

POOL REPORT

President's meeting with S. I. Hayakawa

October 5, 1976

GOP Senate candidate S. I. Hayakawa arrived outside the Sutro residence at 10 o'clock and was taken to a holding room in a house next door and held for 20 minutes. On arrival, Hayakawa was wearing a Tyrolean hat while an aide carried his famous tam o'shanter.

He passed through an outer wall near the sidewalk and sat on the President's right in a patio between the wall and the house. He presented the President with a tam o'shanter. Ford said that the tam o'shanter had proved "good for combat". Then Ford said to Hayakawa, "You have used it effectively, Dr. Hi-yo-o-kawa; I am looking for ways to use it. It has been very effective in his regard."

Then the President asked Hayakawa for the derivation of the tam o'shanter, and Hayakawa replied that he had grown up in Canada "and half of my classmates were Scottish and the other half were Jewish, and I call this my Scottish Yamulka." Ford: "It's very colorful... is it hand-knit?" Hayakawa: "Machine manufactured in Scotland... The tartan of the Buchanan clan, and there is no particular reason for it." The President asked whether it was warm in the cold weather, and Hayakawa said, "It's too warm for California."

The President then remarked that "you are in the presence of the next Senator from the state of California." The President was asked, "Is that a prediction?" He replied, "Yes, we are both going to carry California."

Rather conspicuously, the President never donned the tam o'shanter. Indeed, he held it as though he did not know exactly what to do with it, except he was sure it did not belong on his head in the presence of cameramen and your pool.

Twenty minutes later, Hayakawa came out and in response to a question, said that the President had, during their private meeting, put the tam on. How did it look? "Not too good, I must say. But I'm not sure it looks very good on me, either. It's a good luck charm." He was asked if he won anything with it. He replied, "I won the battle of San Francisco State with it." He was asked if the hat he gave the President was the same one he had worn in the 1968-69 disturbances, and he said, "Same color, same design."

Commenting on the prospects for the election, Hayakawa said that he is optimistic about Ford's carrying California and winning the election: "I feel very, very warm empathy toward President Ford -- the same kind of empathy I felt toward President Truman. Both he and President Ford were unexpectedly thrust into the Presidency without advance notice and they made their adjustments. He was asked whether there had been any polls that indicated that the Republicans might carry the state. He replied he hadn't done any polls. He said he knew "simply by intuition, which I don't trust too much."

He was asked why he thought things looked good for the party in California. He said the President mentioned that he did not have a very high opinion of (Senator John) Tunney as a legislator. He said, "Mr. Tunney had not shown much originality or leadership as a legislator either in the House or in the Senate." Hayakawa said they did not discuss any issues except the "state of my health and his" and "congratulated each other for looking so well."

Before the Hayakawa visit, Mike Duval talked to reporters briefly outside. He said Ford is "studying his book" and does not plan any practice question and answer sessions with staff. He said the President has spoken to Kissinger for about 2 hours on Sunday and that they had talked about the debate along with other things. Asked if the President would be under more constraints than he was in the first debate, Duval elaborated on his Air Force One briefing of yesterday and said: "Everything he says will be beamed to every capital of the world -- and is the policy of the United States of America."

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Asked about the possible impact of the Butz furor on the campaign and on the debate, and UN Ambassador William Scranton's criticism of Butz, Duval said that Scranton had called after Scranton's televised statement. Duval said, "I got the feeling the Ambassador felt it (the Butz furor) was not an appropriate subject for this debate... I don't see any relevance to it at all." He was asked if there had been any special briefing material prepared on the Butz matter, Duval said no.

Duval was asked if there was going to be any major change in format of the debate as a result of both sides' assessment of the first one. No, he said, "we were very pleased with it" and that after negotiations back and forth, the Carter camp "has decided to stick with what we got."

While we were waiting, Nessen was touting a poll which he said he thought had been put out by Governor Edwards of Louisiana, which he said showed Ford leading 42-38 in Louisiana.

Other details: During the Hayakawa visit, television consultant Bill Carruthers arrived and was kept waiting outside the house until the Hayakawa meeting was over. Dr. William Lukash was spotted prowling the rooftop sun deck of the house next door to Sutro's. Across the street from the Sutro house behind a police cordon were about 20 school children ages about 6 to 8 in the care of their teachers.

The house where the President is staying is at the corner of Jackson and Spruce streets in a residential neighborhood. It is surrounded by a 10-foot high red brick wall set back about six feet from the sidewalk, with double locked iron gates and an elaborate electronic security system. The house is 3-1/2 stories, red brick in the front and built into a hillside. At the rear where the President's study is located, it is 4-12 stories and looks out onto tennis courts, the wooded Presidio military reservation, and across the bay to Marin County. The house has a copper mansard roof from which three men, one in civilian clothes and two in military, scanned the neighborhood with binoculars.

Bill Ringle - Gannett
Strobe Talbott - Time Magazine