

March 20, 1976

(Continuation)

PRESS POOL # -- Travel pool from Asheville Mall to Hickory

It rained throughout the President's appearance which was in an open area which appeared to be at the top of the mountain. There were low clouds and fog but the crowd seemed to be in a remarkably good mood. The President's first words after his one hour and 45 minute motorcade trip to this wet top of a hill were: "Gee, it's nice to be with you." He then made a brief reference to the problem of the "mountain dew," which the crowd appreciated. The President's speech to the group was a combination of his standard lines on several subjects -- the improving economy, bringing government back to the people, revenue sharing, social security, and that he won't go for "quick fix solutions". He also was particularly hard on the poor bureaucrats back in Washington saying that local officials "can make better decisions than some of those bureaucrats that sit behind fancy desks in Washington." He also gave his litany of the primary victories that he first made at the Asheville Mall. He said "We won real good" in Florida and "we just walloped the devil out of them in Illinois." As for North Carolina the President said "I can't wait to see those results (Tuesday) when they come in because they are going to be good." The people of North Carolina, he added, "they want a winner and I can win." The President worked the crowd briefly after the speech, then tromped over the mud to his limousine to begin an uneventful one hour and 25 minutes to Hickory.

Bob Pierpoint, CBS
Jim Wieghart, N. Y. Daily News
Ed Walsh, Washington Post

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