

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 30, 1976

Office of the Vice President  
(Dearborn, Michigan)

---

PRESS CONFERENCE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES  
AT THE  
DEARBORN HYATT REGENCY HOTEL  
DEARBORN, MICHIGAN

(AT 4:07 P.M. EST)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Ladies and gentlemen, I am delighted to have a chance to visit with you. I am here for the Midwest Republican leaders' gathering. I happen to be a very strong believer in the two-party system as being the basic strength of this country and the vitality of our political system and the preservation of freedom.

I also would just like to say that observing, on the national scene, politics, that I think that President Ford is gaining and that he is going to carry the New Hampshire primaries, which is an interesting, and only a first.

If there are any questions anyone would like to ask, I would be delighted to discuss them.

QUESTION: Can I get your reaction to the Supreme Court opinion?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I have only seen it in just a little squib. I haven't read it.

QUESTION: Can you tell us what you think about what you have learned so far?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I am just sort of an observer on the scene. I haven't read the opinion, what is back of it. I think the whole thing is pretty complicated and I would hope that this would simplify it because, really, either as a contributor or as a candidate who receives funds or as a party, you almost have to have a lawyer by your side every move, or an accountant, or both, to be sure you don't make a mistake. So I do hope that it is simplified and made more understandable.

QUESTION: Mr. Rockefeller, when you say that President Ford is gaining, do you mean over Mr. Reagan or over the Democratic candidate?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: No. I am still in the primaries; over Mr. Reagan.

QUESTION: Sir, as far as you know, out of what little you know out of the Supreme Court decision today, would it slow any of your personal spending down?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: You mean would it speed it up?

MORE

QUESTION: Slow it down, speed it up?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I can spend \$1,000 in support of President Ford, period. If you have in mind slowing it down from that, I think, if I understand it, it doesn't affect that. The only thing I saw was that an individual was not limited to a certain amount that he or she could spend on their own campaigns. I am not running for anything.

QUESTION: Do you think that would give wealthy candidates a decided advantage over the average man running for office?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: It is going to give an advantage in terms of funds.

QUESTION: That is the big advantage, isn't it?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: No. The candidate himself, what he stands for happens in my opinion to be, he or she, happens to be the important thing. You can make a very good case that it is a lot better for a person who puts their own money in at least the public knows who is responsible.

If large sums are raised from others, then there is no way of telling what strings are placed on that candidate, what loyalties that candidate has, who the candidate is beholden to. This is what American people have been worried about. So it is very easy to say that has an advantage.

I think the history of American politics is that those who have contributed in many cases have done it on a conditional basis and the candidates when elected to office were not free agents.

QUESTION: Mr. Rockefeller, Secretary Simon described the Public Works bill as pork barrel. Would you agree with that and can you defend the pending presidential veto of that bill?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: The two points that you make, that you quote Mr. Simon, I suppose that if that description is accurate, that then the veto would seem to be in order.

QUESTION: Would you veto that bill?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I am not President. I haven't studied it. Therefore, I have no position.

QUESTION: Can you give us an idea of what indication you have been given to lead you to say that President Ford is gaining?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Just a political sense. I think that this position on returning to the States \$90 billion of social programs has got to be one of the Seven Wonders of the World and that it has excited governors, mayors, county executives all over the country.

MORE

Just a rough figure, I figure it will cost about \$6 billion in increase in taxes to Michigan. Maybe that is unimportant out here. Or if the tax increase wasn't made, then you would have to cut all the social programs.

I have been in government about 35 years, Washington, State level, local level, and at the last major presentation that Governor Reagan made at the Governors' Conference that I attended he had a proposal then which was, and he had a proposition on the ballot in California, as some of you probably know, that State expenditures should be limited to a percentage of the State gross product and they couldn't spend more than that. It would be automatic which, of course, is totally and diametrically opposed to this new suggestion. This is taking Federal expenditures, passing them back to States.

