

The original documents are located in Box 1, folder “Abortion” of the Ron Nessen Papers at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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GDP 2 California

en's rights" forces were in fact surprisingly weak, and admittedly afraid of fighting
 abortion for fear of losing out on ERA too (they got that, with a big assist from Bet
 Ford). The text, however, is hardly a ringing declaration of rights for the unborn
 letter's man-in-Kansas City reports that it could have been made much tougher if anti
 abortionists had agreed on a hard line). It reads: "The question of abortion is one
the most difficult and controversial of our time. It is undoubtedly a moral and pers
issue, but it also involves complex questions relating to medical science and crimina
justice. There are those in our party who favor complete support of the Supreme Court
decision, which supports abortion on demand. There are others who share sincere conv
tions that the Supreme Court decision must be changed by a constitutional amendment
prohibiting all abortions. Others have yet to take a position; or they have assumed a s
somewhere in between the polar positions. We protest the Supreme Court's intrusion
the family structure through its denial of the parents' obligation and right to guide
their minor children. The Republican Party favors the continuance of the public dia
on abortion and supports the efforts of those who seek enactment of a constitutional
amendment to restore protection of the right to life of the unborn child."



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Bill

Frontline

"Why?"
"How did?"

1 - Economy

"What"

Jobs

Inflation

2 - Energy



3 - Crime

4 - Fact in Court

5 - Military expenditure

Foreign policy

6 - Busing

7 - Abortion

3 questions from a Mr. Bernstein on Cronkite show.

1. Do you agree with the Supreme Court's position that the right to abortion be left to a woman and her physician?
2. Do you think states should have the power to regulate abortions?
3. Do you favor a constitutional amendment to curb the Supreme Court's liberalized abortion ruling?

Abortion Hit By Reagan

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. -- In a of the vote after only three copyrighted interview in the weeks of pro-life television com- latest issue of the National.

Right to Life News, official. Reagan, who signed permissive newspaper of the National Right abortion legislation when he was to Life Committee Inc., presi- governor of California, says in dential contender Ronald the interview that eperience Reagan explains his opposition with that law convinced him to abortion and euthanasia. that "I would have vetoed the

In the interview with News bill, in the light of what I know editor Alice Hartle, Reagan ex- now . . . "

presses support for a Human He says that if he "had it to Life Amendment to the U.S. do over again" in signing Constitution to overturn the U.S. abortion legislation, he would Supreme Court's Jan. 22, 1973 sign a strict law allowing ruling that abortion is a basic abortion to prevent the death of constitutional right throughout the mother. This was the pregnancy — not merely in the traditional allowance for abor- "first three months," as is still tion in American law. often reported.

Reagan becomes the second Asked his opinion of eutha- nasia — "mercy killing" — presidential hopeful thus far to Reagan replied, "It is one thing to support the idea of an amend- to talk about the truly doubtful ment. Experienced pro-life case, the moral case of the activist Ellen McCormack, Bell- individual whose bodily func- more, N.Y., has announced she tions are being kept alive when death has really occurred to all is entering Democratic presi- dents and purposes. dential primaries because none of the other Democratic as- pirants is supporting a Human Life Amendment.

Pro-lifers recall that, in last year's New York race for the U.S. Senate, Barbara Keating, an unknown third-party candi- date with a pro-life stand- picked up more than 16 per cent

"There is still only one who determines whether life or death shall occur, and that is God Himself."

Editor Hartle said she hopes this will be only the first of various interviews with the presidential candidates giving their views on pro-life issues.

Citing such people as Cesar Chavez, Garry Wills, Jesse Jackson and Ken Kesey for their opposition to abortion, she said some presidential candi- dates mistakenly have assumed that liberal politics means one must hold a pro-abortion posi- tion.

Mrs. Hartle continued, "We reject the idea that merely because a politician is a Cath- olic, he deserves the pro-life vote. Nor do we believe that people who aren't Catholic will reject pro-life politics.

"Ronald Reagan is an obvious example of someone who's not a Catholic who takes this view. And this is especially refreshing when the Republican Party's titular leader, President Ford, avoids all pro-life commitment and his wife enthusiastically endorses the killing of innocent unborn children.

"We have heard enough eva- sion from people like Sens. Edward Kennedy and Birch Bayh who claim they 'person- ally' don't favor abortion but won't try to give moral guid- ance to restore the rights of the unborn by supporting a strong Human Life Amendment.

"No less a pro-abortionist than Nelson Rockefeller re- cently said here in Minnesota that to reverse the Supreme Court's ruling, you'd have to amend the Constitution. We'll give our support to candidates, regardless of party or other views, as long as they demon- strate a sincere commitment to protecting all innocent human life by endorsing a strong Human Life Amendment."

REAGAN: Abortion? I had to face this problem as Governor. I'd never given it much thought--I guess like a lot of people. Nine years ago there hadn't been much of a problem where I was concerned and I hadn't given it any thought. When I had to face the proposal as to signing or not signing legislation I probably did more soul searching and more study than I've ever done on anything in my life, and I've come to the conclusion that the interrupting of a pregnancy is the taking of a human life and you can only take that human life in the same context that you can take any other human life. We recognize in our Judiac-Christian tradition, for example, that you can take a human life in defense of your own. Therefore, I believe that the mother--prospective mother, has the right to defend her own life even against her unborn child. But beyond that--just to take a human life on a whim because you made a mistake or that it might be inconvenient--no, that is taking a human life and you can't do it on that basis.

questio n- your personal opinion about abortion

I have never given that subject much thought until I became Governor. As Gov. I found myself faced with legislation- bitterly contested- state divided between the pros and the cons and the Senator who was proposing almost abortion on demand sent word down that he would amend his bill to anything that I felt like I could sign. and that set me on a course of study and more soul searching than I have ever done in my life. And I have come to the belief that the interrupting of a pregnancy can only be justified is on the same basis that it was justified in our prevailing Christian tradition. but yes a mother does have a right to defend her own life against ..unborn child.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

January 16, 1976

ADMINISTRATIVELY CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM FOR:

PHIL BUCHEN
JIM CANNON

FROM:

JIM CONNOR *CC*

SUBJECT:

Abortion

The President reviewed your memorandum of January 15 on the above subject and approved Statement 1 as amended:

"As President I am bound by my oath of office to uphold the law of the land as interpreted by the Supreme Court in its 1973 decisions on abortion. In those decisions the Court ruled 7-2 that States could not interfere with a woman's decision to have an abortion the first three months.

As a matter of personal philosophy, however, my belief is that a remedy should be available in cases of serious illness or rape. Personally I do not favor abortion on demand.

I feel that abortion is a matter better decided at the State level. While House Minority Leader, I co-sponsored a proposed amendment to the Constitution to permit the individual States to enact legislation governing abortion."

Please follow-up with appropriate action.

cc: Dick Cheney



CBS REPORT ON PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE
STANDS ON ABORTION
Wednesday, January 28, 1976

Bob

WALTER CRONKITE:

In the presidential primary campaign, abortion has suddenly risen as a significant issue. It was credited with having some part in Jimmy Carter's victory and Birch Bayh's defeat in the Iowa caucuses and now the anti-abortion, right-to-life groups are raising the issue in New Hampshire, the first primary state. Ed Bradley reports.

ED BRADLEY:

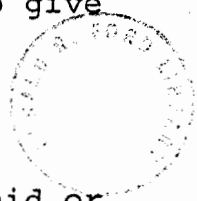
From the start of this campaign anti-abortion tickets made Birch Bayh a special target because of his leadership role on the subcommittee that killed the constitutional amendment that in most cases would have outlawed abortion. Bayh admits he'll probably lose some votes because of his out-front stand and his camp is upset. Because they feel Jimmy Carter has been deliberately ambiguous on abortion. Ed Rabel to state his position.

JIMMY CARTER:

I think that abortion is wrong. I think that the government ought to do everything it can to minimize abortion. I think that the Supreme Court has ruled that women have complete control over that process the first 13 weeks. I do not favor the Supreme Court ruling nor do I favor a constitutional amendment to change that. I have never favored a constitutional amendment to give unrestricted abortions, nor to give states local options.

BIRCH BAYH:

I'd rather not judge Jimmy Carter and what he has said or



hasn't said. I can say without fear of qualification or contradiction that anybody who believes that you can appeal to those people who want absolutely no abortions without supporting a constitutional amendment is either unfamiliar with what the Constitution and the Court has required or is not honestly representing what can happen.

WALTER CRONKITE:

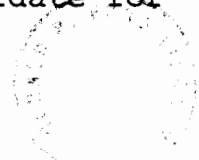
Abortion is a topic that is bubbling near the surface of this campaign, threatening to boil over as an outstanding issue. The Right-To-Life movement has built a grass-roots organization in an effort to make their issue the focal point of the campaign. Barbara Watts has a Right-To-Life movement in New Hampshire that is backing the candidacy of Ellen McCormack.

BARBARA WATTS:

Our main goal is to get radio and television time about the pro-life issue. We're not able to buy this time just as right-to-life or pro-life groups. We have Ellen McCormack running for President so that we can purchase television time and radio time to have on a regular pro-life message to everyone in the United States.

TEXT OF A RIGHT-TO-LIFE TELEVISION MESSAGE:

Did you know that the heart of an unborn baby begins to be formed at 3 weeks after conception? Did you know also that a million babies have their hearts stopped each year in a very painful way by abortion. I'm Ellen McCormack, a Democratic candidate for President.....



ED BRADLEY:

Ellen McCormack is a one-issue candidate who has raised more than 135,000 dollars and is soon expected to qualify for federal matching funds. And with Secret Service protection will take her campaign across the country, partially funded by the taxpayers. She spoke with David Cohane.

DAVID COHANE:

You don't see anything unfair about taking public funds, as you will be, in this kind of one-issue campaign?

McCORMACK:

It's only one issue to proponents of abortion, because I do answer to the other issues. They use that issue just to pretend that it isn't an important issue, but it is an important issue.

DAVID COHANE:

If some other group that was concerned about some other single issue wants to campaign and got matching funds, you wouldn't see anything wrong with that?

McCORMACK:

Well, who will determine what the important issue is? You see. The people should decide what is important and the country might be good speaking out on it.

ED BRADLEY:

We asked some of the other candidates what they thought about the abortion issue. Morris Udall and Fred Harris shared Sen. Bayh's position. They agree with the Supreme Court that the right to have an abortion should be left to the woman and her position. Sen. Henry

Jackson and Sargent Shriver agree with Jimmy Carter. They are against the Supreme Court's decision but do not support a constitutional amendment. Ronald Reagan and George Wallace also oppose the Supreme Court decision and they favor a constitutional amendment that would curb the Court's ruling. A spokesman for President Ford would not reveal the President's position on abortion. It's a tough issue, he said, and deserves a lot of thought. Ed Bradley, CBS News, New York.

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U.S. COALITION FOR LIFE, P.O. BOX 15, EXPORT, PA. 15632

Randy Engel

Executive Director

U.S. Coalition for Life

Export, Pa. 15632

412/327-7379

327-8878

PRESS RELEASE

Wednesday, January 28, 1976

For Immediate ReleasePROLIFE MEETING AT WHITE HOUSEBRINGS CALL FOR AN EXECUTIVE ORDERTO HALT FEDERAL ABORTION PROGRAMS

In an abrupt turnabout face barely 24 hours before the March for Life on the White House and Capital Hill marking the third anniversary of the January 22, 1973 Supreme Court decision on abortion was to begin, key members of the Ford Administration agreed to meet with a small group of prolife leaders for a mid-morning briefing with representatives of the Domestic Council, HEW, and the Justice Department.

The prolife delegation included Nellie Gray, Chairman of the March for Life Committee, Randy Engel, Executive Director of the U.S. Coalition for Life and Dr. Harold Brown of the Christian Action Council.

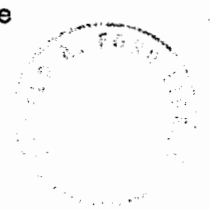
Representing the Ford Administration was Dr. Philip Buchen, Council to the President ; Marjorie Lynch, Under Secretary of HEW ; Sarah Massengale, Associate Director of the Domestic Council; Judy Wolf, an attorney for the Civil Right Division of the Justice Department and other Presidential assistants and aides.

The major areas of discussion centered around the growing subsidy of the abortion establishment with tax dollars by Federal agencies within the Executive Branch, stated Randy Engel, the Director of the U.S. Coalition for Life which specializes in federal anti-life programs.

Mrs. Engel and Miss Gray called upon President Ford to issue an Executive Order directing all Federal agencies within the Administration's jurisdiction, to halt the tax-funding of abortion and other related anti-life and anti-family programs and policies.

(MORE)

PHONE (412) 327-7379



All the members of the pro-life delegation urged support for a mandatory Human Life Amendment.

Speaking for the U.S. Coalition for Life, Mrs. Engel emphasized the responsibility of the President to curb the promotion and funding of abortion and the Sangerite mentality within Federal agencies, particularly the Department of HEW and the Defense Department.

