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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JANUARY 13, 1976

OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

THE WHITE HOUSE
PRESS CONFERENCE
OF
ROGERS C. B. MORTON

THE BRIEFING ROOM

4:18 P.M. EST

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Q Is it your understanding or would you describe your political duties here at the White House as being incidental?

MR. MORTON: I think that the political duties will be a concentration of those political duties now being carried out by other members of the staff. Dick Cheney has had a running liaison communication with the campaign community -- Bo Callaway's committee. There has been a normal communication between Bob Hartmann, for example, and the National Committee.

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Q Political speech making?

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If that is what a political speech is, I certainly will make them. But if I make political speeches in the sense I am going to fund raisers and that sort of thing, under the rules I have been following, the expenses and all the other travel and things pertinent thereto will not be charged to the Government.

Q How do you think he is doing in his head-to-head with Reagan?

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Q Mr. Secretary, I think the problem some of us are having is, first of all, they talked about Mr. Scranton coming in here. Now he is an independently wealthy man, and I don't think there was too much talk about if he had been a political adviser, he probably wouldn't have needed the money. I don't know if you are independently wealthy or not. Maybe you do need the money.

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Q Mr. Morton, how do you feel about President Ford's present political image, the accuracy of it, the inaccuracy of it, the fact he is rated at less than 50 percent acceptance in doing his job, the fact that Ronald Reagan was polled ahead of him in the New Hampshire primary? How do you feel overall about the Ford political image as now perceived by the public?

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That goes for his friends in the Congress. That goes for his friends across the Nation because, obviously, there is some work to do. But, I think we are fortunate in having President Ford in this country at this time, and when you compare him in substance with all the other offerings, you have a great sense of confidence that the best man we have for the job is in the job.

Q Sir, without questioning your expertise on economic, energy and other domestic matters, do you think you would be getting this job if it weren't also for your political expertise?

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Q Mr. Secretary, is your taking this position evidence the President is becoming more concerned about the state of his campaign?

MR. MORTON: I don't think so. During the time Rummy was over here--Rummy and I became acquainted in the Congress. We were closely associated with Jerry Ford, the Minority Leader, and I think he is a very persuasive person. I was prepared to go back in the private sector but I think he felt there was a gap here in a kind of counseling gap, if you will, left by Rummy, and I think he felt he wanted to fill it. Also, I think he kind of wanted to get me before I got involved in the private sector, and he did. He is a pretty persuasive person.

Certainly I didn't come over here to address myself to any crises. I don't see them.

Q How is your health?

MR. MORTON: Pretty good. I am in good shape. I just went out to Stanford about six months ago and had my six-month in-depth evaluation. The doctor was pleased but not near as much as I was.

Q Sir, why should the taxpayer have to pay for a man for the President to communicate with his campaign committee?

MR. MORTON: Well, I think this is part of the American system. For example, I don't think there are any staff members of a Senatorial staff or any staff members of a Congressional staff that should not and are not involved in the Member's political activity -- the Member's effort to get re-elected. This is part of the American system.

You can't separate Government from politics and I think it would be an impingement upon the Government if the President said, "Now look, all you fellows are sterilized against any communication with the Ford For President Committee" and he had to drop the important matters of State and get on the phone with Bo Callaway or Stu Spencer and deal with the details of the campaign. I think that would be a terrible misuse of the President's time.

Q That is not the question. Why don't you just let the campaign committee pay your salary, Mr. Morton? You could still do the same service for the President.

MR. MORTON: I don't know whether you should have people working in the White House advising the President on Governmental matters that are paid by external revenue sources.

MORE

This is the way it has always been. I am not defending it -- it is a difficult question -- but I believe that you would have more of a conflict in interest if you accepted funds from an external source whether it be the campaign committee, General Electric or anybody else.

It seems to me that the people who advise the President -- and I don't think you can separate political issues from Government issues -- shouldn't receive their funds from external sources. I think you would have a bad tug of war in terms of interests in the White House. It is a tough one.

If you could separate it cleanly, if you could say now that is political and that is Governmental, I think you could say you mustn't cross this line. But the nature of the beast in a free economy and a free society and a place where the people will establish Government through our electoral process, there is no way to separate it that way, so I think you actually would be in more of a conflict of interest position if you came in here and developed a loyalty to this institution and to the President but were paid by funds from the outside, the source of which you don't entirely know.

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MR. MORTON: It would be hard for me not to. I get invited to a lot, and I think I would do it to the limit that it was tasteful and the limit it was effective and to the limit of time that I find I can do it. I am not one of these itinerant, back-on-the-back-of-the-wagon guys. The fact is, I just don't like to travel that much. If you are six feet six you don't like to sleep in too many strange beds.

