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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

NOTE FOR: *Lonnie G.*

FROM: RON NESSEN

For file.

Not issued

I recognize that the choice of a new Chairman rests solely with the members of the National Committee. Whoever that choice will be will have my full and enthusiastic support and cooperation.

There have been inquiries as to who my choice would be, if I were a member of the Committee. Without qualifying in any way what I have said above, I am glad to respond to that for any who may be interested and for whatever weight they wish to give it.

My choice would be Jim Baker. Jim has proved himself to be an able, effective, fair, non-factional, nonsectional political leader. He has my full confidence. He would give continuity to the national leadership of the party that was confirmed by the Republican National Convention in Kansas City.

12/20

NEW YORK REPUBLICAN STATE COMMITTEE

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To: Mr. Ron Nessen
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A

REPUBLICAN

PROSPECTUS

RICHARD M. ROSENBAUM

CHAIRMAN

NEW YORK REPUBLICAN STATE COMMITTEE

P R E F A C E

The following prospectus for the Republican Party contains reflections on conversations between Republican Party leaders held in the wake of the 1976 Presidential election.

Mr. Rosenbaum chairs the Northeastern Republican State Chairmen's Association and the national State Chairmen's Advisory Committee. He is a member of the Executive Committee of the Republican National Committee. He participated in meetings of both groups following the election to assess the status of the Party. He also was invited to participate in the post-election meeting of the Republican Governors Association in Washington, D.C. and maintains frequent contact with Republican Party leaders in all sections of the nation.

In this paper, Mr. Rosenbaum has sought to summarize what he considers the concensus of thought among those Republicans he has met with and those with whom he has talked about the future of the Republican Party following the 1976 voting.

December, 1976

The national voting in the 1976 Presidential election shows clearly that the Republican Party today remains a significant force on the national political scene.

After starting from far behind, we almost won. So it is not a time for discouragement. It is not a time to become despondent over the spate of pessimistic projections being written and broadcast about our Party.

It is a time to call upon the lessons of our history and our heritage both as Republicans and as Americans. Our Party has meant too much to this nation's history to let it down now and abandon its principles.

We are at a point in history that is not unique to the Republican Party of the 1970's.

Reflecting on the special form of self-government and democracy created by the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson wrote at the very beginning of our history as a nation:

"In every free and deliberating society there must, from the nature of man, be opposite parties and violent dissensions and discords; and one of these, for the most part, must prevail over the other for a longer or shorter time. Perhaps this party division is necessary to induce each to watch and relate to the people the proceedings of the other."

While that was penned before the development of the political system, as we know it now, it defines a framework within which human nature functions -- and our system has come to reflect the nature of the human community that is governing itself in this unique form of representative democracy.

Both political parties have experienced disappointing cycles down through history and their appeal, as predicted by Jefferson, has swung in a wide arc -- for one reason or another -- for varying periods of time.

In the early 1800's, for example, when the political party system was in its infancy, the public almost shunned the system and it was nearly shattered by weakness, apathy and lack of leadership.

The people did not see the political party as a vehicle for expression of their own views of how government should operate. The parties were scarcely given the chance in the beginning to demonstrate that they could be the compromiser of competing interests or forces to minimize conflict and to achieve worthwhile public goals.

Yet the party system not only endured this low point in its evolution but it gradually grew in strength and public acceptance and understanding.

In 1861, the party system -- indeed, our entire system of democratic self-government and obedience to a national discipline -- faced the supreme test when the nation went to war with itself over the issue of basic human rights and the application of the national Constitution literally to break the chains of slavery on a segment of the population.

The founder of the Republican Party stood by his principles and those of our Party and he brought the nation and the new Republican Party through the crisis.

In the late 19th century, the nation once again was plunged into a deep trough of distrust and disenchantment with politics and politicians because of the excesses of corruption by political leaders.

The period was marked by disclosures of graft, payoffs, vote-buying, graveyard voting, ballot box stuffing and many other acts that branded the political system as both venal and criminal in the minds of many.

The cumulative effect of the disclosures brought a crisis of confidence in the political system.

It is important to note that at this low point the system, instead of collapsing, moved effectively to correct itself through enactment of such reform measures as corrupt practices acts and civil service standards imposed on municipal administration.

* * *

In attempting to place the swinging of the political pendulum down through history into correct perspective, it is important to note each party has suffered at one time or another.

It also is important for Republicans to remember today that in the period between the founding of the Republican Party and the beginning of the long-tenured Democratic 'New Deal' in 1932, there was a Republican President in the White House for 56 of those 72 years.

Those, incidentally, were years when the challenge to national leadership was to make this Republic work and function effectively in a fast-changing and dynamic period

that saw pioneers push west through uncharted wilderness into ungoverned territories. Back in the East, meanwhile, the industrial revolution was making incredible changes in the nation's factories, catapulting us into a position of world leadership as a producer of goods to improve the life and lifestyles of men everywhere. To the West, the reach of railroads brought tremendous change in the agricultural economy of the mid-continent and extended the markets for the benefit both of the farmer and the consumer.

