

ON POLITICS

BY GLORIA BORGER

Dole: Age before Newtie

Who is this Bob Dole? Republicans call him their first choice for the GOP nomination. Voters give him a 56 percent approval rating. He beats the president in most polls pitting the two against each other. More than 60 percent of all voters think he's doing a good job leading the Senate; only 35 percent think as highly of House Speaker Newt Gingrich. President Clinton publicly reaches out to Dole for a deal on health care. David Letterman invites him on the show for a few laughs. And while Newt Gingrich presides over Animal House, the 71-year-old Senate majority leader counsels restraint.

Restraint? From the man who once bitterly told George Bush to "stop lying about my record" on national television? From the scowling pit bull who used to growl about "Democrat wars"? Granted, Dole's outbursts seem timid compared with the recent shenanigans in the House. But that suits his presidential gambit just fine: If Gingrich's baby boomers fall on their faces or fail to outgrow the sandbox, the public will begin looking for some adult supervision. When Clinton won, "the big headlines were that the torch had been passed to a new generation," Dole explains in an interview. "I think it depends on how the new generation does, and right now the new generation could do better. There may still be one turn left for the World War II generation, one more opportunity."

The boomers-go-bust scenario is handy for a presidential candidate who is older than Ronald Reagan was when he first took office. So, too, is a budding plan to take the age issue head-on: Have Dole announce he will run for only one term and then choose a (younger) running mate (early). Explain that this means there will be no politics in the White House for the next four years, and argue that a lame duck with a veto pen is still powerful. In this era of congressional term limits (which Dole doesn't like, but will vote for), this scheme would make a virtue of age and enhance a veteran pol's appeal to voters who are sick of politics. Dole won't commit now, but he sounds as if he will do it: "There are two schools of thought: One, you just do it outright; the other, you have in your mind it was one term but you'd never say it."

Hot coals. Age aside, the one-term gamble would also get Dole something he needs: a new idea. "He could use it to say, 'I'm going to kick some serious butt' in an unexpected way," says pollster Bill McInturf, who has worked for Dole. In the grand old days, Dole would not have had

to worry about that. Republican presidential nominations were hierarchical and résumé based—handed to Vice President Richard Nixon, to twice-tested Gov. Ronald Reagan, to Vice President Bush. Under the old code, Dole, who lost the nomination to Bush in 1988, might be a shoo-in. But those rules were written when the GOP was a minority; in this era of Republican congressional rule and national domination, the top-down approach could become extinct. When Dole argues that "we've been there, we've been tested, we've been through the hot coals," it is no longer enough.

Dole would never say so publicly, but Gingrich is a godsend. When Newt (at age 51, just ahead of the baby boom) bounces off the wall, it makes Dole look the statesman. "Dole adds some normalcy to the uproar," says GOP pollster Frank Luntz. "He seems outright cool." Gingrich's Contract With America could also provide Dole with a popular record to run on as a successful majority leader. And while Gingrich's successive waves of ideas propel him into outer space daily, there is nothing third wave about Bob Dole. "I'm not an intellectual and I think Newt probably borders on that," he smiles, preferring to welcome the New Age in his own way. "We've been the rear guard action waiting for the reinforcements, and now here comes the cavalry. We've been waiting a long time."

But for what? Try as he might to rally the troops, Dole has always been more action plan than vision thing, more establishment than revolution. "Our theme is going to be reining in government, returning power to the states and the people," he says. Dole speaks of leadership, of compromise, of getting the job done. No one would deny that those are his strengths, but they are also his weaknesses in the context of a re-formed party suddenly trying to cope with its own success. Vision may not have been a key asset when running against Bush; it will matter in a race against Bill Clinton.

In many ways, Dole is candid about all of this. "I feel so much different about it this time. I'm not all tensed up. I'm not going to go out and take on Phil Gramm or Lamar Alexander or anybody else. I think I am sort of the consensus leader. And I think I've, frankly, earned it. I've done a lot of work over the years, been to a lot of places, carried a lot of water. Now maybe it'll pay off." In 1988, when George Bush made the same case for himself, he hit the jackpot. Today hardly anyone is ready to even place a bet.



