

**The original documents are located in Box 16, folder “House and Senate Wednesday Groups” of the Richard B. Cheney Files at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

### **Copyright Notice**

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Gerald Ford donated to the United States of America his copyrights in all of his unpublished writings in National Archives collections. Works prepared by U.S. Government employees as part of their official duties are in the public domain. The copyrights to materials written by other individuals or organizations are presumed to remain with them. If you think any of the information displayed in the PDF is subject to a valid copyright claim, please contact the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

Meeting with the Wednesday Group  
September 2, 1976

Page 3

McKinney further stated that in his campaigning and discussions he found that the union organizers do not like Carter and have stated "My God, first McGovern and now Carter." In conclusion, McKinney stated that he would not get elected without the support of college students and strongly recommends that the President use his son Jack heavily on college campuses during the Presidential campaign.

Senator Schweiker - The Senator pledges his full support to the President and vice presidential nominee Dole. Schweiker stated that the first TV debate would be a most important event of the campaign and that the President should devote all his efforts and time to preparing for the first TV debate. Schweiker met with Senator Dole yesterday and stated to Dole that the moderate wing of the Republican Party is concerned over the direction in which the Party is going but that he recognizes a similar problem exists with regard to the conservative wing of the Party. Schweiker indicated his concern of the need to broaden the base of the Republican Party.

Senator Hatfield - Opened his comments by stating that no one group was going to determine this Presidential election. However, one group was coming into this campaign with significant influence and it is tied in with the religious awakening in the country. That group is the evangelical movement which appears to be closely associated with Jimmy Carter. Hatfield stated that this group has not traditionally been close to politics; have been aloof from it until now. If examined carefully, this group or some of the same individuals were much of the Reagan support across the country. He emphasized that in his judgment the evangelical group was growing in importance and influence as the campaign progresses. Hatfield stated it was important not to let this group defect from the Republican Party to Carter, but stated that the President could not out-Carter Carter in this group. Hatfield stated he thought it was the fastest growing religious group in the country and the Presidential campaign organization needed to be aware of its political strength in the campaign and pointed out that most religious publications are now showing this group for Carter when traditionally they have been with the GOP.



The President mentioned that he did have ties to the Calvinist movement in his old Congressional district which are some of the same elements of the evangelical movements. The President further stated that some efforts were being made on his behalf with these evangelical groups through his friends in his old Congressional district.

Rep. Pete McCloskey - Stated that the strident point is that the Christ-like evangelism of Carter is not as strong as the President's quiet faith, and in California the quiet faith and strong character of the President is coming through in favor of the President. McCloskey then pointed out that Carter's evangelism and praising of God is inconsistent with his position to bomb Hanoi. This re-born Christianity must be reckoned with in the campaign, but the doctrine of separation of church and state is still important and fundamental to our concept of government.

He hoped that this would be the last time during this campaign that the President would find it necessary to meet with this wing of the Party and thanked him for taking the time and effort to do it on this occasion and others in the past. McCloskey recommended a positive approach and strong leadership as being most important in the campaign and for the President to show that he is against the abuse of executive powers. He stated that the President should hit Congress for their Congressional abuses and encroachment on executive powers which have jeopardized his Presidential authority and power to act. He felt that the President should posture against the abuse of executive powers as exposed in the Lockheed situation, etc.

McCloskey then asked the President for his support of the moderate to liberal Republican candidates such as Danforth and Chafee. He stated that the two-party system in this country will depend on the philosophical balance that the President takes into this election. McCloskey then made several points on behalf of other Members which included Mark Andrews, Charley Thone, Caldwell Butler, who requested that the President send up a name for the federal judgeship in the western district of Virginia, regardless of whose name it be, and Silvio Conte, who recommends the President do a whistle-stop campaign by train.



McCloskey then stated that the President could make a strong issue out of Vietnam and his efforts for peace from the fact that the Vietnamese appear to be ready to give an accounting of MIAs if the President is ready and willing to admit Vietnam to the United Nations. He felt this issue could be of tremendous benefit to the President. McCloskey says the President should take credit for signing the Sunshine Bill and include those Members who participated in the passage of that legislation.

Next, McCloskey spoke to the Administration's maritime policy and stated that Paul Hall was ready to help but there was a need for a positive maritime program by the President. In conclusion, McCloskey said that many Democrats go along with the President on his reform and reorganization of federal regulatory agencies and their inter-relationship with the business community.

