

Books show different sides of Dole

Is he for sale or does he have what it takes?

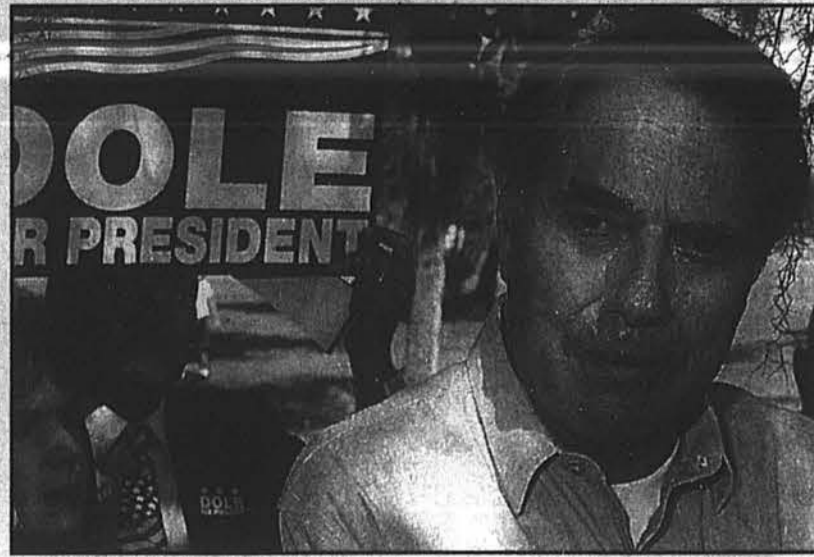
By The Associated Press
WASHINGTON — Is Sen. Bob Dole the Republican "Man for All Seasons?" Does he have "What It Takes" to be the next president? Or is he a "Senator for Sale?"

Three books now available on the Kansas senator offer markedly different portraits of his life and long career in politics. Depending on which book a voter chooses, Dole could come off as either a heroic statesman or just another unprincipled politician.

The newest of the three is "Senator for Sale," an "unauthorized" biography by Stanley Hilton. Hilton, now a California attorney, claims his access as an employee of Dole's in 1979-80 led to the insights in his book — the second Dole biography he has written. The first sold poorly in 1988.

In new book's introduction, Hilton criticizes Dole as a "political slot machine, a human pendulum dancing to the tune of the highest contributors. ... I was appalled by his utter lack of commitment to any ideals or beliefs."

For the most part, Hilton's book reveals little that is new. It recounts Dole's life, his campaigns for the Senate and White House,



File photo

Three books now on sale paint different portraits of Sen. Bob Dole, who is seeking the Republican presidential nomination.

his legislative work and relationships with the press and others. But Hilton imposes his own, negative view of these events in drawing conclusions for the reader.

"His career can best be summarized as a symbiotic relationship with moneyed special interests," Hilton writes.

The Dole campaign is quick to blast Hilton, calling his work a "lame attempt at character assassination" and contending that Hilton

misrepresented his level of daily contact when he worked for Dole.

Another just-published Dole biography consists of excerpts from the Richard Ben Cramer's widely acclaimed book on the 1988 presidential campaign, "What It Takes."

This book, simply titled "Bob Dole," is a series of vignettes detailing key moments in the senator's life. It ends in 1988, as Dole is preparing to announce his second bid for the presidency in Russell, Kan.

This is the most personal account of the three, showing how Dole's upbringing during the Depression, injuries while fighting in World War II and efforts to rehabilitate his damaged right arm resulted in a determined, indefatigable politician.

"Dole is one man who has endured, suffered and triumphed through the greatest events of our time," Cramer writes.

Cramer's book is a sympathetic, impressionistic look at Dole himself.

The third Dole book, published a year ago, was written by Jake Thompson of The Kansas City Star's Washington bureau. It is the most straightforward and balanced of the three, generally letting colleagues, friends and adversaries tell Dole's story through interviews.

As suggested by the title, "The Republicans' Man For All Seasons," Thompson touches on Dole's varied political career, his war service and recovery, and his deep Kansas roots.

"To the public, Bob Dole is loved and loathed for perhaps the same reason: Despite his senatorial dark suits and power ties, he's still a rough-hewn Kansan, a fearless straightshooter prowling in the nation's capital, where numbing nuance, bureaucratic mumbo-jumbo and caution are the normative values," Thompson writes.

