when he was selected as National Chairman of the Republican Party. Here he is visiting with Republican leaders, President

Richard M. Nixon, on the left, George Romney, former governor of Michigan and candidate for president in 1968, and Strom Thurmond, senator from South Carolina. Dole is second from right.



ELIZABETH DOLE

Elizabeth Dole, the former Elizabeth Hanford of North Carolina, stands alongside the American flag and the seal of the Department of Transportation. She resigned her secretaryship of the department Oct. 1 to spend full-time campaigning for her hus-

band, Robert J. Dole, the minority leader of the United States Senate. Dole will announce his candidacy for the Republican nomination for the presidency here at 9 a.m. Monday, Nov. 9. Mrs. Dole will be in charge of the senator's campaign in the South.

Bush Touchy on Dole's Gains

The Washington Post Sept. 4, 1987

The crowded field of Democratic presidential contenders has yet to produce even two or three short-odds favorites for the nomination. But the Republican race is rapidly narrowing down to two tough competitors: Vice-President Bush and Sen. Robert J. Dole (Kan.).

Dole's solid early strength has come as an unpleasant surprise to the front-running Bush. Dole has been attracting both money and supporters at a faster pace than the Bush camp anticipated. With five months to go before the first caucus, the GOP nomination contest is shaping up into a close one — a lot closer than Bush's people like.

"We have become competitive with the Bush campaign," Dole's campaign manager, Robert Ellsworth, told us. "They know they've got serious competition."

A top Bush supporter insisted, however, that they had never underestimated Dole's strength. Signs of strain are beginning to show between the two candidates, and it could break out into open feuding. President Reagan's famous 11th Commandment for party rivals — "Thou shalt speak no evil of another Republican" — may prove too constricting for a political infighter of Dole's scathing wit.

In fact, the opening skirmish may already have occurred, presaging a bare-knuckle brawl that could rescue at least the Republican half of the presidential race from eye-glazing boredom.

It began with Dole's appearance Aug. 24 in Texas, supposedly rock-solid Bush country. It was one stop in Dole's 30-state campaign swing during the congressional recess.

According to a Dallas newspaper, Dole's organizers "expected only 200 to 300 people" to show up at the reception. The candidate was greeted by "an

enthusiastic crowd of 2,000" instead.

No doubt stung by this evidence of defection in his adopted state, Bush took an indirect slap at Dole in a speech the next day in San Antonio. He charged that Congress has "tied the president's hands" by trying to "micromanage" U.S. foreign policy. As Senate minority leader, Dole has publicly expressed misgivings about the president's foreign policy initiatives, so Bush's criticism clearly included Dole.

Never one to sit idly by in a political dogfight, Dole immediately and publicly denounced the vice-president's remarks as "unfair." In a shrewd appeal to the GOP right wing, Dole said he and other congressional conservatives should not be lumped together with Reagan's liberal Democratic opponents on Capitol Hill.

The vice-president's men have tried to use their candidate's front-runner status to scare off potential Dole contributors. They

have said that Dole cannot hope to set up organizations in key states that will match the impressive state campaign machinery Bush has acquired over the years.

But a survey of Dole's organizational efforts in 37 states shows remarkable progress in his campaign's first six months. Even Bush supporters privately acknowledge that Dole has achieved much more than they ever dreamed he would.

Dole Called 'Underdog'

Bob Dole and George Bush are widely considered the Republican front-runners for president through the Rev. Paul Robertson and Jack Kemp also are running. Bush and Dole are both World War II veterans in their 60s, and '87-'88 likely will be the last national campaign for the loser.

Of the two, Bush is considered the leading contender — in part because as Vice-President he's already literally only a heartbeat away from the Oval Office.

But Dole is a heavyweight, too. The days are long past when Bob Dole handed out Hawaiian pineapple juice so voters would remember his name (as he did in his first race for Congress in 1960).

Launching in the Capitol's Senate dining room with Sen. Larry Pressler, R-S.D., Robert Ellsworth introduced Pressler as "the very first senator to come to the Dole campaign and say he wanted to help. The first contribution, after Kansas, came from South Dakota."

Pressler agreed; said he has worked with Dole for 13 years and is eager to work out a Dole visit to his state this summer.

Pressler described the Kansas senior senator as "ahead in Iowa and South Dakota" and predicted he will win in New Hampshire.

Then he added, pragmatically, "It's a tough struggle. Bush will be the front runner to the convention. I don't care what anybody says. But Dole can win!"

Discussing the campaign's strategy to assure that, Ellsworth later said, "The first real thing that happens in the Iowa caucus

in February '88, and that's followed immediately by the South Dakota and New Hampshire primaries.

"Then on March 8 comes something that we call 'Super Tuesday.' In '84, Mondale and Hart had a big fight over it. In '84, it was seven Southern states. This time, it's 15 or 16 states, and it's nation-wide. It includes Washington, Oklahoma, Massachusetts, Maryland, Missouri and the Southern states.

"Then there are a couple of important primaries — Ohio and Illinois — then some western states, concluding with California on the first Tuesday in June, and then the convention in August.

"There are a couple of very important factors: With a schedule like that, we have to have enough money to carry us through. 'Super Tuesday' is going to be great consumer of money. And not only money, but money at the right time. 'Workers in the various states, he said, want to be assured the money will be available.

"We've got to win in Iowa and New Hampshire on 'Super Tuesday,'" said Ellsworth. "The farm economy is a very big element in the state" in most of those first state votes. "They're all Republican primaries, and Dole is very well known. Trusted. They all know him from his work on the RNC, from past campaigns."

As for Bush, he continued, shrugging, "Bush is there. He's got Air Force One. He's the vice-president." All that, he implies, leaves Bob Dole the underdog in the coming contest.



PRESIDENT DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER welcomes Bob Dole to Washington, D.C. Dole had just defeated Keith Sebelius, Norton, to win the Republican nomination for Congress from the Sixth District of Northwest Kansas and was preparing for the November election. He is in his fourth term as Russell County Attorney.



NORMAN G. STAAB, Russell, left, has just introduced Sen. Robert J. Dole as one of the featured speakers at the Veterans of Foreign Wars National Convention held in August at New Orleans, La. Staab completed his term as National Commander-in-Chief of the VFW at

the convention. Using the theme, "VFW—The Rallying Force," Staab had an increase of more than 17,000 members in the more than 2 million member organization during his year as its top officer. Staab has always been a strong supporter of Bob Dole. (Staff Photo)