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NOV 12 1975

Politics by Perry

Ford's No Shoo-In To Be GOP Nominee

By James M. Perry
FROM WASHINGTON, D.C.

PRESIDENT FORD does face a serious challenge from Ronald Reagan, a National Observer survey of Republican delegates and alternate delegates to the party's 1972 convention indicates.

And the President would have had an extraordinary problem with Nelson Rockefeller as his 1976 running mate, the survey also indicates. Last week, though, Rockefeller withdrew his name from consideration. In what seemed to be related developments in the "Halloween massacre," Ford fired James Schlesinger, his hard-line Secretary of Defense; fired his troubled CIA director, William Colby; and reduced the powers of his Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger.

Before all of these dramatic events took place, delegates to the last GOP convention were asked if they thought Ford should be nominated for President at the party's next convention. Of those responding to that question, 479 said yes and 273 said no. That's 63.7 per cent in favor of the President's nomination, 36.3 per cent opposed to it.

Of those opposed to his nomination, 241 said they favored the nomination of Ronald Reagan. That's 83.3 per cent.

Ford thus leads Reagan by two to one—but with the convention still months away, that's not as safe a lead as it seems. Reagan's showing in the survey indicates that, if the convention were held today, Ford would be denied the overwhelming renomination that for incumbent Presidents is almost automatic. It also shows that Reagan already has a substantial power base, which could broaden dramatically if Ford missteps. A key Reagan campaign strategist says he is "impressed" by Reagan's showing in the survey. Commenting on Ford's reshuffling of his Administration, the Reagan strategist says cheerfully, "If we've shaken them up this much be-

fore we've even made our announcement [of Reagan's candidacy], think what we ought to be able to do when we have a candidate."

Finally, the delegates were asked if they favored the nomination of Nelson Rockefeller as Vice President. Of those replying to that question, 306 said yes and 422 said no. Thus, 42 per cent wanted to keep Rockefeller, 58 per cent wanted to dump him.

Those who opposed Rockefeller's nomination were asked whom they preferred in his place. Some of the delegates gave no names at all, others mentioned several people. What follows is the "top 10" in terms of numbers of mentions:

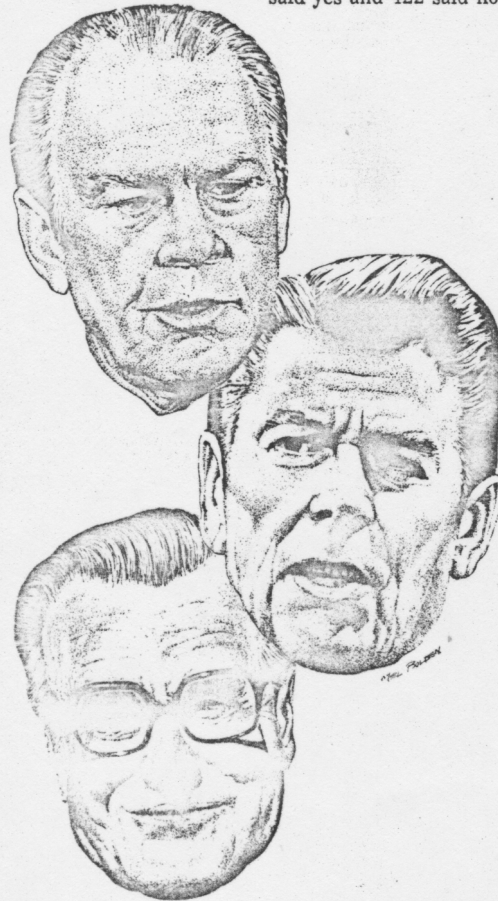
Reagan, 136; Sen. Howard Baker, Tenn., 44; former Gov. John Connally, Texas, 31; Sen. Barry Goldwater, Ariz., 20; Sen. James Buckley, N.Y., 16; Sen. William Brock, Tenn., 15; head of the U.S. liaison office in China (and now CIA director-designate) George Bush, Texas, 13; Sen. Jesse Helms, N.C., 9; Rep. Philip Crane, Ill., 9; and Sen. Charles Percy, Ill., 8.

Also mentioned were Gov. Meldrim Thomson, N.H., 7; Sen. Edward Brooke, Mass., 6; Sen. John Tower, Texas, 6; Sen. Mark Hatfield, Ore., 5; De-

fense Secretary-designate Donald Rumsfeld, Ill.; Gov. Dan Evans, Wash., and Rep. Jack Kemp, N.Y., all 4; Rep. John Ashbrook, Ohio, Sen. Paul Laxalt, Nev., and Gov. Kit Bond, Mo., all 3; and Secretary of Commerce-designate Elliot Richardson, 2.