Q What do you think of the job Callaway has done?

MR. MORTON: I am a Callaway fan. I think Bo has done a good job. I think Bo has made some mistakes, which he admits to. I think the experience of getting this thing started and bringing in good professionals, like Stu Spencer, has gotten the campaign going.

I think if you compare it to any of the other campaigns, Democratic or Republican, Mr. Reagan's or any of the Democratic candidates, I think you will say that is the best organized and the best. I think we are getting better every day, and the campaign is on the way back.

I am all for Bo, and I am going to help him and support him in every way I can. I am delighted the President has every confidence in him.

Q Didn't you wince a little bit when he revealed he called over here at the White House and asked them if it wouldn't be a nice idea to delay the Gurney retrial?

MR. MORTON: I was on vacation and didn't know about it until after it happened, so there was no point in wincing.

I don't know what the circumstances of that are. He may have had a good reason for doing that. I think he has a responsibility to explore ideas and he doesn't expect all of these ideas that are put forward to be gobbled up.

I don't think that was too good a one, but I have had some bad ideas myself and some of my editor friends around the country have, too.

Q Mr. Secretary, you described your role as an overall adviser. I was wondering inasmuch as we have talked politics here, isn't it fairly safe to say while you won't be managing the President's campaign that you will play a fairly significant role as a coordinator and as a liaison with the President's election committee and, in that sense, you will be playing within that framework a fairly significant role in the President's campaign?

MORE

MR. MORTON: Let's put it this way: I think that is a good statement, not in his campaign. I think it is up to me and up to Dick Cheney and up to Bob Hartmann or any of us, if we see the campaign going in what we think is the wrong direction, not to bury our heads in the sand and say, "Oh, we can't do anything about that," but to talk to the President, advise with the President and then talk with the committees that are involved or the campaign, whatever is involved, and turn it around and move it in a different direction.

You know, the ultimate responsible person in a campaign is the candidate. He is the person who finally goes up or down as a result of it. I think it is up to his advisers to say, "We think you are doing good, or we think you are doing poorly."

If we think this is a good idea politically or that is a good idea politically, it is up to us to communicate this, not only to him, but after getting a sign-off to whoever the people involved are, whether it is a State group or national group.

I think your statement encompasses that.

Q Is there any political significance to you being assigned to Richard Nixon's old office? (Laughter)

MR. MORTON: I didn't realize it was that until somebody told me about it.

Q Are there no microphones there?

MR. MORTON: I don't know whether there are or not. Did you put any in there?

Q I have never been in there.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END (AT 4:40 P.M. EST)

January 13, 1976

Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

The President today announced the appointment of Rogers C. B. Morton, of Easton, Maryland, as Counsellor to the President with Cabinet rank. He has been Secretary of Commerce since May 1, 1975.

Secretary Morton's duties will encompass several areas of responsibility in domestic and economic policy. He will retain his membership on the Economic Policy Board, the Energy Resources Council and the Domestic Council. He will also direct the liaison with the Republican National Committee and the President Ford Committee. In addition, the Secretary will be available to take on such specific assignments as the President may direct.

Born on September 19, 1914, in Louisville, Kentucky, Secretary Morton received his B. A. degree from Yale University in 1937. He served with the United States Army from 1943 to 1945, attaining the rank of Captain.

Secretary Morton was elected to the 88th Congress from Maryland's First District in 1962 and subsequently elected to the 89th through 92nd Congresses. He was Secretary of the Interior from January, 1971 until May, 1975. He also served as Chairman of the Republican National Committee.

While serving in the Congress, Secretary Morton was a member of the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs (1963-1968), the Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries (1963-68), the Select Committee on Small Business (1967-68) and from 1969 until he became Secretary of the Interior, he was a member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Secretary Morton is married to the former Anne Jones and they have two children.

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M E E T T H E P R E S S

Produced by Betty Cole Dukert

SUNDAY, JANUARY 25, 1976

GUEST:

ROGERS C. B. MORTON - The Secretary of Commerce

MODERATOR AND EXECUTIVE PRODUCER:

Bill Monroe - NBC News

PANEL:

Tom Brokaw - NBC News

Martin Schram - Newsday

Helen Thomas - UPI

Irving R. Levine - NBC News

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This is a rush transcript provided for the information and convenience of the press. Accuracy is not guaranteed. In case of doubt, please check with

MEET THE PRESS



1 MR. MONROE: Our guest today on MEET THE PRESS is
2 Secretary of Commerce, Rogers Morton. Secretary Morton has
3 just been appointed Counselor to the President for Domestic
4 and Economic Affairs, a post he will assume officially next
5 week. He will also serve as White House liaison man for
6 President Ford's election campaign. Mr. Morton is a former
7 Republican National Chairman, former Secretary of the Interior
8 and former four-term Congressman from Maryland.


