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SEPTEMBER 12, 1975

Office of the Vice President
(Dallas, Texas)

PRESS CONFERENCE
OF
THE VICE PRESIDENT
NORTH BALLROOM, SHERATON DALLAS
DALLAS, TEXAS

(AT 1:40 P.M. CDT)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Ray.

It is a pleasure and a privilege for me to be here to talk to the Republican women from around the country and I told them that I thought it was very symbolic that they chose Dallas, the most dynamic city in the country, to have their meeting; beautiful city, fiscally solvent, that there was a certain analogy, here they were, a beautiful group, dynamic and successful hopefully in the next period ahead; and also standing for fiscal solvency and deep human concern.

So I am delighted to be here and answer any questions anyone might like to ask.

QUESTION: You told the women this morning that you felt that the machinery of Government is eating too much of the Gross National Product and you would like to do away with some regulations. We all know regulations are born immortal. How are you going to do that?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I spoke of regulations and the 863 Categorical Grants, social programs, overlapping, duplicating and impinging very seriously on the ability of State and local government to assume their responsibilities because of the regulations and also impinging on the creativity and dynamism of free enterprise. I know that all of the regulations and all of the programs are designed for very worthy social objectives. The problem is that these now have become so complex that they are not achieving their objectives and they are tending to stifle initiative both in local government, State government and in free enterprise. Therefore, what it really needs is an overhauling of the structure as it is presently legislated. That is not unreasonable seeing it is 20, 30 years this whole thing has been evolving. Now it is time to take a good hard look at it, reappraise it and come up with a simplified structure that goes back to a reaffirmation of our faith both in the Federal system and in free enterprise and individual initiative.

QUESTION: Sir, you have stated your position on busing to achieve racial balance at public schools. I don't know what it is. Would you mind stating it for us now?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We have this problem in New York State. And the legislature passed a law -- now about five years ago -- passed a law which left to local school board decision whether they would use busing as a means of achieving integration. I signed the law. I happen to believe in local home rule and in many of our communities, both the black community and the white community did not want to have

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the program. Unfortunately the law was declared unconstitutional.

Busing in and of itself, of course, is what has made possible the bringing together of students from little red schoolhouses into central schools so that busing, in itself, is not unknown in this country and it is a very important factor. In many cases busing has contributed to racial integration, but in many other areas it has created a kind of strife which I think has set the movement back rather than brought it forward.

However, anybody who is elected in government has to uphold the laws of the land and these happen to be the laws.

Then the question is either by Congressional Acts, Constitutional amendment or an opinion going back to the Supreme Court where the Supreme Court renders a different opinion than it did before. Those are the only three methods for changing the situation. It is difficult, but this is the kind of problem that we go through in a democracy. We do it the hard way and only when the people speak does the action get taken.

QUESTION: Mr. Vice President, what do you think ought to be done?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I think that there needs to be either Congressional legislation, if it can be done, within the framework of the opinion of the Supreme Court or Constitutional amendment that gives greater flexibility to the local communities in trying to work out their problems in a way that doesn't accentuate strife instead of overcoming it.

QUESTION: Anyway, what would your advice be to parents and communities which are under court order to bus, places like Boston, Louisville? What would you tell them, sir?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I have a very good friend who is Governor of Virginia who had this problem. They got the order. And his three children, four children, three or four children, all went to integrated schools by busing and they were in schools where maybe there was a 20 percent white population, 80 percent black. They made the adaptation and they did very well. I think that under the system of law we have in this country the parents, these are public schools, the parents either have to fulfill the interpretation of the law by the courts or they have got to, if they can, send their children to a private school if they don't want to.

QUESTION: Sir, do you think busing in Boston is a good thing?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: What do you mean "a good thing"?

QUESTION: I mean do you think it is a good way to have the children educated in terms of raising the standards of some of the schools in Boston?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I am not familiar with the situation in Boston; never have studied it and am not familiar with it. Therefore, I am not in a position to make an intelligent answer to your question. The law has been passed. The Supreme Court has made an interpretation. The judge has acted. The school board has said this is what should be done. Unless there is a change in the law or a change in the Supreme Court decision there is very little option.

QUESTION: Do you think there should be a change in the Supreme Court decision or the law?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: As I said, I think that a greater degree of local rule, which is a great tradition of this country and one which has stood us in good stead, is desirable. I think the local community knows how to handle the problems better within the broad framework and objectives set by the Congress. Therefore, I think greater flexibility would be a very useful thing. But it has got to be achieved legally.

