

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF SENATOR DOLE

Multiple roles keep Dole on go

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Dole explained. "I drive my own car on the weekends."
Dole read the Washington Post and the New York Times as he traveled to the Capitol. Once there, he dispatched Leader to his Senate office in the Hart Building and took the elevator to his second-floor office just outside the Senate.

It was about 10 a.m., and Dole paged through clips his staff had collected of the day's news. Then he headed to a cloakroom outside the Senate to converse privately with colleagues.

His staff says there are three Doles: national political figure, Republican leader and senior senator from Kansas. As Republican leader, he must be a consensus builder, which necessitates a lot of informal discussions with colleagues.

He spends 80 percent of his time at his Capitol office as part of his leadership duties. He says he uses his Hart office to get away from it all, during recesses and on Saturdays. He also has a Campaign America office for his political action committee and an office for the non-profit, non-political Dole Foundation that raises grant money to help disabled Americans re-enter the workplace. He has regional offices in Topeka, Wichita, Kansas City and Pittsburg.

In all, he has a staff of about 65, about half of whom are Kansans.

Dole's Capitol office includes a reception room that once housed the Library of Congress, the Supreme Court robing rooms, the vice president's office and the Republican leader's office. Indeed, it is the only room in Washington to have housed all three branches of government, said Press Secretary Walt Riker from Topeka. The British started a fire here in 1814 in their attempt to burn down the Capitol and the White House. Cracks in the white marble fireplace are evidence of the intense heat.

An adjoining hallway featuring Dole's war medals leads into a conference room Riker said has housed a bevy of notables.

"There's no one in government in the past 10 years who hasn't sat here," Riker said. "Budget negotiations happen here. Late night deals happen here."

Next door was Dole's office, which looks out on the Washington Monument, the Smithsonian and Pennsylvania and Independence avenues. Arlington Cemetery and the Lincoln Memorial are in the distance, as is the tip of the National Cathedral.

The office is spacious, with white marble fireplaces, large gilded mirrors and a handwoven silk rug from Chinese political leader Deng Xiaoping. There are two chandeliers and paintings of Abraham Lincoln, Dwight Eisenhower and Pocahontas.

Dole's desk is uncluttered. There's a historical almanac he authored on the Senate and a solid crystal pyramid containing his wedding ring. There's also an update on the Higher Education Reauthorization bill the Senate would take up that day.

Elizabeth Dole's picture is on a

nearby table, as is a cutout picture of Leader. Behind the desk is a baseball bat called "the deficit buster."

"Senator Dole gave one to President Bush in the budget summit of 1990," Riker said. "It's to remind everyone the deficit is the number one issue."

Across the hall is the Old Senate Chamber, where Dole was elected majority leader.

"It's like electing the pope," Riker said. "It's a secret ballot among your peers."

Riker called Dole a "giant" and said he had the most talented staff on Capitol Hill.

It was 11 a.m., and Dole returned to the Senate cloakroom for more conferences, while Majority Leader Sen. George Mitchell, D-Maine, addressed the Senate. Then Dole met with reporters. Senators frequently come and go when the Senate is in session, doing most of their work in committees and meetings.

While Dole was away, chief of staff Sheila Burke from San Francisco reflected on her boss and the office she runs.

Dole is at his best when he is creating consensus, said Burke, who was the first woman chief of staff to be named by a party leader. And she said he was a workaholic.

"He is consumed by what he does," she said. "It's his hobby and his job."

She called the office mood "upbeat," since Dole had announced his plans to run for a fifth six-year term. Dole had said he was waiting for a clean bill of health following his prostate surgery.

It was just before 11:30 a.m., and Dole met privately with the chairman of National Computer Systems in Hutchinson, Charles Oswald. Oswald said later he wanted to make sure guaranteed student loans were thoughtfully considered in the education bill.

Shortly thereafter, Dole met privately with the president of the National Association of Realtors. A few minutes later, Dole joined some noisy Virginia fifth-graders outside his office. Dole shook hands with the students and stood among them, looking very tall.

Then he disappeared into his office, to re-emerge in his conference room at noon with Indonesian foreign minister Ali Alatas. The Senate photographer took pictures. Majority Leader Mitchell joined them.

Alatas updated the men on his government's investigation into the Nov. 13, 1991, military massacre of up to 200 people at a cemetery in East Timor. He told Dole and Mitchell his government was bringing four people to trial on subversion charges, with possible death sentences, and 12 people to trial on common offenses.

