

31. 1976

THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR

Friday, August 20, 1976

254

Chicago Tribune

FOUNDED June 16, 1847

STANTON R. COOK, Chairman and Publisher
ROBERT M. HUNT, President

CLAYTON KIRKPATRICK, Editor
MAXWELL MCCROBON, Managing Editor
JOHN MCCUTCHEON, Editorial Page Editor
WILLIAM H. JONES, Managing Editor, News

2 Section 2 Friday, August 20, 1976

THE NEWSPAPER is an institution developed by modern civilization to present the news of the day, to foster commerce and industry, to inform and lead public opinion, and to furnish that check upon government which no constitution has ever been able to provide.

—THE TRIBUNE CREDO

So it is Ford and Dole . . .

With the choice of Sen. Robert Dole of Kansas as a running mate, President Ford has called the signals for a fierce, hard-driving presidential campaign — one that will carry the fight directly to Jimmy Carter. With the possible exception of Texas' John Connally, Sen. Dole is the most aggressive teammate Mr. Ford could have picked—a witty, abrasive, colorful campaigner who has a record of beating the odds.

In some respects, this was a high-risk choice on Mr. Ford's part. Sen. Dole has a number of liabilities—or what would be liabilities in a less forceful battler. He was former President Nixon's personal choice to be chairman of the Republican National Committee; Mr. Nixon overrode objections from moderate Republican spokesmen to appoint him. As the party's leading spokesman during the growing uproar over Watergate, Mr. Dole waged a typically fierce battle against Mr. Nixon's critics in government and the media, he called them "mudslingers."

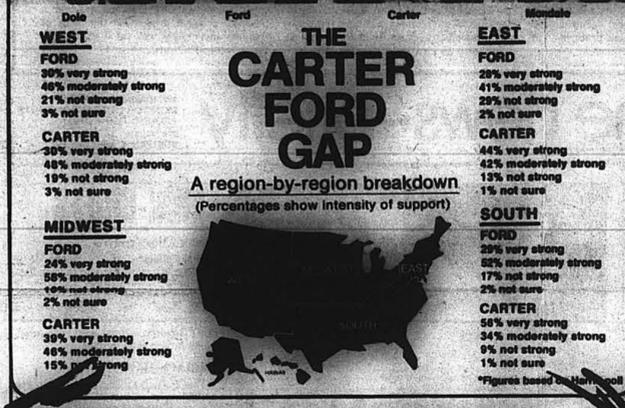
If this was a handicap, however, Mr. Dole overcame it handily in his own state. In 1973, when he was forced from the party chairmanship, the widespread belief was that he had proved too blunt and straightforward for the cover-up strategy that White House strat-

egists had chosen. In his 1974 reelection campaign, he beat off a challenge from Democrat William R. Roy by accusing Roy of "mudslinging" and misrepresenting his record. Also typically, he faced the Watergate challenge frankly, discussed it in full, and won, attracting votes from all kinds of Kansas Republicans—and others.

Sen. Dole's physical handicap—a disabled right arm, the result of a tank engagement in Italy during World War II—also has proved no handicap to him politically. As a campaigner, he seems able to punch harder with one hand than most politicians can with two.

Mr. Dole's gravest challenge is that he must prove himself to be vice presidential material—which means presidential material. Until now he has been an intraparty worker, a whole-souled Republican partisan who has won elections only in normally Republican Kansas.

Yet this too may prove an advantage. With Sen. Dole on the ticket, disappointed supporters of Ronald Reagan will have the "clearest choice" they demand; there will be little reason for them to drift toward the liberal Democratic slate. The GOP this fall will offer a solidly welded pair of conservatives—one that even has a built-in slogan: It's better to have a Dole as Vice President than as a policy.



Pollsters tell Ford: look north

By John Dillon
Staff correspondent of The Christian Science Monitor
Kansas City, Missouri

President Ford's best hope of cutting into Jimmy Carter's big presidential lead lies along a northern band of states that reaches all the way to the Pacific Ocean.

