The original documents are located in Box 68, folder "May 5, 1997 - Oral History Interview with Robert Teeter" of the Robert M. Teeter Papers at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

Oral History Interview With

ROBERT TEETER

May 5, 1997

By David Horrocks, Gerald R. Ford Library

The interview was conducted at Mr. Teeter's offices at Coldwater Corporation, Ann Arbor, Michigan. The interview was part of an oral history program conducted by National Archives staff of the Gerald R. Ford Library and funded in major part by the Gerald R. Ford Foundation. The verbatim transcript has been edited to improve the readability of the spoken word.

Q. I'd like to start by asking if you would recount your first substantial association with Gerald Ford, whether by contact in a meeting or chance to observe.

A. It really falls into two completely different levels. First, I had worked for George Romney when he was Governor and for the Michigan party for Ellie Peterson in the 1960s. I had been active in running campaigns in Michigan during that period, the mid to late 1960s. So, I had met him and I knew him, but I didn't really have any substantive relationship with him when we were working. He spoke at conventions and at Lincoln Day dinners, and we flew back and forth. So you would know him the way you would know any other congressman. I didn't have any really close working relationship with him until after he was President, in the fall of 1974.

Q. Then we'll begin the interview at a point before you have a substantial association with him, because I'd like you to tell me about the national survey that you conducted for the RNC in June 1974.

A. All right. Obviously, that was right at the end of the Nixon administration, and I think there were two things that had gone on during that period. One is that I had polled for President Nixon in the 1972 campaign. Then there continued to be some polling after that, during 1973 and 1974, to look at where he was at different times with the public. But I think the June 1974 poll was one that was done for the [Republican] National Committee, really aimed at the perception of the party and looking at where the party was going into the 1974 elections. Obviously, in June there was a lot of focus on how the party was going to do in the congressional elections of 1974. We were beginning to get very concerned about that, and I did that poll, I think, to look at the party and how people perceived it, not knowing that it was just six weeks or something before President Nixon would resign.

Q. Would you describe the process by which a survey was contracted---what kind of input the contractors would have into the subject areas and into the kinds of questions that were asked.

A. There were two in that era. One is there was independent work that polling companies like ourselves or other contractors did for the parties. The National Committee at that time was interested in the congressional elections, and so the National Chairman and the staff there were interested in just straight political polls on how they would plan and execute their

campaign for 1974.

The other kind is done for an incumbent President, which has always been done. There are a variety of ways over the years that that has been contracted and paid for and executed. In that era, the way it was done is the National Committee had a budget set aside for White House polling. It was done to comply with the law. The polling was contracted with and paid for by the political parties, obviously to keep from having some kind of a fund in the White House. But it was really directed by the people in the White House. I mean, they were the clients in the sense that they decided when they wanted to poll, what they wanted to poll on. You worked with them. And so, there is the Presidential White House polling, and there is polling done for the parties for campaigning. Those were two separate things, even though you might have had two contracts with the Republican National Committee. And I think that's largely -- I don't know how it is done currently in the Clinton Administration -- but I know through the Reagan and Bush administrations that's the way it was done. There was a political budget that was part of the National Committee budget, and that's how they paid for it. And that was the proper way, and it's always been the proper way, to do it.

Q. In the 1974 June survey, who would you have worked with at the RNC in designing it?

A. There were probably three entities -- the National Chairman, and there was usually a Director of Research who was in charge for contracting for and analyzing it, and interpreting polling. And then, quite possibly, that

late in the campaign year, some of the political people who were in the process of running campaigns, who were out in the field. There was probably a political director or a deputy chairman of the National Committee---I don't recall who it was at this time---who was probably involved in it.

Q. Do you recall what your findings were?

A. No, I don't.

Q. Or with whom you would have communicated them?

A. No, I don't.

Q. I can't give you a prompt from the [Library's] files either, because I don't see one in our files. Do you remember if you spoke with Vice President Ford about the survey results?

A. No, I don't believe I did. No, that would not normally have been true.

Q. Was it pretty much outdated upon August 9, 1974.

A. Sure. Obviously, the whole world changed politically. I mean, you had two big changes. You had, first, the resignation of Agnew, and Vice President Ford comes into office, which had a big dramatic effect on things. But [that was] nowhere near as big as the resignation of the President, and

President Ford becoming President. The first unelected President in the country's history. So, anything that you had done was outdated by then.

Q. When was your first association with the Ford administration?

A. I had known Don Rumsfeld and Dick Cheney and had worked with them in the past, in several other things during 1972 when they worked with the Cost of Living Council. I guess it was in 1972. We worked on the campaign together. I had known them for some time. So somewhere, not long after President Ford was in office, in late August or early September, I began to have some discussions with Rumsfeld and particularly Dick Cheney, who then Deputy Chief of Staff, about polling for the President to see how he was doing. And then, obviously, it wasn't going to be very long before he was going to have to run in the next year.

I'm not sure exactly when they started, but by September we were having some fairly detailed discussions, and I know we have a proposed polling program outline that I wrote for him about the middle or the 23rd, dated the 23rd, of September.

Q. [I saw at the Library] a memo to schedule briefings with Dean Burch on September 12--- Burch and several others---on a second round of Fall public opinion surveys that had been due to be completed on September 9. And, of course, September 8 is the pardon announcement.

A. Dean Burch was in the White House. We were all beginning -- it was the beginning of a nucleus in the White House of people who were

concerned about the politics of both the 1974 election, which was right upon us, and of the 1976 election, which was getting started. It was Dean Burch and Dick Cheney, Jack Marsh, and a group of people. I used to go in and brief them on the polling that we had done for the other committees. We did work for the National Committee and for the other two campaign committees---Congressional Committee and the Senatorial Committee at that time. But we were beginning---and I think it was in very late September---to focus on polling specifically for President Ford's election campaign in 1976.

Q. What were your analyses telling you at that time about the 1974 Congressional campaign?

A. That it was going to be a bad year. We had known that, really. Those signs were there after the 1972 election on. Once the Watergate hearings got going, Republicans were in trouble. I don't think that we anticipated we'd lose 72 or 74 seats, or whatever it was, but you knew it was not going to be a good year. Historically, six years into the administration, it would have been a bad year [even if] President Nixon had not been in trouble or not had to resign. A kind of tradition is that those off years, particularly the sixth year in, are bad years for the incumbent White House party. But obviously it was much worse yet. You had the Watergate hearings that had gone on for a long time. You had the indictments. You had everything wrong with Watergate and the President resigning. So, everybody knew it was going to be a very tough year for Republicans.

Q. Were you telling the White House that it was Watergate-related issues that were going to drive that election? Or the economy? It's not an either/or, really, but...

