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Bob Dole's Dilemma . . .

— Can He Run Senate and Campaign for the Presidency?

By JAMES A. BARNES
At the height of his political powers, Robert Dole also confronts one of his greatest predicaments: As he prepares to mount another run for the White House, this time as the early favorite for the 1996 Republican presidential nomination, he is also responsible for running the Senate as its majority leader. Can he pull it off?

Although Dole can be relentless in, say, courting a reluctant Republican Senator to secure a commitment on a vote, he still keeps his own cards close to the vest. "I think his style is very much as it's always been—somebody who consults and then makes up his own mind," said his chief of staff, Sheila P. Burke.

His challenge is to manage the Senate while he also dashes around the country wooing primary voters and political activists. Because he is the presumptive front-runner, state and local party officials will expect him to attend every event on their political calendars, from policy forums to steak fries. It's hard for a presidential aspirant to resist those entreaties, especially a candidate of motion more than reflection, who is fond of his frequent travels outside the Capital Beltway.

There are signs that Dole is willing to delegate some of his responsibilities for running the Senate, which he often dominated even when he was in the minority, as was the case last year when he was largely responsible for sinking President Clinton's cherished health care initiative.

But Dole's 1988 presidential race was marred by his insistence on micromanaging most aspects of his campaign. His loyal corps of talented congressional and political advisers is ready to help him surmount that obstacle this time. The question is whether Dole will listen, to them.

Running the Senate

He has already informed his colleagues that he expects the top members of the Senate's Republican leadership — Majority Whip Trent Lott of Mississippi, Conference chairman Thad Cochran of Mississippi and Policy Committee chairman Don Nickles of Oklahoma — to act collectively in his absence from Washington.

He made it very clear to all of us that we will work together as a team," Cochran said. "I don't think that he is going to be turning (the floor) over to any one person."

But Dole is known for a hip-pocket management style. That penchant leads some analysts to wonder whether he can easily reduce his role as majority leader to focus on a presidential campaign, a step that will probably be critical if he is to succeed. Although he will never relinquish his authority completely—that's not in Dole's character, and none of his supporters think he should—they also believe that he will entrust some of his leadership burden to others.

"His indication that he will be away is an indication that he will delegate some of his Senate responsibilities," said Washington lawyer Roderick A. DeArment, a partner at Covington & Burling who is a close Dole adviser and one of his former Senate chiefs of staff.

Policy Committee chairman Nickles observed that in the past couple of years, Dole has been "more inclusive" in working with his colleagues in setting the Senate's Republican agenda. Nickles said, "I think you will see more delegation to the leadership team during Dole's run for the presidency."

Dole associates hasten to add that the emphasis on a leadership troika is not intended to diminish the role of Majority Whip Lott, who unseated a longtime Dole ally, Alan K. Simpson, of Wyoming, from that position last December. "There are more of us; it's a very aggressive freshman class, and it's going to take a team," Dole chief of staff Burke said, to keep the Senate Republicans functioning effectively.

Although Lott's one-vote victory over Simpson is generally attributed to the desire of many Republicans to acknowledge the anti-status quo verdict of the midterm elections by shaking up their own leadership structure, the looming contest for the GOP presidential nomination also cast a shadow over the race. Lott was backed by Phil Gramm, R-Texas, a likely Dole rival for the nomination. Simpson had suggested that a Lott victory would hinder Dole's freedom to leave the chamber for the campaign hustings.

After the vote, Lott vowed to be a loyal lieutenant; Dole described the leadership race as "history." And even though Dole maneuvered to fill five openings on the Finance Committee with Republicans more senior than Gramm to deny him one of those coveted seats, Dole supporters say that they expect he will be able to work well with his new assistant.



"My guess is Dole will be somewhat deferential, because Lott is going to be the one taking the pulse of his colleagues on the floor," former Dole deputy chief of staff Jim Whittinghill said. And as the No. 2 Senate Republican, it's not in Lott's interest to try to thwart Dole from moving up Pennsylvania Avenue to the White House.

While Nickles and Cochran will supplement Lott's leadership role, they also will be important players in fashioning GOP policy in the Senate through the new working-group apparatus that Dole agreed to set up to help the new majority seize the legislative initiative. Those two Dole allies—both endorsed the Kansan in his 1988 presidential bid—and Senator Judd Gregg, R-N.H., function as a coordinating council overseeing the efforts of a dozen or so working groups of other Republican senators who are developing proposals on issues ranging from unfunded federal mandates to the balanced budget amendment.