9 We will have the first questions now from Tom Brokaw
10 of NBC News.

11 MR. BROKAW: Mr. Secretary, in his briefing on his new
12 budget, President Ford said his plan envisions continuing
13 unemployment of almost 7 per cent right through next year, 1977.
14 By any measurement, that is abnormally high in the American
15 economy.

16 Can you blame those who have the impression that
17 President Ford has written off the unemployed in an effort to
18 win favor with fiscal conservatives in his own party?

19 SECRETARY MORTON: Of course, the facts are, Mr. Brokaw,
20 there are so many new people entering the labor force that it
21 is going to be hard to control the per cent, even though a
22 great many new jobs are taking place every day.

23 The actual thrust of Mr. Ford's program is to expand
24 the economy and to increase employment across the board.
25 None of us, I think, can live with a seven per cent



1 unemployment, but thankfully we have a lot of people back to
2 work now that were formerly laid off. The per cent is high
3 because of the bulge in the labor market that occurred after
4 the tremendous bulge in the population following World War II
5 but certainly the President's program, if closely examined,
6 is one to develop employment.

7 MR. BROKAW: Congressional Democrats clearly feel other
8 wise, I am sure you will agree, and they are very likely to
9 send the White House, the President, specifically, bills that
10 will deal with unemployment through government job programs.
11 If they send those bills, will he veto them?

12 SECRETARY MORTON: I think we have to look at each one.
13 I think to just say he will or will not veto this or that
14 even before it is discussed in the Congress, there is just
15 no way to come out on it. There obviously is always some
16 room for some compromise and I know that the President wants to
17 work with the Congress. We don't want to do anything that
18 will hold up employment and if you really look at the numbers,
19 though, and if you conclude that the only way to bring unemploy-
20 ment figures down is to create public service jobs, you are u
21 just going to have to put literally millions of people on the
22 federal payroll and this will be, I think, in the long pull, a
23 very disastrous thing for our economy.

24 MR. BROKAW: Well, specifically Congress is about to
25 send the President a public works bill that is worth about



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\$6 billion and the Democrats say it will create about 300,000 jobs. Will the President veto that bill? Surely he has had time to study that one.

SECRETARY MORTON: I don't know whether he will veto it or not. I would think that he would in its present form, but you have also got to remember he is recommending the procurement of \$7 billion more of military supplies, weapons systems and so forth, and this will be a tremendous shot in the arm to the economy, particularly in terms of employment. This will penetrate factories all across the land.

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1 MR. SCHRAM: Bo Calloway, President Ford's campaign mana-
2 ger, said not long ago that the White House had not gone, in
3 his words, "near far enough" to take advantage of incumbency
4 in this campaign year. Now, do you agree with that statement,
5 and just how far do you think that a White House should go to
6 promote a President's candidacy?

7 SECRETARY MORTON: I think it is an awful good question,
8 and it is hard to fit the parameters on what you should do in
9 what ought to be normal political activity of an Administration
10 and how far you should go in terms of extraordinary promotions.

11 I think what Mr. Calloway was probably referring to is
12 that the Cabinet, itself, has not really gotten out into the
13 hustings, and I think the reasons are good. I think the State
14 of the Union message had to precede that. I also think the
15 budget message and the budget had to precede that. I think
16 now we should all go out and show the people what the President's
17 program is in detail, and hopefully the other candidates will do
18 the same thing, so that they will draw a comparison, not just
19 on personalities, but on real issues. I feel that this
20 thing is ready to start. I don't agree necessarily with Bo
21 that the White House hasn't done enough up to this point. I
22 don't think in this nomination there has been the opportunity,
23 really. I also think it isn't proper that they should have done
24 much more than they have done.

25 MR. SCHRAM: Let me follow it up with a specific, if I may.



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1 Bill Barudi is very respected for the job he runs on Presi-
2 dent Ford's staff as kind of a liaison with all the interest
3 groups. Now, he also runs these White House conferences around
4 the country, and Cabinet members and Administration officials
5 go to these conferences with domestic local leaders and labor
6 leaders and tell them what a wonderful job the President and
7 the Administration is doing, and they answer questions from
8 them.

