

128. 1979

TOPEKA CAPITAL JOURNAL 4-29-79

Dole definitely tooling up for races

By KEN PETERSON
Capital Journal
Washington Correspondent
WASHINGTON — Shortly after he announced the formation of his presidential campaign apparatus last week, Sen. Bob Dole, R-Kan., came upon a heartening poll that showed he may be a stronger contender in the New Hampshire primary than many believe possible.

He interpreted the results and said they accurately reflect his movement in the crucial primary state where he firmly believes the race remains wide open.

To be certain, GOP bulwarks Gerald Ford and Ronald Reagan were far ahead in the poll of 602 registered Republicans. What makes Dole smile, however, is the result that if Ford is not in the race — and the Kansas senator has received private assurances Ford is disinterested in running — the poll shows Dole is among three candidates who can take on Reagan.

"It is clear that Reagan and Ford are the candidates to beat, but should Ford not run, the three most likely challengers to Reagan — at least at this stage — are (Howard) Baker, (John) Connally and (George) Bush," an analysis of the poll in the May issue of Public Opinion magazine says.

An outright popularity ranking shows Ford and Reagan tied at 29 percent each, Baker a distant third with only 9 percent, and Dole, Connally, George Bush, Philip Crane relatively equal with, at most, 5 percent. Connally garnered 5 percent, Dole 4, and Bush 2.

Dole's reason for optimism, however, rests in another poll which asked the Republicans to name their first, second and third choices. The poll analysis said the choices were designed to reveal how much potential support each candidate has since many things can change before the February, 1980 primary.

Ford and Reagan were in the top three choices of 49 percent of the Republicans. Baker trailed with 20 percent, Connally with 17 percent and Dole with 15 percent. With Ford out of the race, Reagan would lead his closest competitor, Baker, by a whopping 40 to 13 percent. Connally and Dole, under

such circumstances, would have 8 and 6 percent, respectively.

All of which probably means Dole is making slow progress.

He has formed the basic ingredients for a presidential bid and, after many fits and starts, has settled on May 14 as the date for his announcement.

He will journey to Russell, his hometown, and make the traditional stops at the nursing home, hospital and drug store as he tells the nation he is in the presidential race.

Dole is putting together a campaign organization drawn heavily from underlings to Bill Brock, Republican National Chairman and former Tennessee senator. Dole has retained a Washington management and communications firm, Response Marketing Group, Inc., to coordinate the campaign activities.

Response Marketing clients have included the New Jersey Republican party, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the U.S. Industrial Council and the political action committee for conservative Sen. John Tower, R-Tex.

The campaign has established two ambitious goals. They want to put Dole among the top four contenders within three months of his announcement date and they want to dispel the negative image he conjured up while he was the 1976 vice presidential candidate.

Although Dole's long delayed announcement seems somehow anticlimactic, the immediate campaign goals certainly leave a degree of suspense.

Can he achieve them? It seems a fitting question.

Bill Goodwin, newly appointed campaign press secretary who has no recourse but to be optimistic about his boss's chances, believes Dole can meet both goals.

"We've got to overcome a very negative image," Goodwin says flatly. He describes Dole's demeanor in 1978 as the "little stiletto, the quick knife" but also pictures Dole as a reluctant attacker who agreed with Ford campaign managers that his pungent remarks would help the Republican ticket but harm his own image.

Now Dole must undo over the next few months what he managed to do to

himself in the 45 days of the 1978 campaign, Goodwin says. He is confident Dole can turn it around and present a positive image because the senator's past 20 years as an elected government official have been ignored.

Dole will build his base from veterans, the handicapped and farmers, Goodwin says. Dole has befriended those groups over the years.

The New Hampshire poll showed Dole had too little support to interpret his base of support and he wants them to remember his help when the time comes.

Reagan, Connally and Baker represent formidable candidates, but Dole workers evidently believe they can pick off each of them; Baker, the Senate minority leader, is poor at getting an effective campaign organization started, Goodwin says. Connally is a dynamic speaker, but those who have heard him seem to have second thoughts once they analyze the substance of his remarks. Goodwin notes, Reagan has a built-in campaign set to go, but his constituency is limited and he only appeals to a narrow band of Republicans, the Dole campaign reasoning goes.

