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MEMORANDUM

OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT  
WASHINGTON

PRESS CONFERENCE  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
JUNE 14, 1974

The Vice President --- Good afternoon. It's a privilege and a pleasure to be here. Because there is a very limited time, I think we ought to get started right away.

Q --- The findings of the Grand Jury which named the President as an unindicted coconspirator have been criticized on the grounds that most of the Grand Jury members are blacks. Senator Curtis made that criticism at a Presidential support dinner last Sunday. Mr. Buchanan who is a White House staffer made the same criticism in an article in the New York Times. Sir, I wonder if you think that the racial makeup of this Grand Jury had any bearing on its findings, and as someone who is said to be a conciliator and also a supporter of the President, what you think of this kind of criticism?

A --- I don't believe that the racial makeup of that Grand Jury had anything to do with their conclusion. I repeat what I said before about the effectiveness or conclusiveness of their findings, however. It is not in my judgment a finding that ought to be used by an elected Member of Congress who has the responsibility to make an independent judgment. I simply argue with the merit of the result. I have no quarrel with the racial makeup of the Grand Jury.

Q --- Do you think this was a responsible criticism to make for a high official in the government towards the President?

A --- This is my judgment. I don't pass judgment on anybody else's opinion.

Q --- Sir, what safeguards will there be on the nuclear help that we will give Egypt to guarantee that we will not have a bomb there as we did in India?

A --- Well, first I want to make sure you understand that the United States belongs to a treaty with all other nations with the exception of the People's Republic of China to the group that signed the Nonproliferation Nuclear Treaty group. And, as a signer or a co-signer of the Nonproliferation Treaty Group, the United States guaranteed that any nation that gets our nuclear capability for peaceful purposes and uses it for military purposes, it is our responsibility

the United States, to make certain they do not use it for military purposes, and I can assure you that we will.

Q --- Mr. Vice President, you have criticized the leaks of the House Judiciary Committee and many others have, too. But others have criticized the media for broadcasting and printing those leaks. What is your view of the media?

A --- As far as I'm concerned, I understand the media's utilization or use of leaks. My strong conviction and very firm feeling is against those who are on an individual basis leaking information that was given to the Committee for the Committee's use in the Executive hearings that they're holding. I condemn those who by one means or another leaked this information. What they should do and what I have repeatedly said they should do is they should open up the hearings so that all of the evidence is laid out on the table for the Committee members, for the Members of the House and primarily, and more importantly, for the American people. And I don't understand why this Committee wants to shield information on a deliberate basis from the American people. This is information that the American people ought to get firsthand, and I strongly urge that the Committee hearings be opened up so the American people can see what's going on in that organization or that group.

Q --- Mr. Vice President, what about all the critics who were saying that the only reason Mr. Nixon was traveling around the Middle East was just to take the focus off of Watergate, that this was sort of a grandstand thing just to get the cameras away from Watergate hearings?

A --- Of course, most of that criticism, if not all of it, comes from partisan members of the political party that tried to beat Mr. Nixon. It's a primarily partisan attack with some exceptions. I think it is vitally important bearing in mind the tremendous steps that we have achieved in the Middle East. The new attitude, the new atmosphere, the disengagement, the return of the POW's, these are tremendous steps forward and the President going to Egypt, the President going to Israel, the first time an American President has gone to Israel, the President's going to Syria, to Saudi Arabia, these are, I think, constructive efforts I think to show the United States' interest in the Middle East and the preservation of peace and continued progress for a permanent peace.

Q --- What can he do that Dr. Kissinger hasn't already done?

A --- Well, I think the mere showing of the tremendous crowds in Cairo, the crowds that I'm sure will be elsewhere, I think this is a very vital part of the whole operation. Dr. Kissinger did a superb job, but I don't think he would draw crowds comparable to that.

Q --- Mr. Vice President, knowing what you know about how Congressmen are commenting about the impeachment would you be surprised if the House Judiciary Committee does not recommend impeachment?

A --- I'm not going to pass judgment at this point on what the Committee may or may not do. I think it's probably very close. But being as close as I think it is, it would be hazardous for me to speculate or forecast on what the Committee might do.

Q ---

A --- I have doubts both ways. But I'm not doubtful at the present time about what the House will do and that's the final arbiter as far as (Interruption by newsmen). I think the House will turn down any impeachment.

Q --- Why?

A --- Because there isn't any evidence that justified sufficiently such action.

Q --- Mr. Vice President, you spoke in your speech about some people giving you advice to stay by the Potomac. Were you including the President in those who give you advice?

