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Dole returns to Kansas home to launch his presidential run

Sen. Bob Dole returns to his small-town home of Russell, Kan., on Monday to formally begin his second attempt to win the Republican presidential nomination.

It will be a campaign portraying him as the most experienced politician in the six-candidate field, a man of achievement who overcame hardship that heightened his instincts for compassion.

"When all is said and done, the American people are looking for someone who's done it the hard way," Dole told an audience of Republicans gathered in Peoria for a weekend political conference. "And that's why I'm going back home on Monday."

Dole, 64, the Senate minority leader, recounted his upbringing in a working-class family and how he came back after serious wounds suffered in World War II to work his way up the political ladder.

"If I'm a correct judge of the American people, not just party activists but people everywhere, there are one or two things people regardless of party are looking for," Dole said. "In a broad sense, it's called leadership."

After 12 years of presidents who came from outside the Washington political establishment, Dole said, "the pendulum swings back and forth and the bottom line is that we want a hands-on president, someone who understands the Congress, the government and can work with Congress."

Dole, the running mate to President Gerald Ford in 1976 and an unsuccessful candidate for president in 1980, is considered the strongest Republican challenger to Vice President George Bush. Thomas Hardy

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Opinions

It's a day for Kansas

This is Bob Dole day in Russell. The Kansas senator made his announcement for the presidential nomination from his hometown.

It is also a day for Kansas. The media attention is focused on Dole, but the media coverage can give a boost to the state also. Should Dole get the Republican nomination it will be a great thing for him, and also for his state.

And that is as it should be for the senator, who previously served in the House, has been a great ambassador for his native state. Certainly his efforts in Washington have been geared to help Kansas. In this area there are many examples of his work on behalf of Kansans whether it be in the field of agriculture or programs for counties and cities.

Dole's national prominence speaks well for Kansas. As a presidential candidate, and as president, he will bring credit to himself and to his state. —B.F.

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Dole comes home to make bid

By DALE HOGG

Tribune Area Reporter

RUSSELL — Over the din of cheering crowds and marching bands, Sen. Bob Dole announced his candidacy for president of the United States before a throng of family, friends and supporters here this morning.

Through the strains of patriotic music, the crowd of several thousand braved the bitter cold to see their Republican candidate.

Although the response was generally positive, some waved placards reading "peace in Nicaragua" and "no aid for the contras."

On the edge of Russell, a small group of farmers protested Dole's ideas on farm policy. The sign on a farm truck read "Dump Dole."

But downtown, the feeling was all in favor of the community's native son.

However, just after Dole stepped to the podium, his remarks were interrupted. He had to ask for a doctor when a spectator collapsed near the

front of the crowd. The unidentified man was taken from the area by ambulance.

After the proceedings resumed, the candidate praised the people of his home town. "I enjoy showing Russell off," he said. "It's just a little easier now. I carried the spirit of this place with me."

He mentioned the time when he was wounded during the second World War, and the community's residents helped raise the money needed for his hospital bills.

It didn't take Dole long this morning to get down to the reason for his visit and say what he had come to say. "I have come to announce that I am a candidate for my party for the office of President of the United States."

The crowd broke into chants. "We want Dole," they said. "I accept. Why not?" Dole responded.

"I offer a record, not a resume. I have made a difference and I will make a difference," he commented. Dole said despite the words of cynics, improvements have been

made in several areas, including Social Security and agriculture.

"Ronald Reagan is onto us again," Dole offered his support of President Reagan. "He has made a difference, but what he has done is something to build on." The senator believes the budget deficit is the single biggest problem the country faces. "It's time to decide if we want to sacrifice for our children or to continue to make our children sacrifice for us."

Paul Sharmek, Hutchinson, a former Ness County Republican Party chairman, told the Tribune this morning that he has "supported him since he started out. I can't quit now." Sharmek noted that he isn't sure what to think. "We don't have anyone else."

