

We have called this press conference today to announce the formation of a "Citizens for Reagan" committee. (Introduction of committee members.) ^{AP} The purpose of this committee is to build an organization and raise the money necessary to conduct a viable and effective campaign once Governor Reagan decides to become an active candidate.

The decision to take this step has not been an easy one. Mr. Ford came to the Presidency under circumstances unique in American history, amidst problems of confidence, international unrest and domestic instability which are unparalleled. All of us, Democrats and Republicans alike, must give him our support lest others in the world receive the impression that America is too weak or immobile to act.

Yet, Mr. Ford's efforts to cope with these problems on a day-to-day basis provide little relief for the vast majority of Americans who yearn for a leader who can communicate a realistic perspective on America's future. ^{AP} The process by which the American people have become frustrated and untrusting of their political leaders has been built up over ~~twelve~~ ^{the many} years in which ~~the winners~~ ^{there has} ~~of Presidential elections have not been forced to articulate~~ ^{been too much promising and too} ~~specifically what they would do in office and have disregarded~~ ^{little performance after election.} ~~those pledges which were made once they were elected. This country cannot ultimately survive if Presidential elections continue to be decided on the basis of the lesser of two evils.~~

we have had far too much instances in our political history where the voters have been left with a choice of deciding between the "lesser of two evils" - this country cannot survive if Presidential elections continue

to be decided in the same way.

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We, as Republicans, cannot meet our responsibility to the country by anticipating a Presidential race which would merely take advantage of the presumed weakness in the Democratic Party. We owe a positive obligation to the American people to demonstrate that we have thoroughly searched our ranks, considered all the alternatives and nominated our most effective leader. We must convince the people that we will not only try, but also will actually do those things which we agree must be done.

The next President must enter office armed with a positive compact between himself and the American people, such that Congress will realize that there is no longer any merit in political expediency. We believe that Governor Reagan, a man who stands ^{fall} ~~alone~~ among American politicians in his demonstrated ability, can to do those things which he promises. ~~is that man. A man who~~

That can only be achieved, in my opinion, by the candidate submitting themselves to the people in the primary process.