9 Now, in a campaign year, do you think it is a fair use of
10 taxpayer funds to sponsor these conferences around the country,
11 get the Administration people out there talking about the Presi-
12 dent and how fine a job he is doing?

13 SECRETARY MORTON: Well, let me say this, Mr. Schram.
14 I have chaired two of these conferences, one a sort of a
15 town-hall type that really the Vice President put together with
16 his staff. The other one was the Consumer Conference. In
17 both of these, at Tampa, Florida in one case, and Atlanta in
18 the other, we were listening to people. Certainly the whole
19 thrust of it was to listen to various peoples' ideas; and we
20 had a great cross-section in both of those, and we got an awful
21 lot of material and thoughts. And that is what the conferences
22 were designed to do. If people stepped out of bounds and be-
23 gan to use the conference as a political promotion device, then
24 I think it is wrong, but I believe certainly the two that I
25 attended, we learned a great deal, and that was the purpose of



1 the conference.

2 MS. THOMAS: Mr. Secretary, do you foresee any circumstances
3 under which President Ford would bow out before the nominating
4 convention; and on that note, how would you forecast the up-
5 coming primaries in terms of Ford, vis-a-vis Reagan?

6 SECRETARY MORTON: The answer to the first part of the
7 question is no, I don't see any circumstance under which the
8 President would bow out, and I don't think they will come to
9 pass. I am very optimistic about the primaries. I think we
10 are on the ascendancy. I think Mr. Reagan is a very glamorous,
11 attractive personality, now, and is beginning to articulate his
12 position; he is beginning to review issues. And when you
13 compare the two men on that basis, I think that President Ford
14 is on the way up, and I think he is going to do very well in
15 the primaries.

16 MS. THOMAS: You have said that President Ford has an
17 image portrayal problem.

18 SECRETARY MORTON: I have?

19 MS. THOMAS: You said that at your briefing at the White
20 House, that there is some question about the image that is
21 being portrayed to the President.

22 SECRETARY MORTON: I said that I didn't think he was
23 being accurately portrayed. I think a great to-do is made,
24 for example, of tripping, going down a set of stairs, and
25 this seems to have triggered a whole lot of little phrases
that I don't think accurately portray him.



1 I don't think there are any of us here who haven't
2 tripped going down stairs.

3 MS. THOMAS: How will you treat that now that --

4 SECRETARY MORTON: I think deal with the issues, and deal
5 with what the decision is that the President has had to make.
6 He has made some tough decisions. He came in under very diffi-
7 cult circumstances and he, I think, has lined out a very common
8 sense program for the country, and I believe that if we will
9 deal with his job, the way he has done it, I think then you
10 will see that some of the other things that are said are rather
11 ridiculous.

12 MR. LEVINE: Mr. Morton, in your dual job at the White
13 House as campaign advisor and as advisor on economic affairs,
14 one of the issues you are going to have to deal with is the
15 President's proposed budget. He has proposed a \$10 billion tax
16 cut, but with the proposal as well for an increase in Social
17 Security taxes, the net actual tax cut comes down to about
18 \$1.7 billion. What is your response to critics who say the
19 President's tax cut proposal is deceptive because the actual
20 cut is so much less than the \$10 billion figure?

21 SECRETARY MORTON: I certainly don't want it to be decep-
22 tive in any way, and I think we all agree that in order for
23 the Social Security trust fund to be actuarially sound and to
24 be able to serve the beneficiaries, that this is a necessary
25 increase.



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Now, this won't be paid by everyone, but it will be paid by a great big block of the society, there is no question of that. But I don't think that a general, across-the-board income tax reduction should not be granted just because you have to raise the Social Security tax in order to keep the fund sound. Because everybody doesn't -- everybody is not an employer, and some people are therefore not paying from an employee point of view, but I feel very strongly that that part of the economy must stand on its own feet. And I also think you are never going to really increase the efficiency of government unless you put some restraint against it, and I think that we should move a little more of our money out of the Federal and government sector into the private sector; and this is the way to do it, by general tax reduction.



1 MR. LEVINE: Since the increase in the Social Security
2 tax will result in some of the working poor actually paying
3 a larger net tax than they do now, it has been said by some
4 critics that the budget tax proposals have a distinct bias
5 toward business and away from the nation's working poor.
6 What is your reaction to that?

