



Post-Register photo

Backing the budget

SEN. Robert J. Dole, R-Kan., chairman of the Senate Budget Committee, left, spoke strongly in behalf of the compromise budget during a press conference in Idaho Falls

Saturday afternoon. With him are Ann Rydach of Idaho Falls, state party second vice chairman; and Dennis M. Olsen of Idaho falls, state party chairman.

Dole wields financial powers

By BEN J. PLASTINO
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When Sen. Robert J. Dole, R-Kan. came to Idaho Falls over the weekend, those who met him were very much impressed by his candid answers to tough questions.

On the question of whether he would be interested in the president, he jokingly referred to himself as the "young Reagan who is waiting to be called but nobody has called me yet."

The question most people, especially the older ones, want to know is specifically what the \$40 billion in Social Security reductions entail in the so-called compromise budget. This "compromise" label is a misnomer as none of the nine Democrats on the Senate Budget Committee voted for the proposed budget and it appears it will be opposed by the vast majority of the Democrats in both chambers.

However, Dole, who is chairman of the Senate Finance Committee and thus has a prime role in the budget process, did attempt to answer some of these questions.

The questions center most on what kind of \$95 billion tax increase over a three-year period are contemplated and just where is the axe going to fall on the \$40 billion in "unspecified" Social Security cuts.

The Social Security cuts, he said, likely will lower or eliminate the cost of living increase, restrictions in early retirement and

possibly upping the 65 retirement age, student loans, and many other fringe benefits.

Dole, who has been a critic of Reagan, in his press conference here, left it clear that he solidly backs the Reagan proposed budget.

He feels the Republicans will retain control of the Senate and maybe even increase their margin, declaring 11 of the 13 Republicans up for re-election are safe while a number of Democrats up for re-election are vulnerable.

He did, however, hastily sidestep such a question about the House, saying he was not well acquainted with the situation. This is difficult to understand but it does lead one to suspect the Republicans could lose seats in the lower chamber.

He did get the Senate Finance Committee chairmanship which had a major role in steering tax and budget cuts last year.

"I'm going to have a lot to say where we are going to cut and increase," he said.

He is outspoken about need to reduce the projected fiscal 1983 budget deficit of \$91.5 billion.

In a private interview he said most people he has met and who are largely Republican have no great animosity against Reagan but they are concerned over the economy.

Even though Dole believes Reagan is on the right track in the fiscal policies, he acknowledges he doesn't have all the right answers at this time.