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Dole: Hatchet man now builder of compromises

By Hedrick Smith
N.Y. Times News Service

WASHINGTON — When the Senate almost broke last week, the main author of compromise was Sen. Bob Dole, the Kansas Republican who usually bridged the gap between Democratic liberals such as Edward M. Kennedy of Massachusetts and Re-

publican conservatives such as Strom Thurmond of South Carolina.

"He was a very positive, constructive and significant force," Kennedy said afterward. Conservative allies of President Reagan were equally pleased. "Without Dole, it wouldn't have been done," said Sen. Paul Laxalt, R-Nev.

Dole sold the White House on his

compromise as a way not only to avoid passage of a more liberal bill but also to take positive action on voter discrimination to improve Republican credibility among blacks and Hispanic Americans. The Dole formula would base proof of discrimination on the overall effects of government action, not election results alone, but would not require proof that discrimination was intentional.

The senator has also been promoting compromise in other areas, including farm matters, gun control, food stamps and the Reagan budget. As chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, he has guided the progress of administration legislation, but he has also sounded an independent voice, criticizing the feasibility and equity of some specific proposals.

In all this, the tall, dark-haired,

third-term senator has come across as a far different figure from the aggressive, partisan "hatchet man" of the early 1970s when he was Republican national chairman and later, in 1976, as Gerald R. Ford's vice presidential running mate.

The biting wit and sarcastic cut-and-dash political attacks that became a Dole trademark gave him, what Sen. Howell Heflin, D-Ala., termed an ex-

aggerated image as "an acid-tongued villain."

Former Sen. George McGovern, the 1972 Democratic presidential nominee, recalled: "He was awful tough on me. He used to eat me for breakfast." The McGovern camp was convinced, one aide recalled, that "Dole was out to prove to the Nixon White House that he was as tough as they were."

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Some say Dole still eyes presidency

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In the 1976 vice presidential debate with Walter F. Mondale, Dole wisecracked that the late George Meany, then president of the AFL-CIO, "was probably Mondale's makeup man."

Then, in a heavy-handed comment, he said that Watergate was no more appropriate a campaign issue than "the Vietnam War would be, or World War I or World War II or the Korean War — all Democrat wars."



But in person, the 55-year-old Kansan has long seemed to colleagues and reporters a more relaxed, charming, witty, reasonable and amusing figure, more moderate than his conservative image, more generous toward other politicians than he has been on the stump.

In Congress, he worked with McGovern to protect food stamps, nutrition and other programs for the disadvantaged. In 1980, he refused to sign a conservative fund-raising letter against McGovern, saying "the language was too offensive." And now McGovern, like others, comments on how much "Bob Dole has grown" in recent years.

Some credit the senator's second wife, Elizabeth, an aide in the Reagan White House, with helping mellow her husband since their marriage seven years ago.

Musing about his political evolution, Dole says his image has followed his changing roles: his shift from the upstart tactics of the Republican opposition and the 1976 campaign to the responsibility of the Senate majority and committee chairmanship.

Others suggest another motive for his mellowness. Despite his disastrous showing in the 1980 Republican primaries, they suspect that he has not forsaken presidential ambition.

With a Republican in the White House, Dole is understandably reticent about such speculation. But he travels widely, accumulating political chits by speaking for Republican colleagues. He has formed his own political action committee, Campaign America. And he does not dismiss the thought out of hand.

"If I were to do it again," he says, "I'd approach it in a different way, good campaign management and money in advance." And, he didn't have to add, a more moderate image.

2 Section 3 Chicago Tribune, Sunday, May 30, 1982

'The new' Bob Dole straightens out his barbs

By Dorothy Collin
Chicago Tribune Press Service

WASHINGTON—When and if Congress finally comes up with a 1983 budget resolution, a \$109 billion bill will land in Sen. Robert Dole's court.

How he plays it will be a test of the Kansas Republican's new image as a moderate master of legislative compromise.

Dole, 58, is chairman of the Senate Finance Committee. He and Rep. Dan Rostenkowski (D., Ill.), chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, will have to spend the next few weeks tiptoeing through political land mines as they try to find some way to meet the revenue targets in the 1983 budget resolution.

Those targets are expected to be around \$100 billion, give or take a few billion, over three years, although the budget process was thrown into even further confusion at the end of last week when the House tossed out three budget versions.

Eventually, the two chairmen will be forced to face that most fearsome of issues — Social Security. It also comes under their committees' jurisdictions.

DOLE, WHO was chairman of the Republican Party during part of the Nixon era and was Gerald Ford's running mate in 1976, used to be thought of as something of a partisan hit man.

Using a wit as deadly as an old-time Kansas gunslinger's Colt .45, he often eviscerated the opposition. But with the Republicans taking control of the Senate after the 1980 election, Dole assumed a role of power and responsibility in the Senate. He has used it to take the middle ground, seeking solutions palatable to opposing sides on various issues.

Dole was the main architect of a compromise on the Voting Rights Act, finding the middle ground between Sen. Edward Kennedy (D., Mass.) and Sen. Strom Thurmond (R., S.C.). After the bill was approved by the Judiciary Committee, both sides praised Dole. Joseph Rauh, a founder of the liberal Americans for Democratic Action, called the senator "superb."

"Neither side had enough votes so it was easy to suggest a compromise," Dole said. "Most everything around here is a compromise of sorts."

