

Dole dreamed of being a doctor before injury

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Dole planned to be a doctor, but that dream ended in 1945 in a clearing in Italy's Po Valley. As a result of German gunfire, Dole's right arm was shattered.

In a 1987 interview with the Salina Journal, his younger brother, the late Kenneth Dole of Russell, remembered visiting Dole in a hospital in Battle Creek, Mich., and being shocked by his appearance.

All four of Dole's limbs were paralyzed, and he had lost 70 pounds. Doctors feared he might not live. Dole would spend 39 months in hospitals before he was allowed to return to Russell.

It was as if the experience only added to the determination Dole already had to make something of himself.

"If I ever get out of here, I have to make up the lost years of my life," Kenneth remembered his brother saying.

"I tell you that guy has a lot of guts, a lot of moxie and a lot of self-discipline," Roderick said. "Bob could have gone back to Russell and with his disability spent the rest of his life in a rocking chair. I've often wondered what he would have become if he hadn't been wounded."

The real Bob Dole

Keith and Liz Duckers have known Dole since 1955, when Dole, as program chairman of the Russell Kiwanis Club, asked Keith Duckers to take a group of cadets to Russell. Liz Duckers still has the correspondence from Dole, who was Russell County attorney at the time.

The three have continued their friendship. The Salina couple were in Iowa with the senator when he won the 1988 Republican presidential caucuses. Their son Ed,

A week in the campaign

Sen. Robert Dole, R-Kan., will officially become a candidate for the Republican presidential nomination Monday.

His itinerary for the week follows:

Monday: Community prayer breakfast at 7:30 a.m. at Topeka's Downtown Ramada Inn. Dole's wife, Elizabeth, will speak at the breakfast.

Official declaration of candidacy at 9:30 a.m. on the steps of the state Capitol.

The Doles are scheduled to leave Topeka at 11 a.m. for a campaign visit to New Hampshire.

Tuesday-Thursday: Dole plans to make campaign stops in New York, Ohio, Iowa, Colorado, Texas, Florida, South Carolina and North Carolina. The candidate will return to his hometown of Russell Thursday.

Friday: A "welcome home" community pancake breakfast is planned at 10 a.m. at the Russell VFW building.

Saturday: Dole is scheduled to tape a "Meet the Press" show in Russell in the morning.

now an attorney in Washington, D.C., worked several years for Dole.

They say Bob Dole is the All-American boy chasing the All-American dream.

"I just think the real Bob Dole is going to come through in this campaign," Keith Duckers said.

KU's Collier thinks that has to happen for Dole to succeed.

The Bob Dole that Russell knows, the Bob Dole who Marie Boyd calls "the most honest, candid man I have ever known," a man whose deep emotions are matched only by his loyalty to friends, a man who extends a helping hand to society's more vulnerable is not the Bob Dole of "Saturday Night Live" — in late March actor-writer Dan Ackroyd revived his cutting impersonation of the senator — or the Bob Dole of the Sunday morning news shows.

"Dole's television presence isn't good. He seems to change," Collier said. "His voice

becomes low and grumbly, and his face becomes darker. People have trouble warming up to Bob Dole. If he can find some way to show them the private Bob Dole, he'd be better off."

Washington insider

Collier thinks Dole's more than three decades in Washington could also be a problem with an electorate distrustful of capital insiders.

Some have compared Dole to Robert Taft, a powerful member of Congress who was defeated for the Republican nomination for president in 1952 by the man from Abilene, Dwight D. Eisenhower. Taft was considered "Mr. Republican" at the time.

"I think being a Washington insider will be a very big challenge for Dole's campaign," Collier said. "Sitting members of Congress have not been elected president very often. It's the exception rather than

the rule."

William Avery, a former Kansas governor who was defeated by Dole in the 1968 primary for Senate, said he is less troubled by the Taft comparison than he was several months ago.

"The circumstances are not the same. There is not a Dwight Eisenhower off-stage, although there is a Colin Powell. But he hasn't shown any colors, and there's no indication he's going to get involved personally or in anybody else's campaign," Avery said.

