

88, 1976

THE NATION

Dole introduced the President as "a man I consider to be a friend of America, a friend of rural America, a friend of small-town America." When his turn came to speak, Ford vowed that his Administration would be a friend to the farmer in towns like Russell and states like Kansas. Then, as quickly as they had come, Ford and the Senator who was his surprise choice to share the Republican ticket with him were gone. But the campaign had begun.

Two days before he was chosen for the job, Senator Dole relaxed and chatted with a group of TIME editors and writers about the kind of man Ford should pick to run for Vice President. From his manner, Dole clearly indicated that he did not at all consider him-

self to be the likely selection, but the man he described began to sound remarkably like Bob Dole. Ford's Veep, he said, should be helpful in the farm states. These would be critically important for the G.O.P.'s chances, the states where the Democrats' Walter Mondale—a Minnesota populist—would surely be making hay. The President's running mate should be able to help out with the party chores. And, Dole added, the man should be able and ready to do "some of the gunslinging."

In picking Bob Dole, 53, Ford signed on the most accomplished gunslinger in the party, a man who makes his point not with obliquity or the cement fist or leaden tongue of a Spiro Agnew, but with an acerbic wit that often leaves everyone but the victim laughing. Dole has characterized Senator Edmund Muskie

as "a political Rip Van Winkle who awoke and started to attack Nixon," and he once dismissed former Attorney General Ramsey Clark as a "left-leaning marshmallow."

Dole is a politician so absorbed in his craft that his dedication—and travel—helped to break up his first marriage. He projects an impression of coiled-spring tautness. Indeed, he exudes so much vitality that new acquaintances usually do not notice the fact that his right arm is withered, the result of a devastating war wound, until they reach out to shake hands with him. (To avoid embarrassing anyone, Dole usually carries a pencil or a paper in his right hand so that a newcomer will not instinctively try to shake it upon being introduced.)

Back home in sun-scorched Russell, Kans. (pop. 5,400), where the Senator maintains a small, red brick house, the

(since razed) on the north side—the wrong side—of the arrow-straight Union Pacific tracks that cut through the geometric grid of tree-lined streets.

Dorothy Dole, the Senator's father, managed the Norris Grain Co. grain elevator and ran a small creamery, feed and seed business on the side. Bina Dole took in sewing to help out, and made many of the clothes for Robert, his brother Kenneth and his two sisters, Gloria and Jean. Recalls a neighbor: "The Doles just didn't have anything when the kids were growing up." To help out, Bob Dole jerked sodas after school at C.R. Dawson's for \$1 a day. Saturday afternoons he and his friends would take in the matinee at the Dream Theater, the only entertainment in town.

Growing up in this Andy Hardy world, Dole apparently never got in trouble; no one can remember him even

tenant—began leading an infantry platoon across the Po River in northern Italy. A burst of fire shattered his right shoulder and arm, damaged his left arm, broke five cervical vertebrae and destroyed a kidney. He lay for hours on the battlefield. "It was," he recalls, "sort of a long day."

Dole spent the next 39 months in hospitals. At first he lay imprisoned in a neck-to-waist cast. When it turned out that he needed a special operation, Chet Dawson, his old boss in the drugstore, started a drive that raised \$5,200 and sent him off to Chicago. Dole now has a right arm reconstructed in part from bone and muscle transplanted from his legs.

In 1948, near the end of his long and painful recovery, Dole met an occupational therapist named Phyllis Holden. Three months later, they were mar-

ried. In 1960 Dole was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives by the thrifty, hardworking and innately conservative wheat farmers of the district that included Russell County. In all, Dole served four terms in the House, fighting for the farmers and opposing the social-reform programs of John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson, although he did vote for the landmark civil rights bills. Dole's witty and zealous partisanship caught the admiring eye of Jerry Ford, then the minority leader.

In 1968 Dole moved up to the Senate, taking the seat of Republican Frank Carlson, who was retiring. Willingly, seven gleefully, the freshman Senator took on the job none of his senior Republican colleagues seemed to want: attacking the likes of Edward Kennedy, Edmund Muskie and J. William Fulbright when they criticized the new Republican President, Richard Nixon.

