A WEAVERIAN STUDY OF PRESIDENT FORD'S EFFORTS TO
SELL HIS ENERGY PACKAGE

THESIS

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By

Ellen S. Fuller, B.A.

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This study analyzed President Gerald Ford's efforts in selling his energy package in February, 1975. Six major speeches and news conferences were examined in terms of Richard Weaver's rhetorical theory. Five criteria of this theory were studied: appeals to man's good values, choice of argumentation, use of "god" and "devil" words, adaptation to the historical setting of the speech, and ethical character of the speaker.

This analysis concluded that Ford was a good Weaverian rhetorician because he appealed to good values in language well adapted to each audience, adapted well to historical settings, and elevated his ethos considerably. However, Ford sold himself but not his program because he relied too heavily on his own ethos and circumstantial argumentation and slighted refutation arguments.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of Problem

The Democrats would love for the President to lose his cool, get mad and have a temper tantrum. But he doesn't look back and brood. His philosophy is that each time you huddle, you line up for a new play regardless of whether you've gained or lost on the last one.

This statement described President Gerald Ford's strong perseverance during our country's most critical energy crisis. President Ford's administration now struggled with a situation in which our energy supply could be reduced by an Arab oil embargo, an increase in the price of foreign oil, or sharp cuts in foreign oil production. The effects of this dependency on foreign oil were experienced by each oil and gas consumer in the United States in the winter of 1974. High gasoline prices, long lines at the gas stations, and shortages in gasoline and home heating fuels brought an energy crisis to each American's doorstep.

In a public opinion poll by the Sindlinger Research firm in February, 1975, five out of six American adults thought the United States still had an energy problem.\(^2\) Furthermore, two-thirds of these consumers thought the problem would grow more serious.\(^3\) Three-quarters of them followed the energy problem on a weekly basis.\(^4\)

The crisis was dominated by our dependency on foreign oil. While the United States was becoming more and more dependent on foreign oil, the cost for the oil was increasing. For example, in 1970 the United States' dependency on foreign oil for its energy needs was 23 per cent; however, in January, 1975, it was 37 per cent.\(^5\) Therefore, in January, 1975, two out of every five barrels of oil or seven million barrels consumed daily in the United States were imported.\(^6\)

In President Ford's energy package, he warned of the problems with such increasing dependency:


\(^3\) Ibid., W-219, Wednesday, February 26, 1975, p. 1409.

\(^4\) Ibid., p. 1415.


\(^6\) Ibid.
If there is no change in our pricing policy for domestic energy and in our consumption habits, by 1985 one-half of our oil will have to be imported. . . . Since our economy depends so heavily on energy, it is imperative that we make ourselves less vulnerable to supply cut-offs and the monopolistic pricing of some foreign oil producers.7

The price during this same period has increased from $2.10 a barrel to $10.25.8 The total cost to the United States was $7.7 billion in 1973 and $24 billion in 1974.9 These costs created a drain on the United States economy. According to Commerce Secretary Frederick B. Dent, "without the burden of imported petroleum, the U.S. trade balance would have shown a 14 billion dollar surplus. Instead, the deficit was 3.07 billion."10

President Ford and his advisors want to reduce this dependency with the help of all Americans. "President Ford and his advisors are being pressured daily to present an energy solution.

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8 "Pay More, Get Less," p. 36.
9 Ibid.
While energy-option papers are being written, our economy is failing and our dependency on imported oil is increasing."11

President Ford met with his aides to discuss and write possible solutions to the energy crisis during the summer and fall of 1974. Many ideas were presented. The general consensus in December, 1974, was that the voluntary energy conservation program "would be scrapped in favor of some far more stringent policy to reduce the U.S. dependency on imported oil."12 Frank Zarb, the nominee for the director of the Federal Energy Administration, told Congress in December, "The seriousness of the international and domestic energy situation will not permit further lengthy studies of alternative energy strategies."13

Encouraged by his top advisors and the public's demands for a solution to our energy needs, President Ford proposed his own plan, "Energy Independence Act of 1975," to Congress January 30. The Ford package was presented in three parts according to importance: the recession, the energy crunch package, and inflation. The energy crunch package's goal was achieving energy independence by 1985 and to


13Ibid., pp. 29-30.
cut the demand enough to reduce oil imports by one million barrels a day by the end of 1977. To reduce the demand quickly, the price of gas and other oil products will increase and the foreign oil will be taxed $3.00 a barrel. In addition, tougher federal standards on auto exhausts will be postponed for five years.

President Ford's energy plan was received skeptically. Light applause was noted in the Congress. Many citizens were confused as to the effects of the package. Therefore, the President and his advisors sought a means of gaining public support and understanding:

He and his people planned a massive PR offensive to sustain the momentum—a blitzkrieg of briefings, mailings, meetings, teachins, by Cabinet members, even a return to the road by Ford in person to sell his program and not incidentally, himself.

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16 "Ford Makes His Move," p. 16.


18 "Ford Makes His Move," p. 17.
In February, 1975, President Ford and his advisors began to personally sell this energy package to the American public. They presented speeches, answered questions, and attended meetings on energy in New York, Atlanta, Houston, Topeka, and Florida. These five locations for the President's speech were well-planned with definite purposes and an intended audience. William J. Baroody, Jr., the organizer of these energy trips, described their purpose. "Those who think we are selling the President's program are partly correct. After all, we believe in it ourselves."19

The presidential energy package was taken to the public for several other reasons. First, since President Ford was not the public's elected leader, he assumed a responsibility to seek public support for his plan. Second, William J. Baroody, Jr. explained in Florida that these direct meetings "bring the White House to the people and create a two-way exchange of ideas."20 He further noted that the visits to these various cities had "been highly successful in developing ideas and opening communication lines between the public and the White House."21 Another advisor explained that finally they had "something to sell. We're off the ground. The Ford

21 Ibid.
Presidency has begun. In Atlanta, President Ford agreed with these advisors that the meetings

... give me and other Washington officials ... a real opportunity to discuss the pressing national issues with the people who are affected by them at the grass roots, and thereby, it improves the communication between national and local leadership.

Another purpose was evident in the following statement by Earl H. Rast, Jr., vice-president of KFDA-TV in Amarillo:

"Ford's primary purpose in meeting with the news group was to ask the communications media to take his message back to their communities." The next purpose was to stimulate Congress into an action on our energy needs. Last, he proposed to improve his political position by telling the American voter of his concern for the energy crisis.

Purpose of Paper

From February 3, 1975, to February 25, 1975, President Ford gave speeches to promote his package for the energy crisis. The purpose of this study was to analyze his rhetorical efforts in selling

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23 President Ford's Speech in Atlanta, p. 1. Refer to footnote no. 14.
his plan. Five reasons exist for the public's interest in Ford's energy rhetoric. First, Ford used rhetoric to seek public and Congressional support and action on his solution to the energy crisis. Second, Ford directly tested his ethical appeal with the varied public who had not elected him to office. Third, Ford, the rhetorician and speaker, had not yet been analyzed. Fourth, Ford and his advisors carefully selected each audience for an energy speech. Fifth, the same subject matter was used in each speech; yet, the word choices and examples were changed to fit each particular audience.

This analysis was prepared in terms of the criteria formulated by rhetorical theorist Richard Weaver. Weaver was selected for four reasons. First, Weaver thought that the ethical character of a speaker was important for persuasion. Second, word choices should be selected in accordance with the audience's experiences. Third, the speaker's word choices and modes of argumentation should represent the improvement and goodness of man. Fourth, during a crisis, rhetoric is listened to eagerly. Therefore, since Ford used selected rhetoric for selected audiences to seek a positive improvement in our energy crisis, Weaver's criteria were an appropriate framework for an analysis of Ford.

These criteria of Weaver's analysis were: the degree to which the speech appeals to ethical values of man, the choice of modes of
argumentation, the speaker's use of "god" or "devil" words, the adaptation to the historical setting of the speech, and the impact of the ethical character of the speaker.

