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DOLE: Image Was Changed After '76 Vote

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Politically, Bob Dole is less sensitive—but neither blacks nor the poor consider him an opponent.

Along with former Sen. George S. McGovern (D-S.D.), he was an early sponsor of food stamps. Former staffers Bill Taggart and John Smith recall that Dole became interested in food stamps as a way to help farmers sell their surplus crops. "But," Taggart says, "I think that it became more than that."

In most instances, Dole has voted against legislation considered important by the National Assn. for the Advancement of Colored People. Indeed, his NAACP Civil Rights Report Card for the 99th Congress gives him one of the lowest grades in the Senate.

But Althea Simmons, chief lobbyist for the NAACP, says he helped civil rights activists gain the ear of the White House when presidential aides were refusing to hear them—and tried personally, in vain, to negotiate a compromise with Atty. Gen. Edwin Meese III on the makeup of the Civil Rights Commission.

"He's been a person you can talk to, can make sense with," Simmons says. "He may not agree with you all the time, but at least you feel he's considering it."

His sensitivity, however, can make Bob Dole defensive.

Joe Bailey, the former operations director of his political action committee, would take special care during trips to arrange Dole's hotel rooms to accommodate his handicap—and in ways that would not be obvious. He unwrapped the soap, loosened the tissues and removed the seals from toilet seats. If there was wine in the room, he pulled the cork most of the way out. He unwrapped any candy. And he turned down the bed—and made it look as if the maid had done it.

"He hates it that he is in that kind of shape," Bailey says. "One time we were at an airport in San Diego, and we kept going back and forth out to the plane to use the phone that was out there. And, at one point, he took off in a sprint. Here's a guy that was in his 60s. And he looked good. This was not somebody that had never been involved in athletics. It was a sprinter's sprint. He had his coat off. His tie was loosened. I kind of picked up the pace with him, and we sprinted about 150 yards.

"And I said, 'Senator, that was a pretty good looking sprint there.'

"He said that, well, he didn't run much.

"And I said, 'Well, how do you keep in shape?'

"And that was it—it was just kind of like it hit him, or something came back to him. And he really clammed up. . . . It was like you had mentioned that somebody had died in the family or something. . . . He just didn't want to talk about it.

"He really has a chip on his shoulder about that."

Bob Dole's sensitivity and introversion can make him a loner.

"One thing I've learned in that little city of Washington is that up there you don't really have time to build friendships," Bob Dole says. "You can get too much advice from your friends. Some of them try to move in on you—and I don't want anybody to move in on me.

"So I sort of keep my distance."

Dole and his mother, Bina, greet a Kansas crowd in 1979 after the senator announced he would seek the presidential nomination in 1980. "There's no way he can lose," she said.

Associated Press

Dole plugs Rep. Robert Taft Jr. of Ohio for the vice presidency at the 1964 Republican convention. The nominee, Sen. Barry Goldwater of Arizona, instead chose William E. Miller.

Bob Dole's difficulties made him a determined man. He was not at the University of Arizona long before yet another blood clot sent him back to Winter General Hospital in Topeka. Undaunted, he transferred to Washburn University in Topeka. There he earned a bachelor's degree as well as a law degree—*magna cum laude*. He came by it the hard way.

The kid who had gotten up at 5:30 a.m., done his chores, thrown the Salina Journal, gone to school, trained for track and worked at Dawson's until nearly midnight now attacked his classes the same way.

By the time he got to Washington, he was a workaholic who drove his staff unsparingly.

"He expects out of his staff what he expects out of himself," says Sen. Simpson. "When he's putting in 18 hours a day, he doesn't want to see some sonofabitch putting in a 10-hour day."

Hours like that helped cost him his first marriage.

"It was a matter of two people growing apart and going different ways," says publisher Russ Townsley. Bob Dole said he wanted out, and he arranged for a quick divorce. Phyllis is on record as saying it hurt—but that she was not surprised, since, in retrospect, the marriage had ended anyway. "There was no hint of a scandal . . . " Townsley says. "Bob is just too busy for that."

Dole's second wife, Elizabeth, who quit recently as secretary of transportation to help him campaign, works almost as hard as her husband. "They're very busy," says Ralph Stanley, her former chief of staff. Stanley says Bob and Elizabeth Hanford Dole tried to set aside at least one day a week—usually Sunday—for dinner. But a lobbyist says he found them at dinner one Sunday night at a tiny French restaurant in Washington called Le Steak and thought about saying hello—until he realized that they had paper work in the table between them.

