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Voices Beneath the Harmony

Three prominent Republicans talk about the political future

Unlike the Democratic Convention, where the cheers were punctuated by occasional jeers, and struggles for the heart of the party were apparent on the podium and on the floor, the Republicans' conclave was a telegraphic display of unity. But off-camera, the Republicans were more candid about the divergent currents that will determine the party's future. Presidential Pollster Richard Wirthlin, Kansas Senator Robert Dole and New York Congressman Jack Kemp were among the GOP leaders and strategists who met individually with TIME's editors to discuss the changing Republican Party. Their main points:

Richard Wirthlin. For the first time in my memory, voters 24 years old and younger support Republicans and Reagan more strongly than any other age group except those over 65. We have an 18-point margin over Mondale among these young voters. And that is where long-term partisan change can happen. If we get a voter who is 19 or 20 years old to cast his first vote for Reagan, we know we have a very good



Wirthlin measures the fairness issue

chance of having that voter for ten presidential elections.

The vote itself is a very ephemeral thing. It's fish on the sun, churning sea. To understand what is generating that froth you have to understand what people aspire to and what they value highly. I just completed a study on this subject and found that younger voters are very individualistic in their economic views but quite liberal in terms of their positions on social issues, such as the ERA and abortion. They tend to be more liberal than the Republican platform. So there is a certain tension there. If growth continues and the economy is no longer a major concern in people's lives, it is possible that social issues will play a more prominent role in a voter's decision. That could work against the President and the Republican Party. But I do not think this is highly likely. The pocketbook is going to be the dominant concern of Americans for a long time to come.

In 1982, when the economy was pretty rocky, it was interesting to us to learn that it was the fairness issue more than the economic issue that helped Democratic Congressmen win elections. I think that is even more true today. The Democrats are going to come at us very hard on the fairness issue. The perception of unfairness in the Reagan Administration is about where it was a year ago, except among older, retired voters who are supporting the President more than they did earlier. We felt the recovery would soften the fairness issue somewhat. It did not.

Robert Dole. I do not see a big shift in the Republican Party. We are a conservative party. But I think we have sort of lost our way a little bit on fiscal policy, largely due to the recession, but partly due to the belief that the deficit would just take care of itself. Just continue to cut taxes and the deficit goes away. Now that may happen, but I do not see much evidence of it yet. The fastest-growing program in Washington is not Medicare. It is not agriculture. It is not defense. It is interest on the debt. That interest this year is \$110 billion. It is headed for \$200 billion by the end of the decade. That is not interest. The total is more than double President Kennedy's budget in 1962 for the whole country.

We are supposed to be the tightfisted party that wants to balance the budget. So we put a balanced-budget provision in the platform, but then we proceed to spend \$75 billion to \$100 billion in tax breaks. The same people who are talking about a flat tax to broaden the tax base and get rid of loopholes are loading up the platform with provisions that increase the [personal income tax] exemption from \$1,000 to \$2,000. That is big money—\$15 billion just for that one little item.

[House members such as Kemp, Trent Lott and Newt Gingrich] controlled the platform but do not control anything in Congress. Unfortunately, they are a minority in the House. We have a little different view in the Senate because we are in the majority. We have to be totally responsible from time to time. Now, if you are in the minority, that is when you can put out a lot of newsletters.



Dole criticizes the deepening deficit

and say "I'm for lower taxes" and "I'm not going to worry about spending or the deficit" and "We're going to bash Paul Volcker [chairman of the Federal Reserve] and get interest rates down."

Jack Kemp. The far right did not write this platform. They would like to take credit for it, but with all due respect to them, it was written by a group of young, activist-oriented Republicans who are not comfortable sitting on the sidelines. The platform is not a narrow, negative, nationalistic, Communist-bashing document. There are elements of conservatism associated with values we Republicans share about the family and Judeo-Christian ideals. But it is liberal with regard to trade and the inner city. I think the platform expresses a newness.



Kemp insists not all deficits are equal

For all too long our party was trapped in the green-eyed, accounting-firm mentality that has turned off the cities and minorities to what we Republicans are all about. We became associated with a narrow fiscalist view of the world. Part of the change taking place today is that Walter Mondale is beginning to sound like the old conventional orthodox wing of the Republican Party, which made reducing deficits its single overriding goal. Now it is the Republican Party that is actually talking about jobs and growth and rebuilding a liberalized trade system that would be more encouraging to the world.

Today there is not more tolerance of the deficit as much as there is a recognition that all deficits are not created equal. Deficit reduction is at the top of everyone's agenda," Dole declared. He added that he shared the president's view that a tax increase would be "a matter of last resort."

