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Native Son Rises

Dole's speech

Associated Press

TOPEKA — The text of Sen. Bob Dole's speech declaring his presidential candidacy:

It's great to be in Kansas. It's great to be in Kansas. Of course, I'm not the first Kansan to say there's no place like home. But for me the words have a very special meaning. Wherever I have traveled in this life, I've never forgotten where I came from or where I go home to, and that's very important. Whatever lessons I've applied in public life were first learned here as a member of the Kansas House of Representatives, and I'm very proud of that, too.

These days I spend much of my time in another capital. You see many things from atop the Hill in Washington where I work, but you can see America from here. You can see America from here. Common sense and uncommon sensitivity, that's the Kansas way. It's what made Dwight Eisenhower a great general and a great president, and it's what prompted Alf Landon, with his unique wisdom, to say, "There are some intelligent people in Washington, but there are a lot more of them in Kansas." I hasten to add the same applies to the other 49 states, particularly Iowa and New Hampshire.

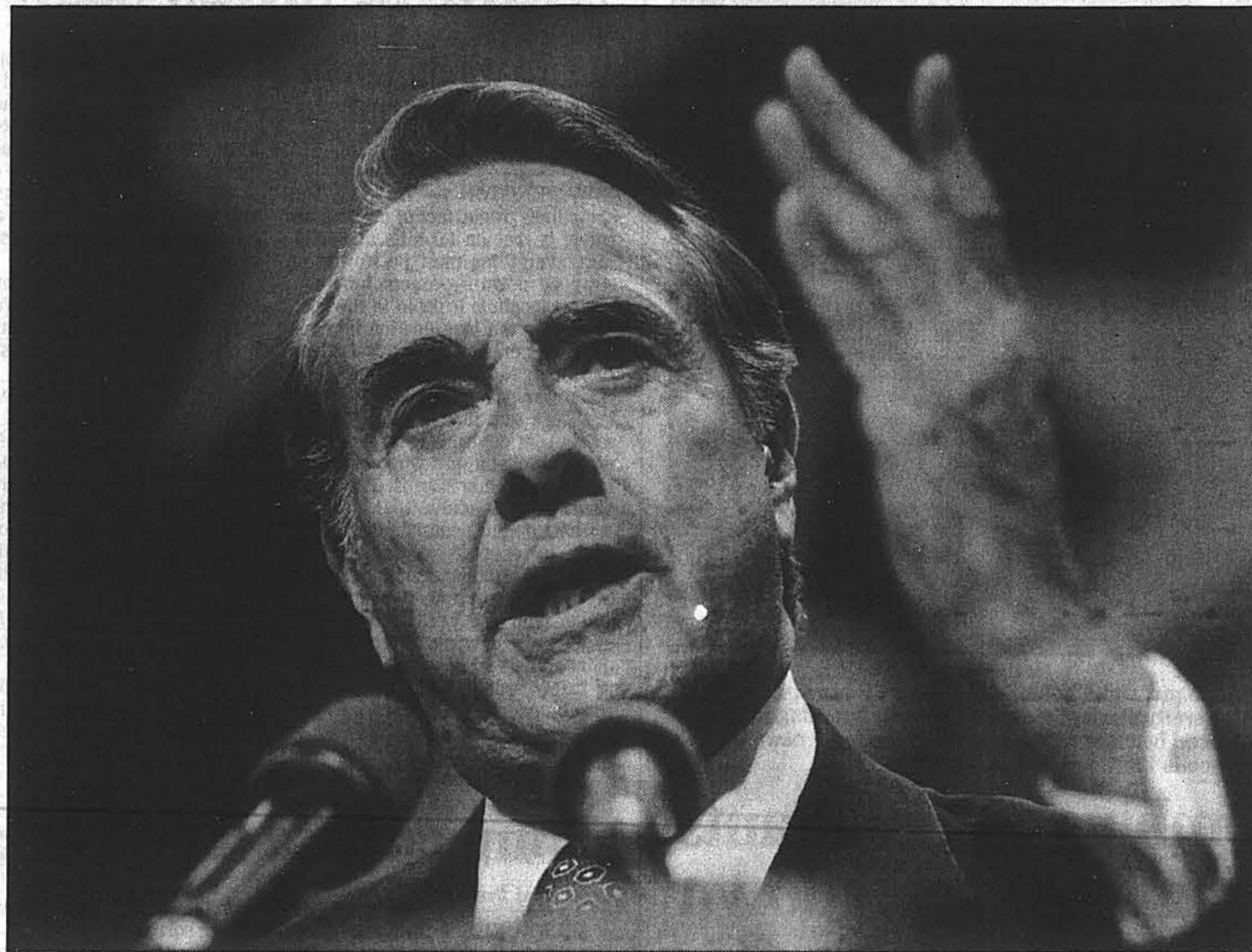
But then Kansas never had to look to Washington, D.C., for a sense of compassion or community. As a young man in a small town, my parents taught me to put trust in God, not government, and never confuse the two.

