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COMMENTARY: The GOP

IS THERE A TRUMAN BEHIND FORD?

by Dick Behn "Had Enough?" was the Republican campaign slogan in 1946. At least eight million Democrats apparently had, and they stayed away from the polls in droves. Voter turnout was a miserable 37 percent, and Republicans won 55 Democratic seats in Congress.

In 1974, "Had Enough?" was the implicit, if not explicit, campaign slogan of the nation's Democrats. Many Republicans, as well as independents and Democrats, had had enough. Only 38 percent showed up at the polls, the lowest turnout figure since 1946. 1974's Republicans had less to lose than 1946's Democrats, but the results were analogous.

The key question to be faced by the Republican Party now is whether Gerald Ford can be the GOP's Harry Truman. Truman faced many of the same problems that President Ford now faces. When Truman assumed the presidency, he had difficulty replacing Roosevelt Administration appointees and placing his own stamp on the government. Citizens who expected him to be conservative were disappointed by his liberal moves. Americans used to the patrician FDR were shocked by the earthy, folksy ways of the new President. Truman's handling of labor disputes alienated supporters and earned him a reputation as a fumbler. The President's intervention in a Missouri congressional primary backfired when evidence of election fraud was turned up. His attorney general tried to whitewash the investigation, reviving memories of Truman as the "Senator from Pendergast," a reference to his origins in the notorious Kansas City political machine. Sen. J. William Fulbright(D-Ark.) became so disgusted with Truman that he suggested that Sen. Arthur Vandenberg(R-Mich.) be appointed secretary of state so Truman could resign and be replaced by Vandenberg.

Above all, Truman was harassed by problems of inflation and decontrolling a wartime economy. His foreign policy was handicapped by public disagreements between his secretary of state and his secretary of commerce. Ultimately, he was forced to fire the latter and the former resigned, to be replaced by a man Truman called the "greatest living American," George C. Marshall. Truman's stock was sufficiently tarnished by these matters that his rating in the Gallup Poll plummeted abruptly. Southern conservatives were sufficiently disenchanted that Truman was challenged at the 1948 Democratic National Convention by Sen. Richard Russell(D-Ga.). The Democratic Party split into third and fourth party efforts by liberal and conservative fringes.