However, quipping his way through his first news conference as leader, Dole said he hadn't thought much about other agenda items. "I'm going to find out first what you do as leader," he said. Asked if he would bring more discipline to the Senate than had the easy-going, diminutive Baker, the six-foot Dole retorted: "I'll bring more height."

Dole, who described himself as "a little euphoric, a little high," was the best known nationally in the field of five candidates. He was President Ford's 1976 vice presidential running mate and unsuccessfully sought his party's presidential nomination in 1980. He is married to Transportation Secretary Elizabeth Dole.

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TOPEKA CAPITAL JOURNAL
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Dole elected majority leader

WASHINGTON (AP) — Sen. Bob Dole, R-Kan., flush from his election Wednesday as Senate majority leader, said he intends to be a "positive" force for Kansas in his new role as chief of the Republican-controlled Senate.

Dole, who was first elected to the Senate in 1968, downplayed suggestions that his duties as majority leader would take him away from Kansas concerns.

"It's not going to change what happens in Kansas," Dole said at a news conference. "Hopefully I can be a force for some positive good for the state of Kansas as majority leader. I'll be going home frequently and looking after everything I should in Kansas."

Dole said he would retain his seat on the Agriculture and Finance committees, which handle farm and tax legislation respectively.

He noted that Congress will write a comprehensive new farm bill next year and made it clear that he planned to play a key role in formation of the legislation.

Dole, a likely 1988 presidential aspirant, defeated four rivals in the hotly contested battle to succeed Howard H. Baker Jr. as Senate majority leader.

The 61-year-old Kansas Republican was elected 28-25 over his closest

competitor, Ted Stevens of Alaska, on the fourth secret ballot in a caucus of all 53 GOP senators who will serve in the upcoming 99th Congress.

Three other contenders — James McClure of Idaho, Pete V. Domenici of New Mexico and Richard Lugar of Indiana — were eliminated one by one in the first three rounds.

The outcome also touched off a chain reaction among key Senate committee chairmanships, catapulting Bob Packwood, a frequent administration critic, into the chairmanship of the Finance Committee. As leader, Dole is banned by Senate rules from heading any panels.

Lugar will become chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, while arch-conservative Jesse Helms of North Carolina will stay on as chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee; both senators confirmed following the four-hour, closed-door caucus.

A beaming Dole emerged from the meeting with Baker, who did not seek re-election to the Senate this year, and told a jammed news conference he would work his hardest to shepherd President Reagan's second-term initiatives through the

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Hard-driving and with a cutting wit — Democrats unflatteringly dubbed him Ford's "hatchet man" in the 1976 campaign — Dole presents a much different, higher-profile

leadership figure than Baker, known for his calm caution and for his ability to force compromises by soothing ruffled Senate egos.

But the two men are both middle of the road in the GOP political spectrum, suggesting that Dole's election will not result in an ideological shift in the chamber that Republicans regained from Democrats in

1980 and held on to in the elections earlier this month.

Dole, who won't actually take command until the 99th Congress convenes on Jan. 3, has consistently supported Reagan's programs as chairman of the Senate Finance Committee. However, the committee's next chairman, Packwood, has been less of a cheerleader for the administration, and this could become a problem for its tax-overhaul proposals.

In other GOP leadership contests

Wednesday, Alan Simpson of Wyoming was elected to the No. 2 position of majority whip, a job now held by Stevens. Simpson defeated Slade Gorton of Washington, 31-22. John Chafee of Rhode Island beat Jake Garn of Utah, 28-25, for the chairmanship of the Republican Conference. And John Heinz of Pennsylvania defeated Malcolm Wallop of Wyoming for the chairmanship of the GOP Senatorial Campaign Committee.

Sen. Strom Thurmond of South Carolina was re-elected unanimously as Senate president pro tempore and William Armstrong of Colorado was elected without opposition as chairman of the Republican Policy Committee.

Overall, the new Senate leadership team is made up of more political moderates than the current one. Baker — who has presidential ambitions of his own for 1988 — told reporters: "I can't think of a better management team and I can't think of a better man to lead it than Bob Dole."

Democrats will pick their leaders next week. Senate Minority Leader Robert C. Byrd of West Virginia has no opposition.

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Kansas political leaders proud of, happy for Dole

By ROGER MYERS
Capital-Journal Statehouse writer

Kansas Democrats and Republicans alike congratulated Sen. Bob Dole, R-Kan., on his election Wednesday as majority leader of the United States Senate.

Gov. John Carlin, a Democrat, issued a statement in which he said, "This is a proud achievement for the senator and it is a recognition by his colleagues of his leadership abilities."