Dole. A candidate for one term?

*'There may still be one turn left for the World War II generation.'*

Social Security not exempt from cuts

By The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — In an atmosphere of increasing partisanship, the Republican-controlled Senate refused Tuesday to carve out an exemption for Social Security from a balanced-budget amendment to the Constitution.



Dole

Democrats said the 57-41 vote opened the door to tapping the Social Security trust fund to reduce deficits, a step that could lead to benefit cuts. Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole replied that Republicans have no such intention.

"For the moment, everybody is willing to protect Social Security," Dole said.

The vote came amid deepening political stress in the Senate, where Republicans have tried to maintain the impression of bipartisanship on a measure that might need the votes of 15 Democratic senators to pass.

Within moments of the roll call on Social Security, Dole sought to curtail debate on the proposed amendment, with a vote on that effort set for Thursday.

Democratic leader Tom Daschle replied that he was "disappointed" at Dole's action, saying some senators had proposed changes that deserved a thorough airing.

Following a private caucus with fellow Democrats, Daschle of South Dakota issued a statement criticizing the Republican National Committee for a new series of television commercials designed to pressure him and other

wavering Democrats into supporting the balanced-budget amendment. "Last week, Republicans in Washington held a dinner that took in \$11 million — the most money ever raised at a political fund-raiser," the statement said. "Now we know why they need so much money: TV smear campaigns are expensive."

One targeted Democrat, Sen. Jeff Bingaman of New Mexico, said the ad campaign "will certainly not help persuade me to vote for it." But he also noted that some Democrats had lamented during the caucus that they didn't have the funds to mount a similar effort.

RNC chairman Haley Barbour said in announcing the commercials, "The votes are there to pass it unless politics and partisanship interfere with principle and good public policy."

Russell Looms Large for Dole's Announcement Plans

Russell Daily News 2-16-95

Russell definitely will play a major role in Bob Dole's presidential announcement on the Republican ticket, according to information learned today from Kathryn Coombs, acting press secretary of

the Bob Dole for President Exploratory Committee.

Coombs said that Dole announced in the Sunday, Feb. 12, issue of The Boston (Mass.) Globe that he will make his announcement on April 10. The date will tie in with the 40th anniversary of his injury on April 14, 1945, as a second lieutenant in the United States Army during action in the Po Valley of Italy against Nazi German forces.

Coombs said Russell will factor into the announcement, which will not be a one-day event. It will cover several days and the tour will take the Dole campaign group to several states.

Coombs said the Dole for President Exploratory Committee is still discussing different options on how to structure the nationwide tour.

Kansas, she said, will have a prominent and central role in the tour.

Members of the Dole committee are still discussing options and the logistics of how to make the tour run smoothly and where else Dole will visit.

Dole's appearance here will be sometime during the week of April 10-15 but it definitely will not be on Friday, April 14, since that is the date of Good Friday.

Dole to lighten up in latest White House bid

By RICHARD L. BERKE The New York Times

WASHINGTON — The majority leader of the U.S. Senate sat by a fire in his Capitol office on Friday afternoon, wondering if he could carve out time for an important engagement: to be guest host of "Saturday Night Live."

It was not a question of whether Bob Dole should do it, but whether he could afford four nights of rehearsals and posing for promotional spots with the comedian Dan Akroyd, whom he would want on the show.

"I like Akroyd," he said. "He plays me. I think he's great."

By his own reckoning, Dole, 71, would never have thought of doing such a program in his last three tries for national office. But if what politicians must do to get elected president has changed, so has Dole. Or so he says.

Dole's message, in essence, is this: Now is his time.

**"My own view is you can want something too much."**

— Sen. Bob Dole

While his is a record of squandered opportunities for the White House — he ran with President Gerald R. Ford in 1976, and then sought the Republican nomination in his own right in 1980 and 1988 — he is for the first time running at the head of the pack.

"I want to be perceived as somebody who has earned the right to do this," the Kansan said.

Still, with the Iowa caucuses, the first actual contest for delegates, tentatively set for one year from Sunday, doubts linger among lead-

ing Republicans: Can Dole keep his temper in check, even as he watches his longtime nemesis, Speaker Newt Gingrich, set the agenda on Capitol Hill?

