

Ford Says Attack on Foes Not Confined to Democrats

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By Carroll Kilpatrick
Washington Post Staff Writer

President Ford yesterday softened his attack on Democrats who oppose his foreign policy by declaring that his criticism was directed equally at Republicans who stray from the reservation.

But the President declined to apologize, as Democratic National Chairman Robert S. Strauss asked him to do, for declaring that the election of "the wrong kind of Congress" could jeopardize the peace.

White House press secretary Ron Nessen said Mr. Ford was surprised by Democratic charges that he was using demagoguery on the peace issue when he asserted in Oklahoma City and Cleveland Tuesday that bipartisan-

ship in foreign policy is threatened.

The President's "message was directed to Republicans as much as to Democrats," Nessen said. "He needs help from Republicans, too."

Nessen said that the President was disturbed by recent congressional votes on foreign policy issues and that his speech "was a general call for cooperation on foreign policy."

The President was "appealing to the voters to send to Washington people who will cooperate with him," Nessen said.

"I believe it was Mr. Strauss who made the comparison with the Nixon-Agnew speeches in 1970," Nessen commented. "The President sees no comparison. The difference

between his remarks yesterday and the Nixon-Agnew speeches is the difference between night and day."

In 1970, Mr. Nixon charged that Democrats "appeased aggression here at home" and indirectly blamed them for supporting "rock throwers and the obscenity shouters in America."

Sen. Lloyd M. Bentsen, chairman of the Senate Democratic Campaign Committee, charged that Mr. Ford injected "the worst kind of partisanship into the conduct of this nation's foreign affairs."

The President will continue to receive foreign policy support, Bentsen said, but he "must not mistake bipartisan support for blind acceptance" of everything he wants.

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that only 42 per cent of the eligible voters could go to the polls Nov. 5.

"I think we ought to be ashamed," he said. "If that happens—and I trust it won't—it means that the composition of the next Congress that will be sworn in Jan. 3, 1975, will be decided by slightly more than four out of every 10 voters.

"In short, the majority would let the minority decide."

Mr. Ford said he was deeply concerned by "the inclination of the American people to consider politics something they would rather not be involved in."

Some persons urged him to stay out of the campaign, he said, to "sit in the Oval Office and contemplate and listen to advisers" who are "permanent residents of Washington, D.C."

He rejected that advice because a President should be involved in politics and because he learned a great deal from his travels, Mr. Ford said in Cleveland.

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Although the President has been vigorously supporting Republican candidates in all parts of the country, his support of Republican Judy Petty, who is trying to unseat veteran Rep. Wilbur D. Mills (D-Ark.), appeared to be less than all-out.

When asked about the contest, Nessen said the President believes Miss Petty "is waging a vigorous and determined campaign for Congress and he wishes her well."

Nessen would not go so far as to say that Mr. Ford wanted to see the defeat of his old friend, Mills, the powerful chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee and a conservative like the President.

The President will hit the campaign trail again today with speeches in Des Moines, Melvin, Ill., and Chicago, before returning to the White House after midnight.

Next week, he will spend four days on the road, one in his home state of Michigan and three on the West Coast trying to stir interest in a campaign marked by lethargy in many parts of the country.

In his Cleveland speech, Mr. Ford said one estimate showed

On at least two occasions in recent days, he praised Democrat Harry Truman as a great President.

Some observers, watching Mr. Ford warn that election of a "veto-proof" Congress could damage his conduct of foreign as well as domestic policy, speculated that he might be attempting to stir interest in the campaign with a Truman-type "give 'em hell" attack on Congress.

The President seemed surprised by the apathy he has encountered in various parts of the country and disturbed by his inability to arouse the interest of the voters.

His latest attack on the Democrats has brought angry rejoinders from Democratic spokesmen that may in the last days of the campaign help stimulate what has been a listless campaign.

Mr. Ford's travels today in the Mid West could indicate whether he has succeeded in injecting new interest in the Nov. 5 voting.