7 SECRETARY MORTON: My reaction to that is, I think
8 everybody is going to benefit because what the President is
9 trying to do is create a climate in the economy for
10 expansion of the economy to take care of a need for an expand-
11 ing number of jobs, and that is going to have to be done in the
12 private sector. Jobs are not the result of the distribution
13 of the wealth, but are the result of investment an' investment
14 in tools, an investment in the expansion of our economy and
15 what the President's budget thrust is, is to produce a climate
16 in which the economy will expand, and that will provide oppor-
17 tunity for jobs, better jobs and more jobs, and that is the
18 only way I think we can go. If we try to do this any other
19 way, I think we are going to have a terrible inflationary
20 situation and it is going to eat up the benefits and the good
21 that we do otherwis.

22 MR. MONROE: Mr. Secretary, the Democrats and the new
23 Election Commission have raised questions about whether it is
24 proper for you to serve at the White House, receiving a
25 salary from the taxpayers and do considerable politicking on
behalf of President Ford. Are you going to handle your job in



1 some way with some formula to meet that criticism?

2 SECRETARY MORTON: I really feel as though the
3 Election Commission ought to take a hard look at it, and I
4 would certainly abide by and I am sure the President will
5 abide by whatever they come up with.

6 This is a very difficult thing. Everything that the
7 President does, everything that he says, every legislative
8 proposal that he makes, based on the very discussions we have
9 had here, has a political impact. Therefore, it is very
10 difficult to separate this.

11 Let's take in the case of a congressional staff man.
12 Assume he advises his principal that this would be
13 good politics; it would be good politics if he would go to
14 this meeting and not go to that meeting. Should that
15 congressional staff man be paid by some outside or external
16 funds? That question has to be resolved, and I am glad that
17 Mr. Buchen and Chairman Curtis and their lawyers are sitting
18 down and now reviewing this very thing because I don't want
19 to be in an uncomfortable position. I don't want the President
20 to be in an uncomfortable position, but how do you separate it?
21 And I think it is silly to say I am going to work 40 hours a
22 week doing this and 40 hours a week doing that.

23 I think you become less effective under those kinds of
24 conditions. But where is political advice proper and where it
25 is improper? If somebody will tell me that, I will certainly



1 abide by it and this is what the Federal Election Commission is
2 looking at.

3 MR. MONROE: You don't like this formula Mr. Buchen
4 and Mr. Curtis talked about the other day where you would work
5 40 hours for the government and beyond that be a political
6 volunteer, which might take you into 70 or 80 hours a week?

7 SECRETARY MORTON: I might have a tough decision to make
8 early Monday morning, Mr. Monroe, and before I put in my 40
9 hours, and I just think that is almost -- I think it is not a
10 good way to do it.

11 I think we have got to decide. My principal job will
12 be to advise the President. Obviously on the political
13 impact of various programs, various decisions, he wants some-
14 body he can talk to who has been there and has had some
15 experience, and I want to feel free to talk to him at any time
16 of the day or any day of the week about the political aspects
17 of his job.

18 I want to be able to review this campaign with him.
19 I want to be able to take some of the burden off of others in
20 the White House who have been doing that during the last few
21 months.

22 MR. BROKAW: Mr. Secretary, your arguments on behalf
23 of the President's plan to deal with unemployment are probably
24 very attractive to many members of the Republican party and
25 members of the American business establishment, but don't you



1 think they will be detrimental to the President in a general
2 election when he has to face six or seven unemployed workers,
3 heads of households, who do not have a job and have little
4 hope of getting a job under the President's plan for another
5 year and a half or two years, or perhaps even longer?

6 SECRETARY MORTON: This, of course, I think you are
7 beginning to drive right at the heart of the issues that we will
8 be faced with in this campaign.

9 I think that the American people don't want their
10 economy taken away from them and all responsibility for economic
11 activity placed in the hands of the government. I think there
12 is great fear among the American people that if we begin
13 to develop this tremendous public service corps, that we block
14 out the economy and say that government is responsible for
15 employment and therefore the government must absorb all the
16 unemployed through make-work types of programs, I think this
17 country would be gripped by fear. And the thing we must do --
18 and we have had this in the past, and we are doing it better
19 now than we did in the earlier depressions. Look how long
20 it took us to get out of the depression of the thirties
21 compared to/bottoming out that has taken place in this case.

22 I think that the American people want to expand their
23 economy and want to be in a climate that is conducive to that
24 expansion, and I think the people will get the jobs.

25 You can't have -- forever -- you can't have a make-work



1 situation, and have this country develop and strengthen its
2 economy and strengthen its society. We are a free country and
3 we have to put up not only with some of the difficulties that
4 freedom presents, but we also are able to enjoy the great
5 privileges of it and I just think if we go to a controlled
6 economy and begin to lose that, we lose a lot that many
7 generations have fought for.

