

FORD AD

Party Moderates Bid Ford Soften Conservative Tone

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WASHINGTON, Sept. 3—Moderate Republican members of the Senate told President Ford today that the conservative tone of his candidacy for a full term in the White House could cost him the electoral votes of crucial industrial states next year.

In a blunt, hour-long meeting with the President, a dozen Republican Senators urged him to keep Vice President Rockefeller as his running mate in 1976, to pay more heed to liberal attitudes within the party and to give public expression to his "compassionate nature" as a political counter to his tightfisted views on social spending.

The delegation, representing all but two members of the informal Senate Wednesday Club, which is made up of moderate and progressive Republicans, reported later that Mr. Ford listened to the complaints and pledged to give the Senators and opportunity to help to shape his campaign platform and organization.

Issue of Images

But the criticisms, which several of the Senators repeated in public, may have underlined the extent to which the President's recent and projected political appearances are directed at strengthening his conservative party base.

"There was a feeling in our group that the President is secure in his efforts to get the nomination, and does not have to move too far to the right," said Senator Bob Packwood of Oregon.

He said that Senator Charles McC. Mathias Jr. of Maryland had told Mr. Ford directly that "images you create now are going to be hard to shake" once the nomination is secure.

Continued on Page 28, Column 4

Continued From Page 1, Col. 2

and Mr. Ford tries to move beyond the endorsement of a minority party.

The President, in an apparent effort to fend off a possible primary challenge from Ronald Reagan, the conservative former Governor of California, has undertaken an ambitious schedule of speeches to preach such conservative Republican doctrines as fiscal prudence, military preparedness, and an end to Federal intrusion in the affairs of corporations and individuals.

Mr. Ford will set out tomorrow on a two-day trip to Washington, Oregon and California for official and political appearances. He tentatively plans to be on the road nearly every weekend for the rest of this year.

Senator Jacob K. Javits of New York said that the Wednesday Club had asked to meet with the President to impress upon him the success its members had had with generally progressive themes in states having a total of 187 of the 270 electoral votes needed to win the Presidency.

Ford Team Praised

Mr. Ford and Mr. Rockefeller make "a sound, effective team," Mr. Javits said, but he added that the issue was whether the President would shore up his standing in the states with large electoral votes or "tailor his campaign to small states with pronounced conservative views."

Another participant, Senator Charles H. Percy of Illinois, said, "Our main point was that we are able, every one of us, to hold 99 per cent of our Republican vote, but we win by attracting discerning independents and Democrats."

Asked if the group had been critical of the tone of Mr. Ford's political speeches, Senator Clifford P. Case of New Jersey replied, "We think that he hasn't been doing his own compassionate nature justice."

Mr. Case said that while no one expected Mr. Ford to alter his basic view on issues, the Senators believed he might try to relate that view to citizens who have not embraced traditional Republican conservatism. "It's a matter of emphasis," Senator Case said. "To a great degree, this is what campaigning is all about."

Others at Meeting

Others in the Senate delegation were J. Glenn Beall Jr. of Maryland, Mark O. Hatfield of Oregon, James B. Pearson of Kansas, Richard S. Schweiker of Pennsylvania, Robert T. Stafford of Vermont, Ted Stevens of Alaska and Robert Taft Jr. of Ohio. They were said to be speaking as well for Senators Edward W. Brooke of Massachusetts and Lowell P. Weicker Jr. of Connecticut.

The Senators reportedly became concerned in July, after Howard H. Callaway, Mr. Ford's campaign manager, complained publicly that Vice President Rockefeller was a politi-

cal liability among party conservatives.

The Wednesday Club members agreed to try to convince Mr. Ford that his increasingly conservative stance was shortsighted. They assembled election statistics that showed that in nearly every case they had fared better in their states than had former President Nixon, even in his 1972 sweep, by taking a more progressive tack.

Senator Case said that Mr. Ford had indicated that any "exuberance" Mr. Callaway had displayed about considering a replacement for Mr. Rockefeller would no longer be a problem.

Contention Disputed

But Ron Nessen, the White House press secretary, said that he knew of no directive to Mr. Callaway to tone down his attitude toward the Vice President. Mr. Callaway said in a telephone interview that the subject had not been raised by Mr. Ford or by the White House chief of staff, Donald H. Rumsfeld.

Mr. Callaway also disputed the Wednesday Club members' contention that, as Mr. Javits put it, "Our point of view was not being adequately reflected" in the campaign.

"They certainly don't have any problem getting input to me," Mr. Callaway said.

Mr. Ford's dilemma in trying to satisfy opposite wings of his party may have been reflected, meantime, in a fresh conservative complaint.

Senator Robert Dole of Kansas, unhappy over the refusal of the White House to promote Kent Frizzell, a Kansan, to Secretary of the Interior, told a reporter:

"This Administration is no different from the Nixon Administration. They simply don't listen to us."

Senator Case said that the President had listened, though, to the moderates' case, and that "the great thing about Mr. Ford" was his good nature in the face of "sincere and earnest expressions of criticism."

Reagan Said to Trail

SAN FRANCISCO, Sept. 3 (AP) — Mr. Reagan has lost substantial ground in his home state over the summer in his quest for the Republican Presidential nomination, the California Poll reported today.

The statewide survey said that he trailed President Ford by seven percentage points. In May, he led by nine.

The most recent poll was conducted in early August among 1,006 persons in various parts of the state.