A. To be honest with you, I don't recall. But it was clear that the resignation dominated. You had a Republican President resign in disgrace, and it was huge. And you had a bad economy. You had all the things going wrong, and you were six years into a Republican term. So, you had a whole combination of things, and you can't quantify how big each one is.

Q. Did you or Jack Marsh or Don Rumsfeld try to get President Ford to back away from his intention of campaigning vigorously for the congressional candidates? In other words, say "this is a losing proposition."

A. No, I don't think so. There were two things or maybe three elements to it. One is, I don't think you could have gotten him to back away from it. He had spent his life up to that moment trying to figure out how to get more Republicans elected to Congress. Every Congressional election had been important to him, and he certainly, probably up to that point, had always been on the complaining end of Republican Presidents or presidential candidates not doing enough to help Republicans running for Congress. So he was one committed to do it.

Secondly, I think there was a feeling that you had to get him out. He was an appointed President. He didn't go into office with the benefit of having run a national campaign. He was not well known. In fact, there was very little known about him other than the fact that he had been a Congressman from Michigan. It was important to get him out and get him

known. Then there was also that question around at the beginning---Would he really be the candidate next year? Should he run for re-election, or election, or should he be replaced? Should he just serve the interim time? And I think that there was an idea that you'd want to use some of that campaign to make him a national political figure.

Q. Set the table, in a sense.

A. Yes.

Q. What did you think of that table, as you analyzed the election results? He has had two or three months in office and made several key decisions through that period. What analysis did you pass on to the White House staff and what did they ask you?

A. We [the political advisers] were talking about messages and themes, because what he was going to say during the 1974 campaign was going to have to lead in to what he was going to say after, in the State of the Union. He was only going to get one State of the Union, and then you'd be into the 1976 campaign year. So, we talked a lot about the beginning of laying the groundwork of the message. But you were trying to hold on to as many seats as possible, too. So his schedule was more controlled by where he could go and help individual people who were in trouble during that time. And, remember, he had some huge governmental problems. So, the fact was you didn't have, as you would with somebody who had come to office a different way and had been there for six years, or even two years---you couldn't take the whole White House staff or the President's time and put

command focus on the campaign. These were side trips. He was focused on being President.

Q. Did the transitional status of the White House staff at that time---a lot of people coming and going, people trying to find and decide where they stood or what they should do---did that cause problems for you?

A. No, I don't think so because the people were pretty stable. Dick Cheney, particularly, is someone I had known and worked with, and he was there. So you always had somebody to talk to. He had a young assistant by the name of Foster Chanock.

Q. I was going to ask you about him later.

A. Anyway, you had somebody with whom you could deal on the daily details---the administrative type details. There was always someone there, and then you pulled together groups of people who were interested in politics and policy in that junction. It was at various times Alan Greenspan--- and Dean Burch and Jack Marsh were, I think, the two most political. And Dick [Cheney].

They were focused on what they should've been focused on. First , on running the government. Second, on how to begin to lay a political base for President Ford. Dick paid attention to it. He was the deputy chief of staff and he kind of drew that straw. He did pay attention to it. We began to talk about putting a campaign together for the next year. He had a guy, this young guy Foster Chanock, who was assigned to that detail.

Q. He shows up in our files. We have his files. He has a lot of polling material. We don't know much about who he was and why he was there. This a good place to identify Mr. Chanock.

A. Unfortunately, he died very early and young in life of cancer. But he was a brilliant young guy. In addition to being very smart, he was a very charming guy and a lot of fun to work with, got along with everybody, and turned out an immense amount of work everyday. He was kind of Dick's personal assistant and aide, and he just followed-up on things and got things done. He was kind of extra sets of eyes, ears, hands and feet for Dick. As we got further toward the campaign, more and more of that was political. He had come there (I'm really recalling old history)---he was a native of Washington, his father was a physician at NIH, and he'd gone to the University of Chicago, and had gotten to know some of Don Rumsfeld's daughters at some point in life. He had spent a year or two overseas as a young college graduate. He'd come back and was looking for a job in politics. I think he'd gone to see Don, and he had just popped up in the White House at the time and Don hired him. He and Dick hired him to be an assistant, you know, kind of a "gofer" and do those kinds of details. As I said, he was a brilliant guy and he was a wonderful personality. He was smart, charming, great sense of humor, and turned out an immense amount of work. He did really handle a lot of administrative detail for following things up for Don and Dick.

Q. That would have carried through right through 1976?

A. Right. He was there for the duration.

Q. When you were talking earlier about political advisors within the White House---those who would advise on political matters in late 1974---you didn't mention Robert Hartmann.

A. He was in some [meetings] but he was not in most of the kind of strategy meetings. He was over with the communications section, was the chief speech writer and had a personal relationship with the President, but was really not a regular or daily participant in the political meetings as much as say, Dick and Jack and Burch.

Q. Were there consequences for that in terms of President Ford's ability to communicate?

A. In retrospect there probably were, yes. The single most important thing--- not only in this day and age, but even then--- about a President and a presidential candidate, is not in the official campaign or the advertising. It's their ability on a daily basis to go out and articulate what they want to say to the country and do it in a way that they make a positive image on the country when people see him on the news every night doing the job as President. The formulation not only of what they're going to say in terms of content, but in the way in which it gets written and articulated, is important. Usually you've got to have some link between the people who are really deciding on the political strategy and tactics and those people who are doing the speech writing and [who are] coaching the President or candidate, and talking to the press.

Q. Hartmann also had some polling done, I think, through DMI. Was there, in effect, information from two polling operations going into the White House and to the President?

A. I don't know about to the President, but I think, yes, in the White House, temporarily. Hartmann had his own kind of nexus there, and then there was the group that was with Dick Cheney that would ultimately evolve into the campaign group.

Q. What was you data telling you in late 1974 in terms of what President Ford needed to do to articulate themes and establish his personal.....

A. The biggest problem was that people didn't know him very well. It sounds hard to believe, but the fact was, in some ways, you had here a sitting President who was not very well known. When you went out and asked people about him, they couldn't tell you much. They could tell you that he'd been a Congressman. They could tell you, sometimes, that he was from Michigan. They got to know his family well---it was obviously a very attractive family and they knew that. Some could tell you that he had played football at the University of Michigan. In other words, when you think about other presidents or other presidential candidates, they were very well known commodities by the time they got to office. Most of them had run once or twice before. Lyndon Johnson had been the Majority Leader of the Senate, he'd been Vice President of the United States, and a presidential candidate himself. He had campaigned all over and gotten known. Really

the only latter day example of someone who hadn't was Jimmy Carter. Think about Hubert Humphrey being the nominee---he'd been around national politics for a long time. Certainly Nixon had, Reagan had, Bush had. By the time somebody not only runs but goes through a campaign and gets elected, what you learn is that a campaign, as much as it may look like a circus, is an educational device. People really learn about the candidate. The voters are very wise. They not only learn about what's important, what the candidate's priorities are--- they learn about what [the candidate] has to say about [the issues], and they get a feel for him as an individual.

