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# EVANS-NOVAK POLITICAL REPORT

WHAT'S HAPPENING . . . WHO'S AHEAD . . . IN POLITICS TODAY

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To: Our Subscribers

FLORIDA PRIMARY  
SPECIAL REPORT

From: Evans-Novak

Former Georgia Gov. Jimmy Carter's brilliant and surprising victory over Alabama Gov. George Wallace in the Florida Democratic Presidential primary last night has done grave, perhaps mortal damage to Wallace and has raised the possibility of a showdown between Carter and Sen. Henry Jackson for the nomination. And this, in turn, raises two questions: 1) Can Carter make himself more clearly attractive to the Democratic Left than Jackson? 2) Can Carter beat Jackson in a major industrial state?

To the extent that Carter's Florida win slowed down Jackson, it is a plus for the convention deadlock hopes of Sen. Hubert H. Humphrey. But HHH needs more than that: he needs the delegate vote split up four ways (with Wallace and also Rep. Morris Udall getting pieces of the pie). Therefore, the next big Democratic question may be whether Udall can stay alive by winning the Wisconsin primary on April 6.

Although President Gerald R. Ford's win in Florida over ex-California Gov. Ronald Reagan is unsurprising, it clearly indicates that the combination of Mr. Ford's incumbency and Reagan's mistakes has proven too heavy a burden for the challenger. The odds are now prohibitive that after the Illinois and North Carolina primaries - where Reagan faces almost certain defeat - the candidate challenge - though not the issue challenge - will evaporate.

## DEMOCRATS

Florida: These observations in the wake of the tremendous Carter win:

1) Once again, Carter's long-range planning paid off: a) Mobilization and organization of the black vote (where Carter carried over 70%); b) Saturation campaigning over the last year; c) and most important, support from liberals and even liberal candidates as the man to "stop" Wallace. This last support was given when it was never dreamed that Carter could be a far more potent threat for the nomination than Wallace.

2) The difference between 1972 and 1976 for George Wallace in Florida is that he was reduced to his hard core support of approximately 30%. He lost heavily in the Northern-oriented suburbs of Southern Florida and ran as well as in '72 only in the Southern-oriented Panhandle area.

3) Jackson slightly exceeded expectations with 24% of the vote and 21 delegates - not bad after a late start. He might have done better, however, were it not for the fact that: a) He personally pulled off the air two highly-effective anti-Carter spots (on mortgage tax deductions and defense spending); and b) He so publicly concentrated his campaign in the Miami Beach Jewish condominiums that he may have turned off voters in Northern Florida. Still, Jackson did as well or better as could have been expected. He even pulled some black votes away from Carter thanks to a last-minute effusive endorsement

from Humphrey for his civil rights record. Jackson's biggest problem was that Wallace ran so poorly.

The Future: A rundown on the four major surviving candidates as the result of the shock-a-week primary race so far:

1) Carter is a clear favorite in next week's Illinois' four-way "beauty contest" against Wallace, ex-Sen. Fred Harris and Sargent Shriver (despite some Shriver backing from Chicago Mayor Richard Daley as an anti-Wallace measure). Carter's Florida victory also propels him into the favorite's role in North Carolina (March 23) against Wallace and Jackson (not running hard there). This projects a formidable record of five primary wins (New Hampshire, Vermont, Florida, Illinois, North Carolina) and one loss (Massachusetts) in six elections. Color Carter the front runner.

What he must do next is clear: 1) Soften the visceral opposition to him from such liberals as Sen. George McGovern and ADAer Joe Rauh, and 2) Beat Jackson in a big industrial state such as Pennsylvania (April 27), Michigan (May 18), California (June 8), Ohio (June 8). The way to do this is clearly to move Leftward on the issues. But this is no easy task considering the fact that Carter has built his strength by 1) Taking no positions and 2) Attracting a constituency largely to the Right in the Democratic spectrum. Further complicating the confused Carter image, however, is the fact that while his voters are to the Right generally, his delegates are to the Left. His Florida delegation, for example, is dominated by old-time McGovernites.

2) The probability of Jackson doing well in New York is becoming a near certainty. With the demise of Sen. Birch Bayh, we perceive signs of a general liberal bailout without a major effort for Udall. That raises the possibility of 210 out of 274 delegates for Scoop - a large bag all right, but lacking dramatic impact if the liberals don't really fight. Again, the Big State Jackson-Carter confrontations - California and Ohio, in particular - could decide the issue. After his Massachusetts victory, Jackson's strength in California so frightened the Left that key liberal moneymen began pleading with Gov. Jerry Brown to run in the primary to save them from Jackson. We believe that Brown, who has been running hot and cold on this for some time, is running hot and may well get into it.

3) Udall took a calculated gamble in pushing restoration of the Wisconsin primary into a binding one (instead of a "beauty contest"). If Ronald Reagan is effectively out of business by April 6, Republicans may cross over to vote for Wallace. Udall simply cannot afford a defeat in Wisconsin. But he must win some-where, so the risk is justified (and made less by Harris slowing down his campaign and probably skipping Wisconsin altogether).

Mo Udall's problems transcend Wisconsin. Where can he look for wins in the future, particularly if Carter starts winning over the Left? His only hope is that a win in Wisconsin would generate some steam to energize him in Nebraska and Michigan (which seem to be his best bets).

