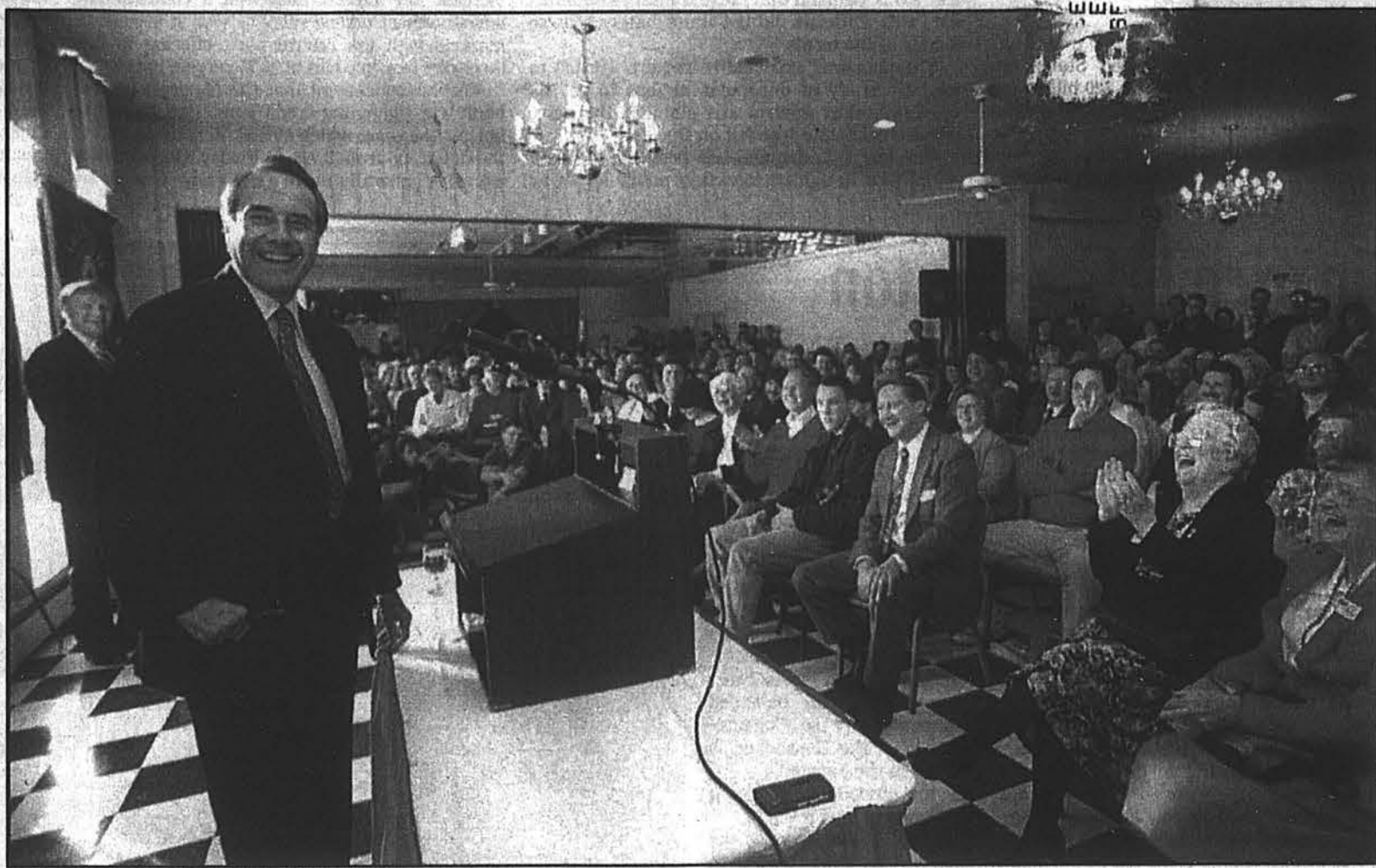


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U.S. Sen. Bob Dole, R-Kan., smiles as he receives applause from a crowd during a town meeting Sunday in Dover, N.H.

## Dole cautious despite front-runner status

But this race a 'much better feel' than in 1988, he says

### The race for 1996

By JOHN KING  
Associated Press

MANCHESTER, N.H. — Bob Dole has been ahead in the New Hampshire opinion polls before, only to see his presidential dreams shattered by the likes of Victoria Zachos and David Carney.

