



# THE TOPEKA CAPITAL-JOURNAL

## HAPPY EASTER

APRIL 16, 1995

## On friendly ground, Dole 'Meets Press'

By KRISTEN L. HAYS  
The Capital-Journal

**R**USSELL — For Bob Dole's record 53rd appearance on "Meet The Press," he sat in front of an audience of more than 600

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The 47-year-old Washington-based television show — the longest-running on NBC — hadn't taped a segment in front of a live audience for 20 years, said host Tim Russert.

Saturday's taping of the show, which will air today at 8 a.m. on KSNT Channel 27, at Ruppenthal Middle School in Dole's hometown of Russell was the result of a bet between Russert and Dole on the Super Bowl in January 1993.

Russert bet on the Buffalo Bills, but Dole stuck with the Dallas Cowboys, and Russert had to make good on the agreement to bring the show to Russell. Buffalo, N.Y., is Russert's hometown.

Ruppenthal was Russell High School when Dole graduated in 1943.

Faced by "Meet The Press" regulars David Broder of the Washington Post

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—Chris Ochsner/The Capital-Journal

"Meet The Press" host Tim Russert, at center, explained how the show would be taped before journalists Lisa Myers, far right, and David Broder, second from right, began their questions.

## Dole hits stride on campaign trail

By KRISTEN L. HAYS  
The Capital-Journal

**W**hen you're making your third and last try for the most powerful position in the United States that has been out of

your grasp throughout a 35-year political career, it probably makes sense to do it big.

Bob Dole did. The 71-year-old Senate majority leader and front-runner for the GOP presidential nomination spanned the country east of the Rockies this past week in a candidacy announcement tour full of patriotism, print and television photo opportunities, and a touch of



**Bob DOLE**

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small-town charm.

By now Americans — particularly Kansans — might feel "Doled out," but they can't deny the Washington war horse is serious about possibly ending his career in the Oval Office.

It was no secret Dole was planning a third run for the presidency.

He and top members of his campaign staff met two years ago — long before Dole decided to make a third try. Current campaign manager Scott Reed and deputy campaign manager Bill Lacy advised Dole if he chose to run in 1996, they needed a highly structured approach — much different than the inner chaos that helped lead to his downfall in 1983, Lacy said.

Reed was with Jack Kemp in 1988 and has been the chief of staff with the Republican National Committee for two years. Lacy has been with Dole for 10 years.

In February, Dole appeared on the "Late Show with David Letterman,"

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## Dole 'Meets the Press'

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and Lisa Myers of NBC, Dole easily answered question after question during the final event of his weeklong presidential candidacy announcement tour. The taping marked the 53rd time Dole has appeared on "Meet The Press," the most appearances by any guest in the show's history.

The questions and answers included:

■ Does Dole want to be president?  
"I've thought about it a lot, yes," Dole replied. He wants to transfer his leadership abilities as Senate majority leader to the White House, "rein in government," and "I know how to lead. I've said, I know the way."

■ Dole, 71, would be 73 in November 1996. If he wins the GOP nomination and later the election, he would be the oldest first-term president every sworn into office. Would he pledge to serve only one term?  
No, Dole said. He said he is in good health with "lots of stamina, a lot of energy." Such a pledge would make him a lame duck before he broke out of the gate, he said.

■ Will he select a running mate soon?  
Not until after the presidential primaries, he said. If he captures the nomination, he will announce a running mate soon after. Though Colin Powell, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, has been touted as a possible running mate, Dole said he has done nothing more than ask Powell for advice on foreign policy.

■ Has he flip-flopped on gun control, having supported the Brady Bill but now promoting repeal of a ban on assault weapons to gain support of the powerful National Rifle Association?  
"Seven of those 19 weapons are back on the streets," he said of assault weapons that the ban was supposed to eliminate. "I want an instant check" with a credit-card like device that will indicate whether a buyer is supposed to own a gun rather than the several-day wait-

ing period that comes with the Brady Bill. But he wouldn't advocate repealing the Brady Bill.

■ In 1988, Dole, in New Hampshire, was the sole Republican presidential candidate who refused to sign a pledge not to raise taxes shortly before George Bush beat him in that state's primary. He signed that pledge April 7, three days before he visited Exeter, N.H., during his announcement tour. Why?  
The majority of the Congress was Democratic in 1988, and the pledge didn't close tax loopholes in 1988, Dole said. With a Republican majority in the U.S. House and Senate now, he believes it is more realistic to sign such a pledge.

■ Sen. Phil Gramm of Texas, another GOP contender, is saying if elected he will balance the federal budget by the year 2000. Doable?  
No, Dole said. He respects Gramm as an economics professor, but he doesn't think the budget can be balanced so quickly and indicated Gramm shouldn't say that "just to attract a few votes. I've got a better idea. Let me occupy the White House and we'll do it in seven years."

■ During his tour Dole never mentioned his opposition to abortion rights. Why?  
No reason to, Dole said, noting "my record is pro-life, it has been, and it continues to be."

