

April 22, 1976

POOL REPORT - AIR FORCE ONE - INDIANAPOLIS TO EVANSVILLE

President left the Governor's Mansion on time, went to President Ford headquarters downtown, where a small crowd was gathered, outside, and inside were estimated 350 volunteers in premises decorated by balloons. Mayor William Hudnut welcomed the President, who shook hands and said, "I want to give an analysis of where we are. As we get more or less to the halfway mark, we are well above the 50 percent of delegates we need to win in Kansas City in August, and when we keep going down the road with momentum from the various primaries and convention States, that momentum is real and we are going to Kansas City and win, and win in November thereafter." He said, "We are doing better in Texas."

Talked about the asset of the improving economy and said the other big asset was that the old traditional programs were still good. "We have got prosperity at home and peace around the world because those programs are still successful. Now for the first time in many years, not a single U. S. male officer or man is in combat around the world. We have peace and we are going to keep it that way."

Also said, "This administration will be frank, honest and candid with the American people. We have been and as a result we have their faith and trust."

John Carlson explained that the 50 percent represented estimates of delegates from precinct caucuses, State conventions and primaries. The President went from the PFC group to the Rodeway Inn, where he took questions and answers from the broadcasters and outside signed a large, red, white and blue sign announcing, "There's a great hope for the USO." On the sign was a cartoon sketch of Bob Hope's profile, beside which the President wrote, "Happy Birthday, Bob. Best wishes, 'pro.' Jerry Ford." This was described as a USO fundraising project. The President shook hands with Rodeway Inn workers before heading for the airport.

Incidentally, John Cochran points out that the 50 percent estimate was also given by Ford in one of those hundreds of Texas interviews he has conducted in recent days, and it already has appeared in print.

Air Force One flight uneventful other than for soggy sweet rolls.

J. Cochran
M. Dobbin
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