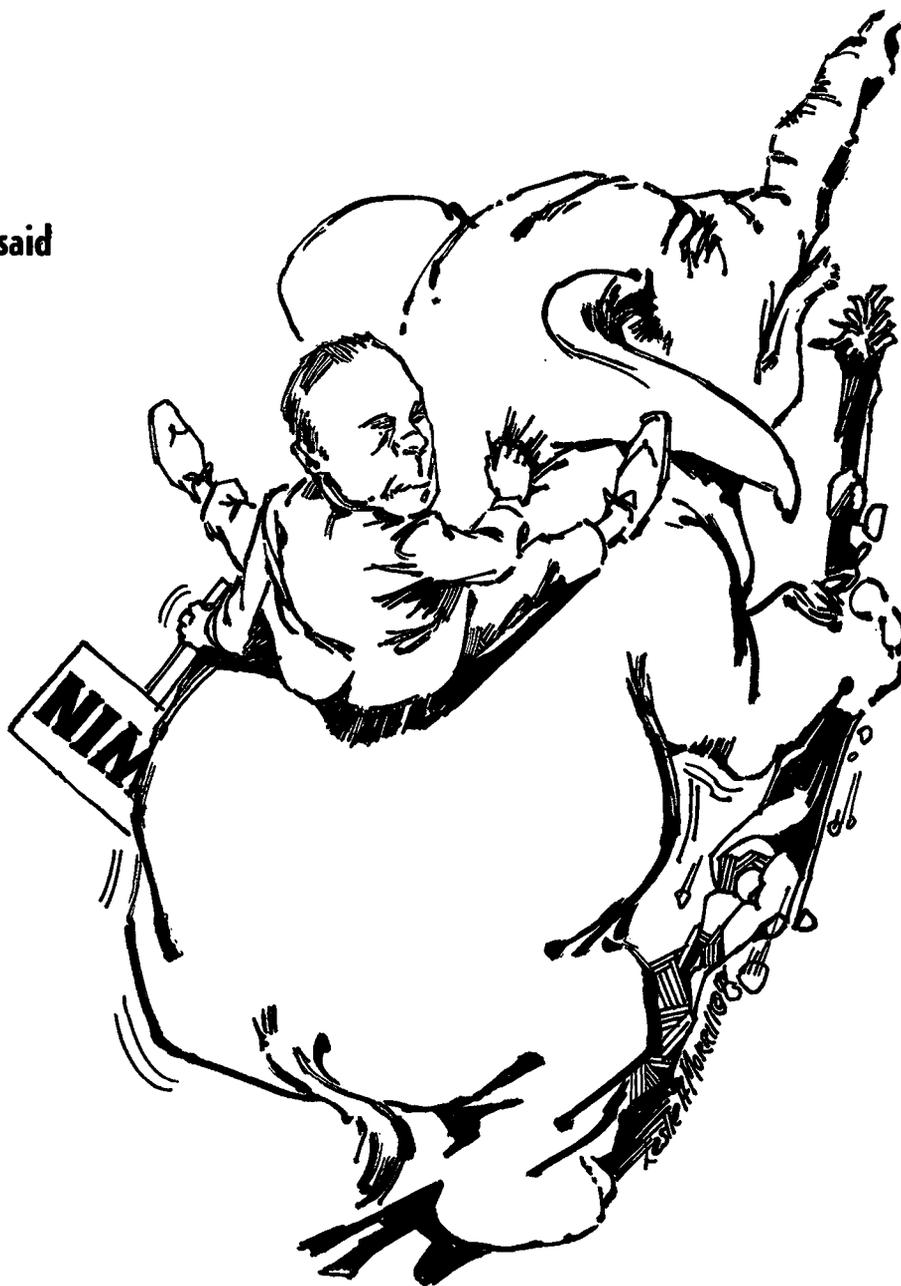
Like President Ford, Truman had his problems. But Truman also had his strengths: a bold secretary of state in Marshall, strong political advice from Clark Clifford and others, and well-formed ideas about progressive legislation needed by the country. Truman was able to demonstrate the leadership the country needed at home and abroad while contrasting that leadership with the inability of congressional Republicans to offer constructive alternatives.

President Ford still has the opportunity to demonstrate such leadership. President Ford does not have a mandate, but neither do the Democrats. As AFL-CIO president George Meany has observed, talk of mandates is political idiocy. As the Ripon Society observed concerning Richard Nixon's "mandate" in 1972, Democratic support this year is broad, but not deep. The nation's nation's electorate is fluid. In 1946, the Democrats lost because eight million of them stayed

home. In 1974, the Democrats won because of similar Republican apathy. Modern political coalitions are put together with sealing wax, not concrete. The Republican Party is not dead though its death is widely rumored among conservative Republicans. Conservatives like Ronald Reagan who see their own political ambitions fulfilled by third party quests may wish the GOP's demise, but Reagan should consult Mark Twain concerning death and exaggerations thereof.

The Republican Party has a future if President Ford can clean out the Nixon Administration, place his own progressive legislative program before Congress, adequately pursue that program and challenge the Democratic Party to produce. Ford's success will require bold statesmanship in international affairs and firm leadership in congressional affairs. Then, perhaps, the Republican Party will again earn the respect and votes of the American electorate. ■

"UP" he said



POLITICS: REPORTS

Abraham Lincoln had a beard. Republican Jay Hammond has a beard; he was elected governor of Alaska. Republican Robert Bennett has a goatee; he was elected governor of Kansas. Conclusion: 100% of the bearded Republicans seeking gubernatorial posts won. An impressive statistic.