"Everything will go" well during the Dole campaign, said Martha McCabe of Hays, who is vice chairman of the Ellis County Republican Committee. She added that her candidate will become president.

"He says he will hold the victory party here too. We have a lot of confidence."

McCabe's husband, Ed, said that a packrat is for the Democrats as a pinhead is for the Ted Kennedy button pinned to the backside of his trousers.

Martha McCabe said the many visitors can't help but boast the local economy. "There are a lot of people from out of state that have never heard of Russell or Hayes either."

Lillian Barker, Lawrence, and Helen Ellenburg, Topeka, are also longtime Dole supporters. "This hat is from Dole's campaign 20 years ago," Barker said, pointing to her Dole campaign hat.

Sen. Nancy Kassebaum praised

Dole as a man who has spent his life preparing for the job of president.

She said no one possesses his skill at putting together a consensus from differing views and characterized him as "one who has faced reality and refused to be overwhelmed."

Commenting on the Russell send-off, she said: "In a real sense, Russell is what this campaign is all about. It's about farmers and

storekeepers and workers and

bankers."

Prior to Dole's speech, he was presented the sunburst cigar box that was used to collect donations when he returned home from World War II to recover from wounds suffered in Italy.

The cigar box originally contained

more than \$2,000 that was collected

at Dawson's Drug Store — where

Dole worked while attending high

school — to help with medical ex-

penses when he returned from the

war.

"There are people standing here

who long ago put quarters they

couldn't spare in this cigar box,"

Dole said today. "That generosity

helped reshape my life."

G.B. "Bob" Dawson, former co-

owner of the drug store, presented

the cigar box to Dole again today

and said it contained more than

\$100,000 collected in Kansas for

Dole's presidential campaign.

"This box is also filled with the

good wishes of the people of Russell

... in the hope you'll be elected presi-

dent of the United States," Dawson

said.

On behalf of an anonymous donor

whom he said had come from a long

distance, Dole presented \$10,000 to

the city that he said the donor

wanted to "give for the poor people

of Russell."

Several hundred blue and yellow balloons, representing Dole's cam-

paign colors, were released at the

conclusion of his speech. He and his

wife, arms around each other, wavy-

ed to a cheering crowd before Dole

left to campaign in Iowa and New

Hampshire later in the day.

Dole greeted about 2,000 friends,

political associates and news media

representatives Sunday night at the

VFW Hall in Russell.

"It means a lot of people feel good

about what I'm doing, and nobody

feels better about it than my friends

here in Russell," Dole said, explain-

ing the large turnout.

At a rousing prelude to Dole's an-

nouncement today, supporters from

as far away as New York and

California jammed into this small

Kansas community to help Dole

kick off his second bid for the

presidency.

"I have a shot at it this time."

Dole told the throng packed

shoulder-to-shoulder into the VFW

Hall. "It's a two-person race (with

Vice President George Bush) and if

we keep doing what we've been do-

ing I think we have a real chance."

His wife, Elizabeth, and daughter,

Robin, joined Dole in squeezing

through the crowd to say hello to as

many of his supporters as possible.

"If this doesn't prove Kansas is

behind Dole, nothing will," said

Donald Schnacke of Topeka, who

with others rode a bus the 180 miles

from the state capital to be here.

William Brock, who resigned from

President Reagan's cabinet to

manage Dole's campaign, said the

turnout typifies the senator's cam-

aign and distinguishes it from that

of Bush.

After his announcement, Dole took

off to Des Moines and Manchester

for more campaigning in the first

two states where Republicans will

pick convention delegates early next

year, Iowa and New Hampshire.

The Associated Press contributed

to this story.



WAVING TO THE CROWD—Senator Bob Dole and his wife, Elizabeth, greet the crowd as they walk onto the platform. Dole officially announced his candidacy for president of the United States in Russell this morning before an audience of thousands.—(photos by Dale Hogg)

ENTHUSIASTIC—A young Dole supporter waves a flag while on his father's shoulders. The youngster was one of many ages who turned out for Dole's announcement this morning.