THE SENATOR said he has worked to achieve compromises "for a long time," citing his years of effort on behalf of the food stamp program, often in cooperation with former Sen. George McGovern — the same McGovern that Dole verbally worked over during the 1972 presidential campaign.



Sen. Robert Dole
"He has the ability to get on in the Senate. He's very respectful of senatorial courtesies. And he's a guy you can make a deal with," observes an aide on the Agriculture Committee.

But now the game is different. "Suddenly we have the responsibility," Dole said. "We can't just sit and chuckle. We have to make things happen."

"I'm competitive," he said. "We're all competitive or we would not be in the business. No one likes to lose. But when you are in the majority you have to back off and look at all those great ideas and see if they will pass."

What will pass the Finance Committee, which has 10 members up for re-election in 1982, is one of the jackpot questions in Washington. No politician wants to raise taxes, especially if his political skin is on the line.

"It's really going to be tough this year," Dole said. "Last year there was a much different climate and it was not an election year."

REFERRING TO the Senate budget resolution which calls for more than \$100 billion in new revenues over three years, Dole said, "A lot of people who voted to raise taxes last week are going to vote against them when it comes to the nitty-gritty."

Among the sources of revenue Dole is looking at are a minimum tax on upper-income taxpayers and a modification of the leasing provisions of the 1982 tax bill which allows less profitable companies to "lease" their tax breaks to more profitable corporations.

"We want to take a look at the generous provisions offered to business and upper-income people," he said. But he said lobbyists were already "going nuts," pressuring senators, especially those who are running for election. "Everything we do has local impact," he said.

AS FOR Social Security, which has given the Repub-

licans fits, Dole said whatever changes are made to bail out the system "they will have to be phased in slowly and gradually."

"You don't have to have big changes to get big dollars," he said. "I don't support raising taxes or going to general revenue funds. And Danny, he knows we don't have any general fund."

"Danny" is Rostenkowski. And to hear Dole talk about his House counterpart one would think the two of them could solve a lot of problems if they were left alone to wheel and deal and finally agree with each other.

"We're not long on theory but I hope we are long on common sense," Dole said. "If they would leave it to the chairman (Rostenkowski) and I, we could work it out."

ROSTENKOWSKI IS known to think along the same lines. "He gets along with Dole very well," an aide said. "They are both very good politicians."

Dole also gets along very well with Sen. Russell Long (D., La.), the ranking member of the Finance Committee who was the chairman before the Democrats lost control of the Senate.

"He's doing a great job," Long said of Dole. "We have our philosophical and political differences, but I have a high respect for Sen. Dole and when I can, I cooperate with him. He has sought to measure up to his responsibility and he has."

The moderate, mellow Dole has been a surprise to some of his colleagues. Sen. Alan Dixon (D., Ill.), who was elected in 1980 and serves on the Agriculture Committee with Dole, said: "Of all the people I've met out here, he is the least like his image. I thought of him as a mean tough guy, but he is unlike that in his personal dealings."

"HE HAS the ability to get on in the Senate," said a committee aide. "He's very respectful of senatorial courtesies. And he's a guy you can make a deal with. You don't see him going down in flames. He understands the art of the possible."

He also understands that political hit men don't do too well in presidential primaries. In 1980 he did terribly, finishing last in New Hampshire with less than 1 percent of the vote.

"I haven't thought much about 1984," he said. "If President Reagan does not run then a lot of us will get our telescopes or microscopes, whatever will reach from here to Iowa." The Iowa caucuses are the first stop on the campaign trail to the White House.

Though he may not have his political telescope out, Dole does have a political action committee, Campaign America. Such committees can help fund and organize the route to the White House.

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Dole Discards Hatchet-Man Image of Early '70s

By DAVE BARTEL
Of Our Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — After nearly 17 hours of riding herd on reluctant Republicans, shooting holes in lobbyists' dreams and smothering every effort by Democrats to have their own way, Sen. Bob Dole had won everything he wanted.

The Kansas Republican, chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, had extracted a \$100 billion tax bill from a fragile coalition of senators facing re-election.

Then, in the wee hours of the morning, Dole announced the final item on his agenda. He wanted to enable Democrats to offer an amendment to the tax package when it goes to the Senate floor.

For a moment, Dole's fellow conservative Republicans seemed aghast. Under Senate rules, the Democrats would be shut out. There was no need to give them another shot, as Dole wanted.

"This could destroy a carefully crafted proposal," Sen. Bill Armstrong, R-Colo., protested.

"I don't want to destroy the package," Dole replied, "but neither do I want to destroy the good relations on this committee."

When Armstrong insisted that a Senate vote on the Democrats' alternative was too big a gamble, Dole conceded with a wry grin: "If it's adopted, I get shot."

Dole, who once accused Democrats of leading the

nation into every 20th Century war, goes a long way these days to accommodate members of the party he used to roast with rhetoric.

He failed in that late-night argument to find a way to give the Democrats their floor vote, but he promised to keep trying.

It was a clear sign of how far Dole has come since those days in the early '70s, when he played Senate sheriff for Richard Nixon and baited liberal Democrats for fun.

Back then, Dole had a sharp tongue and a hatchet-man image. As one angry Republican senator put it then, Dole "couldn't sell beer on a troop ship."

(See A MORE, 7A, Col. 1)



Dole, who once accused Democrats of leading the nation into every 20th Century war, goes a long way these days to accommodate members of the party he used to roast with rhetoric.