

10-A / THE TOPEKA CAPITAL JOURNAL Wednesday, December 20, 1995

# Dole remained loyal to Nixon

**As Watergate started eating away at presidency, senator gave encouragement**

By MIKE FEINSILBER  
The Associated Press

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He thought it would all blow over and, according to newly opened papers of Richard Nixon, sought a private meeting with the president "to offer his personal encouragement."

That was on May 22, 1973. Less than a month earlier, Nixon, attempting to save his presidency, threw overboard White House Chief of Staff H. R. Haldeman and domestic adviser John

D. Ehrlichman, calling them "two of the finest public servants it has been my privilege to know." He also went on television to declare, "There can be no whitewash at the White House."

Nixon resigned 15 months later. Among thousands of papers opened to the public for the first time Tuesday by the National Archives, where they were sent after Congress passed a law taking possession of the papers from Nixon, were others that shed light on the role played by Dole, then a young senator and now the front-runner in the race for the Republican presidential nomination.

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liam E. Timmons, sent Nixon a memo laying the ground for a meeting between the Kansas senator and the president.

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Another memo, dated Feb. 15, 1971, chastised Dole for being too loyal — and for criticizing Walter Cronkite, the CBS anchorman who had such a

strong following that there was occasional talk of him as a Democratic presidential candidate.

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WASHINGTON

▼ NIXON PAPERS

## Dole was loyal to ex-president

Kansan played down Watergate, was critical of Walter Cronkite

By The Associated Press

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In January 1973, Dole had been forced out as chairman of the Republican National Committee and replaced by George Bush, who preferred a diplomatic job instead. But Dole remained loyal to Nixon.

▼ ABORTION

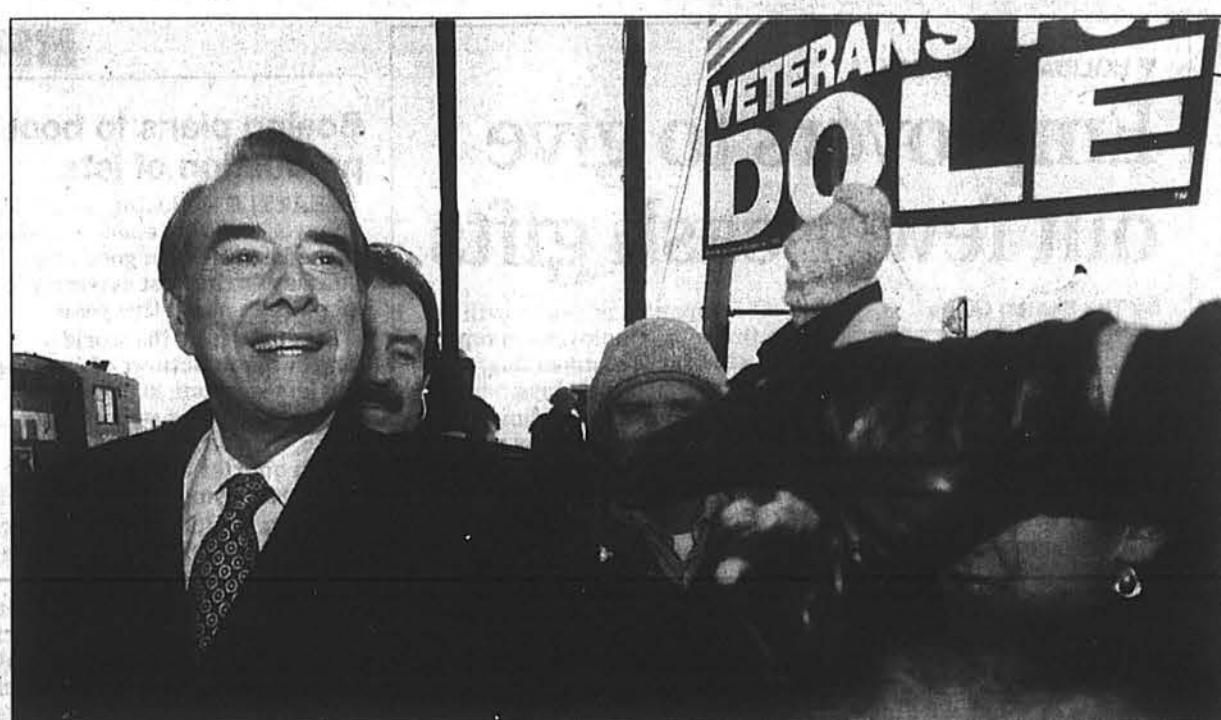
## Dole defends anti-abortion record

By The Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa — Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole on Tuesday defended his anti-abortion record and aides accused rivals of trying to "distort the issue."