So don't blame Dole for not taking much stock in early polls, except to joke he wishes New Hampshire's primary were today instead of a year from now. Or for making sure Zachos and Carney are on his side this time around.

The Senate majority leader and putative front-runner for the GOP presidential nomination made his campaign debut this weekend with a circuit of town hall meetings across New Hampshire, including four on Monday. Along the way, he served notice that he would not be outworked here in 1996, as he was in 1988 by then-Vice President George Bush.

And he said he planned to refrain, at least for now, from getting drawn into a daily war of words with Texas Sen. Phil Gramm or other rivals, preferring instead the kinder, gentler demeanor of a confident front-runner.

Dole's cushion — three weekend polls showed him with a 30-percentage point lead here — is unlikely to be so comfortable after his rivals have had more time to introduce themselves and the campaign becomes serious. But as Dole launched his third White House bid he said it had a "much better feel" than the last one.

"It certainly is easier to bring people into the organization now," the Kansas senator said.

Throughout his Senate career, Dole has earned reputation as a loyal soldier to Republican presidents and a shrewd legislative tactician. But, as

was the case in 1988, critics and even some supporters question whether he has what Bush used to call "the vision thing," a compelling message that captures the imagination of voters.

But Dole is hoping that when comparisons are made with President Clinton, or his less experienced GOP rivals, he will win voter loyalty for a simpler reason.

"I want to be your president for the right reason — because I can provide the leadership America needs now and into the next century," Dole said at a New Hampshire GOP dinner Sunday night. He is also banking on the loyalty of GOP primary voters, including many who opposed him in years past.

"I've been tested," Dole said in the interview. "I've provided leadership. I am not a lone ranger. I am in every battle for this party and have been a consistent leader."

So far, it's an appeal that is winning Dole important early converts.

Carney, for example, helped orchestrate Bush's 1988 win here but is now a senior Dole adviser and urging fellow Bush loyalists like Zachos to join him.

"He has been there for us back to Nixon," Zachos said of Dole. "I really think he has earned it."

Dole's three-day foray here was designed to "freeze that early support that is out there and get these folks involved and invested in the effort," said William Lacy, Dole deputy campaign chairman.

It was on the night of his 1988 New Hampshire loss that Dole told a TV interviewer he had this caustic message for Bush: "Tell him to stop lying about my record." Bush went on to crush Dole in the Southern primaries.

This time, Dole says he will choose his words more carefully. Still, it appears inevitable that he and Gramm are headed for a few confrontations.

Gramm is fond, for example, of noting that he opposed the 1990 budget deal and its tax increases, a package Dole supported after helping the Bush administration negotiate it with congressional Democrats. Gramm was part of the budget negotiating team, but voted against the final product.

"He insisted that he be invited and helped make the decisions up to the end, and then he jumped overboard," Dole said of Gramm in the interview. "Maybe that is the way to get ahead."

In the short term, Dole's biggest challenge is to keep the GOP agenda moving through Congress. As majority leader, he knows a good deal of the blame will fall on him if major items fail — one reason he is counting carefully before pushing for a Senate vote on the balanced budget amendment to the Constitution.

And he warns his audiences not to expect the Senate to move as quickly as the House, because of rules allowing unlimited amendments and debate.

"It's like watching grass grow or paint dry in the United States Senate," Dole says.

At 71, Dole also confronts inevitable questions about his age. When the subject came up at his first town hall meeting, Dole cracked a few jokes but then urged anyone with doubts to follow him around for a day.

After his 1988 loss, Dole said he thought he would never get another chance. But now he says he concluded, "Maybe there was still one more mission, one more call to serve America, maybe just one more effort in this generation."

One thing about Dole hasn't changed: He has a joke or three for every audience.

Looking back on the 1994 elections, Dole told a Keene audience, "They say it was such a landslide even the dead people in Chicago were voting Republican."

And he said he wanted to bring along his wife, American Red Cross President Elizabeth Dole, to campaign with him, "but if she saw a crowd like this she'd want to hold a blood drive."