What you saw--- and it was the first time anybody had seen it, (certainly the first time I had)--- was here you had a sitting President who had never had that experience. People didn't know very much about him. It was amazing how little people knew about Jerry Ford.

Q. What did you desire to tell people about Jerry Ford? This is early 1975. How did you go about telling that story? Did he listen to your advice?

A. Oh I think so. We were focused by 1975. We had gotten past that period of the appointment and the Nixon resignation and the pardon. So I think, even though he was very new in office, the operation had stabilized itself to where we began to get a real focus on the campaign. We wanted to tell people some economic news, because they were having a tough economic time (which would have been true for any incumbent President). Mostly, we were interested in giving them some biographical information, to persuade people that he was smart, that he was a man of real

accomplishment in his life, that he was someone who had the kind of experience you want in a President---all those things you'd try to do if you were starting out in a campaign with a non-incumbent. In this case we had an incumbent President. Later in 1975, if you recall, the press got into all that business about him falling down the steps and him bumping his head, and so that began to create the perception that he was a fine guy, personally, had a wonderful family, but was he smart enough to be President? There were a lot of these things answered in the campaign. We were trying to really say, "Look, here's a guy who really is an exceptional person on his own even though he came to office...."

Q. This is in 1976 in the campaign. Are you talking now the 1974....?

A. Very late 1975, early 1976. I guess I didn't answer your question about 1974---we wanted to give people that biographical information to prove that he was smart, that he was someone of real accomplishment and of real experience. The kind of person you would want as President. The one thing that was above and beyond any question, the more people learned about him, was personal qualities. They looked at him and they looked at his family and they looked at the job that he'd done in his first few months of that Presidency. That really solidified his personal characteristics.

Q. What was the nub of his difficulty communicating his substance and experience to the public?

A. I don't know that it was a difficult thing to do as much as that the problem was quantity. You had a very limited amount of time to teach

people and allow them to learn all these things that you'd like to teach about him. [Something] that other candidates accomplished over years; they had years to do it as candidates and as office holders. Here you were, with him being President, and you were trying to do this in a very short period of time. You were doing it with limited resources, too. Obviously we weren't very far [along in progress] in 1975, then we got a challenge in the primaries, which turned out to be very tough and very expensive.

Q. At least one interviewee on this round said that by the end of 1974, so many key decisions had been made in terms of the Vice Presidential selection, the pardon, the commitment to campaign [for Congressional candidates], and the commitment to retain as many Nixon staff as he did---- that Ford was locked in. His flexibility was very sharply limited.

A. It was limited, but it was limited for some other reasons, too. Those are true, but it was also limited because of the economy. You had a certain degree of freedom. You were dealing with the real world economy, which was not good, and we were trying to get it going again. That was a limiting factor. You were dealing with that staff, but I don't think the fact that it was a Nixon carryover staff had anything to do with public perception, myself. I think one of the most limiting things in 1975, the most limiting thing by far, was that you had a conservative challenge from Ronald Reagan on the right. It is the same problem candidates have had before and since then. While you want to be in the middle for the general election, and that was your instinct, you were always having to pay a lot of homage to the very conservative wing of the party to get through the primaries. You were very

locked in, and by far and away the most limiting thing that reduced your degrees of freedom politically was the Reagan challenge.

Q. We're heading for that quickly, but before we get there I want to ask about polling, especially during 1975, and policy decisions. Were polls used as part of policy decision making and the agenda-setting process?

A. In a certain respect. Always when that question gets asked or answered....

Q. And we get asked it at the Library--- we have people coming....

A. Oh yes, there is often an underlying supposition that somebody was trying to govern by poll and therefore create positive public opinion and therefore get re-elected.

I don't think that's true for several reasons. Certainly you can't say that nobody ever considered what the polling information showed, in trying to think about making, or merchandising, a public policy decision. The fact is, the best public officials I have ever worked with and seen--- and there are dozens, hundreds of them--- are the people who understand and have it ingrained in them. It is not a conscious thing, and it has nothing to do with polling. It is a seamless process, that if you get elected and you do a good job, measured by a couple of ways... One, you do what the public would like you to do. But even more importantly, it produces good results. That tends to build political support and make you more popular--- and that's what gets you re-elected. My view of this is: having a positive approval

rating in public opinion, and being seen as doing a good job, and making smart policy decisions, and having political support, is kind of a seamless circle and cycle that goes on.

If you look at public opinion simply as what it is, which is a measurement of what public opinion is at a given time, then it is useful. In a democracy, it is useful to know what the majority of people think. It is useful to know what they think is important and what they think should be addressed---if it's the economy, or if it's education, or if it=s crime, or drugs, or the environment.

But in terms of somebody in the Presidency (and certainly not President Ford) sitting around and saying, AWe're going to do this or make this decision because it looks to be the most popular one in the polls,≅--- that was not true at all. Particularly with him [Ford]. I think there are some candidates who probably get elected President and have used polls on a daily and weekly basis in getting elected, but he hadn't. He had been in Washington. He had been a major player in the country for a long time, and I think he knew what he thought. Well, I *know* he knew what he thought.

And so, most of these decisions, while they were tough, they were not agonizing, because he had a fundamental, philosophical view. He had dealt with all of them as a Congressman, a Congressional leader. In economic policy, he had a pretty good idea of what he thought was the right thing to do, and he did it.

If it comes to polls and you say, "Here are things we ought to address," that people think education is particularly important and you ought to talk about it some--- then that's good. But, in my view, you didn't

have a situation in that administration, near as much as others before and since, of policy-making by poll.

Q. We have wondered at the Library to what degree he was an avid consumer of polling information?

A. Not particularly. I think he was interested because he was interested to know what the country thought, and when you get into a campaign, and you're fighting for your life, [he was interested] in winning or losing and what it takes to win. In terms of sitting around and trying to look at public opinion polls and decide what to do as President, he didn't do that.

Q. Neither for decisions nor for agenda setting?

A. No, I don't think so. I'm sure there are times in the middle of a Presidency where you go in and say "Look, there's a high level of interest in this issue." It may be something that you weren't talking about much and you decided to include it and start to talk about it.

Q. What was your view of the value of the public forums and meetings that were held by Vice President Rockefeller or William Baroody [White House] Public Liaison operation?

A. I think they were useful. I think at that point they had two uses, one of which we mentioned. Anything that was done to give people a better feel and a deeper perception about the Ford administration was important because of that unknown, don't-know quality about it. Secondly, to

establish it as an entity independent of the Nixon administration was very important, particularly after the pardon. We were trying to think of everything we could do to establish the Ford administration in a very short period of time. As I said, there were a lot of limiting factors, time being maybe the worst. The one [even worse] was the Reagan challenge.