Dole "always has been, and always will be" opposed to abortion except in limited cases and would back constitutional provisions to restrict the procedure, Iowa campaign manager Darrell Kearney said.

Kearney issued a statement af-



Sen. Bob Dole, shown here campaigning earlier this month in New Hampshire, was an adamant supporter of former President Richard Nixon in the early '70s.

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taking on Walter Cronkite cannot do us any good whatsoever. It is like attacking the Lord himself."

"I can see the merit in keeping the heat on the networks, but I think to take on an individual such as Cronkite may be a mistake," Chapin added.

The files give no indication whether Dole was given the message. At the time, the networks were under broad administration attack. Vice President Spiro T. Agnew accused CBS of "propagandistic manipulation."

The Associated Press

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## A sampling of Dole's words to Nixon

A 1971 memo from White House aide Dwight Chapin expressed concern about Sen. Bob Dole's criticism of CBS anchor Walter Cronkite. Dole, who frequently accused the news media of favoring Democrats, had complained publicly that "Walter Cronkite can't even pronounce Republican."

In a memo circulated to White House press secretary Ron Ziegler and other Nixon advisers, Chapin asked whether someone should muzzle the outspoken senator.

"This is strictly my own feeling," he said. "However, taking on Walter Cronkite cannot do us any good whatsoever. It is like attacking the Lord himself."

In a Feb. 4, 1969, letter to Richard Nixon, Dole wrote: Dear Mr. President, For whatever it may be worth,



Nixon

I want you to know that the good people of Kansas are most impressed with the Sunday morning worship services and with the practice thus far of serving no "hard liquor" at White House functions. I need not tell you what an impact continuation of these practices will have all across America.

Sincerely yours,  
Bob Dole, United States Senate.

A July 10, 1972, letter from the White House:

Dear Bob,  
I want to tell you how much I appreciate your coming to my defense when certain very irresponsible charges were made several days ago. As you know, I believe in hitting hard on the issues but character assassination has no place in American politics.

With warm regards, (signed

Richard Nixon)

A Jan. 24, 1973, letter from Nixon:

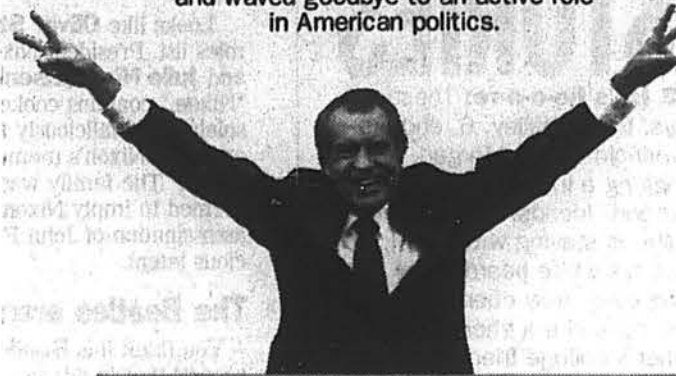
Dear Bob,  
Now that we have finally achieved peace with honor in Vietnam, I particularly want you to know how much I have appreciated the support you have given during these difficult years to the policies that made that achievement possible. Without those in the Congress who stood steadfastly as you did, we could not have won the settlement that I announced last night.

I know how great the pressures have been. I know the sorts of attacks to which you have been subjected, as a result of following your conscience. But I also am confident that history will prove you to have been right, and that in the years to come you can look back with pride on a stern test nobly met.

With warm personal regards, (signed RN, for Richard Nixon)

**A White House staff memo to Richard Nixon in January 1974 said Bob Dole "believes Watergate is not nearly as big an issue outside Washington" and would soon blow over ...**

Seven months later, Nixon resigned and waved goodbye to an active role in American politics.



## Nixon's files show Dole as a rising star

By Tom Webb and Aaron Epstein

Eagle Washington bureau

WASHINGTON — Newly released files depict the political ascendancy of Bob Dole — from a novice senator badgering the Nixon White House for a few patronage crumbs, to a key partisan role as a trusted Nixon ally.

Nixon's files, released Tuesday by the National Archives, captures a moment now 25 years past, when the young, hard-working and sometimes hot-headed senator from Kansas first tried stepping on to the national stage. The files were revealed in response to media requests.

Dole was at the time an unwavering Nixon loyalist: backing the president's legislative agenda, vigorously supporting the Vietnam War, fiercely attacking the "liberal" media, and declaring that the Republican Party had "nothing to fear" from the Watergate scandal.