Political polls find Mr. Carter's support quite soft among millions of voters in the Northeast, the Midwest, and the far West. But the Carter lead appears virtually unshakable at this time in the South.

The poor outlook in the South probably helped steer Mr. Ford away from Sen. Howard Baker of Tennessee, who had been under serious consideration as a running mate. Sen. Robert J. Dole of Kansas will help the President in the vast Midwest farm belt, where Republican policies have drawn bitter criticism.

The new Ford-Dole team starts far behind in the polls. But those same polls offer genuine hope for the Republicans.

In the West, for example, less than a third of Mr. Carter's support is considered "strong," according to a sampling just released by the Harris Poll. In the Midwest, more than 60 percent of the voters who say they are for Mr. Carter are considered "wavering," and in the East 56 percent are similarly soft in their support of the Democratic ticket.

Mr. Carter's own pollster, Pat Caddell, recently was reported saying his candidate appeared vulnerable in a number of Northeast states.

The probable Ford strategy for the fall seems apparent.

★Pollsters tell Ford: look north

● Strive to lock up the President's own region, the Midwest.

● Hit Mr. Carter vigorously in the East, especially among Roman Catholic voters who appear to have serious concerns about Mr. Carter.

● Take advantage of what seems to be serious weakness in the Democratic campaign in the West where Mr. Carter has his worst ratings.

Mr. Carter has stated he would run a 50-state campaign that concedes nothing to the Republicans. But it is known his strategists see certain states as pivotal: "New South" states like Texas and Florida; border states like Maryland and Kentucky; industrial states like Indiana; big population states like New York and Pennsylvania.

If the Harris Poll offered Mr. Ford hope, it also contained a sobering view of his own standing with the voters.

The poll was taken July 31 to Aug. 4, before the Republican convention, so it measured the President's strength before the hoopla and the publicity of this week had rallied support behind his party. Even so, the news was grim.

Mr. Harris found only 28 percent of those supporting the President nationwide were firm. All the rest, 72 percent, are considered vulnerable.

In the Midwest, his home region, support was even thinner — with a bare 24 percent "strongly" for Mr. Ford. Some 76 percent of his supporters are considered "wavering."

The President's best standing was in the West, where 30 percent of his support was strong.

Among religious groups, Mr. Ford runs best among protestants, but still loses there to Mr. Carter 57 to 38 percent. Among Roman Catholics, Mr. Ford loses 54 to 45, and among Jewish voters, 53 to 47.

But two of every three Roman Catholics who support Mr. Carter do so with enthusiasm. This appears to offer Mr. Ford a good target.

Why Dole choice gives Ford a tactical boost

Needing to play catch-up ball, President aims at Midwest

By Godfrey Sperling Jr.
Staff correspondent of The Christian Science Monitor

President Ford now has visible momentum — and it seems bound to lift his prospects for closing the gap with Democrat Jimmy Carter. And Mr. Ford also comes away from this town on the edge of the Great Plains with a running mate who is a hard-working, hard-hitting campaigner and who should help the President in the race to catch up with the Carter-Mondale ticket.

Sen. Robert J. Dole is known as a thorough, professional politician, completely loyal to his party. He is sufficiently conservative to be acceptable to most Reaganites. And he is viewed as sufficiently flexible in dealing with issues to be acceptable to most party moderates.

Mr. Dole's "philosophy and mine coincide almost identically," Mr. Ford said in introducing his choice of running mate.

More than anything else, Mr. Dole, a Kansan, will help Mr. Ford where the primaries have shown he has troubles with the voters — in the agricultural belt of the Midwest.

The President comes out of this bruising nomination battle looking stronger.

For this he can thank Ronald Reagan, who almost beat Mr. Ford and who, in the end, helped Mr. Ford by providing a stage on which America's millions could witness their President emerging a victor.