Rep. Margaret Heckler - She stated that the convention was exciting and that there was good feedback. The convention left a good taste in people's mouths by showing that the President had taken the initiative and the offensive in the campaign. With regard to the forthcoming debates, she stated it was important for the President to be able to side-step questions and answers in the debate.

Mrs. Heckler then mentioned that on Main Street in Fall River, Massachusetts, in her district, which is overwhelmingly Democratic, that the people distrust Carter and that the labor leaders cannot sell him to the people. She felt that the President's chances in her district are excellent and that if possible she would recommend the President make a campaign swing along the Massachusetts - Hartford, Connecticut - Providence, Rhode Island axis.

Mrs. Heckler then stated that the President could not concede the cities to Carter, that the President needs an urban strategy, that the problems of the cities must be addressed with a positive approach and specific programs. She stated there was a need for an ethnic strategy and that the Republican Party traditionally only thinks to the eastern European ethnics. There is a need to look to the Italians and the southern Europeans, including the Portuguese, during this Presidential campaign.



She then spoke to the influence of the labor machine in the forthcoming campaign. She recommended that the President speak over the heads of labor leaders and to the rank and file of the unions, but not to try to destroy the labor machine but to appeal to the mass of union people who do not generally follow the labor machine.

She said that the President's style of campaign was too quiet; there was a need for him to be more aggressive and that his strong character and personality were his best assets. Mrs. Heckler then strongly recommended that the role of women in the campaign be increased and emphasized a need to bring more women into the campaign. She commended the President on the campaigning ability of Mrs. Ford as his number one asset. She concluded by saying that the campaign requires a positive approach with new strategies to win.

Rep. Thad Cochran - Stated that the President's speech at Yellowstone was excellent and had a positive impact on the people of the Nation. He stated there was a need to be more specific on the President's ten-year program for the national parks and spoke specifically to the Natchez Trail in Mississippi. He felt that the President's statement on national parks shows that the President is sensitive to the needs of the people and this was the kind of new initiative that was appealing.

Cochran then spoke to the forthcoming Presidential campaign in the southern states and said he did not know if the President could carry Mississippi, Georgia, and some of the other southern states. However, for selfish reasons and for the benefit of the Republican Party in the South, he requests the President to continue to emphasize his strong stance that the South is not going to be written off. He felt that the President's strong statements thus far not to write off the South have been effective in reaching the people in the South. He stated if the President could not campaign in the South then the vice presidential nominee Dole should go into the South as Dole is very much liked in the South.



The President then said that Bob Teeter had been taking some polls in the southern states on a state-by-state basis and that the results of those polls looked good in Virginia and Georgia. Cochran concluded by stating that in his own Congressional district, which is traditionally Democratic and black, that he was pleasantly surprised at the support for President Ford.

Rep. Joel Pritchard - Opened by asking the President to ignore the pleas of Senators and Congressmen to campaign in their states or districts and their campaign advice. Pritchard said "you can protect yourself from your enemies, but not your friends." Pritchard then read from a prepared statement on the debates and commented on the preparation, appearance of the President, participation by staff, rehearsal, that the President be rested prior to each debate, that his answers be short and responsive followed by a positive attack, that all work be completed far in advance of each debate, that there be no pressure placed upon the President prior to each debate, that the debate have a theme and that theme be plugged continuously, that the President look at the TV camera, and then to Carter, and not be looking down at notes or away from the camera. Most important was that the President have a commanding presence to show his leadership and that he is in control. Pritchard concluded by reiterating his admonitions on the President protecting himself from his friends versus his enemies.

Rep. Ralph Regula - Said amen to what had previously been said and mentioned that luck has a lot to do with politics. He recommended the President be positive all the way; that he play hard-ball on the economy. Regula stated it was his judgment that the people make up their minds on the basis of the polls, the economy, and their paycheck during the last week of the campaign. He emphasized the need for an up-beat feeling in the President's campaign during the last week. If there is a sense of the people at home being comfortable with the economy, this could be very beneficial to the GOP.



He stated that the President's quality of life theme was a good one, he liked the President's vision of America as he mentioned in his acceptance speech in Kansas City.

Regula recommended that the President kick off his campaign in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The President then asked what about Atlanta? Regula answered stating he preferred Grand Rapids. Regula then recommended that women be used in the campaign and suggested Congressional wives and Cabinet wives go out and speak. He stated that Martha Griffiths, in his judgment, was a good person to head up the Democrats for the President.