Q. What were the distinguishing characteristics of the Ford administration that you wanted to get across? Not of him personally, although maybe that *was* the distinguishing characteristic....

A. People vote for President. When people go vote, particularly in our system as opposed to a Parliamentary system, people go vote for or against individuals as President and you are asking them to make a value judgment between your candidate and the opponent. The Presidential system focuses people on the individual more than a Parliamentary system does.

Q. I've read that you have views on how a voter's family status, and where they are in their own life--whether or not they are head of a family or single etc---is an important key criterion in how they view values and issues.

A. I think there are a couple of things. Voting, even though it is only one decision, has a lot of complex elements.

One is background. It is what you learn from your parents. It is still true to a degree. It is less than it used to be..... I used to go around and speak on campuses and places. People would say, "Why are you a

Republican?" I used to say "Because probably my parents were,"--- and that is true. That is why most people are what they are. It may less true today than it used to be, but it is still the single most important influence.

I think people have views of Government and of politics that they bring as part of their value system to it.

Then there is an even more important one. It is that, at least equally as important, that at any given moment in time they are trying to achieve certain things. They are living lives. They are either interested in getting educated, or getting a job, or getting a better job, or educating children, or buying a home, or planning for retirement. Those life cycles are very important to them and what issues are important. They are very focused in their own lives, a lot of the time, on those things.

Secondly [sic], is social mobility. That is, if you look at people who were born and stayed essentially in the same socio-economic class. Let's say you were born to an ethnic Catholic family, in Boston or Philadelphia in the East, and your parents were Democrats and blue collar workers--- and you stayed a blue collar worker all your life and lived in the same place. You probably stayed a Democrat all your life. But people particularly in the >50s, >60s and >70s were very socially mobile in this country (which they've always been)---you had a lot of people who became maybe the first generation of their family to go college, who moved from the central city to the suburbs, moved from the East to Midwest or the South, etc. As they went through those other economic and social changes, it made them much more open to political change. As their value systems changed and they moved up in terms of social and economic status, they may have changed

their political beliefs too. That is why, all of a sudden, this big surge in the >50s and >60s in ticket splitting---you a lot of traditional working class Democrats who all of a sudden went from a lower, working middle-class to a middle or upper middle-working class. [If you were in this group] you probably moved from the central city to the suburbs, got your own home, different school systems, maybe in a different part of the country. As they changed their social and economic situations, their political values changed and they began to split their ticket.

Now we've seen, since that time, this huge growth in a more conservative country and a much stronger Republican Party and weaker Democratic Party. We really have had [a realignment]. And it is interesting to trace where the realignment started. There isn't anybody anymore ---I used to go around and give this speech for years and everybody thought I was nuts--- but there isn't anybody alive who doesn't understand we've had a political realignment. We have them only every twenty-five to thirty-five years. It really took place, in fact, during the Reagan years in 1980 and 1984, the most important elections. You can go back, I think, and make some very good arguments that it was beginning to take place during the Nixon years. You began to see the real breakup of the old New Deal Democratic Party in the late 1960s and the early 1970s. Then, the fact is, Watergate, which was right during the same era we are talking about, kind of held it together for the Democrats. It in some way allowed them to come along and nominate a Southerner in 1976, which they had not done in a long time. Secondly, it pushed people back to being Democratic because they were mad at the Republicans because of Watergate. You may have said that period from 1972 to 1980 simply delayed the fundamental changes. The

changes were there but it delayed the political affect until 1980. The real seeds of it were back in the 1960s.

Q. I was struck by one of the memos that you wrote in late 1975. It identifies cynicism, alienation, Aanti-bigness≅ toward all institutions, as a key underlying theme. That resonates today.

A. Well, when you look at the old New Deal Democratic Party that Franklin Roosevelt built in the 1930s, it lasted longer than any other majority coalition in the history of the country. Partly because the Republicans, with Watergate, helped hold it together an extra eight or ten years. It really had two lives. It had the fundamental, basic New Deal era of Roosevelt and Truman. Then it had another kind of iteration in the Great Society stuff that Lyndon Johnson proposed in the mid 1960s. What happened then was it ran into two or three problems.

Probably Johnson extended it, to the degree to which the Federal Government was going to tax and accumulate money and spend it and re-distribute it, way beyond anything Roosevelt or Truman ever thought about. People thought it was going too far. But more importantly, that coalition always had had trouble, and was split; it had a real cleavage when the issues were around civil rights, or foreign policy before World War II, in 1939 and 1940. All of a sudden by the late 1960s you had Viet Nam, which not only divided the country but also divided the Democratic Party sharply. You had Civil Rights Movement going on in the 1960s, which divided the fundamental elements of the Democratic Party. The Democratic Party was built of Northern liberals and minorities, of unions, and white southerners.

You had the two places that had always given the party trouble. You go back to Strom Thurmond splitting off in 1948. That is where that party had trouble, and both those issues were in the bright light by the mid and late 1960s. Then you added onto that the fact that Johnson took a stand, and extended it way beyond, in terms of Government intervention into the economy and into lives. Finally it just fell apart.

Q. The Ford administration had a hard time translating what was happening into a clear statement of themes and view. I see the [frequent refrain] of calling out in different places "We need to seize upon a major theme, to weave these together...".

A. Well, that is always true. But remember, then, at that time the Ford administration and the Ford campaign were incredibly limited by some defining factors. The boundaries were very limited.

One is that the Ford administration came to power because of Watergate, which had put Republicans in a terrible situation and caused the worst [Congressional] losses in modern times in 1974.

Second is that he came as an unelected President. So the point we talked about earlier--- there wasn't very much known about him.

Third was that from the period of when he came to office and where he had to run for election was very short, less than a year.

Fourth and fifth, then, the situation of the economy was a limiting factor. It was not very good to go out and say "Vote to keep things as they are." They weren't very good, either in terms of Watergate or the economy.

Last, just about the time you would normally have some freedom to do that, we had the Reagan challenge, which limited us ideologically.

Q. You didn't mention the fall of Saigon. Does that mean that it was just a final chapter and that everyone was glad to be rid of it?

A. There was that element to it. That was not a negative, that was a positive---that it was something where, even though it was in many ways a tragic event, it was seen as the end. And it was seen as one more time where President Ford was bringing closure to a long, bad sequence of events. He did that, but it was taking him a while to do it, both in terms of Nixon, getting rid of that, getting rid of the pardon, the fall of Saigon, the economy.

