

318. 1987

TIMES PICAYUNE 12-21

# Dole

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He subscribes to no particular ideology and analysts say his campaign, which stresses his experience rather than offering detailed programs, lacks political vision.

Dole says such concerns are irrelevant: "I'll work hard and I'll tell you the truth," he said. "I'm an issues person. Some people like to say I don't have a 'vision' for America. Well, I think my whole life has been visionary. I started at the bottom of the ladder. I have been tested every day of my life. I am a survivor."

His daily test is as unassuming as buttoning a shirt or eating a steak, neither of which comes easily without the use of his right arm. A star athlete crippled by shrapnel in World War II, Dole nevertheless stands tall, tan and tireless at 64.

No wimp factor here. It's no secret that the Democrats would rather face Bush in the general election because Dole is stone tough and had the fear shot out of him long ago.

He brings those qualities, and an old reputation as a tough competitor, to the presidential race.

As Gerald Ford's running mate in 1976, Dole said America's 20th century wars, with their 1.6 million casualties, were "Democrat wars." There's no telling what he'll try to pin on the donkey this time.

### War changed goals

Dole wanted to be a doctor until the war broke his neck, took a kidney, destroyed his right arm and numbed his left. So he went home on a stretcher and found opportunity in the curious formula for rural post-war politics.

He remembers it this way: "The Democratic county chairman said to me: 'Bob, you ought to run for office. You've been shot and I think we can get you elected.' Then the Republican county chairman said: 'Bob, he's a right, but you ought to run as a Republican.' I asked him why and he said: 'Because Republicans outnumber Democrats around here 2 to 1.' At that point, I made a profound philosophical judgment."

So he ran for the state legislature as a war hero and a Republican and he won. Turns out he liked politics. "It's not a bad way to spend your leisure time," he said. But the thing is, that's how he spends all his time. Neither much of a family man nor a hobbyist, legislation consumes his life.

As Washington Post columnist Mary McGrory put it: "Bob Dole eats bills for breakfast."

"He's going to do his job," said Dole's first wife, Phyllis Macey. "And he's going to do it at the expense of a family and at the expense of a wife."

Dole's second wife, former Transportation Secretary Elizabeth Hanford Dole, doesn't suffer the same detachment. On the contrary, she seems to be Dole's perfect mate. She has held posts in four presidential administrations and is among the most powerful women in Washington.

Together, Bob and "Liz" are Washington's favorite power couple, tops on invitation lists and regulars in the social columns. Only problem is, Bob Dole doesn't like parties or the power elite. Just politics, straight up.

### Demanding childhood

A prevailing explanation for Dole's social reticence comes from a childhood spent under demanding parents and borderline impoverishment.

As soon as they were old enough, Doran and Bina Dole's four children went to work. Doran ran a cream and egg stand and later managed a grain elevator on the Southern Pacific tracks running east to Topeka. Bina sold sewing machines.

Bob Dole was 6 when the Depression set in and austerity chipped away at the family income and pride. In the mid-1930s, an oil boom fired hope in the Kansas plains and the Doles capitalized by moving into the basement of their house so they could rent the upstairs to incoming roughnecks. It was the only way to make the house note, remembers Kenny Dole, Bob's younger brother.

"It was tough," Kenny said. "All the kids at school knew what we had done. If it's dishonorable to have been poor, then we're in bad shape. But looking back, I realize we made do with a helluva lot of nothing."

Dole went to Russell High School where he starred in track and football. It was the end of the "Dirty 30s" — years of relentless prairie dust storms so bad "you couldn't see the neon lights across the street," remembered Bub Dawson, a boyhood friend whose family owned Dawson's Drug Store on Main Street, where Lew worked as a soda jerk. After graduating in 1941, Dole

## THE PRESIDENTIAL RACE



Dole, left, with his brother Kenny in 1929.

### A Dole sampler

George Bush  
Age 64  
Family: divorced and remarried, one daughter  
Education: University of Kansas, Washburn University Law School  
Occupation: U.S. senator from Kansas  
Political affiliation: Republican  
Religious affiliation: Methodist

His hero: Dwight D. Eisenhower, former president who lived in Kansas.  
At the confirmation hearings for his wife's appointment as Reagan's secretary of transportation: "I regret that I have but one

wife to give for my country." On the possibility of having his wife as a running mate: "It would be cheaper. Only need one house, one limo."

On George Bush's heroics in a burning Navy aircraft in World War II: "That was destruction of government property."

Political embarrassments: Finishing the 1980 New Hampshire primary below Lyndon LaRouche, an extremist candidate now on trial on charges of election fraud.

On the campaign's momentum: "When I announced in 1980, 50 people who said they were my relatives showed up. When I announced this year, 270 said we were related."

Other than politics, the job he'd like to have: Host of the Johnny Carson show.