ALASKA Informed by a reporter that he had probably won a clear victory over Gov. William Egan(D) after five days of ballot-counting, Republican Jay Hammond replied, "I'm gratified to see the see-saw has stopped. I can't talk too long. I've got wood to cut---winter's setting in out here." Hammond had been awaiting the compilation of absentee and rural ballots at his phoneless home in Naknek, fixing a water pump among other chores. Hammond's victory occurred amid massive ticketsplitting in the state, where voters elected a Democratic senator and an overwhelmingly Democratic legislature as well as a Republican governor and a Republican congressman. Egan supporters had hoped that absentee ballots from teamsters working on the Alaska pipeline would throw the election to the Democratic incumbent, but those Egan ballots never materialized. Confusing the gubernatorial vote were computer-counted ballots which invalidated several thousand ambiguously-punched ballots. The election was decided by several hundred votes but 4,500 ballots may have been thrown out by computers. Since as a state, Alaska casts about half the votes that may be involved in a vigorous congressional race in a larger state, every vote is precious. Egan angered his running mate for lieutenant governor by ordering him to make a hand recount of computer ballots---usurping the lieutenant governor's constitutional authority as chief state elections officer. After the recount, Hammond's lead had been reduced but he still led by less than 400 votes. Under Alaska state law, Egan was entitled to a full recount and he ordered one. Although Egan is an authentic "founding father" of Alaska, he seemed determined to leave no door unslammed in his effort to stay in office.

GEORGIA Macon Mayor Ronnie Thompson(R) is not deterred by crushing little defeats. He had scarcely lost the Georgia gubernatorial race by a 3-1 margin when he informed his supporters: "Just in case there is some question in somebody's mind, it is not John Savage and it is not Bob Shaw who is the titular head of the Georgia Republican Party. I got the most votes. I will be the one to reconstruct the party." Thompson had oriented his fall campaign as much against the state GOP as against his Democratic opponent. State Republican Chairman Shaw was roughed up by Thompson supporters on his way out of Thompson headquarters on election night. Said Shaw, who was cut on the forehead: "I guess what really hurts is that a man you've been friends with a long time doesn't let his supporters know it." State Rep. Savage, the party's candidate for lieutenant governor, actually received more votes than Thompson. Even Savage's Democratic opponent observed that maybe Savage was "the best candidate that Republicans have ever offered in Georgia."

IOWA U.S.Rep. H.R.Gross(R-3rd) is retiring from Congress, but he is leaving his fiscal watchdog job to his successor, State Rep. Charles Grassley(R). Said Gross to Grassley the day after the election, "You're going to have one heck of a tough row to hoe up here. This new Congress is just spenders, spenders, spenders." Grassley attributed part of his victory to the snow on election day which kept farmers out of the fields and in the polling places.

MARYLAND One unexpected victory for Republicans came in the scandal-ridden area of Baltimore County, where two past county executives have been convicted for misdeeds during the past two years. Although Republican State Sen. Jervis S. Finney narrowly lost the race for county executive this year, the GOP was luckier in the state's attorney race. Clarence D. Long III(D) had tried to capitalize on the popularity of his father, U.S.Rep. Clarence Long, Jr.(D-2nd). Running against "the congressman's son," Sandra A. O'Connor won a startling 2-1 victory. Republican O'Connor was assisted by workers for the Democratic candidate for county executive.

MASSACHUSETTS If Boston Mayor Kevin White does not like busing, it is with good reason. Democrat White's ambitions of moving to Washington, D.C. in 1977 have been eroded by federal busing orders now being implemented and to be implemented next year. White is up for reelection in 1975 and although he probably will not face City Councilwoman Louise Day Hicks this time, he may face a more formidable anti-busing spokesman such as State Sen. William Bulger(D) of South Boston.

MICHIGAN "I lost because Bill Milliken is a popular governor who worked hard at his job," the defeated Democratic gubernatorial observed after the election. Milliken's reelection was manufactured in the "white doughnut" of white, middle and lower-middle class suburbs around Detroit. The doughnut voters selected Milliken and then, in many cases,

voted a straight Democratic ticket. Only in Detroit was Milliken hurt by straight-Democratic ticket voting. As Detroit News reporter Robert Pisor observed of Milliken's new national eminence in the GOP, he may "become known as Traverse City Slim for the way he finessed to victory in a disastrous year for Republicans." Grand Rapids, meanwhile, now has three Democratic state legislators (versus only two Republicans) as well as its Democratic congressman, Richard VanderVeen. As one Grand Rapids Republican told President Ford on election night: "There aren't any coattails anymore."