So he was having to go back and bring to closure a lot of bad situations before he ever had a chance to go on the offense. About the time he'd have liked to get on the offense, he had Reagan. People underestimate---I used to--- how important and how negative a primary challenge is. When you think about the four incumbent Presidents who in one way or another have lost in modern times---Johnson, who was really forced not to run again, Ford who lost, Carter who lost, and Bush who lost---they all had serious primary challenges. If you think about those who won and got re-elected, they did not.

Q. When did you know in your own mind [that Reagan would run]?

A. I may have been one of the more naive ones. While there was talk

and certainly it was clear all during the fall of 1975 that Reagan might run--I think I may have been one of the last to fall in terms of concluding that he really was going to run. I think I always viewed it as: he was going to look at it carefully and in the last analysis he wouldn't run. Then he decided to. If I recall, it was in December when he finally and actually got into the race. From that time on, obviously, you were in the middle. Remember, this was a very short period of time between these other events that we talked about and when we are having then to run a full blown primary campaign---which took you completely off-focus on what you wanted to do with the country as a whole in the general election. These become kind of tactical, week-to-week fights every Tuesday in a primary.

Q. You must have had a memorable meeting once the White House knew that Reagan is running and had decided that they were going to contract with Market Opinion as it's polling firm.

A. That was prior to that. They contracted with us in Market Opinion before they knew Reagan was going to run.

Q. Long before, okay. I imagine there might have been a war council type of a meeting, where you sit down and say AAlright, we know that we have to face this primary campaign. This is what we've got to start doing...≅ Was there such a meeting?

A. There were a lot of them. Almost daily at that point.

Q. Could you describe that process? That period?

A. If you go all the way back---I think that we have a memo here, a note, that I wrote on October 6th to Bo Callaway, who was then Chairman of the President Ford Committee, that summarized the polls up until then. And then there is another one, on October 14th, where we began to outline the process or the polling that we would do from that time up to the national convention. The first element is a whole description of primary state polls. We are talking about a whole array of primary state polls starting with New Hampshire and Florida, and we were proposing at the time that they be done the first week of November in 1975. In that memo I raised the question of whether we ought to do those two, and then it was hard to decide where else we ought to do primary polls without knowing whether or not the President was going to have a serious challenger. This was in mid October. Then we said in the same memo that, assuming Reagan will run in New Hampshire and Florida, we ought to plan on doing short telephone follow-ups around the first of the year and again just before the primaries in a whole series of primary states after that.

Q. I haven't seen all those memos. We have scattered ones from a little bit later period in the Library. *[Note to reader: Mr. Teeter subsequently gave to the Library a binder of memos to be added to the papers he had donated several years previous.]* I was struck by one that was written approximately two weeks after the Colby-Schlesinger-Rockefeller changes at the end of October 1975. The memo was written about twelve days afterward, and it is on Ford's strengths and weaknesses. One of the

weaknesses was a perceived lack of forceful leadership. The memo doesn't mention all these changes that had just taken place. How were those changes perceived? What did those changes contribute to the perception of Ford as a candidate?

A. Well, at the time there were some mixed perceptions of him. I think certainly there was on some, you know---one of Vice President Rockefeller's ideas is that, with the presidential primary challenge coming, they were perceived as positive in conservative terms. But I think they were seen more as Ford putting his own stamp on his administration and kind of lining-up his administration the way he wanted going into the >76 campaign. I don't think they hurt in terms of the [inaudible]. But, in retrospect, all those things that represent internal upheaval never usually turn out to do much positive. Not because they're negative, but because they detract from what you're trying to do, which is establish a main theme at the time. This was quite a long time before, and so I don't think there were long lasting political affects from that. Other than, obviously, the Vice President had taken himself out.

Q. What were the most urgent steps needed in order to prepare for the primary season?

A. There are two kinds. One, there are all the mechanical ones. It means that you simply have got to have a campaign organization, you have got to raise money, you have to put it together. You have to be ready to schedule, produce ads, run a campaign, produce organizational efforts in states a lot faster than you would otherwise. Normally you wouldn't be doing that until

August or September, and now all of a sudden you are faced with having to do it. And, you are faced with having to do it while always focusing on that line between: ACan I do something to help me win these primaries but not do something that will hurt me with the general election at the same time?≅ All of a sudden your degrees of freedom have been narrowed by an order of magnitude down to almost nothing. That, I think in the long term, is the toughest.

Q. Who is in the better strategic position going into New Hampshire? I'm speaking not just the strategic position for New Hampshire but for that primary season. President Ford or Governor Reagan?

A. Governor Reagan. Because one, you've got a conservative Republican Party. Second, he is an extremely well known personal figure in the party, probably better known than President Ford. He's ideologically attuned to, particularly, the early primary states---New Hampshire and Florida, the two early ones. Here you've got President Ford trying to walk a fine line between being President and aiming at the general election and then having to prove his conservative credentials to a bunch of people among whom he is suspect. Then you've got President Reagan, who at that time is a well-established, known kind of conservative idol. When you think about who it that goes to vote in a Republican primary in New Hampshire and Florida, he [Reagan] is almost perfectly attuned to them. We had the advantage of the White House, which is no small advantage.

Q. Was that the advantage that turned the tide?

A. Probably. Sure. I mean, the fact is that Republicans in primaries are also pretty establishmentarian. I think it takes a very big, a very compelling, argument to persuade Republicans that they ought to throw out an incumbent President. Now there are a number of them who do, and they try from time to time. But the fact really is, yes, the single strongest suit that we had and President Ford had going was that.

Q. You almost took Reagan out early with the New Hampshire and Florida victories. Then he [Reagan] stumbles on [foreign policy and especially the Panama Canal] and comes back, using that as a theme throughout the primaries.

A. Right.

Q. Where did that come from? Did you see it coming?

A. Well, they had found some things, obviously, that were unifying themes that President Ford couldn't go off on, the Panama Canal being one of them. He [Ford] was not willing to take an irresponsible position on Panama. That's one of the advantages a challenger always has. You can take a very simplistic---there's no accountability---position.

To be honest, we all recognize since then that we made a mistake in not working harder in North Carolina. We made a decision, a decision was made, not to send President Ford back to North Carolina. We thought we were in pretty good shape in North Carolina, and Reagan rose up and beat us there. Had we beaten him there, he would've been finished. They

would've been out of money. They would've been done. And so we let him have a second life by not probably putting in enough resources. Again, we were worried about having to get all the way to August and run a whole primary schedule, so we were not interested in kind of going for broke anywhere. In retrospect, hindsight, we should have spent more resources, both money and his time in North Carolina. We probably would've won, and that would've been the end of Reagan.

Q. What was the impact of the campaign spending limits in the primary campaign? Whose campaign was more adversely affected by [campaign spending limits]?