The meeting ended at 12:15 p.m., and Dole disappeared for lunch at the Senate dining room. Later, he said he had eaten a bowl of split-pea and ham soup and a "Tsongas slice" of Boston cream pie, while he talked with colleagues about the New Hampshire primary. Presidential candidate Paul Tsongas had two days before finished first among



—Photo courtesy of the U.S. Senate

Dole looked on as a Kansas student called his mother from the senator's desk in his Capitol office near the Senate.

Democratic contenders in the New Hampshire primary.

On Dole's return, a Fox television network reporter interviewed him on Tsongas.

"I like his candor," Dole said. "He's not anti-growth, he's not anti-business, he's not anti-consumer and he's not trying to stir up class warfare. Tsongas is a dose of reality for the Democratic Party."

Dole predicted Tsongas would endure but Republican challenger Patrick Buchanan, who captured 37 percent of the vote, would fade.

It was just after 1 p.m., and Dole headed to his Hart office on the noisy basement trolley cars, saying hello to people as he went.

His first-floor Hart office was closely guarded by Leader, who looked a little sad sitting alone in a staffer's cubicle. Dole tried to keep the schauzauer at his Capitol office but ended that when Capitol police found the dog in the dome.

Dole's Senate office is carpeted in white. His desk was piled with books. Here, he reflected on his career.

He likes tackling different problems every day, he said.

So, what doesn't he like? "Sometimes I don't like the hours," he said. "We seem to waste a lot of time. Like right now. The Democrats are meeting, so we're not doing anything for two hours. If the Republicans were meeting, we'd still be in session."

Dole said the key to being effective was not to overreach oneself and to abide by one's word.

"All you have around here is your word," he said.

And, he said, it was important to get along with colleagues.

"You have to level with them, but not go along to get along," he said. "He said he would rather be major-league leader but gets along with Mitchell. 'We understand we have to run the place,' he said. 'We can refuse to cooperate, or we'd have gridlock here.'"

Dole said his leadership job involves a lot of White House meetings, and President Bush calls him from time to time. On the few occasions he calls Bush, the White House operator puts him through directly.

"I extend the same courtesy to him," he joked.

Asked to describe his strengths and weaknesses, Dole said, "Someone else can tell you about my weaknesses. I'm strong enough to get things done and smart enough to figure out what's going on around here."

Dole said his office tried to respond to constituents' calls or letters within 24 hours.

"I don't check if they're a Democrat or Republican if they're in trouble," he said.

Staffers said the office gets more than 70,000 letters a year, including about 40,000 from Kansans. They said they couldn't begin to measure the number of phone calls.

It was 2 p.m., and Dole got back on the trolley for the Capitol. Reporters briefly intercepted him, and when he got back to his office, Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger and Republican senators

were waiting. They would receive a top-secret briefing focusing on most favored nation status for China.

Dole asked if the office recently had been swept for listening devices and wondered if the meeting should be moved. He was reassured his offices were adequate.

At 3:40 p.m., Dole met with two Kansas area orthopedic surgeons. They talked about the need for men to get annual prostate checkups.

"It's something men don't talk about, but it's a big killer," Dole said.

They also noted Rep. Dan Glickman, D-Kan., had decided that day not to challenge Dole's seat.

Dole called it "fairly good news." At 4:30 p.m., Dole hosted a reception for former White House chief of staff John Sununu in the reception room.

Tables were decked with cheeses, fruits and brownies.

Senators came and went. Dole greeted them all, asking if he could buy them a Coke.

The Senate photographer was busy shooting.

A tall, thin Sen. Alan Simpson, R-Wyoming, held his arms over the short, chunky Sununu, Godzilla fashion. Everyone laughed.

Meanwhile, staffer Jim Wholey of Pennsylvania looked on from outside the office, commenting on his boss.

"He is straightforward to the point of being blunt," Wholey said.

"There's not a lot of wasted motion."

Fifteen minutes later, Dole was on the Senate floor, eulogizing his late friend and "Roots" author, Alex Haley, and defending a study he had released on the effects of massive defense cuts on the economy.

He said his study showed the Democratic plan to double defense cuts would result in as many as 1.4 million job losses by 1997.

The Senate went on to consider amendments to the education bill, and at 6:35 p.m., Dole peeked into Riker's office to ask if all his own amendments to the bill had been drafted.

"We don't know when to go home; that's our problem," he said.

He returned to the floor at 7:30 p.m. and offered his amendments at 8 p.m. The bill would pass the next day, 93-1, with Dole voting in the majority.

When the Senate adjourned about 9:45 p.m., Dole retrieved Leader from the Hart office. Dole's driver escorted them back to the Watergate.

