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Pleased with the Dole honor... Lukewarm support from Rice farmers

Senator Bob Dole's vice-presidential selection to fill the Republican ticket is viewed nationally as a move toward an attempt to recapture an agriculture sector that has been alienated by Ford administration policies.

Will the move be effective? A check with several Rice counties indicates it should, but there are enough reservations expressed to assure that the GOP candidates' battle is far from downhill. It may not even be level. It may be uphill.

Nonetheless, most of the area agrarian citizens called by the News this morning were either pleased with the Kansas Senator's selection, or made an effort to be optimistic. Most seemed willing to give Dole the benefit of doubts.

Wendell Ebright of rural Lyons, currently vice-president of the Kansas Wheat commission, sees his selection as flattering to the Senator and to Kansas, but in the long haul, if Ford and Dole win, he sees problems elsewhere. "Governor Bennett is pretty apt to seek Dole's senatorial position and I have a bit of concern about this. This could involve having both senators in the extreme northeast part of the state. We



WHEN BOB DOLE visited Rice county in October of 1974, for a question and answer session with farmers and businessmen, he was trailing Dr. Bill Roy in his race for reelection to the Senate. Dole pulled out a victory statewide, but Rice county did not join the switch. The vice-presidential nominee lost here by a 312-vote margin, 2,727 to 2,415.

would be losing Dole's seniority, particularly in the agriculture committee where he is so vital to us. There are good and bad aspects that give us all cause to ponder."

Ebright is also concerned that Dole will be lost as an effective Senator, and will be going to a position that traditionally has had minor input in past administrations.

Ebright thinks wheat growers have felt Dole has been an articulate spokesman for them, primarily through his familiarity with the central and western areas of the state.

Ed Case of rural Little River feels that Dole as an elected vice-president "can't hurt us any." "If he doesn't let big business push his thinking the wrong way, he could even do us some good...if he does what he has been doing he can help us out...he's kind of stood up for us." Case says he is not too much of a Ford man. He was for Reagan.

Loren Wiens of rural Chase believes that Dole's selection at least makes it a tossup between the two tickets (Ford-Dole and Carter-Mondale). "We've got a Democratic candidate who has some

agricultural background too (Carter and members of his family are long-time peanut growers in Georgia)." "But as far as Dole, I think he was chosen strictly because of his campaigning potential. After the election is over a vice-president is almost...he's nothing, no authority or voice, and it may be a false euphoria as far as I can see."

Dole on the ticket makes it more acceptable for Wiens. But, he says, "I'm still not able yet to support Mr. Ford, after what he did to us on the embargo. This doesn't mean we won't get it from the other side too, but I'm still not swayed by Dole."

Dole is from a strong farm area of the nation, but Wiens has always associated him more with oil than farming. He says he concedes, however, that Dole has been paying a little more attention to farmers recently. "We've been stomped so hard last year, two and three years back, that he has to respond a little to our plight." Wiens also noted that Dole won by a razor thin margin in the last election over Dr. Bill Roy. "He referred to it on television. He's well aware that he doesn't have overwhelming support."

Long-time farm leader Ralph Ball of rural Sterling also is a long-time friend of Dole's. "We've had our differences, but he is hard-working and he knows agriculture better than any candidate who could have been named as vice-presidential candidate." Ball considered Dole and Baker both good prospects, with Dole having the edge for agriculture. "Possibly he's a little controversial, but I call it a plus for agriculture. He stands for America, the things that make it great, I think."

Ralph Helmer of rural Lyons has decided he is like Mrs. Dole, when she was interviewed on television last evening on her feelings at possibly becoming

ing the nation's Second Lady. "I've got to think about it awhile."

Harold Reed of rural Lyons has not been a Dole supporter and has not really followed the Dole philosophy closely, but feels that some good might — just might — come from the vice-presidential selection.

Colin Hoyt of rural Lyons feels Dole and Ford are going to have to make a stronger stand agriculturally, "or they'll not get my vote." "They can't straddle the fence." Hoyt does feel that Dole has come out stronger for the farmer in the past year than he ever had. I feel that Dole was scared by the last election. I think, I hope, he has seen the light. I still feel that in order for the Republicans to carry the state they are going to have to do something about the price of farm commodities."

Karl Kandt, elevator manager at Chase, feels "Ford could have done worse. I think Dole has tried to do some good for the farmer, but there are times when I've thought he hasn't. And, I know that sometimes we don't understand all of the problems." Kandt felt that there wasn't much — far from enough, at least — in the convention's farm platform. "Anybody can say anything, but what is it going to mean?"

Ron Ricker of rural Chase sees Dole's nomination as one that could put him in a good position to help agriculture. "If he just does...we'll wait and see." Ricker said he hasn't followed Dole's political turns closely, but in his past efforts to help agriculture, he "wishes he had tried harder." However, beyond that, the Rice county questions whether it really makes much difference whether Dole represents the farmer, as far as the election outcome goes. "We don't represent that many people."