8 MR. SCHRAM: We used to hear several weeks ago actually
9 that President Ford was thinking about getting himself an
10 adviser to help him on political matters, and yet when your
11 appointment was announced, the Press Secretary at the White
12 House, Mr. Nessen, told us you were going to be
13 advising on domestic affairs, and only incidentally political
14 advice.

15 SECRETARY NORTON: I think it was a bad choice of words,
16 I think, on his part.

17 Nobody is trying to deceive anybody. I have been in
18 this business for a while. I sort of had a parallel career to
19 the President's. Don Rumsfeld now has left the White House,
20 who was also a colleague in the Congress, and it left only
21 Jack Marsh as really a sort of a person whom he could discuss
22 these matters with that had actually had some of the same
23 experiences, so obviously I am going to be discussing these
24 things and I want everybody to know it. I don't want to deceive
25 anybody. I think it is not going to be incidental, but I am



1 going to be doing an awful lot of other things other than
2 saying this or that about the campaign. I am going to try to
3 continue to develop a better energy program, develop better
4 economic policies along with my colleagues, and particularly
5 ones that meet the demands of the people now.

6 MR. SCHRAM: I guess the Ford campaign isn't going to be
7 won or lost on the basis of who pays your \$45,000 salary or
8 whatever it is, but I just wonder, looking back now and seeing
9 the controversy that this has touched off, seemingly needless,
10 couldn't have helped the President any, this controversy.

11 Do you regret at all that the job was laid out to be a
12 White House job and would you now, in retrospect, wish it had
13 been over at the campaign committee where maybe you could have
14 been separate, but equal with Bo Calloway?

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1 SECRETARY MORTON: I don't want to run the campaign. If
2 I went over to the campaign I would either be the manager of
3 the campaign or Bo Calloway would be the manager of the cam-
4 paign. He is doing what I think is a good job. The President
5 has got confidence in him, and I certainly want to help him
6 and not interfere with him.

7 I am very nervous about anybody in the White House that
8 is on a daily kind of advisory basis with the President that is
9 paid by external funds from any source. I think we have to
10 keep that Simon Pure, and I believe anyone that is there on
11 a daily basis, hourly basis with the President and the senior
12 staff that is paid with external funds would, I think, give us
13 the creeps.

14 MR. MONROE: We have about two and a half minutes.

15 MS. THOMAS: Mr. Secretary, do you think Ronald Reagan
16 is politically vulnerable because of his \$90 billion shaving
17 of the federal budget as planned, and to return these programs
18 to the states?

19 SECRETARY MORTON: I don't think the idea is a very good
20 idea. I don't think it would have / ^{very} much appeal, particularly
21 to people who are living in states having an awful hard time
22 making ends meet. And if espousing a program that is not
23 very palatable, I guess that makes you politically vulnerable.
24 I just don't think that is a good idea. It is subject to
25 debate, but I think it is the kind of idea that runs second.



1 MR. LEVINE: Mr. Morton, you have labeled the apparent
2 solution which came out of conferences between the White House
3 attorney and the Election Commission, as to your role at the
4 White House, as a silly solution.

5 SECRETARY MORTON: Oh, no.

6 MR. LEVINE: The 40-hour split between the political job
7 and domestic advisor's job. What solution would you like to
8 see to that?

9 SECRETARY MORTON: That is not a silly solution, because
10 it never was a solution. It was simply a suggestion, and it
11 probably was a good suggestion that they review the number
12 of hours that I work for, perhaps, the President.

13 MR. LEVINE: Time is very short. What solution would you
14 like to see?

15 SECRETARY MORTON: I would like to have the Election
16 Commission put some regulations out on this particular subject
17 that applies to everybody. It applies to every staff member
18 of every Congressman who is running; it applies to all of the
19 Congressmen who are running for President, as well as for anyone
20 who is a political advisor. And I think when they review all
21 of that they are going to have a very hard time. And I am per-
22 fectly willing to accept some sort of a split. I don't know
23 what it should be. They should study it.

24 MR. LEVINE: You certainly have given it some thought.
25 What would you think would be an equitable and fair role for



1 you to play, paid by whom?

2 MR. MONROE: I am sorry to interrupt. We will have to
3 move on without that thought of Mr. Morton's, if he has in-
4 dulgged in it.