Vern Chesbro, executive director of the Kansas Republican state committee, said, "We're elated we think it's wonderful."

Attorney General Robert Stephan, the highest-ranking Republican elected state official, said, "I am more excited about this appointment than any other recent political event."

Rep. Dan Glickman, D-Kan., the

4th District congressman and Dole's possible rival for the Senate in 1988, said, "I sent the senator a note congratulating him. It's a good honor and I know he wanted it very badly and had worked on it a long time."

"I think I'm just a little jealous," Dole said for the post in a series of runoff ballots in which the candidate with the fewest votes dropped out after each ballot.

Carlin, who announced Nov. 9 he would not run against Dole for the Senate in 1988, said, "I believe it is a plus for Kansas that one of our senators will be guiding the Senate as decisions are made that affect the economic well-being and the future of our country."

"As chairman of the National

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Kansas

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Veteran recalls helping to save Sen. Dole's life

By LEW FERGUSON
Associated Press writer

Nearly 40 years have passed since Bob Dole, critically wounded by a shell fragment, was carried 10 miles down an Italian mountain road to medical treatment and survival.

Until recently, Dole never knew who his benefactor was that dark night in the spring of 1945, when he barely was conscious enough to know what was going on after the shell crushed two of his vertebrae, paralyzing his arms and legs and seriously damaging his lungs and one kidney.

Dole, whose recovery from his World War II wounds and his subsequent rise in politics to become a United States senator are well known, might have died that night if it were not for Bill Roberts.

Roberts, now 64 and retired as a firefighter in Indianapolis, was a 25-year-old Army private first class in charge that night of a detail which included about 40 captured German soldiers. It was his detail which carried Dole to an ambulance, picked up location and, finally, safety as dawn broke on April 14, 1945.

Roberts had heard of Dole's war wounds and political career, but hadn't convinced himself of the connection between the young U.S. lieutenant, who his detail carried down that mountain road about 12 miles from the town of Tolle, until the time of the Republican National Convention last August.

"Intuition told me several years ago that it might have been Sen. Dole," Roberts said in a telephone interview some time ago. "I assumed I probably had him that night. People at the aid station told me I had a very badly wounded

lieutenant. I always assumed I had him, but I couldn't prove it."

Roberts got the proof he wanted to satisfy his own mind earlier this year when he read a newspaper story about Dole's being sent to Italy as President Reagan's representative at an observance of the liberation of Italy.

"That story said Dole remembered he was wounded on April 14," Roberts said. "When I saw that, I told my wife, 'That's it. That was the night I was there.'"

Roberts called Tom Keating, columnist for the Indianapolis Star, and told him the story of how Dole's litter was carried by German prisoners under Roberts' scrutiny.

"I said I thought I was the man who had saved Sen. Dole's life," Roberts said.

Keating called Dole's office, and the senator's Kansas senator confirmed details of Roberts' story as he knew them.

"It's kind of interesting after 40 years to find out who carried you down the mountain," Dole, who was a platoon leader when he was hit by the shell fragment, said during a stop in Topeka this week.

"I hope through him to find some more of those people who helped me."

Dole, who has talked personally with Roberts, was described by his benefactor as "semi-conscious" during the 10-mile trek on the mountain road that night almost 40 years ago.

"There were seven other wounded men besides Dole," said Roberts. "We had about 40 German prisoners to carry the litters for the wounded. One of the Germans was wounded. He dropped Dole's litter at one point. I'm sure it was very painful."

Roberts, a rifleman and ammunition bearer in the 87th Regiment of



—Associated Press

Bill Roberts, now 64, a retired Indianapolis firefighter, is credited with helping to save the life of Sen. Bob Dole, R-Kan., during World War II when Dole was critically wounded in Italy. Until recently, Dole never knew who his benefactor was.

the 10th Mountain Infantry Division, credited two young German prisoners for helping him get Dole down the mountain.

One of them had a knife tied to his leg when the trip started, he recalled.

"They didn't believe I'd let them keep it," Roberts said. "I told them I didn't care as long as they didn't cause trouble. From that point on, they helped me tremendously. They helped me watch the others."

The band of prisoners carrying Dole and the other wounded soldiers was shelled at one point along its route to the ambulance rendezvous,

Roberts said. At another time, an American tank driver saw the captured Germans approaching and gave an order to open fire. Roberts quickly nullified the order by holing up at the American soldiers to hold their fire.

After he turned the wounded men over to the ambulances, Roberts never saw Dole again.

"I often wondered how many of them survived," Roberts said. "I'll never know, except for Dole."

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