Something else I learned the hard way: that while self-reliance is an essential part of the American character, so is the spirit of community that reaches out to those wounded in body or soul. When I went off to war, it was to defend a community of values unique in all the world. I came back sustained by the love and generosity of friends and neighbors who renewed my sense of life's possibilities. And over these years, they have given me the opportunity for service which I can never hope to repay.

And because they restored my spirit in a time of trial, I have dedicated myself to restoring the spirit of America. And so today, tempered by adversity, seasoned by experience, mindful of the world as it is yet confident it can be made better, I have come home to Kansas with a grateful heart to declare that I am a candidate for the presidency of the United States.

The view many Americans see is a sobering one. We are troubled about the direction our country is taking. Our values are under constant assault from our public and cultural institutions. We feel threatened by the random incidents of violent crime. Too many of our schools, which were once passports to opportunity, have become demoralizing places. Welfare has become a misery subsidy, fostering illegitimacy and generations of dependency. And yet the deficit keeps growing, taxes keep increasing, and the government keeps demanding more and more authority over our lives.

Now none of this should come as a surprise. For much of this century, power and wealth alike have flowed from grass-roots Americans to a federal government which exploded to meet the twin crises of economic depression and global war. Yet the life jacket of one generation can become the straitjacket of the next, and in giving Washington our responsibility to address problems close to their source,



Mike Hutmacher/The Wichita Eagle

Americans have unwittingly encouraged the federal government to become too large, too remote, and too undemocratic to be representative.

However, another America's waiting, an America with a strong heart, strong again in heart and sure of mind, and I would like to lead us there. Our problems are not too difficult to handle. They're not too difficult to handle. It's just that our leaders have grown too isolated from places like Topeka, embarrassed by the values here. They seem to have lost the idea that we are and must remain one nation under God.

We are bound by our heritage to a set of common values: hard work, integrity, responsibility. These values have always been the source of our strength and the glue that holds us together. Our country must again have leaders who believe in our people and are proud of our values. We need leaders who will summon from each of us the best of our character, who will call us as a nation to our full potential. I want to be president so I can do this for America.

My mandate as president would be to rein in the federal government in order to set free the spirit of the American people; to reconnect our government in Washington with the common sense values of our citizens and to reassert American interests wherever and whenever they are challenged around the world.

My guide in this would be the final piece of the Bill of Rights — the Tenth Amendment. It reads, "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states... or to the people."

When those words were written by our founding fathers more than 200 years ago, they were an affirmation of a radical new theory of politics — a theory based on the need to limit the powers of the central government in order to unleash the unlimited potential of the people. The federal government should do only those things specifically called for in the Con-

stitution. All others should remain with the states of the people. That's what it's all about. It is a philosophy of freedom conceived in liberty, tested by history, yet too often ignored in Washington. I intend to restore it.

In the last election, the American people sent an unmistakable message to Washington. With rare clarity, they reaffirmed their faith in themselves and a healthy amount of skepticism about government.

If we are truly to rein in government, we must have a president who is more than a clever apologist for the status quo. In 1992, Bill Clinton ran for president as the candidate of change. In 1996, he will seek re-election as a candidate pledged to prevent change at all cost.

We need a president who will do more than say "no" to every spending cut, "no" to every attempt to return power and money to the states. We need a president who shares our values, embraces our agenda and who will lead the fight for the fundamental change America chose last November. We need a president who will say "yes" to the American people, and that is the kind of president I intend to be.

And while on the subject of creating a government that will say "yes" to the American people, let me make one fundamental belief crystal clear. We can cut taxes and balance the budget. No mistake about it. Middle-class families are forced to send too much of their hard-earned money to Washington. We should provide a tax credit for children and remove the marriage penalty to strengthen our families. And we should cut the capital gains tax to stimulate economic growth, create new jobs, and expand opportunity for all our people. And this is just the first step. Not the last, just the first step.

