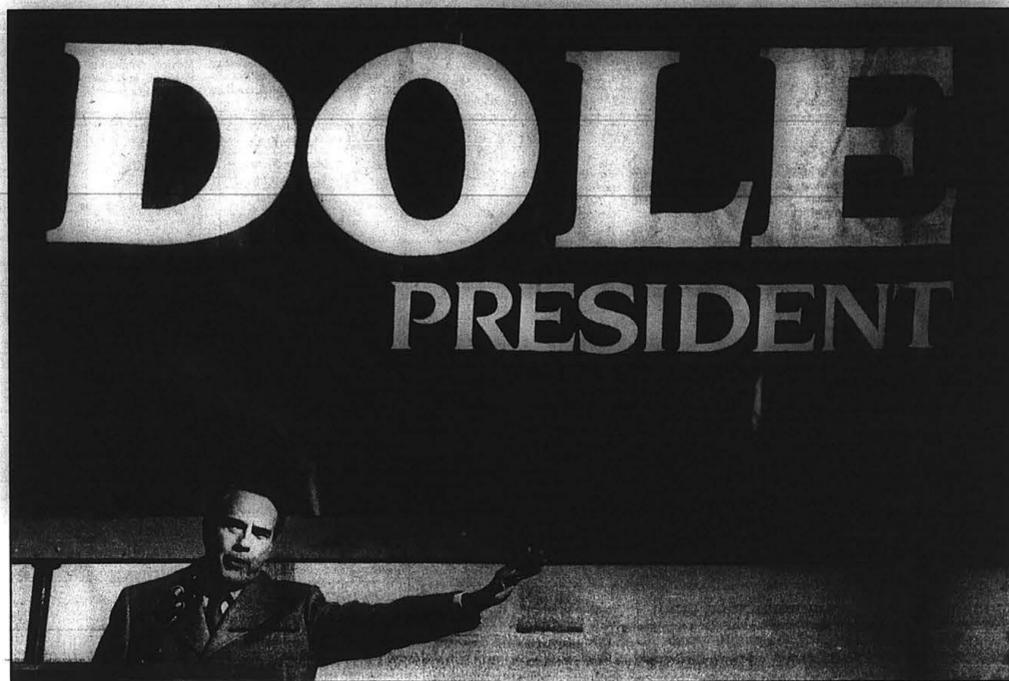


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Sen. Robert Dole officially announces his presidential candidacy this morning in downtown Russell

Photos by Charlie Riedel

Once again, starting out in Russell

By BRUCE BARR

RUSSELL — "I am back home again before my family, before my friends and before the people who know me the best to announce I am a candidate for the presidency of the United States."

With those words Sen. Bob Dole formally announced this morning that he is a candidate for the Republican nomination for president.

He made the announcement to thousands of people penned on Russell's Main Street by bleachers filled with students.

Dole's remarks began shortly after 9 a.m. The first onlookers had arrived at 6. It is unlikely that Russell will soon forget the spectacle.

Thirty minutes before the announcements and entertainment began, thousands had gathered. School busses lined up for blocks discharging children, high school marching bands formed on two streets, people joined the crowd from every direc-

A few protesters also show up. See page 8.

tion. As they entered the area, small flags were handed out. Some got posters made earlier by Russell High School students, others carried their own signs. No one displayed any reluctance to wave them.

Before Dole spoke, he was presented with a cigar box by G.B. "Bub" Dawson, owner of the drug store in which Dole once worked. It was the same cigar box into which, in 1945, donors placed \$1,800 to pay for Dole's hospitalization. This time the cigar box contained \$100,000, raised by contributors to Dole's campaign.

The announcement, which had been planned for so many weeks, went off with only minor hitches. Shortly after Sen. Nancy Kassebaum introduced Dole to the speaker's podium, a man in the crowd

passed out Dole opened his remarks by calling for a doctor, and a paused a few minutes until one arrived.

His speech began with a few typical quips.

He had always enjoyed showing off Russell, he said, though it takes hardly any more time now than when he was a boy.

The quips were soon over. He had carried the spirit of Russell with him throughout his life, he said, and it was home that he remembered when he was wounded during World War II.

In an oblique reference to his main opponent for the Republican nomination, Vice President George Bush, Dole said "I offer a record and not a resume."

He pointed toward his 11,000 congressional votes and his leadership in restructuring Social Security, his help in beginning to put rural America back on its feet, his support of voting rights, and his leadership in tax reform.

His stands on the issues were clear. "The federal budget deficit is the single greatest threat to a prosperous and dynamic America," he said. "We do not expand opportunity when we burden our children with debt from our own self-indulgence."

"I will sit down with congressional leaders in my first week in office and we will not stop until we have a renewed commitment to a multi-year plan, a new compact that leads to a balanced budget in the near future."

A part of that plan would be a constitutional amendment requiring a balanced budget, and if the amendment could not be achieved through Congress, Dole promised to "go over their heads" and call a constitutional convention.

Dole promised to continue free trade policies.

"We cannot be confused by the delusion that if only we build trade walls high enough we can shut out a flood of foreign-made products, but neither will we play the patsy."

Domestically, he said, "education must be at the top of the list." He said that the federal government could stimulate an acceleration "back toward the basics," and could place an emphasis on math and science.

His administration would back educational programs that had been proven to be effective, and would support merit pay for teachers and education for students with special needs, he said.

He would not support abortion. "I will continue my consistent and lifelong efforts to protect the rights of the unborn, the first of which is the right to life," he said.

The federal health care programs must be rethought, he said, to provide for more prenatal care, and to take care of an increasing number of elderly.

His first priority would be defense, he said.

"We must never lose sight of the fact that our No. 1 priority is liberty and freedom and a strong national defense," he said.



ABOVE LEFT: Dole is flanked by his daughter, Robin, left, and his wife, Elizabeth, as he greets the crowd. ABOVE RIGHT: Lisa Cox, a tenant at Dole's Russell home, cheers for her landlord.

DOLE PLEDGES
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