

233. 1987

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## Reagan seeks Dole's assistance on veto effort

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Reagan, convinced that a \$87.5 billion highway bill is a budget-buster, asked one of Washington's most prominent husband-and-wife teams Monday to help make his planned veto stick in Congress.

Senate Republican leader Bob Dole of Kansas and Transportation Secretary Elizabeth Dole, emerging from a strategy session with Reagan, conceded to reporters, however, that it would be difficult.

The compromise legislation, which includes a provision allowing a new 65 mph speed limit on rural interstate highways, was approved by the Senate 79-17 last Friday, and was immediately denounced by Reagan as containing "excessive spending."

It was expected to be delivered to the White House today.

Elizabeth Dole told reporters that Reagan is "very much concerned about the fact that there are 152 special interest projects in this legislation."

Bob Dole acknowledged that Reagan's planned veto is "risky."

But the Republican leader also said that although Reagan needs no confrontation, "he needs to demonstrate that he's in charge, and that he's effective and he can't let these big things through, saying, 'I don't want a confrontation. Let's just go ahead and bust the budget.'"

White House spokesman Martin Fitzwater said earlier that "I think we have a good chance" to sustain the veto. He brushed aside a question of whether Reagan, seeking to make a new start with Congress amidst the Iran-Contra affair, would consider accepting the legislation.

"Goodwill and attempts at consensus don't mean you give up your principles," Fitzwater said, when asked about a remark Sunday by White House chief of staff Howard H. Baker Jr.

Baker said he raised with Reagan the question of whether an attempt to veto the five-year highway and mass transit aid measure would be wise in view of the push for the White House to get a fresh start on Capitol Hill.

Asked whether a veto of the measure would not also have the effect of killing the 65 mph speed limit proposal, Elizabeth Dole said, "The presi-



Senate Minority Leader Bob Dole of Kansas and his wife, Transportation Secretary Elizabeth Dole, left the White House on Monday after a meeting with President Reagan concerning the highway bill that passed the Senate last week.

dent supports that change, so that is not something that he is fighting at all. He's for that.

"And there's no reason why the Congress can't act quickly. This is what you call a surgical veto. So there's no reason that the Congress can't act quickly to move to the next piece of legislation. Get it done quickly with 65 (mph) in it," she added.

The measure is about \$10 billion above that proposed by the administration in the fiscal 1988 budget submitted to Congress early this year.

Dole said he didn't think Reagan is "picking a fight. I think he just sees that his responsibility, as the executive, (is) to not approve this bill. He's not hostile about it or angry. He just says the bill ought to be vetoed."

SANITY FAIR APRIL

# The Whole ROBERT DOLE

**W**hen Iranseam erupted, Senator Robert Dole hit the ground running. Running, that is, toward the '88 campaign. GAIL SHEEHY investigates Dole's character — and finds that his combative wit and formidable drive stem from the will to overcome his crippling war wounds

ROBERT DOLE IS A SURVIVOR. Born with none of the genealogical gloss or family wealth or social position taken for granted by many Republicans, Bob Dole did have one obvious God-given gift: he was a natural athlete. He played basketball and football, he was tall and he could run. In fact, he ran everywhere he went, always training, lifting weights he made himself out of cement blocks and lead pipe, and he nearly broke the indoor-track record at a university he could barely afford before he went away to war, where his gift was shattered.

Granted, most people don't know that Bob Dole is not whole. Even those closest to him often forget that he has no working right arm. So brilliantly does he compensate for his disability, even his wife will forget and say, "Will you hang that picture?" Senator Alan Simpson, another tall, blunt, irreverent wit, who has been in the trenches with Dole on deficit busting and tax reform, shakes his head in unaccustomed awe when asked about Bob Dole. "What can you do to a guy who's lain in a hospital bed for three years? You can't spook him up. He's invulnerable."

Yet not a day goes by that Dole doesn't have to prove himself. Just to tie a shoe, buckle a belt, thread a cuff link, demands the patience of the demented. And then his nemesis—pushing the tiny buttons of his shirt through the holes. Some days it takes ten minutes. If he gets flustered, fifteen. Because, you see, he hasn't enough feeling even in his good hand to pick a dime out of his pocket. Somebody asked him, "Why can't Elizabeth button your buttons for you?" Because he doesn't want to get in the habit of leaning.

Not Bob Dole is dependent on nobody, never has been well, not since that hazy, hideous gap in his life that opened up when he was twenty-one years old.

"I was all this physical fitness, bodybuilding, da-da, da-

da kind of person," he told me when we first talked, last June. Sunbathing is one of the few sensual pleasures Senator Dole permits himself, so his press secretary had set me up on a Senate veranda. Dole had been up until one A.M., the indefatigable majority leader, trying to get the tax-reform bill done. He settled back and let the sun butter his face, and talked of his passion for sports and survival.

He can remember the running and push-ups. And pumping those weights in the basement where he and his younger brother bunked together. They lived just across the tracks, in Russell, Kansas. When his father's feet hit the floor above them at five A.M., everyone else hit the floor running. Had to. His mother, Bina Dole, had to load up the old Chevy with the Singer sewing machines she sold around the county. All four kids had their chores, washing and vacuuming and setting out the meals. "Bobby Dole was a good worker," recalls Bub Dawson, who used to own the drugstore where Bob worked as a soda jerk until 11:30 every night.

So it was only in the dark before dawn that a boy with a crush on sports had a few minutes to himself for running and push-ups, before he plastered down his hair with vanilla and raced off to school and his afternoon job delivering newspapers. The girls went for Bobby Dole, with his big sad eyes and his biceps and his shyness, but he didn't have time for girls. "If he had a girl, he'd a had to take her to the show," says his brother, Kenny. "Who had that kind of money?"

