

25. 1976

Dole still in running for VP

KANSAS CITY — Melvin Laird, former secretary of defense and an adviser to President Gerald Ford, said Wednesday night that Sen. Bob Dole remains "under active consideration" for vice president.

"I can't say enough for him," Laird continued. "I don't think the President has made up his mind."

"Dole is an excellent person," the former secretary of defense said. "He's as qualified as any man alive."

Meanwhile, an active campaign to get Dole on the Republican ticket was under way by members of the Kansas delegation.

A number of placards had been painted for display on the convention floor when Kansas cast its ballot for the nominee. The delegation is dominated by Ford and the big posters proclaimed "Ford-Dole."

"Dole remains pessimistic about his

More convention news, photos on pages 2, 6, 7, 23, 42

chances to be selected as Ford's running mate.

The junior U.S. senator from Kansas said late Wednesday "I haven't heard anything. It leads me to believe the idea is as remote now as it was in the beginning."

"It seems to me if I was still under active consideration I would have been contacted by now," Dole, along with a number of others, was asked to submit financial and medical background to the White House several weeks ago.

John DuBois of Topeka, an alternate delegate, was making contacts with other delegations to seek support for Dole as the President's running mate, along with Harold Chase of Salina, another alternate delegate, and former Kansas Lt. Gov. Dave Owen, of Olathe.

Chase indicated only a lukewarm response to the Dole "candidacy" for vice president in two of the three delegations he contacted.

He said the Wisconsin and Minnesota delegations both told him they believe the President should be left free to make his own choice without undue influence from delegates.

Chase said a contact in the Ohio delegation told him Dole's name had been recommended to the President for consideration and was "high on the list" submitted by the Ohio Republican Party officials.

Ford campaign officials announced Wednesday the President will disclose the name of his running mate at approximately noon Thursday.

Time thus appeared to the running out on the Kansas senator with no clear indication how high he stands on the Ford list of prospective vice presidential running mates.

The strain of the convention is beginning to show on Dole. He has been in Kansas City about two weeks and reportedly hasn't had much sleep the last 10 days.

Dole suffered a ruptured blood vessel in his right eye Wednesday and doctors told him it probably was the result of long hours, hot convention hall and television lights directed at the podium where Dole presided as temporary chairman two days, plus an abundance of cigarette smoke in Kemper Arena.

Owen, who earlier had written a letter to all delegates urging them to consider Dole as a vice presidential possibility, said a number of states had taken Ford-Dole placards to display on the floor.

Owen also said a number of state delegations had turned down the placards, telling Kansas contacts they had their own favorite son for the post.

Ratification at tonight's session

Ford selects Dole for running mate

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — President Ford today chose Sen. Robert J. Dole of Kansas to be his running mate in the Republican campaign to retain control of the White House.

Ford announced his choice at a news conference less than 12 hours after he triumphed over Ronald Reagan in the balloting for the GOP presidential nomination.

Ford's choice is to be ratified at tonight's closing session of the convention.

Introducing Dole at a news conference, Ford noted he and Dole had served together in the House for eight years.

"He has been a great team player," the President said. "His philosophy and mine coincide almost exactly. Bob Dole is a great campaigner."

Moments before the announcement, a leader of a group of delegates trying to generate support to draft Reagan for the second spot on the ticket said the drive had col-

lapsed.

"At this point, I think we're dead," said Rep. Lou Frey of Florida.

Ford said he had told Reagan he

Convention news page 6

planned to choose Dole and "Gov. Reagan has endorsed my selection of Bob Dole as my running mate."

Reagan met with his campaign workers and told them, "Sure, there's a disappointment in what

happened. But the cause, the cause, goes on."

At Reagan's side crying quietly as he bid his farewell to his staff, was his wife, Nancy.

Ford introduced the smiling Dole at a nationally televised appearance at his Crown Center Hotel headquarters, calling him "my running mate for victory in 1976."

Said Dole: "I'm not certain what I can add to the ticket, but I will work hard and do the best I can."

The selection of Dole was somewhat of a surprise. He was not among those mentioned by several sources as the finalists in Ford's search for a running mate.