If you look for leadership in terms of people who have a deep understanding and conviction and belief about the structure of the Federal system, how it works and how it can be improved and how we can meet the problems of today, I think that is what the American people want. I think this has been a very serious.....

MORE

QUESTION: Are you suggesting that Mr. Reagan is hanging himself with that \$90 billion?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: He is certainly not helping himself.

QUESTION: Do you anticipate this question of the structure of government, where the money comes from for Federal programs, will be the primary issue in the campaign?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Not where it comes from, but how it is handled after it gets there. The President has suggested in his budget message what the governors have supported for 18 years, which is that the Federal Government which has the income tax on both corporate, private earnings, each of which is a big growth income source in this country -- that they instead of having 1,007 categorical grants each which is operated by a bureaucratic organization, changing regulations constantly, which leaves everybody in the state of uncertainty and tied up in bureaucratic red tape, that they create block grants and give the money within a broad framework of the purpose of the States and the local governments and let them decide how to handle it.

I can have a state plan which the Federal Government could approve. This is what the President has suggested: The money be given back to the States for broad, say, primary, secondary educational purposes or health or some other area. I happen to believe very deeply that this is the right way to do it.

QUESTION: Mr. Rockefeller, presidential election candidates apparently now have a choice between either not having a spending limit for their campaign or having a spending limit in return for accepting the Federal funding. Which do you think the candidate should do in the Republican primary, accept the Federal money?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: This is under the Supreme Court ruling of today?

Question: Yes, sir.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I have no idea, because I only saw, just five lines on it. So that what you are saying, it is very hard to be intelligent about a complicated situation on a superficial basis. I would just hesitate, and say these things. I spend many hours with lawyers in trying to understand the present law. When it is changed, I think everybody is going to have to spend more time with lawyers to try and understand the change, what the implications are. After they have done that, then, hopefully, they will make a wise decision as to what they should do about it; the greatest thing for lawyers-- that's what is happening here.

QUESTION: Mr. Rockefeller, it would seem the Democrats are going to use the President's long list of vetoes as a campaign issue. How do you plan to counter that?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: It is very simple. I happen to come from New York, in case nobody is aware, and New York

City has been having some financial problems; and there have been many people, including members of the Congress of the United States, from all parts of the country who you almost felt had a sense of satisfaction that New York City had gotten into trouble.

But I would like to say to you all that Congress has been doing exactly what New York City has been doing for years. They have a far bigger deficit that they have created for this country of some \$74 billion this year, perhaps, and the only difference is that they can print the money and New York City can't. So that is really the pot calling the kettle black. The Congress has done exactly what New York City has done, only on a large scale. The result is that they don't go bankrupt. They print the money.

But by printing the money, you debase the currency. When you debase the currency, you have inflation. When you have inflation, it is the most insidious tax on those who can least afford it and the most devastating effect on our senior citizens, those who are retired, those who are on fixed incomes, those who are working, because their dollars buy less.

I think the American people are going to admire President Ford for his courage to try and hold down inflation, which he has reduced from 12 percent to 6.9 percent last year because he had the political guts to veto these very attractive spending programs. He is playing for the long-term best interests of America instead of the short-term political gain, and I admire it.

QUESTION: How does Congress control the supply of money?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: How do they do it?

QUESTION: Yes.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: By passing legislation. You mean expenditures of Federal funds?

QUESTION: No, the supply of money.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: The supply of money is by the sale of notes in the market. You borrow money to pay the debts that the government has incurred or the obligations.

QUESTION: Is that the Administration or the Congress?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: The Administration has no choice. They have to sell Treasury notes in order to get the money to pay for the programs. The previous President tried to so-call impound funds because the Congress had voted more money to spend than there was revenue to pay for it.

QUESTION: Does that increase the supply of money, you are saying?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Which, by impounding the funds or selling Treasury bonds?

QUESTION: By selling the Treasury bonds?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: The Treasury notes and bonds increase supply. The Federal Reserve can do it, too, by their guarantees and fixing the rate of interest.