Method of Procedure

President Ford's speeches, press conferences, and character will be examined. In addition, the intentions of and reactions to these speeches will be analyzed. The six major speeches and the three major press conferences on energy given during the month of February, 1975, used in this paper are easily available through the Government Printing Office or a local Congressman. The following speeches and press conferences will be used: "Remarks of the President at the Salute to the Vice-President Dinner" at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York, February 13, 1975; "Remarks of the President to the Joint Session of the Kansas State Legislature" at the State Capitol in Topeka, Kansas, February 11, 1975; "Remarks by the President to the Houston Chamber of Commerce Energy/Economic Conference" in the Emerald Room of the Shamrock Hilton Hotel in Houston, Texas, February 10, 1975; "Remarks of the President at the Opportunities Industrialization Centers' 11th Annual Convention" in the Grand Ballroom of the Marriott Hotel in Atlanta, Georgia, February 4, 1975; "Remarks of the President at the White House Conference on Domestic and Economic Affairs" in the Phoenix Room
of the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Atlanta, Georgia, February 3, 1975;
"Remarks of the President to the White House Conference on Domestic
and Economic Affairs" at the Diplomat Hotel in Hollywood, Florida,
February 25, 1975; "Remarks of the President and Question and
Answer Session to the New York Society of Security Analysts" at the
Security Analysts Building in New York, February 13, 1975; "Press
Conference No. 8 of the President of the United States" in the Ball-
room of the Ramada Inn in Topeka, Kansas, February 11, 1975; and
"Question and Answer Session by the President" in the Hyatt Regency
Hotel, Atlanta, Georgia, February 4, 1975. These areas, drawn
from Weaver's criteria, will be examined in these speeches: the
word choices, the types of argumentation, the appeals to ethical
values, the adaptation of the energy crisis to each audience, and the
ethical appeal of President Ford.

Richard Weaver's theory was obtained by reading the follow-
ing books: The Ethics of Rhetoric, Ideas Have Consequences, The
Southern Tradition at Bay, Visions of Order, and Language Is
Sermonic. Chapter II of this paper was devoted to the explanation of
this theory as it relates to this paper.

Any Weaverian analysis requires a thorough examination of
the circumstances in which the speech was given and reactions to it.
This information is readily available through the mass media, which
have astutely covered the President's energy plan and travels, and through major public opinion polls. The New York Times, Houston Post, Houston Chronicle, Miami Herald, Chicago Tribune, The St. Louis Post-Dispatch, The Dallas Morning News, and The Dallas Times Herald newspapers contain press conference, local reactions, letters-to-editor, and pictures concerning the President. Major news magazines such as Time, U.S. News & World Report, Nation, and Business Week provide interviews, polls, and explanations of the energy package. Television programs during the month of February contained visual crowd and audience reactions. Listening and taping the local and national coverage of NBC and CBS, special Presidential speeches, and the NBC program The Loyal Opposition provided varied opinions of and reactions to the energy package. The Sindlinger, Harris, and Gallup national research firms provided clues to the national sentiment and values toward President Ford and his energy message.

Considering the current setting for this study, the author used the opportunity to seek personal remarks from some of the people present during one or more of the President's energy speeches. Since these remarks were not scientifically solicited, they are used for example only, not for general conclusions. The following people's replies are greatly appreciated by the author: Ron Nessen, press secretary of the President; Roland Elliot, director of the President's
correspondence; William J. Baroody, Jr., director of the White House Office on Public Liaison; Senator John Tower of Texas; Governor Robert Bennett of Kansas; Governor David Boren of Oklahoma; Governor Dolph Briscoe of Texas; Governor Dan Walker of Illinois; Lt. Governor Bill Hobby of Texas; the Houston Chamber of Commerce; the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce; Mike Shapiro, president of Belo Broadcasting; Tom Simmons, managing editor of the Dallas Morning News; Joe M. Dealey, president of the Dallas Morning News; and Everett Collier, editor of the Houston Chronicle.

Weaver thought a history of the speaker's ideas and actions was important to the understanding of his rhetoric. The recent Ford biographies by Bud Vestal and J.F. terHorst, the Congressional Quarterly on Ford, and the Weekly Presidential Documents report, a publication of the Superintendent of Documents in Washington, provided information as to President Ford's past history and his present activities during the weeks of February, 1975.

Conclusion

This paper will analyze President Ford's rhetorical efforts in selling his energy package directly to the public through on-the-road speeches. Such an analysis has potential rhetorical value for the student of rhetoric. First, the use of Richard Weaver's theory to study a contemporary speaker is demonstrated. Second,
the handling of a modern crisis, rhetorically, could provide patterns for Ford in particular and for the presidency in general. Third, the employment of value-laden word choices to persuade particular audiences illustrates the power of words themselves. Fourth, the appeal by Weaver for the speaker to seek the general good in man should stimulate speakers to question their purposes and consequences in the long run as well as the pragmatic short run.
CHAPTER II

THE FRAMEWORK: RICHARD WEAVER'S THEORY

Purpose

So rhetoric at its truest seeks to perfect men by showing them better versions of themselves, links in that chain extending up toward the ideal, which only the intellect can apprehend and only the soul have affection for.\(^1\)

Richard Weaver has presented a rhetorical theory intended to improve our society and man himself. Through the use of rhetoric man can clarify his values and remind others of them. Even though Weaver was writing of the 50's and 60's, his ideas are applicable today. Furthermore, his theory will continue to be valuable as long as man seeks to improve himself and to possess values.

The role of rhetoric to Weaver was sermonic or ethically persuasive.\(^2\) A speaker's rhetoric appealed to the good in man and contained value-laden words. The ultimate sanction of rhetoric was

\(^1\) Richard Weaver, *The Ethics of Rhetoric* (Chicago, 1953), p. 25.

the order of values with the most ethical values being the ones most associated with the ultimate good. Therefore, to judge a speaker as ethical, Weaver examined his use of words which reflected the good values of mankind. The ethical speaker strived to encourage his audience to examine these good values with both their minds and their hearts.

There are five points of Richard Weaver's theory relative to the critical evaluation of a speaker or rhetorician. First, rhetoric is eagerly adhered to during a major crisis. Second, a speaker needs a sound evaluation of the history and values of the intended audience. Third, a good speaker or rhetorician uses "god" and "devil" words to persuade his audience, since neutral words get no response and "god" words reflect an ethical character. These words are called ultimate words. Fourth, there is a hierarchy of ethical arguments used by the speaker to influence his audience. Fifth, the character of the speaker is closely linked with the rhetoric he uses.

Crisis and Rhetoric

Rhetoric defined by Richard Weaver was the art "... to move men's feelings in the direction of a goal" and in the "service

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3 Richard Weaver, *The Ethics of Rhetoric*, p. 25.
Weaver argued that rhetoric obtained a greater audience response during a crisis. He noted that people were interested in listening to new facts and interpretations of their current problems. The energy crisis had certainly affected the American population in this manner.

President Ford took advantage of this readiness of the public to listen and presented his energy package directly to them. His rhetoric during these energy crisis speeches will be analyzed in Chapter III.

History and Values: The Intended Audience

Richard Weaver encouraged a direct relationship between rhetoric and history: "All questions that are susceptible to rhetorical treatment arise out of history, and it is to history that the rhetorician turns for his means of persuasion." The speaker should examine his audience’s historical situation defined as "man and his individual desires and knowledge of his own past." Next, he should examine the audience’s popular attitudes, data, needs, items they will receive

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5 Richard Weaver, Visions of Order, p. 55.

6 Ibid., p. 40.
well, their realistic choices, and their questions about the matter discussed. Having analyzed the intended audience, the speaker can organize his speech to reflect and preserve their historical values.

A speaker's sound evaluation of the history of his audience leads to his selection of the most responsive, persuasive techniques. Weaver refers to the necessity of this clear perception of the audience's needs as learning its "concrete history." The audience has definite traits and feelings that are predictable by the speaker; therefore, the good rhetorician investigates these particular attitudes carefully before he speaks to any audience. The reader is reminded that each of President Ford's energy speeches was written with a definite audience in mind. In addition, the help of modern computerized research firms makes the profile of each audience easily available.