5 Thank you, Mr. Secretary, for being with us today on MEET
6 THE PRESS.

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8 NEXT WEEK: Itzhak Rabin, Prime Minister of Israel

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TRANSCRIPT OF LEAD STORY ON TEN O'CLOCK NEWS, JANUARY 26, 1976.

Scott: It boils down to questions of just how much public is left in public service. The questions of how regulatory agencies dispense favors and to whose benefit. Our investigation has uncovered evidence that this country's private shipping industry has at least taken advantage of the public treasury, at the same time, the industry has rewarded favored Congressmen and other public officials in what seems to amount to collusion.

Take the case of Rogers C.B. Morton, once a Congressman and Republican National Chairman. He's just left as Secretary of Commerce to become President Ford's sometimes White House counselor and sometimes political agent. Morton was allegedly involved in what our sources explicitly describe as a shakedown of the Maritime industry in the late 60's while he was a Congressman and a member of the committee which monitors shipping subsidies that amount to billions of dollars.

Mike Trupp was high in the Federal Maritime Commission while all this allegedly was going on. He says he saw it all first-hand. A rather unusual admission for a former public official.

Trupp: Through contacts that he had at the Federal Maritime Commission, penetrated the shipping industry. He had a bull roast on the Eastern shore, he had high price tickets for those bull roasts and he saw that the shipping industry was informed that Rogers

Morton was having that bull roast and would like to sell them tickets. The shipping industry bought those tickets from Rogers Morton, the money was forwarded to Rogers Morton and went into his coffers as Congressman.

Scott: How would you characterize the actions by Rogers Morton?

Trupp: They are questionable morality of questionable judgement and again touch upon the question of extortion in a borderline of substantial manner.

Scott: You had at one point prior to this filming said that this was a shakedown.

Trupp: It is my feeling and it is my general belief that all of these approaches which bring money from the coffers of industry to the political benefit of people running for office are in fact a strong arm method of shaking down American industry.

Scott: For twenty-two years, Mike Trupp moved in the highest circles, as Director of International Affairs for the Maritime Commission which regulates the shipping industry. His allegations, he says, are not loose charges.

Trupp: I was close enough to consider this a personal experience, personally observed by myself and practically, at times, forced to participate.

Scott: How was that?

Trupp: Well, when the word came over from high government officials that we were stuck with x number of tickets for Roger Morton's bull roast and that we were going to have to try to get rid of them some way, we did what we could to help Rogers Morton.

Scott: Did you handle some of the checks yourself?

Trupp: I saw them, yes.

Scott: Now, to the best of your knowledge, has this been a standard operating procedure for Mr. Morton over the years?

Trupp: It happened in more than one of Mr. Morton's election tries for his Congressional seat.

Scott: A spokesman for Mr. Morton confirmed for us tonight that he did hold bull roasts annually over a period of eight years, raising an average of \$20,000 at each bull roast. Total: \$160,000.

How did it work? According to our sources, then Congressman Morton's office would arrange to have blocks of a hundred tickets for the bull roasts hand-delivered to various Maritime Commissioners who in turn would arrange for subordinates to sell them to representatives of the shipping industry and unions, as well.

Scott: We spoke to one of the former commissioners who supposedly received some of those tickets. While James F. Van remembers attending a few of the Morton fundraisers, he told us he does not recall being involved in any of the transactions. While never questioned for his alleged role in the Morton fundraising activities, V subsequently was indicted in Baltimore in another matter for illegally picking up corporation checks for the Nixon re-election campaign. V did not contest the charges and he appealed to the court for mercy.

We called the White House for a response from Mr. Morton today. An assistant reached him in California and tonight this response:

"Mr. Morton has no way of knowing if it happened. He delegated the responsibility to two staff members who made arrangements for the bull roasts." Morton's assistant said, "You'll have to talk to Jim Webster and Bill Mills." But quickly added, "That'll be difficult since both of them are dead."

Morton's alleged methods of extracting funds from the shipping industry while in a position to influence decisions effecting that industry is only one aspect of how the industry carefully compensates friendly Congressmen and other public officials.

Highly placed sources within the industry have told us that Gerald Ford, as a Congressman, was "in tight with the industry and unions." He reportedly was the recipient of campaign contributions and other favors from shipping interests.

Trupp: I know from my position and discussions which I had with people in the Maritime industry who were raising funds to aid Congressmen that Congressman Ford, the Minority Leader in the House, was looked upon as a person especially favored by the Maritime industry. They considered him a friend and they considered him a point of their strength upon the Hill.