Has Dole finally learned from the mistakes that doomed him before? Or do the qualities that often serve him well in the Senate — the compromising, the micro-managing, the acid wit — threaten what he called his last shot at the White House?

Has he learned from 1988, when his campaign was plagued by an unclear message, a series of misguided decisions, months of highly public feuding among his advisers and extravagant spending that left the campaign in debt?

"A lot of people are trying to teach him," said former Sen. Warren Rudman, R-N.H., and a longtime Dole confidante. "We'll see."

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Sen. Bob Dole says he was swamped with positive letters after his recent appearance on the David Letterman show.

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Dole aims to shed his brooding image

Already, Dole said, he has attended to some of the problems of the past. Most important, he said, is his changed attitude. He said he was not as obsessive or raging with ambition.

He contends that if people get a chance to see his lighter side on programs like "Saturday Night Live" — "as long as it's not off-color" — that might wipe out the brooding image of him telling

George Bush on national television in 1988 to "stop lying about my record."

He said he was swamped with positive letters after his recent appearance on David Letterman's show.

"I'm trying to approach it differently," Dole said. "My own view is you can want something too much, you can be too ambitious or too focused or too self-centered."

He has begun putting a seasoned staff in place, led by Scott Reed, a former executive director of the Republican National Com-

mittee, who he said would "call the shots."

He is "insisting we have a green eye-shade person" to watch the money. He has been meeting with governors as part of a plan to line up early endorsements. And he said he was eager to jump into the process with a dozen town meetings scheduled for this weekend in New Hampshire.

But some Republican strategists point to potential trouble, including signs that Dole is not completely comfortable with Gingrich's pre-eminence.

The senator said publicly that

he did not approve of Gingrich's initial plan to take a \$4.5 million advance on a book deal, and some of Dole's opponents say it will be only a matter of time before tensions between the two men surface — and endanger Dole's efforts to be the reasoned leader.

Dole suggested that letting the speaker have center stage only made him appear mellow.

"I was sort of the lightning rod; I finally got a little relief this year," he said. "I've been on the bench since January. Everywhere, people go, 'This is the nice Bob Dole, the voice of reason.'"

der was shattered by German fire. But Dole, who noted that the actual anniversary falls on Good Friday this year, decided to make the official announcement in Topeka during the same week and then visit Des Moines, Iowa; Concord, N.H.; New York; and his hometown of Russell.

"The first day's going to be reining in government, returning power

to the states," said Dole. "It's a good idea to go to state capitals to make that point."

Dole launched his 1980 and 1988 presidential campaigns, as well as his 1976 bid for vice president on a ticket with President Ford, from

Russell. But Mayor Neal Farmer said he didn't think the people there would feel slighted this time.

"If he feels like he needs to start his presidential campaign in Topeka, that's not going to be a slap in anyone's face here," Farmer said.

Dole to announce bid for presidency in Topeka

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Breaking from personal tradition, Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole plans to announce formally his third bid for the presidency April 10 in Topeka, campaign officials said Friday.

The date is a few days before the 50th anniversary of the Kansas Republican's wounding in Italy during World War II, when his right shoul-

Dole's pick ties up base-closing process

White House mum on Stone's delay

By The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A dispute between the White House and Sen. Bob Dole over his pick for the military base-closing commission could disrupt the delicate process for shutting down unneeded installations, a fellow senator says.



Dole

Michael P.W. Stone, a former secretary of the Army, was one of two nominees whom Dole, R-Kan., recommended to President Clinton for appointment to the eight-

member panel. "There's a danger of politicizing the process," Arizona Sen. John McCain, a senior Republican on the Senate Armed Services Committee, said Wednesday. "There's a breakdown in communications here."

Dole, the Senate majority leader, is threatening to delay Senate approval of the nominees until the White House explains why it held up Stone's appointment, said Dole spokeswoman Joyce Campbell.

Congress set up the Base Closure and Realignment Commission in the late 1980s to provide an independent, bipartisan method of deciding which bases to close.

The commission is to get recommendations from the Pentagon by March 1 and then draw up a list of closings.

The White House did not return telephone calls Wednesday.