

March 20, 1976

POOL REPORT FROM POOL NUMBER THREE...HOLIDAY INN TO
ASHEVILLE

While waiting for President Ford to leave his suite at Holiday Inn in Charlotte, we talked with Stuart Spencer who said he expects the President to win North Carolina. Governor Holshouser said he predicted Ford by "50 and a half". But Spencer stood by the 50 plus one. Spencer also said Ford contributions had ballooned after Ford's Florida victory, but have settled down now to about \$80,000 to \$100,000 per day. Holshouser predicted Ford would spend about one third of the legal limit in NC... but your pooler says that is wrong...it will be about one half...about \$330,000. Spencer said they have sent five people to Texas to get ready for that primary. Also, Spencer indicated that the Ford camp is receiving calls from former California Reagan backers who are now defecting. But no prominent defectors as yet.

Ford finally emerged...crowd at the Holiday Inn about the same as you folks saw it...not very large. Crowds also extremely sparse along motorcade route. President arrived at building where PFC telephone bank is located. There were a few local high school bands outside and another very sparse crowd...your pool estimate is about 400. Mr. Ford worked the crowd...there were the normal signs.."We Love Jerry"..."Betty's husband for President"..."We love Susan". The President shook hands with everybody inside the telephone bank room. About 15 to 20 telephones...no phoning while President was visiting.

Before leaving he talked...you can get full text from White House press office but this is the essence of what he had to say.

Talked about how he had come from behind in New Hampshire and it was because of all the telephoning and other hard work that was done by volunteers. Then said he doesn't think he's going to lose North Carolina...operative quote..."five is great, but six would look even better". President continued.. "I can foresee nothing but victory ahead and he said the convention would be the "clincher" for the victory in November. Said, "Let's make sure we keep the party structure so we can all work together after Kansas City". Apologized for Betty's absence..said she was in New York trying to bring "my votes up to her polls." Also said she had called Mayor Beame on his birthday.

At airport before heading to Asheville, Mr. Ford shook hands with all the cops and worked the military crowd again.

Phil Jones - CBS
Jeff Copeland - Newsweek
Carl Stepp - Knight Newspapers

#