To nudge Senate Republicans toward common positions, Dole has been hosting discussions in his office involving as many as 10 senators and outside policy experts, frequently former Republican executive branch officials. Even though Dole's guest experts might have different opinions, as senators often do, the dialogue has been productive.

"He has learned the utility of frequent meetings bringing senators together to talk about what they agree on and what they don't agree on," Conference chairman Cochran said. Dole tries to get his colleagues "to work towards a consensus," Policy Committee chairman Nickles said. "That way he is able to keep people with a lot of different views together."

Dole had great success with this technique on health care, the subject of many, many meetings, but Dole won't have the time to oversee as many of these sessions with experts, or with senators alone, while he is also running for president. And maintaining his role as a kind of impartial arbiter in this setting is likely to become more difficult as he stakes out his own views for the GOP presidential nominating contest.

Friends and Advisers

Now running for president, he also will probably rely more on his friends in the Senate to implement policy. An informal survey of nearly a dozen Dole associates and supporters found Pete V. Domenici, R-N.M., at the top of the list of Dole's Senate comrades. Both share a passion for deficit reduction and worked closely in that pursuit in the 1980s. Dole would probably give Domenici wide latitude on budget matters. Bob Packwood, R-Ore., would get the nod on tax policy. Alfonse M. D'Amato, R-N.Y., Cochran and Nickles also are considered personally close to Dole.

When the same people were asked who Dole's Senate confidants are, however, the question was almost always met with silence. In part, that may reflect the nature of the institution. Unlike the House, whose size and character often compel members to form cliques, no senator is likely to subordinate his or her interests to those of another senator.

But this lack of confidants is probably more a matter of Dole's personal background. During his initial recovery in a veterans' hospital from a World War II wound, the muscles in Dole's right arm atrophied because he was neglected by the staff doctors and therapists. That experience bred a

Senate, Burke is respected by Democrats and is far and away the most important person on Dole's staff. "He gives her broad direction, and she follows up on it," Lighthizer said. "She develops a lot of Dole's legislative proposals."

Another powerful woman in Dole's employ is Jo-Anne L. Coe, president and executive director of Campaign America, Dole's political action committee, which raked in more than \$8 million during the 1993-94 election cycle. She met Dole in 1980, when she was a congressional staff aide and he was a member of the House. She went to work for him in 1987, as he was gearing up for his first Senate bid. Coe became Dole's administrative director in 1977 and was appointed by Dole to be the first woman secretary of the Senate, a post she held from 1985 to 1987.

Coe once referred to herself as a "jack-of-all-trades." She is so close to Dole that he asked her to draw up the list of wedding invitations for his marriage to Elizabeth in 1975. But Coe is also a tough political operator. A Dole aide quoted in Newsweek during the 1988 campaign described her as "Bob Dole in an ultra-suede suit."

Another Dole idea merchant is Whittinghill, his former deputy chief of staff who is now the executive director of the Better America Foundation, Dole's new think tank. The operation, for which Dole helped raise about \$3 million since last August, is preparing studies on several issues, some of which will be "complementary" to the subjects of the Senate GOP working groups, Whittinghill said.

"We hope to come up with ideas that the Senate and the House will consider," Whittinghill said. The think tank's research efforts will focus on downsizing government and easing the federal regulatory burden on states. Whittinghill signed up with Dole as his deputy chief of staff in 1986, having previously worked for then-Republican Tom Loeffler, R-Texas.

The Kansas connection in the inner circle is Kim B. Wells, a bond attorney and partner in the Kansas City (Mo.) law firm of Gilmore & Bell. He managed Dole's 1986 and 1990 Senate races, following in the footsteps of his father, who was Dole's Senate campaign co-chairman in 1974. A former Dole administrative assistant in the late 1970s, Wells is currently the Kansas Republican Party chairman. He worked on Dole's 1976 vice presidential campaign and was a senior consultant to Dole's 1988 presidential bid, often traveling with the candidate.

Although they are not among his top rung of advisers, several veterans of Dole's 1988 presidential campaign are likely to have key positions in his 1996 effort, including Dole's 1988 director of strategic planning, William B. Lacy, an Annapolis (Md.) political consultant who helped Republican Fred D. Thompson to capture a Tennessee Senate seat last year; Tom Synhorst, a Mission (Kan.) telemarketing consultant who engineered Dole's victory in the 1988 Iowa presidential caucuses; Mari Maseng Will, a Washington public relations consultant who was Dole's 1988 campaign press secretary; and Dole's 1988 political field director Jim Murphy, a top aide at Campaign America.