NEBRASKA Sen. Roman Hruska(R) will be 72 in 1976. If he decides, to step down, a contest is expected between U.S.Rep. John Y. McCollister(R-2nd) and Gov. J. James Exon(D). McCollister was reelected with 55% of the vote while Exon won a three-way race with 59%. Exon will have another problem to contend with first, however, if he hopes to win the state's "Omaha" Senate seat. Maverick State Sen. Terry Carpenter, who ran unsuccessfully against Sen. Carl Curtis(R) in 1972 and unsuccessfully for the Democratic nomination for lieutenant governor in 1974, ran as a write-in candidate for the state legislature this fall. He won, returning one of Exon's least favorite people to the unicameral legislature. True to character, Carpenter lost no time after the election in accusing Exon of a "doublecross" on the Democratic nomination for attorney general. Lest anyone forget, the 74-year-old Carpenter was the one-time Republican who nominated a mythical candidate against Richard Nixon at the 1956 Republican National Convention.

NEW JERSEY In recent elections, it has been the New Jersey voters who have been on the backs of the New Jersey Republican Party. Now, it is the party's creditors. The GOP is further in debt than at the beginning of 1974. The state GOP owes \$170,000 and the ill-fated 1973 campaign of U.S.Rep. Charles Sandman(R) owes about \$200,000. Several lawsuits against the state GOP are being processed, including a suit by landlords of the state GOP's finance office in Newark. "There's not a damn thing we can do about it until we get some money. They'll just have to bear with us," one GOP leader has said. But the creditors are impatient and no source of new funds is on the immediate horizon.

NORTH CAROLINA The Tarheel election results were bad enough for the North Carolina GOP, but in the office of Mecklenburg County Sheriff Don Stahl(R), the balloting led to a fight. Stahl fired Deputy Sam McCollum for voting for Stahl's Democratic opponent. When another deputy objected and was also fired, a scuffle ensued. The second fired deputy tried unsuccessfully to swear out an arrest warrant against Stahl. The GOP sheriff may yet face legal action over the incident. Meanwhile, the lone surviving GOP state senator, Donald Kincaid, observed, "I suppose they'll have a cage down there to put me in so they can throw peanuts at me and show me off." The state's new attorney general, Rufis Edmisten(D), has been charged with failure to promptly file his 1973 and 1974 North Carolina income tax returns. Even in the unlikely event of conviction, the former aide to Sen. Sam Ervin(D) will still be able to take office. He has already paid all late taxes. The North Carolina GOP may be headed for another siege of infighting as a result of its recent defeats at the polls. Sen. Jesse Helms(R-N.C.) stayed out of the recent Senate race lost by the GOP so, in the words of former GOP State Chairman Frank Rouse, "as not to blow his credentials with the voters by not getting into a partisan thing with a friend." The friend in this case was the Senate winner, former Attorney General Robert Morgan(D).

RHODE ISLAND After his election to Congress this year, former painter Edward Beard told a reporter: "I'm not interested in bein' a politician so I won't be gettin' in anybody's way down there. I'm not going to step on anybody's toes in any way." The 34-year-old state representative admitted he was confused by a statement made by Sen. Claiborne Pell(D), who had told a pre-election gathering that "Eddie is part of the establishment now." Wondered Beard: "What do you think he could have meant by that?"

TEXAS Republicans elected the top officials of Harris(Houston) and Dallas counties this year for the first time since reconstruction. The respective county judges, John Whittington in Dallas and John Lindsay in Houston, are about the only two faces to emerge recently in the Texas GOP, which may have difficulty finding candidates for the 1976 senatorial and 1978 gubernatorial races. The GOP should perhaps breathe a sigh of relief that for the first time it will not have to field another gubernatorial candidate for four years instead of the usual two. The two logical candidates for higher political office, U.S.Reps. Alan Steelman(R-Dallas) and Bill Archer(R-Houston), may be reluctant to leave their relatively safe congressional havens for the uncertain waters of statewide politics. Archer received 79% of the vote in his Republican stronghold while the more moderate Steelman received 52% of the vote in his basically Democratic district. Steelman's independence would be more of an irritant to the Texas GOP establishment than Archer's conservative conformity.

