

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1976

Office of the Vice President  
(Franklin Square, New York)

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PRESS CONFERENCE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT  
AT THE  
SENIOR CITIZENS RALLY  
THE GREEN ROOM, PLATTDUETSCHER PARK RESTAURANT  
FRANKLIN SQUARE, NEW YORK

(AT 11:58 A.M. EDT)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I want to tell you, for me it is a great pleasure to be back in Nassau County and New York State. I love the State, and I love the county. And I want to tell you that it is an exciting moment to be here with Joe Margiotta, your great County Chairman; our State Chairman, Dick Rosenbaum, and then some outstanding congressional representatives and candidates.

John Wydler, on my left, sitting right here, who is the dean of our Republican delegation in Washington. He not only represents you, but he represents the State and the country in the kind of integrity and concern that we need.

And the same is true for Norm Lent, again, one of your congressional representatives, a man whom I have had the privilege of working with when I was governor and they were in the legislature.

Tom Bogan is not here. He is a young, new face as far as the national scene is concerned, but will be another one of your congressional representatives.

And Vince Balletta, whom I also worked with in Albany. Also, we need him in Washington.

We have the kind of candidates that are essential. We are coming down to the closing days of the campaign, and I would like to say a word about the President, who was half voted into office two years ago in a moment of Constitutional crisis, and had the capacity, the integrity, and deep belief in this country and the experience to deal with the problems of this country. First, restoring the confidence and trust of people in the Executive Branch, of the White House; secondly, cutting inflation from 12.7 down to 4.4 percent, and at the same time reviving the economy.

Almost four million new jobs in the last 18 months, and the courage to veto spending bills to stop inflation, to get the economy rolling, and a belief in the American enterprise system. Not feeling that government has to try and solve every problem, but that government should stimulate the American enterprise system. And that is why he sent one bill after another to encourage conservation of energy, to create the Energy Independence Authority, and a whole series of areas we can talk about, if you want. And, frankly, this Congress, two-to-one Democratic controlled, did not act on these measures, and the result is we have not been facing up to our problems realistically and stimulating the creativity of America, which is personified by Nassau County and Long Island.

I will be glad to answer questions.

MORE

QUESTION: Mr. Vice President, if President Ford is elected, would you accept, if asked, any Cabinet post or another post in a Ford Administration?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Frankly, I would like to get back and catch up with Happy and the two boys, and my own affairs. And there are lots of ways you can serve your country, and this is 20 years I am coming back now.

QUESTION: There was a lot said about the concerted effort in the final days of the campaign in New York State, specifically the importance of Long Island --

THE VICE PRESIDENT: You can say that again.

QUESTION: Why?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Because Long Island is one of the progressive areas of the country. It is a suburban area. And those who study the trend in the country, the balance of political power is now in the suburbs, between the cities and rural areas.

There is no more dynamic suburban area than Long Island and Nassau County, and what happens here is going to be the bellwether. And I think for New York State, the President will win it, and here in Nassau County.

QUESTION: The polls don't show it that way.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: But the polls are before election. And you remember, I started with 24 percent and won. The real important thing is what is the trend in the last month, and that trend is up for President Ford, and President Ford will be elected.

QUESTION: How would you characterize your role in this campaign?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Strong supporter of President Ford, because I think for our country his experience, his integrity, his deep belief in our country is the best for the future of America.

QUESTION: Would you have played a more active role had you had the number two spot?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I am, frankly, not built for stand-by equipment. I went to Washington to take the Vice Presidency for the two-year period because we were in a Constitutional crisis, and I thought I could add stability and help the country. And this period is ending, and we are coming to electing the President and Vice President. And, frankly, I want to get where I can do things myself.

QUESTION: There is a lot of talk about undecided voters in this election, and there is indication many of them live here. How do you explain that?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Because they are uncertain, to tell you the truth. I think the reason is they have two candidates. One they know, and he has a proven record. The other, the more they read about him and hear from him, the

less they seem to be sure of what they think about him. And I think there is great uncertainty about Mr. Carter, and now, really a sense of fear as to just exactly what he would do on any particular issue, because he said I would do this or that, and maybe have a year in the White House, if he got there, and he would do something different. For the American people, I don't think this is good enough.

