

# FORD ANNOUNCES CANDIDACY FOR '76 'TO FINISH THE JOB'

Promises an 'Above Board'  
Campaign Seeking 'Duty,  
Decency and Debate'

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KEY AIDES ARE NAMED

Statement Hints Attempt to  
Distinguish His Approach  
From Nixon's in 1972  
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WASHINGTON, July 8 —

President Ford announced formally today that he would seek the Republican nomination for the Presidency in 1976 "in order to finish the job I have begun."

Seated at the same 1858 desk in the White House Oval Office from which President Nixon announced his resignation exactly 11 months ago, Mr. Ford pledged "an open and above-board campaign."

"I want every delegate and every vote I can get that can be won to my cause within the spirit and the letter of the law," Mr. Ford said. He asked for the support of "all who believe in the fundamental values of duty, decency and constructive debate on the great issues we face together as a free people."

#### No Promises or Theme

The expected declaration, by the first President ever to attain the White House through appointment, was deliberately brief, muted, and in official setting apparently meant to underline Mr. Ford's stated determination "never to neglect my first duty as President."

The President made no political promises, struck no specific campaign themes and took no notice in the short statement of other claimants, Republican or Democratic, on his job. He told reporters later that he assumed he would be successful in his first quest for national election.

For the most part, the unusually early announcement by an incumbent President sought to distinguish Mr. Ford less from political opponents in 1976 than from the election campaign of Mr. Nixon in 1972.

Mr. Ford referred to four campaign officials standing behind him—Howard H. Callaway, the chairman; David Packard, the finance chairman; Robert C. Moot, the treasurer, and Dean Burch, the head of an advisory panel—as "outstanding Americans on whose integrity both my supporters and all others can depend."

#### Campaign Qualifications

He said that he had authorized them to wage a campaign for him with "three qualifications, which I want all Americans to know."

The qualifications were that his candidacy be waged openly and lawfully, that it reflect

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his pledge to be "President of all the people" and that it take into account his obligation to put statecraft before politics.

Without specifically drawing a parallel, Mr. Ford thus foreswore the secrecy, political espionage and sabotage that the Watergate investigations showed to have marked the campaign approach of the Nixon White House.

The point was also drawn, coincidentally, by a statement that Robert S. Strauss, the chairman of the Democratic National Committee, issued to acknowledge Mr. Ford's declaration.

"Assuming he will be nominated," Mr. Strauss said of the President, "I look forward to a clear and vigorous campaign where the concerns, the priorities and different approaches of the two parties are clearly defined."

Aside from television cameramen and a few reporters, the only witnesses to Mr. Ford's declaration were White House aides and the officers of the new President Ford Committee. The President's wife, Betty, was not present and their 32-year-old son, Jack, was there, in his capacity as an unofficial and unpaid White House intern.

Mr. Ford said, however, that he would campaign "with the strong support of my family and my friends."

His carefully arranged low-key declaration began a 16-month campaign by Mr. Ford to fend off any possible rivals in his party, to retain Vice-President Rockefeller on the party ticket and to persuade the electorate that his conservative philosophy was attuned to the nation's needs in a Bicentennial election campaign.

John P. Sears and Franklyn C. Nofziger, political conservatives and one-time officials of the Nixon Administration, have begun organizing for a possible, but so far indefinite, challenge by Ronald Reagan, the former Republican Governor of California.

But that effort and political explorations by John B. Connally, the former Secretary of the Treasury, are widely assumed in the White House and elsewhere to be aimed at the second spot on the Republican ticket, Mr. Rockefeller's, rather than at Mr. Ford.

The most explicit recitation by the President of the philosophic underpinnings of his candidacy came late last month, when he told Republican party leaders at a White House reception that he would emphasize five central themes.

They were "total dedication to the free enterprise system," fiscal responsibility, a strong national defense posture, a Federal withdrawal from state and local matters and "freedom for the individual" from an "all-powerful government."

Mr. Ford said today that he had learned in 13 campaigns for the House of Representatives in Michigan that "the best politics is always to do the best job I can for all the people."

"I see no reason to change that successful philosophy," he added. "I expect to work hard, campaign forthrightly and do the very best I can for America in order to finish the job I have begun."

Before he was nominated to be Vice President in 1973 by Mr. Nixon following the resignation of Spiro T. Agnew from the Vice Presidency Mr. Ford had planned to retire from politics in 1976.

He said at Congressional hearings on his nomination that his personal feeling was that he would not be a candidate in 1976 even if he were to succeed to the Presidency before then. Soon after Mr. Nixon resigned and Mr. Ford became President last August, however, Mr. Ford began saying that he would likely change his judgment and seek a four-year term of his own. SEE LETTER TO EDITOR

#### TEXT OF ANNOUNCEMENT

Today I am officially announcing I am a candidate for the Republican nomination for President in 1976.

I do this with the strong support of my family and my friends. My campaign will be conducted by outstanding Americans on whose integrity both my supporters and all others can depend; I have found those leaders in Bo Callaway of Georgia, Dave Packard of California, Bob Moot, Dean Burch and many others from every state and every walk of life who have volunteered to help.

I have given them authority to seek my nomination

with three qualifications, which I want all Americans to know.

First, I intend to conduct an open and above-board campaign, both for the nomination and for the Presidency. I want every delegate and every vote I can get that can be won to my cause within the spirit and the letter of the law and without compromising the principles for which I have stood all my public life.

Second, I will not forget my initial pledge to be President of all the people. I believe I can best represent my party. But this will be futile unless I can unite the majority of Americans who acknowledge no absolute party loyalty. Therefore, I will seek the support of all who believe in the fundamental values of duty, decency and constructive debate on the great issues we face together as free people.

Third, I am determined never to neglect my first duty as President. After 11 months in this office I know full well that the obligations of the Presidency require most of the stamina and concentration one human being can muster. But it is also the duty of all Americans to participate fully in our free elective process, and I will do so enthusiastically.

In all the 13 election campaigns I have undertaken, my basic conviction has been that the best politics is always to do the best job I can for all the people. I see no reason to change that successful philosophy. I expect to work hard, campaign forthrightly and do the very best I can for America in order to finish the job I have begun.