QUESTION: Do you, at this time, support a Constitutional amendment for enforced busing?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I talked to some of the legislators and there are those who think that it can be done by, as I mentioned before, either legislation without a Constitutional amendment, a suit which goes to the Supreme Court which results in a revised or more refined opinion which allows greater latitude or an amendment.

QUESTION: Sir, did you ever consider, perhaps in the symbolic sense, sending your own children to public schools?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I don't know what you mean "symbolic sense."

QUESTION: In the sense that it would, perhaps a prominent figure such as the Vice President or Governor of New York, if he sends his own children to public school, it might show more support for the public schools and it might give people who have to bus their children the feeling that all classes are sharing in this problem.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: My children went to a private school, still are going to them. I understand what you are saying. I have done, I think, probably as much as any governor to increase the State's assistance to education. So I have tried to do the best possible job to improve the quality and character of public education while also recognizing that private education in this country traditionally has been the area where experimentation and creative forces were developed, new methods, new procedures developed and it has a role to play.

QUESTION: Sir, why aren't oil companies drilling for more oil since we need it so much?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I think that one of the problems is the uncertainty and the removal of the depletion allowance makes it a very risky thing to drill for oil. Therefore, with the depletion allowance gone and the ability

to import oil even though, from the point of view of the nations as a whole, it leaves us in a very vulnerable position; but I think that has been one of the reasons. Now there has been decontrol. The legislation expired and the President vetoed the six-month extension. They overrode or they tried to override but they did not succeed in overriding his veto. He asked for a 45-day extension with the idea of working on a plan for a 39-month phased decontrol with a provision for wind-fall profits and a plow back for those who invested their money.

The Congress as yet has not acted on either the 45 days or the compromise on the decontrol. So at the present time we stand with no control.

QUESTION: Are the profits as obscene for oil companies as Scoop Jackson says they are?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: No. He is totally wrong. It is a political approach to the problem and a very tragic one because he has given the public the impression, he used the figures when the price of oil was raised by the OPEC countries 500 percent. New oil in this country was allowed to go to that price. All imported oil went to that price. All old oil was controlled.

Because of large inventories these companies had, those inventories were written up and then that made it look as though there were huge profits. But they weren't huge profits.

This resulted in the public reaction and was fanned and the public was misled by statements such as his which, let us face it, have to be political because they are not factual. The real truth of the matter is that industry not only in the oil industry, but industry generally in this country is not making enough money to invest in new capital production to meet the needs of the people of this country and expanding economy and at the same time meet the water quality standards, air quality standards, safety standards, equal opportunity standards, et cetera.

I happen to be chairman of the Commission on Water Quality which was created by the Congress to study the impact of that legislation. I got a presentation yesterday, as a matter of fact, showing that one major industry, fundamental industry essential to this country in order to meet its capital needs for all of these Federally-required expenditures, plus expansion of production would require a 10 percent increase a year for the next 10 years to get enough capital to be able to do it.

So we are in a very serious situation and I think that it is typical of this country. We come to a conclusion as we did which, I think, was sound that we were polluting our environment and that we ought to stop and that we ought to correct, but typical of our country, we wanted to do it yesterday.

We are going at a rate which can have, if we are not careful, very serious impact on employment because of the lack of ability to invest, to have the capital to invest.

QUESTION: Mr. Vice President, has Mr. Hitchinson or

any other Texas Republican leader or any businessman that you met with this afternoon made any commitment to supporting you in a 1976 ticket?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I am not a candidate. I am not on the ticket. So there is no problem. I am not looking for support. I came down here to speak to the Republican women. I came down here to talk about the President's program and his efforts to meet the problems this country faces. I have said for seven months, I guess it is nine now, since I was approved by the Congress, that I felt that the President should not feel in any way committed that I am not even willing to discuss whether I would be available in '76 because after he is nominated he should, then, make the decision as to whether or who he wants as his running mate. He will recommend that to the convention and I assume in the tradition of this country which is 200 years old, both Parties will nominate the person who he recommends. Who that is going to be, that is up to him at that time. Prior to that, I don't think that he should get himself committed.

QUESTION: You have been attacking New York City pretty vigorously in recent weeks about it being a bad example of fiscal policy. I was wondering, don't you, as a former governor of New York, bear any responsibility for that situation and didn't the banks in New York City, such as Chase Manhattan, benefit in any way from that type of fiscal policy?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: First, I have not been attacking New York City. I have been saying that New York City is a tragic example of what happens if you try and spend more money than you have income and get yourself into the kind of debt situation which they have for 15 years. They have come up with a balanced budget each year based on over estimating their income and under estimating their expenditures. At the end of the year they would then sell short-term notes to make up the difference. Those cumulated to a point where they now have \$3.2 billion of short-term notes they have to keep going over. They followed another course which was a very unfortunate one which was to use capital bonded debt for operating expense.