" The Ford Administration's silence in light of the Federally-supported abortion carnage and in light of such unscientific and shoddy research works as the Civil Rights Commission Report on the Right to Limit Childbearing, " Mrs. Engel said, " spoke louder than any public relations quip about the President's former support for a states rights amendment to the Constitution when he was House Minority Leader. This is especially true because the majority of grassroots people in the Pro-life Movement will not support a Constitutional Amendment where the right to life is dependent upon state geography. "

In response to the Administration's claim that it was merely upholding the Supreme Court decision, *Nellie Gray*, a pro-life attorney noted the Court's declaration on the alleged right of abortion as a 'private' action could not be used to justify the use of tax funds and public policies and programs to support the abortion establishment.

Mrs. Engel stated that Federal programs directed at the poor should be orientated in the service of life and not death.

At the conclusion of the forty-five minute meeting, the pro-life delegation urged the Administration to improve its communication with the pro-life community. Mrs. Engel noted that her agency, the U.S. Coalition for Life would continue to meet with the Administrative representatives throughout the year to discuss a wide variety of pro-life issues.

As an effective followup to the White House meeting, the U.S. Coalition for Life has called upon pro-life groups and individuals around the country to support the drive for an Executive Order by President Ford to halt the tax-supported abortion program of the Federal program, Mrs. Engel said.

* Attached Copy of USCL Letter to President Ford.

January 27, 1976

COPY

Gerald R. Ford
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President,

On the morning of January 22, 1976 the third anniversary of the March for Life commemorating the death of millions of unborn children following the Supreme Court decision on abortion, a prolife delegation was invited by the White House to meet with Administrative spokesmen to discuss our common concerns related to federal anti-life policies, programs and funding and which reflect this Administrations formal and informal policies related to abortion, population control and broader areas of family life and health.

Speaking on behalf of the United States Coalition for Life, an international prolife movement, I wish to thank you for the cordial welcome shown to myself and to Mrs. Nellie Gray of the March for Life and Dr. Harold Brown of the Christian Action Council. Each of the agencies represented at the White House meeting are independent prolife organizations who share a common concern for the unborn child and indeed all human beings whose right to life is threatened by the penumbra of the Supreme Court edict of January 22, 1973.

This letter will summarize the major concerns of the U.S. Coalition for Life and confirm our request for the issuance of a Presidential EXECUTIVE ORDER to halt - immediately - the nationwide abortion carnage currently subsidized by Federal agencies within your jurisdiction.

Specifically we are calling upon you to end the mounting campaign by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (an agency which spends over 118 billion dollars a year) against the unborn child via abortion and the American family via the promotion of antilife policies and programs, including the subsidy of fornication among young unmarried persons through federal support of Planned Parenthood Federation of America and its affiliates at home and abroad.

These Federal agencies have taken such action despite the fact that Congress has never authorized nor appropriated a single cent for elective abortions and furthermore Congress has on specific occasions approved of anti-abortion riders to both foreign and domestic family planning programs.

You are aware I am sure of the current prolife drive for a mandatory Human Life Amendment in Congress. We desire however that you also recognize your obligations as President and that you possess the power of Executive Order to halt the promotion and funding of elective abortions by the Federal

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Government. With one swoop of your pen you can save the lives of hundreds of thousands of preborn children and restore the role of the State to that of protector of all innocent human life.

In addition the U.S. Coalition for Life seeks to open channels of communication between your Administration and the Pro-life Movement both in the United States and abroad. We seek a greater voice in the areas of family life policies, public health, population, abortion and maternal and child care and rights and responsibilities. For too long, anti-life Sangerite-Malthusian advocates have had the run of the White House and numerous Federal agencies. It is time to let in a little fresh air.

In the coming weeks and months we hope to improve our communications with the White House by initially meeting with members of your Administration who were present for the January 22nd meeting at the White House including Dr. Philip Buchen and Marjorie Lynch.

Lastly, we trust that you will consider for future appointments to Presidential and agency positions well qualified pro-life men and women. The Coalition will be happy to submit the names of such individuals upon request - individuals who/recognized national and international authorities in public health, constitutional law, demography, and family life to name just a few areas of concern.

On January 22nd more than 50,000 pro-life came to the steps of the White House and the Capital to express their concern for the unborn child and to pledge their support for a mandatory Human Life Amendment. I am aware that while Minority Leader of the House you co-sponsored a States Rights Amendment to the Constitution. In the coming political campaign it would be I believe valuable for you to understand that the millions of grassroots proliferers will not support anything but a mandatory Human Life Amendment and will reject any attempt to make the right-to-life a matter of state geography, and which will institutionalize the taking of innocent human life in the Constitution. Simply stated - a States Rights approach is not acceptable.

During the White House meeting I noticed that Ms. Bobbie Kilberg, your Assistant Council was sporting a large campaign button to re-elect Betty Ford's Husband. In considering our agency's requests, I hope that you will look beyond your role of husband and father to the role of President with the duty and responsibility to uphold the basic rights guaranteed in the Constitution - the most important of which is THE RIGHT TO LIFE.

Sincerely,

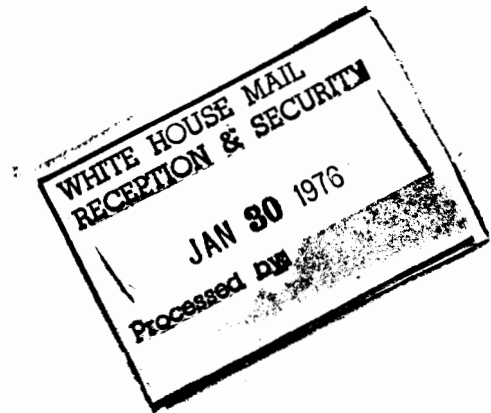
Randy Engel

Randy Engel
National Director
U.S. Coalition for Life

U. S. COALITION FOR LIFE
Export, Pennsylvania 15632
U.S.A.



Press Secretary
Office of the President
The White House
Washington, D.C.
20001



February 3, 1976

What is your position on abortion?

I'm in a moderate position in that area. I do not believe in abortion on demand. I do not agree with the Court decision of 1973. On the other hand, I do not agree that a Constitutional amendment is the proper remedy. I think we have to recognize that

there are instances when abortion should be permitted.

The illness of the mother, ^{incest} rape or any of the other unfortunate things that might happen, so there has to be some flexibility.

I think the court decision went too far. I think a Constitutional amendment goes too far. If there was to be some action in this area, it's my judgement that it ought to be on a basis of what each individual state wishes to do under the circumstances. Again I should add, even though I disagree with the court decision, I have taken an oath of office, and I will, of course, uphold the law as interpreted by the court, but I think there is a better answer.

decision
Doesn't the Supreme Court/itself seem to move against any possibility that the state can take any local action?

That is correct, but if there is to be a Constitutional amendment and there are some suggestions in the Congress now that would permit each state on its own through a vote of the people or through its/^{state} legislative branch to adopt its own state regulations. If there is to be one, I think that's a preferable answer rather than the one that's recommended by others.

But under the Supreme Court decision, that would presumably
take a Constitutional amendment to let the states do that.

That is correct.



and the parties and the policies.

The main characteristic of an information environment is the proliferation of attractive images and promises. It is a world of public relations and

sical, intuitive and social. The North, on the other hand, is strongly allied to the left hemisphere of the brain—linear, connected, literate and goal-oriented.

fore, will align the old pre-TV generation against the young of the TV world.

Another feature of the television electronic ground that will affect the de-

television

Marshall Centre for

Decent Is as Decent Does

By Anthony Lewis

BOSTON, Sept. 22 — Some liberals who are uneasy about Jimmy Carter for one reason or another have taken to speaking of President Ford's "decency." That overworked word, covering a variety of rationalizations, has taken on a code significance. A California Democrat said, "We don't really know Carter. And Ford's not so — he's decent."

personal relations. Gerald Ford undoubtedly is a considerate person: cannot imagine him being unkind to children or dogs or neighbors. But decency in political leadership must be more than that. It connotes a sensitivity to human needs, a breadth of vision and humanity.

Mr. Ford measure up to the standards of decency in political leadership. His response on a number of issues provide a fair basis for judgment.

Human Rights. In his two years as president Mr. Ford has taken no interest in the growing world problem of official brutality: the use of torture and other inhumanities by governments of the left and right. He has strongly resisted Congressional efforts to secure human rights in countries supported by the United States such as Chile. He snubbed the man who is the foremost symbol of resistance to official tyranny, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn.

Sensitive? Wise? Decent?

Law. Mr. Ford never criticized the violations of law disclosed in investigations of the C.I.A. and F.B.I., and to date no legal action has been taken against any official of those agencies. Shortly before Richard Nixon's resignation, when in addition to the public record Vice President Ford had been privately advised of Mr. Nixon's criminality, he said in a speech: "I can say from the bottom of my heart, the President of the United States is innocent and he is right."

Sensitive? Wise? Decent?

Secrecy. The other day Mr. Ford praised a new "sunshine law" for Federal agencies as he signed it before the cameras. But one of his early actions as President was to veto an improvement of the Freedom of Information Act so widely accepted that Congress easily overrode the veto. After the disclosure of abuses by the intelligence agencies, Mr. Ford proposed the toughest law in American history to conceal information related to claimed intelligence methods.

Sensitive? Wise? Decent?

War. As the thirty-year war in Vietnam drew to a close in 1975, Mr. Ford tried to keep it going with an urgent appeal for \$1 billion more in American arms. He took punitive—and blundering—military action over the Cambodian seizure of the ship Mayaguez, in the teeth of a law expressly forbidding the use of U.S. forces in Indochina. He secretly aided

one side in the Angolan civil war and wanted to increase that intervention when Congress said no.

Sensitive? Wise? Decent?

Arms. Escalating American arms sales to such countries as Iran and Saudi Arabia have aroused concern among many students of international security affairs. When Jimmy Carter suggested that the policy was dangerous, Mr. Ford told a Jewish organization: "Does the gentleman want Soviet arms to have a monopoly in the world? Does he want our adversaries to arm not only the radical Arabs but the more moderate Arabs?"

Sensitive? Wise? Decent?

Amnesty. As "an act of mercy," Mr. Ford in 1975 created a program of "clemency" for Vietnam draft evaders and deserters. Because he was opposed to a blanket pardon, men were to be treated on a case-by-case basis. But the program was so complex, the standards so vague, the administration so quixotic that a former U. S. Attorney in Utah, William J. Lockhart, has spoken of the process he saw as "inevitably inconsistent and discriminatory."

Sensitive? Wise? Decent?

Abortion. A year ago, Mr. Ford was against a constitutional amendment to limit abortions. But as the chance for Catholic votes seemed to glimmer in the campaign, he said he was for letting the states limit abortions as they wished—a step that would require a constitutional amendment.

Sensitive?

The record be the center. It is the nature of a narrow ought to please interest in his care about law, who be secrecy, who or forget re war, and so

But for li accept that r It is indecent about sensiti politics to te Gerald-Ford.

THE BLACK FAMILY RECONSIDERED: II

Durability on the Plantation

Durable Afro-American family organization developed in the United States in the

By Herbert G. Gutman

called themselves by kin titles: "Mornin' brudder Lon'on." "Mornin' mi



We top ca top de sta ap of "e for th

Walker Chronicle Interview 2/3/76

I have to add -- and I think it is important -- that as President I have to uphold the law whatever the courts decide, and I will, having taken that oath of office.

MR. CRONKITE: What is your position on abortion?

THE PRESIDENT: I am in a moderate position in that area. ~~I do not believe in abortion on demand.~~ I do not agree with the court decision of 1971.

On the other hand, I do not agree that a Constitutional amendment is the proper remedy. I think we have to recognize that there are instances when abortion should be permitted -- the illness of the mother, rape or any of the other unfortunate things that might happen -- so there has to be some flexibility.

I think the court decision went too far. I think a Constitutional amendment goes too far. ~~If there was to be some action in this area it is my judgment that it ought to be on the basis of what each individual State wishes to do under the circumstances.~~


Again, I should add even though I disagree with the court decision, I have taken an oath of office and I will, of course, uphold the law as interpreted by the court. I think there is a better answer.

MR. CRONKITE: Doesn't the Supreme Court decision itself seem to move against any possibility that a State can take local action?

THE PRESIDENT: That is correct, but ~~if there is to be a Constitutional amendment -- and there are some suggestions in the Congress now that would permit each State on its own through a vote of the people or a vote of its State legislative branch to adopt its own State regulations -- if there is to be one I think that is a preference rather than the one that is recommended by others.~~

MR. CRONKITE: But under the Supreme Court decision that presumably would take a Constitutional amendment to let the States do that.

THE PRESIDENT: That is correct.



PRAYER IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

the law, they, of course—or their decision is subject to court involvement.

The worst thing would be for a President or his people to unethically or illegally get involved in that process. That would really slow the matter up.

Now, if a Governor wants to get involved, or somebody on the outside, they do it at their own risk. But this President isn't going to do anything illegal or unethical concerning that project. I have strong feelings, as I said a moment ago, that we need 200 more nuclear power plants, and I hope the Nuclear Regulatory Agency [Commission] moves as rapidly as it can on all of them. But that is their decision, and I am not going to try to tell them how to do it.

Q. Well, the Governor made this claim a couple of weeks ago. Had you heard about it at all? Had you heard that he said he had been told by an aide?