DULY NOTED: STATES

"Governor's Race: Evans Wins Annual Invitational," by UPI. Seattle Post-Intelligence, November 12, 1974. Every year for the past ten years, Gov. Daniel Evans(R-Washington) has sponsored an invitational two-mile race. Evans defeated about three-dozen other state officials for the coveted prize: "a cardboard center from a roll of bathroom tissue and an admonishment to conserve resources." Secretary of State A. Ludlow Kramer(R) did not show up this year although he has been a regular participant in past races. "Maybe Lud is tired of running," observed one wit, referring to Kramer's recent loss in the 3rd C.D. race.

● "L.I. Politicians Await Corruption Studies," by Frank Lynn. New York Times, November 11, 1974. Democrats elected district attorneys in both Nassau and Suffolk counties this year. This development has Long Island Republicans worried, particularly in Nassau County where town and county employees "tithe" one percent of their civil service salaries back to the GOP. Among the prominent Republicans who might be embarrassed by vigorous Democratic investigations are State Assemblyman Joseph M. Margiotta, the Nassau County leader; Ralph G. Caso, the Nassau county executive who was the GOP's candidate for lieutenant governor this year; Assembly Speaker Perry B. Duryea, whose gubernatorial aspirations were squashed this year; and John Klein, the Suffolk county executive who also harbors gubernatorial ambitions.

● "Those Republican Gains in the Legislature," by Doug Smith. Arkansas Gazette, November 17, 1974. "At the state level, it has been all downhill for the Republicans since the (Winthrop) Rockefeller era ended in 1970, and they've had some pretty fair candidates since then. They've deserved better," writes Smith. The GOP did triple its membership in the legislature's lower house this year, however. "Surely, no one is happier about the GOP gain than Rep. Preston Bynum of Siloam Springs, who has been the only Republican in the House and who was reelected without opposition. He'll have company now. More than that, he'll have followers, assuming he retains his post of minority leader, which he should because of seniority. There are few things lonelier---let's put it this way, there are a lot of things less lonely---than being minority leader with no minority to lead. The party caucuses promise to be livelier and productive of a wider range of views, though Bynum always tried to encourage debate among himself."

● "Key to Election Results? Try 'Utter Confusion'," by Bernie Wynn. Arizona Republican, November 10, 1974. "If anyone is looking for a definite pattern in last Tuesday's election, he is doomed to disappointment. Confusion is the closest denominator(in the Arizona elections). Ticket-splitting occurred all across the board in both parties as the obviously unhappy electorate attempted to sort out the culprits responsible for today's overwhelming problems," writes Wynn.

● "Are Its Politics As Mickey Mouse As Disneyland?" by Melvin H. Bernstein. California Journal, October 1974. "Contrary to media folklore, there is good reason to believe that Orange County is no longer a 'monument of nomolithic conservatism,' as Newsweek described it in 1966." According to Bernstein, a political scientist who is chairman of the Republican State Central Committee, Orange County is now characterized by a more pragmatic version of conservatism than it has exemplified in the past. He cites the political decline of former U.S. Rep. John Schmitz(R) and the rise of Republicans like pragmatic State Sen. Dennis Carpenter(R) to buttress his thesis. "Orange County's political profile is well-known to include intense loyalty to the principles of individual initiative, private enterprise, limited government, and a strong sense of strict morality in public affairs," writes Bernstein, but he adds, "Few are the voters who today have much time or zeal to devote to such formerly charged issues as the U.S. Supreme Court, the United Nations, prayers in the public schools, and the 'international Communist conspiracy.' Even the John Birch Society appears to be living off its past reputation. Concludes Bernstein, "As Orange County completes the transition from an agricultural to an advanced urbanized-industrial society, it will likely become known more for its practical politics than for its identification with the John Birch Society. The area remains clearly Republican and conservatively oriented. But kooky and extreme it is not."