James Schlesinger, the man who may now become a new hero to the GOP's right wing (he fought for a harder defense line, and lost), got one vote. Henry Kissinger received one vote, too, as did Democratic Governors George Wallace, Ala., and Edmund C. Brown, Jr., Calif.

Remember, though, 306 delegates and alternates checked off Rockefeller for Vice President, while fewer than half that many mentioned Reagan



Politics by Perry

Ford's No Shoo-In for '76

Continued From Page One

for the second spot. Rockefeller was supported by delegates in 14 states (opposed in 30, with 6 ties) and those states that preferred him include such heavyweights as New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Michigan.

Rockefeller's popularity, though not as high as Ford's anywhere but in his own state, New York, and in Wyoming, is significant in those states that have a "progressive Republican" tradition. Most of them are along the Eastern seaboard and scattered through the Midwest.

What happens now to this GOP constituency, for years paramount in the national party? In our survey, we gave everyone a chance to vote against

Analysis and Opinion

Ford. Large numbers of Reagan conservatives took that opportunity, many of them with considerable enthusiasm. But only a handful of votes were cast against Ford by the so-called progressives. Rockefeller himself got 8 mentions; Percy, 7; Richardson, 4; and former Gov. Tom McCall of Oregon, 2. All together, 31 votes were cast against Ford and for someone other than Reagan.

This seems to indicate that Ford has been correct in perceiving that the serious threat to his nomination comes from the right, not the left. Perhaps Ford now believes that Rockefeller's withdrawal takes most of the fire out of the Reagan insurgency. Surely, Rockefeller was the principal kindling in building that fire. When we asked delegates to say whom they preferred in Rockefeller's place, a front runner turned out to be "anybody else."

Ford the Centrist

But those conservatives may not be ready to concede the nomination to Ford yet. They do prefer Reagan, and if he gives any indication of real strength, they'll go with him. And if that fails, they want a conservative matched with Ford, whom they seem to perceive as a centrist. They will watch carefully Ford's movements in choosing a running mate. One suspects that Republicans such as Percy, Richardson, Hatfield, and the rest will be almost as unacceptable as Rockefeller to them. Ford may decide that a Southern Republican such as Howard Baker of Tennessee, who runs very well in our survey, could mollify bitter-enders at both



—Photographs From UPI

ends of the scale. Baker drew support from all over the country, from both conservatives and liberals. His ideology seems to be locked away in the eyes of his beholders.

Perhaps the withdrawal of Rockefeller, plus what seems to be an ever-growing conservative direction to the Ford Presidency, may inspire the progressive wing to wage still another battle in a war that seems to have been lost. Interestingly, Sen. Charles McC. Mathias, a Maryland progressive and heretofore more a foot soldier than a field commander, has talked about making just such a fight.

Reagan's Challenge

Unquestionably, pockets of resistance to the right-wing conquest of the national Republican Party remain. The removal of Rockefeller — and what Rockefeller makes of that removal in the months that remain to him as Vice President — may be the shock these troops need to start moving. Our survey, however, underlines the depths to

which this wing of the Grand Old Party has sunk. It will be a long climb back.

In this survey, Ford triumphs over Reagan in every region of the country except the 11 states in the South. Even there, the vote is paper-thin: 87 for Ford, 88 for Reagan. Ford leads better than three-to-one in New England; two-to-one in the Middle Atlantic, the Midwest, and the plains and mountain states; and almost two-to-one on the Pacific slope.

Yet Ford's lead is not overwhelming. Until the dramatic events of the Halloween massacre, Ford—for all his desperate efforts—had not been able to put down the Reagan challenge. It lives, and with Reagan's formal announce-

How the Survey Worked

Letters were mailed to all 2,696 delegates and alternates to the 1972 convention in Miami Beach, Fla., that nominated Richard Nixon and Spiro Agnew. About 300 of those letters (in which we explained our reasons for undertaking this survey) were not delivered, because the delegates had died, moved, or simply because the mail didn't get through. Of the people we contacted, 783 returned the stamped, addressed post cards we supplied. Of these returns, 37 could not be tabulated. Finally, then, 752, or 31.4 per cent, of the people we contacted took part in the survey. The breakdown, region by region and state by state, is at left.

	FORD		ROCKEFELLER	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
NEW ENGLAND				
Maine	2	1	1	2
Vermont	3	1	2	2
New Hampshire	7	3	5	5
Massachusetts	14	5	11	7
Rhode Island	2	1	2	0
Connecticut	10	0	7	1
TOTAL	38	11	30	17
MIDDLE ATLANTIC				
New York	23	13	25	10



ment of candidacy expected momentarily, it may grow.