The values of the intended audience are reflective of the audience's history. Man's history is one of giving importance to certain permanent values, and by his rhetoric he transmits these values to his peers and to succeeding generations. Rhetoric also creates "an

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informed appetition for the good." Man should use his rhetoric to present choices among values and to encourage efforts toward the ultimate Good, according to Weaver:

Rhetoric is advisory; it has the office of advising men with reference to an independent order of goods and with reference to their particular situation as it relates to these. The honest rhetorician therefore has two things in mind: a vision of how matters should go ideally and ethically and a consideration of the special circumstances of his auditors. Toward both of these he has a responsibility.9

Ultimate Words

Present values and our past history are transmitted through language which consists of "god," "devil," and charismatic word choices.10 For these words to predict and preserve our historical values accurately, they must be in actual, popular usage; therefore, they change with society and can even be reversed.

The "god" words possess the capacity to demand sacrifice and exemplify an ideal good. They satisfy primal needs. They arouse positive feelings and ambitions with the intended audience. Weaver uses examples of progress, science, American, and efficient to reflect the "god" words of the late 50's and early 60's. After

8 Richard Weaver, Life Without Prejudice, pp. 116-118.

9 Richard Weaver, Language Is Sermonic, p. 54.

10 Richard Weaver, The Ethics of Rhetoric, pp. 211-212.
reading several selections on modern values, the following list of "god" words for today can be compiled: specialist, consumer, entertainment, planning, happiness, self-help, humanitarianism, liberation, equality, The West, substitutes, computer, investigation, dollar, emerging societies, efficient, fact, American, research, diplomacy, improvement, national security, social mobility, free enterprise, contract, democracy, American spirit, real, practical, optimistic, free world, dynamic, independent, self-direction, progressive, future, process, social responsibility, self-knowledge, future generations, energy, profit, cooperation, openness, sensitivity to others, environment, profit, and nature.  

The "devil" words are the negation of the "god" words. They reflect the lowest valued elements of society or the enemies of the society. Therefore, these terms change more frequently than the "god" words. Examples Weaver uses were Un-American, reactionary, communist, and prejudice. Examples today are Water-gate, crisis, energy crisis, Vietnam, inflation, recession, depression, dependency, foreign oil, busing, pollution, energy shortage, escalation, cancer, pig, devaluation, Nixon, outsiders, backward areas, oil embargo, expletive deleted, assassination, and ration.12

Charismatic words function without a definite referent and mean something according to the popular will. Weaver's examples are freedom, peace, and democracy. Examples today are energy crisis, the free world, economy, real, hope, practical, equality, freedom, peace, and democracy.13

The fabricated or engineered charismatic words are popularized by government, state, or advertising agencies. These are produced by one of the above groups to be forced on the public; however, the meaning or referent for these fabricated words is never made clear to the public. Examples of Weaver are FBI, US, war effort, and defense. In the 1970's several words have been created

12 Ibid.
13 Ibid.
by the government or our technological changes. Examples are the CIA, Pepsi generation, A-OK, national security, ready-mix, self-service, and the real thing.

Hierarchy of Arguments

To Richard Weaver rhetoric is persuasive and should move men into good actions. A speaker's selection of arguments to persuade his audience tell much about the speaker. "Nowhere does a man's rhetoric catch up with him more completely than in the topics he chooses to win other men's assent." As the words of rhetoric reflect a hierarchy of ethical goods, so do the arguments. The audience is asked to accept the speaker's interpretation of reality as presented in four types of argumentation.

The first and the most ethical argument in the hierarchy is that of definition or genus. To argue from definition is to attempt to capture essence or to speak of the nature of a thing. These are fundamental, general, and unchanging properties. Examples are the nature of all government of self-preservation, the nature of contract, the nature of the American Union, nature of majority rule, and the

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14 Ibid.

15 Richard Weaver, The Ethics of Rhetoric, p. 114.

16 Richard Weaver, Language Is Sermonic, p. 209.
nature of the sovereignty of people. To argue from definition, state
the argument and logically associate it with the general principle
which is already in the minds of the intended audience. Emphasis in
such argumentation should be on what ought to be. Weaver thought
that frequent use of this type of argumentation was the mark of a true
conservative.  

The second most ethical argument is similitude. Examples are the analogy, metaphor, figuration, contrast, and comparison. The user of this argumentation expresses "belief in a oneness of the world." Weaver argues that "behind every analogy lurks the possibility of a general term." This is a common argument type to establish probabilities about a subject.

The third argument on the hierarchy is the argument from cause and effect or consequences. The audience's fears and

17Richard Weaver, The Ethics of Rhetoric, p. 58.
18Ibid., p. 57.
19Ibid., p. 23.
20Richard Weaver, Language Is Sermonic, p. 213.
21Ibid., p. 209.
emotions are exaggerated by the speaker. The power of the cause is extended to cause alarm with the audience.

At the bottom level of the hierarchy is argument from circumstance. This argument states the facts, accepts them, and allows them to dictate the decision to be made. This argument "attempts only an estimate of current conditions or pressure." The reason this is the lowest of the ethical arguments is that it stops at the level of the perception of facts. Weaver argues that this type is characteristic of the true liberal. An example of an argument from circumstance is "either you change fast or you get crushed."

Character of Speaker

Weaver states that "the significant part of every speech situation is the character of the speaker." The speaker is the one to select the subject and the arguments to use and the one to face the audience for approval. The speaker should use liveliness, animation, and vividness of the scene to actualize the subject for the

23Richard Weaver, The Ethics of Rhetoric, p. 57.
24Ibid.
25Ibid., p. 58.
27Ibid., p. 20.
Another responsibility of the speaker is to present choices of values that are relevant to the audience: "The good rhetorician is a preacher to us, noble if he tries to direct our passion toward noble ends . . . base if he uses our passion to confuse or degrade us." 29

The good rhetorician or speaker has two responsibilities: to consider the special circumstances of his audience and to use the ethical hierarchy of arguments in his speaking. The good and ethical speaker induces his audience to accept a decision of choice which is good and political. 30 The speaker should view his rhetoric wisely and project it to the improvement of mankind "by showing them better versions of themselves." 31

Conclusion

This paper's framework, Richard Weaver's theory, is an analysis of the ethical character of the speaker, the intended audience, and their needs, the historical subject of the speech, and the ethical language of the speech. This analysis recognizes a responsibility of

28 Ibid., p. 217.

29 Ibid., p. 200.

30 Ibid., p. 225.

31 Richard Weaver, The Ethics of Rhetoric, p. 25.
each speaker to promote good values and to seek the betterment of mankind. The speaker fulfills this responsibility by selecting appropriate word choices that reflect good values. These words are described as "god," "devil," and charismatic. Another technique of encouraging ethical goodness with the audience is the speaker's selection of arguments high on the ethical hierarchy of arguments.

Richard Weaver argued that questions involving man's history should provide the subject matter for speeches. Furthermore, questions concerning a historical crisis obtained the greatest audience response.
CHAPTER III

AN ANALYSIS OF FORD'S SIX MAJOR ENERGY SPEECHES

Introduction

I believe Americans will accept the sacrifices of today for a stronger and a better country tomorrow. I have a deep and abiding faith that we will help ourselves overcome the problem we face in the economy, the energy difficulties that are on our doorstep and, in the process, make us a better people, individually and collectively--a better people, not only for ourselves, but our posterity.1

Gerald Ford spoke of this improvement in our energy situation in a recent speech in Atlanta. He was asking the public to sacrifice some of its energy needs now for the future generations. Such an argument from definition, a better life for the next generation, would have been appreciated by Richard Weaver and labeled highly ethical.

This chapter analyzed President Ford's Atlanta speech and five other major energy speeches and press conferences in light of Richard Weaver's framework as established in Chapter II.

Character of Speaker

Richard Weaver was concerned with the ethical character of the speaker. The ethical speaker promoted a good goal for his audience in good terms which encouraged the audience to improve themselves and seek an ultimate good. President Ford through his energy message was trying to improve our country's energy position in the future and lessen our current dependency on foreign oil; therefore, to Weaver, Ford would have been ethical.