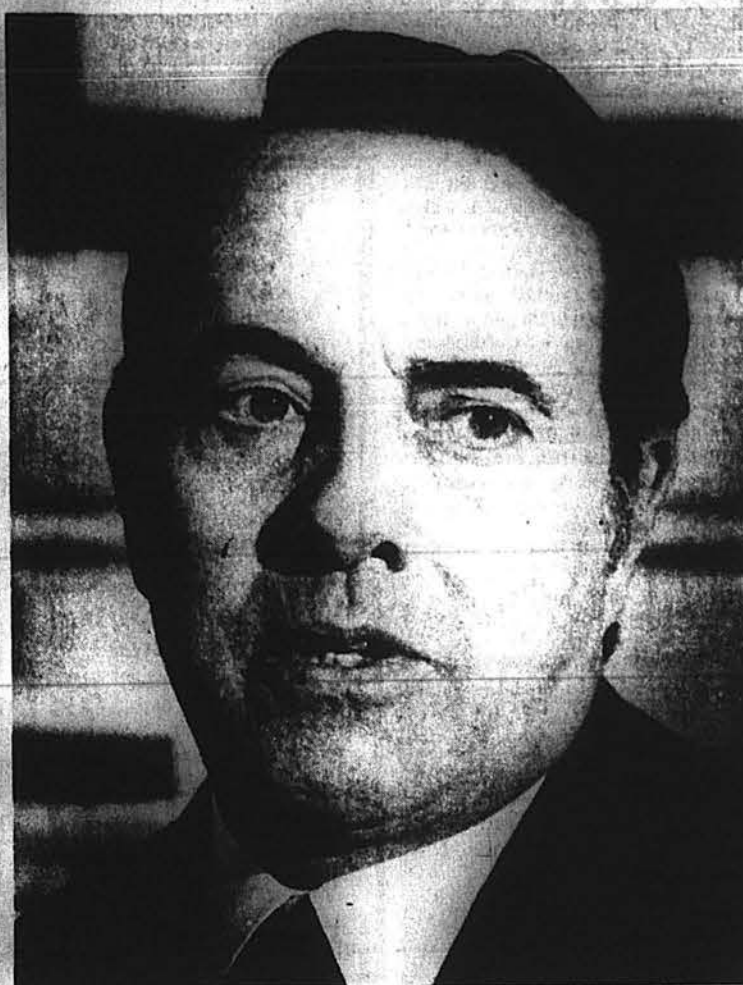
Others in the race, such as Bush and Crane, will fade as the primaries roll, Goodwin says.

Dole is building his campaign by hiring experts with proven fund-raising ability and loads of political savvy. His chief fundraisers are Brad O'Leary and Bob Perkins. Perkins is immediate past national finance director for the Republican National Committee, a former executive director of the Tennessee Republican party and was Brock's senate finance director in 1976. O'Leary is former executive director of the Texas GOP. He coordinated Missouri Sen. John Danforth's campaign in 1970 and last year raised \$5.8 million for Sen. Tower's re-election.

Dole could use the money. The last campaign finance reports showed he only had \$48,000, hardly a strong showing, although the contributions evidently now are close to \$50,000. Money will start showing up after the announcement, Goodwin says, adding he expects Dole will quickly qualify for federal matching funds.

Thomas D. Bell, chairman of Response Marketing, will be Dole's presidential campaign manager. Bell was an administrative assistant to Brock and has been a political consultant to the Republican National Committee and the national Republican Senatorial Campaign Committee.

Press aide Goodwin is native of Independence, Kan., worked as an editor of a Marysville newspaper and was press secretary when Brock was a se-



SENATOR BOB DOLE...New Hampshire primary strength may be strong.

nator. He is past director of public relations for the U.S. Jaycees.

Dole has done little except travel around the country, but as his campaign gains momentum, he will start concentrating on the presidential primary states. He wants to hire more people in New Hampshire, site of the first primary, and has the beginning of a basic organization in Iowa and a "fair one" in Florida, Goodwin says.

