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Dole: GOP in a bit of a slump

By Stuart Ambrey
WASHINGTON — Sen. Robert Dole, the Russell Republican, says the GOP campaign is "in a bit of a slump."

His reaction came at the close of a week which had seen a number of setbacks for Gerald Ford & Co., including:

— A flap over the President's statement that Eastern Europe is not Soviet-dominated.

— Revelation of a racial slur by Earl Butz, and his resignation as Secretary of Agriculture.

— Two new government statistics indicating that more people are out of work and that our industrial production is slumping.

— Presidential confusion over the administration role in trying to combat an Arab boycott of Israel.

— New polls indicating Jimmy Carter was favored by viewers of last Wednesday's debate.

"But we think our campaign has bottomed out," Dole said, "and that's not just because of the Butz affair."

Peter Macdonald, Hutchinson newspaper-radio executive who is chairman of the advisory board for United

Press International, presented Sen. Dole to UPI editors, and then wisely ducked away from the podium as the GOP's choice for vice-president began zinging across one-liner gags with a skill that comedian Mark Russell must envy.

The editors, from places like Tampa, Fla., Tyler, Tex., and San Mateo, Calif., obviously enjoyed his jabs.

Dole downplayed his reputation as a "hatchet man," preferring another description as a "pussy cat," but his claws were as sharp as ever.

For example, he noted Carter's call for more public participation in foreign policy discussions, and added:

"I assume he's going to open up the National Security Council meetings to United Press and the other wire services. Playboy magazine and the other people who like inside information."

In more serious moments, Dole branded as false Carter's statements on military sales to Saudi Arabia and the Democrat's allegation that we sold F-14 planes to Iran before satisfying our own defense needs.

The editors tossed him questions which one observer termed "softballs." The theme was politics, particularly the presidential campaign politics of the last two weeks.

There was no discussion of Dole's obvious troubles in his home state, nor of the problems of agriculture in general.

In fact, comment of that nature was left to Macdonald, who in his introduction noted that the Senator represents a rural America that generally is short-changed by government and business in such matters as the price of farm goods, postoffices, rail service, and communications.

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Much of his 30-minute presentation was a re-hash of older routines, such as his account of how Ford picked him as the vice-presidential candidate — "He flipped a coin and when it didn't come down, he chose me. . . He figured a lot of people drink pineapple juice."

He credited The Hutchinson News for prepping him for political campaigns since he graduated from the Kansas First district. After the editorial attacks in The News, he said, he was better able to cope with the criticism he now is getting, "from such local papers as the New York Times."

6 Section 1 Chicago Tribune, Monday, October 4, 1976

★★★ Nation

Dole blames the game he's playing himself

By Jon Margolis

Chicago Tribune Press Service

PORTLAND, Me.—Sen. Robert Dole didn't play any games at the Cumberland Fair.

He petted a prize-winning sheep, drew the winning ticket for the baby-beef lottery, and checked out the blue-ribbon quilts. But he didn't go near the game area.

Not that Dole plays no games. The Republican vice-presidential candidate has been playing political hard-ball all around the country in recent days. It's just that he's trying to appear as though he's not playing a game.

Dole's job is to paint Jimmy Carter as a typical politician who changes his mind, dissembles, and tries "to cloud every issue and mislead our people in his attempt to be all things to all people."

TO DO THIS, Dole sometimes has to change his mind, dissemble, and cloud an issue.

This is certainly not unprecedented in politics, and up to a point it is widely accepted. It is called playing the game. The difference is that Dole is trying to pretend that Carter is the only one playing the game.

It doesn't always work.

One day last week, for instance, Dole chastised Carter for holding an off-the-record meeting with reporters in which he reportedly complained about the way they were covering his campaign.

Then, later that same day, Dole charged that the New York Times was "part of the Carter operation" and was slanting the news against the Ford-Dole ticket.

AND THOUGH HE constantly charges that Carter keeps changing his positions

depending on his audience, Dole seemed to have trouble last month keeping track of his own position on a controversial California farm labor law.

First he opposed the proposed law, backed by labor. Ten days later, speaking to Mexican-Americans, he insisted, "I have not taken a public stand" on the ballot proposition to insure fair labor practices.

LATE LAST WEEK, at the reported direction of the President Ford Committee, Dole attacked a Carter statement on taxing property owned by churches.

In an interview in a Seventh-Day Adventist magazine, Carter had been asked about taxing church property "such as publishing houses, church institutions, etcetera."

Carter's answer was, "I would favor the taxation of church properties other than the church itself."

"WHAT'S HIS position?" Dole said. "Is he talking about income tax, property tax, or what?" The interview indicated that Carter was asked about state and local property taxes.

As to Dole's own view on church taxation, he's not talking. "I'm not the politician," he said, "I'm the candidate, who often discusses policy." He [Carter] is running for President."

When a reporter persisted Dole turned away rudely and asked, "Anybody else have any questions?"

Dole is not generally unpleasant, and he is certainly not humorless. Much of his humor is directed at himself.