A. Well, golly, we were. He could pick his spots. If Reagan beat us anywhere, it was a huge victory. For us, we needed to win everywhere. And so Reagan could kind of pick his spots easier than we could and save money by not going places where we had to go. At the time, under the rulings, it was very expensive to move an incumbent President around. You had to pay for all that. There would be advantages to it, and the advantages outweigh the disadvantages. [But] that was the first year of the new limits where you had not only a national limit but had limits by state. You really were in the strategic game. Reagan's ability to focus on a few states, beat you and had a national victory out of those victories---it was big.

Q. I would imagine that with spending limits there was also a certain freedom that the campaign had from fund raising.

A. Well not really. Because you still have to raise the primary money.

While it may not look like it today, you've got to go raise.... [it is] the matching situation. You've got to go raise the money. You've got to raise it with the thousand dollar limits, and so you did have to raise it. No freedom from fundraising.

Q. So there was no benefit of not having to raise as much money?

A. No, not really, because [spending] limits were imposed, too. Four years before, in '72 the campaign that caused all the trouble---doing the limits by our [current?] standards, if you inflate those same dollars, the Nixon campaign probably spent three times that limit. In current dollars, it probably spent a hundred and fifty, sixty million dollars.

Q. What was the impact through this period of the changes in PFC chairmanship and also of Don Rumsfeld's departure from the White House earlier? Essentially, he goes to Defense and he is not able to participate in the campaign.

A. Right. Dick took that job over well. Cheney took that over, so I don't think there was a great affect. Rumsfeld was good, and Cheney turned out to be, by what a lot of people think, is one of the best---if not the best---chiefs-of-staff ever. He was very good in the job. But we did have a problem with the campaign, and we had this change at chairmanship in the campaign, a couple of them, during the year. It took us a little longer to get our core team. Every campaign ultimately gets run by some kind of a core team of three to seven people. They all do. It took a while, obviously, to shake that team down. And the ones that were there, kind of through all

this, really, were Cheney and Stu Spencer and myself. Then, ultimately, Jim Baker, who joined us during the course of the primary but didn't become chairman of the campaign until mid summer, just after the convention.

Q. Really the changes in PFC chair--- the impact is more apparent than real because there's this core...

A. Well. it's still real. You're still worried about it, and every time you spend time worrying about the chairman and how that's going, it's time you're not spending doing something else.

Q. An opportunity cost.

A. That's right.

Q. Another foreign policy question from the primary season----the Texas primary did not work out well.

A. It not only didn't work out well, it worked out badly. And it was a place where the polling was terrible in all respects. We looked at that and thought that Texas primaries were run by Congressional District---clearly I looked at it, and our people looked at it, and we thought there were a bunch of Congressional districts where we had a real chance. We committed a lot of money we shouldn't have committed there. We spent about a million dollars in Texas, and we lost all of them. We got beat one hundred to nothing, literally. Everything was bad about it, starting with the polling. It was one of the great polling disasters. Foster Chanock, who we talked

about, at a party after the election, gave me a tie with Texas maps all over it.

Q. [Simultaneous with the Texas primary was] Kissinger's trip to Rhodesia and call for an end to white rule there. Sometimes this has been cited as being a very costly political act even if it was a wise act of foreign policy. Was it costly?

A. If it was, it was marginal. Again, remember, it's like I said in terms of effort and time a few minutes ago. All of a sudden you have a news story that becomes a problem politically and you have to deal with it for a week---there is an opportunity cost because you've got a problem that you're in the paper, that you are dealing with it, but you've also got that time and coverage [lost because] you're *not* dealing with something you'd like to be. You're not getting your message out. You're having to respond to another one.

The fact is, in retrospect, the Republican primary in 1976 was a very small operation in Texas in turn-out. And that is where we missed with the polling. It was a very small turn-out. Only a few hundred thousand people voted. It was made for Reagan. It was absolutely made for Reagan---conservative people, great Reagan appeal. But very damaging. May 1st, I remember it well.

Q. You had two key Texas Ford friends unavailable to help for various reasons. George Bush at CIA and Anne Armstrong, in the United Kingdom. Did that really make a difference?

A. Well, yes. I mean, both of them could've been a great help because particularly they had great constituencies. Anne Armstrong had been a national political figure from Texas, had a constituency. George Bush had been a Congressman and, particularly in the Houston area, had a big constituency. The fact was, at that time with an evolving, very young, very conservative and new Texas Republican Party, and not very big Republican Party, it was made for Reagan.

Q. This is a question about Mrs. Ford and her controversial A60 Minutes≅ interview on social issues at the time. To what extend...

A. Do you know when that was?

Q. It was in 1975. Were her stated views a liability among social conservatives that you had to deal with?

A. It's a perfect example of why a primary challenge is so damaging. Sure. But the fact is they [Mrs. Ford's views] were also a tremendous asset in the general electorate for whatever small problem it was in the primary. One, if you hadn't had a primary it would've been no problem. Second is, Mrs. Ford, her activities, her persona, and her views were a tremendous asset in the general electorate. It's a perfect example how different primaries and general elections are.

Q. Was there a decision not to use Mrs. Ford extensively during the primary season?

A. No. I can't remember, to tell you the truth, whether we decided that she shouldn't go to Texas or something. I don't think so. But, I mean, she was one of the huge assets, both Mrs. Ford and the children. The whole perception of the family was one of the strongest assets we had.

Q. Now we are getting to the general election....

A. Yes. But one of the things we were trying to be very conscious of is not to win the primary and lose the general at the same time--- not to do something in the course of winning the primary that would cost us the general. We were very interested in making sure we were doing things always that would strengthen us in the nation as a whole for the general as well win the primary.

Q. June and July of 1976, the primaries are over. The emphasis is on caucus states, and especially retaining the people you think you've got, and picking up the others as well. What was your role during that period?

A. We worked on that, but that was more of an organizational effort, and that is why Jim Baker had come over. He had come over---Dick Cheney and I, and Stu, had recruited him to be our delegate-counter. He had been over at the Commerce Department as the Undersecretary of Commerce. He came over to do that, and he was really in charge of keeping track of all the delegates up until the convention. By that time more of my time was focused on the convention itself in terms of what his speech was going to be, and what kind of image he had, and on the general election.

Q. Would you elaborate a little bit more on that--- your contribution towards the image that would be portrayed at the convention, and the speech?

A. We talked about these themes earlier, of what we wanted to get across and then some specific policy things. We worked on that during that summer, as to what the convention would look like. Again, we were also handicapped because we were not really rid of Reagan yet. A lot of times, if you have a primary challenge, you've beaten them and they've withdrawn by the time you go to the convention. Here, we still had an active opponent with a bunch of delegates. We were still fighting for some uncommitted and caucus delegates. Everything we were doing up until that August convention was conditioned not only on trying to figure out what to do to win the general election, but to make sure we didn't do something that got us in trouble at the convention.