THE PRESIDENT. I read it in the newspaper, but I don't think that any person on my staff should try to tell the NRC when and how they ought to make the decision.

Q. Did you check out, Mr. President, whether anyone on your staff had had communication with Governor Thomson on this matter?

THE PRESIDENT. Yes, I will try to do that.

ABORTION

Q. Mr. President, Rick Beyer, WDCR News.

I would like to know, was your recent change of heart on the Supreme Court ruling on abortion basically a political move to improve your position in New Hampshire? And, if not, I would like to know why you feel that a new constitutional amendment of the kind you advocated for State control of abortion regulations is necessary.

THE PRESIDENT. My decision, adverse to the Supreme Court decision, goes back some time. I felt at the time the decision was made that it went too far. I publicly expressed that view at that time. And while I was a Member of the House of Representatives, after that decision I made a decision to oppose the constitutional amendment that would preclude any Federal executive, legislative or judicial action against abortions. And I felt then—and it is on the record at that time—that I favored an amendment that would permit individual State action.

That record was laid out long before I became Vice President or President, so it has no application whatsoever to the current situation.

Q. Why do you think such an amendment is necessary?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, I think that it would be very helpful in clarifying and giving to the individual State—we have 50 States, and if they want to make a decision one way or another, if you believe in States rights, I think it is a very proper, very logical conclusion.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

Q. Mr. President, I am Fred Kocher from WMUR-TV in Manchester, New Hampshire.

The Federal District Court in Concord just recently here in New Hampshire ruled that a State law here in New Hampshire allowing voluntary prayer in public schools was patently unconstitutional.

My question to you is, do you agree with that kind of court decision, because there are people in this State and in many States that feel that voluntary prayer is a basic constitutional right?

THE PRESIDENT. Some years ago there was a United States Supreme Court decision as to whether or not a woman in Baltimore, as I recollect, had a child who objected to the nondenominational prayer that was conducted in that community.

That court decision, in effect, said there could be no prayer in public schools in the United States. I read that decision very carefully. I read the dissenting opinion of Justice Potter Stewart very carefully. I subscribe to Justice Potter Stewart's dissenting opinion and, therefore, I disagree with the Supreme Court decision which precludes nondenominational prayers in public schools. I agree with the Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart, who said the court was wrong.

So, I regret the court decision. I agree with the minority, and I think it is most unfortunate that under reasonable limitations—I think it is regrettable that under reasonable limitations, there can't be nondenominational prayer in public schools.

Q. What course of action would you suggest at this point, let's say, to the Congress or to any group who disagreed like you do?

THE PRESIDENT. The most extreme course of action would be a constitutional amendment. When this matter came up, I was the Republican minority leader in the House, and Senator Everett Dirksen was the Republican minority leader in the Senate. He was a firm advocate of a constitutional amendment to remedy this situation.

I talked with him many, many times about it, because that was one thing he wanted to do because he felt so strongly about it. In the process of my discussions with him, I subscribed to an amendment of that kind.

FEDERAL AID TO EDUCATION

Q. Mr. President, Mike D'Antonio from The New Hampshire.

Any cuts in aid to education may make entrance to universities impossible for low- and middle-income people who cannot pay the entire bill without assistance. Will you please comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, the primary responsibility for the financing of a State university comes from the State

The President's Remarks to Reporters Upon Arrival at the Greater Peoria Airport. March 5, 1976

THE PRESIDENT. It is great to be in Peoria. I have been here a number of times. In fact, Bob Michel reminded me of the time quite a few years ago—I won't tell you how long, but it was a great occasion, and it's nice to be back in 1976.

Q. What is your current stand on the right-to-life amendment in the Constitution?

THE PRESIDENT. My stand today is the same as it has been for some time. I think the Supreme Court went too far. I think the amendment that bans all abortion goes too far. I think that there is a reasonable and responsible middle ground, and that's the position that I take.

Q. Mr. President, if you win the primary, will you be able to beat out either Teddy Kennedy or Hubert Humphrey?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, I think that our chances in November are very good, regardless of the Democratic candidates.

Q. How about the current status of revenue sharing as far as you are concerned? Are you satisfied with the progress of that bill through Congress?

THE PRESIDENT. Not at all. I have recommended to Congress a 5¾-year extension of general revenue sharing—last July, as I recollect—and Congress has not gotten the legislation out of subcommittee yet. Congress has been very, very dilatory. The majority party doesn't seem to have much inspiration to pass the legislation. I hope that we can push—with the help of Governors, mayors, and county officials—this legislation can be vitally important to all units of government.

Q. Do you think it is going to pass?

THE PRESIDENT. I'm always optimistic, but the time delay is very bothersome. All I can say is that we're working very hard to get some Congressional action before it's too late.

Q. Is it going to pay in Peoria? Are you going to win in central Illinois?

THE PRESIDENT. I'm very optimistic with my prospects as far as Peoria is concerned. Illinois has always been a good State. I had many opportunities to visit it. I have virtually been all over the State. I think I have a friend or two, and I think they will be helpful.

REPORTER. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:45 p.m.

The President's Remarks and Question-and-Answer Session at Bradley University. Everett McKinley Dirksen Forum. March 5, 1976

THE PRESIDENT. Thank you very, very much Dr. Abegg, Congressman Bob Michel, Congressman Tom Railsback, Congressman Ed Madigan, my outstanding Secretary of Agriculture, Earl Butz, Mayor Carver, friends of the Everett McKinley Dirksen Chair, students, faculty, and guests of Bradley University:

At the outset, let me say I don't think we would have scheduled this tonight if I had known that Chet Walker was being honored last night. [Laughter] I probably would have been here last night if I could have, because I am a great fan of his, and I am a great fan of all that Bradley University stands for in the field of basketball, as well as academic standing, and I congratulate you. And I'm darn glad and lucky to be the recipient of the Everett McKinley Dirksen Honorary Chair here tonight. I thank you very, very much.

Bob Michel was much too generous and far too kind, but it's nice to hear in 1976. And I thank Bob for not only his kind words, but his long friendship. And I could reciprocate in kind for the outstanding job that he does for all of you in the Congress of the United States.

Obviously, it's a great pleasure and privilege and a very high honor for me to be here tonight, not only in Bradley but in the city of Peoria. And I thank Mayor Carver for his warm and very kind reception at the airport.

I have been here—yes, back in 1949, but I have been here subsequent to that, and I am impressed with your people, your administration, and the objectives and the kind of morale that you have here in Peoria. You set a high standard for other communities around the country.

The trustees of this University have been very kind and honored me in a very personal way with an honorary appointment to the Everett McKinley Dirksen Chair of Government and Public Affairs. And I am deeply honored, because Everett Dirksen was one of the finest public servants I have ever known, and history will record him as one of the most gifted and beloved men ever to serve in the Congress of the United States.

Ev and I became especially close during the years when he served as the Republican leader in the United States Senate and I was his counterpart in the House of Representatives. Ev Dirksen was more than a statesman, more than a master of legislative process, more than a never-to-be-forgotten speaker. I knew him as a good friend, a wise counselor, and an inspiring teacher.

He taught us one of his most unforgettable lessons on the memorable day in 1963 when the Senate was debating

file

March 28, 1973

93^d CONGRESS
1st SESSION

H. J. RES. 468



IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

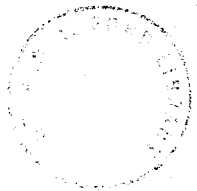
MARCH 28, 1973

Mr. WHITEHURST (for himself, Mr. ARCHER, Mr. BEVELL, Mr. BROYHILL of Virginia, Mr. BUTLER, Mr. DERWINSKI, Mr. GERALD R. FORD, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. HUBER, Mr. HUNT, Mr. KETCHUM, Mr. MAZZOLI, Mr. PARRIS, Mr. SIKES, Mr. STEIGER of Arizona, Mr. WON PAT, and Mr. ZION) introduced the following joint resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

JOINT RESOLUTION

Proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

1 *Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of*
2 *the United States of America in Congress assembled (two-*
3 *thirds of each House concurring therein), That the follow-*
4 *ing article is proposed as an amendment to the Constitution*
5 *of the United States, to be valid only if ratified by the*
6 *legislatures of three-fourths of the several States within*
7 *seven years after the date of final passage of this joint res-*
8 *olution:*



"ARTICLE —

1
2 "SECTION 1. Nothing in this Constitution shall bar
3 any State or territory or the District of Columbia, with
4 regard to any area over which it has jurisdiction, from
5 allowing, regulating, or prohibiting the practice of abortion."

93rd CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. J. RES. 468

JOINT RESOLUTION

Proposing an amendment to the Constitution of
the United States.

By Mr. WHITEHURST, Mr. ARCHER, Mr. BEVILL,
Mr. BROTHILL of Virginia, Mr. BUTLER, Mr.
DEWINSKI, Mr. GERALD R. FORD, Mr. HAST-
INGS, Mr. HUBER, Mr. HUNT, Mr. KETCHUM,
Mr. MAZZOLI, Mr. PARRIS, Mr. SIKES, Mr.
STIGER of Arizona, Mr. VON PAT, and Mr.
ZION

March 28, 1973

Referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

February 6, 1976

Ron,

For your information.

P. Buchen



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

INFORMATION

February 6, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

THROUGH: PHIL BUCHEN *P.W.B.*
FROM: BOBBIE GREENE KILBERG *B.K.*
SUBJECT: Proposed Constitutional Amendments
on Abortion

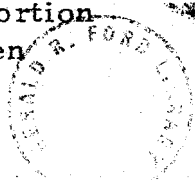
Max Friedersdorf has asked me to prepare for your information an analysis of the various constitutional amendments that have been introduced in the 94th Congress on abortion.

There are three basic types of constitutional amendments dealing with abortion:

- (1) a right to life amendment which would prohibit state action in the area of abortion;
- (2) a right to life amendment which would prohibit both state and private action in the area of abortion; and
- (3) a states' rights amendment which would give each state the authority to allow, regulate or prohibit abortions.

The Constitutional Amendments Subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee considered a number of anti-abortion amendments in 1975 and voted not to report any out of the Subcommittee. The Civil Rights and Constitutional Rights Subcommittee of the House Judiciary Committee held two days of hearings on anti-abortion amendments on February 4 and 5 of this year, but it is most unlikely that any amendment will be reported out of the Subcommittee.

Below is a description of each of the basic types of anti-abortion constitutional amendments, more than 50 of which have been introduced in the House and the Senate:



(1) Right to life constitutional amendment which would prohibit state action in the area of abortion

Congressman Erlenborn (R., Ill.) has introduced H. J. Res. 99, a state action amendment prohibiting both abortion from conception and euthanasia. No explicit exception is made in the abortion prohibition to protect the life of the mother. The proposed amendment reads as follows:

Section 1. Neither the United States nor any state shall deprive any human being, from conception, of life without due process of law; nor deny to any human being, from conception, within its jurisdiction, the equal protection of the law.

Section 2. Neither the United States nor any state shall deprive any human being of life on account of age, illness, or incapacity.

Section 3. Congress and the several States shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

The Fourteenth Amendment definition of state action would apply to this amendment. Among H. J. Res. 99's co-sponsors are Congressman Delaney (D., N. Y.), Congressman Eilberg (D., Pa.), and Congressman Mazzoli (D., Ky.). According to the minority counsel of the House Civil Rights and Constitutional Rights Subcommittee, the state action approach was not seriously focused upon in the Subcommittee's hearings.

(2) Amendment to prohibit all state and private action in the area of abortion

H. J. Res. 311, introduced by Congressman Latta (R., Ohio), is typical of this type of amendment. It states as follows:

Section 1. With respect to the right to life, the word 'person' as used in this Article and in the Fifth and Fourteenth Articles of amendment to the Constitution of the United States applies to all human beings

irrespective of age, health, function, or condition of dependency, including their unborn offspring at every stage of their biological development.

Section 2. No unborn person shall be deprived of life by any person: Provided, however, that nothing in this article shall prohibit a law preventing only those medical procedures required to prevent the death of the mother.

Section 3. The Congress and the several States shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

This amendment forbids euthanasia as well as abortion, and it does contain an exception to protect the life of the mother.

Among the Congressmen who either have co-sponsored H.J. Res. 311 or have introduced similar amendments are Madden (D., Ind.), Quie (R., Minn.), Erlenborn, Delaney, Smith (R., Nebr.), Hyde (R., Ill.), Goldwater, Jr. (R., Calif.), Oberstar (D., Minn.) and Lagomarsino (R., Calif.). In the Senate, Senator Buckley has introduced two constitutional amendments, one of which is identical to the Latta wording and both of which contain the same intent. The Buckley amendments were S.J. Res. 10 and 11 which were re-introduced as S.J. Res. 140 and 141 in October, 1975 after the former resolutions were voted down in Subcommittee by votes of 2-to-5. The co-sponsors of the Buckley amendments are Senators Bartlett, Curtis, Eastland, Garn, Hatfield, Helms, Proxmire and Young.

All of the right to life bills in this category, except one introduced by Congressman Delaney and one introduced by Senator Helms, contain a provision to save the life of the mother. The Helms amendment was voted down in Subcommittee by a vote of 2-to-5. One resolution, H.J. Res. 451, introduced by Congressman Blouin (D., Iowa) and co-sponsored by four other Democrats, requires that while protecting the life of the mother "every reasonable effort" must be made to preserve the life of her unborn offspring.