Dole once approved of Education Department

Now he says it was bad from the start

By The Associated Press
WASHINGTON — Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole wears his opposition to the Education Department as a badge of conservative honor. But a Republican presidential rival says Dole wasn't always so down on the department.

Texas Sen. Phil Gramm's campaign unearthed a 1978 vote by Dole favoring the department's creation, plus a speech in which he gave the idea a ringing endorsement.

Dole's campaign literature mentions two Senate votes that came a year later in which he sided against the department. On many occasions he has talked as if the earlier vote did not exist.

"I am a mainstream conservative," the Kansan told a Vermont press conference in June. "I have been. I didn't vote for the Department of Education."

In February, he told a news conference, "Let's take a look at who voted to create the Department of Education. I didn't, but

Phil Gramm did." He went on to say: "I didn't think it was a good idea to start with."

But in a Sept. 28, 1978, speech in the Senate, Dole said the idea of having a cabinet-level education department had grown more attractive as existing education programs had become entangled in the bureaucracy of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

"I believe it is our responsibility to see that these young citizens receive the best education that we can provide, and I feel that a new department of education is one way toward that goal."

"I strongly urge its passage by the Senate," he said of a bill that would have created the department.

But the Dole campaign says he changed his mind after a year of reflection and voted against the 1979 legislation that actually set up the department.

Gramm, Dole and fellow candidates Pat Buchanan and Lamar Alexander all want to disband the department as a way to save money and transfer responsibilities to states.

Dole to propose school voucher system

Associated Press

CEDAR RAPIDS, Iowa — Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole, using a Christian academy as a backdrop, said Saturday that he would propose a voucher system giving incentives for parents to send children to private schools.

"Our schools aren't lacking in wealth, they're lacking in wisdom," said Dole.

Under a federal system envisioned by Dole, parents would get a voucher that they could exchange for tuition at the school of their choice. He also said he would seek "a tax credit for parochial schools" in an education package he would flesh out in the next month.

Dole said his voucher plan would be a boon for lower- and middle-income families, who can't afford to

send their children to private schools.

"If you've got enough money you can go anywhere you want, but if you're middle-income you can't," said Dole.

School vouchers are popular with conservatives, particularly social and religious conservatives with increasing clout in Republican politics.

Teacher unions and some other education groups oppose the concept, saying it would drain money from the public school system.

Dole dismissed those critics, arguing the teacher unions are "arm and leg part of the Democratic Party, part of the liberal left."

Under his system, parents could

use the money to teach their children at home, a practice endorsed by many religious conservatives.

Dole, at a news conference, declined to spell out details of his proposal, saying he would offer them within a month. He said that it would be "federal in a sense" but that states would also have a role.

Dole: GOP, Clinton not far apart on taxes

By Sally Buzbee
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole said Sunday he doesn't think President Clinton and congressional Republicans are that far apart on the tax cuts each could support.

"He's talking about a \$300-per-child tax credit; ours is \$500 — that's 70-some percent of the whole tax package," Dole, R-

Kansas, said on NBC's "Meet the Press."

Dole said the president also has indicated a willingness to look at capital-gains-tax reductions.

"If you boil it all down, there's not that many differences, in my view," he said.

But Dole sounded less sure the two sides can reach agreement on welfare reform or reductions in the growth of

Medicare spending.

The White House, preparing for President Clinton's trip to Israel for the funeral of slain Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, had no immediate comment, said spokeswoman Ginny Terzano.

Clinton has said he will veto the legislation unless Republicans agree to less severe reductions in education and Medicare spending.

Dole, running for the GOP nomination for president, said he and House Speaker Newt Gingrich had a "pretty good discussion with the president last week on the budget — on the whole, not on tax cuts specifically."

But in recent days, Clinton aides have suggested he may yet oppose a Republican welfare-overhaul bill he had previously indicated he would support. And

Clinton and Democrats continue to criticize the Medicare changes as too severe.

"The Republican proposal will not be fair to our seniors," Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass., said Sunday on "Meet the Press."

But Dole said, "After 30 years, there ought to be some fundamental change. We ought to be able to reduce the cost of Medicare."

Young Kansas staffers can't get enough of Dole

By DAVID NIELSEN
Special to The Capital-Journal

WASHINGTON — What do an Ichabod, a Jayhawk, a Wildcat and the nation's capital have in common?

