

October 9, 1976

POOL REPORT # 16

At a luncheon in the Hall of States, the President sat between John Connally and Mayor Folsom of Dallas. Bob Strauss, Chairman of the Democratic National Committee, was there, and we are told that the two shook hands and were pictured together, but we did not see it.

He also met briefly before the luncheon, we are told, with Pat and Lucy Nugent, the daughter and son-in-law of President Johnson. It was a cordial meeting.

At the luncheon he was presented with an orange and beige afghan blanket that had won a prize at the State Fair. "Betty will love it," the President said. "Maybe after November 2, Betty and I will have some time to snuggle up underneath it."

After leaving the luncheon, he paused briefly at a replica of a large bell that is going to hang in Thanksgiving Square in Dallas. He shook hands with several children who were standing around the bell before getting in the car and driving to the Pan American Center. He spent about 45 minutes in the Pan American building before emerging with John and Nellie Connally for the half-block ride to the Cotton Bowl. His car entered under the stadium and he got out to greet the coaches of the two teams. Darrell Royal, the Texas coach, was there to greet the President, and the Oklahoma coach, Barry Switzer, walked up shortly and greeted the President.

Then the President walked to the field with a coach on either side as the photographers took pictures. There was no sign of recognition from either coach to his counterpart, and later the President said, "They sure didn't have much to say to each other," as he walked onto the field.

The President sat on the 50-yard line, about half-way up in the lower deck under the overhang. The pool was too far behind him to see him during the game, and we did not go on the field with him when he tossed the coin. That was restricted to photographers.

We were told he planned to leave with four minutes remaining in the game, so we left when there were about six minutes left. Oklahoma started their touchdown drive, however, and he did not leave until after they had missed the extra point, which was with about 90 seconds left in the game.

It was an uneventful trip to the apparel mart until we arrived and the incident with the train bomb occurred. When the President arrived at the apparel mart he stayed in his car for several minutes as local police with drawn guns and Secret Service agents walked over to a clump of weeds about 50 yards away. We were told there was a report that a man had jumped off a train into those weeds just a few minutes before the President arrived. The railroad track was perhaps 75 yards from where the President's car was parked. They found nothing and the President, after several minutes, was hurried into the building surrounded closely by Secret Service agents.

(MORE)

About 1,500 campaign workers were in a room upstairs waiting for him. They were packed in the room and there was much enthusiasm, lots of screaming and shouting as he shook hands with the people at the front of the room.

In remarks, the President described today as "one of the finest days in this campaign and..." "one of the finest days of my Presidency. It has been a super day -- the State Fair, a great football game and this great rally."

He said that he wanted to make three points -- trust, national security of the United States, and taxes. "You might have watched the debate Wednesday night," he told the crowd, which drew a big cheer. He said that in 90 minutes, Jimmy Carter had made 14 distortions, inaccurate statements, misrepresentations or untruths, and in his hands he said he had an 8-page document there that was detailed -- it was the document Nessen released to us last night. Continuing the quote, "And I think, if my mathematics is right..." -- and then he stopped and said, "and don't any of you professors double-cross me -- "that is a distortion or untruth every six minutes." And this is a direct quote, too: "That is too darn many for a President."

He said, "Jimmy Carter talks about reorganizing the Federal Government." He said, "The Federal Government needs to be streamlined. But I don't think I trust that job to Jimmy Carter, based on his record as Governor of Georgia."

He then recited the figures that we have heard, that the cost of Government went up 50 percent, the number of employees went up 25 percent, the bond indebtedness went up \$200 million. And then he said, "If elected, just imagine what he would do with the Federal Government."

Then he talked about Jimmy Carter denying that he had ever said that he would advocate a cut of \$15 billion in the Federal budget. He said, "The record shows in a meeting in Savannah, Georgia, and in an interview in Los Angeles, he said he would advocate a \$15 billion cut in the defense budget. His denial is a total untruth, period."

Then he said, "Jimmy Carter wants to either cancel or delay the B-1 bomber. That means that Jimmy Carter would send young pilots and crews out into planes that are older than they are." In relation to that, he said, "I really don't think he understands what the Defense Department is all about," speaking of Carter. And he said that a \$5 billion to \$7 billion or \$7 billion to \$9 billion cut in the budget would cut our defense strength. "Now we won't stand for it, and we are going to win on it." I can only interpret that means he is pledging to make that an issue. It seemed to be the thrust of it.

(MORE)

Then he accused Carter of flipflopping from one day to the other. He talked about tax reform. "The best tax reform I know is tax reduction for the American people." There was much applause to these lines. It was a very, very enthusiastic crowd. The crowd estimate was 1,500. They were supposed to have been campaign workers from the county around here. They were introduced by the County Chairman as some of the best campaign workers in the State.

Then he quoted Teddy Roosevelt and said, "Carter wants to carry a flyswatter."

"The momentum is with us. We are going to carry Texas," he said in conclusion. And then, as the crowd shouted and chanted "We want Ford," the President waved this 8-page document at the crowd and they responded enthusiastically, and he worked the crowd afterwards and he left right away.

After he came down on the elevator -- he was way ahead of schedule -- he stopped in a sort of loading area on the way to the car. There was a little girl standing 10 or 12 yards away. She looked about 10 years old. He shook her hand and he shook her father's hand and he sought out 4 people -- 3 men and a woman, black people -- from their dress they appeared to be freight loaders. They seemed to be standing in the background and he went over there and shook their hand. Then he had a very brief press conference out front. He walked over to some cameras that were there. He said, "We could not have had a better day. I am very, very encouraged." And then I only heard the answer to a question, and I think he was asked if he was going to carry Texas, but I am not sure. He said, "I think we will surprise some people." He said, "We are an underdog but we are going to surprise them." I did not hear the question.

The only other thing, I happened to ride down on the elevator with him because of the push and the shove -- and I don't think he was too happy with that. Bob Barrett had me hidden behind him and after the President got in he stepped aside and he said he was going to bronze me and give me to the President for a watch fob.

When Darrell Royal greeted the President under the stands, and they were shaking hands, when Switzer walked up and there was no recognition from either of them to the other one -- I have been reading stories that they have been a little upset with one another. The President laughed about that coming down. He said, "They sure didn't have much to say to each other," as we walked out onto the field.

Aldo Beckman-Chicago Tribune
Bob Jamieson-NBC

#