"Those were hers," Bob Dole says. "I don't do that. She's worse than I am. She wakes up in the middle of the night and makes little memos. I just told her to keep the lights off—do it in the dark; don't wake me up. She's got one of those little flashlights now with a pencil on it. It's great."

Dole is no less compulsive. "I've suggested to our campaign scheduler, 'Get us back in Washington for a day off,'" he says. "But I've got to confess, they gave me next Sunday off, and I said, 'Gee, I'm out near Iowa. Why don't I go to Iowa?' Because if I lose in Iowa, I'm gonna get a lot of days off—more than I ever had in mind. So we're going to spend Sunday going to the Omaha World Herald board, do the David Brinkley show from Omaha, do two other editorial boards and do a town meeting and get back to Washington and speak to a group of editors that night."

The drive Bob Dole values in himself and admires in his wife has cost him some members of his staff. Senate records show that during the late 1970s he went through administrative assistants at the rate of about one a year. In addition to long hours, those who have worked for him say that he demands perfection and has very little patience about mistakes. He does not suffer naysayers and—like his father before him—he is stingy with praise.

Friends cannot name a single outside interest that either Bob or Elizabeth Dole pursues, apart from the Dole Foundation and other charitable undertakings.

Former aide Joe Bailey says: "Politics is his hobby. That's his life—politics."

Adversity also made Bob Dole tough.

Nobody alive, Sen. Simpson says, "will ever frighten Bob Dole. You're never going to spook him."

Rep. Dick Cheney (R-Wyo.), who served as chief of staff to President Gerald R. Ford, says a President must "have the capacity to make very important decisions and not look back. I don't have any real doubts about Dole's ability in that area. . . . "

"My guess is he would be tougher than Ford was," Cheney says.

Often the toughest thing is to say no.

And Bob Dole did it during the nascent days of Watergate, when he was Republican national chairman.

He found himself at odds with Charles Colson, special counsel to President Nixon. Tom Evans, who was Dole's co-chairman for administration and organization, remembers a demand from Colson that the Republican National Committee distribute cartoons of Sen. Hubert H. Humphrey (D-Minn.), who was running for the Democratic presidential nomination. Evans says the cartoons showed Humphrey "with a girl on his knee and a bottle of whiskey."

With Dole's blessing, Evans refused.

Dole also turned down attempts by Colson to tell him what to say as the national party chairman, both on the Senate floor and in speeches and at news conferences and fund-raising events across the country.

"Colson used to send the most egregious stuff up to us," Ward White says. "They were intemperate, extreme, unnecessary sorts of things—points that

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could be made with equal force but much less obnoxiously.

"There were lots of phone calls that went back and forth." The phone calls, White says, were not pleasant.

Evans recalls hearing parts of them.

"Bob would say, 'I'm just not going to say that. I'm not going to do that.' I remember very specifically speeches where he said, 'I'm not going to do it. Period. I'm not going to give that speech.'"

Fifteen years later, the memory still rankles.

"It finally got so bad in '72," Bob Dole says, "that I told Chuck Colson, 'I'm not making any more speeches out of the White House unless you tell me, who made these charges.'

"I remember giving one in Baltimore one night where I was supposed to attack [then-Washington Post publisher] Katharine Graham by saying that somebody had overheard her at a dinner saying, 'I hate Richard Nixon.' Well, I didn't have any brief for Katharine Graham or the Washington Post, but I said, 'I'm not going to say it.'"

Such independence cost him the party chairmanship.

Tough Bob Dole, however, can get mean. It begins as partisanship.