● "Carl Curtis: National Conservative Spokesman?" by Andy Montgomery. (Lincoln, Nebraska) Sunday Journal and Star, September 8, 1974. Sen. Carl Curtis(R-Neb.) has reorganized his Senate staff to allow him to devote more time to being an "aggressive advocate" of conservative causes. He is styling himself as a conservative spokesman on health care and welfare issues in preparation for his new position as ranking Republican on the Senate Finance Committee in the next Congress. Curtis' staff will focus on Nebraska issues while the 69-year-old senator devotes himself to the big scene.

DULY NOTED: NATION

"The Non-Lessons of Politics, 1974," by Peter A. Jay. Baltimore Sun, November 8, 1974. "There were no lessons in this election. This is a considerable hardship for newspapermen, social studies teachers, and the League of Women Voters have been taught that they have the obligation as opinion leaders and informed citizens to find a lesson in the results of every electoral collision, and when there is no to be found it sometimes causes tremors," writes Jay. Even the near-obliteration of Maryland Republican legislators does not portend "one party rule," as some analysts would suggest. "There will never be one-party rule by Democrats, even if the last Republican expires or atrophies. They are incapable of it; factionalism smoulders aways in the Democratic breaths, and bursts into flames in any party gathering of more than three members."

● "Ford's '76 Plan---Truman-Style Campaign?" by Godfrey Sperling, Jr. Christian Science Monitor, November 8, 1974. "Without fanfare, President Ford has been using this last campaign to set the Democrats up for 1976, sources close to Mr. Ford disclose...If, as he anticipates, the Democrats will obstruct his programs, particularly those relating to the economy, and then not come up with alternative programs of their own, he expects to be able to go to the country, as Harry Truman did in 1948, charging the Democrats with 'do-nothingism,' according to Sperling.

● "An Election in Search of a Meaning," by Haynes Johnson. Washington Post, November 3, 1974. Writing before the election, Johnson observed, "Some pundits are expressing concern that this election heralds the deterioration, if not the extinction, of the two-party system. The election forecasts are being read as proof of a Democratic mandate. A mandate for what?" Johnson is justly critical of the cataclysmic predilections of the media, whose interests run counter to boring election results. Johnson quotes political scientist James MacGregor Burns: "My general approach to off-year elections is they don't mean very much. They have very little to do with the substantive positions on issues. The only significance I can presently see in the likelihood that lots of Democrats will be elected next week is what happens to the Democratic Party in 1976...My general point is that the leadership in the (Democratic) Party is already very fragmented, and it will be more so as we head into what appears to be the most wide-open presidential primaries we have seen." Writes Johnson: "In casting their ballots on Tuesday they are not voting for slogans, for a veto-proof Congress or against the big spenders, for the liberal Democrats or against the conservative Republicans. They are voting against the problems of the present, and they are hoping that somehow, some way, things might get better."

● "The Hot Air Of A Landslide," by Mike Royko. Chicago Daily News, November 6, 1974. Commenting on the Illinois Democratic victories, Royko wrote, "The Democrats, in explaining their lopsided triumph, credited their tradition of progress, their concern for the little man, their broad range of viewpoints, their superior virtue. They gave credit everywhere except to the one man who made it all possible---the great brooder of San Clemente. After Nixon, a Democrat could have campaigned by biting off the heads of live chickens and been elected. The chickens might have, too." Observed Royko: "Thanks to Nixon, giants were toppled, while midgets began ordering clothes from the tall man's shop. People were swept into local offices who should be sweeping the floors of local offices. In every election, party leaders must find eager clunks to run in hopeless contests. This time the clunks are making victory speeches." Now for the big show. "For the moment, the most exciting development is that we suddenly have at least 450 panting new hopefuls for the Democratic presidential nomination. And that doesn't include the dark horses. By next summer, everybody who got elected last night will be on the traditional fact-finding tour of Israel."

