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Washington Outlook

EDITED BY STEPHEN H. WILDSTROM

BOB DOLE BETS IT ALL ON BUSTING THE BUDGET DEFICIT

Bob Dole went home to tiny Russell, Kan., on Nov. 9 to tell America it was time for a dose of bitter medicine. As he opened his bid for the Presidency, the Kansas senator called for an austerity program to wipe out the federal budget deficit. Dole's approach—and his willingness to accept new taxes—puts him sharply at odds with Vice-President George Bush, his main rival for the Republican nomination.



DOLE STARTING HIS RUN IN RUSSELL, KAN.

On the surface, Dole looks as if he's taken a cue from Walter F. Mondale's disastrous 1984 campaign. But the differences are important. In 1984, Mondale ran smack up against Ronald Reagan's "Morning in America" message. This time around, the stock market crash has shocked the public into an awareness of the risks to the economy posed by the budget deficits.

Dole reckons that Bush is in no position to exploit the deficit panic. The Vice-President is inextricably linked to Reagan Administration policies that produced the deficits. Bush limited what little flexibility he had by breaking with Reagan and coming out against tax increases in the current budget negotiations. Dole, by contrast, has been a budget hawk from the beginning and played a key role in pushing tax hikes through Congress in 1982 and 1984. Rather than invent a new political persona for himself, he is trying to turn his antifiscalist zeal into an asset.

BURYING THE HATCHET. The senator still has a long way to go. He trails Bush in most public opinion polls, and his organization lags behind the Vice-President's in key Southern and New England states. "He's sitting comfortably in second place," says GOP political consultant John D. Deardourff. "But he has no clear sense of how to get from there to the top spot."

Dole hopes to score points by contrasting his solid legislative record as Senate Republican leader with Bush's succession of appointive posts. "I have a record," says Dole, "not a resumé."

To date, Dole has also managed to suppress the dark side of his personality—a weakness for the low blow that won him a well-deserved reputation as a political hatchet man in his 1976 campaign as Gerald Ford's running mate.

What Dole's campaign has lacked thus far is a theme. In a five-state tour that formally opened his candidacy, Dole spelled out a program of deep spending cuts and tax increases. "As far as this candidate is concerned, public enemy No. 1 is the federal deficit," he told supporters in Manchester, N.H. "We will either sacrifice for our children or we will continue to make our children sacrifice for us."

'NO RATIONALE.' Dole is convinced that voters will respond to a message stressing "common sense and discipline." In a Dole Administration, he says, everything but spending programs that benefit "vulnerable Americans" would be on the table. And the only tax increase he rules out is in income-tax rates, leaving the door open for a gasoline tax increase, oil import fee, excise tax hikes, and long-haul closings. Says campaign chairman and former Labor Secretary William E. Brock: "I don't believe it when somebody tells me we can solve this problem without additional revenues, and I don't think anyone else does."

Dole's single-minded focus on austerity is not without risk. "If the economy picks up steam," warns GOP consultant Kevin P. Phillips, "there's no rationale for Dole." And a severe economic downturn could turn voters against all Republicans and drown out Dole's deficit-cutting message.

It won't be clear for some time just where the economy is going, and GOP polls are urging Dole to bide his time. "There's a growing frustration in the Dole camp that they're still in second place," says one GOP strategist. "But right now, second is a pretty good place to be."

By Richard Flynn in Russell, Kan.

CAPITAL WRAPUP

TAKEOVERS

Congress stalled efforts to write antitakeover legislation may soon be kicked into motion by the Delaware legislature. Governor Michael N. Castle wants a law that makes it harder for raiders to mount assaults on Delaware corporations. Because so many of the nation's largest companies are incorporated in Delaware, state action would have national importance. "A Delaware law will set off a hydrogen bomb in Congress," predicts a Capitol Hill staffer. Delaware hung back when the Supreme Court gave the green light to state takeover laws last spring. But attitudes changed after executives

PEOPLE

Theodore Garrish, the Energy Dept.'s top lobbyist, will become the agency's third Assistant Secretary for nuclear energy programs in a year. He takes over from James W. Vaughan Jr., acting head since David Rossin, who had held the post for only a few months, left earlier this year. Linda Fisher, a top aide to Environmental Protection Agency chief Lee M. Thomas, will be the EPA's new assistant administrator for policy.

PARENTAL LEAVE

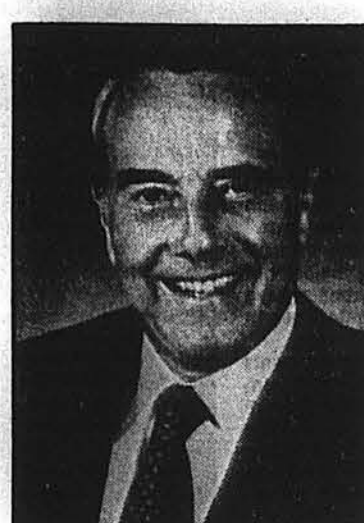
Legislation mandating unpaid leave for new parents is likely to pass Congress next year, business lobbyists concede. A compromise has cleared the way for House action. The leave period has been cut to 10 weeks from 18, and the smallest businesses would be exempt. A House committee is expected to act on Nov. 17, and Senator Christopher J. Dodd (D-Conn.) is working on a deal in the Senate. Backers are buoyed by a General Accounting Office study showing the cost to companies will be low. But business remains opposed, fearing the measure would open the door to other mandatory benefits.