We need a president committed to making our tax system lower, fairer, flatter, and simpler so that ordinary people like you and me could fill out our tax forms without a lawyer or an accountant or both.

Balancing the budget will also be a top priority; we cannot continue mortgaging out

children's future. We will give the president the line-item veto and we will give the American people a balanced budget amendment.

But that is only the beginning. Reining in the government means streamlining the entire federal bureaucracy, getting its nose out of places the government just shouldn't be. We should work our way through the alphabet soup of government, asking this question: Is this program a basic function of limited government, or is it an example of how government has lost faith in the judgment of our people?

The best place to begin is with four of the most ineffective, burdensome and meddlesome departments: Education, Housing and Urban Development, Energy, and Commerce. Together they spend more than \$74 billion per year and employ more than 74,000 workers.

Let's close down the Education Department and spend the money on our children, not bureaucracies and red tape; and let's implement school choice to return power to parents. HUD has become a cash cow for big-city mayors and the well-connected. We should give housing vouchers to those who need them and get the government out of the landlord business altogether. Energy would function better as an agency within the Department of Defense. And more than half of what the Department of Commerce does has nothing to do with commerce or trade — duplicated by 71 other governmental departments, agencies and offices.

And there are other questions we should ask. We spend hundreds of millions of dollars on the Endowments for the Arts and Humanities. Why is the federal government in the culture business? In this explosion of the information age, why do we have a Corporation for Public Broadcasting?

There are a host of other areas that cry out for reform. I will be talking about them at greater length in the year ahead. Welfare is one. The federal system has failed. And why are the liberals in Washington so afraid to turn welfare decision-

making over to our governors, like Governors Graves and Branstad, and to our state legislatures in Kansas, Iowa, New Hampshire, Arizona, wherever? There's already considerable evidence that they could do much better.

Affirmative action is another federal policy out of control. Discrimination is wrong, immoral. This is America. We should have a color-blind society. But fighting discrimination should never be used to divide Americans by race, ethnic background, or gender.

There is one area where the federal government must work in partnership with our state and local governments, and that area is crime. Today, a criminal committing a serious crime has less than a 10 percent chance of going to jail. And once in jail that criminal will serve only a fraction of his sentence.

We should put an end to parole for violent offenders. Put limits on the endless and often frivolous appeals clogging our courts. Remove teenagers who commit serious, violent crimes from juvenile courts and try them as adults. We should be more concerned with the rights of victims than the privileges of criminals. And we must rededicate ourselves to the war on drugs.

Finally, let me touch for a moment on America's place in the world. There is one responsibility only the federal government has, and that is to protect our freedom. We must never be reluctant about our greatness or ashamed of our national strength.

We must stop placing the agenda of the United Nations before the interests of the United States. When we take our revolution to the White House in 1996, we will vow that American policies will be determined by us, not by the United Nations. Let us remember that America has been the greatest force for good the world has ever known.

I was reminded of that on the 50th anniversary of D-Day last summer when the eyes of the world were focused on the beaches of France. I was there and witnessed the emotion as memories came flooding back, memories of the heroism, the sacrifices and pain men and women suffered. Before visiting France, I traveled to Northern Italy where I served in the 10th Mountain Division, and while revisiting the battle sites, I thought about why we had been sent there, about the America of our youth, the America we were risking our lives to protect, and about our hopes for the generations who would follow us.

And then I thought about the America we live in now, an America still great and still the beacon of freedom around the world, but an America that is headed in the wrong direction. And standing there gazing across those now peaceful fields, I thought of why it is critical to have a president who knows what made America great and what has been sacrificed to keep us free, and who would do all in his power to lead America back to her place in the sun.

My friends, I have the experience. I have been tested and tested and tested in many, many ways. I am not afraid to lead and I know the way. Let us rein in our government to set the spirit of the American people free. Let us renew our moral convictions and strengthen our families by returning to fundamental values.

Together let us reassert our rightful place as a great nation. We should do it for ourselves. We owe it to our children. And we must act to be worthy of the gift our ancestors have sacrificed so much for, to ensure that the next century will dawn on a new beginning of American greatness, prosperity and freedom. Let us do it together. Let us begin today. God bless the United States of America. Thank you very much.