QUESTION: Mr. Rockefeller, some Republican leaders seem to feel that the best thing President Ford can do is say nothing and let Governor Reagan keep on talking. Do you agree with that?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: No. I think that, for instance, I agree with the second half of it. There is no question about that, but the first half, I don't know whether any of you saw President Ford in his press conference when he answered questions about his budget. I was there. He spoke for an hour and a half without a note, answered every question, was totally familiar with each area that was raised, knew exactly what the reason was for why he had done what he had done, all related to the basic objectives, holding down inflation, getting the economy going so that there will be jobs and industry and business on the solid basis where people can count on growth in our country.

I happen to be a strong advocate of growth. I think we can solve our ecological problems, protect our environment, that we can produce the sources of energy here in this country and not have to spend \$30 billion abroad, that we can produce alternate sources for raw materials, produce the food, and we can have the kind of growth which is going to assure employment opportunities for Americans.

QUESTION: Mr. Rockefeller, you mentioned that you feel that the American citizen will admire Mr. Ford or his vetoes. Are the unemployed persons, the 12 percent that are on the streets, going to admire him for the same thing when they can't get jobs?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: It is going to depend on whether they think the Congress in its spending program is solving their problems or whether the Congress is making the gesture or someone has proposed a motion, a bill which looks good, sounds good, but which in actual fact is going to increase the inflation and not achieve the employment opportunities.

Nobody really wants to be on dole or just government made, artificial jobs. They want to be on jobs they know a great majority of the American people want to be in jobs and in an expanding economy where they can do for their families as they would like on the basis of stability and dignity because they are producing not just riding along, getting a free ride on the government. We are not going to produce enough to make the money to pay for these things.

QUESTION: Mr. Rockefeller, if Governor Reagan runs close to President Ford in the primaries and President Ford is a nominee, would that qualify Mr. Reagan as a vice presidential candidate?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Only one person in the United States can answer that question, and that is President Ford; and that will be after he is nominated.

QUESTION: What would be your opinion of Mr. Reagan at the present?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: My opinion is totally irrelevant to what President Ford decides and anybody who tried to decide now who his vice presidential candidate should be after he is nominated, I think has got to -- he wouldn't.

QUESTION: Mr. Rockefeller, you said you see Mr. Ford gaining in New Hampshire. Are you confident of a Ford win in New Hampshire?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I wouldn't have said it if I wasn't. That is a judgmental question.

MORE

QUESTION: What happens in your judgment if he doesn't win in Florida?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: He will win in Florida.

QUESTION: It wouldn't hurt?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I ran in that in 1964 against Mr. Goldwater. We both worked very hard, if I say so myself. Who got nominated? Cabot Lodge, Ambassador over in Vietnam, who wasn't even a candidate. So it is a big deal.

QUESTION: Would you be a candidate for President this year if you weren't Vice President?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: There are so many ifs there. I am Vice President. I have withdrawn from the vice presidency as far as this coming year is concerned. The President is my candidate -- and I think he is going to win.

QUESTION: Mr. Rockefeller, what changes would you make in the Vice President's role if you had the power to do so?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I studied this for President Eisenhower when I was Chairman of this Committee on Government Organization. He was trying to find something for Nixon to do..... (laughter).

After three months of careful study with the lawyers, we came up to the conclusion that the only constitutional responsibility was presiding over the Senate; that it would be inadvisable to give him any other assignment because you would have two elected officials each as centers of power within the Executive Branch and it could create the kind of rivalry or conflict of loyalties within the government and within the political structure which could be very unfortunate.

The President has all the power and all the responsibility. The only thing he can do is delegate part of it to the Vice President. If he does that, this President is a man of unique openness. So he has given me a lot of specific assignments. He welcomes comments and criticisms, expressions of opinion on any issue. This has made a very happy relationship.

QUESTION: Is this a rewarding job?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Very definitely. I couldn't be more relaxed or happy.