Usually very little. But Lance Lathan, Scott Morris and Denise Haffner have put aside their old college allegiances and joined here for a common goal: to elect Kansas Sen. Bob Dole as the 43rd president of the United States.

These native Kansans are working side by side with the key strategists of Dole's national presidential campaign. Lathan is an assistant to Dole's national political director, Jill Hanson, helping her coordinate the 50 state election offices. Morris is the assistant to deputy campaign chairman Bill Lacy. He works on polling and media issues and develops campaign strategy. As a field desk coordinator, Haffner prepares briefing books for Dole and works closely with the political directors of important states like Iowa and New Hampshire.

The trio traveled decidedly different paths to arrive at their campaign positions.

Haffner was an industrial psychology major at Kansas State, graduating in December 1991. After a stint with the Kansas State Board of Education, she worked for the Kansas Republican Party. She moved to Washington and began with the Dole campaign when it geared up in January.

The Hoxie native said it didn't take her long to realize she wasn't in Kansas anymore.

"It hit me moving here," she said. "Being from Kansas, especially growing up in western Kansas, it's just odd to see people walking down the street you always see on TV."

Lathan grew up in Stockton and graduated from Washburn in 1992 with a political science degree. After working for Dole's Senate re-election campaign in 1992, he worked in

Candidate says his campaign won't dig up dirt on Powell

Meanwhile, New Hampshire governor reportedly is close to endorsing GOP front-runner.

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole said Sunday he won't run a negative campaign against Colin Powell if the retired general enters the Republican presidential race.

It was reported last week that some candidates for the GOP nomination were gathering information on Powell's career and private life, in hopes of finding something to attack him on if he runs. The story quoted an unidentified aide to Dole.

"I hope that's not our campaign," Dole said Sunday on NBC's "Meet the Press," adding "we have a lot of people claim they're aides."

"I think we'd take a look at strategy, what happens if General Powell runs," Dole, the GOP front-runner, said. "But I don't — I don't go for that and I don't know why somebody would be saying, 'Well, this is

what we're doing.'"

Dole said he has no plans to run a negative campaign against anyone.

"I've never said a word about President Clinton that involves his personal life, personal problems," he said.

Powell is expected to announce his decision about a presidential run before Thanksgiving.

Meanwhile, New Hampshire Gov. Steve Merrill, whose state holds the first presidential primary, has been in talks recently with Dole and a senior aide about possibly endorsing the GOP front-runner, Republican sources said Sunday. A New Hampshire republican who spoke on condition of anonymity, said Merrill was inclined to endorse Dole, perhaps as early as this week.

Merrill's endorsement is being sought by most GOP presidential candidates as a key to a good showing in the New Hampshire primary.

than anyone, and being from Kansas I'm probably biased and have a totally different perspective."

Morris, an Emporia native, came to Washington to work for the Republican National Committee right after graduating from KU with a broadcast news degree in

December 1992. In March, he jumped at the chance to work for Dole.

"I'm a big fan of Ronald Reagan, he's the one that pretty much got me started into politics and piqued my interest," Morris said. "I think Sen. Dole shares much of the same optimism for the country that Ronald Reagan had."

"I have the highest respect for Sen. Dole as I did for Reagan. I think Sen. Dole as far as carrying out the Reagan revolution, he's the one to do it. It doesn't hurt being from Kansas, and growing up with the respect for Sen. Dole. "I would shine his shoes if he asked me to."

Each of the Kansans agree that the close personal contact with Dole is what makes their jobs special.

"Just being around Sen. Dole is exciting," Lathan said. "He has so much energy. Probably more than I have."

"It's kind of neat when he walks by. You've seen him all your life on TV, and you look at him and he's right there in person."

Sometimes Dole comes across on TV as gruff, but, Morris says, Dole is easy to talk to.

"You run into him in the hallway and he asks you about KU basketball. ... That's the neat thing about him, you'd think he'd be uptight, and what-not, but he's not."

"Almost every time he sees me, he asks about my family (in Hoxie)," said Haffner.

Although they all enjoy their jobs, they admit there are drawbacks. The hours are long, the workload is never-ending, and if Dole wins the Republican nomination, there are still 12 months of campaigning ahead. Which means another year away from family and friends back home.

The pace is going to pick up as the Feb. 12 Iowa caucus and Feb. 20 New Hampshire primary draw near. Still, the Kansans feel their personal sacrifices will be worth it if Dole is elected.

"The hustle and bustle is what makes it exciting," Morris said.