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DULY NOTED: CONSERVATIVES

"What Happened to Ramsey?" by William F. Buckley, Jr. Anchorage Daily News, November 12, 1974. "There has been a weightlessness in Republicans since the death of Robert A. Taft, and nobody, with the conspicuous exception of Barry Goldwater and Ronald Reagan, has done much about it...So (the GOP's) slide continues. What is missing is the top man. What becomes clearer and clearer is that Gerald Ford isn't that man. That means just what it says---nothing more. There may not be such a man; in which case the slide will simply continue," writes Buckley.

● "Election Failed to Point U.S. Toward Answers," by James J. Kilpatrick. The Charlotte Observer, November 12, 1974. "A week after the election, conservatives still are picking their way through the smoking ruins. The palpable fact is that we got clobbered---but the clobbering, as such, is not the most disturbing aspect of the vote." Prospects for liberal legislation from the next Congress really depress Kilpatrick. The conservative commentator knows the past electoral and impending congressional disasters: the failure of the GOP "to provide a constructive alternative to the liberalism with which the Democratic Party now is so well-identified." Writes Kilpatrick: "The GOP's trouble is not merely that its image is stained by corruption, or that it is unfairly saddled with blame for our economic distress; the larger trouble is that the party no longer is strongly identified with any particular ideas. The party is not unprincipled; in the popular view, it is non-principled...The time may be at hand not for the formation of a new third party, but for the emergence of a new second party instead."

● "Pattern of GOP Weakness Revealed in Election," by Kevin P. Phillips. Jacksonville Times-Union, November 7, 1974. Using his "six-year itch" theory to analyze the recent election, Phillips concludes that "one can make a historic case that the Republican Party will vacate the White House in 1976. Since 1952, whenever a party has lost heavily in the congressional off-year elections six years after taking office, at the same time retaining only a minority of the nation's governorships, it has been defeated in the next Presidential election." Phillips admits that historical precedents may not apply but argues that the pattern "is one of the realities that clear-thinking conservatives will want to face rather than try to ignore."

● "At Home," by Daniel Oliver. National Review, November 15, 1974. Late in the Connecticut gubernatorial campaign, U.S. Rep. Robert Steele(R) blasted his Democratic opponent, U.S. Rep. Ella Grasso(D), and Democratic State Chairman John Bailey because of Bailey's involvement in the multimillion-dollar purchase of a building owned by a utility company. Steele's fellow Republican, Sen. Lowell Weicker(R-Conn.), then blasted Steele for dirty politics. Weicker's comments were not well received by Nutmeg GOP leaders, and Weicker threatened to seek reelection as an independent in 1976. Commenting on Weicker's threat and the state of the Republican Party, Oliver writes, "And so he threatens to leave the party, or what is left of it. Others too contemplate leaving, but for the purpose of forming a third party, of making, that is, a new label which conservatives now in both parties could wear comfortably. According to a Gallup Poll, 59 % of the American People identify themselves as conservatives, but only 24% say they are Republicans. Yet---starting a new party is a formidable task. And there, after all, an almost empty vehicle around---the 'old' Republican Party. We even have a President with a genuine conservative voting record. But, the disenchanted Republicans ask, is the President tractable, except by the Left? The evidence to date is not encouraging and that is why after November, conservatives will be reevaluating the role and future of the Republican Party."

● "A Conservative's Viewpoint on How to Win the '76 Race," by Patrick J. Buchanan. Miami Herald, November 10, 1974. "If the President decides that the nation, in rejecting Republicans, has endorsed the philosophy, politics and program of the national Democratic Party---and if he turns his White House leftward to accommodate the trend---there will be a third party on the right in 1976," pontificates conservative guru Buchanan, formerly of the White House. Says Buchanan, "Entering the politics of 1976, the GOP will carry with it enormous burdens. In the eyes of many, it is not simply the party of big business, but the party of hard times, and now, the Party of Watergate. If the Republican Party is to regain the allegiance of the majority of Americans, then, it must begin anew to affirm, articulate, and defend the values and basic beliefs of working and middle-class America. Just as FDR's Democratic Party became the chosen instrument of protest for millions against the incumbent establishment of commercial, business and financial power, so the Republican Party should become the vehicle of protest against the incumbent establishment which dominates the academy, the foundations, the media, the bureaucracy, and the courts." Buchanan is not confident that Ford is the man to lead this crusade.