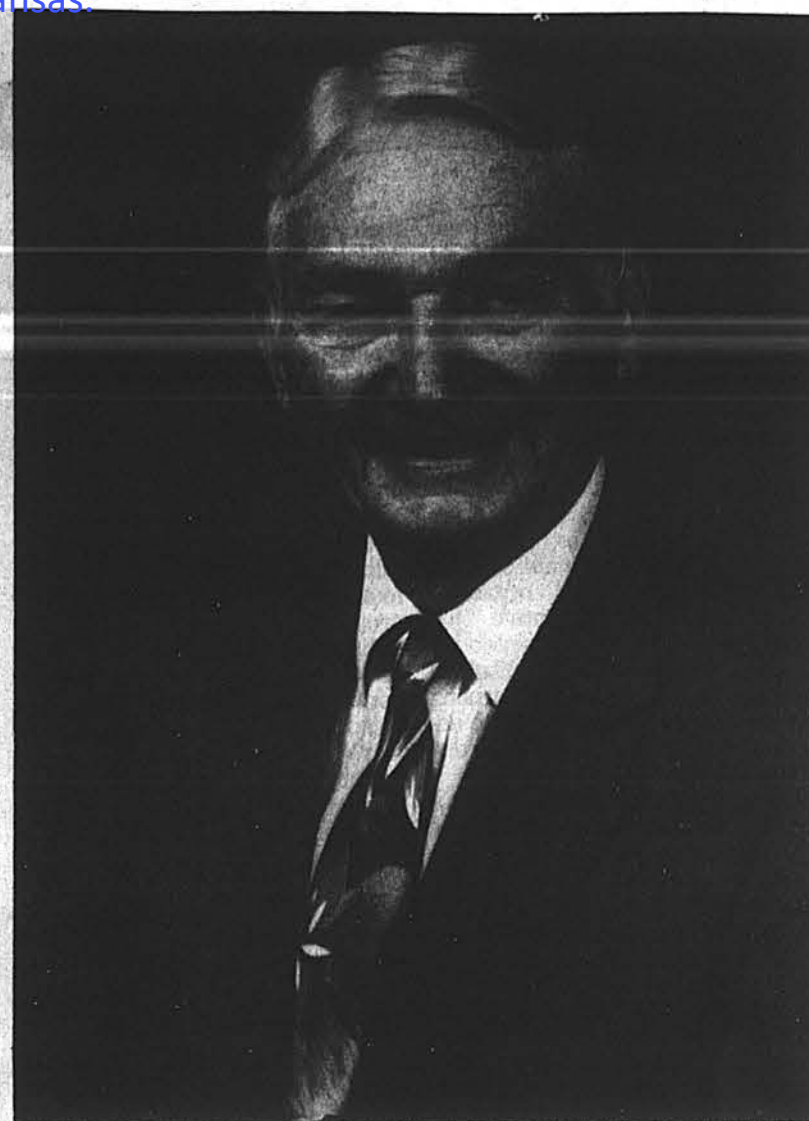
Another politician of Dole's generation, George Bush, had a much more varied group of core advisers. Some were peers, like former Secretary of State James A. Baker III. Others were people like the late Republican National Committee chairman Lee Atwater, who rose to political prominence working for Ronald Reagan and joined Bush's political team only three years before his 1988 presidential campaign. Often outsiders and peers can be very useful to a candidate in a presidential race.

In the 1988 New Hampshire primary, Atwater prevailed upon Bush, against Bush's intuition, to run a last-minute television commercial attacking Dole for straddling the fence on tax issues, the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty and a proposed oil import fee. The TV spot was critical in securing the primary victory for Bush, dashing Dole's hopes for the nomination. Six months later, Baker took command of Bush's stumbling campaign, whipping it and the candidate into winning form.

Lighthizer admitted that he "generally probably not" have the same stature with Dole that Baker had with Bush. "Do you have the ability to insist that he change?" Lighthizer asked. "No, he's the boss."

Given his advisers' loyalty to Dole, Lighthizer said, the Senator would know that any arguments they presented to him would be made only with his own best interests at heart. "All you can do is say, 'Here's my view,'" Lighthizer said. "He listens to you, and he makes the decision."

Ultimately, that decision would come down to Dole's instincts, which have enabled him to conquer the Senate, but not the White House—not yet, anyway.



ADOLPH REISIG

Reisig Says Dole 'Great American'

By ALLAN D. EVANS and MATT SHEPKER

For Adolph Reisig, Hays, there is no question of who deserves the right to be the next president of the United States of America.

"As certain as night turns into day, Bob Dole will make Russell, Kan., and the United States proud of him as president," Reisig said. "Bob will absolutely make a good president. This country needs him, and he deserves to be president."

