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by PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY
Box 618, Alton, Illinois 62002
Phone: 618-462-5415

THE "CAN'T WIN" SYNDROME

The eastern liberal-establishment Republicans have always pretended to pose as political pragmatists rather than as ideologues. \ bile invariably supporting Presidential candidates who would continue big government deficits, they argue that their choice is determined by a magic formula guaranteed to appeal to party professionals: "The liberal candidate can win; the conservative cannot."

Thus in the primaries of 1952, the eastern liberals hammered with the slogan, "Bob Taft can't win," until they froze him out of the presidential nomination he had earned as Senate Republican leader. The liberals successfully argued that Taft was too closely tied to controversial legislation such as the Taft-Hartley Act and that a fresh face without such impedimenta, Dwight Eisenhower, was more electable.

In 1964 the eastern liberals again urged the Republican National Convention to nominate a candidate from outside of Washington, either Nelson Rockefeller or William Scranton, predicting that conservative Senator Barry Goldwater couldn't **win.** In the November election, the eastern liberals made this a self-fulfilling prophecy by supporting a Washington politician, Lyndon Johnson.

In 1968 the eastern liberal Republicans, echoing the same refrain, said that nonald Reagan couldn't **win,** while Richard Nixon was more electable because he was more liberal. That practical consideration was persuasive with enough conservative Delegates to the Republican National Convention to nominate Nixon.

In 1976 the shoe is on the other foot. On pure y pragmatic political criteria, the western conservative Ronald Reagan is obviously

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more electable than Nelson Rockefeller's candidate, Gerald

Whereas President Ford is hopelessly hung with the triple albatross of Washington, Watergate, and Kissinger, those are all non-issues against Reagan. If one thing is clear from the 1976 primaries, it is that the AiiH'rtcan vot(•rs *er<>* systerrm t ieal ly voti n;l agnins t \·ssh lngto.n p(:,1:i. tic.L:ins(such as Ford), /and for thn::'f' wi,o hsj] from the hinterJ,,n,: (snch as Cr;rt.E'.r ,n.1d Brol'm).

While the subject of Watergate has been quiescent this spring, the Democrats will surely resurrect this obvious issue in the fall campaign. The ghost of Richard Nixon will forever hang over Ford because no explanations can erase the facts that Nixon made Ford President of the United States, and Ford saved Nixon from going to jail.

There is no way Ford can get out from under the burden of carrying the Kissinger policies on his back: the troublemaking hypocrisy of the recent Afr1.can stat emen ts, the planned gi V('/JWay of t.t:e n. :;;. C:?lnal iu Panama, the obvious lopsidedness of detente with the Russians and allowing them to overtake our former lead in missiles and submarines, the Sonnenfeldt sellout of eastern European hopes, and the senseless snub *of* Solzhenitsyn. As Congressman ;,i ·nr:rw'inski reePntly f.a:!d ı"11tw President is a captive of Henry K. The subordinate is controlling his chtcf.11

Against the now-probable Democratic nominee, Jimmy Carter, Ford would have to write off the entire south, wherens n ng?1ı woulct have o good ch,itnce. F'ina lJ y, ,:eagan is cle,rd.y s-:in0rior t.o For.J :Ln rrticu1atint; the isBues, fieldin questions from reporters and voters, and communicatin.,:.:, via tf:},,vis1on.

As push comes to shove in the final weeks before the Republican National Convention, the non-ideological party professionals are climbing aboard the Reagan bandwagon because they know that he has a better chance to win than Gerald Ford.

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