Russell, Kan., Proudly Watching Dole

By Tim Johnson
A Member of the Staff
RUSSELL, Kan.—To hear local folks talk, this town and which has made this county a Republican blue chip in a predominantly Republican state. Russell's first settlement in 1871 came from Ripon, Wis.—birthplace of the Republican Party.

In a sense, when people here speak about Dole they're talking about themselves and the collective strengths they'd like to see embodied in a monument. But his status isn't quite legendary, because they can still see a connection between the man in the motorcade and the boy whose initials are still visible in a neighborhood sidewalk.

People here still haven't gotten over the fact that cross-country motorists in 1976 were lured into Russell off Interstate 70 by the post-convention appearance of Dole and President Gerald Ford. An estimated 3,000 people turned out for that event, which has been commemorated by a plaque in front of the county courthouse.

If Dole ever becomes president, Russell's tourist trade will boom as dramatically as the local oil business did 50 years ago—a fact not lost on local entrepreneurs.

Yet the town is by no means desperate for extra revenue. Cattle and wheat are economic staples, but oil is king—particularly since the energy crisis of 1973. The oil produced by 2,000 wells accounts for nearly half of Russell County's taxable property.

At first glance, Russell strikes a visitor as a sleepy little country town—an impression residents do their best to dispel in conversation. The point out that during the first oil boom in the 1930s, Walter Winchell dubbed Russell "Little Chicago." It was only after World War II, they say, that the town stopped being a regional mecca for bootleg whiskey and gambling.

They're quick to point out, however, that the illegal activity never got seriously out of hand.

Dole grew up during those years, but his family didn't share in the prosperity. His father, who ran a creamery and sold produce, paid the family doctor in eggs.

1976 Republican vice presidential candidate, expects to enhance his visibility here next week when he formally announces his candidacy for the presidency. Some townspeople may be skeptical of his chances of winning the nomination, but few would quibble with the billboard just outside town welcoming motorists to "Bob Dole Country."

"He's liked better here than Jimmy Carter is in Tulsa, Ga.," proclaimed Chet Dawson, a retired drugstore owner who still presides over coffee-hour regulars at his old soda counter.

"You won't find anyone in Russell," echoed Max Horn, vice president of a local bank and a

coffee-hour regular, "that doesn't have a good word for Bob Dole."

Dole's popularity in this town on Interstate 70 about 80 miles west of Salina is a success story that's an archetypal version of the American dream: The kid from a poor family who tossed newspapers and worked as a soda jerk to make ends meet. The star high-school athlete in a sports-crazy town that prides itself on its seven state basketball championships. The victim of a disabling war injury who beat the odds—and his political opponents—through determination and hard work.

See RUSSELL, Page 18A, Column 1

★ Russell

Continued From Page 1A

To these ingredients, add the political allegiance that is as old as Russell itself and which has made this county a Republican blue chip in a predominantly Republican state. Russell's first settlement in 1871 came from Ripon, Wis.—birthplace of the Republican Party.

In a sense, when people here speak about Dole they're talking about themselves and the collective strengths they'd like to see embodied in a monument. But his status isn't quite legendary, because they can still see a connection between the man in the motorcade and the boy whose initials are still visible in a neighborhood sidewalk.

People here still haven't gotten over the fact that cross-country motorists in 1976 were lured into Russell off Interstate 70 by the post-convention appearance of Dole and President Gerald Ford. An estimated 3,000 people turned out for that event, which has been commemorated by a plaque in front of the county courthouse.

If Dole ever becomes president, Russell's tourist trade will boom as dramatically as the local oil business did 50 years ago—a fact not lost on local entrepreneurs.

Yet the town is by no means desperate for extra revenue. Cattle and wheat are economic staples, but oil is king—particularly since the energy crisis of 1973. The oil produced by 2,000 wells accounts for nearly half of Russell County's taxable property.

At first glance, Russell strikes a visitor as a sleepy little country town—an impression residents do their best to dispel in conversation. The point out that during the first oil boom in the 1930s, Walter Winchell dubbed Russell "Little Chicago." It was only after World War II, they say, that the town stopped being a regional mecca for bootleg whiskey and gambling.

They're quick to point out, however, that the illegal activity never got seriously out of hand.

