

Quayle's looks baffle strategists

WASHINGTON (AP) — Some may swoon, but others demand, "Can he type?" Indiana Sen. Dan Quayle is making an impression on women but it's not always the one Republican strategists may have had in mind.

When Quayle catapulted to prominence as the GOP vice presidential nominee, it was hard to ignore two facts: Other Republicans were far more experienced, and Quayle, blond and fresh-faced, possessed striking good looks.

"I can't believe a guy that handsome wouldn't be attractive in some respect to women, Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., said at the GOP convention in August.

"Anyone that good-looking must stand for really good things," a supposedly surveyed woman in a recent Doonesbury comic strip said.

"I think most women want a really hot guy to be in charge of the country," her friend agreed.

McCain wasn't kidding. But the mock Doonesbury poll should have been "adjusted for sarcasm," according to the strip.

Experts disagree on whether

Quayle will help attract women to the GOP ticket headed by Vice President George Bush.

He's been credited with narrowing the gender gap, but he's also been compared to a "Ken" doll — "Barbie" doll's friend — and labeled a hindrance rather than a help for Bush.

When actor Tom Selleck escorted Nancy Reagan to the podium at the convention, "I saw grown women faint and moan," GOP consultant Ann Stone said. "There are a lot of women where (physical appearance) still is important. . . . I don't think Quayle has the charisma of Selleck. But that still has some impact."

Ann Lewis, a Democratic consultant and Ms. Magazine columnist, sniffed at the thought. "Candidates that would pass a Hollywood screen test do not do noticeably better than candidates that would flunk it. Looking at the House of Representatives will bear this out," she said.

On the other hand, former actor Ronald Reagan has had some political success.

Recent polls showed Bush had erased a 20-point gender gap and was winning as much support from women as Michael Dukakis, the Democratic nominee.

Democrats say Quayle had nothing to do with this development. But GOP consultant Eddie Mahe said Quayle has been the only variable in the race since the conventions; thus you could hardly make the case that he's not a factor.

At rallies across the country, Quayle has encountered a mixed reception. Some placards carry messages such as "But Can He Type?" and "Women Don't Vote For Men Prettier Than They Are." But many women eagerly press forward to hear and touch him.

Lewis predicted Quayle would attract women who would have voted for the GOP ticket anyway.

"He may cause some excitement at parties and gatherings, but he doesn't cause vote-switching among undecided or independent women voters," she said. "Right now he is the biggest single danger to George Bush's election. He is a land mine that George Bush planted in his own territory."

Republicans claim Quayle has more than sex appeal to offer women voters, and hold up his marriage as exhibit A. Quayle's wife, Marilyn, is a lawyer taking off more than a decade to raise the couple's three children.

"A lot of women in that age group of his wife, professional women staying home to raise the children, can relate to that family," Mahe said. "They feel that he understands working wives, women as professionals."

Lewis said, "If I were a partisan Republican desperately looking for something good to think or say about Dan Quayle, Marilyn Quayle would be the best example I could think of."

Mrs. Quayle herself blamed the pretty-face controversy on the news media and recently declared, "George Bush wouldn't have selected someone who could not stand in his stead for president."

