

Students Give Views on Russell Problems

—Fourth Graders Write Letters to Sen. Bob Dole

"If you had your own way, what would you ask Sen. Bob Dole to do for Russell?" The question became a classroom exercise for Bickerdyke fourth grade students of Mrs. LaRue Covalt last month.

Each student was asked to draw a picture showing Russell, past and future, and to write a letter to Senator Dole suggesting what Russell really needs and what he should do for Russell if he could.

The class project arose in classroom discussions of Russell's economy, where energy and agriculture place a double whammy. The number of empty buildings, the number of students leaving classrooms and Russell as parents move to other communities hasn't escaped notice of the fourth graders.

Modern parents may play down the impact of the depressed economy on the youngsters. Some may even hope it will go away, leaving the generation unscarred. But grandparents who were fourth graders in the 1930s still remember the dreary days, endless meals with beans and chicken, hand-me-down clothing and 10-cent movies a Saturday afternoon treat if there was a dime to be spared.

Random Selections

The three letters were selected at random.

Clara Pape wrote:

"I would like to have people move into Russell so I can make more friends.

"We have little places where you can go to eat, like the Mecca Mall Sandwich Shop. My Mom

owns this shop and she would be happy if more people ate there. We have nice homes, nice people, good churches, pretty parks and good streets in our town.

"If you can help us get new industries to come to Russell, I would thank you. People need jobs. — Your friend, Clara Pape."

Scott Mai wrote: "Dear Senator Dole, My dad is Randy Mai, Russell City mayor. I do not want him to lose his job. I want Russell to pull together to get new industries. My Dad would have a happy face and so would I.

"People are moving out of Russell everyday. We have over 200 houses vacant.

"We have a free public swimming pool, baseball and softball fields, lighted tennis courts, horse-shoes, a golf course, miniature golf and lakes for recreational enjoyment. Please do what you can to help us. — Thanks, Scott Mai.

The third letter came a little closer to home for the senator.

"Dear Senator Dole, I am Dustin Poche, your nephew, a fourth grader in Mrs. Covalt's class.

"I think Russell needs more recognition. People need jobs here so they quit moving away. Oil prices are down and we are having a drought. People are getting laid off, stores are closing and families are fighting because there is no money. I love Russell. My mom, grandparents and you were

raised here and I want to be, too. Please help us get a prison and new industry soon. Help us save yours and my hometown. — Love, Dustin Poche."

No Mincing Around Other letters were as direct.

Tasha Keathley said Russell has lots of things but "if our town is not saved soon, with new industry to bring new jobs, it will become a ghost town."

Nick Seib feels a prison would be a boon to Russell. "We need new places for people to work," he wrote, "so the people will quit moving out of Russell."

Karissa Lynch went for the kill: "If industries would move to Russell, the city would expand in population. The businessmen would prosper. Our stores would carry more products and people from out of town would come to Russell to shop and spend their money."

Christina Shumaker notes "People used to come to Russell because there were lots of jobs. Now, people are leaving because the oil industry has gotten bad and there are no jobs." She added "We do not want to become a ghost town so please help us!"

Melissa Lawrence wrote Senator Dole: "Russell has many advantages like nice empty houses, good schools, a hospital and nice parks."

Sara Honas notes that, with other attributes, Russell has nice people. "These nice people need jobs and more nice people, if Russell is going to stay being a town."

Joshua Braun writes, "I feel in order to improve Russell and keep it, we need more industry." He joins the others in looking for more jobs and more people — bringing more money.

Brian Gallart noticed "Russell also has lots of empty houses, people who need jobs, and vacant business buildings."

Tyson Hunter's closing paragraph reads, "We need factories and businesses; because, we do not have many jobs. Our population is dropping because people cannot find work. If we do not get new industries, people will continue to move to other places. I want to finish school in Russell and I would like to have more kids to play with."

Ayres Finds Clincher John Ayres found a clincher:

"Our schools would have more taxes to pay teachers and buy books."

Damian Morgenstern is afraid "They will close our schools if we do not get new jobs. If people move away, we lose good friends and that makes me sad."

Jake Dumler writes his mother works for Edward D. Jones.

"They will move to another city if trade keeps getting less."

Andrea Resley asks for new industries stating "Russell is a nice clean town and a fun place to live."

Duane Dinkel, whose father works in the oilfields, writes that because of the drop in oil prices (Continued on Page 3)

Students —

(Continued From Page 1)

and people moving away, "Our taxes and city bills have gone up. We need a prison and other new businesses to help our economy."

Shauna Ehrlich says, "You can save Russell by putting the prison here."

Amber Zordel summed up the letters with: "The reason for this letter is to ask to help us get more

March 2, 1989—Page 3

industries to move here so people will not move away."

Past-to-Future Posters Many of the posters developed similar themes. Jessica Gage shows youngsters going camping this year but not in the future — as they ask their mother, "Why not?"

Several posters show Bickerdyke School closed in the future. One, Duane Dinkel, showed the 1889 heritage as did others, the discovery of oil in 1923, the present — and a future with space port and flying people-transporters — probably not in in Russell.

The loss of jobs, closing of stores and facilities dominated the art work. John Ayres' view of the future was a barren field with cactus here and there. Damian Morgenstern's view was that of moving vans headed for Hays. Joshua Braun shows the early days, arrival of oil crews, and the modern times with mother taking a job . . . a youngster coming home after school to an empty house, and finally, a moving van leaving town.