At one point, Dole surveyed the pride of Democratic Senators who had

him politically in conservative Kansas. Phyllis Dole had loved to campaign with him back home, when he was on the way up, but she disliked big-time politics. "I had a lot of fun stuffing envelopes and working with volunteers," she says now. "That's a lot better than being handed a schedule and told to go out alone and make a speech."

Phyllis Dole wanted to try to keep the marriage together a while longer, but the Senator wanted out. On Jan. 11, 1972, she agreed to a divorce, influenced in part by Dole's arguments that the unhappy marriage might harm the couple's only child, Robin, then a 17-year-old high school student. Now married



DOLE (RIGHT) & SIBLINGS (CA. 1930)



A FAMILY CHRISTMAS: NORMA JEAN, ROBERT, KENNY & GLORIA (1930)

news of Dole's selection caused a sensation. People gathered around the TV set in the Elks club and in the Ramada Inn to share in the excitement. To mark the occasion, Harold Elliott, Dole's high school basketball coach, took the clock off the living room wall and hung in its place an autographed picture of the Senator. Mrs. Carl Friesen, Dole's aunt, got out the family pictures and a folder of clippings she has been collecting for years. Mrs. Everett Dummer felt she just had to do something to celebrate. "So," she says, "I baked a strawberry pie."

When Bob Dole was growing up in Russell on the flat plains of central-western Kansas, the town was enjoying an oil boom. It had started in 1923, the year he was born, after the "Carrie Oswald" well came in. The good times lasted into the '30s, but they bypassed the Doles. The family lived in a tiny, white frame house

pulling a Halloween trick. He was a solid student, but his real promise seemed to be as an athlete who went out for track, football and basketball. "He was a marvelous physical specimen," remembers Coach Elliott, "about 175-185 and six feet two, and he was a competitor. If you told him to climb a wall, he'd climb a wall." George Baxter, the football coach, recalls that Dole "never competed in the easy track events. He went in for the 440 and 880." An end on the football team, Dole won a big game for the Russell Broncos by making an impossible catch on the last play and slogging down a muddy field to score, while the opposing coach threw his hat to the ground in disgust and jumped up and down on it.

Dole was planning to become a doctor but, in 1943, he left the University of Kansas during his sophomore year and enlisted in the Army. On April 14, 1945, Dole—a 21-year-old second lieu-



THE POLITICIAN, AGE TEN

ried. His wife still had to help tie his shoes and button his shirts when he enrolled in the University of Arizona. He graduated in 1949 with the help of credits he had accrued in the Army, the G.I. Bill, and his wife—who not only worked but also managed to take notes on his reading and write the exams that he dictated. In 1952 Dole got his law degree from Washburn University of Topeka. In 1950, while still in law school, Dole was elected to a two-year term in the Kansas legislature—the first of eleven consecutive electoral victories. From 1953 to 1961 he served as Russell County attorney and developed his brisk, prosecutorial style. He was already a superb campaigner. In 1958 he had defeated Democrat Cliff Holland, who recalls how even his mother was converted into a fan by the eager and boyish charmer. Dole met Holland's mother once casually in a crowd, then 18 months later remembered her by name.

WITH HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL COACH

obvious aspirations to reach the White House and suggested that the Senate set aside a "presidential hour" every day that would be reserved for four groups: "First, those Senators who think they are President. Second, those who think they should have been President. Third, those who want to be President. And fourth, those who are willing to settle for Vice President."

As Nixon's gunslinger, Dole fought for the Administration's program virtually down the line: he supported the war in Viet Nam, helped lead the successful campaign to build the Safeguard anti-ballistic missile system (it won approval by one vote), and vainly endorsed the President's nomination of Clement Haynsworth and G. Harrold Carswell for the Supreme Court.

As Dole's career took on momentum, his family life was collapsing. Although he and his wife had been drawn apart for years, he had maintained the marriage—as he is frank to admit—out of fear that a divorce would harm



WITH HIS SISTERS (1945)

to Lon Buzick, a rancher and the Republican chairman in Lincoln County. Dole's former wife lives in Sylvan Grove, 40 miles from Russell. When Ford picked Dole, Mrs. Buzick made an attempt to hide her sarcasm. "He always goes for the top," she said, "and apparently, he makes it."

In the meantime, Dole had taken a job that could easily have brought about a quick end to his career: a good deal below the top. In January 1971, President Nixon showed his appreciation for Dole's one-man stands in the Senate by naming him Republican National Committee chairman, although Dole was still only two years into his freshman term.