There's an unpredictable factor in the events of the last few days. The withdrawal of Rockefeller may well be balanced by the dismissal of Schlesinger. Conservatives don't know who will take Rockefeller's place, but they do know that a man who fought for a stronger defense and a bigger military budget, a man who questioned Kissinger's *detente* diplomacy, has been fired and in his place will be a tough Gerald Ford loyalist. For conservatives, this is very serious business. For Ronald Reagan, it may be a very big asset.

There is the possibility, too, that Ford's frantic shuffling of major positions in his Administration (and, perhaps soon, in his faltering campaign apparatus) may cause millions of Americans to believe he is inept. If people begin to doubt he is capable of governing the country, then all the signals are switched. It is something to watch carefully.

In fact, Ford could find himself threatened from both the right and the left—with the center gone.

In that event, the battle for the Republican nomination would be just as confusing and chaotic as the battle for the Democratic nomination already has become.

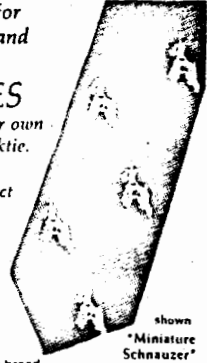
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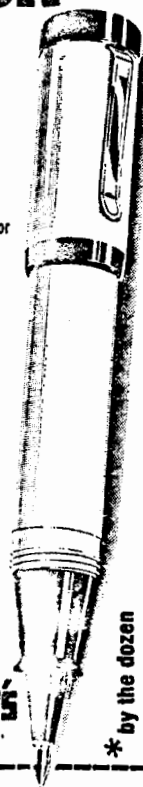
	FORD		ROCKEFELLER	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
NEW ENGLAND				
Maine	2	1	1	2
Vermont	3	1	2	2
New Hampshire	7	3	5	5
Massachusetts	14	5	11	7
Rhode Island	2	1	2	0
Connecticut	10	0	9	1
TOTAL	38	11	30	17
MIDDLE ATLANTIC				
New York	23	13	25	10
New Jersey	13	5	13	5
Pennsylvania	23	9	16	15
Delaware	0	1	0	1
Maryland	8	5	5	7
West Virginia	5	3	4	4
TOTAL	72	36	63	42
SOUTH				
Virginia	13	15	11	16
North Carolina	5	7	3	9
South Carolina	3	8	1	10
Georgia	10	7	4	13
Florida	12	10	4	19
Alabama	5	4	3	6
Mississippi	3	10	1	12
Louisiana	6	10	1	14
Arkansas	4	1	2	2
Tennessee	8	8	4	13
Texas	18	8	2	23
TOTAL	87	88	36	137
MIDWEST				
Kentucky	8	12	8	12
Ohio	24	9	18	15
Indiana	10	7	7	9
Illinois	22	8	12	17
Michigan	18	3	12	8
Wisconsin	13	4	6	11
Minnesota	14	0	9	4
Iowa	15	4	10	7
Missouri	9	6	7	9
TOTAL	133	53	89	92
PLAINS				
North Dakota	7	0	2	4
South Dakota	4	2	3	3
Nebraska	5	3	2	4
Kansas	15	2	13	3
Oklahoma	4	8	1	10
TOTAL	35	15	21	24
MOUNTAIN				
Montana	3	3	2	4
Wyoming	5	4	6	2
Colorado	6	3	2	7
New Mexico	3	1	0	3
Arizona	7	5	4	8
Nevada	2	2	1	3
Utah	4	7	1	10
Idaho	6	3	2	7
TOTAL	36	28	18	44
PACIFIC				
California	23	20	8	34
Oregon	9	3	6	5
Washington	13	8	11	10
Alaska	4	2	3	3
Hawaii	3	5	3	4
TOTAL	52	38	31	56
OTHER				
District of Columbia	5	1	3	2
Puerto Rico	1	0	1	0
Virgin Islands	2	0	2	0
TOTAL	8	1	6	2
GRAND TOTAL	479	273	306	422

Note: There were 21 replies that didn't indicate the originating state, voting 18 to 3 for Ford and 12 to 3 for Rockefeller. They have been tabulated in the grand total. A few delegates didn't complete the Rockefeller question, so that the grand total shows only 728 of the 752 tabulated votes.

ABOUT 300 OF THESE ANSWERS, which we explained our reasons for undertaking this survey) were not delivered, because the delegates had died, moved, or simply because the mail didn't get through. Of the people we contacted, 789 returned the stamped, addressed post cards we supplied. Of these returns, 37 could not be tabulated. Finally, then, 752, or 31.4 per cent, of the people we contacted took part in the survey. The breakdown, region by region and state by state, is at left.

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