I was there in Albany, as governor. I argued with them on these points to try to get them to follow a different course. We did make possible each year the balancing of the budget and at various occasions after two or three days of round-the-clock negotiations we would come out with a package in the first instance advanced by the State to keep them from firing all of their police and firemen which is what they always threatened to do.

It finally caught up on them. But the State cannot control and, as you know, the cities have a very strong sense of independence. They were supported by the newspapers who often talked about, and as a result of my actions, that maybe New York should secede from the State and become the 51st State. So that was their reaction while I was there.

QUESTION: Mr. Rockefeller, most recently you testified at the Attica hearings. How do you feel that that situation could have been avoided; how do you react to allegations that you were responsible, personally, for those deaths?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: It is a tragic situation. But these are the simple facts, that the Superintendent of

Correction had been concerned for some time that there was political agitation in the prison. He had asked for a doubling of the guard. We did not have the money. We had some serious fiscal problems of our own. That year we had let 8,000 State employees go in New York. And then this thing blew.

The State police, as was the tradition on the plan, went into Attica without guns to retake the prison. They had about 54 hostages who were guards. They came to a welded gate and the prisoners said that they would kill the guards, the hostages if the police came any further.

At that point it happened that the Superintendent of Prisons arrived on the scene and he said, "Stop the retaking of the prison. I will negotiate and release the guards without any deaths or loss of life."

His estimate of the situation turned out to be incorrect. After we had agreed to 28 points relating to so-called prison reform, they then asked for total amnesty and free passage to a non-imperialist country which did give a little bit the impression that this was not purely a prison reform operation, but that this was a political politicized operation.

The fourth day, the Superintendent came to the conclusion that his negotiations had failed, that he was not achieving his results and, therefore, he said, "I think we have got to go in and retake the prison." By this time they had made fabricated arms from knives and so forth from the prison and when he made his last appeal they lined up a dozen guards on the elevated area in the prison yard and each guard had a prisoner behind him with a knife at his throat, and they said to him, "This is your answer. If you come in, we will kill all of the hostages." We had no choice and I supported his recommendation we go in. By this time we had to go in with arms although the instructions were nobody was to use their arms unless the life of a guard or a State trooper was involved. I gave specific orders not to use guards because of the tremendous tension they were under in the retake of the prison.

You say would I have done something different? I think the answer is, in retrospect, that we should not have stopped the retake in the beginning which was being done without guns and that that was the right thing to have done and that is the policy which is now back in operation.

QUESTION: Mr. Rockefeller, according to a Harris Poll, one out of four Republicans would not vote for the GOP ticket if you were on it and 55 percent of those polls feel that you have done a poor job as Vice President; 45 percent of the Republicans also give you a negative rating. What is your reaction?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: My reaction is really what is new? One out of five or one out of four? Did you say one out of four? Eighteen percent of the voters are Republicans. So that makes about, what is it, four and a half percent? So that means that 4.5 percent of the American people wouldn't vote for me. You can't get elected with 4.5 percent of the people if you are on the ticket. The truth of matter is I am not on the ticket and I am not seeking to be on the ticket.

QUESTION: What about the other figure in which 55 percent of the Republicans, Democrats and Independents do not feel you have done a good job as Vice President and 47 percent are opposed to your being on the ticket?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: That is reminiscent of the fact when I ran for governor the second time only 24 percent of the people thought that they would support me and by the time I had been able to reach the people and tell them what had been done and what we were doing, what our plans were, I was reelected.

QUESTION: Is that what you are doing now, sir?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: No. You are asking me for an analogy or I am giving you an analogy of a situation that is the only one I can think of, except that that thing happened each time. I was elected four times in New York. Each time it was somewhere between 24 and 36 percent and New York State has a Democratic enrollment of one million plurality over the Republicans. So that we started out from behind the eight-ball. But that is where you start out as the Republican on a local ticket or a national ticket.

QUESTION: Are you trying to meet some of the people so that you can, perhaps, bring that percentage point up?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: No. I am just trying to answer your question, to tell you the truth. I am just supporting the President's programs. I am not campaigning either for him or me.

QUESTION: How do you explain this type of poll?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I have answered all the questions I can. The answers would be pretty much the same as I have already given you.

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(AT 2:05 P.M. CDT)