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Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

Statement by the President

When I was chosen to be Vice President, I underwent the most intensive scrutiny of any man who has ever been selected for public office in the United States. My past life, my qualifications, my beliefs--all were put under a microscope and in full public view.

Nonetheless, all of you here tonight and many in our listening audience are aware of allegations in recent weeks involving my past campaigns.

As I have said on several occasions, those rumors were false. And I am very pleased that this morning the Special Prosecutor has finally put this matter to rest, once and for all.

I have told you before that I am deeply privileged to serve as the President of this great nation. But one thing that means more to me than my desire for public office is my personal reputation for integrity.

Today's announcement by the Special Prosecutor reaffirms the original findings of my vice presidential confirmation hearings.

I hope that today's announcement will also accomplish one other major task: that it will elevate the Presidential campaign to a level befitting the American people and the American political tradition.

For too many days, this campaign has been mired in questions that have little bearing upon the future of the nation. The people of this country deserve better than that. They deserve a campaign that focuses on the most serious issues of our time--on the purposes of government, on the heavy burdens of taxation, on the cost of living, on the quality of our lives, and on ways to keep American strong and at peace. Governor Carter and I have profound differences of opinion on these matters. I hope that in the 20 days remaining in this campaign, we can talk seriously and honestly about these differences so that on November 2nd, the American people can make a clear choice and give one of us a mandate to govern wisely and well during the next four years.

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