Q. Vice Presidential selection at the convention. Would the cost of choosing Ruckleshaus or Anne Armstrong have been too high with the Reagan delegates?

A. I don't know. I don't personally think so, but I don't know. And while I was there for the whole deliberations, only President Ford can answer exactly why he decided what he decided.

Q. Could you tell me what your role was in the preparations for the

Vail, Colorado meeting, after the convention, at which the strategy book was delivered? Tell me about the steps to prepare that, and your concerns as you prepared.

A. At that point, obviously, you've finally gotten rid of the primary challenge, and you know who your opponent is. You are really focused, then, on how you are going to campaign. You're focused on the budget. You're focused on the allocation of resources by state, what type of an electoral coalition are you going to put together to get the two hundred seventy electoral votes you need to win. You're focused on what kind of overall message and theme, on the timing, on how you're going to roll that out, and how you go out and solidify the strongest area first. And then you go to the marginal states and have to worry about the big marginal states---- California and these big Midwestern states Michigan, Ohio, and Illinois. You spend a lot of time. My staff people spent a lot of time preparing for briefings and focusing people on the agenda items that had to do with those basic strategic decisions at Vail, even though also we were making a lot of operational decisions about who was going to do what in the campaign and kind of putting our formal campaign organization together.

Q. What were the key areas of debate? In hindsight it was a wonderful strategy, I think, but I'm sure there were decisions in there that look obvious only in hindsight There must've been a lot of debate as it was being prepared. It couldn't have been an obvious thing.

A. Well, I'm not sure how much debate there was. There was a lot of discussion, but, remember, by that time we were thirty three points behind.

Nothing focuses attention like an impending hanging. The job was to get at it and begin to catch up, not to debate about it a lot. I think the basic decision we made there---and I'm not sure we focused on it quite as clearly as I can now with the advantage of twenty years of hindsight---was to shift the question[mark] off of President Ford and onto Jimmy Carter. There was that whole question about "Was Jerry Ford experienced enough, smart enough, accomplished enough to be President?" We knew we had to fill those up, and we worked on some biographical materials, for instance. One of the things was just a small tactical thing. We found that if we included in the biographical information that he graduated high in his class at the University of Michigan and Yale Law School, then people who saw that [didn't have] any question whether he was smart enough to be President.

More important is to go out and reinforce the public perception, or fill it, with some very positive things about him, most of which we discussed earlier. Then to try and shift the focus to Carter. So, if you think about the question in the voter's mind, if the question in the voter's mind was: "Is Jerry Ford good enough, smart enough, experienced enough, accomplished enough to be President?", people [answered] "Well, he's done a good job but we still don't know enough about him. We're still uncertain about that."

Then we began to focus on Jimmy Carter, Governor Carter. We said, "Look, there are three basic weaknesses to him...."---he had incredible strength because as a [Southern] Democratic nominee he had a bunch of Southern states he was going to win, which no Southerner [sic Democrat?] had won since before '64. He gave us electoral trouble. He took away this Republican gain in the South right away. Secondly, because he was a

Southerner and because he was an evangelical Christian and talked about it a lot, he was perceived by many people as being more conservative than President Ford on a lot of social and domestic issues.

We raised three questions about him. One, "Was he experienced enough to be President?" Second was, "Did you know enough about him?" The third was, "Did he have enough of a record as Governor of Georgia?"

At that time John Deardourff and Doug Bailey, the advertising people, made three different sets of commercials using man-on-the-street interviews, each one of which focused on one of those issues. People from Georgia would say, "He really didn't do much as Governor" or "He wasn't a very good Governor." In late August, early September---I don't remember exactly when they ran---that set of commercials is what I think began to turn it around for us. It did two things. It took the question and---obviously, people knew less about Carter than they did about Ford. One of the interesting things is [that the campaign had] two candidates neither of whom were really long-term established figures. It did two things for us. One, it shifted the question in the voter's mind to focus on Carter instead of Ford. Secondly, it raised some real doubts about Carter. As we began to see that unfold, we began to gain and we reinforced it. That began to turn it around for us.

Q. What was President Ford's contribution to setting campaign strategy, both during the primary season and at Vail?

A. It was one of his great strengths as President, I think, and as a

candidate, to say "Look, I assembled a bunch of smart people who know how to run a campaign, and I'm pretty well going to go along with it." He hadn't run for President before. He had a lot of strong feelings about it. He knew what he was going to say, and he knew what he wasn't going to do. But in terms of the tactics and the mechanics of the campaign, he pretty well left it to us.

Q. You mentioned Bailey-Deardourff and their ads. But Peter Dailey had been the advertiser through the convention?

A. I think, I'm told, the convention. The only ---I think we hooked-up [with Bailey and Deardourff] before the convention. I'd worked with him for a long time. We'd been through dozens and dozens of statewide campaigns together. We got hooked up with them, and I think they began to plan before the convention. That it was really at the convention that they took over.

Q. Are there dangers in taking polling information, your accumulated polling analysis, that you carry-around [in your head] through a primary season as you run against one candidate---and then having to switch gears and start thinking about a completely different kind of candidate?

A. I hope not. The whole theory of polling is that---I guess, with other things--- is that you're going to use well-analyzed information to make decisions, instead of just [using] intuition and experience. You're trying to combine them with some experience and judgment, but, instead of guessing, you assume that now you know what public opinion is and you've got some

objective data to make those decisions. That is the job of the person doing the polling---to create and develop objective information and analyze them objectively.

Q. Would and should Pat Caddell's polling from the Carter campaign have been a mirror image of yours?

A. Yes, all of those. He and I have talked about it many times. It looked exactly like it.

Q. So, you and Caddell are both fighting the same fight, but from opposite angles...

Q. Could you describe the assumptions or anticipations about Black voters in 1976?

A. We were in trouble with Black voters. The Republican Party had gotten in trouble with black voters. It had nothing to do with President Ford. Obviously, in retrospect from a pure political science standpoint, prior to 1964 Republicans had gotten twenty to thirty percent of the Black vote. Eisenhower did. Nixon did in 1960. The Goldwater campaign--- and, again, you didn't know it at the time--- in retrospect traded [to gain] large blocks of the White South for whatever Black support we had. From 1964 on, there'd been a very small percentage of Black support for Republicans. Nixon did a little better in 1972 only because he was winning with sixty percent. He was doing so well over all.

We did not have any anticipation of getting big numbers of Black

supporters, although we did focus to some degree because it was always my contention that, to win a lot of the big northern states that were important to us, we needed higher percentages of Black voters than Republicans had been getting. This is not an idea that you are going to carry them, but this is the idea that you get from five to ten percent. When you look at "How are you going to carry Michigan?", you aren't going to carry Michigan very well with two percent of the Black voters. Maybe you can carry it with eleven or twelve, or even easier with fifteen, but at that time it was simply a means of trying to minimize our loss and make it easier to carry some of the big northern states.