Another variation in the right to life amendments is a resolution introduced by Congressman Karth (D., Minn.) (H.J. Res. 197)



that contains an exception to allow termination of a pregnancy of no more than ten days' duration which resulted from rape. No distinction is made between statutory and forcible rape.

None of the state action or private action right to life amendments contain an exception for the mental illness of the mother.

(3) States' rights amendment which would give each state the authority to allow, regulate or prohibit abortions

The basic states' rights amendment has been introduced in the House as H. J. Res. 96 by Congressman Whitehurst (R., Va.) and in the Senate as S. J. Res. 91 by Senator Scott of Virginia. The Whitehurst amendment was co-sponsored by you when you were in the House and is presently co-sponsored by Congressmen Rhodes, Steiger (R., Ariz.), Treen (R., La.) and Wampler (R., Va.), among others. Senator Scott's resolution was voted down in the Senate Subcommittee by a vote of 3-to-5.

The basic Whitehurst provision reads as follows:

Section 1. Nothing in this Constitution shall bar any State or territory or the District of Columbia, with regard to any area over which it has jurisdiction, from allowing, regulating, or prohibiting the practice of abortion.

This states' rights amendment does not specifically provide an exception to save the life of the mother.

The minority counsel of the House Judiciary Civil Rights and Constitutional Rights Subcommittee is of the opinion that the language of the Whitehurst and Scott amendments could be interpreted by the courts as being consistent with the Supreme Court's 1973 abortion decisions and thus defeat the intent of the amendments. Other lawyers disagree with this opinion, and cite as especially important a clear legislative history.

Another states' rights approach is illustrated by S. J. Res. 143, an amendment re-introduced by Senator Burdick after his amendment was not reported out of Subcommittee by a vote of 4-to-4. An identical amendment was introduced in the House by Congresswoman



Sullivan (D., Mo.). Burdick's amendment is both anti-abortion and anti-euthanasia and reserves to the states and to the Congress within Federal jurisdictions the affirmative power to protect life.

The Congress within Federal jurisdictions and the several States within their respective jurisdictions shall have power to protect life, including the unborn, at every state [sic] of biological development irrespective of age, health, or condition of physical dependency.

The Burdick amendment does not contain an exception to save the life of the mother.

* * * *

Right to life and states' rights amendments which do not provide an exception to save the life of the mother would create a condition of competing fundamental rights if ratified. While the unborn child's right to life would be constitutionally protected, so would the mother's right to life under the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments. While it could be legally logical to hold that the ratification of the new amendment would supersede the right of the mother to life under the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments, it is inconceivable to the Solicitor General and to most other attorneys that the Supreme Court would ever in fact rule that the mother's life must be sacrificed for the unborn child's life.

The following are the positions on the issue of anti-abortion constitutional amendments of the House and Senate Republican leadership:

Congressman Rhodes: co-sponsor of Whitehurst states' rights amendment to give each state the authority to allow, regulate or prohibit abortions.

Congressman Conable: has generally stated that he is not completely happy with the Supreme Court decision, and he had asked the Chairman of the Judiciary Subcommittee to hold hearings so that all views could be fully aired. Congressman Conable has not come out in favor of a constitutional amendment.

Congressman Michel: opposes abortion on demand and abortion as a contraceptive device. However, he favors abortion when a pregnancy is a danger to a mother's life, or when a woman has been raped. He does not favor abortion in the case of mental illness. The Congressman also does not favor a constitutional amendment on the issue but feels that it may be possible to present the Supreme Court with arguments that might cause it to reconsider its 1973 decisions. He is presently looking into this possibility.

Senator Scott: presently does not favor a constitutional amendment.

Senator Griffen: has not supported a constitutional amendment.

Senator Tower: would consider the possibility of supporting a states' rights amendment.

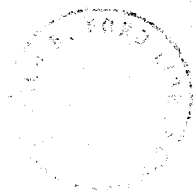
The following are the positions on the issue of anti-abortion constitutional amendments of the Republican and Democratic Presidential candidates:

Reagan: favors state action and private action right to life amendment except where necessary to save the mother's life or to end a pregnancy caused by rape.

Carter, Jackson, Shriver: believe abortion is wrong; do not favor Supreme Court ruling; do not favor either right to life or states' rights amendment.

Bayh, Harris, Udall: agree with Supreme Court decision.

Wallace: favors right to life amendment.



PRESIDENT'S REMARKS TO THE
41st INTERNATIONAL EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS

PHILADELPHIA

AUGUST 8, 1976

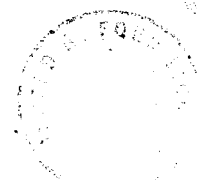
1.

-- YOUR EMINENCE CARDINAL KNOX, PAPAL LEGATE FOR HIS
HOLINESS, POPE PAUL

-- YOUR ENIMENCE CARDINAL KROL --

-- DISTINGUISHED CLERGY FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD.

-- DEAR FRIENDS--



2.

I AM DEEPLY HONORED BY YOUR INVITATION TO BE WITH YOU
FOR THE CONCLUSION OF THIS 41st INTERNATIONAL EUCHARISTIC
CONGRESS, AND TO REITERATE, ON BEHALF OF ALL THE PEOPLE OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, OUR MOST HEARTFELT WELCOME TO OUR GUES
FROM MANY OTHER COUNTRIES.

3.

IT IS AN INSPIRING DEMONSTRATION OF ALL THE WORLD'S HUNGER
FOR PEACE AND UNDERSTANDING THAT THESE CONGRESSES ARE ABLE TO
UNITE CITIZENS OF MORE THAN 100 NATIONS IN COMMON PURPOSE
AND COMMON PRAYER.

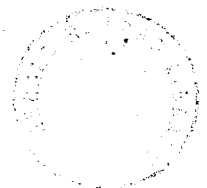


4.

IT IS FITTING THAT YOU GATHER HERE IN THE CITY OF BROTHERLY LOVE, WHERE 200 YEARS AGO MY COUNTRY DECLARED ITS NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE "WITH A FIRM RELIANCE ON THE PROTECTION OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE."


5.

THAT RELIANCE HAS NEVER FAILED US, AND HAS BEEN REINFORCED BY THE EQUALLY FIRM DEVOTION OF AMERICANS TO FREEDOM OF WORSHIP AND FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE FOR ALL WHO HAVE COME TO US THROUGH THE CENTURIES.



THESE FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS ARE NOT ONLY WRITTEN INTO
OUR CONSTITUTION AND OUR LAWS, BUT THEY ARE WRITTEN IN OUR
HEARTS AS WELL.

ON THIS OCCASION WE CELEBRATE THE CHURCH'S CONTRIBUTION
TO BUILDING A MORE PEACEFUL WORLD. WE SALUTE YOU FOR GIVING
DEPTH AND DIRECTION TO THE WORLD COMMUNITY IN EVERY AGE.



8.

FOR MILLIONS OF MEN AND WOMEN, THE CHURCH HAS BEEN THE HOSPITAL FOR THE SOUL, THE SCHOOLROOM FOR THE MIND, AND THE SAFE DEPOSITORY FOR MORAL IDEALS. IT HAS GIVEN UNITY AND PURPOSE TO THE AFFAIRS OF MAN. IT HAS BEEN A VITAL INSTITUTION FOR PROTECTING AND PROCLAIMING THE ULTIMATE VALUES OF LIFE ITSELF.

9.

WE ARE RIGHTLY CONCERNED TODAY ABOUT THE RISING TIDE OF SECULARISM ACROSS THE WORLD. I SHARE YOUR DEEP APPREHENSION ABOUT THE INCREASED IRREVERENCE FOR LIFE.



10.

THE SUPREME VALUE OF EVERY PERSON TO WHOM LIFE IS GIVEN BY
GOD IS A BELIEF THAT COMES TO US FROM HOLY SCRIPTURES --- ONE
CONFIRMED BY ALL THE GREAT LEADERS OF THE CHURCH.

11.

OUR COMMITMENT TO THE UNIQUE ROLE OF THE FAMILY RELATIONSHIP
IS ALSO BASIC TO OUR FAITH.



12.

THERE ARE NO ADEQUATE SUBSTITUTES FOR FATHER, MOTHER, AND CHILDREN BOUND TOGETHER IN A LOVING COMMITMENT TO NURTURE AND PROTECT. NO GOVERNMENT, NO MATTER HOW WELL INTENTIONED, CAN EVER TAKE THE PLACE OF THE FAMILY IN THE SCHEME OF THINGS.

13.

THE FAMILY CIRCLE SUGGESTS A ONENESS SIMILAR TO THAT OF THE CHURCH FAMILY AND THAT WHICH WE STRIVE TO ACHIEVE IN THE HUMAN FAMILY.

14.

I REMEMBER A POEM THAT MY MOTHER TAUGHT ME AS A BOY, BY THE
GREAT AMERICAN POET EDWIN MARKHAM, WHICH BEAUTIFULLY EXPRESSES
THE DETERMINATION THAT WE MUST MOVE BEYOND TOLERANCE TO LOVE.

15.

IT GOES LIKE THIS:

"HE DREW A CIRCLE THAT SHUT ME OUT -

HERETIC, REBEL, A THING TO FLOUT.

BUT LOVE AND I HAD THE WIT TO WIN:

WE DREW A CIRCLE THAT TOOK HIM IN."

I AM MOVED THAT YOU HAVE BROUGHT ME WITHIN THIS GREAT CIRCLE
TODAY AND BY THE SPIRIT OF LOVE AND SERVICE THAT ANIMATES IT.

I HOPE THAT WE ALL, WHATEVER OUR COUNTRY OR CREED, WILL CONTINUE
TO DRAW LARGER AND LARGER CIRCLES UNTIL THAT DAY, IN HIS GOOD TIME
WHEN ALL GOD'S PEOPLE ARE ONE.

17.

AS WE WORK TOGETHER FOR A BETTER WORLD WHERE OUR BROTHERS
AND SISTERS ARE FREE FROM HUNGER AND FEAR, LET US KEEP OUR HEARTS
FREE FROM PRIDE AND HATE, IN THE SPIRIT OF THIS OLD FAMILIAR
PRAYER OF THE GOOD ST. FRANCIS:

LORD, MAKE ME AN INSTRUMENT OF THY PEACE,

WHERE THERE IS HATRED, LET ME SOW LOVE,

WHERE THERE IS INJURY, PARDON,

WHERE THERE IS DOUBT, FAITH,

WHERE THERE IS DESPAIR, HOPE,

19.

WHERE THERE IS DARKNESS, LIGHT,

WHERE THERE IS SADNESS, JOY.

GOD BLESS AND MAY YOU HAVE A SAFE JOURNEY TO YOUR

HOMES.

END OF TEXT

17. (ALTERNATE ENDING)

ON THIS CLOSING DAY OF THE 41st EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS,
I INVITE YOU TO UTTER IN YOUR HEART A PRAYER FOR GOD'S CONTINUED
GUIDANCE AND PROTECTION FOR ALL THE WORLD - - - A PRAYER THAT,
WHEN ANSWERED, WILL BLESS NOT ONLY US BUT PEOPLE EVERYWHERE.

THANK YOU.

END OF TEXT

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

February 9, 1975

MAIL AND TELEGRAM UPDATE ON ABORTION AFTER
THE PRESIDENT MADE HIS POSITION KNOWN IN THE
CRONKITE INTERVIEW:

PRO - 99
CON - 543
COMMENT - 16

UPDATE ON THE MAIL RECEIVED SINCE THE FIRST
OF THE YEAR ON THE ABORTION ISSUE IN GENERAL:

PRO - 31
CON - 1,023 (these are the people who
want the Supreme Court decision
changed)

MAIL AND TELEGRAMS ON THE CONCORDE DECISION:

PRO - 19
CON - 387
COMMENT - 3

These figures are as of 11:30 this morning.

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 12:05 P.M. EDT

AUGUST 9, 1976

MONDAY

MR. NESSEN: I don't have anything.

Q Good. Thank you, Ron.

MR. NESSEN: Okay, thank you, Dick. (Laughter).

Q How is the President celebrating his second anniversary in office?

MR. NESSEN: Working.

Q What is he doing?

MR. NESSEN: He has some staffer meetings. He has an NSC meeting this afternoon and he is working on his acceptance speech.

Q What drafts are we on, on the acceptance speech, now?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know.

Q Any plans for a press conference today or this week?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Can you find out what draft it is at some point, or how far along he is?

MR. NESSEN: I will try.

Q What is the subject, abortion? (Laughter);

MR. NESSEN: No, we hope it is not.

Q Ron, the Washington Post reports that an unidentified White House staffer is saying that it was a common interpretation that the President was talking about abortion yesterday when he referred to "increased irreverence for life." Is that true?



MR. NESSEN: I don't know who that staffer was.

Q The question is, what was the President talking about when he said "increased irreverence for life"?

MR. NESSEN: I won't elaborate on his words.

Q Is this the reason Mrs. Ford did not go with him?

MR. NESSEN: No, it isn't.

Q Or was Mrs. Ford not invited by the Bishops?