Dole grew up during those years, but his family didn't share in the prosperity. His father, who ran a creamery and sold produce, paid the family doctor in eggs.

"I never had my own clothes," quips Dole's younger brother, Kenneth, now an oil lease broker in Russell. "I'd just wait till he'd take his off and wear them."

The senator's mother, Mrs. Bina Dole, who lives in the same house where she raised her family, recalls that as a teen-ager he "was interested in sports, but didn't have too many girlfriends."

His former basketball coach, Harold Elliott, remembers him as "a tremendous defensive man" who "played his best basketball against the better teams."

Reminiscing about Dole, it's not unusual for Russell townspeople to preface their remarks with phrases like, "As I said when I was interviewed by U.S. News and World Report..."

But it has been three years since the last wave of publicity, when East Coast journalists flocked to Russell looking for skeletons in Dole's closet. It's still news here when an out-of-town reporter shows up.

Some die-hard Republicans resent the treatment Dole got from national media during the 1978 campaign.

"Bob is anything but a hatchet man," declares Miss Mollie Krug, county Republican chairman.

There are local Democrats, however, who say Dole's tough-talking manner in that campaign was entirely in character. Everyone agrees he's a tireless campaigner with an unusual ability, most commonly described as "an uncanny knack" for remembering names and faces.

It's an ability that's served him well since the early 50s, through his successive terms as state representative, county attorney, U.S. representative and, now, senator. And of course, during the '60s there was Dole pineapple juice, liberally dispensed in outlying areas from the back of a flatbed truck.

"I was a Democrat till Bob ran for Congress," said a retired businessman. "He talked me into switching for the primary." That was in 1960 and, as it turned out, Dole didn't need the vote. He won by nearly a 4-1 margin.

Russell businessmen, when they talk about their town, have a self-satisfied air that goes somewhat beyond mere boosterism—as witnessed by the remarks of eight men, whose interests range from oil to farming, who gather each day at the Hamada Inn for coffee.

What kind of town is Russell? A "progressive" town, they agreed, referring to public works as a measure of progress. There are water system improvements, a new wing for the hospital and a public swimming pool where anyone, even an out-of-towner, can swim free of charge.

What else distinguishes Russell? "We've got the largest life membership of any YWCA post in the world." The first bowling alley in Kansas with automatic scoring... A real fine grass green, watered-fairway golf course—none to mention all those high school basketball championships.

What's wrong with Russell? "The businessmen were silent. Finally one said: 'I don't think there's anything wrong.'"

They acknowledged, however, that the town has a doctor shortage—a shortage which seems more acute in view of \$2 million it's investing in the construction of a hospital addition and medical clinic. But town officials have their eyes on some homegrown medical students who will soon be graduating.

Dole's original ambition was to be a doctor, but his war injury—which left his right arm useless—ended that dream.

"When Bob came back from the service," his mother recalls, "He said, 'Momma, I've got to use my head now; I can't use my hands.'"

Dole's brother Kenneth and a sister, Mrs. Gloria Nelson of Fort Morgan, Colo., are among his strongest backers and biggest admirers. When they talk about their support for his candidacy and the work ahead, one senses the same kind of tenacity that makes Dole an effective campaigner.

But their mother admits to having reservations about his running.

"Any mother would have mixed feelings," she said last week. "I even feel sorry for Carter."

CHARLES OF CANINE
Russell, Kansas
May 1, 1979
Dear Bob Dole:
I am writing to you today "Bob Dole" day on Monday, May 14, 1979, to honor a distinguished native son. A special ceremony is scheduled for 7:30 a.m. in front of the City Building at Eighth and Maple streets. It is expected that the national news media will be on hand as well as many out-of-town business leaders. We need a helping hand from our ambassadors. Some help is needed to act as greeters, perhaps provide transportation to and from the airport and assist near the stage area. With this in mind, we would like to have the ambassadors meet in the basement of the City Building at 8:30 a.m. on Monday, May 14. Wear your red and blue so you can be easily identified. Again, our thanks for you much needed help. Sincerely,
Everett L. Hamby
Manager

MICROFILMED FROM
BEST AVAILABLE COPY