The Republican Party's opposition to abortion rights alienated moderate Republicans in 1992, and Dole said he will support limiting abortion rights through statute rather than an amendment to the U.S. Constitution so as to "not drive Republicans from our own party."

■ Dole's temper has emerged during previous runs for the presidency. As a vice presidential candidate in 1976 with Gerald Ford, Dole in a televised debate blamed Democrats for Vietnam War deaths. After losing the New Hampshire primary to Bush in 1988, Dole told him testily, "Stop lying about my record." Can he keep his cool this time?  
"Oh, yeah, I'm cool," Dole said.

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## Dole hits stride on trail

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and admitted he would run. And on Monday he sprang from the starting gate in a feverish run with the first of 11 official announcements in Topeka.

Topeka greeted him at the Kansas ExpoCentre — rain moved the rally from the south steps of the Statehouse — with a crowd of more than 3,000 dotted with handmade signs, professionally manufactured "Bob Dole for President" signs and three high school bands.

Dole ended the same speech he would give at other stops with, "I have been tested and tested and tested. I am not afraid to lead. And I know the way," generating wild cheers. The only frosty reception he received in Topeka came when he slammed federal funding for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and the National Endowment of the Arts.

From Topeka, he hit Exeter, N.H., and New York City. He received a mixed reception in Exeter, with supporters nearby and opponents filtered in the back of the crowd, so the rousing reception he got at a \$1,000-a-head fund-raiser in Manhattan gave

him a boost.

Tuesday the engines were revved. A crowd with much more enthusiasm than any he faced on Monday pumped him up with approving roars in Columbus, Ohio.

"This is a good event," Reed noted as Dole circulated through the crowd, shaking hands with Army veterans who served in the 10th Mountain Division in World War II, a unit of which Dole led when gunfire shattered his right arm and shoulder 50 years ago.

Press advance director Mark Rosenker agreed Tuesday went better than Monday.

"The kickoff was great," he said, "but you've got to get loose. The communication is there."

Later Tuesday in Des Moines, Iowa, Dole also received an enthusiastic welcome from a state with agricultural ties as strong as those in his native state.

Like in Topeka, the Des Moines rally was moved to a building at the state fairgrounds from the state capitol because of rain. And though Dole was running late and appeared 90 minutes after the scheduled time, the crowd was anything but cranky.

Campaign staffers predictably reported similarly successful appear-

ances Wednesday in Dallas and Fort Lauderdale, Fla., and Thursday in Columbia, S.C. and Raleigh, N.C. Fund-raisers that were part of those stops brought in \$3 million for his campaign.

Late Thursday brought Dole time with friends and family in Russell after the frenetic week. Nearly 3,000 Kansans, many of them from Russell, turned out for a community pancake breakfast Friday and welcomed the man Washingtonians call "the senator," but whom they simply call "Bob."

They gave him a war hero's reception on the 50th anniversary of his wounding during World War II. Included was a limestone plaque taller than Dole commemorating the milestone, as well as a wooden box stuffed with \$7,000 raised in Russell 48 hours before his arrival home. The box, former Russell newspaper publisher Russ Townsley said, was reminiscent of a cigar box passed around to raise money for a series of operations Dole needed to repair his war wounds in the late 1940s.

Dole noted the real work on his campaign has yet to begin. He still has to flesh out his campaign agenda and vision for America.

"There's just a feeling out there, an electricity," he said Saturday, "that Bob Dole can make it this time — if I don't make a mistake."

## Russell queries media on campaigns

By KRISTEN L. HAYS  
The Capital-Journal

**R**USSELL — Bob Dole wasn't the only one who got to "Meet The Press" Saturday.

Departing from the routine of talking to a "Washington insider" after interviewing Dole, host Tim Russert invited members of the audience in Ruppenthal Middle School to pose questions to Russert, David Broder of the Washington Post and NBC reporter Lisa Myers.

Knowing he faced an audience of more than 600 Dole supporters in the Senate majority leader's hometown, Russert started the taping with a caveat:

"Our goal is to take the other side" when asking questions, he said, and the reporters don't display their personal opinions through those questions. "I ask you to please not take any of this personally — at least until I get out of town."

Asked why the national media covers big-

names and faces out there through many forums, including television, since the race has started nearly 20 months before the November 1996 election.

"We have to be careful not to ignore the underdogs," Broder said.

For the 1996 election, the media has committed to covering issues in depth as well as campaign hoopla, Russert said.

Broder added that the Post will knock on doors in precincts to help bring voters' points of view to the forefront, along with those of candidates.

"We are the surrogates of the American people," Russert said.

Delving too deeply into a candidate's character while seemingly ignoring other issues was an issue in the 1992 campaign, one member of the audience said. Where is the line drawn between reporting on candidates' personal lives and political lives?  
The question is "whether it has any bearing on his performance," Myers replied. In 1992,