Crowson's View



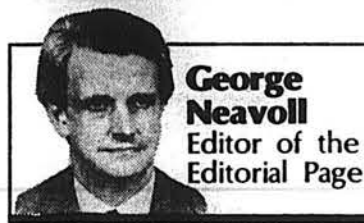
Wanted: President for all the people

An interesting thing is happening with Sen. Bob Dole, R-Kan., as he pursues the Republican presidential nomination. It was underscored last week with the re-entry of former Sen. Gary Hart, D-Colo., into the Democratic nomination race.



Kansas' Bob Dole could be it

It is that Bob Dole is being seen more and more as the only candidate of either party who can rescue the country from what will have been eight years of drift under Ronald Reagan. He is becoming, as syndicated columnist Jeffrey Hart put it early this month, "the real presidential candidate of the Democratic Party."



George Neavoll Editor of the Editorial Page

Now, this isn't expected to elicit hal-lalujahs from the Republican old guard, or make Democratic stalwarts very happy, either. And, granted, the Reagan administration yet may restore some direction to the country's foreign policy — which has been the most adrift of all its policies — through its rapprochement with the Soviet leadership.

Indeed, the Senate-minority-leader-who-would-be-president should have learned a valuable lesson from his initial reluctance to endorse the new intermediate-range nuclear force treaty. He risks losing it all unless he can convince moderate would-be supporters he's really as good as he sounds, and not beholden to his party's right wing.

BUT the truth is that no other candidate possesses the equipment Bob Dole does to put the country back in order, to restore fiscal sanity to government, to address the real needs of the poor and the dispossessed, and to forge a political consensus that allows all of these things to happen.

When he says he will "sit down with congressional leaders during my first weeks in office and we'll stay there as long as it takes" to come up with a plan to end the federal deficit, you can bet he'll do just that.

He'll be able to do it because everybody else around the table will be people he has worked with in Congress for many years. They will like him and respect him, and together they'll be able to end the deficit.

WHEN Bob Dole addresses all-white Republican audiences and tells them, as he often does, that he intends to change the GOP's image of "insensitivity to black, brown, poor-white and disabled

Americans," you can bet he'll do that, too. Blacks and other minorities haven't forgotten all he's done for them — and therefore, for all Americans — over the years. It was he who saved the Voting Rights Act of 1965 from dismantlement, when it would have been politically safer for him to look the other way. It was he who pushed the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. national holiday through Congress — much to the distress of Ronald Reagan — when it would have been easier to let someone else carry the bill.

It's smaller wonder that Coretta Scott King, the martyred civil rights leader's widow, is said to be ready to announce her endorsement of Bob Dole at an opportune time.

No other candidate, not even the Rev. Jesse Jackson and his "Rainbow Coalition," can offer to do so much for blacks and other minorities, with a reasonable expectation of seeing it accomplished.

GARY Hart's sudden reappearance on the Democratic presidential landscape brought home a terrible truth to a great many Democrats: Their party isn't going to put a president in the White House next November. That probably was so before Mr. Hart's latest act of rashness, but it's almost universally accepted as being so now.

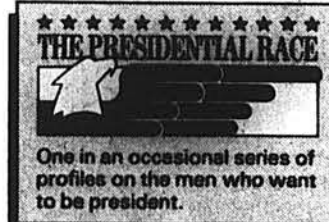
Dole's political appetite grew in the Kansas plains

By CHRISTOPHER ROSE Staff writer

RUSSELL, Kan. — The sign on the interstate outside of town says "Welcome To Bob Dole Country" — the yellow plains of west Kansas, wanting for trees, rain and Democrats.

Fence posts here are hewn from stone for the shortage of wood, and Main Street is paved in rolling red brick. Grain towers cut the prairie horizon and gently nodding pump jacks coax oil out of shallow wells.

This is where the Bob Dole story begins. It is a paean to opportunity, grit and determination, the stuff of legend and Gary Cooper movies. The plot is so steeped in heartland imagery as to be nearly ludicrous: The Kansas Dust Bowl, the Depression, a small-town poor boy and soda jerk who makes a catch in a high school football game that townsfolk still talk about 50 years later. He becomes a war hero, county attorney, U.S. senator and, finally, president.



That last scene isn't written yet, but Dole is working on it. The script calls for defeating Vice President George Bush, winning the Republican nomination, then stomping whatever candidate the Democrats offer next fall. It goes this way because, in Bob Dole Country, you don't just win things; you fight like hell for them.

The long, lean plainsman is running an unadorned campaign to match his Midwestern reserve: Don't spend more than you have, listen to all sides of an argument, make a decision and stick with it. Nothing complex about it, but it got him this far.

Dole, and three of them have announced their retirements. Dole is just picking up speed.

He is the Senate minority leader, a position that assures the limelight. He met with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in Washington, President Daniel Ortega in Nicaragua. He was a member of the deficit reduction committee that trimmed the federal budget last month. He played a prominent role in the wars over Supreme Court nominees Robert Bork and Douglas Ginsburg.

Events like these are the fundamentals of his campaign. He's not interested in visions or promises, but the machinations of legislation. "I have cast 10,600 votes in Washington," he said. "I know how to play the game."

Dole is a political powerhouse of scathing wit and rugged good looks. He is a model of paradox: compassionate yet vindictive, instinctive yet calculating, a small-town boy who lives in Washington's glitzy Watergate Apartments.



Robert and Elizabeth Dole on the campaign trail in Iowa. See DOLE, A-6. STAFF PHOTO BY TED JACKSON