### The campaign



Dole says the battle for the Republican nomination is a two-man race. The key word in the Dole campaign is "electability." Dole says he's got it, and the other Republicans — especially George Bush — don't. He is widely viewed as the most likely to appeal to independents and conservative Democrats. Raised by working-class parents and educated in public schools, Dole bucks his party's elitist mold and wants to make the GOP the party of com-

passion. He is a consummate Washington insider with a proven track record of forging compromise between the White House and Congress. Dole says the deficit is "public enemy No. 1" and makes it the center of his platform, though he has proposed no specific plan to deal with it other than to appoint a bipartisan commission to propose effective spending cuts. He favors an oil import fee and expansion of the ethanol industry.

### Biography

- 1920 June 22, 1923. Born to working-class parents in Russell, Kan.
- 1942. Enrolls as pre-med student at Kansas University.
- 1945. Injured on an Italian hillside at the close of World War II.
- 1948. Meets and marries Phyllis Holden, a therapist he met while recuperating in a Michigan hospital.
- 1950. Elected to the Kansas Legislature.
- 1952. Elected Russell County attorney.
- 1960. Elected to the House of Representatives.
- 1968. Wins a seat in the U.S. Senate.
- 1972. Dole and Phyllis are divorced.
- 1975. Marries Elizabeth Hanford Dole.
- 1976. Running mate to President Gerald Ford, is defeated.
- 1980. Runs for president but pulls out after drawing 609 votes in the New Hampshire primary.
- 1984. Elected Senate majority leader.
- Nov. 9, 1987. Returns to Russell to announce his bid for the presidency.

STAFF GRAPHIC

enrolled in pre-med studies at the University of Kansas in his sophomore year to join the Army. Dole, a flatlander of modest means, wound up a second lieutenant in Italy, leading a platoon in the 85th Mountain Regiment, an elite ski division paddled with Ivy Leaguers and Olympic athletes.

On April 14, 1945, the entire patrol was cut down. As American forces mounted their final offensives of the war in Europe, Dole's dreams of sports and medicine were shattered in a burst of German gunfire on a lonely place called Hill 913 in the Po Valley.

He doesn't recall if it was mortar or machine gun that did him in, but he had 89 months to consider the question as he bounced in and out of hospitals around the world, fighting paralysis, fevers, infections and a 70-pound weight loss.

Townfolk poured out for Dole's homecoming in 1948 and gave him several thousand dollars they had collected in cigar boxes placed on store counters all over town. With this sweet, inelegant gesture, Dole was able to afford the private care that eventually gained him use of his left arm again.

During his campaign for the vice presidency in 1976, contrary to the hatchet man image he would cultivate during the campaign, Dole wept as he fumbled for the words to thank the people of Russell for what they had done so many years before.

Before his return home, Dole met Phyllis Holden, an occupational therapist, in a Michigan hospital. They married three months later.

"I buttoned his buttons, I zipped his zippers, I brushed his teeth," she remembered. And while he struggled for independence, she wrote his law exams at Washburn University in Topeka while he whispered the answers to her. They had a daughter, Robin, Dole's only child.

One day in 1972, Dole — then the leathery chairman of the Republican National Committee — came home and announced: "It's over." And through an emergency divorce provision in Kansas law, it was — in three days.

Though Phyllis thought she got a raw deal, she now blames herself as much as Dole for letting the romance die. She watched as Washington sank its claws into her husband, and she never tried to break the spell.

### Working his way up

While he was still in law school, Dole served two years in the Kansas Legislature, an unglamorous job that paid less than the office custodian. In 1953, he became Russell county attorney, a job he says "put me in touch with real people and real problems," a claim he uses to distance himself from the pedigreed Republican contenders for the nomination.

Dole's persistence and energy as Russell attorney won admirers among Kansas power brokers and

they groomed him for a venture into national politics. After winning an argument against a severance tax on oil and gas in the state Supreme Court, the petroleum industry showed its gratitude by throwing its support and contributions behind him.

He won a seat in House of Representatives in 1960 by a margin of 982 votes, no triumphant mandate, but a seat nevertheless. Four years later, he won by 2,600 votes. His reputation as a political tough emerged with each thorny election.

In the House, he was a reliable partisan in the battles over Lyndon Johnson's Great Society programs. He toed the rural party line, voting against the anti-poverty programs of 1964, against Medicare and against subsidies for urban mass transit.

"When he started out, he was a good redneck," remembered Norbert Dreiling, the former Kansas state Democratic chairman. "In Kansas, being liberal was like being communist."

Dole graduated to the Senate in 1969, where his reputation as a team player won kudos from President Richard Nixon. He was the administration's staunchest advocate, supporting Nixon's Vietnam policy, failed Supreme Court nominations and nuclear weapons programs.

For this, Nixon rewarded him with the Republican national chairmanship in 1971. But after two contentious years in the heart of the party, Dole was squeezed out by Nixon's hench-

men — a fortuitous event — as the spectacle of Watergate and the administrations' unraveling lay just weeks ahead.

