

310.1987

Editorials

Tuesday, November 10, 1987
The Hutchinson News

The homey touch

The weather didn't exactly cooperate.

A medical emergency in the crowd delayed the epic moment. Another ambulance's flashing lights distracted attention on the screen. And the senator had a few momentary problems turning the pages of the script on the bitterly cold stage.

But it all seemed to fit.

It was Hometown USA, where phony glitz or mechanized illusion would most certainly have been out of place if anybody had tried to foist them on the town. Bob Dole made the most of the homey touch, with a speech that was Bob Dole now as it was Bob Dole yesterday.

He had the help of 7,000 or so good friends and well-wishers Monday in Russell. He tried to show that he does have a vision for the future, and it's the one he has built piece by piece over the long years in public life.

What he wants for America he said, is freedom, security and opportunity.

He would get there, first and foremost, by using honest labors to confront the most serious challenge facing the nation: The need for honest labors of finance, in which a nation no longer spends beyond its means and sends the bill to its grandchildren.

"The federal budget deficit is the single greatest threat to a prosperous and dynamic America," he said.

He promised to take the lead in bringing honesty to the financial process, with congressional leaders if possible, but with leadership to call a constitutional convention if necessary.

He recited his record of the past as prelude to the future: A defense of Social Security, rural America, voting rights, tax reform, free trade. A push for back to the basics in education, merit pay for teachers, and a Ronald Reagan strong defense with "Star Wars." And vigorous opposition to abortion.

He didn't spring any surprises, but Hometown USA is not the place to try to spring a surprise. They know you too well for that.

Bob Dole did well Monday in Kansas. Hometown USA did well, too.

He's off to a fine start.

Dole protesters try to get views across

By Tim Hoyt
The Hutchinson News

RUSSELL — Leonard and Norma Blake, a middle-aged farm couple from the Larned area, wanted to let Americans watching on national television know what they consider is the truth about the life faced each day by some people in Kansas.

Not connected to any group protesting during Sen. Bob Dole's announcement Monday of his presidential aspirations, the Blakes made and carried their own signs to provide what they said was a counterbalance to the smiling faces and positive atmosphere that the majority of the 7,000 to 8,000 other people in attendance provided.

Their signs describe the problems faced by the American farmer.

"We were trying to tell the other side of what's going on in this part of the country," Leonard Blake said. The festive announcement, he said, "looks good on TV, but you get out in the country, we're dying. Farm families are going broke and there's not much future for young people."

"We don't like to do this kind of thing, but we thought the other side needs to be told."

Unlike the Blakes, who decided together to carry signs describing the situation they see in America's heartland, most other protesters at Dole's announcement were involved in some organization.

Also troubled by problems facing many farmers were about 25 members of the Kansas chapter of the American Agriculture Movement. A few of these protesters pushed wheelbarrows of manure, topped by signs indicating the manure represented Bob Dole's farm policy.

"We feel he's betrayed us," said Stephan Anderson of Alma. "He's basing his campaign on agriculture and his hometown roots, but we feel he's sold his birthrights to corporate interests. He didn't forget his roots with his campaign announcement, but the '85 farm bill spelled disaster for Kansas and all the Midwest."

Anderson said the group wanted to bring a tractor covered with their protest signs closer to the announcement site, and in fact had it in place near the event, but were forced to move it by officials who organized the Dole event.

Another member of the same American Agriculture Movement, Ed Petrovsky, said he was within 5 feet of Bob Dole when he told farmers during the 1977 "Tractorcade" to Washington, D.C., that things would be getting better. Thousands of farmers traveled by tractor to Washington during that event to protest the dilemma faced by those in agriculture.

"Things definitely have not gotten better," he said. "Dole's been in one of the strongest positions to have done something about it, but for the most part he's turned a deaf ear. We're hear to let him know things haven't gotten better. The whole rural infrastructure is going down the tubes."

Another group of protesting sign-carriers at the announcement Monday opposed Dole's position concerning U.S. aid to Contras fighting the Sandinista government in Nicaragua. Todd Herzog, a student at East High School in Wichita, said Dole "will follow right in Reagan's footsteps" by supplying aid.