Dole and Reisig graduated together from Russell High School in 1941. They played on the Champion Union Pacific League football team in 1940.

"Bob was always very strict in his training. He was an excellent athlete and he was a perfect specimen of a human," Reisig said.

While Dole was in the Army during World War II, he was injured during a battle in the Po Valley in Northern Italy.

"I couldn't comprehend how he was going to compensate for his disability. He was always such a great athlete," Reisig said.

Reisig designed a device that helped Dole rehabilitate his arm when he came back to Russell. The device was lead cast that Dole wore on his right arm so he could build the strength of his muscles. "The community stood behind Bob. Helping him was the thing to do," Reisig said.

When Dole announced that he was going to run for the presidency in 1988, Reisig and Dole's other classmates were in Russell to support him. "Bob wanted all his classmates there when he announced. His hometown supports him. That is what brings him back," Reisig said.

While in high school, Dole had aspirations of becoming a doctor. "The war changed him. I always imagined that he would do great things, but I didn't think that it would be politics. But, he is ready for it. He has the experience. He is powerful in Washington. He has proved himself," Reisig said.

"I think he will make it this time. He is hoping, and will do a great job."

Reisig had these other things to say about Dole:

"Bob grew up in the Depression years, the Dirty Thirties, when day turned to night at 4 p.m. because of dust clouds. Everybody was poor. He had to help by working for spending money and clothes. He was a hard worker. His boss, G. B. 'Bub' Dawson, said he earned \$2 for 20 hours work at Dawson's Drug Store.

"Bob was tempered by these difficult times and grew to manhood by small-town values. That has shaped his life. He empathizes with people who are poor and less fortunate. His foundation is testimony to that."

"I have known Bob for 65 years. I grew up with him. I was a classmate and a teammate. Bob was a good student and a tremendous athlete. He was a great competitor and it was an inspiration to be around him. Everyone liked him. He was enthusiastic and always optimistic when things got tough. He never broke training rules. He lived a clean life. He exemplified the life of a Christian athlete. He was always respectful to others. He wasn't one to try to upstage. He was a team player."

"Bob has never forgotten his roots or his friends. He loves Russell and is sentimental about his boyhood home. He still calls all his classmates by their first name and never forgets a person's name

when he meets them.

"His memory is unfathomable, he remembers the importance of the individual. He is a very compassionate person. Bob can relate to all people and he can communicate at all levels."

"Bob has designed his life for the presidency. His name has not been tarnished with moral or personal issues."

"Most important of all, Bob is a great American. His service to his country in wartime is legend."

"Bob along with all 42 members of the championship football teams of 1940 and 1941, entered the service of their country in World War II."

"He's a great American," Reisig said.

Reisig was born in Russell and lived all his life here, until he moved to Hays in the 1950s, to attend college, and to start a new career, after being in the oil field excavating business here for several years.

He attended classes here with Dole, chemistry from Elvin Brickley, journalism from Mae Beveridge, geometry from Herman Search, English from Mabel Lacey, and American Government from Rev. Steve Williams, who also was pastor of the Congregational Church.

In sports in the Union Pacific League when Dole and Reisig were in high school, Russell played Ellis, Hays High, the Hays Cadets, Lincoln and Ellsworth. In non-league play they also went against Holsington and Great Bend.

Dole, Reisig said, won the game with Ellis — at Ellis — during their senior year. They were playing on a very muddy field and Dole caught the winning pass. "I didn't catch it," Dole said, or something like that. "It just landed in my hands."

Reisig's wife, Gene, also thinks highly of Bob Dole and the entire Dole family. She knew them all her life. Two years behind her husband and Bob Dole in school, she graduated with the RHS class of 1943. Her parents were Mr. and Mrs. Charles Graf.

Reisig's father came to the United States from Russia, where he had clerked in a clothing store, at the age of 12. He immediately went to work for Louis Banker in Banker's Store, and remained there as manager of the ladies department until he retired.

Adolph Reisig was executive director of the Fort Hays State Endowment Association at Fort Hays State University for many years. He retired in January.

Congenial Couple From Land of Oz

First things first: Who's nasty and who's nice?

The Capitol police, elevator operators and doorkeepers were asked which senators take time to be friendly.

The top five on the nice list, according to this informal survey, were Nancy Kassebaum ("a real lady"), Dirk Kempthorne ("a regular guy who happens to be a senator"), Howell Heflin ("your typical grandfather"), Paul Wellstone ("a wonderful human being"), and, believe it or not, Bob Dole. In fact, Dole won the popularity contest because "he goes out of his way . . . he never walks by that he doesn't speak."

So it seems that the Wheat State has the most civil senators.