Roderick thinks Dole's time has come. He and another Salina physician and Dole friend, Marvin Gunn, said America needs moral leadership and Dole certainly can provide that.

"There has never been a scandal associated with Bob Dole, and we have very few politicians these days who can make that cut," Gunn said.

As for Duckers, he remembers a day many years ago when Concordia's Frank Carlson was a respected member of the U.S. Senate and Bob Dole was a freshman congressman. Carlson whispered to Duckers about Dole, "Keep your eye on that young man. He's going places."

"Bob Dole has been on the team for a long time, and now he wants to be captain of it," Duckers said.

Friends say he will be a good one, perhaps even a great one — a man who knows the problems of America and will work to correct them.

"He has been tested more than any other candidate who has announced so far, and he has survived those tests in a responsible way," Avery said. "I don't know of anyone who has had to deal with more public issues — national and international — than Bob."

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ments over the past 15 years, bends toward that current now — sharpening his opposition to affirmative action, hiring campaign organizers from the Christian Coalition and promising the National Rifle Association that he will attempt to repeal the ban on assault weapons that Congress narrowly approved last year.

Those gestures to conservatives ultimately could endanger Dole's standing with the centrist voters who will decide the general election. At the same time, even these signals may not be sufficient to suppress lingering suspicion of Dole on the right during the primaries.

Dole heads toward the formal announcement of his candidacy Monday in Topeka as the man on the tightrope. He stands far above everyone else, but must walk an exceedingly narrow line.

Dole's lofty standing in the polls, support from a wide array of leading party officials and virtually unlimited capacity to raise money all give him reason for optimism. But looming over his candidacy is a question as heavy as the dust clouds of his Kansas youth: Even with Dole's determined effort to tack right, will a party hungry for revolution accept as its nominee a veteran of more than three decades in Washington, a man whose political career has been defined by compromise, conciliation and the search for 51 votes?

After Clinton became the first baby-boomer elected to the White House in 1992, one of Dole's closest advisers told him that his time may have passed. But now in Dole's camp there is a sense that the nation may be exhausted with brilliant and mercurial baby-boomers (a category in which they privately include not only Clinton, but also Gingrich) and ready to turn back one last time to the stolid, steady generation that surmounted the Depression, defeated Hitler and manned the watch during the Cold War.

In a parliamentary system, Dole would be an obvious choice for prime minister. No one knows better the terrain between the introduction and passage of legislation.

But in his two previous campaigns for president, he has often appeared to be a man without a map. In 1980, after serving as the party's 1976 vice presidential nominee, Dole finished last in Iowa and attracted only a humiliating 607 votes in New Hampshire. In 1988, he won the Iowa caucus, but again crashed in New Hampshire, losing to Vice President Bush, who went on to win the nomination easily. The defining characteristics of Dole's 1988 campaign were almost all negative: disorganization, infighting, indecision and the absence of a compelling message.

Message remains a particularly



Sen. Bob Dole, R-Kan., far left without helmet, poses with his platoon during World War II. Dole is timing his official entry into the 1996 presidential race to the week of the 50th anniversary of his wounding. On April 14, 1945, his right shoulder was shattered by German machine-gun fire as he tried to lead his men across a field in Italy.

Sen. Bob Dole's words often sound statesmanlike next to voices such as Texas Sen. Phil Gramm's, Dole's leading rival for the nomination. And in a city polarized between the competing visions of President Clinton and House Speaker Newt Gingrich, Dole often seems like the adult supervision.

spot for Dole. Like Bush, Dole throughout his career has struggled with the vision thing. Dole has always put more stock in tangible things — commitments, vote counts, the sharp snap of a deal settling into place. Even now his speeches often sound as if he's reading the list of pending bills on the Senate calendar.

That rhetorical style reflects the habits of mind of a man who has spent his entire life as a legislator, one who is more comfortable solving problems, reacting to events, than charting a course. Dole doesn't

pretend he can see beyond the horizon, and he has always appeared suspicious of those who believe they can.

