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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN.....

EVANS-NOVAK POLITICAL REPORT

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

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To: Our Subscribers

From: Evans-Novak

Ex-Georgia Gov. Jimmy Carter's smashing triumph in Pennsylvania last night makes him far and away the front runner for the 1976 Democratic Presidential nomination, and cripples all his announced opponents. Carter is now a 10-to-1 shot for the nomination. However, he must win consistently in the succeeding primaries and pick up uncommitted delegates to get over the 1505 total needed to nominate.

Carter's only viable challenger left is Sen. Hubert H. Humphrey, for the old picture of a deadlock followed by a brokered convention has now been broken. He has all but ruled out the New Jersey - June 8 primary, but may well sign a letter to the Federal Elections Commission permitting formation of an HHH-for-President Committee to be set up on an "exploratory" basis under the chairmanship of Robert Short of Minneapolis. This would imply a full-out run in the weeks remaining, and some politicians not unfriendly to HHH doubt he has the heart for it.

The Texas primary on May 1 is absolutely make or break for ex-California Gov. Ronald Reagan. He must win a majority of Texas' 96 delegates or be reduced to a mere nuisance. RR's South-West strategy depends upon following up his Texas victory with wins on May 4 in Georgia (probable), Alabama (probable) and Indiana (extremely improbable). Winning the rest and losing Indiana is a bare minimum performance for Reagan.

Despite his overwhelming prospects to win the Republican Presidential nomination, all is not well with President Gerald R. Ford's campaign. There is no long-range strategy; Reagan has put Mr. Ford on the defensive; and there is indeed concern in the White House over what Jimmy Carter can do in the South in November.

DEMOCRATS

Pennsylvania: Carter's win by popular vote and delegate totals both larger than expected can be summed up quickly:

1) Take away Sen. Henry Jackson's win in Philadelphia (where Mayor Frank Rizzo's machine turned out the vote), and Carter actually won by 17-to-23 percentage points elsewhere. To run that well in a Northern industrial state shows that he is the only viable candidate left.

2) Labor, as we suggested in our last report, fell flat on its face. Incredibly, Carter ran better among blue collar workers outside Philadelphia than did Jackson.

3) The "ethnic purity" flap, as we predicted, did Carter little harm - losing him a little among blacks but probably helping him (though the polls cannot show this) among erstwhile Wallaceites. Carter ran very well in western Pennsylvania

areas where Alabama Gov. George Wallace was strong in 1972.

The Future: We now calculate a Carter delegate total of 1100 going into the convention based on continued primary victories, and that's still short of the 1505 total needed to nominate. But we believe he will pick up the necessary 400 if he gets to New York in excess of 1000. The question then is, with Jackson and Rep. Morris Udall nearly ruined, how can Carter be kept below 1000 delegates. These are the big primaries remaining:

Texas, May 1: Sen. Lloyd Bentsen must win more delegates than Carter, but our guess - based on a recent trip there - is that Carter, riding his Pennsylvania momentum, has a good shot for winning in Texas.

Indiana, May 4: Jackson and Wallace have no real chance to prevent a big win by front-runner Carter.

Michigan, May 18: Today Carter is way ahead of Jackson, Wallace and Udall, and it's likely that the fence-sitting UAW and its President Leonard Woodcock will endorse and work for Carter soon.

Maryland, May 18: The entrance of California Gov. Jerry Brown leads HHH people to hope that he will draw enough votes away from Carter to give Jackson the win. We think that's very remote.

California, June 8: Jerry Brown must beat Carter here, and as of today he would. However, one savvy California pol is already scaling down his prediction from a Brown majority to a Brown plurality.

Ohio, June 8: Carter is far ahead and should win big.

New Jersey, June 8: Uncommitted delegates must beat Carter's slate here, and it won't be easy. Carter people claim some uncommitteds - including Newark Mayor Kenneth Gibson - are getting itchy. Favorite son Rep. Peter Rodino has been threatening to get off the slate entirely unless HHH becomes an announced candidate, because he refuses to head a Stop Carter slate. If Rodino stays on, it probably will mean that HHH has decided to approve formation of Bob Short's committee and intends later to announce his candidacy.