**LEARNING ABOUT DOLE** — Karen Alexander, Washington, D.C., journalist, is learning about Bob Dole as she inspects an edition featuring Dole which was published by The Russell Daily News and The Russell Record at the time of his second presidential announcement in 1987. Alexander is a reporter for Bob Woodward, co-author of "The President's

Men." The book, published in the early 1970s, exposed President Richard M. Nixon's involvement in Watergate. Alexander spent Thursday in Russell interviewing Dole's sisters and friends, gaining information for a book that Woodward will publish in 1996 about all the presidential candidates in that year's national election. (Staff Photo)

## Woodward Assistant Latest Dole Researcher to Visit Russell News

Journalists have been coming to Russell for almost a year now searching for information about the life and times of Bob Dole and the Dole family in Russell, and trying to ascertain what people of this community think of the majority leader of the Senate and the Republican candidate for the presidency.

Some of the media people have

been wanting information for a book, and others have been calling The Russell Daily News for Dole information and pictures that can be used in publications or on television shows.

Recently The News sent pictures to the David Letterman Show. Most of them were not used, however, because Letterman spent so much time interviewing Dole that he did not have time for the pictures. So they were returned to the newspaper.

The most recent journalist to visit here was a young woman by the name of Karen Alexander, from Washington, D.C. She is a reporter for Bob Woodward, a Washington writer of fame, who plans to write a book about the 1996 presidential candidates.

Woodward was co-author with Carl Bernstein in the early 1970s of the book titled "All the President's Men," which exposed Richard M. Nixon's activities in Watergate. His denial of any connection with the affair cost him the presidency during his second term, after being re-elected by the biggest landslide margin in the nation's history.

During her time here, Alexander interviewed Bob Dole's sisters, Gloria Nelson and Norma Jean Steele, Russell T. Townsley and Allan D. Evans.

Alexander said she especially was interested in the challenges of all the candidates, both Republican

and Democrat, and wanted to know what hometown people thought of Dole.

She agreed that Dole appears to be the front runner in the Republican

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### Woodward Assistant —

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where she received a degree in English. For a year after her graduation, she was a reporter for The New Haven Register.

While attending Yale she was the editorial page editor of the university newspaper, The Yale Daily News.

can race, and she does not think there will be any candidate on the Democratic ticket other than President Bill Clinton.

Alexander was reared in Los Angeles and has been Woodward's assistant since he started research for his book on Oct. 31, 1944.

At the age of 18 she entered Yale University at New Haven, Conn., Her folks own and manage a furniture business in Los Angeles.

Alexander flew from Washington to Topeka, then drove to Russell on Interstate 70. She thought the state of Kansas was "gorgeous." She drove to Hays Thursday night and caught a flight there this morning for her return trip to the nation's capital.

Visiting about Woodward, Alexander said today he is the assistant deputy managing editor of The Washington Post's investigative unit. His wife, Elsa, is a reporter for The Post. She will be coming out soon with her own book, a profile of three accomplished women.

Russell Daily News 2-23-95

## Bob Dole To Be Here April 14

The date that Bob Dole will come home to Russell to announce his candidacy for the office of president has been set for Friday, April 14, Kathryn Coombs, acting press secretary of the Bob Dole for President Exploratory Committee, announced today.

Dole will highlight his World War II record during his visit here with family members, veterans, and friends.

The majority leader of the Senate will make his official announcement of his candidacy in Topeka on Monday, April 10. The event will be the first of a five-day nationwide tour that will end here.

Dole recently has been campaigning hard in the Northeast, especially in New Hampshire, and has filed fund-raising paperwork with the Federal Election Commission.

Time and location of Dole's visitation to Russell have not been established.

While fighting with the United States Army in the Po Valley of Italy in April, 1945, Dole was shelled on April 14 and suffered injuries that required years of rehabilitation and left his right hand and arm damaged.

At the present, Dole appears to be way out ahead of political rivals for the Republican nomination.

"Senator Dole is not the kind of politician who forgets his roots — he feels it is important to begin and end the campaign tour in Kansas," campaign manager Scott Reed said. "The tour will be an event-packed week, in which we will be highlighting the main themes of the campaign — rolling back the size and scope of government; restoring American values, and reasserting America's role in the world."

Beginning the campaign in a state capital will serve to emphasize one of these themes — returning power to the states and the people. On his recent New Hampshire campaign trip, Senator Dole called for "making government a whole lot smaller, a lot less arrogant, and getting out of matters best left to the states, cities and families across America."