But the President also comes away scarred by the highly effective Reagan challenge.

Item — His effectiveness and strength as a leader were put into question by Mr. Reagan's many primary victories, most of them coming in the later stages during the 30-primary period that extended from February into June.

Item — Mr. Reagan made Mr. Ford appear to be a loser, he cut into the President's credibility as President. This was reflected in the polls which showed Mr. Carter first behind Mr. Ford, then getting out in front, and then lengthening his lead to about 2 to 1.

Item — Further, Mr. Reagan moved the President to the right ideologically — causing him to shape harder lines on both foreign and domestic policy.

This is reflected in the platform, where the President accepted just about everything Mr. Reagan wanted.

But it may well handicap Mr. Ford now as he seeks to win over those independents and Democrats who might be wooed by a GOP moderate, but not by a GOP conservative whose position bears much of the Reagan brand.

★Dole choice

But the convention was a huge qualified success for the President as he turns now to the task of cutting away at the Carter lead.

● The U.S. public was fascinated by the goings-on here.

The tide of battle held the viewers' interest, keeping them at their TV sets even through some of the dull speeches.

This, it was clear that the Republicans beat the Democrats in the convention battle for viewers.

Morale boost

And this was the sort of public-relations scoop the Republicans needed to lift their morale as they move now into the uphill struggle against the Democrats in key elections this November — the governors and congressional races as well as the presidential contest.

● Further, there seemed to be ample evidence here that the party was coming together (some of the Reaganites a little reluctantly, of course) behind the Ford-Dole team.

Again and again, top Reagan people, when interviewed, are saying (a) that while they preferred Mr. Reagan, they really have nothing against the President, and (b) that they will back Mr. Ford because their principal concern is that Jimmy Carter be denied the presidency.

COLORADO SPRINGS SUN 8-20-76

Dole termed 'political infighter'

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (UPI) — When the Republicans need a tough political infighter who can take it as well as dish it out, they call on Bob Dole.

A tough campaigner is just what President Ford needs facing an uphill fight against Democrat Jimmy Carter and again Dole was called in to help, this time as Ford's running mate.

With a tight smile, the Kansas senator can deliver a caustic argument on the Senate floor or a biting joke to a crowd back home. The joke often is aimed at himself.

With the experience of two years as GOP national chairman, Dole, 53, perhaps was the natural choice for temporary chairman for the 1976 Republican National Convention at Kansas City, bordering his home state and those same qualities undoubtedly were a factor in President Ford's selection of a running mate.

Well known in Washington, and with strong agricultural ties, Dole had been mentioned before as one who could shore up weak spots in the campaign against Carter.

Before the selection, Dole said he thought his chances were remote, but asked if he would accept, he said, "I think anybody would want to be vice president."

Dole also has avoided enemies among the defeated supporters of Ronald Reagan. Despite the fact he was a Ford delegate to the convention, the conservative senator refrained from attacking Reagan.

Even when he spoke for Ford's behalf at the Kansas state Republican convention — following an appearance by Reagan — Dole's tone was conciliatory. He said both were fine men he could support and the party must unite behind whatever candidate is selected.

One of his stronger statements about Reagan on that occasion indicated the former California governor was criticizing Ford for problems born of a Democrat-controlled Congress.

He served 5½ years in the Army in World War II, including a stint as an infantry platoon leader in the 10th Mountain Division in Italy. He twice was wounded and twice decorated for heroism.

He was hospitalized 39 months as a result of wounds that left him with a crippled right arm and hand. During his hospitalization he met his first wife, Phyllis, whom he divorced in 1972.

Dole began his political career at 26, with election to the Kansas House of Representatives in 1951. He served four terms as Russell County attorney, 1953-1961.

In 1960 he was elected to the House and re-elected every two years until he won a Senate seat in November, 1966, succeeding retiring Republican Frank Carlson.