MR. NESSEN: I will have to look at my letter from Cardinal Krol, but I don't think Mrs. Ford was invited.

Q When he said "increased irreverence for life," certainly that doesn't mean the restoration of the death penalty, does it?

MR. NESSEN: I will not elaborate on his words, Les.

Q Why not, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: Because I try not to elaborate on the President's words. He can speak very clearly for himself.

Q When the Washington Post reports that a spokesman for the White House said this could be interpreted as abortion, why is it you won't clarify it? Is it abortion or not?

MR. NESSEN: The audience seemed to understand him, Les.

Q Did they have a correct assumption of what the President was talking about?

MR. NESSEN: I won't elaborate on the audience response, either.

Q Besides, Les, I wouldn't pay much attention to what the Washington Post says. They didn't run our interview. (Laughter)

MR. NESSEN: The letter of invitation from the Cardinal indicated that the Board of Governors of the Eucharistic Congress were joining with Cardinal Krol in "extending to you a cordial invitation to the Eucharistic Congress." So it appears that the invitation did not extend to Mrs. Ford.

Q None of the Church officials brought their wives, either. (Laughter)

Q Ron, Evans and Novak say the President is going to compromise on the cruise missile to get a SALT agreement before the election.

MR. NESSEN: Well, I don't have anything specific to say about the details of that column. First of all, the President believes that a SALT II agreement, and what it seeks to accomplish, which is a ceiling on offensive nuclear weapons, is in the interest of the United States and in the interest of the world. But he is not going to conclude any treaty that does not fully protect the interests of the United States.

There is no particular timetable for reaching that treaty. If and when a treaty can be worked out with the Soviet Union that does fully protect the interest of the United States, he will agree to it, but not until then. There is no timetable for one.

Q Has the United States made a response to the latest Russian proposal on SALT?

MR. NESSEN: We have not.

Q You have not?

MR. NESSEN: We have not, Jim.

Q Is that what today's NSC meeting is about?

MR. NESSEN: We never tell what the subject is, Phil.

Q Did they get the information they were looking for last week?

MR. NESSEN: The information for this meeting today is now ready to go forward with the meeting, that is right.

Q What is it?

MR. NESSEN: I can't tell you, Fran.

Q Ron, I am sorry, I have been out of the country. Do you know yet when the President is going to Kansas City, and if you don't know, when will you know?

MR. NESSEN: He has not yet decided, as I think he told Helen and Dick and the others over the weekend. I don't expect a decision to be made really until the end of the week.

Q Ron, yesterday Elliot Richardson said that the White House is asking for his financial information, apparently because he is being considered for Vice President. How many other people have been asked to supply financial data to the White House?

MR. NESSEN: I was trying to follow my directions and not give the number, but the President, I think, indicated in response to a question from Dick over the weekend that it was something more than a dozen.

Q Can you elaborate on that any more?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q It is true that Richardson is one of them, then?

MR. NESSEN: I won't elaborate on names.

Q Is there some sort of a packet of materials that indicates what the President wants in the way of --

MR. NESSEN: I mentioned the other day that they are really being asked to provide the same material that any candidate for a top Presidential appointment is asked, and I have the questionnaires that are required to be filled out by candidates for top White House jobs. It is not precisely the same questionnaire, but it is the same thoughts. I also have the memo that Phil Buchen sends to people who are being considered and if any of you want to look at these after the briefing, I will be happy to have you do that.

Q Ron, don't you think it is a little bit ludicrous for some of these people to be coming out and saying they have been contacted and the White House refuses to even confirm that? What is the purpose of that?

MR. NESSEN: It is the way the President wishes to conduct this process of selecting his Vice Presidential running mate.

Q Is he unhappy because these people are disclosing this?

MR. NESSEN: I didn't hear him say one way or the other, Phil.

Q Why does he prefer they not acknowledge that they have been called?

MR. NESSEN: I think the President indicated he would like to conduct this on some basis of confidentiality.

Q Then why is he not unhappy when they come out and say they have been contacted?

MR. NESSEN: They are all folks who are used to dealing with the press.

Q As you know, the President has said several times the swine flu threat is very genuine, the most recent time being last Friday. My question is, what medical evidence does the President have for making that statement at this point in time?

MR. NESSEN: This goes back to a series of meetings he had just before the decision to go forward with a national inoculation program. He gathered together medical people from both inside the Government and outside the Government, public health officials and drug company officials, and they laid all the evidence on the table and examined it, and then he asked -- I think I mentioned this the other day -- whether there was anybody there who did not agree or objected to the idea that there was a real danger of a swine flu outbreak this winter, and nobody said that they did not share that. Then he asked if anybody disagreed with the idea of going forward with a national inoculation program, and nobody there disagreed with it. It was on the medical evidence.

The President, I think, has said, Walt, that none of the researchers have said we are 100 percent sure there is going to be a swine flu outbreak. They have said there is all this evidence pointing in that direction, and I think at the time the President either directly or through me indicated that it was better to have the inoculation program and thereby prevent any outbreak than to take a chance and say, "Well, we are going to hope there won't be an outbreak." Because, once an outbreak starts it is too late to begin the program. I think he even used the expression "this is an insurance policy" to make sure there is no outbreak.

Q My question was -- I think you heard it -- what medical evidence is there? So far you have not provided any evidence.

MR. NESSEN: Let me get you together with Dr. Cooper, the one who assembled the medical evidence that was presented to the President, and he can lay it out for you.

Q Can you clarify one thing in the weekend interview that doesn't come across clear to me? The President stated he would make his selection known about 24 hours before --

MR. NESSEN: I think the question was, when will you make your final decision? And the President said he would make it within 24 hours before he announced it.

Q Can you clarify for us whether he will make his decision known before or after the balloting for the Presidency?

MR. NESSEN: No, I think he said last week, or had me say on his behalf, that he would follow the traditional method of announcing his choice for running mate, which is after his own nomination.

Q Back to the swine flu issue, does the President or does the White House or does anyone in the medical community of the United States have evidence of more than one confirmed case of swine flu in the past 12 months in this country, out of 215 million people?

MR. NESSEN: Walt, I am not a medical expert, and you are quite right -- it is a medical or epidemiological question, and Dr. Cooper is the one who assembled the information that was persuasive to the President, to Dave Mathews, to all the medical people who were at that meeting, and I would like for you to let me put you in touch with Dr. Cooper.

Q I will be glad to if you will give me the number.

MR. NESSEN: I will.

Q Ron, there have been some differences of opinion about how a vaccination program should be carried on and as to whether a mass inoculation program is the best thing to do. Has the President reviewed that with the medical authorities since the last meeting?

MR. NESSEN: Dave Mathews has given the President periodic reports as the testing and so forth goes on, and I can't tell you exactly what the last finding was, but HEW is concentrating on what the best method of a mass inoculation is, and the President is being kept informed.

Q Could I pursue this one step further? If the threat continues to be genuine, as the President persistently suggests, then why isn't the medical community up in arms? Why is the chief promoter of this program a political figure, being the President of the United States?

MR. NESSEN: Oh, Walt, I think I see what you are suggesting, and I --

Q I am not suggesting anything, really I am not. I just want to know why it is that none of the doctors you referred me to are up in arms saying, "Listen, the President is right, we have to do something about this?" The chief spokesman for the program continues to be the President and not the doctors.

MR. NESSEN: I don't agree with that, but I will make sure that you are shown the data that supports the conclusion that the danger of a swine flu outbreak is sufficiently great to warrant the program.

Q Ron, has there been any thought given to some sort of mass program for Victoria flu, which actually killed 2,000 people last year?

MR. NESSEN: Not that I know of, but you ought to ask at HEW what the reason for that is.

MORE

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Q What is the President's reaction to all this fuss that erupted over the Republican platform? The conservatives complained about it.

MR. NESSEN: I was unaware of any fuss that had erupted over the Republican platform.

Q Apparently Jesse Helms and others are leading a conservative drive and the whole thing that is being talked about is a whitewash and that they are not going to go along with it and will try to take it all the way and try to get some definitive --

MR. NESSEN: I don't know. Bill Greener is out in Kansas City and John Carlson will be there in a couple of hours. They are certainly on top of the situation, Phil.

Q Do you know whether or not the President is aware of what Helms has said?

MR. NESSEN: Since I was unaware of what you referred to as a fuss, I don't know how to answer the question since there is no awareness of a fuss here.

Q Maybe you wouldn't describe Jesse Helms' comments as a fuss, but is he aware of what Jesse Helms has said and that the conservatives are up in arms?

MR. NESSEN: The platform proceedings are just getting underway. I think they hold hearings and then sort of put it together later in the week, and I think it is sort of premature to comment on how it is going to turn out.

Q Is the President taking an active or passive role in the events of this week in Kansas City?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what you mean by that, John.

Q Is he keeping close track of what is happening. Is he sending word out to Bill Timmons and others out there what he wants done, or is he giving them carte blanche?

MR. NESSEN: He is keeping a close watch on what is going on out there.

Q The people know what he wants done?

MR. NESSEN: As you know, a good number of the members of the Cabinet will be testifying before the Platform Committee outlining the President's views on the issues the Platform Committee is dealing with.

Q Is he going to see any delegates this week?

MR. NESSEN: I haven't seen any delegates listed on his schedule for this week. Most of them will be out there, I guess.

Q What will the President be doing this week? Can you tell us anything about the President's schedule this week?

MR. NESSEN: Let me see the grid for this week. I didn't look at it carefully this morning.

I know he will be working on the acceptance speech.

Q Does he plan any appearances anywhere?

MR. NESSEN: Let me get a hold of this.

Q Ron, two or three years ago your predecessor, terHorst, stated that the President had also been considering a woman for the Vice President. Is a woman in the running now?

MR. NESSEN: I won't comment on any specific names, or sexes, or colors, or persuasions.

In answer to Bob's question about the schedule, there will be a lot of time spent this week working on the acceptance speech on his choice of running mate. He obviously will follow the proceedings in Kansas City. There will be some visitors coming in, but not delegates. Secretary Kissinger will report back when he gets back on Thursday, I guess. But, there is no outside event planned outside the White House.

Q How about Tuesday afternoon?

MR. NESSEN: Tuesday afternoon? What is supposed to happen Tuesday afternoon?

Q The PGA.

Q He said he was going to a reception.

MR. NESSEN: He is going over to a reception Tuesday evening on the eve of the PGA golf tournament.

Q Without mentioning any names, will he be meeting with any of the people under consideration as a running mate?

MR. NESSEN: Well, since we haven't said who is under consideration, it is hard to say.

Q Will he see John Connally tonight or in the morning?

MR. NESSEN: John Connally?

Q He is coming to town, isn't he?

MR. NESSEN: Not that I know of.

Q Has the White House made contact with all those that are being considered?

Q You wouldn't tell us that anyway, would you?

MR. NESSEN: I have always told when he has seen John Connally.

Q But not concurrently, would you say?

MR. NESSEN: No, I don't think that is right.

Q Has the White House made contact with all those being considered for the Vice Presidency?

MR. NESSEN: There are still a few more days for recommendations to come in.

Q On the President's list, his first list?

MR. NESSEN: The ones who have been recommended and singled out by the President so far?

Q Have they been notified?

MR. NESSEN: I am told there was some problem reaching some of them on the phone, as you did, Phil. To answer the last line of your story, I think the White House switchboard did have some of the same problems you did. So, with some people, there was an effort made to contact them but they have not yet been contacted yet.

Q Ron, on this trip Kissinger has been on, his talks in Iran Connally referred to as negotiating arms for oil, and that sort of thing. Just a general sort of question. How does it square with the President's overall goals of the U.S. becoming independent on unreliable foreign sources of oil when you have Kissinger negotiating long-term deals with Iran for oil?

MR. NESSEN: As far as I know, Secretary Kissinger's talks in Iran had nothing to do with negotiating what you referred to as arms for oil.

I think some of you have written that there are those kinds of thoughts being given, but my understanding is that since the arms sales are sales by private companies and the purchases are purchases by private companies, that whatever discussions have gone on in that direction have been by private companies. It is not a Government --

Q Ron, you mean oil didn't come up at all, to your knowledge, in Kissinger's talks?

MR. NESSEN: I haven't seen the complete report on the talks.

Q Ron, it is reported that at Kansas City --

Q On this subject, one question, Les. Inasmuch as Kissinger is in Iran or plans to be there --

MR. NESSEN: No, he is gone from there now.

Q All right. Did he make any effort to try to persuade the Shah to reduce oil prices via OPEC? Has the Ford Administration ever made any effort and used its leverage, vis-a-vis the arms, to reduce oil prices?

MR. NESSEN: As I said, I haven't read the full report on what Henry talked about over there. I know the State Department was asked a very similar question the other day, and Brown talked about it at some length. But, let me look it up and see what I can find.

Q Ron, just one minute. I am perplexed by your answer that arms purchases by the Shah are strictly a matter between the Government of Iran and private companies in the United States since, as you know, and everybody knows, these require export licenses, which are Government matters.

Are you saying the United States -- that is to say, the Government -- has no role whatever in the sale of arms to Iran?

MR. NESSEN: The point I was trying to draw, Jim, was I think there was a suggestion that Henry had been there negotiating some kind of arms for oil deal, and I was pointing out arms are sold to Iran by private companies and oil is purchased by private companies. Obviously, there is the requirement for approval before arms of a certain sophistication or cost can be exported.