The names being mentioned most often were Reagan, Sen. Howard H. Baker of Tennessee, Treasury Secretary William Simon, and William D. Ruckelshaus, former deputy attorney general.

But in the end, Ford chose the Kansas senator who has never lost an election since he was elected to the Kansas legislature in 1950 at the age of 26. Dole was elected to the U.S. House in 1960 and to the Senate in 1968.

Dole addressed the convention Monday night and his speech was a hard-hitting attack on the Democrats.

Referring to the Democratic platform adopted at the party's convention in New York City last month, Dole said, "I'd be afraid to stand on that platform, much less try to run on it. It isn't safe. It is weak. It tilts

so far left that any of us would slide off."

One of the first congratulatory calls received by the President today was from Jimmy Carter, his Democratic opponent.

In a telephone conversation from his home in Plains, Ga., Carter told Ford he wasn't surprised that Republicans appeared to be uniting behind Ford.

Carter first tried to call the President at 8:31 a.m., after he heard Ford's son, Jack, say in a television interview that his father was awake and at work.

When Carter called, he couldn't reach the President. Two hours later, Ford returned the call and Carter quoted him as saying, "I was in the sack" when Carter had called earlier.

A White House spokesman quoted Ford as telling Carter, "Aren't you kind. Give my best to your family."

Within an hour of the balloting that gave him the nomination, Ford sped across the city to meet with Reagan in the former California governor's hotel suite. Later they stood side by side before reporters, congratulated each other on their campaigns, and Reagan pledged to campaign for Ford.

Reagan repeated his statements that he didn't want to be vice president. But the defeated challenger refused to rule out accepting a convention draft.

Upsets most predictions . . .

Ford names Kansas Senator Dole

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The President said Reagan had endorsed his choice of the Kansas senator.

The Ford selection was a carefully-guarded secret, disclosed only during

the hour before it was announced. White House and campaign sources had leaked lists of the names of likely selections — but Dole's was not on it.

The final session of the 31st Republican National Convention was to ballot on the vice presidency, and the choice made by the presidential nominee is virtually certain to be ratified.

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Dole won election to the U.S. House from western Kansas and was elected U.S. senator in 1969, a race that pitted him against some of the state's top political pros.

He was named chairman of the Republican National committee in 1970 and was the leading spokesman for the party during President Nixon's first term. He was replaced at the party helm just before Nixon's second term began and sources close to the Senator said he was forced from the position by White House aides.

Dole sought re-election in 1974 and won a close election against Dr. William Roy, who was serving at the time as 2nd District congressman.

In December of 1975, Dole married Commissioner Mary Elizabeth Hanford, of the Federal Trade Commission.

The senator has a 21-year-old daughter, Robin, from his previous marriage, which ended in divorce five years ago.

Dole was born July 22, 1923. He has degrees from the University of Kansas and Washburn University in Topeka.

He was elected a state representative in 1951, serving one term before becoming Russell County attorney for eight years.

He was elected to the House in 1960 from western Kansas' first district, serving eight years before winning the Senate nomination.

The Disabled American Veterans once named Dole the outstanding Kansan to overcome a handicap.

His right arm is crippled from a war wound suffered in Italy during World War II. He served in the Army from 1943 through 1955, entering as a second lieutenant and leaving the service as a captain.

The selection followed an early-morning meeting between Ford and Ronald Reagan. Following his nomination at the convention, Ford sped across the city to meet with Reagan in his hotel suite. Later they stood side by side before reporters, congratulated each other on their campaigns, and Reagan pledged to campaign for Ford. Reagan repeated his statements that he didn't want to be vice president. But the defeated challenger refused to rule out accepting a convention draft.



RECENT VISIT TO JUNCTION CITY
... Sen. Robert Dole and his wife, Elizabeth.



Bob Dole visits with a Rice County constituent during a stop in Lyons while on the campaign trail for reelection to the Senate in 1974.
(Photo by David Saylor)

the Lyons Daily News

Daily Except Sunday

Lyons, Kansas Thursday, August 19, 1976

Volume 71, Number 151