

MARCH 26, 1976

POOL REPORT/AF 1/AAFB to SAN FRANCISCO

*(he's meaning Peter Kaye)

Peter Kaye came back to fill in your poolers on California and Wisconsin--he said he's not going to Wisconsin, but indicated he would stop in Texas on his way home (Texas primary May first). On California, he said there was a spending limit of \$2,590,000, says no idea how much money Ford Campaign will have left to spend on California; it is a winner-take-all state with 167 delegates. Indicated that there are no recent polls; the Field Poll was the last in late January or February, showing Reagan slightly ahead. Kaye said much of Ford organization is former Reagan people. Co-chairman is Evelle Younger, state attorney general and highest GOP statewide officeholder, and State Senator Dennis Carpenter of Orange County (see below).** Southern California chairman is Mayor Pete Wilson of San Diego, largest Republican-governed city in U. S. Ford also supported by majority of Congressional delegation (9 or 10 out of 15). Two members of said delegation aboard AF-1, Bob Wilson and Clair Burgener, both of San Diego area.

Kaye said there are 2.8 million Republicans in California. Registration by party and it closes May 9. According to Kaye Ford campaign is trying to reach 80 percent of these Republicans by telephone. Ford organization is located in 51 of 58 California counties. They also will be doing some direct mailing and have an active "advocate" schedule. Going to California in April are Butz, Governor Dan Evans of Washington, Rogers Morton, Senator Tower, Elliott Richardson, and Mitchell Kobelinski, head of Small Business Administration.

Kaye says this is fund raising trip, not a campaign trip as such. President expects to help raise \$600,000 (after expenses) for PFC. Meeting at noon is \$500, tonight's LA dinner, \$1,000, but this not all new money, since some people have participated in earlier ongoing statewide fund raising projects... Asked about Governor Brown's entry into the Democratic race, Kaye said he thought it might help Ford because the fact that Democratic governor has come in and cut the rate of increase of the budget by about a half "does something to the luster (of Reagan's record)... and it's food for thought." Kaye said the rate of budget increase under Brown was about 6 percent, while it was about 12 percent under Reagan.

On request of your poolers, Rep. Wilson and Rep. Burgener came back to discuss California race. Burgener said the race between Ford and Reagan is "nip and tuck... (and) depends a lot on what happens between now and the June 8th primary..." Wilson disagreed and thought Ford was doing "a little better than nip and tuck. I think Ford is ahead right now." Wilson said that Ford had the "major power structure" behind him, including a majority of the Republican Congressmen (Burgener interjects: "It's almost unanimous), and, adds Wilson, "by primary time, I, they'll all be (in the Ford camp--paraphrase)."

Wilson said in response to question, that "defense is the biggest issue... California is the biggest defense state in terms of dollars---employment, etc." Said the Cruise Missile contract going to Convair meant 2,000 jobs in an area where they are needed. Also said the other two big defense projects, B-1 Bomber and F-18 fighter are also to be built in California. Asked if SALT agreement would dump Cruise Missile, said no because SALT would only limit range of Cruises allowed under the agreement. In any event, doesn't see any change between now and election time in SALT. Because of defense orientation, President has "some advantage over governor" like RR because of experience in field, says Wilson. Burgener, who member of Appropriations Committee, says Ford will make "major effort" not to permit defense budget cuts this year. How about issue of U. S. defense posture?

*{minority leader Cal. Senate/former state Rep. Chairman.) -MORE-

Wilson said "any attempt to blame weakened condition on President would backfire" cuz it's Congress fault for cutting budget. Is U.S. weakened? No, U.S. not No.2, still ahead "but no question losing ground," Wilson said. Said U.S. \$35 billion weaker than it would have been cuz of Congressional budget cuts over last 7-8 years.

Is Reagan playing politics with foreign policy? "Not irresponsibly," says Burgener. Wilson added, "It's rather touchy for him... think he'd better to stick to other issues... he's out of his field in foreign policy." Burgener indicated that Kissinger was an issue but that he shouldn't be, that he should speak out more and make it clear that he's in favor of a strong defense policy, not only in California, but nationwide.

Cuba? Both Congressmen indicated they thought it beneficial to Ford campaign because people want America to be strong, don't want Cuba to make any more gains. Wilson recalled that in Cuba missile crisis of 1962, JFK's actions "changed American public opinion toward him dramatically..."

-0-

(And suddenly, at this point, a butterfly appeared and your pool ceased its efforts for a brief, shining moment...)

-0-

Queried about feelers to Reagan as Vice President, Burgener said he thought it would be a strong ticket, said he didn't believe in "balanced" ticket and thought VP should be "mirror image... or a carbon copy" of President.

-0-

(Out of sequence) Nessen came back to report who was on plane, only speech-writer is Pat Butler, Hartmann to meet Ford in California. Nessen said there would be some foreign policy, national defense in lunch speech. Textile speech will be devoted to historical place of textile industry and its problems (economy, international trade). National convention of textile industry, with 900 members from all over (including North Carolina).

Lengthy discussion ensued regarding swine flu vaccine program. Asked if some medical authorities didn't think \$135 million program not necessary, Nessen said it was a case of whether to take a chance next winter -- "lot of things pointed toward possibility of outbreak" "This is an insurance policy," he said. It is better to be criticized for having done it, than for not having done it and people die (paraphrase). Haven't seen swine flue transmitted person-to-person since 1930 until outbreak at Fort Dix. There are, however, reported cases of transmittal of swine-to-people. Pool inquired about instance of transmittal ewe-to-people. Nessen had nothing to add.

Nessen did take issue with critics who say it is not possible to complete massive inoculation. Said President was told by health, pharmaceutical biggies that it is possible to get it done.

Under miscellaneous, son Steve, who ranching and attending California Poly, will join President for 2-1/2 hours this afternoon during hotel free time in LA. No plans to contact Nixon, said Nessen, when questioned about whether President would phone ex-President.

Asked if President has requested Callaway's resignation, Nessen said "no change in Callaway situation."

MORE

Asked about Washington Post story on Administration authorizing contacts with North and South Vietnam, Nessen referred reporters to President's Honolulu speech (December 75 enroute back from PRC) when he said, "We are looking toward the future rather than the past." Asked specifically if there had been any authorization for new contacts, he refused to comment.

-0-

Miscellaneous from Kaye: Questioned about Carter campaign and whether or not he is beginning to look at HHH less, he responded, "No, but looking at Carter more." Thought Carter would be tough. In this connection, asked about Carter's anti-Washington stance and if it would hurt Ford, Kaye said, "If the economic news stays as it is, stable, and we have a peaceful international situation, it's pretty hard to fault Washington for that."

Asked if Cuba warning would boost Ford's campaign, Kaye replied, "I like to think he makes foreign policy decisions for the good of the country; I see no indication that he's playing politics, like his opponent."

Frank Jackman
Phil Jones
Strobe Talbot

#