The memos show, however, that Dole also privately bristled at perceived slights from the Nixon administration. In 1969, for instance, he complained that the administration had hired almost no Kansans.

"I can tell you, in confidence," Dole wrote to a Nixon aide, "that we do have an inside track on a janitor's job at the USDA — we lost out on the doorman."

Later, Dole did land some administration posts for Kansans and lobbied the White House on behalf of Kansas firms.

A 1970 staff memo to national security adviser Henry Kissinger said Dole had been informed that two Wichita aircraft manufacturers, Cessna Aircraft and Learjet, would be permitted to sell millions of dollars worth of planes to South Africa — despite an arms embargo then in effect.

Dole was told, the memo said, that "it was in the interest of the companies as well as the government that there be no publicity regarding this decision." Otherwise, the sales would "appear to be a more significant departure from previous practice than it in fact is," according to the memo.

At various points, Dole kept the president informed about how Nixon policies were faring in Kansas.

"I want you to know," Dole wrote Nixon in a 1969 memo, "that the good people of Kansas are most impressed with the Sunday morning worship services and with the practice thus far of serving no hard liquor at White House functions."

Nixon frequently thanked Dole for his help. After announcing a "peace with honor" in Vietnam in January, 1973, Nixon lauded Dole for his support of the war. "I am confident that history will prove you to have been right," Nixon wrote to Dole.

As revelations of political espionage and cover-up widened in the Watergate scandal, Nixon told Dole in a July 1972 note:

"I want to tell you how much I appreciate your coming to my defense when certain irresponsible charges were being made several days ago."

"As you know, I believe in hitting hard on the issues but character assassination has no place in American politics."

White House aides also thanked Dole for criticizing CBS and NBC news coverage as slanted against Nixon policies and Republicans in general.

A May 1970 telegram from Dole to CBS President Frank

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## NIXON

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Stanton castigated a decision to put a Johnson administration holdover — "a disgruntled fifth-level" federal worker, Dole said — on "Face the Nation."

"Most viewers are aware of the strong anti-administration bias on CBS programs," Dole remarked. "But should CBS go this far in efforts to polarize America's youth and discredit President Nixon?"

But aide Dwight Chapin thought Dole had gone too far in 1971 by saying that the celebrated TV newsmen Walter Cronkite "can't even pronounce Republican."

"This is strictly my own feeling," Chapin said. "However, taking on Walter Cronkite cannot do us any good whatsoever. It is like attacking the Lord himself."

The files contain many memos about Dole's idea that Nixon speak at Kansas State University's Landon Lecture Series in 1970. White House staffers were initially opposed, arguing "there is absolutely no reason for the President to go to Kansas," though just in case, they did seek "a report as to the militant student situation at Manhattan."

But Dole persisted, and Nixon's speech was a triumph. Chief of Staff H.R. Haldeman later wrote in his diaries, "Huge success, beyond all fondest hopes" as a handful of anti-war demonstrators were drowned out by 15,000 cheering young Kansans.

As Nixon was preparing to fly to Kansas, Dole had another idea: why not fly a black Republican official on the president's plane, Air Force One? It would be good press, Dole said.

"Absolutely not!" Haldeman scrawled on a 1970 memo. An aide then suggested carrying another

black official and setting up a meeting of black officials and the black press in Topeka. Haldeman's reply, "Good God!"

Most of the thousands of memos in the Dole-Nixon files are routine: Dole seeking small favors for a constituent, commenting on a farm problem, speaking up for a Kansas business. There are also Dole memos seeking favors for his political buddies, including his one-time finance director David Owen, whom Dole recommended "for appointment to a board or a commission," but apparently didn't specify which one.

And he was hardly the only favor-seeker at the Nixon White House. Ross Perot sought help with "Wall Street troubles," says a 1973 memo from Al Haig, the general-turned-political-foot soldier. And 18-year-old John Kasich, now chairman of the House Budget Committee, sent a five-page letter seeking an internship. He was rejected.

The files also contain the glowing words of Pat Buchanan, one of Nixon's youngest aides, as he watched the boss in action.

"The president entered about 8:30 a.m., looking surprisingly rested and even tanned following his trip" to Europe, Buchanan noted on March 4, 1969. By contrast, Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass., looked "inordinately ruddy, as though he had either been on the slopes for the weekend, or on the town for the night."

Two other members of the Republican presidential field, Sen. Richard G. Lugar, then mayor of Indianapolis and a favorite of Nixon's, and Lamar Alexander, then a rising star in Tennessee, also show up in the newly declassified files, but only in passing.

Contributing: New York Times News Service