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Bush Stumbles

As Dole scores with Reagan

It should have been a good week for George Bush. With the Democrats in disarray over Gary Hart, the Vice President maintains a comfortable edge over his strongest challenger. Republican Senator Robert Dole last week's poll for TIME by Yankelovich Clancy Shulman found Bush ahead of Dole, 40% to 20%, as the first choice of likely GOP voters. After bidding Soviet Leader Mikhail Gorbachev farewell at the airport, Bush seemed to bask in the summit's afterglow. But by Friday, the front runner had stumbled over two minor mishaps and allowed his staff to make him sound like a beleaguered underdog.

The first sour note was struck when Dole appeared beside Ronald Reagan in the White House to announce

halfheartedly that he would support the INF missile treaty. Dole has been waffling on the treaty in an attempt to appease GOP right-wingers, while Bush loyally endorsed the deal. Reagan, who needs the backing of Senate Republicans to ratify his treaty, was in the awkward position of seeming to boost Dole's faltering campaign.

When the White House invited Dole to appear with the President, the Bush campaign reacted immediately. "We had Dole finished," an aide complained to staffers in the office of Reagan's chief of staff Howard Baker, "and now you're letting him up." Despite the grousing, the White House refused to rescind the invitation. Said an Administration official of

the Bush campaign: "They're behaving like children."

Bush's more serious problem concerned the Administration's arms-for-hostages deals with Iran. The congressional Iran-contra committees released a memo from former National Security Adviser John Poindexter citing the Vice President as a strong supporter of the policy. Dated Feb. 1, 1986, the memo states that "president and v-p are solid in taking the position that we have to try."



Dole: guest appearance

ROBERT WALTERS

Dole's determined drive

By Robert Walters

NEWTON, Mass. (NEA) — Addressing the Lincoln Day Dinner sponsored by the Newton Republican Club in this Boston suburb, Sen. Robert Dole recounts his meeting with a group of furious farmers in the Kansas agricultural community of Colby. Their anger showed on their faces, and the immediate object of their fury was apparent from the stark, two-word legend emblazoned on their baseball caps: "DUMP DOLE," it read.

"I put 'em down as undecided," quipped the Kansas Republican. He grimaced, and the audience roared with laughter.

That anecdote, which the senator recounts at virtually every appearance he makes these days, is more than a speech-opening crowd-pleaser. It also illustrates the gritty determination of a compulsively competitive politician who is the only presidential candidate in either party to register any significant popularity increase in recent months.

Vice President Bush, the apparent leader in the contest for next year's Republican presidential nomination, has been hurt by the Iran-Contra scandal. He has been stagnant in most recent public opinion polls and has

slipped badly in some. Rep. Jack Kemp of New York, long presumed to be a leading Bush challenger, has failed to capture the electorate's imagination. Former Sen. Howard Baker of Tennessee, once expected to be a major contender, withdrew from the race to become President Reagan's chief of staff.

That places Dole in the enviable position of being Bush's principal challenger — and in some states the senator may have overtaken the vice president. In Iowa, where the selection process begins early next year, a recent poll conducted by the Des Moines Register gives Dole a 33-28 lead over Bush.

In New Hampshire, whose early primary follows Iowa's precinct caucuses, Bush has the support of Republican Gov. John Sununu, but Dole says he will get Republican Sen. Warren Rudman's endorsement "whenever he decides the time is right." Dole could also gain the backing of Republican Sen. Gordon J. Humphrey.

Another outspoken conservative, Sen. Jesse Helms, R-N.C., offered this unexpectedly lavish praise for Dole in a recent interview with the Charlotte (N.C.) Observer: "Bob Dole has been marvelous in his cooperation, not only with me but with the conservative group in the

Senate — On top of that, Bob Dole is a very good person. He has never defaulted on one promise or commitment. He has always been helpful, and I think the conservatives in general are grateful to him."

Dole, known by both admirers and detractors as a driven man, now is both serving as Senate Republican leader and campaigning almost ceaselessly.

Traveling every weekend and sometimes on weekdays, he has appeared at more than 200 political events in 32 states since the beginning of the year. On a typically hectic recent weekend swing through New England, he attended functions in Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire and Massachusetts in a 48-hour period.

Dole's standard campaign speech is refreshingly upbeat: "I'm very optimistic about the future of the Republican Party. President Reagan is making a fresh start. I'm optimistic about America. I'm an optimist."

Although he has not formally declared his candidacy, Dole says he is "very serious" about running — and many observers believe he has a fair chance to upset Bush and win the Republican nomination.

What happened to those angry farmers in Colby, Kans.? Dole says he listened patiently to their problems, then promised to do whatever he could to help them. When the encounter ended, some of the farmers had become quite friendly, the senator adds, and a newspaper reporter who was present says that's exactly what happened.

"I've learned in this business," says the 63-year-old senator, "that you never write anybody off."

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Bush goes on offensive against rival Dole

By Kathy Lewis
CHIEF, POST WASHINGTON BUREAU

WASHINGTON — Vice President George Bush Tuesday went on the offensive — telling Kansas Sen. Bob Dole to "get off my back."

Bush, responding to Dole's frequent barbs suggesting the vice president hasn't really done much, apparently decided enough was enough.

"I'm not sure that being in Congress all your life is a part of the answer. I think it may be part of the problem," Bush retorted.

After dealing with Dole's long career in Congress, Bush then laid out his own credentials and asked how many had accomplished such things.

"So tell him to get off my back," a feisty Bush said. "He's just begun to see the Silk Worms coming across his bow."