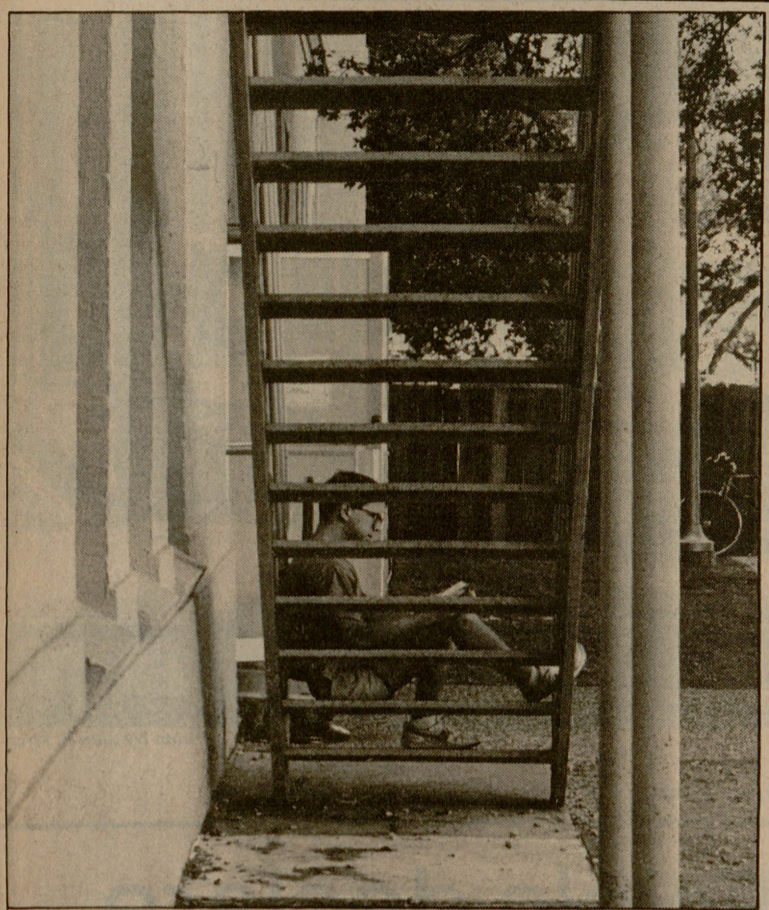


Photo by Sam B. Myers

Steps to higher education

Senior history major Robert Love, from Kingwood, studies some English literature while waiting for friends in front of the weightroom at Deware Field House Tuesday afternoon.

Welfare bill passes despite objections

WASHINGTON (AP) — House and Senate negotiators overwhelmingly approved a historic, work-oriented welfare bill Tuesday despite bitter objections by several House members who labeled it punitive and fraudulent.

The conference committee adopted their landmark compromise 35-8 after conservatives and moderates had heaped heavy praise on the plan, designed to foster independence and parental responsibility among welfare recipients.

"A chance like this doesn't come along very often," Rep. Dan Rostenkowski, D-Ill., chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee said.

He said the \$3.34 billion plan demands that welfare recipients help themselves, but it also provides the training and work-related assistance that is needed for economic independence.

President Reagan, returning to the White House from New York, said he was very happy with the measure, the first major overhaul of the welfare system in 50 years.

House insurgents led by Rep. Augustus Hawkins, D-Calif., chairman of the Education and Labor Committee, condemned the bill for imposing a workfare requirement on some recipients. "It is simply a punitive approach for forcing people off the rolls," Hawkins said.

Hawkins and others also charged

that the bill fails to assure high-quality child care for mothers who would have to participate in a work, education and training program. And they said people working off their grants in public work programs could be paid the equivalent of the minimum wage regardless of how much those working next to them were making.

Rep. William Clay, D-Mich., asked for a roll call vote on the wage provision. His request was defeated by one vote after Rostenkowski said it would unravel the compromise so painstakingly worked out all summer.

Most lawmakers agreed with Rep. Stephen Solarz's assessment. "On balance, people who are on public assistance today will be better off with this legislation than without it," the *New York Democrat* said.

The five-year, \$3.34 billion cost of the compromise bill is modest but its aims are not.

Its architects say they want to move welfare recipients from dependence to independence, to instill a sense of responsibility among parents, to help them get the skills and services they need to support their own families.

A large-scale Job Opportunities and Basic Skills program offering job training, education and work experience is the focal point of the new plan.

Police search for suspect in stabbing

HOUSTON (AP) — Authorities were searching for a suspect Tuesday in the stabbing death of a 57-year-old bar owner who apparently died during a robbery at her home.

Mary Dobbins, described as a cautious woman who usually entered her well-secured home with a gun drawn, was found sprawled on her living room floor Monday night by her 18-year-old grandson and a friend, police said.

Investigators speculated that Dobbins, who owned nearby Mary's Lounge, may have been surprised by her assailant because her body was found just inside the front door with her money bags and her purse beside her. She had been stabbed repeatedly, police said.

The attack came despite Dobbins' efforts to secure the home by nailing down windows and dead-bolting doors. Investigators believe an intruder entered the house by prying open a washroom window that had been nailed shut.

Robbery may have been a motive because cash was believed to have been taken from the four or five money bags found near Dobbins' body, Houston homicide Sgt. M.E. Doyle said.

Some small change was found in the bags as well as a .357-caliber Magnum gun Dobbins carried for protection.

A large butcher knife, covered partially by leaves, was found in a ditch in front of Dobbins' home, but investigators were not certain it was the murder weapon, Doyle said.

"She had always been real cautious since she'd been burglarized so many times," Jan Bethune, a family friend, said.

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