Dole's father took pride in being a man who never gave in to emotion. The Western Union man would go all to pieces when he had to read the killed- or missing-in-action telegrams to townfolk, so Doran Dole would do it for him. Cool as you please. He was not ambitious, but his wife more than made up for it. Few dared confront her. During the Depression, Bina Dole rented out their house to oil and gas people. The family moved into the boys' room in the basement. To this day, her son appears to bear a class resentment, but rather than becoming a social reformer, he has followed her pragmatic credo. "Can't never did anything."

DOLE DID NOT SEEK OUT DANGER in the war. It was his duty to enlist, he felt. He was called up halfway through his sophomore year at the University of Kansas, Time: 1943. After officer-candidate school, he was sent to Italy, assigned to an infantry replacement depot near Rome. Safe. Dreams of the Olympics danced in his head when he saw athletes running around the Colosseum. "I figured the best way to get out of the army over there was to get in the sports school," he has said.

On February 25, 1945, he was assigned to the 85th Mountain Regiment. Bobby Dole, son of a grain-elevator manager, a boy from the dead-flat center of the States, thrown in with a bunch of Ivy League richies to an elite ski division—it was a bad joke. Dole had less than a month of real exposure to combat before that fogged day when he was ordered to take Hill 913.

His men scuttled from shell hole to shell hole, clinging to what little safety they could, but when firing began from the hill it was

bad, an indecipherable, crippling rain. "I was trying to drag the radioman back into this little shell hole," he said, still puzzled. "All I remember is a sting. I must have been turning over when I was hit, because my arms were over my head. I couldn't bring them back..."

Sometime during the eight hours he lay there thinking both his arms had been blown off, somebody piled them on his chest. The medic had been hit too; in fact, almost every man in his unit was down. The orders were to leave the wounded. His platoon sergeant dipped his fingers in Dole's blood and blessed the boy's forehead with an "M" to let the litter bearers know he'd been dosed with bootlegged morphine.

When he woke up at the evacuation hospital, Dole couldn't walk, couldn't void. Whatever had hit him had crushed his most important wires. He still couldn't bring his arms back. All four limbs were paralyzed. Just like that. No lead-up, no connection to his past life, no comforting sense of heroism: hell, he didn't even know the radioman's name.

"They shipped me back like a piece of furniture from Italy to Africa to Miami," he recalls. Still crated in a full-body cast, he was sent to Topeka, Kansas, Winter General Hospital. A large V.A. facility. A scrap-men dump.

A few weeks later his parents brought him home on leave for the first time. The townfolk of Russell turned out to see his pathetic frame lifted down from the train on a stretcher. Bob Dole looked away in shame.

WHEN HE BECAME VISIBLE as chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, in 1981, the media discovered a "new Bob Dole." Up to then he'd been best known as Gerald Ford's hatchet man, for having run around the country cutting up Democrats in the 1976 presidential election while his running mate remained, presidentially, in the Rose Garden. Suddenly Dole was being saluted for his "independent streak," for being "straight," even "warm and likable"—and funny. Much will be made of these changes as Bob Dole gears up to campaign for president.

There is merit to the notion of two Bob Doles. But the "new Dole" has been under reconstruction for forty years. Ever since that day at Winter General Hospital when they first got him up on his feet...

He had been through three stormy months, once flaring to a temperature of 108.7, only hours from death. A severely infected kidney had to be removed. But the day they got Bob Dole out of bed for the first time was not a day of celebration. He heaved himself into the bathroom and looked in the mirror.

"It was a pretty awful sight, to me."

He stood before himself, this young man of twenty-two, a sucked-out, skin-and-bones invalid. His weight had dropped from 194 to 122 pounds. He'd scarcely had a chance to grow from boy into man before the gods pushed him back into infancy, and it made him bitter.

## Dole's demise

Best man won't be president

THE man who should be elected president in November won't be. Sen. Bob Dole's withdrawal from the Republican nominating contest means that the nation won't be led by the person who has the most experience, courage and wisdom to guide the country into the last decade of the 20th century.

Mr. Dole left the presidential race Tuesday, conceding the GOP nomination to Vice President George Bush. It was a sad day for Mr. Dole, his supporters in Kansas and around the country, and, most importantly, for the American political system.

We remain firmly convinced that Mr. Dole was the right man for 1988, and would have been the president the country needs for the tough economic and foreign policy challenges ahead. His background in Congress would have helped him reach the compromises necessary to get the federal budget under control. His skeptical view of Soviet intentions would have ensured a hard-headed foreign policy. His sensitivity for the underprivileged and handicapped would have made the country more compassionate toward Americans needing help.

But it's not to be. The pundits' autopsies of what killed the Dole campaign reveal

many ailments. The senator never was able to get a smooth operation running; there was bickering and disension within his campaign staff. Failure to respond to Mr. Bush's distortion of his tax position before the New Hampshire primary may have cost Mr. Dole votes in that crucial state. Some campaign funds were not spent as wisely as possible.

It's wrong, however, to say that Mr. Dole lost the campaign. The truth is that Mr. Bush won it, primarily by wrapping himself around Ronald Reagan and by working for seven years to win the allegiance of party officials around the country.

As Sen. Nancy Kassebaum, R-Kan., put it: "The people said, 'We're for President Reagan — George Bush has been with him for eight years — we're for George Bush.'"

Though his presidential hopes are dashed, Mr. Dole remains a powerful figure, and a valuable asset for Kansas on the national scene. As Senate minority leader, Mr. Dole has great influence over the country's future. If the Democrats take over the White House next year, Mr. Dole will be the No. 1 Republican in Washington.

Nevertheless, the dream is over for Mr. Dole. Fate has other plans for the Kansas senator.

**B**ob Dole is a loner who