Now, there has been added to that the congressional veto over arms sales. So, obviously, there is a Government role.

Q Taking it even further than that, is it not the case that during this current visit by the Secretary to Iran that they negotiated and probably signed a \$50 billion trade agreement which included \$10 billion in additional U.S. arms? I think that was negotiated by the Secretary and the Shah, was it not?

MR. NESSEN: It is my understanding Henry was responding to a question in a very general way in saying that, well, over the next five or six years it could well be that the Shah might purchase another \$10 billion in arms. It was that kind of thing, not an arms agreement that was signed there.

Q Let me ask you a flat question. Did the Secretary of State and the Shah of Iran in this last visit, the visit just completed, negotiate a \$50 billion trade agreement between the United States and Iran in which \$10 billion was for military equipment?

MR. NESSEN: I am not fully briefed on the results of Henry's stop in Iran, and I can't answer the question.

Q Ron, it is reported that at Kansas City there will be 100 Ford campaign workers equipped with two-way radios to a mission control center and assigned to watch all the Ford delegates, with contingency telephone plans if the Reagan forces try to jam their radio frequencies.

Jack Anderson's weekly column says the President himself has had this done. Is this true?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know. You will have to ask Bill Greener. I don't know that much about the details of Kansas City.

Q You know of no such thing? Would Bill Greener be the one to know or someone before Greener went to that post?

MR. NESSEN: I think Greener will be able to answer that question.

Q Do you know how many White House people have gone or are going to the convention and when? This week and next week?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know how many have gone, Fran.

Q Will you find out for us?

Q How many will be going?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what the number is.

Q Will you check and find out for us?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, I will.

Q What is Greener's role in this?

MR. NESSEN: Bill is the Director of Communications at the President Ford Committee. While you were away, lots of things happened.

Q Ron, in the wire service interview, the President, in response to a question, seemed to suggest that Richard Schweiker would be too extreme in the political spectrum to be a running mate. The "extreme" was the questioner's word. Yet, the President has always touted Senator Edward Brooke as a possible running mate, and I checked with COPE this morning and Schweiker and Brooke have virtually identical voting records.

I am a little curious about the inconsistency. They are only two votes off, to be exact, and I am wondering why Schweiker is too extreme and Senator Edward Brooke isn't?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think I can sort that out for you, Walt.

Q Ron, in the Camp David interview, the President said, "We have been in communication with the Soviet Union on the two underground explosions in July." Was that direct communication from the President to Brezhnev?

MR. NESSEN: No, it was not.

Q Can you elaborate on the communication?

MR. NESSEN: No, I would rather not.

Q Let me ask you a little more specific question. Was it a request by the U.S. for data from the Soviets on the size of the blasts?

MR. NESSEN: I think I would rather not describe diplomatic exchanges, Russ.

Q Do you know whether either of those blasts exceeded 150?

MR. NESSEN: No, it will be a while before that number is refined any further.

Q Ron, on that general subject, may I ask one or two questions on SALT which came up earlier? You said the United States had not responded to the newest Soviet proposal. Is it still the position of the United States, or the position of the White House that the -- let me ask you first, do you have any time frame on when you might respond?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Is it still the case that the principal problems are the Bison bomber, the so-called Bison bomber, and the cruise missile?

Q It is still the Backfire, not Bison.

MR. NESSEN: I think Henry Kissinger and others in public statements have indicated that the areas of difference have been reduced to a few and Backfire and cruise are among the outstanding unresolved issues.

Q Are they the only ones?

MR. NESSEN: No, they are not the only ones.

Q Is any facet of MIRV still at issue?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think I better get deeper into specifics at this point, Jim.

Q Ron, can I go back to the talks about the Vice Presidency? In the interview the President said that Nelson Rockefeller has certainly not been excluded from his consideration. I was under the impression for weeks and months before that that the President was saying that the Vice President had asked him not to consider him, that he was withdrawing and that the President was abiding by his wishes.

Was his answer in the interview a change in his position?

MR. NESSEN: I just don't think I will elaborate on any of that Vice Presidential part, Dick.

Q I don't think I am asking you to elaborate. In other words, is that consistent with the position he has taken before?

MR. NESSEN: So far as I know, it is.

Q So, in other words, Nelson Rockefeller is under consideration?

MR. NESSEN: Whatever the President said the other day.

Q Is that not different from what you and he have been saying previously?

MR. NESSEN: Not that I am aware of. He said he hadn't excluded anybody. He said that for months now, that nobody was excluded.

Q There is a difference then between being excluded and being under consideration. I suppose you could draw a fine line, but is it not that you and the President have been saying for months that the President was not considering Mr. Rockefeller because he had asked not to be considered?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know. I have to look up what was said, but I know there has been no change in position.

Q Then is he under consideration or isn't he?

MR. NESSEN: Whatever he said on Saturday, Dick, I am not going to go beyond it.

Q Then he is?

MR. NESSEN: Whatever he said on Saturday.

Q Ron, did the President in any way mark his second anniversary in office in any special way?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Did he fix his own muffins? (Laughter)

Q Did he have a birthday cake?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think so.

MORE

Q Ron, I missed the first part of the question about Philadelphia, but in any case did the President -- how do you explain the propriety of the President talking about a controversial political subject, in what was a non-political invitation and I understand he accepted it in the spirit of a non-political way in Philadelphia.

Can you say it was non-political and yet he did talk at what is very clearly a controversial political subject. I am wondering how you rationalize that?

MR. NESSEN: I am not familiar with the controversial political subject.

Q His remark yesterday about abortion.

MR. NESSEN: I don't think he talked about abortion, did he?

Q You deny he talked about abortion?

MR. NESSEN: I will not elaborate on the speech.

Q This is outrageous, Ron.

Q Let Cochran finish.

Q Ron, you said it was a non-political invitation.

MR. NESSEN: That is correct, John.

Q He accepted it in that spirit, too. Now everybody in that stadium, the people stood up and applauded because they thought he was talking about abortion. Anyone with an IQ above 60 would think he was talking about abortion. Now you are going to tell me he was not talking about abortion.

MR. NESSEN: John, I think -- well, let me pass on the word "controversial" and talk about 125,000 people, or however many there were, I don't know how many there were, but people that came from all over the world to attend this Eucharistic Conference. The President was invited as the President, as you know and you have seen the letter of invitation, I suppose. I think it is quite natural that if you look at the text of the speech you will see that it was in a tone and dealt with subjects and concepts that would be interesting to those 125,000 people, or however many there were attending the Eucharistic Congress.

MORE

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After all, one of the themes of the Eucharistic Congress, if I understand it right, was hunger and preservation of life, and that sort of thing. The President was addressing the subjects that those people who attended are most interested in, as I think you would expect him to do in any speech.

Q What irreverence was he referring to, suicide? (Laughter)

MR. NESSEN: I won't elaborate on the speech, but I believe you were there, John, and I think if you heard the speech in its entirety, you will know it was a speech that dealt in a tone and in words that seemed to me to be quite elevating and quite suitable for the occasion.

Q He spoke quite harshly when he spoke of irreverence for life and got a standing ovation for it. Now we can't get you or anybody from the White House to say he wasn't being applauded for what indeed he was saying. Maybe those people were applauding the wrong thing. Was he not talking about abortion?

MR. NESSEN: John, I don't think that particular remark or the speech, itself, needs any further elaboration.

Q All right. Has the President's stand on abortion changed since his last statement on abortion?

MR. NESSEN: No, it hasn't.

Q Ron, I don't see how you can stand there and tell us that in all honesty you can't say whether or not he was talking about abortion.

MR. NESSEN: I don't think the speech in that particular line needs any elaboration.

Q You say the President can speak very clearly for himself and yet he used a word he did not intend to use when he delivered the line that we are questioning.

MR. NESSEN: Yes, he did.

Q Now you had no reluctance in clarifying or correcting that error.

MR. NESSEN: I would think you would want me to, wouldn't you?

Q Well, then, we are asking you to clarify a point here.

MR. NESSEN: I don't see that it needs clarification, Dick.



Q Then you are acknowledging that he was talking about abortion, are you not? That is the general assumption in this room.

MR. NESSEN: Dick, I don't think the speech needs elaboration and I am not going to elaborate.

Q Ron, everybody in the room does now. What is Cardinal Krol going to say this afternoon when he learns from the wires that the Press Secretary, [redacted], when asked repeatedly, "Did the President mean abortion," refused. What is Cardinal Krol going to think?

MR. NESSEN: You will have to check with Cardinal Krol's press secretary.

Q Will you rule out that he was talking about abortion?

MR. NESSEN: I won't elaborate on the speech, Fran.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END

(AT 12:28 P.M. EDT)



September 9, 1976

FOR NESSEN BRIEFING

The President's position on abortion has been, and remains, consistent.

- He is concerned about an apparent increased irreverence for life.
- He thinks the Supreme Court went too far in its 1973 decision invalidating States' laws on abortion.
- He disagrees with the recent Supreme Court decision undermining parental authority and family values concerning abortion for minors.
- He does not believe in abortion on demand.
- He does not believe in a Constitutional Amendment banning all abortions since there are instances, for instance, involving rape and the health of the mother, where he feels abortion should be permitted.
- He does favor a Constitutional Amendment restoring the right of the individual States to decide the issue and is on record as a Member of Congress supporting this position.
- Even though he disagrees with the 1973 Court decision, he has stressed that as President he will, of course, uphold the law as interpreted by the Court.
- The plank of the Republican platform dealing with abortion is consistent with the President's position. The platform states:

"The question of abortion is one of the most difficult and controversial of our time. It is undoubtedly a moral and personal issue, but it also involves complex questions relating to medical science and criminal justice. There are those in our party who favor complete support of



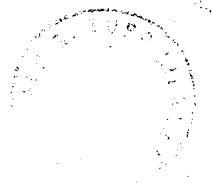
of the Supreme Court decision, which supports abortion on demand. There are others who share sincere convictions that the Supreme Court decision must be changed by a constitutional amendment prohibiting all abortions. Others have yet to take a position; or they have assumed a stance somewhere in between the polar positions. We protest the Supreme Court's intrusion into the family structure through its denial of the parents' obligation and right to guide their minor children. The Republican Party favors the continuance of the public dialogue on abortion and supports the efforts of those who seek enactment of a constitutional amendment to restore protection of the right to life of the unborn child."

Note that the platform first takes recognition of the complexity of the problem and the diversity of sincerely held points of view.

The key sentence is the last which emphasizes the following points:

- The Party favors the continuance of the public dialogue on abortion.
- The Party supports the efforts of those who seek a Constitutional amendment to restore protection of the right to life of the unborn child.

The platform purposefully leaves open the question of precisely defining and spelling out the terms and language of a Constitutional Amendment. It does not say the party favors an amendment banning all abortions. It does use the word "restore" which means to refer back to a situation existing previously - and, the situation that existed previously was a situation permitting individual states to decide the issue.



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FAN-FORD-BISHOPS; BJT-2 TAKES; 330-640

BY HOWARD BENEDICT

ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP) - SIX ROMAN CATHOLIC LEADERS SAID AFTER A 72-MINUTE MEETING FRIDAY WITH PRESIDENT FORD THEY ARE ENCOURAGED BUT NOT TOTALLY SATISFIED WITH THE PRESIDENT'S VIEWS ON ABORTION.

TEN DAYS AGO, THE SAME GROUP MET WITH JIMMY CARTER AND EXPRESSED DISAPPOINTMENT WITH HIS ABORTION STAND. THE ISSUE HAS DOGGED CARTER ON THE CAMPAIGN TRIAL EVER SINCE.

THE "SPECIFIC DIFFERENCE" IS THAT CARTER IS UNWILLING TO SUPPORT A CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT AGAINST ABORTION AND FORD IS WILLING TO SUPPORT ONE TO LET EACH STATE DECIDE FOR ITSELF; THE GROUP'S SPOKESMAN, ARCHBISHOP JOSEPH BERNARDIN, TOLD REPORTERS.

ARCHBISHOP BERNARDIN, PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS, ALSO REPORTED THAT FORD FEELS SOME GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS "GO BEYOND WHAT HE FEELS NEEDS TO BE DONE" IN THE SPENDING OF FEDERAL FUNDS FOR ABORTIONS.

THE BISHOPS ASKED ABOUT USING MONEY FROM MEDICAID AND OTHER HEALTH CARE PROGRAMS FOR ABORTIONS AND ABOUT MILITARY HOSPITALS THAT PERMIT ABORTIONS.

THEY SAID FORD INDICATED HE OPPOSES GOVERNMENT FUNDING FOR ABORTIONS AND PROMISED A STUDY TO MAKE CERTAIN THAT FEDERAL FUNDS SPENT ON ABORTIONS ARE RESTRAINED TO THE LIMITS SET BY A SUPREME COURT RULING OF 1973.

THE COURT RULED THAT STATES CAN REGULATE ABORTIONS AFTER THE FIRST THREE MONTHS OF PREGNANCY AND CAN PROHIBIT THEM IN THE LAST THREE MONTHS. THE STUDY WOULD DETERMINE WHETHER FEDERAL FUNDS WERE BEING SPENT ON ABORTIONS PROHIBITED BY THE STATES.

