

Richard Nixon Presidential Library
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7	31		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Campaign	Report	Report enumerating the "Shape of Wisconsin" at the opening of 1972. 5 pgs.

SHAPE OF WISCONSIN

As '72 begins, Wisconsin with 11 electoral votes appears a drab prospect for the President. In '68, it went for Nixon with less than 50 percent of the vote (RN 47.9, HHH 44.3, Wallace 7.6). The dreary outlook results from three situations.

One, the economy--especially in the major population areas--is depressed and likely to lag behind the rest of the Nation in recovery.

Two, the state GOP is heavily in debt, fractionated and weakly led.

Three, the RN reelection effort is, at present, inactive and led by individuals who are "track sore."

1. The Economy. Milwaukee's economy is largely dependent on manufacturing of heavy machinery. This industry is depressed at present and likely to be slow in recovery due to present excess capacity across the Nation. The Kenosha area is substantially influenced by the major American Motors manufacturing plant located there. While auto sales are up, American Motors does not seem to be sharing in the lushness. The Fox River Valley is heavily dependent on paper mills which are and will continue to be hit hard by pollution control requirements. All in all, it is difficult to see how a prevailing feeling of warm, brisk growth can be expected by the fall.

2. The GOP. It should be recalled that 1970 was a blowout for the state GOP. After six years of Republican leadership under Warren Knowles, the Party lost the bid for the first four year gubernatorial term to a shrewd Democrat, Patrick J. Lucy. It also lost, as expected, the bid to unseat William Proxmire from the U.S. Senate. The only state-wide seat of any political importance won in 1970 was that of Attorney General. The able Robert Warren was re-elected. A one-seat majority in the 100-man State Assembly was reduced to a minority position of approximately 30. The State Senate with staggered terms remained in Republican control. In sum, the

Party came out of 1970 holding the Attorney General's office and control of one House of the State Legislature. It also ended in heavy debt--approximately \$600,000, which since then has been reduced by only \$100,000. The \$500,000 net debt is equal to the amount usually raised for a gubernatorial race.

Just after the 1970 elections, the State Chairman and, I believe, six of the 10 Congressional District Chairmen resigned for individual reasons. Since that time, the State Party has occupied itself with task forces on revitalization which have come to nothing but fights and one debilitating battle (conservatives versus moderates) over the seat of State Vice Chairwoman. The conservatives won. The present Chairman is John Hoff, formerly State Party Treasurer, who is nice but apparently not strong. In short, the Party is stewing around on a number of issues which are tending to sap its already weak strength. Field staff has been cut due to money problems, and there doesn't appear to be much in the way of state led organization efforts.

3. The President's Campaign. In November of last year, the appointment of John McIver, a Milwaukee attorney, was announced to spearhead the President's campaign in Wisconsin. McIver was more or less dragged into this job. His reluctance was understandable. He has been deeply involved in, if not directed, state-wide campaigns every two years since 1964. His last effort was to direct the unsuccessful 1970 gubernatorial campaign of Lt. Governor Jack Olson. Before he began that campaign, and certainly afterwards, he let it be known that this would be his last effort. Yet here he is again. There is a committee mostly composed of similarly "track sore" individuals. Conversation with a number of sources yields no evidence that contact has been made by McIver and his committee with the county organizations. In fact, conversation indicates no activity whatever on the part of McIver and his committee. Ody J. Fish, former State Chairman and now National Committeeman, is reported to attribute this to lack of guidance from Washington and to lay some of the blame on Harry Fleming who he believes to be abrupt, abrasive and non-directive.

The Committee to Reelect the President, through its youth group headed by Ken Reetz, has identified a John Proctor to be the youth coordinator for the state. He is a State Committee field man, about 28 years old, and reputed to be competent. His announcement has not yet been made.

So passive have been McIver and company that there are even rumors among some Republicans to the effect that the Nixon Campaign has written off Wisconsin.

4. The Primary. Scheduled for April 4, the event is likely to see the greatest action on the Democrat side. Wisconsin has no partisan registration, and cross-over voting is easy. The outcome of the primary is binding on the delegation. The procedure is interesting and works as follows: A statutory committee convenes to slate those individuals who are generally recognized as contenders for the nomination. To the best of my recollection, the committee is composed of the chairman of the two parties, some others equally balanced and chaired by the Chief Justice of the State Supreme Court. Once the contenders have been slated for both parties, each individual has an opportunity to officially withdraw by filing an affidavit of non-candidacy. The primary is held. Thereafter, the state party proposes a list of delegates who will go to the Convention bound to the primary winner. The list of delegates is subject to veto by the winning candidate.

Although most of the action will be on the Democrat side with a geometrically increasing number of candidates, there may be some small stir on the Republican side if McCloskey and Ashbrook are slated, which is probable. For Ashbrook, there is a lot of very conservative blood in Wisconsin, particularly in the Fox River Valley and the North Shore of Milwaukee. However, Ashbrook's candidacy may yield more money than votes. Close observers can see no organizational activity for either McCloskey or Ashbrook as of this time.

One critical point which could help the President's effort is the drawing up of delegates after the primary. These delicate posi-

tions can either be inclusive of some hard workers who will follow through in November or a roster of the "track sore." The former is preferable; the latter is the course of least resistance.

5. The Democrats--A Lot of Activity.

Muskie. By far and away, the most organized, with leadership comprised of many long-time Democrat pros. The campaign is chaired by David Carley, a millionaire Turn-key contractor and Political Science PhD who has run for Governor a couple of times himself and is closely associated with Gaylord Nelson. He is assisted by James Wimmer, a former State Democratic Chairman. Others in the campaign are key aides to Governor Patrick J. Lucy. Lucy will remain Independent, though his people are behind Muskie. Most of the candidates on the Democratic side have gone to State Legislators to head up their campaign or embrace it. Muskie has done the best job. Thirty Legislators, many of them formerly for Bayh, have signed up for Muskie. In addition, Muskie counts among his supporters Congressmen Reuss and Obey. Also supporting him is Don Peterson, the Eau Claire pizza manufacturer, who headed the Wisconsin Delegation to the 1968 Democratic Convention and led the march for McCarthy.

Humphrey. Though not yet announced, he is expected to obtain substantial support from the labor movement in Milwaukee, Racine and Kenosha and rural areas in the northwest portion of the state. There are no identified leaders of his campaign at this point.

Lindsay. His day after announcement tour of the state, won great and favorable publicity. McGovern's organization, for what it was, seems to be eroding in favor of Lindsay. Surprisingly, the Mayor, at first blush, shows some signs of being the personality with that needed spark. Maybe it's just Gerry Bruno, but the Mayor does seem to have caught on a bit. Lindsay is certainly way ahead of the three super libs. McGovern trying to be organized but making little headway; and McCarthy approaching the Stasson level of support.

On the other side, Jackson is getting nowhere and has little hope save the possibility of a strong GOP cross-over.

All in all, the primary promises to be dull on the Republican side unless Ashbrook or McCloskey pick up steam suddenly. There will be a large GOP cross-over to the scene of battle on the Democratic side. Some estimate a 75,000 vote cross-over. Notwithstanding what is inherently an unexciting situation on the Republican side, the President's effort--which is and should be targetted toward November--is still behind the starting line and working in a tough environment.