Kim Rieke, from Salina, a member of the Students for Peace at Marymount College, was helping to carry a long sign promoting "aid to farmers, not Contras." She said the Dole backers among the audience had verbally abused the group.

Other protest groups at the announcement Monday reportedly included Kansans against Central American Aid, the Manhattan (Kan.) Alliance on Central America, the Kansas Chapter of the National Organization for Women, Neighbor to Neighbor, and Awakenings, a Concordia group that promotes peace and environmental issues.

The Kansas Times

Mid-America Edition

25c

Dole campaign shifts to high gear in key states

By Stephen C. Fehr
Washington Correspondent

MANCHESTER, N.H. — With his formal entry into the presidential race Monday, Kansas Sen. Bob Dole will begin a new, more intense period of the campaign for the Republican presidential nomination, senior campaign officials said Monday.

This phase, which will begin after Dole completes the announcement tour with stops today in Atlanta and Charlotte, N.C., will concentrate on using polling to identify likely Dole supporters in the states that hold the first contests next year, including New Hampshire and Iowa.

Dole announced his candidacy Monday in those two states, as well as in his hometown, Russell, Kan. He promised the crowds to

lead with common sense "molded in America's small-town heartland and tempered during a career of public service."

After identifying potential Dole voters, the campaign will try to reach them with calls, letters, a videotape and television advertising delivering Dole's message heading into the Feb. 8 Iowa caucuses and Feb. 16 New Hampshire primary.

"We're clearly going into a full campaign mode in the early states," said campaign manager Bill Lacy.

For much of 1987, the Dole campaign has concentrated on recruiting opinion leaders, activists and volunteers to assemble statewide campaign organizations in Iowa and New Hampshire. Now, with those organizations virtually in place, the campaign will

start using its network of volunteers to reach voters who have been identified in polls as possible Dole voters.

The candidate also will make some important changes.

Although Dole will continue to give part of his stump speech dealing with his small-town roots and character, he will start fleshing out his view on issues that he raised in his announcement speech on Monday, officials said.

Among those issues are the federal budget deficit, health care, education, Social Security, agriculture, tax policy and programs for the disadvantaged.

"We're going to fill out more of the specifics as we go on now," said Mari Maseng, the campaign communications

director.

Tully Plesser, Dole's polling director, said that up to now, the campaign had used polling to develop a general idea of voter attitudes in Iowa, New Hampshire and other states. But now, with Richard Wirthlin, President Reagan's pollster, joining the campaign last month, Dole strategists will attempt to develop a profile of the electorate in key states such as Iowa and New Hampshire.

"I think it (the message) is going to sharpen up in the next few weeks with an even clearer focus and direction," Plesser said.

Iowa is Dole's breakthrough state, the place where he is counting on a first-place

See DOLE, A-7, Col. 1

November 10, 1987

The Kansas City Times A-7

Dole campaign moves into high gear

Continued from Page A-1

upset of Vice President George Bush or at least a close second-place finish to propel him into the other primaries and caucuses.

"Whoever does well in Iowa will probably be the next president of the United States," Dole told a crowd gathered Monday on a farm near Des Moines.

A small knot of protesters stood on the fringe of the crowd toting signs accusing Dole of supporting the minority white regime in South Africa. The candidate interrupted his speech to tell them: "The signs are wrong. There isn't a racist bone in my body."

Various polls taken throughout the year have shown Bush and Dole close in Iowa, the latest poll giving Bush the edge. The Bush and Dole campaigns in Iowa have a lot of respect for each other's organizational strength, and also worry about former TV evangelist Pat Robertson, who also has shown an ability to organize.

Bush advisers are setting up the expectation that Bush may lose in Iowa, and say Dole should be the favorite because of his Midwestern farm state background. But Dole's campaign counters that Bush is the frontrunner in Iowa because he has campaigned there since 1978 and beat Ronald Reagan there in 1980.

"We think if we win there, Bob Dole is through," Bush deputy campaign manager Ed Rogers said.

Dole took a jab at Bush in Monday's announcement speech, with-

out naming the vice president. Dole presented himself as a leader with a strong record of accomplishment, particularly as Senate Republican leader. "I offer a record, not a resume," he said, clearly referring to the many positions Bush has held.