Scott: A spokesman in the Justice Department confirmed for us the existence of a secret file of Congressmen who allegedly received illegal contributions. They would not, however, say whether Gerald Ford's name is on that list. American President Lines and Pacific Far East Lines officials who were convicted and fined \$50,000 each under the Corrupt Practices Act reportedly conceded that Mr. Ford's name indeed is on the list of recipients. These contributions were funneled through a special bank account maintained by the shipping corporations back in 1970. Ford and fourteen other Congressmen were not pursued because government attorneys said there was no indication that they knew the contributions were illegal.

Information developed from our sources also indicate that Congressman Ford was among the beneficiaries of a \$750,000 political fund set up by the Seafarers International Union. In connection with this fund, the union and its top officers were indicted under the Corrupt Practices Act but never brought to trial on the grounds that the Justice Department had unaccountably delayed pressing the case.

Apart from contributions, there are questions of what our sources describe as payoffs direct to Congressman Ford from elements in the Maritime industry. These payoffs, we were told, took the form of fees for speaking engagements before the Maritime Trade Department of the AFL-CIO. According to Mike Trupp and other sources, Ford and other Congressmen were invited to weekly cocktail luncheons where they would deliver a speech, frequently written by the labor group. This one was delivered by Gerald Ford in December of 1970. In return for delivering the speeches, Congressmen would receive fees, honorariums they're called. Sources who criticize these honorariums as a vote purchase allege that Gerald Ford was among the highest paid. A Maritime Union official told us that Ford's speeches yielded \$4,000 a year between 1968 and 1973. We asked a Maritime Trades Department of the AFL-CIO whether all this was true. While they confirmed that Ford has spoken to the group, they would not tell us how many times or how much he was paid.

A spokesman declared, "We don't have to tell anyone what we pay anyone. We report honorariums to the I.R.S. Ask them, ask Ford." We did. The I.R.S. doesn't make its' records public. The White House responded with this statement:

"The President has never knowingly accepted illegal contributions. Any honorariums were listed in tax returns which were audited in the confirmation process. The available records on his campaign contributions were turned over to the Senate Rules and House Judiciary Committees." End White House statement.

Seemingly corrupt practices among Congressmen are also mirrored by unethical practices within the Maritime Administration. One of those practices is cited by Admiral John Harlee, former Chairman of the Maritime Commission.

Harlee: Well, you have certain situations like a previous Maritime Administrator awarding a multi-million dollar contract for the construction of tankers to a company which had hitherto been involved only in inland waters and then very shortly stepping out into a tremendous job with, I think, about a million dollar contract himself personally. This seems highly questionable to me in terms of whether a public office was prostituted for private gain. I think it requires further explanation.

Scott: Admiral Harlee would not name the individual involved. But Channel 5 News has discovered that he is Andrew E. Gibson, former Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Maritime Affairs under the

Nixon Administration. Reportedly, Gibson accepted an \$888,000 job as President of Interstate Oil Transport Company less than six months after he, as Maritime Administrator, approved a \$90 million government subsidy to that same shipping company. According to published reports, after only sixteen months with that company Gibson left but is still being paid \$88,000 a year for the balance of his contract. Although there appears to have been conflict of interest here, there is no evidence at all that an investigation was ever conducted into these questionable actions.

In the next part of this investigative report we'll show you how some shipping corporations got their hands on some old ferry boats and converted rusting iron into solid gold.

Morton May Resign as Ford Campaign Chairman
(By Tom Jarriel, ABC)

President Ford's Campaign Manager Rogers Morton may step aside soon, according to sources close to the Republican National Committee.

Morton says he is not instigating any change, and would like to remain in his post at least through the Republican convention, and possibly through the fall campaign.

But reliable sources within the Ford political organization say that he will probably leave within the next couple of months. Speculation already centers on Deputy Defense Secretary William Clements as a possible successor to Morton. Clements has a reputation as a strong administrator, and is close to Defense Secretary Don Rumsfeld, a behind-the-scenes power in the Ford political organization.

Sources say it is felt that Morton has burned himself out while serving as a lightning rod during the primary campaigns. There have been bitter complaints from Republicans ranging from those in Congress to local and state office holders who are unhappy about the way the Ford national campaign was run. Since much of the pre-convention strategy now depends on support from those very Republicans who complain about Morton's management of the primaries, some sources feel he will go before the GOP convention opens in mid-August. ABC -- (7/6/76)

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BG = I'd know about it. And I haven't heard anything about it.

RN = Ray Morton is not leaving. The ?F.C. Naturally, we expect to add people to the campaign staff as we move into the election campaign. But we don't have any homes to announce right now.