Summary: There are three possibilities emerging from all this:

- 1) Carter wins all seven of the above primaries and becomes the nominee.
- 2) He wins all the above except the strong favorite son states - Texas, California and New Jersey. That still puts him around 1000 delegates.
- 3) He loses more than those three favorite son states. That would be trouble. Carter cannot afford to lose a state like Michigan or Ohio. In that sense he is now like JFK in '60, who could not afford to lose any primaries.

Carter: Two points about stopping him should be borne in mind: 1) He has no viable primary opponents left. HHH's strategy, though totally appropriate and intelligent at the time, is now a disaster. 2) Carter does not raise the animosity anywhere in the Party that Sen. George McGovern did in '72 or that Jackson would have done this year. For instance, old-line organized labor doesn't like Carter but will back him strongly against Ford.

Having weathered the "ethnic purity" storm, Carter has been solving his "fuzziness" problem by moving Left slowly - on the Humphrey-Hawkins jobs bill, the Kennedy medical insurance bill. Left-wing speechwriter Bob Shrum, hired from McGovern, could be important -- if he finds happiness with Carter, which is not certain: his first effort was a Carter statement attacking the President for his anti-Hanoi stand. Is Carter just playing with the Party's liberals and preparing to move back to the Center for the general election campaign, or is he getting himself in deep trouble?

HHH: His dilemma now boils down to this: for months he has waited for someone else to stop Carter and deliver him the nomination. That period has now ended and only Hubert himself might possibly stop JC. HHH is showing a lot of unhappiness in making up his mind, but we think he is leaning towards the formation of the Short Committee and giving it one month to propagandize the

Party before the June 8 primaries.

If this happens, bitterness is certain to develop between JC and HHH. Humphrey, we feel, is aware of this, aware of his own shakiness these past months as the Stop Carter shadow candidate, aware that even under the best circumstances Carter may be unstoppable. But anti-Carter, pro-Humphreyites are telling HHH that JC is going to be stuck around 900-plus delegates no matter what happens. We believe this to be nonsense.

The effort to drag HHH into active contention is not universal among anti-Carterites. Some of the Party's top strategists worry that with Watergate a vivid public memory any effort to derail Carter now after his strong popular showing could be counter-productive and lead to a pro-Carter backlash.

GOP

Presidential Outlook: Going into Saturday's Texas showdown (psychologically the most important since New Hampshire) there are three possible results, with the following consequences:

Result #1: RR winning less than half the delegates in Texas. Even if he followed this disaster up with wins in Georgia and Alabama, RR would be finished and would revert strictly to "keep-the-President-honest" Right-Wing candidate of the nuisance variety. Though Reagan's people vow they will stay in the race right on to Kansas City no matter what, it would not make a great deal of sense to do so and pressure would mount (as before North Carolina) for RR to bow out.

Result #2: RR wins a majority in Texas followed by wins in Georgia and Alabama but a loss in Indiana - the most likely outcome now. This keeps RR alive but not well - a 1-in-10 shot, we believe. This would also keep alive the South-West strategy, which is based on sweeping the Southern and Western states to get close to half the 1130 delegates needed to nominate.

Result #3: RR sweeping all four primaries, including Indiana. This would put President Ford in serious trouble, threatening an erosion of his previous strength and questioning - for the first time since February 24 - whether he really could be nominated. However, this result is most unlikely.

Reagan: His basic strategy, as peddled to both politicians and the press, is to capture around 700 delegates from the Southern and Western states running from the Mason-Dixon Line on the Atlantic Ocean through Texas and the Southwest up through California. Add to this some 200 delegates from the rest of the country, and Reagan would be up to 900 delegates. In a two-man race, this would not be enough, but RR's agents are hoping that if they can get that close, a number of uncommitteds would somehow prevent Mr. Ford from going over the top or something would happen.