DOLE (LEFT) WITH FATHER, DAUGHTER ROBIN & GRANDFATHER (1955)

CONGRESSMAN DOLE WITH FIRST WIFE PHYLLIS (1949)

Senator Barry Goldwater was delighted: "He's the first man we've had around here in a long time who will grab the other side by the hair and drag them down the hill." But William B. Saxbe, then a Republican Senator from Ohio and now U.S. Ambassador to India, complained that Dole's style was so offensive that he was "a hatchet man."

As Nixon had hoped, Dole worked hard to put some bite into the Republicans, strengthening the party apparatus and averaging a speech a day. But to his frustration, he discovered that he could not often get through the Praetorian Guard of the White House staff to see the President. In *The Making of the President 1972*, Theodore White recounts how Dole once got a call from a White House staffer who asked him if he wanted to see Nixon. "When?" Dole asked eagerly. Answer: "Tune in on Channel 9. He's coming up on the tube in ten minutes."

During the 1972 presidential campaign, Dole learned that he was to have nothing to do with the election of Nixon; the job was to be done by a new and oddly named group called the Commit-



WITH EISENHOWER IN 1958

tee for the Re-Election of the President. Dole got revenge, of sorts, by coining the acronym CREP for the organization that was to become so infamous.

As it turned out, of course, the fact that he was so cut off from CREP, Nixon and the White House saved Dole's political career after Watergate. He attacked the press for hounding Nixon on Watergate, but he apparently knew

nothing about the break-in that even-Sansy was to drive Nixon—a resignation—though he defended the President too long. Dole declared as early as May 18, 1973, that "Nixon appears to be hiding from the people, who really trust and like him very much." The Senator advised the President to come out of seclusion and meet openly with the public.

In January 1973, Nixon invited Dole to Camp David. The Senator had been forewarned that he was to be fired as party chairman, but the President was too embarrassed to get the words out. Finally Dole said that perhaps he should quit to give himself more time to prepare for his re-election campaign in 1974. Relieved, Nixon quickly agreed. Dole later said his dismissal was caused by "a faceless, nameless few in the White House... the gutless wonders who seem to take personal satisfaction in trying to do somebody in."

Dole had to use all of his political acumen—and his sharp elbows—during the 1974 Senate campaign against Dr. William R. Roy, a popular Democratic Congressman. In the early stages of the campaign, Roy succeeded in identifying Dole with Watergate and Nixon. Trailing 10 to 12 points in the polls, Dole began to fight. He sent his mother and daughter touring the wide-open spaces of western Kansas in a van, and the family team helped to offset any damage caused by his divorce. To fight the Watergate tag, Dole imported Connecticut's G.O.P. Senator Lowell Weicker—a member of Sam Ervin's committee—to stump for him. His most effective device was a TV commercial that showed a poster being obliterated by slung mud, gradually the mess dropped away and Dole's handsome face emerged.

The crucial—and most bitter—issue was abortion. Roy, a Catholic obstetrician, admitted that he had performed legal abortions; Dole took a strong stand against abortions. During the last days of the campaign, Kansas was flooded with anti-abortion literature that includ-

ed graphic illustrations of dead fetuses. Dole has always insisted he had nothing to do with the material, which clearly hurt Roy. The Senator won—by only 13,500 votes out of nearly 800,000. The victory still embitters many Kansas Democrats. Curiously, although Dr. Roy flaily accuses Dole of distributing the literature, he says he bears him no hard feelings.

On December 6, 1975, after nearly four years as one of Washington's most eligible bachelors, Dole married Elizabeth Hanford, then 39, a softly beautiful North Carolinian who had been for years one of the most eagerly courted women in Washington. They live in an apartment at the Watergate. A Phi Beta

Federal Trade Commission. She tackled the job eagerly—too eagerly for Mississippi Congressman Sonny Montgomery, who was then squiring her around town. Says he: "If we were planning to go out and something came up at work, boy, forget going out." During this period, she spent a good deal of time lobbying on Capitol Hill, where she soon met Dole. Recalls one Senate staffer: "We always wondered why he'd dash off the floor so often, until we realized he was meeting Libby Hanford."