### Biggest political fight

Watergate provided the backdrop for the political battle of Dole's life. Three weeks before the 1974 election, state polls showed U.S. Rep. Bill Roy, a Topeka gynecologist, leading by a healthy margin. Game for a dogfight, Dole dug in.

"He was a cutter and a slasher back then," Roy remembered. "He didn't hesitate to use any weapon at hand. He won that election on three issues: Abortion, abortion and abortion."

At rallies in the closing weeks, particularly at Catholic high schools, Dole told young audiences to go home and ask their parents how many abortions Roy had performed that year.

The fact is Roy had performed many, all legal, all involving matters of rape or a threat to the mother's life. Nevertheless, it didn't play well in the conservative plains. Despite Roy's attempts to link Dole to Nixon's scandal-ridden administration, he slipped in the polls and finished one percentage point behind. It wasn't pretty, but "Barbed-wire Bob" was back in power.

Two years later, Ford chose him as a running mate and he hacked away at the Democrats while Ford, the incumbent, remained presidential. Jimmy Carter won and many blamed

Dole for poisoning the campaign with his dark sentiments, personal jokes and comments like the "Democrat wars."

"He was such an S.O.B.," a former speech writer said. "But he's not the same Bob Dole anymore. Whether it was that election or Elizabeth (who he married in 1975), he has mellowed a lot."

His actions leading up to the 1976 election led to assertions there was a "dark side" in Dole's personality, a mysterious but generally predictable penchant for biting humor and surly posturing toward the press and antagonistic audiences.

"I don't know where they get the dark side," he said. "I used to be very partisan. I guess, sort of a gut fighter. But there is no 'new' Bob Dole, as everyone likes to write. Anyone who says there is didn't know me before. I've always been a nice guy."

Much of what he says is candor tinged with sarcasm, but anyone who gets close can see that the edge is still there.

What mellowing has occurred began in the late '70s, when Dole teamed with an unlikely Senate ally, George McGovern, to strengthen the food stamp program and finance new programs for school breakfasts and nutrition supplements for needy infants and pregnant women.

He refuted the partisan and hatchet man images and gradually crafted a reputation as a man well-suited to lead his colleagues to a vote, coordinate traffic and amass coalitions. Some called him the "Sheriff of the Senate" because of his intolerance for filibusters and his push for results over rhetoric.

In 1980, he thought himself significantly matured, but voters thought otherwise. Dole's bid for the White House that year is the shortest and most forgettable chapter in his political profile. In the nation's first primary in New Hampshire, Dole garnered 607 out of 145,000 votes cast. End of campaign. "It was a disaster," he said. "That's all."

Undaunted and, in fact, energized by the drubbing, Dole resumed Senate duties with vigor, working over every legislative package that hit the floor.

Dole led the fight to soften Reagan's proposed cuts in the food stamp program. In 1982, he supported the extension of the Voting Rights Act and later took a stake in creating a national holiday on Martin Luther King's birthday.

At the same time, he remained a party loyalist, ushering the 1981 tax cut through the Senate despite his contempt for supply-side economics. He has supported the Nicaraguan contras since their inception and stood by Reagan in opposing economic sanctions against South Africa.

In these cases and dozens more, Dole played the role of moderator, consulting colleagues in both parties and coalescing positions on floor legislation. It is rare that Dole proposes a bill on his own. Instead, he takes an idea that is offered and shepherds it through the bureaucracy and onto the president's desk.

"He is a catalyst for other views," Iowa Sen. Charles Grassley said. "More of a facilitator than a dictator. With Dole, you get cooperation between the White House and Congress, rather than confrontation. He looks for the possibilities of compromise."

Many colleagues agree, and in 1984 they elected the "sheriff" Senate majority leader. When the Republicans lost the majority last year, he became minority leader.

### Strong player

His no-nonsense approach to law is attracting widespread interest among party insiders who see him as a stronger player than the vice president and a better draw on the ballot. But he has an uphill battle in the Republican Party, which traditionally respects the natural pecking order that would make Bush the nominee.

But he says Bush's support is "soft — a mile wide and an inch deep," ready for the picking. He is making inroads in Iowa, the first caucus state, where he leads the polls.

For the first time in his life, he is learning to delegate responsibility to his staff, and, by no coincidence, for the first time he has an organized campaign.

He draws large crowds in gymnasiums and coffee shops across the Hawkeye State and he greets every audience member at the door as they leave. When the crowd is gone, he's off, press in tow but at a distance. He doesn't cater to trendy personal questions nor suggestions that he soften his touch or project a stoic vision for Bob Dole Country.

"No way," said Dreiling, the Democratic chairman. "This man is as independent as a cat on a hot tin roof. He projects the image of substance and character. And that may be just the vision the country is looking for."