Since our last Report, RR scored some gains in his South-West strategy with a near sweep in Arizona and a win in South Carolina. But what is obviously absolutely necessary is winning the California winner-take-all primary's 167 delegates on June 8. To do that a good performance in Texas is essential. The bare minimum in Texas for Reagan is 55 of 96 delegates.

We travelled with RR in Texas and came up with these observations:

- 1) He is relaxed, comfortable and happy with his material, more so than at any time since 1965. He seems dedicated to his attacks on the Ford-Kissinger-foreign-defense policy.
- 2) The Right Wing no longer has a case for a complaint that RR is soft-pedaling it. They lap up his stuff on the Panama Canal, etc.
- 3) The broader Reagan design is to get the public to believe that Jerry Ford is a dissembler - saying one thing about the Panama Canal on the stump and doing another back in Washington - a ploy reaching beyond the Right Wing.

Ford: There is growing concern inside the White House that the Reagan campaign,

prolonged beyond it's natural life, they believe, by the North Carolina upset, is preventing any forward-thinking about the general election campaign. Unquestionably, Mr. Ford's travels, as well as his rhetoric, are being dictated by the Reagan challenge.

This anxiety is intensified by the advent of Carter, who White House advisers now feel is the most likely Democratic candidate. Whether to contest the South with JC or abandon it to him should be a major consideration at the White House, but it is so preoccupied with RR that it cannot concentrate on Carter. However, both Treasury Sec. William Simon and Campaign Chairman Rogers Morton urge meeting Carter head on below the Mason-Dixon Line.

We travelled with Mr. Ford in Indiana last week and file the following:

1) Despite all the White House propaganda about GRF turning into a super-campaigner, there has not been that much change. Jerry Ford is still a plain-spoken Midwesterner who evokes less intensity than past Presidents.

2) In an effort to avoid dull set speeches, the President's over-reliance on the Q-and-A format means that the Ford Campaign loses some control over the proceedings.

3) Mr. Ford's present content is being set by Reagan. The dominant subjects on the Indiana swing were the Panama Canal, national defense, Vietnam.

There is clearly a Kissinger Problem. In Indiana, anyway, the mention of his name evoked booing from an otherwise friendly audience. The latest difficulty in the Secretary of State's African tour on which he is assaulting the white minority regime in Rhodesia and endorsing black majority rule. Morton was in Atlanta this week and found GOP resentment, particularly from the President's supporters. They wonder why Kissinger chose this particular time - with the Texas, Georgia and Alabama primaries ahead - to make the Administration's strongest stand for black majority rule in eight years.

One politically-oriented senior adviser continues to urge the President to dump Kissinger forthwith and replace him with ex-Treasury Sec. John Connally preparatory to naming him to the ticket in August. It won't happen.

Texas: Based on our trip, these are our conclusions:

1) Nobody is certain but the clear edge today in the popular vote is Reagan's. How this relates to delegate votes nobody knows at all. The answer depends on who has best organized the rural counties, where the GOP is thin.

2) The size of the total GOP vote remains wholly unknown. However, the greater the George Wallace cross-over vote the more RR will be helped.

3) There is also an element of life-and-death struggle here with the Reaganites determined to humiliate Sen. John Tower, depriving him of one of the four-at-large seats on the delegation.

Indiana: Based on our trip there, the Indiana primary seems a total lock for Ford, with one of the last old-fashioned GOP patronage organizations and the very popular Gov. Otis Bowen favoring the Pres. We found signs of RR life, and considering Mr. Ford's general weakness in past primaries, we forecast at best another 55-to-45 win for GRF.

The Vice-President: Nelson Rockefeller's incredibly bizarre behavior re Jackson and his staff undercuts speculation that he really might end up on the ticket after all. We feel that he was not trying to curry favor with conservatives but just gossiping. Any Eastern liberal would be opposed by proponents of the South-West strategy who feel that Ford must win there because he is dead in the Northeast. The logical choice would be Connally but he will be fiercely opposed by his many enemies around the President.

Richard Evans
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