A --- Well, I think he gave it in a different context. He was concerned about my health and I assured him my health was excellent. But the other people who have given me such advice, I think, have different motives. I respect their judgment. I don't intend to be barricaded, as I said, on the banks of the Potomac. I don't want to sit there and listen to the strident voices that immanate the District of Columbia. I really want to get out and listen to the American people and try to solve some problems. I respect your good conscious efforts to council me, but I don't intend to (Interruption)

Q --- Mr. Vice President, do you have any reservations at all about the apparent agreement that the President has reached with the Egyptians in the Middle East and two, have you talked to the President?

A --- I have not talked to the President about this. I had some forewarning that it was probably in the mill. I haven't talked to the President today. You know we've been a little busy today. I'm absolutely certain that under the Nonproliferation Treaty agreement of which the United States signed, the United States will take strong and affirmative action if any recipient of our nuclear capability seeks to use it for military purposes. I think that's our obligation. I think the recipient country, Egypt, understands it just as other countries do. So, I'm not the least bit concerned that these agreements, and Egypt is only one of many, as I'm sure you know, any of these countries utilizing what we have given for military purposes, because if they do, we will cut them off within seconds.

Q --- You assumed office under a rather unique set of circumstances. My question is, do you consider yourself to be any closer to the President than Vice President Agnew was?

A --- Do I feel that I'm closer on a personal basis?

Q --- On a personal and policy-making basis, yes.

A --- I think I am very close to the President on a personal basis and a policy basis because our friendship and association goes back 25-plus years. And that's inevitable. I don't want to pass judgment on how close or how far away the President and my predecessor were.

Q --- Mr. Vice President (Interruption by several newsmen).

A --- Well, I'm working at this present job and I think it carries with it a great many responsibilities that prepare me for any future responsibilities in the federal government.

Q --- How would you analyze now Dr. Kissinger's remark earlier \_\_\_\_\_ and do you believe he may resign?

A --- I don't think Secretary Kissinger will resign because in the first place the charges against him, those charges that have come through these leaks, are unfounded. The charges are really innuendos made by faceless accusers. They are purely using the old trick of semantics to try and tie him down, and I think it's unconscionable really that these faceless accusers who don't have the courage to stand up and do it in public are undercutting the President's and the Secretary of State's tremendous efforts, successful efforts, to bring peace to the Holy Land and the Middle East.

Q --- Mr. Ford, in terms of the leaks, would you suggest sometime an investigation be made because is there a possibility that some laws have been broken by these leaks going to the press?

A --- Well, I think the House Committee on the Judiciary has the responsibility there. I am sure that it concerns Chairman Rodino, I have known him for a long time. He has tried to run that Committee well. But some of the wild members, I think irresponsible members, are getting out of control. Now what the Chairman can do about it, it's hard for me to suggest except one thing. He ought to open up the hearings so that the people, the House Members, can see first hand what the evidence is, not on a selective prejudicial basis by some people who have, I think, peculiar motives.

Q --- Mr. Vice President, how do you feel on your experience in the Congress, how do you think the Congress will respond in its investigation of the allegations against Henry Kissinger now that he has threatened to resign?

A --- Well, I'm impressed I must say, by the fact that fifty-two senators out of 100 have signed on the dotted line that they have full faith in Secretary Kissinger. That's a pretty good indicator of the support he has. I am firmly of the belief that when the Committee goes through this evidence again, they will come to the same conclusion that I do. These charges are unfounded. They are made without any justification. They are selectively leaked for some, I think, unknown, but I don't approve, purpose. And when the charges fall flat, which they're bound to, then I think Henry Kissinger will come out, in even a greater degree of strength than he is at the present time. And it's interesting to note that he was the most popular public official in the country prior to these charges. And when you look at the phoeny charges, the way the charges were made, when you look at the people who participated, I think Henry Kissinger will look tall and strong and these other people will look, I think, pretty bad.

Q --- Speaking of the faceless leakers that you were talking about, would you name the people you're talking about, when you say some members of the Committee are out of control. And also, the past couple of weeks, you talked about doom sayers, wolf cryers and spreaders of doom and gloom, but you never name them. Would you, in the interest of what you're talking about here care to name (Interruption)

A --- Well, I'll give you one name on the Committee because he is personally and publicly used the documents that were made available to the Committee for the Committee's investigation, under their present rules not for public disclosure, and that's Congressman Eilberg. That's a clear cut example. I think the Committee would be well advised to open the hearings up so that you don't have one member out of thirty-eight on a selective basis making information available under these unusual circumstances. Oh, I think you will find a lot of people in all walks of life who go around with their chin on their chest and talk with tears in their eyes about the future of America. I don't agree with them. I think we've had problems before. Those problems have been solved. I don't want to succumb to the fears, apprehension, terror of the doom sayers. I'd rather believe in the people who have got some courage about meeting the problems and don't go around twiddling their thumbs and bewailing the future. One group solves something, the other group doesn't.

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