4) Wallace suffered profound damage in Florida (which, of course, contributes to Carter's lustre). By being defeated in his Southern heartland, the potential Wallace delegate total falls from a high of 700 to a high of around 400, and probably much less. This means that Wallace is not only much less embarrassing to the Party but cannot claim that the Democratic leaders ganged up on him to cheat him out of the nomination. He, therefore, has less basis for a Third Party bid (Wallace has never had a chance to be nominated). We feel that he is definitely strong enough to stay in the race. However, his importance seems greatly reduced, and the possible end of his enormous impact on the Democratic Party's - and the country's - politics for the past twelve years may now be discerned.

Convention: Looking far ahead of the primaries that will probably be as surprising as those already conducted, there now appears to be three general sets of potential circumstances: 1) Either Carter or Jackson sewing up the nomination in the primaries, which we think is extremely unlikely. 2) A two-way race between Carter and Jackson, with Udall having fallen by the wayside. If Carter has made his peace with the liberals by then, he will have them because Jackson cannot make peace with them. We predict a vicious effort to undercut Scoop. If Carter cannot make peace, then the liberals may turn to HHH. But we don't see how Humphrey can make it in a three-man field (Carter, Jackson, and Wallace). 3) A field divided among Carter, Jackson, Wallace and Udall. Here there is a possibility though not the certainty of a deadlock, giving HHH a chance. Last night, Humphrey was privately saying as much by predicting to his friends a Udall win in Wisconsin. Without that, HHH is in bad trouble.

#### GOP

The conservative backers of the Reagan challenge are naturally glum, the realists ready to concede that only a miracle can stop Jerry Ford now, the non-realists predicting ample new money and workers to take RR on to Texas, Alabama and Georgia in May and California on June 8 - his probable best states - for the showdown.

However, we think the showdown is now, and that a sizable defeat for Reagan in Illinois next Tuesday (anything over 58%) would probably tip North Carolina (which is presently close) to Ford and write finis. We don't see how RR can continue to absorb one defeat after another, continue to keep financially healthy (even with Federal tax dollars matching his contributions) and avoid becoming a laughing stock. Some Reagan supporters may want him to do just that, but not Ronald Reagan himself.

He is stuck on several primary ballots, apparently whether he wants to exit or not: Georgia (May 4), West Virginia (May 11), Oregon (May 25) and, of course Illinois and North Carolina. Then there's Wisconsin on April 6, where he is locked in. Reagan can still get out of Nebraska, but only if he makes the decision tomorrow, which hardly seems likely. Some of Reagan's own people tell us that if they determine his cause is hopeless, they will urge him to drop out.

When - and if - Reagan formally withdraws, we do not see at this time any possibility of a Ford-Reagan negotiated peace in any way similar to the notorious Richard M. Nixon-Nelson Rockefeller pact of Fifth Avenue in 1960 (although Rockefeller's national defense issues then were putting the same kind of pressure on President Dwight D. Eisenhower and Nixon that Reagan's are placing on President Ford). Nor do we see:

- 1) A Ford acceptance of any Reagan-camp demand for a major voice in the Vice-Presidential nomination.
- 2) A Reagan Vice-Presidential nomination (which he almost surely would turn down in any event).
- 3) A Ford agreement to permit major Reagan input into the Party platform.
- 4) An important Reagan position in the Ford campaign apparatus for the November campaign.

But the impact of Ronald Reagan on Gerald Ford has been considerable and will continue in these other ways, we believe:

1) President Ford's de-emphasis of the word "detente", a direct result of Reagan pressure, may well transform cosmetics into something harder and more permanent on the foreign policy front. So far, it is only words, but something

more may well be brewing, not only because of Reagan but also because of the clear national mood emerging from both Party's primaries.

2) The importance of the conservative vote within the GOP has been dramatized - RR running only 1.5 points behind in New Hampshire and only 6 behind in Florida.

3) The pressure of competition has forced Mr. Ford to do what he would not have come close to doing without it - come to grips with his first non-parochial, non-Grand Rapids political campaign, and not a moment too soon. The heroes are Stu Spencer, Bill Roberts (in Florida), and Rogers Morton. We still see major gaps in the Ford operation, but the mere act of facing Reagan for the past five months has been a tremendous shot in the arm. Mr. Ford himself has blossomed visibly - both as a campaigner and as a Presidential-appearing figure - since his victory in New Hampshire. Democrats are seriously telling each other that he is going to be tough to beat in November.

Could Reagan have done it some other way? Given his own personality, the upturn in the economy and the now abandoned 11th Commandment (not to speak ill of another Republican), probably not. But an earlier, sharper and more concentrated attack on the President - not waiting until it appeared to be an act of desperation - could conceivably have delivered those few hundred extra votes to RR in New Hampshire, giving him not only that state but denying Jerry Ford the incomparably significant psychological advantage he gained from that narrowest of victories.

Now the danger for Reagan is "too much, too late" criticism of Mr. Ford in Illinois, as his one-stop connection of Ford-Nixon-Watergate-the pardon yesterday indicated. This infuriated Republicans of all stripes and was immediately dropped. Look for RR to go after Ford during the next week on national security, which Reagan aides believed lowered the Ford 17 point lead in Florida (according to RR polls) to 6%.

Unquestionably, the Reagan camp is now desperate, but even in desperation, on Meet The Press last Sunday, RR could not bring himself to say right out that President Ford relies too much on Sec. of State Henry Kissinger, although this is a major part of the Reagan strategy.

A top Reagan staffer told us this morning that from here on out their man would drop the euphemisms and strike out at Ford directly. This last-ditch strategy will strike many Republicans as desperate - as "too much, too late" - and as unlikely to alter the almost-inevitable course of the GOP primaries or President Ford's own course of action.

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