Within hours, Dole counterattacked with a missile or two of his

2 presidential candidates spar over experience, leadership

"I have a solid record of leadership and he doesn't. And it must be getting to him," Dole said. "I can't help it if he hasn't provided any leadership. I am on the

frontline every day making a difference. When President Reagan wants action he calls Bob Dole."

While no one but Bush had thought to dub the barbs Silk Worms — a reference to the Chinese missiles — political observers knew it was only a question of time until the rhetoric between the two perceived GOP frontrunners heated up even more.

Dole, who from the day he officially announced for president has belittled Bush's record, intensified that criticism last week.

In Iowa Dole said, "When Ronald Reagan wants his program passed, he doesn't call George, he calls Bob."

He also has described Bush as being "more or less an observer."

Bush obviously was ready when the question about Dole's comments was asked during an appearance at the National Press Club and he clearly relished the chance to zap Dole back.

Bush has preached that Republicans should abide by the so-called 11th commandment — that Republicans shall not speak ill of each other, but should save their fire for Democrats.

However, he has repeatedly chided Dole for his initial reluctance to support the intermediate-range missile treaty. "I'm one who's still struggling to live by the 11th commandment. So

please don't interpret what I'm about to say as a violation . . ." Bush teased.

With that Bush said his peace. He said he just wasn't sure that being in Congress all your life is what he should be doing.

With considerable zeal, he said 62 percent of Americans blame Congress for the deficit.

Bush said he had been in Congress long enough to understand how it works but not long enough to get "kind of pre-empted by the situation there."

He said he respects Congress, but he said he's also "done other things with my life."

In a statement Dole noted that Bush lost two races for the Senate and said Bush "certainly tried hard enough to get there."

He also criticized Bush for only

presiding over the Senate for 3 hours and 31 minutes last year during its more than 1100 hours in session.

But Bush boasted of having built his own business. "How many of them have met a payroll? How many of them know what it means when you add to the productive base of the country or what the agony of it is when you have to lay somebody off when the going gets rough?"

"We're running for president. That's an executive branch job."

He also cited his experience as director of the CIA and as vice president.

Bush and Dole led their GOP rivals by a considerable margin in several national polls. While Bush was ahead of Dole in a recent national Washington Post-ABC poll, Dole leads Bush in Iowa.

When Dole ultimately endorsed the INF treaty and was accorded a presidential announcement ceremony at the White House, Bush campaign aides were not happy.

Dole, however, has not yet attacked Bush in the two televised debates as Bush aides note.

Asked about Bush's comments and the Bush-Dole relationship, Bush spokesman Pete Teeley said Bush "decided he'd set a few things straight."

"We just see Dole being in a position that he feels his collar is getting a little tight. We think as the pressure mounts we'll see him settle into his traditional slasher role."

He insisted though that Bush does not dislike Dole. "Bush doesn't have that nasty streak that Dole has," he said.

Tim Archie, deputy press secretary to the Dole campaign said reports that Dole simply doesn't like Bush are not true. "Look this is a presidential campaign, there are natural rivalries."

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Kansas deal casts shadow on Dole fund

By Dale Goter
Harris News Service

OVERLAND PARK — A former aide to Sen. Robert Dole, as president of an Overland Park corporation, signed a \$279,000 promissory note in December 1986 to the Elizabeth Dole blind trust, 10 months after his company was awarded a no-bid federal minority business contract worth \$30 million.

Later on that day — Dec. 30 — the note was transferred to a private partnership with the same office address as Dave Owen, a former Dole Senate campaign chairman who is a national general finance chairman for Dole's presidential campaign.

The identities of the partners are not a matter of public record; those involved in the transaction will not disclose them, and

the law does not require their disclosure.

Owen and the former aide either cannot or will not explain the purpose of the property and mortgage transactions on record at the Johnson County Courthouse in Olathe.

The records make it clear that a land deal took place between the Dole trust and the former aide's company, EDP Enterprises. Yet unanswered is a key question: Why?

Circumstances are that a business owned and operated by a former Dole aide was used to expedite a land transaction between the Dole trust and a partnership whose members do not want to be identified. The land deal involved transfer of a million-dollar Overland Park office building and a promissory note worth almost

\$400,000, including interest, over its five-year term.

EDP Enterprises is headed by John Palmer as president and sole stockholder, according to records last filed with the Kansas Secretary of State. Palmer, 35, is a Kansas City native with a strong history of involvement in black Republican circles.

Palmer was a field representative in Dole's Kansas City office from 1982 to 1984 and later was the director of a federal regional administrators' council in Kansas City.

At the beginning of the day on Dec. 30, 1986, the Dole trust owned 100 percent of an office building at 11827 W. 112th in Overland Park. At the day's end, the new owner — College Park Two Building Partnership — held title to the building, which now houses the Kansas City headquarters

of the Dole For President Campaign, plus the business offices of Owen and EDP Enterprises.

Between the beginning and end of that day, Palmer and his company entered the picture. Palmer, as president of the business, signed a \$279,000 promissory note in exchange for a half-interest in the property. The note was secured by a second mortgage on the real estate. EDP then, on the same day, re-conveyed its half-interest to the partnership.

The transactions leave several unanswered questions regarding the relationship between the Dole trust, Owen, EDP and the mystery partnership that now owns the building.

Those involved say they cannot or will

not comment, but among the unanswered questions are:

Who are the partners in College Park Two, and what — if any — is their relationship to Owen, the Elizabeth Dole trust, and Palmer's company?

Why was EDP involved in the transaction at all? EDP had no interest in the building at the beginning of the day, had no interest in it at the end of the day — yet the company signed a promissory note along the way.

Palmer's company last year was awarded a contract to provide food service to U.S. Army mess halls at Ft. Leonard Wood, Mo. The three-year, no-bid \$10 million-a-year contract was awarded by the U.S. Small

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