SATURDAY, MARCH 4, 1989

Dole for Asking Tower to Address Senate

—Wants Nominee to Face Critics Face to Face

By ELIOT BRENNER WASHINGTON (UPI) — Republican leader Robert Dole said he may ask the Senate to let Defense Secretary-designate John Tower come to the chamber to rebut an FBI report on his habits "charge by charge, rumor by rumor."

Dole, chaffing Friday at restrictions barring senators from making specific references to incidents, names, dates, places, allegations and rebuttals in the huge report, said Tower "is entitled to due process. How do we achieve it with all the limitations" on referring to the report.

Senate Democratic leader George Mitchell of Maine said he would "consider any request" by Dole and acknowledged that he also was "profoundly troubled" by the inability to use the FBI report.

But Mitchell, a former federal judge, said it should be understood that the FBI report can only be released by President Bush under an agreement between the White House and the Senate Armed Services Committee.

During Friday's debate, angry Republicans pleaded with Democrats to consider facts, not "fiction, rumor and innuendo" about Tower that threaten to bury his nomination.

"What are we doing to his man?" asked Sen. Trent Lott, R-Miss.

"What we've done to John Tower no man should endure," Lott said of the charges of heavy drinking, womanizing and con-

flict of interest that have marred Tower's unquestioned expertise in defense matters only a peripheral issue in the debate over whether he should have the job.

"Never in my life have I seen John Tower inebriated. I've never seen him when he wasn't in control of his faculties. I've never seen him less than an absolute Southern gentleman to women," said Sen. Ted Stevens, R-Alaska.

The White House continued its search for the five Democrats it

needs to team up with the 45 GOP members of the Senate, but had yet to turn up a single defector.

A United Press International survey showed 11 members undecided or keeping mum on their decision, and two Democrats — Dennis DeConcini of Arizona and Barbara Mikulski of Maryland — shifted from leaning against to flat opposition.

Dole's surprise suggestion, for which he said there was no known precedent, came after he ob-

tained a series of parliamentary opinions that made it clear the report's specific contents were off limits for floor debate.

There are, he said, "other ways to get at the truth, maybe in a closed session."

"My request would be that (Continued to Page 6)

(Continued From Page 1)

John Tower be allowed to come to this chamber, stand in this well and answer his critics face to face, charge by charge, rumor by rumor and fact by fact, and state his case to those senators who are truly undecided on both sides of the aisle, and maybe some who've made up their mind. . . . Some made-up minds might change either way," Dole said.

"If we owe Senator Tower anything, whatever may happen in the end, we owe him a right to say, 'I had my day in court,'" said Dole. "I would hope that whatever the final outcome may be we can all walk out of here with our heads with that we gave John Tower every opportunity to demonstrate he was qualified and we gave the president of the United States, who has the right to nominate, every opportunity."

"I don't want this debate to end with second thoughts. Did we treat this guy fairly?" Mitchell said he hoped to have a vote on Tower "early next week."

Sen. Arlen Specter, R-Pa., conceded it was a "steep uphill climb. People are dug in."

THURSDAY, MARCH 9, 1989 • USA TODAY

Dole fights hard for Bush's man

In Tower's defense

Excerpts from Sen. Bob Dole's last-ditch effort to win John Tower's nomination:

FAIRNESS OF CHARGES

"John Tower doesn't know today the extent of the charges, and even a common criminal is entitled to know the real nature of the charges against him."

FAIRNESS OF OPPONENTS

"I just heard a senator on the floor say (Tower) hasn't proved (himself) beyond a reasonable doubt. I didn't know we had a criminal trial going on here."

TOWER'S ALOOFNESS

"I was never close to John Tower; not many people were. That may be one of the problems."

TOWER AND OTHER SENATORS

"There are members of this body who have not seen John Tower except on television, never shaken his hand, never looked him in the eye, never heard him speak, never saw him in person."



ON SENATE FLOOR: Dole during debate on Wednesday. USA TODAY photo via C-SPAN

By Bob Minzesheimer USA TODAY

Sen. Bob Dole, who fought President Bush for the Republican nomination last year, is battling the bitter end on behalf of John Tower, Bush's choice for Defense secretary.

"We don't have the votes," Dole, the minority leader from Kansas, conceded to the Senate Wednesday night.

But Dole refused to give up in his first test as Bush's point man in the Senate.

Seeing the Senate wouldn't let Tower answer questions on the Senate floor, Dole asked for a six-month trial period for Tower to prove he can stop drinking — a suggestion likely to be rejected today.

Dole said he knew "the numbers in this body, 55-45" (Democrats to Republicans) and that only three Democrats will vote for Tower, but he pressed on.

"I've been around for a while in politics," he added. "I've seen people fall, I've seen people make mistakes. I've even seen people with drinking problems. . . . Most people, Republicans and Democrats alike, are willing to give anyone that chance."

A year ago, Dole's presiden-

tial bid struggled for a month after devastating Southern losses. On national TV, he snapped that Bush should "stop lying about my record."

Now Dole seems to be relishing the legislative battle, demanding, "Where's the fairness? Who's going to be next?"

Forty years ago Dole underwent six operations for his World War II wounds. Dole has said that experience — and a right arm that's virtually useless — shaped him as a person and politician.

Three years ago, before Republicans lost control of the Senate, Dole, in the midst of a tense debate, said, "I didn't become majority leader to lose."

As minority leader, he's had to, but not without a fight.