Furthermore, Weaver thought politicians should deal directly with the public and talk to their "concrete history." Anything less than this approach was considered unethical and base. Ford's style aimed at the "concrete history" of his audiences. Washington's Governor Evans remarked that "the style of President Ford is to be casual, informal, candid." Edward Derwinski, an Illinois Republican, described Ford the politician: "Jerry is an open tactician. He doesn't look for clever ways to sneak in behind you. He does the obvious, which is usually common sense." Martha W. Griffiths, a member of Congress, described Ford: "His soft-spoken words, his fairness, his willingness to reason, and his ability to

effect compromise between opposing factions prompted the overwhelming bipartisan support he received for his nomination. 4 Others have described Ford as a team player, open, candid, physically fit, conservative politically, diligent, patient, honest, loyal, and fearful of the Lord. 5

President Ford had a great concern for and desire to communicate with the public, his audience. Weaver argued that recognition of the audience's needs was important to the ethical speaker. Ford's campaign card in 1948 indicated his public interest: "Remember the name Ford. If I get to Congress I'll remember what you've told me." 6 Arch Moore, the Governor of West Virginia, summarized the present Ford presidency with regard for this concern for the public: "Everywhere there was the feeling that the American presidency was back in the possession of the people." 7

Richard Weaver would have admired President Ford's conservative politics, his honesty with the people, his regard for the future of energy, and his frequent use of good words to present a


5 "A Man for This Season," Time, August 19, 1974, p. 27.

6 terHorst, Gerald Ford, p. 3.

7 Hugh Sidey, "Notes from an Open White House," Time, August 26, 1974, p. 16.
plan for future energy needs of the public. In the following analysis President Ford through his energy speeches presented himself as a Weaverian, ethical character, and leader. These speeches were analyzed according to the sequence of arguments to determine any patterns developing.

Atlanta

President Ford and his advisors organized several White House Conferences on Domestic and Economic Affairs to explain the presidential energy package to the public. One of these was held recently in Atlanta. The audience consisted of fifteen different Georgian organizations representing labor, business, agriculture, scientific groups, and politicians. These people met with the President and his advisors to discuss the energy crisis. Ford, in viewing the audience as a "mini-America," embraced the pride in American citizenship possessed by his audience: "... this group is kind of a mini-America, since most of the participants here can agree on the broad problem, the broad challenges, ... then I think there is good reason to hope for broad national agreement in the solutions as well." ⁸

President Ford spoke to the "concrete history" of this audience. He presented their enemies in "devil" terms: "I see a broad, national consensus forming in at least five major problem areas--recession, tax relief and reform, jobs and productivity, energy, and last but not least, inflation." Next, he told the consumer audience that his program helped them--the "hard working middle-income Americans who have carried the bulk of this country's tax burden." Then he expressed his understanding of the audience's and the general public's confusion about our energy situation.

To clarify this confusion, Ford presented several arguments from circumstance. Examples were "Let me put some figures in perspective for you," "We have no choice," and "We must act now." Ford also aroused the fears of this audience with arguments from consequence or cause-effect: "I don't like to paint a serious picture, but the facts are there. Our vulnerability is getting worse every day to foreign sources of oil, and that crisis requires that we act and act promptly." Weaver considered such argumentation low in his ethical hierarchy, since it was based on shocking the audience.

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9 Ibid., p. 3.
10 Ibid., p. 4.
11 Ibid.
12 Ibid., p. 5.
President Ford effectively combined the consequence argument of our continual dependence on foreign oil with the definition argument of improvement at home:

A serious disruption, which that embargo caused to our economy, is minor, very minor, compared to what will happen if we fail to start right now toward energy independence. We can achieve this independence by 1985 under the program that I have submitted to the Congress, a program which encourages energy conservation as well as a fuller development of our own energy resources right here at home.\textsuperscript{13}

Richard Weaver would have been disappointed in Ford's frequent use of this consequential argumentation, since he thought it the least ethical.

Ford had several general arguments from definition. First, he described his energy package as "in the best American tradition" because it asked Americans to share and to work with one another in difficult times.\textsuperscript{14} Second, he described his package as being equitable to all: "...we will seek equity so that nobody--government, business, individual taxpayers--will suffer. There will be an equilization of the burden."\textsuperscript{15} Third, he appealed to the American value of compromise: "I am confident, as we look at the

\begin{itemize}
\item\textsuperscript{13} Ibid.
\item\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., p. 4.
\item\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., p. 5.
\end{itemize}
dangers and see what has to be done between the Congress, the American people and the President, we can solve the problem.\textsuperscript{16}

His varied audience would consider the American tradition, equity for all, and compromise important in solving our energy needs. Therefore, Ford's choice of words and arguments was intended to be general to fit this general audience of "mini-America."

Atlanta

The President's next energy speech was given to the Opportunities Industrialization Center's Eleventh Annual Convention in Atlanta. His audience consisted of public officials and OIC workers and executives dedicated to helping the handicapped.

He used the "concrete" self-help philosophy of the OIC members to explain his energy message:

I have outlined an economic and energy program to the Nation and to the Congress, to allow us, all of us, 123 million Americans, to help ourselves out of our current difficulties. My plan, like all self-help, requires some sacrifices. It requires some energy, some time, and some direction and those are hallmarks in the creed of OIC.\textsuperscript{17}

\textsuperscript{16}Ibid., p. 8.

\textsuperscript{17}President Gerald Ford, "Remarks of the President at the Opportunities Industrialization Centers' 11th Annual Convention," p. 2.
Throughout the speech he used analogies and comparisons that were in the "concrete history" of his audience. One example of an analogy was his comparing the energy situation to an examination: "... this is like looking at a three-hour test, ... and picking one question to give an answer. You know, it is also a good way to flunk a test." To compare Congress' plan to his own, he compared a car wash to a car tune up:

When I see or read some of the proposals that come from my friends on Capitol Hill, I am sometimes reminded of the difference between washing a car on the one hand and having it tuned up on the other. Washing the car will make it very shiny, but it will not make it run any better.

To illustrate the need for sacrifice and conservation in the energy crisis, he used comparison: "Our current national situation on energy is very much like having a disease. If we do not accept painful treatment now leading to a cure, the disease will only get worse." His comparison and analogy degraded the Congressional plan for energy: "Like a disease, the energy problem will not spontaneously disappear, neither will it be cured by some Congressional aspirin."

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18 Ibid.
19 Ibid., p. 4.
20 Ibid., p. 6.
21 Ibid.
Considering the frequent use of the comparison argumentation by President Ford, the President and his advisors probably thought that this audience needed simple explanations and visual images.

Next, President Ford presented several arguments from circumstances to indicate the pragmatic needs that exist. Examples were, "We must develop new methods of producing energy"; "The energy problem will not wait"; and "The longer the debate, the greater the delay. The longer the delay, the greater the problem."²²

The fears of the audience were again aroused by several arguments from consequences or cause-effect. He discussed the threat of foreign control of our economy: "If the present trend continues, more than 10 percent of the national employment and output would be subject to decisions of countries whose national interest might not match our own. The more oil we import, the more danger another embargo would do to our economy."²³ He reminded the audience of the threat such dependence had for our national security: "Another embargo could or might cripple our economy, making us more vulnerable, not only economically but in the field of national security

²²Ibid., p. 3.
²³Ibid.
The word *cripple* was an effective "devil" word to an organization to help the handicapped.

President Ford argued with ultimate words like *embargo*, *cripple*, *national defense*, and *ration* to persuade the audience that his package was vital for our country. He spent several minutes discussing the rational proposals of Congress. He indicated the red tape and the other disadvantages of the rationing system. According to the public opinion polls of the day, the word *ration* was valued very lowly by the public; therefore, Ford was speaking directly with the public's "devil" word, *ration.*

A few arguments from definition were used by Ford. He labeled rationing as in opposition to the "basic freedom of movement in this country." He addressed the audience's sensitivity and desire to help the disadvantaged Americans become socially mobile:

This audience, I have observed, is very sensitive to the problems of business and the problems of the job seekers, . . . As you train these people, they must have the inspiration and the incentive and the availability to move up that social and economic ladder.