QUESTION: So you think time is on President Ford's side here in Nassau County?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I do.

QUESTION: Do you look on this as your last campaign?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I wouldn't want to rule out any participation. I love people, and I like campaigning because you meet a lot of nice people. I couldn't have met you today if I hadn't been here campaigning. I just think this is very good.

On the other hand, I also like to try and solve problems, and that relates to government because government has a role in this. And I also believe very deeply in our system, both the democratic system and the enterprise system, and I think they ought to work together.

QUESTION: Do you think that Ford can take New York State without the help of suburbs like Nassau County?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: No.

QUESTION: Why not?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Because I don't think you have enough votes.

QUESTION: Do you feel that the campaign is sticking to the issues, as both candidates pledged during the last debate?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Well, you are asking a very sensitive question, because what somebody says in a discussion or debate, or whatever, and what is reported may not, or what is emphasized from what they said or what they do, is in your hands rather than the candidates' hands. So that I have to say if there is a lack of full discussion of issues, that perhaps the responsibility has got to be shared by both the candidates and the media.

QUESTION: Do you have any specific examples?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Well, yes. I made an important swing through the State, and was discussing issues, and all that came out of it was a picture.

QUESTION: I would like to ask you about the man who wants to be your counterpart Vice President, Dole. What impact in the remarks in the debate about World War II, that it was a Democrat war rather than placing blame on Nazi Germany and Japan, had on the campaign, and sort of withdrew it today?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: You know what characterized this campaign is the pressure and the fact that a lot of these candidates have never been on television before, before 90 million people, so they are under some pressure and have been saying things they didn't mean, or got twisted in the process. Obviously, that was a mistake when he said it.

They have all made mistakes. The simplest thing to do is say that was a mistake. But sometimes advisors or others don't want them to say they made mistakes. But I have apologized twice to the Senate about things I said about them. I got a standing ovation. The only time I got unanimous consent to speak, as a matter of fact.

QUESTION: Speaking of apologizing for mistakes, do you think President Ford should have apologized sooner on Eastern Europe?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: He made a mistake. I said it for him the next day. I was in Chicago, and explained it because I knew what his position was. But I also pointed out, for the first time in decades, out of this situation the plight of the people living in the captive nations is on the front pages and on television in the United States. So they ought to think that, really, out of his mistake something good came. I am always trying to look at the bright side.

QUESTION: McCarthy, what do you think he could cost Mr. Carter in this State?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Well, two, or three, or four percent.

QUESTION: Do you think that is enough?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: It sure wouldn't hurt. I think he is going to win anyhow, but this is going to make President Ford even better.

QUESTION: Do you think the President should have apologized to the American people a lot sooner about what Mr. Brown said about Israel being a burden?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Did you read the question that was asked General Brown? I was asked this question at a press conference when I was campaigning out west, and I said -- they asked me like you did -- and I said, "Look, I didn't see what he said. I didn't see the transcript."

And the man came up afterwards with the copy of the New York Times and read me what had been asked, and the question said, "From a strictly military point of view, do you think that Israel is a burden?" The answer to that question, you can't answer a question from a strictly military point of view because it is a geopolitical situation in which the political aspect, the human aspect of a close ally, the whole relationship, can't be singled out. So the answer he should have given is I can't answer that. Now, he is not a politician, and he proved it.

QUESTION: Didn't he prove it two years ago about Jews being influential in too many newspapers, et cetera?

MORE

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Everybody should stick to their own subjects. That is true.

And I got asked what my reaction was to that Playboy article, and I said, "Judge not, that ye be not judged." I think this is wise, to stick to simple things.

QUESTION: Today, what are the chances of the Ford ticket carrying Long Island?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: If the election were today, he would carry, but the question is by how much. And what is important here -- and let's go back to the question before, how big a plurality will Long Island give to President Ford -- and I think it is going to be very big and very instrumental.