New Hampshire is considered in polls to be Bush country at the moment, with Dole and New York Rep. Jack Kemp making the strongest challenges. Kemp's campaign has virtually staked his candidacy on a first- or second-place finish there.

Dole's organization in New Hampshire is coming together; the senator has worried about that state more than the other contests before March 8. Dole staffers have broken the state down by county and city areas and have recruited local chairmen in most of those areas.

Contrasts to 1979

The circumstances surrounding Dole's announcement Monday contrasted vividly with those in 1979 when Dole announced his candidacy for the 1980 GOP nomination.

Eight years ago, at this same juncture, Dole was judged by polls and GOP analysts to be a longshot in the nomination race, far behind better-known Republicans such as Ronald Reagan, Howard H. Baker Jr. and John Connally.

Dole's 1979 announcement speech, delivered in May, acknowledged the pessimism about Dole's chances.

"I have no illusions about the magnitude of the undertaking,"

Dole said. "Financing, logistics, simple human effort or the lack of these may conspire in time to defeat a candidacy, but they cannot deter it at the outset."

Lack of money, organization and message eventually killed the Dole candidacy after the Iowa and New Hampshire contests in 1980.

Dole referred to his past defeats in telling audiences Monday that he was ready to be president. "I'm not perfect, none of us are, but I've been tested and I've fallen and I've gotten up again and I've been tested and I've lost and now I'm ready," Dole said. "I think I'm going to be the Republican nominee in 1988. And if I am, I'm going to win in November of 1988 and provide leadership for America."

This time around, Dole's confidence in winning the nomination is buoyed by several indicators.

First, the polls indicate that more Americans support Dole. The senator still lags behind Bush in all polls, but Dole has steadily moved up out of single-digit percentage points into the teens and twenties since 1986.

These same polls also show that Americans want an experienced, hands-on leader in 1988 after eight years of a detached manager in Reagan. Dole advisers believe this also benefits Dole.

Also, Dole has been able to erase the belief in the political world that he cannot put together a campaign organization. By hiring such top Republicans as Wirthlin and Bill Brock, former labor secretary and

GOP national chairman, Dole has earned a lot of respect in political circles.

"If he can grab a Wirthlin and Brock in one week's time, he's not too far from getting the right speech writer and the right formulation of a candidacy," said Peter D. Hart, a Democratic pollster who worked for Walter F. Mondale in 1984.

Furthermore, Dole has exceeded his expectations in fund-raising providing the campaign with a solid financial base that, although behind Bush, still gives him enough to run the race that he wants. Dole had raised about \$10.4 million by Monday; his goal is to raise around \$13 million by the Iowa caucuses.

Finally, Dole has taken pains to wipe out the image of him from a 1976 vice presidential debate with Mondale as a short-tempered hatchet man. At the Republicans' first debate in Houston on Oct. 28, Dole's primary objective was to come off as polite, mature and statesmanlike — and most analysts said he did.

But the debate also demonstrated the uphill climb Dole faces in knocking off Bush. The vice president was judged the "winner" of the debate by pundits, insiders, the candidates and in voter surveys. Dole advisers had hoped that Bush would stumble in Houston, keeping their momentum going. Instead, nothing changed in the race.

"We don't have to take over Bush until Iowa or a little after," said Dole strategist Donald J. Devine. "You have to look at these (debates)



After his announcement in Iowa that he is a candidate for the presidency in 1988, Sen. Bob Dole of Kansas points skyward as balloons are released. Accompanied by his wife, Elizabeth, Dole made the Iowa announcement on the farm of Ernie and Ellen Thomas of rural Wanke, near Des Moines.

as a series of engagements. I think he (Dole) should get better as he goes along. But in the first one, I think it was important to get that 1976 debate behind him."

Dole's advisers say the hurdle for Dole in the polls after the 1984 election was to move ahead of New York Rep. Jack Kemp into second

place, allowing Dole to become the party's alternative to Bush and setting up the two-man race with the vice president that many feel exists today.

"That was a big threshold," Devine said of Dole overtaking Kemp. "In second place, I think, it is exactly where he should be right now."