The sky outside Dole's office had turned pink and cobalt blue, and the red lights on the Washington monument began to flash. Pennsylvania and Independence avenues filled with car lights.

It had been another long night for Dole and his staff.

"Someone else can tell you about my weaknesses. I'm strong enough to get things done and smart enough to figure out what's going on around here."

— Bob Dole

Sen. Bob Dole

Born July 22, 1923, in Russell.

Graduate of Russell public schools; bachelor of arts, Washburn Municipal University, 1952; law degree, Washburn, 1952.

Elected one term to the Kansas House, 1951-53; elected four terms as Russell County attorney, 1953-61; elected to U.S. House, 1960, reelected 1962, 1964, 1966; elected to U.S. Senate 1968, reelected 1974, 1980, 1986, up for re-election 1992; elected Senate majority leader, 1984; elected Senate minority leader, 1986, re-elected 1988, 1990; Republican candidate for U.S. vice president, 1976.

Serves on Senate committees on Finance (senior member) (subcommittees: Medicare; Social Security — ranking member); Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry (senior member) (subcommittees: Nutrition — senior member); Agricultural Production and Stabilization of Prices; Agricultural Research; and Senate Rules.

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Dole: Time here for budget amendment

By Ray Hemman
The Hutchinson News

The frustration of American voters has made the "climate right" for adding a balanced budget amendment to the United States Constitution, said Sen. Bob Dole, R-Kan.

"I think the balanced budget amendment is going to pass this year," Dole said Friday during his weekly telephone press conference with Kansas journalists. "I think many Democrats who have opposed it, including the two Democrats from Kansas in the House, probably will vote for it this time. I think you are going to see a lot of legislation aimed at trying to regain confidence — Congress trying to regain the confidence of the American people."



Dole

Earlier this week, Sen. Nancy Kassebaum, R-Kan., expressed reservations about the balanced budget amendments as proposed. Dole said he sensed her concern was over the language of such an amendment.

"My view is, and I have been a proponent of the balanced budget amendment for some time, we ought to pass it. We ought to do the best we can on the language and then let it be implemented and see how it works. It's got to be ratified by three-fourths of the states, so we will see very quickly if the state legislators agree with us that we ought to have some limit on spending."

The "popular" version of the amendment being considered would require a three-fifths, recorded vote of both chambers of Congress in order to spend more than the government takes in — known better as deficit spending. Dole said he will attempt to amend the amendment on the Senate side to include a provision that requires a three-fifths, re-

corded majority to raise taxes. The senior senator also said he favored taking a close look at entitlement programs in an effort to get federal spending under control.

"I was one of 28 senators who voted to take a look at entitlements just before the recess," he said. "What the Democrats did was say you can't do anything about veterans entitlements. Well, my view is you've got to do something about all the entitlements. I mean there's veterans, Medicare, Medicaid, food stamps, whatever there is. There's 40 or 50 different programs on entitlements."

"If we say up right up front we're not going to do anything with it, not even look at those programs to find savings, then we're never going to balance the budget. Everything ought to be on the table, and that includes agriculture."

By including congressional salaries and budgets, the White House budget and other pre-

viously untouchable portions of the budget, the public may gain some confidence in the process. "We do that and then the American people are going to have some confidence we are not going to exempt special interests or people with influence or politicians or whatever. And I think they would accept at least some restraint on entitlements."

Also during the press conference, Dole said recent positive economic news would bolster President George Bush's reelection. The public will vote its pocketbook in November, and lower unemployment, higher farm prices and other good economic news will help the president.

The senator also said he was not sure which major party candidate will be affected more by independent Ross Perot's entry into the fall presidential campaign. Dole said he does not put much stock into polls that show Perot with considerable support. Dole pointed out that independent John Anderson had

between 23 and 24 percent support in polls prior to the 1980 election. Anderson ended up with 7 percent of the popular vote that year and no electoral votes.

Perot also has a negative image with a considerable chunk of the electorate, according to the same poll, Dole said.

"Perot obviously is the unknown quantity," the senator said. "He already has some negatives. I think in that same poll, his negatives were about 23 percent, which seems to be fairly high for somebody who's not even a candidate."

"When he steps into the race, it's a whole new ball game. It's easy to have answers for all the questions until you have to deal with them. He'll be a factor, no doubt about it. He's a very able person. He's going to have a lot of money. And there's a lot of support out there. He's saying a lot of things that people want to hear. They are looking for an alternative to Bush and Clinton — at least some people."