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24 Ibid.


26 President Gerald Ford, "Remarks of the President at the Opportunities Industrialization Centers' 11th Annual Convention," p. 6.

27 Ibid., p. 7.
Finally, he appealed to the common will of all Americans to accept "sacrifice today for a stronger and better country tomorrow."\textsuperscript{28}

This speech in Atlanta represented another general appeal for public support for the President's energy plan. The word choices and extensive use of analogy and comparisons were selected for this particular audience to create a greater understanding of the President's plan and ideas.

Houston

In Houston, President Ford spoke to the Houston Chamber of Commerce's Energy/Economic Conference. The audience consisted of local politicians and Texas businessmen involved directly in the production of oil and natural gas.

The President spoke to the "concrete history" of this audience with general analogies and comparisons. In examination of the energy crisis, he challenged the audience to look for the "silver lining" and "to get the lead out":

The message that I am going to bring you today is a very complicated one, but I think we have reached the metallic stage of the energy crisis. I emphasize the metallic stage. We have to look for the silver lining in the energy problem. We must consider it a golden

\textsuperscript{28}Ibid., p. 8.
opportunity to achieve self-sufficiency and then I might add we have to get the lead out. 29

The oil producers in the audience were looking for the "silver lining," and Ford tried immediately in the speech to direct their thinking to self-sufficiency and profits at home. Also, appealing to the businessman, he compared the United States potential embargo on oil to a large family without insurance:

This is a little like saying that a man with a very large family needs no insurance. I assure you that the United States is a very large family, some 213 million Americans, and as President, I do not wish to take that gamble, the risk, the danger, they are far, far, too great. We cannot play games. 30

To stress the differences between his package for energy and that of Congress, he discussed two contrasts. First, his plan contained 167 pages, whereas the Congressional plan contained only four. Second, the title of his bill was "To increase domestic energy supplies and availability to restrain energy demand, and to prepare for energy emergencies and for other purposes," whereas the title of the Congressional bill was "To suspend, for a 90-day period, the authority of the President under Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act." 31


30 Ibid., p. 3.

31 Ibid., p. 5.
Last, he compared the cooperation of the public, industry, and the government during the crisis of the second World War with the kind of cooperation needed today. The age factor of the audience contributed greatly to the understanding of this argumentation.

As in other speeches, President Ford frequently used circumstance arguments. He said several times, "The facts as I see them are," "With those facts in mind," "The facts are," and "Well, the facts are." The numerous references to facts were understood by the businessman audience; however, the ones in the oil business were probably already familiar with the facts that Ford presented.

President Ford used consequence or cause-effect arguments. He stressed the vulnerability of our economy and shift in the oil market's control from the United States to foreign areas: "We were invulnerable to foreign disruption of our critical energy needs, but the control of that market has moved from here in Texas Gulf area in this country to the Persian Gulf and other oil-producing nations." Furthermore, he told the audience of the effects of such dependency:

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32 Ibid., p. 9.
33 Ibid., pp. 3, 4, and 6.
34 Ibid., p. 2.
This presents us with the following problem: we must take immediate and resolute action so that we can insulate our economy against the disruption which a new embargo could create. The risks in terms of unemployment economic damages are simply far too great.35

Both of these arguments were relevant to the Texas oil men who employ people for the production and distribution of oil and its products.

Several ultimate words were used to remind the audience of their good and bad values. *Emargo* was used frequently to remind them of the problems created by the last embargo and of the potential problems a future embargo could have. References to *foreign oil* were used to illustrate the increasing dependency on "outsiders."

*Rationing* was labeled as unfair to the consumer and the producer.36

He appealed to the American values of free enterprise and willingness to work: "Instead of betting on what foreign sources may do, we should put our money on what Americans can do and what Americans will do. If we offer sufficient incentives, American enterprise here at home will solve our energy problems."37

Argument from definition represented his concluding arguments. He appealed to the nature of *contract* which was a realistic definition for the business and political collection in the audience:

"We are all in this together. Each of us has a contract with this country. Each of us must make good on the key clause in that agreement which deals with responsibility."38 Next, the argument for local self-help in securing oil at home was relevant to many in the audience who were oil producers: "This Nation cannot remove the insecurity of our dependence on foreign sources of oil while we constantly hold back assistance to producers right here at home, producers who help make us secure and independent."39 Again, two general arguments were used: democracy is based on the people and there exists an American spirit. Following the format set in the other energy speeches, he concluded by asking the public in our democracy to accept the challenge to improve our own energy problems: "I call on you for a rebirth of that American spirit. It's really a very noble call. It is the call, it is the challenge for solution now to the problems of the future."40 This speech presented the obvious about energy and the Presidential energy plan. For a well-informed audience on oil and energy, this approach may not have been the most appropriate.

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38Ibid., p. 9.
39Ibid., p. 8.
40Ibid., p. 10.
Topeka

President Ford spoke to the Joint Session of the Kansas State Legislature after his Houston speech. Immediately, President Ford spoke directly to their needs. First, he announced the release of two billion dollars in Federal highway funds to stimulate the construction industry. Second, he offered other direct appeals to the Kansas farmer: "I will not let the American agriculture run out of gas."\(^{41}\)

He further addressed the audience of Kansas as, "... the great state of Kansas, where people seem to have a very special regard not for the rights of citizenship but the responsibilities as well."\(^{42}\) He praised them for their high percentage of voting and humorously reminded the audience of the familiar Wizard of Oz story about Kansas.

Having established a concrete relationship with the audience, Ford began to discuss his energy message. He approached the subject of energy, as usual, with arguments of circumstance and pragmatism: "As many of you know, I have always believed in action rather than rhetoric. I have offered the Nation an action program to fight inflationary recession, to tackle the energy crisis, to create


\(^{42}\)Ibid., p. 1.
jobs and to foster economic stability." He stressed that his plan was the only one presented to the public and to Congress: "I don't pretend that my plan is perfect, but it is a plan, and so far no one has come forth with a better idea." Since the Kansas governor and legislature were working on energy plans and ideas, they could respect President Ford's time in forming a national energy bill.

Ford used familiar arguments of example and analogy. His Wizard of Oz example reminded the audience of adventure in a world of confusion. In particular, the confusion of our energy needs should not retard our efforts to seek solutions. By again labeling the Congressional plan as backward and short in comparison to his, he implied that his concern for the energy crisis was greater than that of Congress. Furthermore, his energy message directly affected the Kansas citizen in two examples: the farmer's rebate and the deregulation of natural gas which augments the supply of nitrogen fertilizer needed by the farmer.

To enhance his own ethical appeal, President Ford compared himself to President Eisenhower, who once lived in Kansas:

43 Ibid., p. 2.
44 Ibid.
45 Ibid., pp. 4-5.
"It has been the tough-minded optimist," Ike said, "whom history has proved right in America."

That was true in Ike's time and it is true in ours as well.

I am a tough-minded optimist. This phrase "tough-minded optimist" has continued to be a term used by Ford to demonstrate his determination to fight for an energy solution.

He used cause-effect arguments frequently as in other energy speeches. He explained through the discussion of future effects the harms of American dependence on foreign oil:

Consider, for example, the impact that further delay in the energy field will have on farmers here in your great State as well as other agricultural States. Unless we start now to achieve energy independence, the American farmer will grow more and more dependent on the foreign oil cartel for the energy products that the farmer needs to sow and reap his crops. His costs, his profits, and his productivity will be at the mercy of the foreign force, or a combination of them.

He further described the plight of the farmer in the future if the energy crisis continues: "The farmer would be trapped between growing pressures for lower food prices in the marketplace and higher costs from his energy suppliers. Any way you look at it, this is a no-win proposition for the American farmer." These

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46 Ibid., p. 6.
47 Ibid., p. 3.
48 Ibid.
arguments were relevant to this political audience who are elected by the farmers of Kansas.

