

DRAFT REMARKS FOR THE MEETING OF THE MIDWEST REPUBLICAN  
CHAIRMEN, JUNE 26, 1976

WHAT FEW POLITICAL SPEECHES I HAVE GIVEN RECENTLY HAVE HAD ONE VIRTUE, AT LEAST. THEY HAVE BEEN SHORT, AS THIS ONE WILL BE.

MY TOPIC IS RELATIVELY SIMPLE, I THINK, AND OBVIOUS, AND I DON'T WANT TO BELABOR THE OBVIOUS.

THIS PARTY IS IN TROUBLE.

DON'T MISUNDERSTAND. IT IS NOT IN TROUBLE BECAUSE THE OTHER SIDE HAS IT ALL SEWED UP. IT IS IN TROUBLE BECAUSE THIS SIDE -- REPUBLICANS OR AT LEAST SOME OF US ARE ACTING NOW AND HAVE ACTED IN THE PAST AS IF THEY BELIEVE OUR DAYS ARE NUMBERED.

TAKE US, FOR EXAMPLE, MIDWESTERN REPUBLICANS. LET ME CITE ONE ENLIGHTENING, IF DEPRESSING STATISTIC. IN 1952, BACK WHEN THE TWELVE STATES OF THE MIDWEST WERE AS SOLID A REPUBLICAN STRONGHOLD AS EVER THERE WAS, THERE WERE 18 REPUBLICANS IN THE U.S. SENATE REPRESENTING US. THERE WERE ONLY SIX DEMOCRATS.

TODAY, IN 1976, IT'S JUST THE OPPOSITE. THERE ARE SIX REPUBLICANS AND 18 DEMOCRATS REPRESENTING OUR TWELVE STATES.

SOMEWHERE, SOMEHOW, ALONG THE WAY, SOMEBODY LOST CONFIDENCE OR I DON'T THINK THAT WOULD HAVE HAPPENED.

IT WOULD BE SUPREMELY FRUSTRATING AND IRONIC IF NOW, JUST WHEN THE VOTERS HAVE FINALLY STARTED TO SEE THE LEGITIMACY OF WHAT WE REPUBLICANS HAVE BEEN SAYING ALL ALONG, WE REPUBLICANS THREW IN THE TOWEL AND STOPPED SAYING IT BECAUSE WE GAVE UP HOPE THAT ANYONE WOULD LISTEN.

A FAILURE OF NERVE WOULD BE OUR GREATEST DEFEAT AS A PARTY -- AND IT WOULD BE A SELF-DEFEAT.

PEOPLE HAVE BEEN SAYING THAT ONE THING OR ANOTHER HAD KILLED, OR THREATENED, TO KILL THIS PARTY FOR YEARS. THE FINAL IRONY WOULD COME IF THIS PARTY DIED BY ITS OWN HAND.

I BELIEVE THAT THE REPUBLICANS CAN WIN THE 1976 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION.

I BELIEVE THAT VERY STRONGLY, SO DO NOT MISINTERPRET THE FACT THAT IN THESE BRIEF REMARKS TODAY I INTEND TO IGNORE THE PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN. I SIMPLY DO NOT WANT TO ALLOW OUR FASCINATION WITH PRESIDENTIAL POLICIES TO OBSCURE THE ENORMOUS CHALLENGE THAT EXISTS FOR THIS REPUBLICAN PARTY IN THE CONGRESSIONAL AND STATE AND LOCAL RACES THIS YEAR.

THE MIDWEST, AS I SAID, USED TO BE THE BASTION OF REPUBLICAN STRENGTH. AGAIN, IN 1952, THERE WERE 90 REPUBLICANS REPRESENTING THE MIDWEST IN THE CONGRESS AND ONLY 35 DEMOCRATS -- WE HAD OVER A TWO TO ONE ADVANTAGE. NOW REPUBLICAN NUMBERS HAVE SHRUNK TO 52 AND THE DEMOCRATS HAVE THE MAJORITY WITH 69 SEATS.

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AND IN TERMS OF STATE REPRESENTATION, THE STORY IS SADDER STILL. AS RECENTLY AS 1968, OF THE ELEVEN STATE LEGISLATURES ELECTED ON A PARTISAN BASIS, 8 WERE REPUBLICAN CONTROLLED, THE DEMOCRATS HELD TWO AND ONE WAS SPLIT. NOW, 8 YEARS LATER IN 1976, THAT SITUATION, TOO, IS REVERSED. 8 ARE CONTROLLED BY THE DEMOCRATS AND IT IS WE, REPUBLICANS, WHO ONLY CONTROL TWO.

THE FACT IS THAT THERE IS NOW ONLY ONE MIDWESTERN STATE, IN FACT ONLY ONE STATE IN THE COUNTRY WHICH HAS A REPUBLICAN MAJORITY IN BOTH HOUSES OF ITS LEGISLATURE AND A REPUBLICAN GOVERNOR. THE FACT THAT KANSAS IS THAT STATE, PROMPTS A CERTAIN PRIDE, OF COURSE, BUT I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT THE FEELING IS BITTERSWEET AND A LITTLE LONELY.

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THOSE FIGURES OF MIDWEST REPUBLICAN DECLINE ARE PRETTY GLOOMY AND I DIDN'T COME HERE TO DEPRESS YOU. IF THAT WAS WHY I CAME I SUPPOSE I WOULD GO ON AND CITE ALL THE POLLS THAT SHOW OUR NUMBERS AT AN ALL-TIME LOW AND OUR PROSPECTS FOR NOVEMBER AS PRETTY DISMAL.