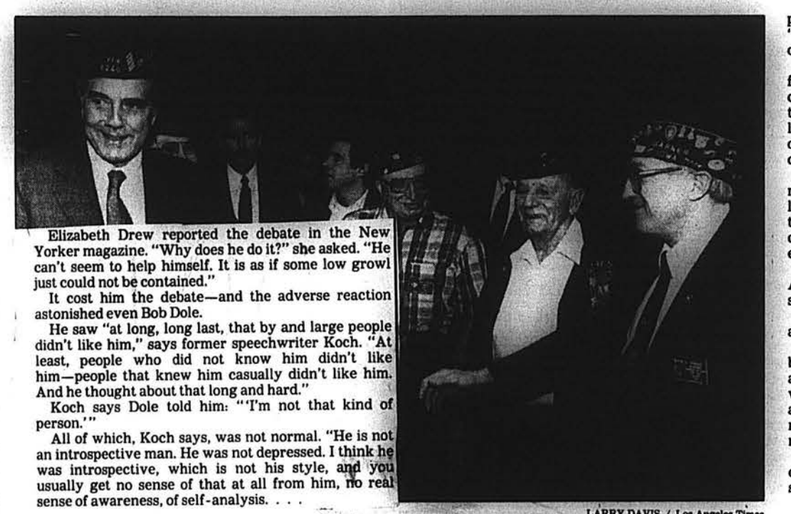
As national party chairman, Dole called former Atty. Gen. Ramsey Clark a "left-leaning marshmallow" for defending the Rev. Philip Berrigan, a Vietnam War protester, in court. When former Sen. Edmund S. Muskie (D-Me.), who ran for the Democratic presidential nomination, criticized agents of the FBI for spying on Earth Day rallies, Dole told reporters that "the McCarthyism of the '50s pales by comparison with the Muskie-ism of the '70s." He said that Muskie was making "a concerted and deliberate effort to turn the FBI in the eyes of the American people into an American version of the Gestapo."

McGovern, who won the Democratic nomination in 1972, became his most embattled target. Dole accused him of everything from failing to report atrocities during World War II to giving his own brother-in-law a job on his government staff. Dole said that McGovern's chief fund-raiser was guilty of a conflict of interest—and said that all of this made McGovern guilty of a moral double standard—"perhaps the grossest of indecencies."

None of it was true, McGovern replied—and no charges were ever brought.

By 1976, when Ford needed a vice presidential running mate who could attack Jimmy Carter with a vengeance, Bob Dole was a practiced veteran. His willingness to "go out and very aggressively charge and take the battle to the Democrats," says a former Ford adviser, was one of the reasons that Bob Dole was picked.

People called him a "hatchet man." That fall he debated Walter F. Mondale, who was Carter's running mate. Bob Dole brought up his war injury. He said he thought about it every day. And he blamed the war that had caused it—and every other American war in the 20th Century—on Democrats. "I figured up the other day," Dole said, "if we added up the killed and wounded in Democrat wars in this century, it would be about 1.6 million Americans—enough to fill the city of Detroit."



Elizabeth Drew reported the debate in the New Yorker magazine. "Why does he do it?" she asked. "He can't seem to help himself. It is as if some low growl just could not be contained."

It cost him the debate—and the adverse reaction astonished even Bob Dole.

He saw "at long, long last, that by and large people didn't like him," says former speechwriter Koch. "At least, people who did not know him didn't like him—people that knew him casually didn't like him. And he thought about that long and hard."

Koch says Dole told him: "'I'm not that kind of person.'"

All of which, Koch says, was not normal. "He is not an introspective man. He was not depressed. I think he was introspective, which is not his style, and you usually get no sense of that at all from him, no real sense of awareness, of self-analysis. . . .

LARRY DAVIS / Los Angeles Times

Candidate Dole makes the rounds Saturday at Veterans of Foreign Wars meeting in Des Moines.

"[But] he realized things had to change."

Some, including Robert S. Strauss, former Democratic Party leader, credit Elizabeth Dole with diluting some of Bob Dole's venom. But Koch says: "I simply don't believe that. . . . He came out of that campaign in '76 realizing people don't like him, and I think it probably was a stunning moment for him. . . . And he willed himself to be a different man."

He went to New York, to the Manhattan Life Insurance Co. building and then up to the 11th floor to a studio with red carpeting and vanilla walls. There he paid Dorothy Sarnoff, an image consultant, $1,500 to help him change what people thought of him. Sarnoff says she has done the same for politicians ranging from Sen. Ernest F. Hollings (D-S.C.), who ran for President in 1984, to ex-Secretary of State Alexander M. Haig Jr., a presidential candidate this year.

She videotaped him at her lectern, then had him watch himself on television.

"I let the camera suggest what an alternative behavior would be that would be more enhancing," she says. And Sarnoff had a few suggestions herself.

Bearing: Hold your rib cage high. "Get body tension for attention." Stand squarely and stop leaning on the lectern with his right arm. It only called attention to it. "He told me a TV director had told him if he leaned on that arm, he would hide it." And sincerity. "For instant trust."

Clothes: Blue suits, sometimes dark gray. Ties "with some interest in them." The joke before the debate was that Bob Dole had to go out and buy himself a new tie, because he had only one.

Finally, Sarnoff says, they discussed the psychology of the kind of things that he said during the campaign. Attacking and being caustic, she told him, "always costs the person who uses it—never the person it is aimed at."

