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Interview with Representative Phillip Crane, Jan. 30, 1978.



Crane said that he had not seen much difference between Nixon and Ford in ~~his~~ ^(their) dealings with Congress, although he said that Jerry, ~~as~~ he called him, had been more accessible. ~~He~~ ^{(however,} he said that some of the oldtimers might ~~say~~ say that about Nixon, ~~as well.~~ Crane, who supported Ronald Reagan for the Republican nomination in 1976, said that, as a matter of fact, ~~that~~ ^{5,} one of his colleagues almost deserted the Ford cause because he was having ~~a~~ great inability ~~in~~ reaching Ford. Crane said parenthetically that he had had the same difficulty ~~in~~ reaching Reagan. Crane said that he was surprised ~~at~~ ⁽³²⁾ his colleagues' difficulties with Ford, because he was a powerful political figure in a crucial primary state and the problem arose just a week or two before the primary. ~~Crane~~ ^P Crane said that he did not think ~~either~~ either Nixon ~~or~~ Ford had been philosophic conservatives. He said their actions had probably followed a course slightly to the right of center, but they were not grounded in a philosophic set of convictions. Crane said that he had always felt that Nixon was not a normative man, ~~that~~ ^H he did not relate argument to principle. ~~He~~ ^H he said that he had the impression that Nixon would set down all arguments for or against a given course of action, including illegal or unethical alternatives, ^(on his yellow tablet) and he would make his decisions on the illegal ~~or~~ ^(or) unethical ~~solely~~ ^{one} solely on the basis of the odds of getting caught. He said that he had not really perceived this in Nixon until around 1964. He said that it always annoyed him when the media identified Nixon and Ford as conservatives. He said that Ford's voting record was rather conservative, but it really reflected ~~the~~ constituent and party loyalties rather than philosophic conviction. Crane said that he was more ~~troubled~~ troubled by people of this kind than he was by the actual liberals, because you always knew where the ~~the~~ liberals were coming from, but ^{who} people ~~that~~ did not have a philosophic background were not grounded in principle, and therefore when they ~~encountered~~ ^(encountered) a crisis, you could not tell which way they would go. ~~As for~~ ^{After (1) AS A WAS SAID ABOUT} President Eisenhower, Crane said, frequently the person who persuaded them is the last person to have their ear.

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Nixon was a man of much greater intellect than Ford, in Crane's opinion. Ford was therefore less secure when he assumed his responsibilities as President. Ford, Crane felt, was in over his head. ~~His~~ ^{His} problems were partly due to the people he had around him. In fairness, Crane said, he would have to say that Nixon from his earliest ~~time~~ ^{time} in politics set his ~~sight~~ ^{sights on being} to be "top banana", but that Ford ~~never~~ had probably never ~~expected~~ expected to be President, and therefore found himself unprepared when he reached the White House. Crane said that he felt that Ford's place in history would be brighter if he had announced, ~~that~~ when he became President, that he had ~~never~~ ^{ever} sought the office and therefore did not intend to run for ~~an~~ election, and ~~he~~ would serve merely as a transition president. Ambition overtook Ford, however, Crane says, which led to much of the meanness and pettiness which Crane detected in the campaign. Crane said that he was principally concerned about Ford's foreign policy, ~~that~~ ^{He} felt that ~~Nixon~~ ^{Nixon} had held Kissinger in check, but Ford, through his lack of experience in foreign policy, was forced to rely almost totally on Kissinger, ~~and~~ ^{and} Kissinger ~~was~~ therefore was operating without check in foreign policy. ^{Con} Domestic issues, Crane said, he detected no significant change from Nixon to Ford. Crane said that he felt that the Family Assistance Plan, deficit budgets, wage and price controls were used by Nixon as a means of buying off the liberals to give ~~them~~ ^{him} a free hand in foreign policy. Crane said ~~that~~ that he felt that Ford would have been as vulnerable to arguments for wage and price controls as Nixon had been if he had been president in 1971. The controls were essentially a means of avoiding pain.

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I asked Crane if there had ever been a conservative president in his sense ~~and~~ ^{He} said, "Yes, ~~that~~ he thought that Jefferson had been, and George Washington, and John Adams, ^I in fact all of the presidents until Andrew Jackson, with whom he began developing reservations." He said, ~~that~~ ^{that} Abraham Lincoln, although a great hero to Republicans, did not meet all the tests of conservatism. ~~He~~ He said ~~that~~ ^{that} Lincoln had violated the concept of the founders when he did not let the ~~sisters~~ ^{sisters} go when the South ~~succeeded~~ seceded. Grover Cleveland, on the other

hand, Crane said, had been a superb conservative. McKinley was less of a conservative than Cleveland because McKinley was a protectionist. Even Herbert Hoover was not fully a conservative, since, Crane pointed out, ~~that~~ ^{many} of the ~~new~~ ^{new} ~~tax~~ ^{deal} programs were begun under Hoover. The 1932 Democratic platform was a fine conservative platform, one of the finest in the century. But Roosevelt did not live up to it. Since that time there have been no true conservatives.



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Crane said that he felt that Ronald Reagan, if he had become president, would have been able to move the country in a more conservative direction, though vastly less so than the more militant conservatives hoped. Crane felt that Reagan had had a creditable conservative record in California, particularly ⁱⁿ ~~on~~ ^{from} ~~the~~ standpoint of initiating welfare reform, which ~~was~~ had been taken up by other states, including New York under Nelson Rockefeller. ~~and~~ ^A Also in holding down the overall rise in the cost of government, which has been followed by his successor, Jerry Brown. Reagan would ~~not~~ have operated a tight-fisted administration, Crane said. Most of all, in foreign policy, Reagan ^{B-1} would have followed a more conservative course. ^{He} would not have cancelled the ~~B-1~~ bomber, he would have gone about beefing up the Navy, he would not have gone through ^{with} the Panama ^{Canal} treaty. Although, Crane says, ~~that~~ ^{Reagan} is talking about ~~other~~ alternative means ^{of} dealing with the canal problem ^{which} that Crane himself would not feel comfortable with, such as setting an international ^{commission} for users of the Canal. Crane said that he felt there was no ~~doubt~~ doubt that the Reagan ^{campaign} had pushed Ford to the right, ^{He} said ~~that~~ they had made Ford aware that Henry Kissinger was a liability. ^{It} made the administration nervous about ~~AMM~~ Henry.

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Crane said he personally knew some Southerners who had been Reagan supporters who had ended up voting for M Jimmy Carter because they felt that there was ~~not~~ not much philosophic difference between Carter and Ford, so why shouldn't they vote for one of their own? Crane says that he expects further conservative gains because the conservatives have ~~not~~ taken up the job issue, and he thinks that this ^{will be a big factor} ~~is doing a real~~ ^(attracting) ~~howling among~~ blue-collar workers ^(to) ~~for~~ conservatism. He said that conservatives are opposing unrealistic goals, and arbitrary timetables for environmental plans. Crane

says that conservatives now have a great opportunity for ^{Sa}major breakthrough with working people. Crane says that working people have come to realize that conservatives stand for the American dream, whereas liberals are attempting to straightjacket the American dream.