BUT THE CAMPAIGN seems to be taking its toll on the candidate. Dole is bearing the brunt of the Republican campaign as President Ford spends most of his time in Washington, and the long days can be tiring.

THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY GUARDIAN, OCTOBER 8, 1976

Bob Dole Will he be pressed as hard for his 'sinful deeds' as Jimmy Carter is for his 'sinful thoughts'?



By Tim Miller
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"Those who make our laws must not debate the reputation of our great legislative bodies which have given us such giants as Daniel Webster, Henry Clay, Sam Rayburn and Robert A. Taft."

"Whether in the nation's capitol or city hall, private morality and public trust must go together."

—From President Ford's acceptance speech at the Republican National Convention, Aug. 19, 1976.

Kansas City

Jerry Ford has milked the Wayne Hays/Congressional sex issue in his campaign since the night of his acceptance of the Republican nomination for president in Kansas City. In his first TV debate with Jimmy Carter, Ford even injected a thinly veiled reference to the Hays affair in response to an unrelated question about secrecy in government. "There's some question about their [Congress's] morality," Ford pontifically told the 100 million Americans watching the debate.

Ford was reported widely to have had the "morality" issue in mind when he picked his running mate in Kansas City. A major factor cited at the time as to why Ford did not choose Sen. Howard Baker of Tennessee, an obvious top choice and one who was on the right side of the Watergate scandal, was that Baker's wife was an alcoholic.

Ironically, Ford may not have known that his final choice, Senator Bob Dole of Kansas, also had some skeletons rattling around in the closet, including a situation with many interesting parallels to the Wayne Hays-Elizabeth Ray scandal, a divorce granted under curious circumstances and several irregular campaign financial transactions during the Watergate era.

Not reported elsewhere, though widely known in Kansas journalistic and political circles, was the fact Dole had his girl friend on his congressional payroll for a period of time when Dole was national chairman of the Republican Party. Here's the background: Dole's marriage was on the rocks for a long time before his divorce in 1972. A Dole congressional staffer from the early 1960s, when Dole was an obscure Kansas congressman, told me his whole office well knew Mrs. Dole didn't like the social pressures of being a political wife, and their relationship suffered badly from it. A Kansas Democratic political figure told me Dole once claimed, in the late Sixties, that he lived in the basement of his house and his wife lived upstairs, and that he "didn't have a marriage for ten years."

Dole responded to the situation as countless millions of other American men have done: he found other female company. His good looks and patent charm apparently served him well; many political journalists and political sources in both Washington and Kansas told me it was widely known Dole was quite a ladies' man. However, now that Dole is a major national candidate, that period of Dole's life is becoming shrouded in partisan secrecy. For instance, the Guardian called the Kansas City Star's society editor, Elyse Allison, to ask about Dole's social life. But Allison would not come to the phone when she learned what we were interested in. Jean Christensen, society page reporter for the Star, explained: "She [Allison] is not going to talk with you. There were other girl friends, but she is a Republican and is not going to help you."

The most prominent of these "girl friends" was a Kansas City fashion model named Phyllis Wells, who was given the nickname of "Sam" by Dole. (His first wife's name was also Phyllis.) I talked with Wells the day after Dole was named as Ford's running mate. At that time, she was willing to talk about her relationship with Dole. "I'm the person that he was to marry," she told me. "I saw a lot of him for a year and a half or two. We were not officially engaged, but we had tentative plans to marry."

However, she said, the relationship was broken off by Dole, and the two are not in touch at all now. Dole later married Elizabeth Hanford, a member of the Federal Trade Commission.

Wells's version of the relationship is in accord with several newspaper articles of the time. Betty Beale, the syndicated Washington gossip columnist, referred to Dole's friend as "Mrs. Sam Wells" in a column that appeared in the spring of 1972. The Kansas City Star, on May 17, 1972, ran a feature article with a picture of Wells entitled "Bob Dole's Guest at Gala Will Be Model From Here." Interestingly, the "gala" event Dole and Wells attended was the May 18, 1972, Salute to Ted Agnew Night held in Baltimore, which featured Frank Sinatra, Bob Hope and Sammy Davis Jr.

The Star article was written by women's news editor Marjane Busby, who told us she considers Wells to be a "personal friend" of hers. The story also detailed an earlier invitation Wells had to a fund-raising party for the Nationalities Division of the Republican National Committee held at a penthouse apartment in the Watergate complex in Washington. She was also Dole's date at the Spring Republican Governor's Conference in White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia,

and at the California Republican state convention in San Francisco, according to the Star article.

One Kansas Democratic political source told me that much of the furniture that showed up at Dole's condominium apartment at the Watergate, where he moved after his divorce in early 1972, was in fact Wells's, and that she spent a substantial amount of time there. But I have been unable to get Wells or other Dole people to comment on this point. Since my initial conversation with her on Aug. 20, she has been unwilling to comment on other items my investigation later turned up regarding her relationship with Dole. She has even apparently made herself inaccessible to other reporters. "She [Wells] has dropped from sight" is the message the Elyse Allison relayed to the Guardian.