Before he left, Sarnoff says, "he said to me, 'Could I send my wife up so that she will know what you have taught me and can reinforce what I've learned?'"

And about a month later, Sarnoff says, Elizabeth Dole got some image training too.

However, a complete change was difficult, if not impossible. Conventional wisdom had it that there had been an "old Bob Dole"—and now there was a "new Bob Dole." And the "new Bob Dole" had rid himself of all the meanness of the "old Bob Dole."

But sometimes the new Dole acted a lot like the old one.

For instance, a compendium of his humor put together by political reporters Jack Germond and Jules Witcover, includes these offerings—all dated after Dole's remarriage and his visit to Dorothy Sarnoff:

—Sen. Howard Baker, his predecessor as majority leader, procrastinated so much that if he "had been working on the Declaration of Independence, we'd still be speaking with British accents."

—President Carter had such a penchant for gaffes that "when the last Pope was elected, he sent him a telegram that read, 'Congratulations. Please give my best to the missus.'"

—Carter, Ford and Nixon were "see no evil, hear no evil and—evil."

All in fun? But other things certainly were not. And they seemed to certify that there was not much difference between the old Bob Dole and the new.

In 1960, the old Bob Dole had run his first congressional race against Keith Sebelius, the Kansas state senator, which Bill Taggart calls "rugged." It was reported to have included whispers—firmly denied—that Sebelius had a drinking problem. Dole flatly denies that any such whispers came from him. In 1974, the old Bob Dole ran a Senate campaign against a physician from Topeka named William Roy. He accused Roy of slinging mud—and, at the same time, prompted Catholic schoolchildren, Noel Koch says, to "ask [Roy] how many abortions he's performed." Dole denies that too.

And, in 1980, the new Bob Dole ended an unsuccessful campaign for the presidency with praise for campaign manager Tom Bell's services—and a simultaneous refusal to pay him. The matter went to litigation. Dole's attack included personal charges, all of which Bell denied, accusing him of pocketing campaign money and taking kickbacks.

And, as recently as the summer of 1986, while he was majority leader, Bob Dole engaged Byrd, the minority leader, in a Senate debate that climaxed with words that still get quoted when the dark side of Bob Dole comes up. Congressional Quarterly, never one to engage in hyperbole, calls the clash "extraordinary."

Dole implied that Byrd had tried to "sneak" a South Africa amendment onto a pending bill for defense spending.

Byrd, in turn, unleashed angry, pent-up complaints about Dole's basic fairness.

"I have had enough," he said, sharply, "of this business of having the majority leader stand here and act as a traffic cop on this floor. . . . He determines who will call up an amendment, when they will call up an amendment and what will be in the amendment. . . . There is a point beyond which deference is not required toward an office.

"And that point is reached, I think, when the distinguished majority leader will not let other senators have the floor. . . .

"That goes too far!"

A former Senate aide says Bob Dole's voice got icy. "I did not become majority leader," he said, "to lose."

Some find Dole's temperament fearful.

Many decline to be quoted by name, on grounds that he might seek vengeance.

Like Richard Nixon, says a former Senate aide, Bob Dole remembers his enemies. "He won't sic the IRS on them, but he will get them politically." Dole, says a former aide to a senator who opposed him, "will cut your jugular—but he won't let you die."

Rep. Rostenkowski, the Ways and Means chairman, puts it this way: "He'll break your arm, but he won't compound the fracture."

Some would say that is exactly what he did to William Roy in his 1974 Senate campaign.

"Well, that was a mean-spirited campaign on both sides," Dole says, in the midst of a primary campaign where many are waiting for the vitriol to flow again. "I was tough on Bill Roy and Bill Roy was tough on me. He went out there saying, 'Bob Dole voted for foreign aid and all this stuff.' And I had been chairman of the party and Watergate was out there. There were all kinds of innuendo from Democrats—'Bob Dole can't have it both ways. Either he knew about it or he didn't know.' It's about like Bush right now.

"You go through some of that as you mature in politics. It's *not* a bed of roses. These guys, the cynics or the critics who run in safe districts and never have to have an opponent, never have a tough race, they can always say, 'Well, this guy's too tough.'

"Well, I grew up; I got away from that stuff. In '88, *I* can set the tone. *I'm* running and nobody tells me what to say. I've learned a lot. I'm smarter. You can be pretty tough on the issues. You can talk about records and resumes, and that's fair. I know the other side doesn't like it, but I'm trying to get elected."

Staff writers Leo C. Wolinsky and Paul Houston and researchers Nina Green and Doug Conner contributed to this story.