FORD HAD NOT PREVIOUSLY STATED A POSITION ON THIS MATTER; BUT CARTER HAS SAID HE OPPOSES SPENDING OF FEDERAL FUNDS.

DISCUSSING THE INCREASE IN FEDERAL OUTLAYS, ARCHBISHOP BERNARDIN SAID IT WAS NOT CLEAR TO THE BISHOPS HOW MUCH FORD "IS PERSONALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS."

ARCHBISHOP BERNARDIN SAID: "THE PRESIDENT MADE IT VERY CLEAR THAT HE OPPOSES ABORTION AND SUPPORTS THE REPUBLICAN PLATFORM PLANK WHICH SUPPORTS A CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT TO PROTECT THE UNBORN."

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FORD-BISHOPS; 1ST ADD; 310

WASHINGTON; ON ABORTION.

HE SAID FORD TOLD THE GROUP HE IS FOR AN AMENDMENT WHICH WOULD LET EACH STATE DETERMINE ITS OWN POLICY ON ABORTION.

"THE PRESIDENT CONSIDERS THAT A LEGITIMATE INTERPRETATION OF THE REPUBLICAN PLATFORM;" THE ARCHBISHOP SAID.

HE SAID THE CONFERENCE OF BISHOPS FAVORS AN AMENDMENT FOR "MAXIMUM PROTECTION OF THE UNBORN;" BUT "WE HAVEN'T ENDORSED ANY PARTICULAR WORDING.

"WE DO FEEL; HOWEVER; THERE IS A BETTER APPROACH THAN THAT EMBODIED IN WHAT IS CALLED THE STATES RIGHTS POSITION;" BERNARDIN SAID. "SO TO SAY WE ARE ENCOURAGED WITH THE PRESIDENT'S POSITION; THAT DOES NOT MEAN WE ARE TOTALLY SATISFIED."

BUT HE SAID FORD'S ENDORSEMENT OF SOME SORT OF AN AMENDMENT IS A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION."

"A CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT DOES NOT COME UP OVERNIGHT;" HE SAID. "THERE HAS TO BE SOME INITIATIVE IF AN AMENDMENT IS TO BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF CONGRESS. AND THEN IT CAN BE DETERMINED WHAT TYPE."

WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY RON NESSEN SAID THE PRESIDENT WAS "PLEASED ABOUT THE MEETING" WITH ONE CATHOLIC CARDINAL; THREE ARCHBISHOPS AND TWO BISHOPS.

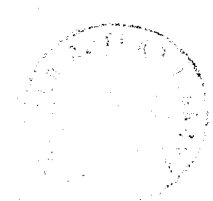
"HE FEELS IT WAS A FRANK EXCHANGE OF VIEWS AND HE LOOKS FORWARD TO MEETING WITH THEM AGAIN IN THE FUTURE;" NESSEN SAID.

OTHER CATHOLIC LEADERS PRESENT WERE ARCHBISHOP JOHN CARBERRY OF ST. LOUIS; VICE PRESIDENT OF THE GROUP; TERENCE CARDINAL COOKE OF NEW YORK CITY; ARCHBISHOP JOHN J. McGUIRE OF NEW YORK; BISHOP JAMES W. MALONE OF YOUNGSTOWN; OHIO; AND BISHOP JAMES S. RAUSCH OF WASHINGTON.

AT THE OUTSET OF THE MEETING; BERNARDIN READ A STATEMENT SAYING: "AS YOU KNOW; WE ADDRESS OURSELVES TO ISSUES ONLY. WE NEITHER ENDORSE NOR OPPOSE CANDIDATES OR PARTIES."

AMONG OTHER ISSUES DISCUSSED WERE EMPLOYMENT; FOOD; ILLEGAL ALIENS AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN FOREIGN POLICY.

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BY CHARLES S. ALDINGER

WASHINGTON (UPI) -- ROMAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERRED WITH PRESIDENT FORD FRIDAY AND MADE CLEAR THEY PREFER HIS STAND ON ABORTION TO THAT OF JIMMY CARTER, BUT ARE NOT "TOTALLY SATISFIED."

IN A WHITE HOUSE MEETING THAT RAN MORE THAN AN HOUR, SIX LEADERS OF THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS QUESTIONED THE PRESIDENT ON WHAT THEY CALLED "THE CENTRAL ISSUE IN OUR NATION AND OUR WORLD" AND TOLD REPORTERS THEY WERE "ENCOURAGED" BY WHAT HE SAID.

"IN SAYING WE ARE ENCOURAGED, THAT IS NOT TO SAY WE ARE TOTALLY SATISFIED" SAID ARCHBISHOP JOSEPH BERNARDIN OF CINCINNATI, WHO SPOKE FOR THE GROUP.

BERNARDIN SAID FORD "MADE IT VERY CLEAR" HE FAVORS A CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT GIVING EACH STATE THE RIGHT TO MAKE ITS OWN LAWS REGULATING ABORTION -- FURTHER THAN CARTER WILL GO BUT SHORT OF THE BISHOPS' DEMAND FOR AN AMENDMENT "THAT WOULD GIVE MAXIMUM PROTECTION TO THE UNBORN."

"WE FEEL THERE ARE BETTER APPROACHES" THAN THE STATES' RIGHTS AMENDMENT, BERNARDIN SAID.

NEVERTHELESS, HE SAID, "WE ARE ENCOURAGED" BY FORD'S POSITION.

AFTER A RECENT MEETING WITH CARTER ON THE SAME SUBJECT, BERNARDIN SAID THE THE BISHOPS WERE "DISAPPOINTED" BY HIS REFUSAL TO SUPPORT A CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT BANNING ABORTION AND FOUND HIS PERSONAL OPPOSITION TO SUCH OPERATIONS INADEQUATE.

ANTIABORTION DEMONSTRATORS HAVE SINCE DOGGED CARTER AT NEARLY EVERY CAMPAIGN STOP.

BERNARDIN SAID THE BISHOPS ARE NOT ENDORSING OR OPPOSING THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDACY OF EITHER MAN.

WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY RON NESSEN SAID FORD WAS "VERY PLEASED" WITH THE "FRANK EXCHANGE OF VIEWS" HE HAD WITH THE BISHOPS. "HE LOOKS FORWARD TO MEETING THEM AGAIN IN THE FUTURE," NESSEN SAID.

BEFORE THE SESSION, NESSEN SAID FORD WOULD NOT CHANGE HIS OPPOSITION TO A CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT BANNING ABORTION OUTRIGHT BECAUSE HE APPROVES OF IT IN CASES OF RAPE, INCEST AND DANGER TO THE LIFE OF THE MOTHER.

BERNARDIN SAID THE BISHOPS ALSO ASKED FORD TO CURB FEDERAL FUNDING OF ABORTIONS, SAYING THEY HAD RISEN FROM 586,000 IN 1972 TO "OVER ONE MILLION" LAST YEAR AS A RESULT, IN PART, OF THE SUPREME COURT'S 1973 RULING ON LEGALIZED ABORTION.

HE SAID THE PRESIDENT GAVE THE BISHOPS "A PROMISE THAT A STUDY WOULD BE MADE TO SEE WHAT COULD BE DONE ABOUT THIS."

NESSEN SAID FORD WANTS TO ENSURE FEDERAL ABORTION SUBSIDY "IS RESTRAINED TO NO MORE THAN THE MINIMUM REQUIRED" BY THE SUPREME COURT RULING.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

September 10, 1976

Your Excellency:

I want to thank you and other leaders of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops for visiting with me today to discuss issues of mutual concern and interest. Because many of these issues are highly sensitive, I thought it might be helpful to set forth my views on paper so that others who could not be with us might have a more precise understanding of my convictions on these issues.

One of the most controversial issues of our time and one in which we share a keen interest is the question of abortion. I have grave concern over the serious moral questions raised by this issue. Each new life is a miracle of creation. To interfere with that creative process is a most serious act.

In my view, the Government has a very special role in this regard. Specifically, the Government has a responsibility to protect life -- and indeed to provide legal guarantees for the weak and unprotected.

It is within this context that I have consistently opposed the 1973 decision of the Supreme Court. As President, I am sworn to uphold the laws of the land and I intend to carry out this responsibility. In my personal view, however, this court decision was unwise. I said then and I repeat today -- abortion on demand is wrong.

Since 1973 I have viewed as the most practical means of rectifying the situation created by the Court's action a Constitutional amendment that would restore to each State the authority to enact abortion statutes which fit the concerns and views of its own citizens. This approach is entirely in keeping with the system of Federalism devised by the founders of our Nation. As Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, I co-sponsored an amendment which would restore this authority to the States, and I have consistently supported that position since that time.

My position has been based on three fundamental convictions:

- I am against abortion on demand.
- The people of every State should have the Constitutional right to control abortion.
- There is a need to recognize and provide for exceptional cases.

I should also point out that the Republican Platform which I support is fully consistent with these views.

I recognize that this abortion question is a matter of deep personal and moral conviction. Honorable people may disagree, but all of us must be concerned about an increased irreverence for life within advanced societies.

Americans have benefited greatly by our rich spiritual heritage. The sound, sensible lessons of goodness imparted by religious teachers and devoted parents have done more than anything else to prepare our children for life.



A second issue of mutual concern is the future of non-public schools. Traditionally, those schools have made a vital contribution to our society, richly adding to the fiber of the American experience. We are a Nation that values competition and diversity. I believe that diversity is as important in education as it is in politics, business, the professions, in our personal lives and in our cultural traditions.

I know that these last few years have not been easy ones for non-public schools. This has been a period of self-examination. I want you to know that as President, I am totally committed to support your efforts to provide the best possible education for the approximately four million children enrolled in Catholic institutions.

Earlier this year, I proposed to the Congress a block grant program to combine 24 existing programs for Federal assistance to elementary and secondary education. This legislation, which would make \$3.3 billion available to State and local governments during fiscal year 1977, provides that non-public school children will continue to be served equitably.

In all that I do as President, I will continue my dedication to freedom of educational opportunity in order to guarantee the continued high quality of the educational tradition in non-public schools -- a tradition for which you deserve great credit.

A third issue of mutual concern is the policy of the United States toward relieving hunger and malnutrition in the world. The United States, I am proud to say, has a strong record of responding positively to this matter, in keeping with both the tradition of humanitarian concern of the American people and the sense of responsibility which we who are more fortunate feel toward those with less.

We have tried to address the two main aspects of the world food problem in the most constructive way possible:

-- First, to alleviate an immediate need for food assistance, the U.S. will be able to furnish this year about six million tons of food assistance, 6 million of the 10 million ton annual food aid target set for all countries at the World Food Conference in Rome. Through our PL-480 program, we are able to use the enormous productivity of the American farmer to meet human needs with grain which the poorer nations could not otherwise afford to import.

-- Second, through our foreign assistance program, we are seeking to curb some of the underlying causes of the food problem by working to improve agricultural production in the developing countries, particularly those which suffer major shortfalls in food. This is of critical importance to the prospects for economic growth.

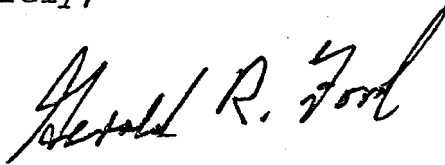
Private voluntary agencies also play an important role in the overall U.S. assistance effort, and have made a major contribution in alleviating world hunger, providing inputs of both food and economic assistance -- an inspiring demonstration of the humanitarian zeal of the American people.

Last year this country proposed the creation of an international system of nationally held food reserves which would provide against the human and economic disaster which could result from a global shortfall in grain production. We are continuing to push for conclusion of an agreement on this proposal in the International Wheat Council.

Let me add one final note. When I visited the International Eucharistic Congress in Philadelphia last month, I commented that "for millions of men and women, the church has been the hospital for the soul, the schoolroom for the mind, and the safe depository for moral ideals. It has given unity and purpose to the affairs of man. It has been a vital institution for protecting and proclaiming the ultimate values of life itself." That is a view I have long held. It is one that I reaffirm now.

I greatly appreciate the opportunity to meet with you today. I look forward to future discussions with you and with others of every faith.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gerald R. Ford". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name.

The Most Reverend Joseph L. Bernardin
29 East 8th Street
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

September 10, 1976

Your Excellency:

I want to thank you and other leaders of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops for visiting with me today to discuss issues of mutual concern and interest. Because many of these issues are highly sensitive, I thought it might be helpful to set forth my views on paper so that others who could not be with us might have a more precise understanding of my convictions on these issues.

One of the most controversial issues of our time and one in which we share a keen interest is the question of abortion. I have grave concern over the serious moral questions raised by this issue. Each new life is a miracle of creation. To interfere with that creative process is a most serious act.

In my view, the Government has a very special role in this regard. Specifically, the Government has a responsibility to protect life -- and indeed to provide legal guarantees for the weak and unprotected.

It is within this context that I have consistently opposed the 1973 decision of the Supreme Court. As President, I am sworn to uphold the laws of the land and I intend to carry out this responsibility. In my personal view, however, this court decision was unwise. I said then and I repeat today -- abortion on demand is wrong.