Republican leadership had a great deal to do with the basic, sound growth of our country and its economic system.

Republican vision encouraged the expansion of the railroads into the new territories.

Republican homesteading legislation aided the settlers who moved to the new lands of the West, those pioneers whose allegiance remained to the concept of a free nation of united states.

Republicans may be labeled as the party of Big Business -- and big business has made its contribution to the greatness of this country -- but we also are the party

that produced the Sherman anti-trust act that protected our economic system and consumers from the abuses of monopolies and harmful trade restraints.

Republican leadership and concern for the environment and our resources produced the nation's first conservation policy and the pure food and drug act.

It was Republican leadership that produced the first labor-management laws and protections against use of child labor.

Women fought for the right to vote for more than half a century and the right was granted as the first act of a newly elected Republican Congress in May 1919. Twenty-six of the thirty-six State Legislatures that ratified the women's suffrage amendment were Republican. Eight of the nine State Legislatures that took action against it were dominated by Democrats. Twelve Republican states gave women the right to vote before the suffrage amendment was even ratified.

Those are but a few of the milestones in our history for which we, as Republicans, can take special pride because of our Party's leadership role.

* * *

In 1976, as we look back, we have a great heritage as Republicans and a great deal to be proud of as we recall our party's contributions to the society and government we have today.

In looking back, there are lessons from which we can profit as we turn and look ahead beyond 1976 and into the nation's third century.

As is customary after an election defeat, there are seers, analysts, pollsters, publishers, academics and others ready to bury our party.

Although pollsters indicate that fewer than one in five voters identified himself with the Republican Party in a pre-election poll, when the Republican Party placed before the voters a decent, steady, honest candidate and a

sound program for the future, we attracted more than 48% of the vote cast for President.

Less than half of the vote does not win elections, but nearly half of the vote is a measure of the support we have among the people when they make a choice on Election Day -- and victory certainly is not out of our reach for the future.

* * *

This is not to say that we can afford a complacent view of our situation or our future.

We need to be realistic as we evaluate our disappointing results in electing Governors and members of Congress and local officers.

It is clear that the Republican Party today needs to define its basic principles for itself and for the public at large.

When people ask: "What does the Republican Party stand for?" we must be ready with a clear, concise and understandable answer.

We have the talent to produce such a statement of principles and we have the ability in this age of modern communications to make sure that every interested citizen gets the message.

We have many articulate spokesmen within the party.

Representative Jack Kemp of New York, for example, touched on a vital point in a recent speech when he said:

"The strength of our Party has been ideas, not numbers. Ideas always rule the world, for good or bad. It is not enough to look forward to the day when there is a majority of registered Republicans. People are becoming more independent and will vote for ideas and principles. Republicans can best serve their party by serving their country first."

From another viewpoint, Senator Jacob Javits of New York recently said:

"Political programs must give practical answers to the problems and aspirations of people -- they are not ends in themselves. Politicians worry about the jobless; about how to carry the welfare burden; they decry the crime rate; are alarmed by inadequate productivity; and feel the dangers of decay and bankruptcy in our great older cities. But behind every discussion of the jobless is an individual suffering the pain and the

shame of being unable to provide for himself or his family. Behind the rising crime rate are individuals -- people who have been hurt, maimed, robbed or murdered -- and whole families destroyed by a member who is an addict or a juvenile felon. ***There are remedies and they can be Republican remedies. *** That, my fellow Republicans, is also what politics is all about. It's about ideas making a better life for the people who give us their trust."

The Honorable Mary Louise Smith, who has given great leadership to the Republican Party in some of its most trying times, spoke eloquently of our high purposes when she said recently:

"We want America to be a nation where the Government serves the people, where there is compassion for the working men and women, for the young, the old, the unemployed. We want to guarantee that our children and our grandchildren will share the same freedoms and opportunities that we now enjoy."

There are millions of Americans who can agree with those statements if we speak clearly to them and convince them we mean what we say.

Speaking at the National Press Club recently Vice President Nelson A. Rockefeller made these pertinent remarks:

"We face a real challenge in providing the political means of developing leadership, developing the concensus and avoiding political paralysis. We can meet all these problems. But first we need to wake up and realize time may not run in our favor -- wake up and eliminate the thought that somehow, some way we'll make it -- with someone else doing the heavy lifting.

"Let's face the facts. We've been on a national negative kick for four years. We've been looking backward and we've been rehashing the past. It's time we face the future. It's time to determine our enlightened national self-interest. It's time we all devote our energies to positive efforts for this Third Century."

The challenge as outlined so forcefully by the Vice President applies equally to the Republican Party.

* * *

These are difficult and changing times. But, as I read the results of the National voting in 1976, I do not see the need for a dramatic revolution in our thinking or our principles as Republicans.