DULY NOTED: REAGAN

"Ronald Reagan, the GOP, and '76," by George F. Will. Washington Post, November 14, 1974. According to Will, California Gov. Ronald Reagan(R) "has never demonstra-

ted substantial national appeal. His hard-core support today consists primarily of the kamikaze conservatives who though the 1964 Goldwater campaign was jolly fun And there is reason to doubt that Reagan is well suited to appeal to the electorate that just produced a Democratic landslide. The electorate recently has shown a certain impatience with wealthy politicians who, like Reagan, have managed, however legally, to avoid paying income taxes. The electorate also has dealt urgently with politicians (like House Judiciary Committee Republicans David Dennis of Indiana and Charles Sandman of New Jersey---both defeated) who, like Reagan, supported Nixon until Nixon collapsed..If a Reagan third party would just lead the 'Nixon was lynched' crowd away from the Republican Party, and into outer darkness where there is wailing and gnashing of teeth, it might be, at worst, a mixed curse for the Republican Party. It would cost the party some support, but it would make the party seem cleansed."

● "Letter from Washington," by Richard H. Rovere. New Yorker, November 18, 1974. Commenting on the 1974 California election, Rovere observes: "What isn't settled yet is the future of Ronald Reagan. He will need employment come January, and he is said to be seeking the Presidency of the U.S. The job is already filled, as he must know; moreover, since the party he led for eight long years was severely trounced, one must wonder what makes him think he could run for President and win. The Republicans do seem to have a death wish, and prominently displayed it in San Francisco in 1964. After that disaster, surely they wouldn't do it all over again in 1974. Maybe they would."

● "Reagan's Third-Party Fumble," by Richard Rodda. Sacramento Bee, October 23, 1974. At a news conference in mid-October, California Gov. Ronald Reagan(R) was asked if he would be a presidential candidate on a third party ticket in 1976. Reagan said time would tell: "If neither political party is going to abide by the will of the people, I think the people are going to find a way to express that will." Reagan's comments received unwanted publicity, according to Bee Political Editor Rodda. So Reagan told Los Angeles Republicans, "I am not trying to start a third party and I'm not thinking of heading up a third party." On a subsequent television show, Reagan was again asked about a third-party candidacy. Said Reagan: "Well, whether I would lead the movement or whether I would join in support of such a movement, I think would have to depend on whether it became evident that both parties had so far failed that they no longer represented the will of the American people." That statement caused more trouble for Reagan so he issued a further denial, saying there was "no way" he would run for President on a third party ticket. Human Events and conservative political analyst Kevin Phillips have continued to play up the third party possibility, but Rodda chides Phillips' American Political Report newsletter for its political naivete: "What APR should do is examine third-party attempts in the 20th century. They have never succeeded. Strom Thurmond of the right wing and Henry Wallace of the left tried it in 1948 and fell on their faces. George Wallace failed in 1968. The two-party system seems here to stay. The GOP may be headed for a major defeat nationwide on Nov.5. But it bounced back after its disasters of 1932 and 1936 and will be alive and healthy, but a little bruised, after the 1974 election."

● "Ford Trying to Heal Rift With Reagan," by Rowland Evans and Robert Novak. Boston Globe, November 3, 1974. "Although President Ford's final weekend of campaigning may have missed its public goal of expanding a late nationwide Republican surge, it did achieve one private goal---a start toward healing the rupture with Gov. Ronald Reagan of California which could threaten not only the Republican Party but the two-party system," write Evans and Novak. Reagan and Ford met secretly in Los Angeles in an effort by Ford to console the GOP's conservative wing. "That defrosted the long Ford-Reagan chill, but those close to Reagan scoff at such efforts to abort his 1976 presidential ambitions or even getting him to disown third-party speculation." Evans and Novak criticize the wisdom of Ford's campaign tour, arguing that the President merely displayed his poor speaking talents.

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