Dole's relationship with Wells would ordinarily be their private business, as I see it, except for one detail: Wells went to work for Dole on Aug. 11, 1971, and remained on his payroll until April 30, 1972, according to Dole's Washington office.

I could not verify that Wells was Dole's girl friend when he put her on his payroll. Wells did not deny Dole was responsible for her being hired in the first place when I talked to her on Aug. 20. But then again, she did not provide any details of the hiring to me and, as I said before, she has since been unwilling to discuss the matter further.

However, the story Wells told the Star's Busby in 1972 about the hiring sounds fishy: "Last summer the former airline hostess learned from Bill Frazier, Kansas representative for Senator Dole, that an eastern Kansas office was being opened at the Ramada Inn in Kansas City, Kansas," Busby reported.

"I didn't get the job at first because I didn't have the office experience or background the others had," Mrs. Wells said, referring to Mrs. Jo Tate and Mrs. Ann Riojas, staff members.

"Then Mrs. Joanne Coe, the senator's office manager in Washington, called me at the end of August and asked if I'd be interested in working part-time. That was better for me because I could keep up some of my fashion work," Busby quotes Wells as saying.

Even by Wells's own account, Dole's office showed unusual interest in hiring a woman with little or no office skills or experience. The most plausible explanation would be that Dole told his office manager to hire Wells. That's how congressional offices operate. But we could not absolutely confirm this 1972 hiring with a 1976 explanation because everybody has clammed up. Wells won't comment; neither Dole nor Frazier could be reached, and neither had returned our calls by press time.

The only person we could reach was not terribly helpful. Joanne Coe, who now works in Dole's vice-presidential campaign office in Washington, told the Guardian in a telephone interview that Wells was hired because "she was the one who was best qualified for the job." But Coe refused to describe whether Dole was involved in the selection. She added, "as a matter of policy, we are having any such inquiries handled by our press secretary." The press secretary had not returned any of our calls by press time.

In terms of why Wells was hired, however, an exact parallel with the Wayne Hays-Elizabeth Ray scandal cannot conclusively be drawn at this point. So why she was hired must remain in the realm of speculation.

But how about the question of whether

Carter — We must pay more attention to China because relations directly affect the world balance. He supports full diplomatic relations with Peking with guarantee of non-interference in the affairs of Taiwan. He would maintain a strong trade relationship with Taiwan.

Henry Kissinger
Ford — He has full confidence. "As long as he wants to be secretary of state, I'd want him to continue in the cabinet."

Carter — He rejects him as a "Lone Ranger" carrying out "a one-man policy of international adventure" and who has "died success too closely to his personal reputation."

Defense
Ford — He says his \$104.3 billion record peacetime defense budget (cut \$3.6 billion by Congress but still \$13.3 billion over last year) is the minimum required to maintain peace through strength. The United States must sustain a posture of unquestioned strength to reduce confrontations and avoid nuclear catastrophe. We are "second to none in capability to protect the country, have best trained and best equipped, best led, most alert military forces in the history of the country."

Carter — Without endangering defense, we can reduce defense expenditures by about \$5 billion to \$7 billion "but I can't give you at this point an exact figure on next year's or the following year's defense budget." Savings could come by "hard-headed" development of new weapons systems and cutting the number of top brass.



Phyllis Wells. This photo is from a xerox of a microfilm page of the Kansas City Star, May 17, 1972.

she actually worked? No one I can find seems to know. Her title was "press assistant." I have talked to several members of the press who had contacts with the Dole offices at the time, but none can recall ever having had any contact with her.

(Wells's employment was at the Dole field office in Kansas City, Kansas.)

Coe, who was identified in the Star article as the person who hired Wells, told us she could not tell us what work Wells performed "because I'm just not knowledgeable in that area." She referred this question, too, to the press secretary, Larry Speaks, who had not returned our calls by press time.

Wells herself insists she did work and that there was nothing irregular about it. "It was no Elizabeth Ray-type deal," she told me. By press time, however, we could find no one else, inside or outside the Dole staff, who could provide any details about her duties.

The presence of Dole's girl friend on his payroll isn't the only note of moral interest in his past. Another item not reported in sufficient detail elsewhere in the press is the divorce itself.

Bob and Phyllis Dole were divorced on Jan. 11, 1972, in Topeka, Kansas. The then-Mrs. Dole (now remarried and named Phyllis Buzick) brought her lawyer from Washington, only to find Dole had retained a local lawyer to act in her behalf. (The Washington lawyer was Bernard Fensterwald, who achieved national prominence during the Senate Watergate hearings as James McCord's attorney.) The second lawyer who was hired by Dole for his wife was Sam A. Crow, then a respected Topeka attorney and now a federal magistrate. Crow "set the whole thing up," Buzick told me, and she said she never did know what Crow's proper role was in the divorce proceeding.

"Setting the whole thing up" in-

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