In conclusion, President Ford chose an argument from definition in keeping with the pattern in other energy speeches. The nature of the American spirit or challenge was directly tapped in this largely conservative and Republican audience:

I believe in America, as you do. I believe in America's future, as you do. I am confident that you joined with me in this great challenge that we face both at home and abroad, we are optimist, we are strong, we have a faith, we are dedicated and simply conclude by saying we can do the job together. . . . 49

New York

Two audiences were selected in New York for energy speeches. The first was at a meeting of New York's Society of Security Analysts. Immediately, President Ford appealed to the "concrete history" of his business audience. He spoke using familiar words like master plan, tick-off, essentials, and realistic balance. 50 One example of this use is the word portfolios: "Looking into the future, I am confident that you in your portfolios, and

49 Ibid., p. 6.

me, in the polls, have seen our lows for the year."\textsuperscript{51} Another example was the word forecast: "The thing we should concentrate on now, as I see it, is not what someone has forecast, but what we can do to change things for the better."\textsuperscript{52} Richard Weaver would have appreciated Ford's use of these concrete words to appeal to the better in man. The word choices and the phrasing moved quickly as a businessman's speech would, giving agenda in a meeting.

His frequent reference to the "god" words American, real, practical, and optimistic indicated the type of energy solution he sought: "... but if we approach it with a practical, tough-minded optimism,"\textsuperscript{53} and "I would buy American, and I would buy it now."\textsuperscript{54}

President Ford often interjected analogy and comparison arguments into this speech. Many such arguments he had used previously in other energy speeches. However, a new one presented in this speech was, "An economic illness is like any other illness. Too much medicine or too little medicine can make it worse."\textsuperscript{55}

\textsuperscript{51}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 1.
\textsuperscript{52}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 2.
\textsuperscript{53}\textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{54}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 8.
\textsuperscript{55}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 2.
Following the examples, two ethically low arguments from circumstance were presented to stir the emotions of the audience: "Unless we do so, our dollar outlay for petroleum will continue to increase very dangerously"; and "Prompt, positive American leadership is essential to any hope for the world emerging from this crisis." The audience of security analysts appreciated these references to money outlay and the need for prompt action. However, these two arguments indicated that the audience and the public had no choice in the energy crisis but a pragmatic solution. Such a lack of choices would have been criticized by Richard Weaver.

In conclusion, President Ford recalled the American idea that America was the leader of the free world and the controller of its own destiny. To the audience of businessmen and practitioners of the free marketplace such arguments were of great value:

Only if the United States takes the lead now will our partners have any hope of an ultimate solution or an incentive to commit themselves to cooperation with us, and only with a determined national effort to reduce and to end our growing dependence on imported oil can we and our partners recover control over our economic destiny.

56 Ibid., p. 6.
57 Ibid.
58 Ibid., p. 7.
The numerous references to "devil" words characterized this speech. Examples were uncontrolled inflation, past errors, unemployment, foreign, and disaster. To the security analysts these words had bad connotations to the business community. Ford attempted to exaggerate the effects of the foreign oil with the use of "devil" words: "We can still avoid a disaster that could wreck not only our economy but the economic structure of the industrialized democracies throughout the world."59

The second New York speech was made at the dinner to honor the new Vice-President, Nelson Rockefeller. This largely Republican, friendly audience offered the President a chance to present the essentials of his energy package and to attempt political support of it as well.

He began these persuasions by designation of Nelson Rockefeller as Vice-Chairman of the Domestic Council which has the purpose of establishing national priorities for the allocation of available resources.60 The majority of the speech was on foreign policy;

59 Ibid., p. 4.
however, the segments on energy were presented precisely through the usual format.

President Ford used "devil" words and analogies to stir the fears of his political audience:

Today, I find myself in President Truman's job. I look to the new Congress and to the critical years ahead and I have to deal with the economic crisis in the United States and other industrialized democracies. I am, of course, concerned with the problems of recession and inflation, unemployment and energy shortages. I would be even more concerned if we were to have a 94th Congress burying its head in the domestic sands like an ostrich while expensive oil flows into America and expensive dollars flow out.61

The use of President Truman's name and position in history was employed to enhance the ethical appeal of Ford and make Ford appear as strong and direct as President Truman. The labeling of Congress as an ostrich with its head in the sand was another attempt to spur the Congress into action on the energy message of Ford.

Using a combination of circumstance arguments and the definition arguments of unity of American during a crisis, the role of Congress, and the big brother role of the United States in the free world, President Ford tried to persuade his audience that action is needed in the energy front: "Congressional action is imperative if the United States is to maintain its international leadership. We

61 Ibid., p. 5.
cannot expect other nations to tighten their belts if we are unprepared to do the same ourselves." Appealing to the audience's concern for peace and the good of the nation and augmenting his own ethical appeal, President Ford referred to one of Richard Weaver's favorite ethical speakers and employed the highest ethical argumentation:

As once again we honor Abraham Lincoln as the greatest President of our party that was given to the Republic, let us rededicate ourselves to the broader vision of the national good, which he brought from the capitol to the White House. Let us continue as Americans to seek his noble goals of a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.

The political audience he addressed appreciated the positive reference to one of their fellow politicians and could directly receive Ford's appeal for their help from the capitol in solving the nation's energy crisis.

Florida

President Ford spoke to another White House Conference on energy in Hollywood, Florida, the last of February. As in other energy speeches, he addressed the "concrete history" of his audience. He noted the ideas of releasing Federal highway funds devised

62 Ibid., p. 9.
63 Ibid., p. 11.
by the governor of Florida had been considered by him and action taken. He described the state of Florida favorably: "It is a dynamic state. It is a friendly state. It is a state that is a very strong and integral part of our Union. As a matter of fact, Florida is the wave of the future." 64

For the audience of this dynamic state, again, Ford argued the pragmatic approach to the energy crisis: "The United States must declare independence from foreign sources of energy, and the sooner the better." 65 Richard Weaver would not have appreciated the pragmatism; however, he would have considered an independent oil position as described by Ford for the national good highly ethical.

Ford argued with several ultimate words used in other speeches: rational, massive gamble, embargo, experts, national security, practical, and energy crisis. To contrast his plan with that of Congress, he used a familiar phrase: "I have got some good news and some bad news." 66


65 Ibid., p. 2.

66 Ibid., p. 5.
Following the pattern in the other energy speeches, several arguments from definition concluded the speech. However, this type of argumentation was used more than in any other energy speech. Ford and his advisors must have considered this audience more likely than the others to accept idealistic arguments. The first of these idealistic arguments was that his plan of energy was progressive and would improve the future energy needs:

This is what I envision for America if this plan that I have recommended, or something reasonably comparable to it, is enacted into law. By 1985 we could have 200 major nuclear power plants, 250 major new coal mines, 150 major coal-fired power plants, 30 major new oil refineries, 20 major synthetic fuel plants, drilling of thousands of new oil wells, the insulation of 18 million homes, the manufacturing of millions of new cars, trucks, and buses that use far less fuel. 67

Next, he argued that man has a responsibility to nature: "We have an obligation, as I see it to find ways to use these resources economically. At the same time we must use them in a manner that is environmentally acceptable, and we must keep our options open." 68

The people of Florida were concerned with the nature of the environment, since much of their state's revenue comes from recreation. Furthermore, he appealed to the dynamic character of the Florida audience. He argued that our energy relationship is changing and

67 Ibid., p. 6.

68 Ibid., p. 8.
that this change must be accepted and recognized now: "The day of cheap energy in America is gone. We must conserve through the development and the application of improved technology, but we must have more efficient means for energy conversion, transmission, distribution, and storage, as well as utilization."69 In conclusion, President Ford followed the pattern set in the other speeches by appealing to the American dream, the challenges of a united America, and the hope of betterment for future generations:

I think we have to ask ourselves individually as well as collectively the following: Will future generations say that we in the 1970's met that challenge? Will they say this was the year of the decline and fall of the American dream, or will they say that we were worthy of their trust?70

News Conferences

President Ford and his advisors had numerous press conferences during the energy visits in February, 1975. The President wanted good media coverage of his energy ideas; therefore, he encouraged meetings with the communications leaders in each city visited.