To win the presidency first Dole must receive his commission from the party. And despite his strong position in the polls, that may prove complicated.

The last presidential hopeful to amass so commanding an early advantage was Walter Mondale in 1984. But Mondale nearly lost the Democratic nomination that year despite his lead because then-Sen. Gary Hart of Colorado persuasively made the case that the former vice president represented the party's past, not its future. Many Republicans believe Dole could face the same threat.

At Republican gatherings around the country, it's common to hear the complaint that Dole is too much the legislator — too willing to make a deal with Democrats rather than press for total obliteration of the left, the banner under which Gramm and Gingrich march.

Ideology explains part of the friction between Dole and the party's most ardent conservatives, but it is not the core of the dispute. It is difficult to label Bob Dole as anything but conservative. His overall voting record on economic, social and foreign policy issues, as measured by the National Journal, have been only slightly less conservative than Gramm's since 1985, the beginning of Gramm's Senate career.

The issue is more the relative

weight of ideology in Dole's approach to the world. To a greater extent than Gramm or Gingrich, Dole is willing to subordinate ideology to the demands of governing — moving the machine forward, reaching accommodations.

That flexibility wins Dole applause even from some Democrats. "Of course I'll be supporting Clinton," says Sen. Joseph Lieberman, D-Conn., who has worked with Dole on policy toward Bosnia. "But I do think Dole has extraordinary experience on the full range of issues, domestic and international. ... Raw material, does he have the capacity to be a good president? I think the answer is yes."

But that same approach is the problem for some on the right. "He's got two problems," says David Mason, director of the Congress project at the conservative Heritage Foundation. "One specific and one more general. The specific one is taxes. He has always been perceived as being weaker on taxes than your typical Republican activist would prefer. The more general problem has always been this more tactical orientation to politics, the belief that politics is the art of the possible and his job is to draw the best possible deal. And that can lead to the criticism that he's too willing to compromise."

The suspicion that Dole lacks sufficient commitment to the Republican counter-revolution is partly a matter of age and style. Once Dole himself was an impatient Young

Turk. Elected to the House of Representatives in 1960, he opposed much of Lyndon Johnson's Great Society (although he did vote for the Civil Rights and Voting Rights Acts of 1964 and 1965) and supported an insurrection against House leaders by then-Rep. Gerald Ford, R-Mich., who promised a more partisan, sharply-edged opposition.

Arriving in the Senate in 1969, Dole expressed the same frustrated impatience he now hears from some of the Republican freshmen who have parachuted into the upper chamber from the House this year. Disappointed by the reluctance of Republican Senate leaders to defend President Nixon from incessant Democratic attacks, Dole quickly became an aggressive presence on the Senate floor, sparring with Democrats and castigating reporters for alleged bias in their coverage of the Vietnam War.

As a reward for his pugnacious loyalty, Nixon named the junior senator chairman of the Republican National Committee. When Ford needed a replacement for Nelson Rockefeller as his running-mate in 1976 — someone who would fire low and hard at Jimmy Carter while Ford remained presidentially above the fray — he turned to the sharp-tongued Kansan. If anything, Dole accepted that mission with an excess of gusto: In his vice presidential debate with Mondale, Dole declared World War I and World War II, Korea and Vietnam all "Democrat wars" — a formulation that cemented the reputation as a political "hatchet man" that stubbornly stuck to him for years.

Even then, however, there were other sides to Dole. As RNC chairman, Dole regularly rebuffed demands from the White House for attacks on Democrats that he considered beyond the line of propriety. And through the mid-1970s, he worked closely with Democratic Sen. George McGovern — who, as the party's presidential nominee in 1972, had been the principal target of Dole's acid invective — to expand enormously the web of federal programs, from food stamps to school breakfasts, aimed at reducing hunger. Dole seemed genuinely concerned about hunger, although it is also true that the programs benefited his farmer constituents.