Constructive change in our Party can be evolutionary and still meet the tempo of change of the times. We need to examine and understand the mood of the people so we can provide them with an attractive alternative.

Our opponents did not receive a mandate on November 2 and the lease on the White House is four years, not eight. In fact, of those voting, more people voted for someone else than voted for Jimmy Carter. And, while more than 40-million voters voted for the Carter-Mondale ticket, nearly 70-million persons of voting age did not participate in the election. The turnout at the polls was the lowest in 28 years, based on the eligible voting age population.

The public, obviously, is still searching. As stated succinctly by Frank Van Riper in the New York Daily News in a recent article:

"Americans today are not alienated. But they are skeptical. They want to believe someone. But not blindly. As Richard Scammon says: 'The easy confidence of the past is gone.' Gone with it, perhaps, is the free political ride on style alone."

The Republican Party should lose no time in turning to the task of developing a statement of principles that can be translated by the average American into substance that relates to life today -- and their hopes for tomorrow.

We have not articulated our basic programs, principles and purposes to Main Street America -- but we can and we must. If we do, we can ask America to give us the mandate it withheld in 1976.

There not only is hope for the Republican Party, there is opportunity for our future.

The people must be convinced of our sincere desire to serve them. We must not only open our doors, we must open our arms and become a human party that cares and is able to do something about problems of life today.

We must listen to the voices of the people -- and they must be convinced that their voices are heard and heeded.

We must maintain a steady course and not reach for extremes in search of an elusive "Majority" that -- if

found in a frantic maneuver -- would not represent the real desires of the American people.

Things have not changed so dramatically as to out-date the comment by Samuel Orth, written in 1920, who said "under a two-party system, as ours is probably bound to remain, the independent voter holds the balance of power...the majorities at elections are usually determined by him."

With every new election, we can recognize more clearly that as the two major parties have sought more and more to appeal to the broad spectrum of varying American political thought, they have tended to become similar in the minds of many. Professor Walter Dean Burnham commented on this phenomenon in his book, "The American Party System". saying:

"The electorate since 1950 has displayed a willingness to engage in ticket-splitting on a unprecedentedly massive scale. Probably as a consequence of image voting, the partial replacement of patronage politics by ideologically-flavored politics and the penetration of the mass media, short term influences on voting have grown tremendously in recent years at the expense of long term continuities."

It is clear that the voter will gravitate not so much to a party any more as to the candidate who convinces them that he is responding to them. People eagerly desire to be wanted and they want their opinions to count.

Unfortunately, there still is too much truth in the comment of Robert J. Pranger, who wrote in 1968 in his "The Eclipse of Citizenship" that "as now practiced democracy is a species of power, not participation."

Pranger wrote:

"The political culture of representation, as all cultures of power, develops an ideology that glamorizes the leaders, denigrates the led. Political drama concentrates on Presidents, Legislators, Jurists and Generals. But who remains interested in the ordinary citizen?"

* * *

The effectiveness of our political parties lies in the fact that they are structured to reflect what each perceives to be the national mood and bring together a multitude of thoughts. It has been uncommon

under this system for a party to base its appeal on a narrow ideology or philosophy. In modern politics, when it has been tried, it has not worked.

In 1972, when the Democrat Party assumed a visibly ideological role on the left of the political spectrum, the result was its worst defeat in modern times.

In 1964, much the same happened to the Republican Party when its candidate was clearly identified as a candidate on the right of the political spectrum.

Strongly controversial positions have been successful in times of crisis, but at other times Americans generally have exhibited a greater comfort with a party that seeks to resolve conflict rather than to intensify it.

Samuel Elliot Morrison recognized this in his 1929 volume, "An Hour of American History," in which he said:

"Practical politicians, in order to win national elections, have been forced to reconcile rival interests and sections in their platforms."

After the 1976 primary contest within the Republican Party, we reconciled the clearly differing views within

our party. If we counsel together now, our differences can contribute to our strength and they can help us broaden our appeal to the masses of the American voting public.

America is a land of differing political philosophies and varied social conditions that are ever-changing. The difficult urban-suburban problems of today are different from the problems created by the collapse of much of the rural economy in the Dust Bowl years that led to mass migrations of impoverished farmers to cities. Those Depression Days differed, in their turn, from the post World War 1 period that spawned the lawlessness and restlessness of the Prohibition Era.

Our nation is 200 years old and change is a way of history. Our Republican Party is more than a century and a quarter old and it has survived changes -- albeit demonstrating along the way a slowness at times to respond to change. But we are conditioned to change and the challenge is to be responsive to today's needs of society as we get back into the race for leadership.

Our challenge is to convince the American people not that we are the only party that can govern effectively but that we are the party that can govern best in their interest.

The American people will listen to us. But we must listen to them first and then speak back in terms they understand and trust.

President Ford made a dramatic start along that road in his short campaign after a brief tenure as President. Now it is up to all of us, as Republicans, to move us the next mile on the road that will lead us to victory and responsibility for governing what remains as the world's greatest nation.