Several patterns developed in these energy news conferences as in the speeches. First, President Ford often called on his

69 Ibid., p. 11.
70 Ibid.
advisors to answer technical or policy questions that he felt he could not handle fairly. This practice was especially used during the news conference after the New York speech. Second, in answering questions, President Ford spoke factually and tried to present himself as an optimist. For example, in Atlanta, he eagerly said, "I think the economic circumstances will be good enough to justify at least my seeking re-election."^71

Third, he stressed his ethical role in the energy crisis and the solution in two ways. By discussing his admiration for President Truman's strong character in Topeka, Ford implied that he and President Truman had similar strong characters.^72 Then he described his role in our energy problems: "It is my judgment that the crisis is far too serious, that the need is very obvious, and therefore, I intend to continue trying to give some leadership for a solution to our vulnerability to foreign oil cartels."^73 Fourth, in each press conference, President Ford listed the four parts of his energy package and

71"Question and Answer Session by the President," Atlanta, Georgia, February 4, 1975 (Office of the President, Washington, D.C., 1975), p. 3.


73Ibid., p. 3.
gave a capsule summary of each part which readily made copy for the newsmen. Fifth, these news conferences were purposely arranged to publicize the President's energy package. Such a policy augmented President Ford's public image as open and friendly to the press. Often after a news conference, the President walked from the speaking podium to mingle with the press people.

Conclusion

In conclusion, two general observations are noted. First, these six major energy speeches and news conferences given by President Ford in February, 1975, possessed several common features. These similar features often resembled a pattern. The speeches began with references using concrete word choices suited to the particular audience addressed. Then, depending on the amount of general energy information each audience was judged to have by President Ford and his advisors, different amounts of examples and analogies were used. Their use provided simple explanations and visual images to clarify the energy problems. Next, consequence arguments were used to demonstrate the immediate, pragmatic dangers of our current energy crisis. Often these arguments seemed exaggerated to deliberately arouse the emotions of the audience. The conclusion always referred to definition arguments which most of the audience should value positively. These arguments
were effective, according to Weaver, because they illustrated the ethical good and positive in man; therefore, the speaker's ethos improved with his audience when he used definition arguments.

The second concluding notation was the application of Weaver's criteria for a good rhetorician to Ford's energy speeches. The first of the criteria was the degree to which the speech appealed to the good values of man. Ford always employed arguments to challenge man positively at the conclusion of each speech. He frequently used "god" words to illustrate the positives of the energy crisis. The second was the choice of modes of argumentation. Ford relied on the factual argumentation to demonstrate the immediate, pragmatic crisis in energy. He aroused the audience's emotions with exaggerated cause-effect argumentation. Weaver would have objected to Ford's exaggerated use of pragmatism and harmful effects. These arguments did not create a better picture of man; therefore, the good rhetorician avoided their use. He applied numerous examples and analogies to the "concrete history" of his audiences. These arguments provided simple explanations of the confusing issue of energy. Weaver appreciated the use of examples and analogies, since he thought that each example and analogy could represent an unidentified definition or positive value with the audience.
Third was the speaker's use of "god" and "devil" words. Ford readily used "god" and "devil" words in his speeches to remind the audiences of their good and bad values concerning energy. Often these words were meaningful only to the particular audience addressed.

Fourth was the adaptation of the historical setting of the speech to its audience. Ford and his advisors carefully selected each place for an energy speech. The general energy crisis speech was adapted to each audience's uniqueness through his word and argumentation choice.

Last was the impact of the ethical character of the speaker. Throughout Ford's speaking on energy, he seemed to sell himself better than this program. In our time of recent disgrace and low ethos in the Presidency, Ford's open and direct personality appealed to the general public. Weaver would have appreciated Ford's increasing ethos. Appealing to the positive values of man and directing national attention to their common problem of energy represented arguments of the highest level according to Weaver. Considering our historical setting of recent memories of Watergate, the fall of Richard Nixon, and the 1973 oil embargo, Ford's modes of argumentation persuaded the public that he was on their side; however,
these arguments still have not produced a national energy program.
Reasons for this were included in Chapter IV.

Ford's efforts to improve our energy situation have been recognized and praised. David Boren, Governor of Oklahoma, presented his admiration for Ford's efforts: "The President is to be commended. People appreciate emphasis on the taxpayers for a change. . . . the President deserves a lot of praise for coming out and listening to taxpayers instead of tax users in Washington." Governor Dan Walker of Illinois was impressed with Ford's use of facts on energy: "I'd like to compliment you. I've rarely seen a chief executive with such a grasp of statistics." Harris County Republican chairman, Nancy Palen, commented on Ford's openness with even the grassroots politicians: "I was astounded the man was this open with us, mere county-level people."

Public opinion polls also echoed the increase in Ford's popularity. The Sindlinger firm measured an increase in Ford's popularity from 20 per cent in January to 45 per cent in February.

74 Dallas Times Herald, February 26, 1975, Sec. A, p. 4.
76 Dallas Times Herald, February 11, 1975, Sec. A, p. 3.
Both the Gallup and Harris polls recorded a 50 per cent or more approval of Ford in May. Comments made during the February Gallup sampling indicated the public's regard for Ford's openness and directness. For example, one housewife from Omaha, Nebraska, commented, "I like his manner of speech. He seems an honest man stuck with a bad situation which he is making the best of." Therefore, President Ford presented his energy speech to a variety of audiences. His audiences reacted more positively to Ford than to his goal or energy package. Weaver would have appreciated the augmented ethos of President Ford, as he gave his energy speeches which promoted the positive goal of energy independence. However, President Ford's ethos was not great enough to implement his energy package.


CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

In February, 1975, an energy crisis was challenging and changing each American's life style. The threat of another foreign oil embargo lurked in the minds of all Americans. To resolve this problem, President Ford proposed an "energy package." It met immediate resistance from many in Congress. However, measures to meet the energy challenge had not yet been formulated by our Congress. Therefore, President Ford launched a massive public relations effort to deliberately sell his own energy package to the American public and the Congress. Such an effort involved a series of speeches in New York, Houston, Atlanta, Topeka, and Florida. President Ford spoke to national and grassroot politicians, security analysts, farmers, employers of the handicapped, oil producers, lawyers, communications leaders, and businessmen. Since all of these people were involved in the energy crisis, they were eager to hear of possible solutions. These people were also curious to listen to a new President whom they had not elected.
President Ford selected words and arguments to connect his energy package with each audience's share of the energy crisis. Choices concerning which words and arguments would be the more persuasive or motivational for the acceptance of his energy package were made. Often these choices reflected a philosophy calculated to arouse the fears and emotions of the audiences. However, in each speech, Ford stressed the hope of energy independence through cooperation and sacrifice of all equally.

Ford used other persuasive techniques to sell his program. During his energy visits to the various cities, he took time for private, small group meetings of local leaders in politics, business, and communications. This consideration for the local leaders augmented the public concept of Ford as open and direct. Ford listened to these local leaders' ideas and complaints. Several times he would implement one of their ideas.

The press was also nurtured by Ford. Numerous press conferences were held throughout February on the energy trips. Newspapers and news magazines of February, 1975, contained numerous pictures, humorous anecdotes, quotations, and the daily activities of President Ford. These news media actions were educating the public concerning the new President. Again Ford implemented personal, direct contact with the press group. He called them by their first
names, allowed them two questions during a news conference, and went into the audience after a news conference to mingle and talk with the reporters.

President Ford also negotiated with and challenged politicians to compromise on an energy package. Breakfasts, dinners, and small group meetings were held for both senior and freshmen Congressmen. Again the direct, person-to-person communication tactics were used with small groups of Congressmen. When the soft sell approach did not work, he hurled public, verbal harassment at the Congress for its inaction.

Governors were invited for meetings. These meetings spurred many governors to organize energy saving plans and ideas for their own states. They were appreciative of Ford's listening to their ideas.