BUT I AM HERE FOR A VERY DIFFERENT REASON. EVEN THOUGH I THINK THE POLLS MAY BE ACCURATE, I ALSO KNOW THAT THEY ARE NOTHING BUT A REFLECTION OF THE PRESENT SITUATION.

THEY ARE CERTAINLY NOT A PREDICTOR OF WHAT WILL HAPPEN TOMORROW, MUCH LESS BY NOVEMBER. IF THEY WERE THAT, THEN I WOULDN'T EVEN BE HERE TALKING TO YOU, BECAUSE EVEN MY OWN POLLS SHOWED ME TRAILING MY 1974 CAMPAIGN OPPONENT AS LATE AS A MONTH BEFORE THE ELECTION. WE FINALLY WON THAT RACE WITH A LOT OF HARD WORK AND THE FACT THAT A LOT OF CIRCUMSTANCES CAME TOGETHER WHICH MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR US TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE.

IN 1976, BELIEVE IT OR NOT, THERE ARE AN AWFUL LOT OF CIRCUMSTANCES COMING TOGETHER WHICH OUGHT TO MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR US REPUBLICANS TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE IN THE COMING CONGRESSIONAL, SENATORIAL AND STATE AND LOCAL CAMPAIGNS.

BUT YOU WOULDN'T HAVE TO GIVE IT MORE THAN A MINUTE'S THOUGHT TO RECOGNIZE THAT ALL OF THE MAJOR ISSUES IN THE CAMPAIGN ARE ON OUR SIDE.

THE PEOPLE DON'T LIKE BIG GOVERNMENT. THE DEMOCRATS  
GAVE IT TO THEM.

THE PEOPLE DON'T LIKE FEDERAL SPENDING THAT HAS GONE  
OUT OF CONTROL. THE DEMOCRATS -- THE DEMOCRATS IN CONGRESS--  
GAVE IT TO THEM.

THE PEOPLE IN FACT DON'T LIKE HAVING A LOT OF GOVERNMENT  
PROGRAMS ON THE BOOKS THAT EVEN THE GOVERNMENT CANNOT CONTROL.  
THE DEMOCRATS -- THE DEMOCRATS WHO CONTROLLED THIS CONGRESS  
ALMOST WITHOUT INTERRUPTION FOR THE LAST 44 YEARS, GAVE THAT  
TO THEM.

THE PEOPLE DON'T LIKE RISING INFLATION AND HIGH  
UNEMPLOYMENT WHICH YEARS OF DEMOCRAT CONGRESSIONAL POLICIES  
HAVE GIVEN THEM, AND THEY ARE REACTING.

WHETHER YOU KNOW IT OR NOT -- WHETHER THEY KNOW IT  
OR NOT -- THEY HAVE ADOPTED OUR REPUBLICAN MESSAGE.

IN SPITE OF OUR MINORITY PARTY STATUS, THE MAJORITY OF  
THE PEOPLE, BY AND LARGE, IN THIS ANTI-WASHINGTON MOOD OF  
1976 HAVE STARTED TALKING LIKE REPUBLICANS. THAT'S GOOD.  
BUT THE FUNNY THING IS THAT A LOT OF DEMOCRATS, WITH THEIR  
EARS TO THE GROUND, HAVE ALSO STARTED TALKING REPUBLICAN,  
ADVOCATING SMALLER GOVERNMENT AND SMALLER GOVERNMENT BUDGETS.  
THAT'S NOT SO GOOD.

THAT'S NOT SO GOOD BECAUSE THERE IS A REAL DANGER THAT  
THE SAME DEMOCRATS WHO WON IN THE PAST WITH FALSE PROMISES

MAY WIN IN THE FUTURE USING OUR ARGUMENTS AND OUR ISSUES AND OUR COMMITMENTS TO RESTRAIN GOVERNMENT.

THAT IS THE DANGER IN 1976. THE RISK IS THAT AT PRECISELY THE RIGHT MOMENT FOR REPUBLICAN POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY TO CARRY THE DAY, THE DEMOCRATS WILL STEP IN AND SNEAK OUR ISSUES AWAY.

DON'T LET THEM GET AWAY WITH IT. THE ISSUES ARE OUR ISSUES. THE TIMES ARE ON OUR SIDE, THE CIRCUMSTANCES ARE REALLY COMING TOGETHER JUST RIGHT TO CREATE THE CONDITIONS IN WHICH THERE CAN BE A RESURGENCE OF REPUBLICAN STRENGTH IN THE TWELVE STATES OF THE MIDWEST AND INDEED, ACROSS THE COUNTRY. ALL WE HAVE TO DO IN THE COMING MONTHS IS STAND UP FOR OUR REPUBLICAN PARTY; TO REMIND PEOPLE THAT WHAT THEY BELIEVE TODAY IS WHAT REPUBLICANS HAVE ALWAYS STOOD FOR AND TO STAND UP, IF YOU WILL, FOR WHAT WE STAND FOR.

IF WE DO THAT OVER THE NEXT FOUR MONTHS -- IF WE DO IT TOGETHER IN UNITY AND REPUBLICAN SOLIDARITY -- THEN COME ELECTION DAY, WE WILL FIND THAT WE WON'T BE STANDING ALONE.