He stated that the perception by the people of the integrity of the individual candidate was most important in this year's election. Regula then concluded by stating that the people or electorate generally have a distaste for the bureaucracy and mismanagement of government programs. He said the people want better management of programs, and not the elimination of programs. The people want their money's worth and the President should seize upon this feeling and emphasize his attempts to provide better management of federal programs. Regula also mentioned the Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area in Ohio as something the President should take credit for.

Senator Schweiker - Schweiker recommends that the President in the first TV debate take two or three items in the Democratic platform that are an anathema to the South and pin Carter down during the debate to accepting the Party platform. By so doing, Carter will alienate the South, and if Carter did the reverse he would be alienating the northern liberals in the Democratic Party. Either way, a portion of Carter's base would erode and the President would come out looking good. The President should not be too subtle in doing this, as the North looks to Carter to stand by the Democrat Party platform.

Senator Javits - Concluded the meeting by thanking the President for having this group in to meet with him and stated that he would write a note to the President concerning labor support. Javits then asked the President not to forget one issue in the campaign which is peace and stated that the President is the apostle of peace.



Javits then said that the President should keep in mind that the Presidential election will be won or lost not by the campaign in the hustings or the debates, but in the Oval Office. Javits said that the President has asserted Presidential performance as the standard, and that the President's performance in office has been his major accomplishment.





Notes of Charles Leppert at the meeting of the President with the House and Senate Wednesday Group --

September 2, 1976

Senator Javits - The moderate to liberal wing of the Republican Party believes in trying to structure the election campaign with the result that moderates are brought to actively participate in the campaign. Javits also mentioned that the day care centers bill should not be vetoed.

The day care center bill has in it provisions for centers for the elderly and if these provisions are not adopted the elderly people of the Nation will be required to take a pauper's oath for care at such centers. A pauper's oath is offensive to the elderly and the President should give these provisions his utmost consideration since the elderly are critical to the Presidential campaign in terms of a voting bloc.

Senator Packwood - Addressed one issue -- the day care center bill. Packwood recommends that the President not veto the bill and, if vetoed, the veto will not be sustained. Packwood commended the President for his acceptance speech in Kansas City; termed it excellent, and stated that if the President could do eight or nine more of those types of speeches during the campaign to various organizations he would so recommend, and to let the vice presidential candidate Dole go campaigning and barnstorming around the country. The President mentioned that this could be a format and discussed the negotiations concerning the debates and possible locations for the debates.

Rep. Bill Frenzel - Stated that he and others in the moderate wing of the Republican Party were anxious to get the President elected and very proud of their role and the results that the moderates played in the nomination process.



Frenzel stated the polls showed the President a strong underdog, with much work to be done. He mentioned the Harris poll which says the President is strong in the industrial states and that the moderate group can be of tremendous help to the President where he is the strongest. The moderates want to know where and to whom and to what organizations they can make their input during the Presidential election campaign. Frenzel also stated that there may be an attempt to organize a Presidential speaker's bureau in the House, a research group, and anything else that can be done to help. Frenzel stated that the moderates also wanted to help build a party after the election, and that this group was uniquely qualified to assist the President in getting elected and to get other Republicans elected to office. Frenzel stated that he was not interested in working for a Republican Party which would only be one-third of the elected representatives to the House.

The President then discussed the campaign organization, including the steering committee and the President Ford Committee. The President stated that the conduit for all recommendations should go through Rog Morton. Frenzel concluded by stating that in his judgment the first TV debate between the President and Carter would be the major event of the campaign and strongly recommended that the President be well prepared for the first TV debate.

Rep. Stewart McKinney - Started out by saying that some eyes have popped when he came out and campaigned for the President, but he wanted it understood that this was out of his personal fondness for the President. McKinney has just returned from campaigning in the Northeast and reported that he found no enthusiasm for Jimmy Carter; the people in the Northeast do not trust him, and consider him to be a \_\_\_\_\_.

McKinney stated that the President needed a positive program in the industrial states and cities. He sees a positive approach to the President in these industrial states and cities. He has not seen such an effort on behalf of a Republican President in his twelve years of elective office except the effort to run away from McGovern. McKinney stated that the Republican Party's power base in the past has always been the Northeast and that the President should consider very seriously a positive approach to the Northeast industrial states and cities.