Q. What steps were taken to do that?

A. I think we did some advertising on Black radio and television stations. We did some campaigning in those areas. I don't remember our scheduling exactly but I think we did some campaigning in Black neighborhoods.

Q. Is it reasonable to talk of Hispanic Americans as a voting group in 1976 or do you....

A. Yes, I think so but only by state. Because you've got different kinds of Hispanics in the country. In New York, you've got Puerto Ricans. In Florida, you've got Cubans. In Texas and California, you've got large numbers of Mexicans. Whether it's then or now, it's tough to characterize Hispanics as one group of voters in the country. People of Hispanic heritage, you can put them all in one [inaudible]-----but you can't do it

politically.

Q. I don't see any polling or grouping of Asian Americans in 1976. When did you first start polling in that category?

A. Only recently, and it's still a very small number. Remember, you tend to analyze polls by Census definition. You'd have to go back and look at when the Census started to classify Asian Americans. If you look at the demographic breaks in polls, you divide them up exactly according to the Census because you want to be able to match it with Census data. Usually you change the demographics and polls every ten years as the Census changes.

Q. What would've been Gerald Ford's mandate had he won?

A. Oh, I think he would have had a very free rein. I think he would've won, and almost did, because of the strength of his own personality and character and his leadership qualities. I think he would've had a pretty open one [mandate] although.... even though we've talked a lot about how little known he was to the general public, here was somebody who had spent his life in major leadership positions in the government. The fact is, he really did know what he thought about economic policy and foreign policy. Now maybe he hadn't thought about a lot of detailed domestic policy, or the specifics of education or environment or some of those things, but he really was very fixed.

When you look back, one of the things you see is he had a very

strong administration. He had a good Cabinet and he had Henry Kissinger and Alan Greenspan, who clearly were his senior advisors on foreign and economic policy. For all the debate that went on, in the last analysis, by 1976, you knew that sooner or later he was going to sit down with Greenspan or Kissinger and make a decision.

I think he would have been focused very much on the big issues, the issues that historically were part of Presidential politics. I mean national security and economics. He probably would not have been a detailed domestic issue person.

Q. The summations and encomiums for the administration, at the end, are along the lines "He healed the nation." *A Time to Heal* is the title of his book. That kind of endures as the accepted legacy, although, at the same time, the cynicism and alienation toward government that you identified in polls in 1974 persist today. I wondered if you could kind of resolve that.

A. I think two things happened, three things maybe. It has turned out to be part of a long term trend. As there is more information, the cynicism has gone higher. I also think that we were at a point where the country really wanted to stop having to pay attention, every hour, every day, to what was going on in Washington. We had been through a period with the 1960s, and the riots in the '60s, with Civil Rights, with Viet Nam, with Watergate, where [people] felt the wheels were coming off. They were focused all the time, worried, about what was going to go wrong next.

I think Ford did begin a true healing process and, had he been elected, he would have decreased and brought an end to some of that alienation and cynicism. What happened is, when Jimmy Carter got in

office he had a very tough four years. He was almost never out of trouble. It was amazing, when you look back at the Ford /Carter years, he was in trouble over something all the time. And it ranged from the big things like the hostages in Iran, in his fourth year, to Burt Lance and all that stuff. So, I think, all of a sudden he [Carter] got in, people thinking they had this kind of pure, young Governor from Georgia, and then they were disappointed. They said, "Oh my God, we've got more of the same!" This kept it going, so I think we kind of slid backwards during that four years. He had a very tough four years and obviously lost the election.

Q. After the 1976 election and [during] your post-mortems and wrap up conferences and speaking, did you get a sense of how disappointed the Reagan people were that President Ford had lost?

A. No, not really. I'm sure that they were mixed. I'm sure there were some people who were core Republicans and who were for Reagan, who were very disappointed to lose the White House. There may have been some others who felt that it was all not so bad because Reagan would get nominated four years later and have a chance to win---which he did. I 'm sure you could find in the Reagan camp all gradations of that sentiment. I'm sure there are people---who turned out to be right--- who said, "Look, the best thing for Reagan is that, if Ford lost, he gets nominated four years later." Frankly, he probably would've been nominated *had* Ford been President.

Q. Did you do any polling for Gerald Ford after 1976? In other words,

especially in anticipation...

A. No. We may have done some for the [Republican] National Committee, just like in a political situation, but I don't recall doing it. I mean, obviously, we still polled and did a lot of work in the late '70s for the party. That was what our business was. And for the various political committees. But I don't recall doing any specifically for Ford. I'm sure we did an after-election study as part of the campaign poll. I know we did.

Q. In hindsight, looking at 1976, is there anything that stands out about that election that is unique and significant about *how* a Presidential campaign is conducted---the evolution of the "institution" of the campaign?

A. No. It was another trend in the thing getting more television oriented as we went along, but that really started before then. Each of those things that you would point out, it was kind of another step in the road. I think the two things that strike me from my involvement in it were---it is hard to say, but it's been written about by others--- is, in some ways, it may have been one of the best campaigns I was ever involved in. We lost, yet in terms of actually getting from the long way back to almost winning---it's hard to say you had a good campaign when you lost because it is a winner-take-all system. Secondly, in terms of what made it work, as I think I said earlier, every operation that I know of---campaign or White House---ultimately is run by a key group of maybe three to eight people. That 1976 campaign really did have a core group of four or five people who were probably better than any other group I've ever worked with in politics, before or since. Dick

Cheney, Jim Baker, Stu Spencer and myself. We got to be very close, and we stayed close. I think one of the tributes to President Ford is not only the quality of the people he had, but how close they've stayed together for a long period of time.

Q. What is the bond? Is it particularly one of political values or personal chemistry or complimentary strengths?

A. All of those. It was personal chemistry, and it was partly because of him [Ford]. It was his own personality, that he really was such a good guy people liked working for him. True, there were a lot of fights and turf fights and all the stuff that goes on in a White House or in a campaign. He didn't like it, he didn't tolerate it much, and he kind of---his mere presence kept people focused on the target most of the time, on the goal line. I think that same loyalty to him---I think personal chemistry has been important since he left the White House--- I think it's also partly a loyalty to him. I've always been struck by what a loyal and close relationship all the people who worked for him, either in the White House or the campaign, still have twenty years later. I worked for four or five other Presidents and none of that is true.

Q. *[As allotted time expires]* Is there something that I really should've asked, but did not, that you think badly belongs as part of this interview?

A. No, I don't think so. We gained, and we... No, I don't think so. I mean, you're right, there are probably a hundred things we could talk about but....

Q. All right. I thank you very much.

A. Okay.

END OF INTERVIEW