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Ford-Dole team in Kansas Russell first campaign stop

Compiled from wire services
Russell — Bob Dole came home today and he brought the President with him.

The 5,500 residents of Russell played host to the Republican team's first appearance since their jubilant acceptance of the party nomination last night. Russell planned a public barbecue.

President Ford was scheduled to leave Salina at 3 p.m. and travel to Colorado.

A crowd of about 2,000 greeted Ford and Dole, when they switched aircraft at Salina late this morning, en route to Russell.

Air Force One touched down at Municipal Airport about 11:15.

The newly nominated candidates reached across a fence to shake hands with the crowd. They also shook hands with newsmen from central Kansas who were in a roped-off area.

By about 11:25 the presidential party was airborne again, this time in helicopters. Four busloads of newsmen from all over the country left for Russell about 45 minutes earlier.

Dole today offered to debate his counterpart on the Democratic ticket, his senate colleague, Walter Mondale.

He noted that he and Mondale have debated in the Senate for years and that extending this debate into the campaign would provide a natural extension of the colloquy. "I'm willing," Dole declared. There was no immediate comment from Mondale.

On the matter of debate, the President took the initiative last night when he launched his campaign against Carter with a challenge to "debate the real issues face to face." Before the Republi-

can convention adjourned, Carter accepted.

From his home in Plains, Georgia, Carter called on Ford to join him in a debate or series of debates that would provide "the fullest and most detailed examination of the programs offered by both sides."

Asked if Ford was eager for a debate because he trails in the polls, an aide cited new election rules, including limits on spending, and said: "This is the way through debates the campaign should be conducted."

Carter, apparently anticipating that Dole will lead the attack against the Democratic ticket, said that he will avoid responding to any personal attacks unless they come directly from President Ford.

Dole, considered a scrappy campaigner, is expected to follow the traditional role of attacking the opposition party's presidential nominee. This strategy is aimed at allowing the President to appear presidential and above the fighting.

Carter said he expects Senator Dole to wage "a combative and aggressive campaign" and to raise issues which would be to the advantage of the Republican ticket. He said he sees nothing wrong with that unless it degenerates into a mud-slinging, low-road campaign.

He said that would not be characteristic for Ford and "if he can avoid it, I certainly can."

Carter said the main campaign issue will be whether to have "new leadership in the White House or no leadership and a continuation of drift in this country because of inactivity from the White House." Carter told a news conference.

'He has always wanted this'... Former Mrs. Dole views career

Sylvan Grove — AP Senator Bob Dole is well on his way to the goal he set for himself years ago — the White House, according to the Kansas Republican's ex-wife.

But Mrs. Lon Buzick, a staunch Ronald Reagan supporter, said she's more surprised that her ex-husband would accept President Ford's nod as his running mate than the fact that the offer was made.

Mrs. Buzick commented from her home in this north central Kansas community.

The Doles were divorced five years ago after 23 years of marriage. Last year Dole married Commissioner Mary Elizabeth Hanford of the Federal Trade Commission.

"He has always wanted this," Mrs. Buzick said of her former husband's run for the nation's second-highest office. "And he wants to be president. There's never been any question about it. He lays his plans well... he plans well ahead. I think that's why he's been successful so far."

Mrs. Buzick said it would not surprise

her if Dole someday occupies the White House.

"I think that's where he's going," she added. "It's timed beautifully."

She met Dole in Percy General Army Hospital, Battle Creek, Michigan, in 1948. She was an occupational therapist and he was at the end of a three-year stint in various hospitals, recovering from paralysis of three limbs, the loss of a kidney and lung damage sustained in World War II. He was seriously injured while leading a platoon on an Italian mountain.

Mrs. Buzick said their only common interest now is their daughter, Robin Carol, 22, who recently graduated from Virginia Polytechnic Institute, Blacksburg, Virginia.

Concern for daughter...

"I'm concerned about our daughter," she said. "I'm not sure I would want to be the daughter of that high a public official. But she'll swing with it. She's a great gal. I'm just wondering how it will affect her life, her future."

An outspoken critic of Ford, Mrs. Buzick said she was "very unhappy"

Thursday morning over the President's victory in Kansas City the night before.

"I'm very worried about our party," Mrs. Buzick said of the Republicans. "I don't see how we can win with what we have. I'm hearing too many things from too many people. Many of our people are disturbed about Ford's nomination. We live in an area where every dollar comes from grain and cattle. President Ford has hurt the farmers."

Mrs. Buzick said her former husband's drive and determination should be a great asset to the Republican ticket.

"He has a tremendous drive, great ambition, great ego," she commented.