Many purposes inspired these persuasive efforts for an energy package. Not the least of these was the promoting of Ford himself. The energy trips gave Ford an excellent opportunity to present himself to the American public. Such an opportunity provided little chance of failure for Ford. He could present his energy plan and publicly chastise the Congress for doing nothing, therefore making himself appear more concerned about public welfare than Congress. If his plan was implemented, he would reap the benefits
as the originator of the idea. If his plan was ignored, he could remind the public that he had warned them about the harmful effects of continuing the present energy situation. If Congress adopted its own plan, he could argue that he had prodded them into it. Therefore, whatever the outcome of the energy situation, Ford's chances of appearing positive were great. He chose to speak to the nation in reference to a national crisis. This opportunity of historical setting for energy speeches was very opportune for the new President, and he took advantage of the situation well.

The public viewed a style of rhetoric in these energy speeches quite different from the rhetoric of Richard Nixon. President Ford relied on personal contact, word choice, and actions to demonstrate his ideas. For example, in a recent speech to the nation on energy, Ford used charts, diagrams, marking pens, and a calendar as props to visually show the effects of the energy situation and Congress's inaction. These visual props were to dramatize his openness for discussion. His energy speeches were loaded with concrete examples and analogies for clearer understanding of the energy crisis' effects upon the public.

Ford determined to be a leader in the energy crisis. His rhetoric reflected this determination to achieve his goal of energy independence. His word choices stressed that this goal was
essential for our nation. Incorporated in his own determination was a desire to cooperate with the public and Congress. He always stressed compromise with Congress and united public efforts to reduce the need for energy now.

Ford's attempts to be open and direct were appealing to a public who possessed recent memories of dishonesty and secrecy in the Presidency. Even though Ford may take longer to sell his energy package in part or in total, he has made great headway selling himself. His methods of selling have been effective because he used a team approach. He and his advisors organized the package. He and his advisors discussed it openly with the public. He used language that to the audience was understandable, challenging and emotional. He asked the public for input and feedback concerning his package. He asked for cooperation and team effort of all Americans to sacrifice some of their energy needs for the future of the country and the next generations. People always were more willing to accept something when they felt a part of the decision. Ford, the former football coach, knew how to spur team spirit and team work. This knowledge he employed well as the leader in forming a constituency from the public.

Because the public was confused about the existence and causes of the energy crisis and because their distrust of big business
and government was heightened by Watergate and the discovery of slush funds, Ford's use of facts was regarded favorably. Also, the discussion of the effects of a future oil embargo illustrated that the energy crisis was a real and harmful problem. Ford was not trying to cover up the crisis.

Richard Weaver would have viewed President Ford's energy rhetoric favorably in some ways and unfavorably in others. Ford's use of general definition arguments which described the best in man would be valued the highest by Weaver. Recognizing and implementing the "concrete history" of each audience through examples and analogies would have been favorable to Weaver. The use of numerous "god" words reflecting good values to inspire the public to act on energy conservation would be positively viewed by Weaver. Ford's attempts to present his own character as direct and honest would be favorable.

The heavy reliance on cause-effect and factual argumentation in several speeches would be viewed with disfavor by Weaver. These persuasions, he thought, would not arouse positive feelings with the audience about themselves, the subject of the speech, or the speaker. Ford's stress on the pragmatic need for his energy plan would also be viewed with disfavor. Weaver thought man should have several choices for his selection. These choices should be based on precedent
or previously established definitions, not on immediate, changing moods. Weaver's theory forced the speaker to choose between traditionally held values and immediate solutions during a crisis.

Considering the historical setting of these energy crisis speeches, Ford had to choose which argumentations and word choices were the most persuasive. Frequently these choices would have been ineffective according to Weaver's criteria. However, a leader must not be hindered by a limitation of his persuasive choices. In addition, Weaver's attempts to make the speaker realize an obligation of improving his audience and augmenting positive values were valuable tools for any speaker or leader to gain a good rapport with an audience and to increase his own ethos.

President Ford and Richard Weaver shared important agreements. Both considered the audience, its values, and its "concrete history" important in the persuasion of that audience to any goal. Both presented this particular audience with a good goal expressed in appropriate and value-laden language for the improvement of the audience. Both thought that during a crisis someone must offer positive leadership. Both chose rhetoric as their weapon during a crisis. Both recognized the great power of words and language to persuade. Both considered the character of the speaker himself a.s. important for the positive audience acceptance of the speech.
Both chose conservative politics. Both were reflective of past historical leaders and their language.

President Ford's rhetorical efforts to sell his energy package would be viewed as effective by Weaver since these efforts increased Ford's ethos. According to Weaver, a good rhetorician should be ethical, promote an ethical goal, and use ethical argumentation and language. Except for some of his choices of argumentation, Ford presented himself in February, 1975, as a good Weaverian rhetorician.

Despite his generally adhering to Weaver's criteria for a good rhetorician, Ford did not sell his goal, his energy package. What reasons accounted for this lack of success? Did Ford fail to fulfill all of Weaver's criteria, or did the flaw lie in the Weaverian theory? Obviously, no theory has explained and answered all aspects of persuasion. In Weaver's theory, he did not explain how the good rhetorician implemented his hierarchy of argumentation for acceptance of his goal. Weaver was more concerned that a good goal be chosen and that highly ethical arguments be used by the speaker.

In addition to this flaw in Richard Weaver's theory, two assumptions of Ford could have explained the lack of acceptance of his energy package. He assumed his package was practical for all because it was the only plan and because he said it was workable.
Ford did not explain how his package was the best choice for the nation's energy crisis. He stressed only that it was the only plan and that the present energy situation would cause increased foreign control, greater chances for another oil embargo, and decreased future energy reserves. He did not explain in appropriate language the effects his own plan had for the consumers or the producers. The audience had to determine for themselves what the effects would be. Often the audiences concluded that his plan would be harmful to them. The general public was concerned with increased gasoline prices and the availability of fuel. Ford told them to sacrifice. The environmentalists were concerned with the effects on nature. He asked the Congress to postpone pollution controls for a time. The Texas oil producers were concerned that their oil and gas would be sent to the north while Texas suffered. These producers wanted more incentives (a "plowback program") to seek new sources of oil. Ford listened and said he would consider these matters, leaving the oil men in doubt as to what would be done. Congress attempted to organize a plan themselves. Ford labeled them as "do nothing." Much time in research and explanation was spent by Ford and his advisors to inform many segments of the public about energy problems and Ford's solutions. However, people wanted more facts and explanations concerning how his program would work and what would be its
effects. They would not accept his plan merely because it was the only one available at the time.

Weaver would also have questioned Ford's dependence on such circumstance argumentation, as "This is the only plan, so let us do it." Weaver considered this the lowest level of argumentation because it stopped at the level of the perception of the fact or a single statement. Weaver thought the audience should be presented with choices for a good goal. Ford did not explain why his choice was good or how it was practical in achieving energy independence, his goal. Ford assumed that his plan would lead to energy independence; therefore, his speeches concerned the effects of achieving and not achieving this independence. According to the February Gallup poll, his assumption was not accepted by the American public. Seventy-four per cent of the public accepted his goal of energy independence, whereas they rejected Ford's plan for achieving this independence two to one.¹

The second flaw in Ford's energy rhetoric was his heavy dependence on his own ethos for persuasion. Considering the public's recent experiences with their governmental leaders, Ford chose a shaky path when he decided to persuade the American people through his own personality. Granted his efforts to solve the energy crisis

¹Dallas Morning News, February 20, 1975, Sec. A, p. 5.
were considered admirable by the public and granted his own personal popularity increased during February, 1975, his ethos, however, was not great enough to be the public's sole reason for accepting his energy package. Possibly, Ford, the old team player, reverted to the single-minded route a quarterback chooses when he alone gets the football and runs alone to the goal line. Ford, as the quarterback, used his team well to get the ball or package, then he chose to run alone. This was perhaps the greatest flaw in Ford's attempts to sell his energy package in February, 1975.

Thus Ford did a good job of following Weaver's criteria, even though his program was not accepted. Weaver's theory did not offer practical refutation argumentation for Ford to satisfy an opposition who desired information about the immediate effects of his energy package. Ford positively demonstrated that language adapted to each audience promoted personal ethos. Possibly Ford's greatest energy success was his increased ethos with the American public.
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