Since 1973 I have viewed as the most practical means of rectifying the situation created by the Court's action a Constitutional amendment that would restore to each State the authority to enact abortion statutes which fit the concerns and views of its own citizens. This approach is entirely in keeping with the system of Federalism devised by the founders of our Nation. As Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, I co-sponsored an amendment which would restore this authority to the States, and I have consistently supported that position since that time. ~~I believe~~ it would return us to the legal situation existing prior to the 1973 Court decision.

My position has been based on three fundamental convictions:

- I am against abortion on demand.
- The people should have the right to determine laws on abortion.
- There is a need to recognize and provide for exceptional cases.

I should also point out that the Republican Platform which I support is fully consistent with these views.

I recognize that this abortion question is a matter of deep personal and moral conviction. Honorable people may disagree, but all of us must be concerned about an increased irreverence for life within advanced societies.

Americans have benefited greatly by our rich spiritual heritage. The sound, sensible lessons of goodness imparted by religious teachers and devoted parents have done more than anything else to prepare our children for life.

in the belief that



September 10, 1976

THE WHITE HOUSE

PRESS CONFERENCE OF
ARCHBISHOP JOSEPH L. BERNARDIN
OF CINCINNATI
PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE
OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

THE BRIEFING ROOM

11:55 A.M. EDT

ARCHBISHOP BERNARDIN: As you know, we met with Mr. Ford this morning. We met with him primarily in his capacity as the Republican candidate. I would like to read to you -- this will be made available to you later -- the introductory remarks that I made. You already have that.

I am Archbishop Bernardin. I think I want to read what I said and then I will give you a very brief summary of the meeting itself.

First of all, we indicated our appreciation of the opportunity to meet with the President, at his invitation, to discuss a number of issues of concern to us and the nation. I indicated that we met last week with Governor Carter, the Democratic candidate, and I indicated again that we addressed ourselves to issues only.

We neither endorse nor oppose candidates or parties.

Then, I went on to say among these issues is abortion and the right to live. "On August 18, I issued a statement in which I called the Republican platform plank on abortion timely and important. We would welcome a statement of your position on the plank, as well as clarification concerning the kind of amendment you support and are prepared to work for.

"We also wish to express deep concern over the substantial increase in the Federal Government's funds of abortion in recent years. We are anxious to know your views concerning the propriety of continued use of public funds for this purpose and also on the question of measures to provide alternatives to abortion.



"It is our prayerful hope that both major parties, their leaders and candidates for office, will adopt and pursue a consistent pro-life policy. We wish to take this opportunity to repeat our concern with respect to a number of other crucial foreign and domestic issues in addition to abortion and the right to live."

I mentioned four in particular. First, employment. "We urge appropriate Federal action including legislation aimed at solving our nation's unemployment crisis and providing a decent job for every person in this country willing and able to work. Government must recognize that opportunity for suitable employment is fundamental to the human development of the person and of the family."

Second, food. "We urge Federal action to combat starvation, hunger and malnutrition in this country and abroad.

"On the domestic front, while recognizing the need for effective reform of the food stamp program, we desire that the program be maintained and strengthened as an effective instrument of assistance to the poor and needy.

"Internationally, we desire practical, generous measures to share the precious resources of food with other peoples by such means as the creation of food reserves.

"Third, illegal aliens. We support the enactment of Federal legislation which will not only prevent the recurrence of the problem, but will deal constructively and humanly with the plight of illegal aliens now in this country.

"A specific dimension of our concern over this issue is its impact on families and family life. Specifically, this requires a meaningful regularizing of the status of illegal aliens."

Human rights in foreign policy was the fourth. "We urge that the defense and promotion of human rights be central to the formulation and conduct of U.S. foreign policy. We desire that this country seek consistently, by legitimate means, to influence other governments, including those friendly or economically important to the United States, to respect the human rights of their citizens.

"In concluding these comments, Mr. President, I emphasize our conviction that the central issue in our nation, in our world today, is the sanctity and dignity of human life. The sanctity and dignity of life are at stake in all of these issues and many others besides.

"For example, the many problems and needs of the American family: health care, housing, handgun control, and nuclear arms limitations. Certainly the sanctity and dignity of life are directly, massively violated by legalized abortion in our country today. This concerns citizens who are also moral and spiritual leaders.

"We desire effective Federal action to protect and foster the sanctity and dignity of life in every stage of its development and by every appropriate means available to our society.

"The Conference of Catholic Bishops intends to speak to all the crucial issues as they enter and move through the legislative process."

As far as the meeting itself was concerned, the meeting was courteous. There was a good exchange of information on many issues. Relative to the abortion issue, we are encouraged that the President agrees on the need for a Constitutional amendment. We urged him to support an amendment that will give the maximum protection possible to the unborn.

We also discussed at some length the issues of employment, food, illegal aliens and the defense and protection of human rights as a key element in determining U.S. foreign policy.

On these issues we explained our position, which generally calls for sensitivity to human needs and an acknowledgement of the legitimate role of government in a free society.

One final issue brought up by the President was aid to non-public schools.

Q Archbishop Bernardin, are you saying the President supports an amendment to prohibit abortion?

ARCHBISHOP BERNARDIN: He supports a Constitutional amendment.

Q To ban abortions or to just give it to the States and let them make up their own rules?

ARCHBISHOP BERNARDIN: First of all, he made it very clear that he supports the Republican platform, which calls for a Constitutional amendment to give protection to the unborn. As far as the kind of amendment, he is in favor of a States' rights amendment which he considers to be a legitimate interpretation of the Republican platform.

Q Do you understand the President's position, and are you comfortable with it?

ARCHBISHOP BERNARDIN: As I indicated in my preliminary remarks on the meeting, we are encouraged that the platform and the President are in agreement that there should be a Constitutional amendment to protect the unborn. As you know, we have not actually endorsed any particular wording of an amendment. There are some 47 different versions, I understand, that are now pending. We have consistently urged passage of an amendment that will give the maximum protection possible to the unborn.

We believe, however, that there is a better approach than that embodied in what is commonly known or called the States' rights amendment. So, we urge maximum protection possible.

Q Sir, unlike the meeting last week with candidate Carter, I take it you are not disappointed with your meeting today and with the President's position?

ARCHBISHOP BERNARDIN: As I indicated a moment ago, we are encouraged that the platform calls for an amendment, and the President made it very clear that he also supports the idea of an amendment.

Q I wonder if I could focus in on the word you used a week ago when you did say you were disappointed after your meeting with Mr. Carter?

ARCHBISHOP BERNARDIN: At that time, I said we continued to be disappointed because the Democratic candidate was not willing at that time to support an amendment to the Constitution. Now we say that we are encouraged that the Republican candidate is willing to support an amendment.

As to the kind of amendment, I have indicated to you what kind of amendment he has proposed. He, himself, has made this known publicly.

I also indicated that, while we have not taken a position on any particular amendment, still we have enunciated the principles that should be reflected in an amendment, and we have consistently urged for an amendment that would give the maximum protection possible to the unborn. And, as I indicated -- and I will repeat -- we feel that there are better approaches than the approach that is embodied in what is commonly known as a States' rights amendment.

Q Archbishop Bernardin, are you saying the President's position is more satisfactory to you than Mr. Carter's?

ARCHBISHOP BERNARDIN: We are saying that we are encouraged by any effort to support a Constitutional amendment.

Q There have been several columnists in the last week who have pointed out what they consider a gap between the campaign position of the President and his actual performance as head of this Administration, particularly referring to the new position on abortion at military installations, the change from the Nixon Administration, as well as HEW's funding, and the Vietnamese refugee camps -- abortion availability. Are you disappointed at the President's record and did you raise those specific points?

ARCHBISHOP BERNARDIN: As I indicated in my introductory remarks, we did express to him deep concern over the substantial increase in the Federal Government's funding of abortion in recent years. In the discussion that followed, we talked about that at some length. He indicated that his personal position is against Government funding, Government participation. He acknowledged that at times some of the departments seemed to go beyond what he feels should be done. He indicated that he would make a study of the situation to determine what needs to be done on his part in order to impose or being about some restraints.

We expressed our grave concern about what is happening. At the moment, it is not absolutely clear to us how much he is actually personally responsible for this.

One of the things that we are concerned about is the fact that the number of abortions has increased. In 1972, there were some 586,000 abortions. In 1975, there were over one million and, of course, the degree of involvement of the Federal Government has increased.

Now much of this is due to the fact that in 1973 the Supreme Court handed down two decisions, which has drastically changed the situation. But our position is that the Executive Department should do everything that it can, not to go beyond what the Supreme Court requires, not to promote in any way an interpretation of those decisions which would go beyond the decisions themselves.

We made this very, very clear and, as I said, what we got in answer to a statement of this concern was a promise or statement that a study would be made to see what more could be done about this.

Q Archbishop Bernardin, I am confused over just exactly what kind of feeling you are coming out of this conference with, with the President. You said on two occasions here that you think there are better approaches than one embodied in a States' rights amendment. You also said that you were encouraged by the meeting with the President in contrast to last week when you were disappointed.

But when you say there are better approaches than those embodied by the States' rights amendments, you are saying there are better approaches than the one which Mr. Ford advocates; is that correct?

ARCHBISHOP BERNARDIN: Yes. And I think you have to remember that this goes in steps, that a Constitutional amendment does not come about over night.

First of all, there has to be some support for the concept. There has to be some initiative in order to convince Congress that such an amendment should come into existence. Then, after that, you begin to talk about the specific kind of amendment. So, in saying that we are encouraged, this does not mean that we are totally satisfied.

Q Is it fair to say that, while you would like to see the President take a stronger anti-abortion stand, you find his views closer to your views than those of Mr. Carter? Is that a fair way to sum it up?

ARCHBISHOP BERNARDIN: I would say that the specific difference is an unwillingness at this time on the part of the Democratic candidate to support any kind of Constitutional amendment, and a willingness on the part of the Republican candidate to support an amendment.

Q You said in your statement here, "We neither endorse nor oppose candidates or parties."

ARCHBISHOP BERNARDIN: That is right, and I would like to repeat that.

Q Am I wrong in recollecting that in 1960 the Catholic Bishops of Puerto Rico, publicly threatened with excommunication any Catholic who voted for Governor Munos Morin because he supported the establishment of birth control planks, that he won by about 90 percent and then those bishops were transferred to the Mainland.

Am I wrong in my recollection there?

ARCHBISHOP BERNARDIN: We can only talk about our own Conference of Bishops here in 1976 and I repeat that we neither endorse nor oppose candidates or parties. We address ourselves only to the issues and then the people themselves must make their decisions.

Q May I ask a question? Some of us who have been covering this issue here at the White House seem to note some ambiguity in the President's position on abortion and, if you would, I cite several positions.

One, he prefers the States' right Constitutional amendment. Two, he does favor abortions in cases of incest, rape, and where the mother's life is in jeopardy, and there have been yet other positions that he states, to wit, the no-interference with the military hospitals and so on.

Did you determine that there is any ambiguity in the President's position on abortion?

ARCHBISHOP BERNARDIN: I think that question should be asked of the President.

Q Wasn't that a matter of legitimate concern to you, as to whether you found his position ambiguous or clearcut?

Wasn't this a legitimate concern of yours as you went into the meeting? If so, what did you find?

ARCHBISHOP BERNARDIN: I really think that the statements that I have made indicate to us what our perception of the present situation is. I think that you have got to keep two things in mind.

I know I am repeating, but I believe, in a sense, that the question is repetitious. In regard to a Constitutional amendment -- agreements that there should be amendment -- while we have not endorsed any particular kind of amendment, we feel that a better approach is needed than the approach that is embodied in the States' right amendment.

Regarding the involvement of the Federal Government in abortion through funding and so on, we expressed our deep concern about this and we were told that this was a matter that would be looked into, a matter that would be studied with a view toward exercising a certain degree of restraint. Whether or not that will happen, only time can tell.

Q Archbishop Bernardin, you told us that you don't feel that the President's States' rights proposal is the greatest in the world. Would you tell us what you would prefer?

ARCHBISHOP BERNARDIN: We have consistently said that we urge the passage of a Constitutional amendment that will give the maximum protection possible to the unborn. We have not, at this time, endorsed any specific wording.

Q If I may follow that up, sir, you said the President believes that his proposals fit under that definition because -- you used the language almost the same that was used in the Republican platform -- you said you are calling for massive protection of the unborn. The Republican platform calls for a Constitutional amendment that protects the rights of the unborn. That is an ambiguous phrase. It encompasses the President's plan.

ARCHBISHOP BERNARDIN: The President said he considers his position as being a legitimate interpretation of that. I am not so concerned about what the platform says. I am more concerned about the way the candidate interprets the platform.

Q The President has said, I believe, the reason why he does not support the sweeping Federal amendment but he is for the States' rights amendment is because he feels abortions in certain cases such as rape and incest -- he supports those. How do you feel about that?

ARCHBISHOP BERNARDIN: We have said consistently that we have not up to this point endorsed any particular amendment. We simply urge the passage of an amendment that will give the maximum protection possible to life. We have debated this position to the Congress in our testimony. We stated our position to the Democratic candidate, and also now to the Republican candidate. But, I think you have to ask some of these questions of the President.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END (AT 12:14 P.M. EDT)