QUESTION: What do you think he needs out here?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I used to say 50 percent of the vote, plus one, and after that is gravy. But you can't take anybody's vote for granted.

QUESTION: But you obviously need a certain amount to offset Carter's strength in Manhattan. We are talking about taking the State and coming out victor. How much does he need in Long Island?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I used to say come down from upstate with 800,000 for Republican and you could carry the State. Now, the last time I ran, I only lost the City by 17,000 votes. Louis Lefkowitz carried the City.

The situation is changing. Since that time, the suburbs have become the balance of power in terms of political strength.

QUESTION: You are not answering the question.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: You want me to say how big a vote should he have. I can't answer because I honestly don't know, but every vote will count.

QUESTION: Speaking of Nassau County, two issues come to mind. One is offshore drilling. Has President Ford put thought into guidelines for how it is going to be planned?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: The law was sent to the Congress that was approved to allow this, and the regulations are the most stringent ever produced on this subject. And if you take the statistics, you will find that the oil spills have been largely from tankers.

QUESTION: What about the undecided, the voters on the Island? Do you think the President will need all of the votes to carry?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: No, I don't think he needs all, but he will carry. And the more he gets the votes, the more chance he has of rolling up a very good win in New York State.

QUESTION: Do you feel any more relaxed now that you are not personally running?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: If I was more relaxed, I don't think they would let me campaign.

(Laughter)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I am having a good time.

QUESTION: Mr. Vice President, will this be your last swing through New York in the campaign?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Yes.

QUESTION: This is your wrap-up in the State?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Yes.

QUESTION: You have done it for so many years around here.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: As I said, I am having a good time. And this is a unique State. If you haven't campaigned in New York, and if you don't know New Yorkers, people don't know how warm they are, and enthusiastic and progressive they are in their thinking and concerns about the future. So from my point of view, this is the ideal place to campaign because people are responsive, sharp, and sophisticated, and enthusiastic, and that is true pretty generally, and probably more true right here than any other place.

QUESTION: Having campaigned almost 20 years, in this the last day, does it have special feeling for you?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I don't relate it to myself. I am interested in President Ford and Bob Dole's election. And I think this is going to happen, and that is the satisfaction I take. So whatever little I can do to help them, or have done, that is my satisfaction.

QUESTION: Don't you feel a sense of nostalgia or sadness?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I feel nostalgia because of pleasure. Sadness, no, because I have always lived in the future, and that is one of my problems. If you live in the future, you are thinking about what ought to be done, not the impact in terms of the headline today but the impact 10 years from now, five years, 10 years from now.

QUESTION: What will you be doing besides spending time with Happy and your sons? Occupationally, what do you think you will be doing?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I have family affairs to catch up with. And then one of the subjects that interests me most is, frankly, that we are living in an era where the rate of change is so rapid, that unless the public understands the problems, the issues and the forces, they are not going to support these wonderful congressmen into taking the steps necessary to deal with them. And I think there is some lag, and it goes back to what we were talking about earlier in discussing issues. They are complicated and involve all kinds of interrelated issues.

Happy gave a good analogy last night about raindrops and a still pond, that little circles come out and overlap each other, and this is the way forces are. To understand these and understand if you do something here, what does it mean over there?

The public needs, in my opinion, to have the opportunity -- and how, I don't know -- to get more detailed information on the factors that are important in coming to their conclusions and in supporting action. That is an area that interests me very much. What I would do about it, I don't know.

QUESTION: There may be a peanut farm available in Georgia.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I don't think so.

QUESTION: He is going to keep that farm?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I think so.

QUESTION: Mr. Vice President, would you come back to a victory party?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I would like to. When are you going to have it?

QUESTION: When it is convenient for you.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: See, I told you they are cooperative around here.

I would like to thank you all very much and say it is a real pleasure to be here. Yes, it is nostalgic. But I don't feel sad, I feel excited.

END

(AT 12:19 P.M. EDT)