THE QUESTION: What will your role be, chiefly, in the campaign and what do you plan to do after you join the ranks of the unemployed in January?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: That is a two-pronged question, totally unrelated. The two questions: first, I am there and

MORE



will be as helpful as it is in the opinion of those managing the campaign beneficial to the President. The campaign manager, having said I was the largest liability to the President's getting the nomination, it doesn't sound as though I am going to have to do too much. (Laughter)

But as far as what happens after that, I have never had any problem, don't have any problem now because I have always had ideas about problems. My interest is in people and solving problems. So you read the papers, you pick up the problems and you start thinking, you get an idea. That is how I got into Government the first time.

I made a trip to Latin America and wrote President Roosevelt a note saying I thought things were in bad shape. He called me down and said he would like to agree with it and asked me if I would become coordinator of Inter-American Affairs, which I did. That is how I got in the Eisenhower Administration. So I have no problem with ideas.

QUESTION: Can you see the Republican Party permitting a nomination to go to Ronald Reagan if the Ford candidacy indeed does collapse?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I don't know how you think the Republican Party works and who it is. When you say can I see it permitting it, I don't know who the party is.

QUESTION; The convention.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: But that is a loosely-knit operation. So I really think that there is no way of answering your question, because I think Ford is going to get the nomination anyhow. But if he doesn't get it, I suppose somebody else will get it. They have got to come out with a candidate in the end.

QUESTION: The stock market is moving up again, the prime interest rate is dropping. Do you think this is the result of Mr. Ford's policies or the normal turn of events?

THE VICE PRESIDENT? No. I don't think it has anything to do with it. You mean the rates dropping? And interest rates?

QUESTION: And the stock market moving up?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: No. I think both are the result of sound policies on the part of the President, not specific policies relating to this, but basically sound policies. I hope everybody here, even though we have got very serious unemployment problems, and that the tragedy of those who are involved and the uncertainty of those who feel they may be, I think is still very real, but let's not underestimate the fact that 1,700,000 more people are working now than at the bottom of the recession.

We need 2,800,000 more jobs. Then after that, this country has to have between 1.6 million and 2 million new

MORE

additional jobs every year in order to absorb the young people coming out of high school and college.

This is why I think we have got to face up squarely to the reality of the growth economy, that we can do it in terms of ecological or environmental objectives, energy objectives, raw material objectives. I think this is a very exciting moment. I am tremendously optimistic about the future.

QUESTION: Mr. Rockefeller, do you think we need stronger laws to protect our CIA agents and our secret documents from being exposed in newspapers?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I think the result of what has happened we either need stronger laws or greater discretion on the part of those who see the secret information get out.

QUESTION: Do you see something more like the British official secret laws being enacted?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: That would be one alternative. The President has not made his recommendations yet, nor have the two committees.

QUESTION: As an astute political observer, how do you look at the democratic race for President?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: With glee. (Laughter)

QUESTION: What about personalities?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: They have got lots of them. You know, I have no idea what is going to happen.

QUESTION: Sir, you discussed the New Hampshire primary. What do you think will happen in Florida's?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I think he is going to win them both.

QUESTION: Mr. Rockefeller, you said you always have ideas for solutions to problems?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Yes, I do.

QUESTION: In what occupational capacity do you think you will take care of those problems?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I will tell you. There are lots of ways you can serve your country. I love this country. I love to serve it. I took my first employment and I was in Westchester last night speaking at a fund raising dinner. I had a call from the County Chairman who, in those days, was called the boss. He said, "Look, your family has benefited from good government in Westchester County for many years." He said, "It is now time you did something about it."

MORE

I just came out of college. He said, "I want you to go on the County Board of Health." I did. I was on it 21 years. That is when I started. That was 43 years ago. So I have been in and out of government, in private life, philanthropic activities and there's no dearth of ways that anybody in any position can help even if you are just helping a few people, your neighbors or a friend, you can help. So I have no concern.

Thank you.

I am delighted to be here. I love your new hotel. Thank you. It is a pleasure.

END

(AT 4:30 P.M. EST)