As he ascended into leadership positions in the 1980s, Dole never lost his partisan edge; but his rhetoric softened, frequently leavened by his insistent, subversive wit, and he began to bury his image as a pit bull by proving himself a skilled legislative tactician.

Installed as majority leader in 1985, Dole won Senate approval, on a dramatic 50-49 vote, for a bold package of spending cuts that abolished 13 federal programs, eliminated Social Security cost-of-living increases for one year and froze defense spending. The package died when House Republicans persuaded

President Reagan to repudiate it — a defeat that still rankles Dole.

Since Bush's defeat, Dole has emerged as the leading Republican voice on foreign policy, promoting a neo-Nixonian vision of hard-headed self-interest as the basis of America's engagement with the world and sharply criticizing Clinton for relying too much on the United Nations.

When Clinton took office, many conservatives feared — and some in the White House hoped — that Dole might be willing to meet the new president in the center. Instead, Dole quickly carved out a position of intense partisan resistance, beginning with the successful filibuster early in 1993 that killed Clinton's economic stimulus plan. Ignoring Democratic efforts to paint him as an obstructionist, Dole led an ever-hardening GOP opposition that doomed some of Clinton's major initiatives in 1994, from lobbying reform to health care.

Having blunted Clinton's advance, Dole now must convince Republicans he can lead their own. In his speeches, Dole presents as his lodestar the proposition that the federal government should radically devolve power to states, cities and individuals. He's pushing legislation strongly favored by business groups (and denounced by environmentalists and consumer organizations) to roll back federal regulation.

On social issues, too, Dole is squeezing the space to his right — on the assault-gun ban and on affirmative action. In mid-March he introduced a bill that would end federally run affirmative action programs for minorities or women in hiring, contracting or other decisions. But Dole still faces doubts from some conservatives about the depth of his ardor.

And consider welfare reform. Having seen poverty firsthand in Russell (as county attorney he signed welfare checks for his grandfather), Dole has always been more equivocal than many conservatives about retrenching federal programs for the poor.

Taxes are another issue where Dole will struggle. During the 1980s, he feuded with young House conservatives over his repeated support for tax increases as part of overall deficit reduction.

Dole's 1988 campaign foundered in New Hampshire largely because he refused to sign a pledge not to raise taxes as president. Under Clinton, however, Dole from the start ruled out tax increases in any deficit reduction package.

Dole is moving forcefully to prove himself compatible with a vision of the Republican future stamped primarily by the young conservatives that he often scorned during the 1980s. He now stands closer than at any point in his career to the presidency, the one prize that has eluded him. But for this proud and private man, there may be no path to victory without an element of surrender.

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Dole walks a political tightrope

Being party's 'voice of reason' creates power and problems

By Ronald Brownstein

Los Angeles Times/Washington Post Service

WASHINGTON — At 71, Bob Dole is suddenly enjoying a second spring.

More popular than ever in public opinion surveys, he leads his competitors for the 1996 Republican presidential nomination by giddy margins of 3-to-1 or more and regularly tops President Clinton in tests of the general election.

Once derided as a political hatchet man for his caustic attacks, Dole's words often sound statesmanlike now next to militant voices such as Texas Sen. Phil Gramm, Dole's leading rival for the nomination.

And in a city polarized between the competing visions of Clinton and House Speaker Newt Gingrich, R-Ga. — two men stamped indelibly by the 1980s — Dole often seems

like the adult supervision: a stolid survivor of the World War II generation who offers stability, balance, maturity. "Isn't it amazing how I've become the voice of reason in the Republican Party?" he marveled earlier this year, when he dropped in for a courtesy call at a meeting of Senate Democrats.

That status is the foundation of Dole's strength in the polls. It is also his potential Achilles' heel.

After last fall's historic victory, much of the GOP's activist core — the partisans who largely will determine the choice of next year's nominee — are looking for a leader who will be unreasonable, in the sense that he rejects accepted wisdom about the scope of "reasonable" retrenchment of the federal government.

Dole, who sparred regularly with the party's most conservative ele



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