The Senator's wife has done her best to make the stodgy FTC more responsive to the needs of consumers. She has written orders prohibiting the Encyclopedia Britannica from using fast-sell techniques, and stopping Chrysler from misrepresenting fuel-economy test results. "Elizabeth Dole," says Virginia Knauer, "is a deceptive package. Behind those

President. Not that she has any possibility of turning Dole into a liberal. "It would be a lot easier to vote for Bush and Libby," says one consumer advocate, "than Ford and Dole."

The consumer issue, in fact, is one of the few on which Dole and Ford differ. In 1975 the liberal Americans for Democratic Action gave Dole an approval rating of only 17%, while the conservative Americans for Constitutional Action placed him at 67%, and the National Farmers Union at 78%. In 1972, during his last full year in the House of Representatives Ford got respective ratings of 6%, 68% and 20% from the same three organizations.

Like the President, Dole opposes the Humphrey-Hawkins "full employment" bill as being unworkable and inflationary; he backs the Administration's defense policies, including the building of the B-1 bomber; he wants strong restrictions on the use of buses to integrate



DOLE'S 1975 WASHINGTON WEDDING

Kappa graduate of Duke University, Elizabeth Dole has both a law degree and a master's in education from Harvard. She began to work in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare in 1966 during the Great Society years, then moved into consumer interests as an assistant to L.B.J.'s White House advisor, Betty Furness. When Nixon arrived in 1969, she stayed on to work in the same office, as the deputy to Virginia Knauer. Addressing a meeting of oil-company executives in Houston, she coolly excoriated them for not regulating mechanics at their service stations.

In December 1973, Nixon named Elizabeth to a seven-year term on the



CANDIDATE'S DAUGHTER ROBIN & HIS MOTHER IN KANSAS CITY

good looks, there's a sharp, serious mind." Two years ago, TIME chose her as one of the nation's 200 leaders of the future (July 15, 1974).

Senator Dole has already had some influence on the FTC commissioner. "She was a Democrat, now she's an independent," he says. "This year she'll register as a Republican. She's moving in the right direction." There is some concern that Elizabeth Dole would violate federal conflict-of-interest laws if she campaigned for her husband. Both husband and wife are strong advocates of the Equal Rights Amendment, but if there is any question about the issue, she will resign her position.

For her part, Elizabeth Dole has also influenced her husband. Before they were married, she persuaded him to back legislation which would set up a Federal Consumer Protection Agency, a proposal opposed at that time by the

schools; and he endorses passage of a constitutional amendment giving states the right to set up their own abortion laws.

Dole did criticize Ford in 1974 for his "premature" pardon of Richard Nixon. The following year, he rapped the President for placing a two-month embargo on the sale of grain to the Soviet Union. The President was responding to labor's charges that the deal would boost food prices in the U.S., but the ban infuriated Midwestern farmers who were eager to sell their bountiful crop to the Russians. In his acceptance speech—and again during his visit to Kansas with Dole—Ford vowed that there would be no more embargoes.

Ford's running mate also broke with the G.O.P. to form a curious partnership with Liberal George McGovern to get a bill through the Senate—the House is still considering its own measure

The Droll Dole

In his 16 years on Capitol Hill, Robert Dole has become known as one of the wittiest Republicans. His humor consists mainly of biting quips on a variety of subjects—often his own party.

On learning that Nixon had topped all his White House conversations: "Thank goodness whenever I was in the Oval Office, I only nodded."

On Nixon's offer of campaign help in 1974: "I haven't invited him to stump for me, but I wouldn't mind if Nixon flew over the state."

On authoring amendments: "In 1971 I introduced a resolution which Senator J. William Fulbright claimed he had already sponsored. 'Stealing a man's

amendment is like stealing his cow,' Fulbright complained. But I reminded him that it was National Dairy Week and I would never steal a man's cow during National Dairy Week. 'I just milked it a little,' I admitted."

On Government spending: "My home-town newspaper, the Russell Record, once reported on a conscientious Congressman who kept having a recurrent nightmare in which he dreams that all the money he is spending is his own."

On being a Republican: "A Republican has to have a sense of humor because there are so few of us."

On his last name: "I'm not a household word except in Hawaii... Dole is a four-letter word you can get used to."

On the presidency (in 1972): "When the President has a view and I have a view, we compromise and adopt his."