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Tom Iwas - 310 1st St.

Mr. A.
Mr. H.
Mr. S.
Mr. T.

TRANSCRIPT, NEWS CONFERENCE, VICE PRESIDENT GERALD R. FORD, ROANOKE, VA. 7/19/74

tobe with all of you
Thank you, it's nice to be in Roanoke/ It's also nice to be here with Bill Wampler, Caldwell Butler, Lt. Governor Dalton. I have been here several times in the past as Congressman, and Minority Leader, so it's nice to be back. I'll be glad to answer any questions. Yes....

Q--Mr. Vice President, you said yesterday you would be highly selective in your campaigning around the country this fall for Republicans and that you might even support some Democrats. Would you refuse, for instance, to campaign ^{on behalf of} ~~for~~ House Republicans who ^{the} ~~refuse to~~ vote for/impeachment of Pres. Nixon?

A--I'm not going to predicate my appearance or attendance in a Congressional District ^{votes} because a person ~~isn't~~ for or against the President. That's a matter of serious independent judgement. There are other very serious and equally important votes in the regular legislative routine, so my appearance for Republicans will be on the basis of the ^{his} ~~quality~~ of the candidate, ^{for} ~~general~~ support of the Administration but also ~~the~~ ^{that I think} ~~we think~~ candidates/who are challenging the incumbents, who/are attractive, and who are capable of doing a good job.

Q--- You are supporting Cong. Butler now?

A--I certainly am. I think Caldwell Butler is a first class member of the House of Representatives, ^{Poff} He is a fine replacement for Dick ~~that~~, who I think was one of the finest members of Congress ^{that} ~~I ever served with.~~ This--

Q--~~But would that change?~~

A-- This District ^{Republican} seems to have a good tradition of outstanding ~~members~~ of the House of Representatives.

Q--- Could ^{support} that/possibly change if Cong. Butler decides to recommend impeachment?

A-- I thought I said a ~~moment~~ moment ago that I was not predicating my appearance for a Republican on the basis of that one vote. Actually, I would hope that ~~a~~ Republican as well as a discerning Democrat would vote against impeachment, but my appearance here or subsequently is not predicated on how an individual member votes.

NOTE***ADD TO TRANSCRIPT ON PAGE TWO WHERE COPY SAYS NOTE: PUT IN CAPS.

Later reporters sought clarification of this point from the Vice President who said
indicate
he did NOT mean to ~~say~~/that he would campaign for Democrats. He said he has no plan
to campaign for any Democrat~~x~~. ~~But he might not campaign~~
~~But he might not campaign~~





A--ought to elect the President, and if he picks bad people, or doesn't do a good job, then the public at the end of four years has an opportunity to make a change. So to go to a nationally-elected Attorney General ~~was~~^{would} I think/be a step--a big step--in the wrong direction.

Q--- Mr. Vice President, Ron Ziegler today said that Chairman Rodino is running the impeachment investigation like a kangaroo court. He is the official spokesman for the President. Do you agree with his characterization, which would be the White House characterization? If not, how would you describe the fairness of the ~~proceedings~~ proceedings?

A-- It's my judgement that Mr. Rodino as Chairman of that Committee has done his utmost to handle it in a fair and proper way. I am not sure I would have made every decision precisely as the Chairman has made them, but that's a matter of independent judgement, and I certainly would not call the manner in which that Committee has operated a kangaroo court. They have had a great responsibility. ~~They have had a great responsibility. They have had a great responsibility.~~

I think they have tried very hard to do a good job. I think, of course I have said before, that some members of that Committee had agreed on impeachment before they heard the first bit of evidence, but that's understandable. I just would only say that as I said before too, I don't think that Committee/ ^{ideologically} is a cross-section of the House as a whole.

Q--But, Sir, could I just follow that ~~up~~^{up} one second

A--Sure-

Q--You have seen the President frequently, ^{including} ~~including~~ last Saturday.. ^{Does} ~~Does~~ his spokesman's denunciation of the Committee ~~as~~ as a kangaroo court reflect the President's estimation of the Committee?

A---I am not privy to the arrangements between the President and Mr. Ziegler so really can't --uh--

Q---Well that ~~really~~ wasn't my question, what I asked was does the President think of it as a kangaroo court?



A--I have never discussed that with the President.

getting back to the Judiciary Committee for a moment

Q--Mr. Vice President, /Special Counsel Doar today told the Committee that ~~the~~ President he

Nixon /was guilty of quote an enormous crime in the conduct of ~~his~~ office, and/recommended a bill of

/ impeachment to the committee. Do you have any ~~comment~~ reaction to that statment? proceedings in the House

A--I'm not going to pass judgement on every day-to-day ~~statment~~ Committee on

Judiciary . My views on the sufficiency of the evidence are extremely well known, I don't think there is sufficient evidence to convict the President of an impeachable offense. I have repeated it on a number of occasions. I'll simply say that I apparently respectfully disagree with Mr. Doar.

Q--Mr. Vice President, ~~you have repeatedly said that you don't~~

~~box~~ find the evidence there to impeach, but realistically speaking, given the office

~~you~~ you are ^{your position} in as Vice President, with the possibility of succeeding is there really any other position you could take in impeachment?

A-- Well, I don't think I ought to speculate on something like that. I think I can be objective , as I see the evidence, and I happen to believe very sincerely there isn't sufficient evidence, it's a personal view, to convict the President of an impeachable offense. And it doesn't have anything to do with the position I hold, it's simply my personal view.

Q-- Mr. Vice President, being as this is Butler's District, I don't want to blow what you said earlier ~~about~~ the proceedings. Now, should he see fit to vote for impeachment, would you come back down here/this fall, if you could?

A--I don't have any hesitancy about ^{and} repeating what I said/I'll make it on a personalized basis. I respect the independent views of ^{Members of the} Congress on any ~~position~~ issue, including this one. And if Mr. Butler would like to have me come back , in the future, under any circumstances, I would ~~like to~~ do so. But I also repeat, and I am sure he respects my view, that I don't think there is sufficient evidence that's been presented to convict the President of an impeachable offense.



Judiciary

Q---Mr. Vice President, the Chief Minority Counsel of the/Committee, has concurred the of the President.

Mr. Doar and called for impeachment/ Are you satisfied with Mr. Jenner's performance as a staff member?

that

A--I have said in the past on more than one occasion, it would have been better, *for the Republic* to have another counsel representing them than Mr. Jenner, and my view hasn't changed.

Q--Mr. Vice President, Joseph Sisko is now overseas attempting to work out some agreement between Turkey and Greece.

~~between the two sides~~ If his efforts should fail and the U.S. could not movements

persuade the troops from either side to halt their military ~~movements~~ what would be suggested to

your ~~recommendations~~ as ~~to~~ US involvement especially in any buildup in troops, naval, air?

maximum

A-- Well, I think the United States should make a ~~major~~ effort in this case to work with other nations, preferably through the United Nations, ~~by making arrangements~~ in order to avoid a confrontation between the Greek government and the Turkish government. I would hope that this long-standing dispute over the control of Cyprus would not lead to a head-to-head confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union. It's my judgement that our State Dept and our Secretary of State working through the President have handled our participation this very serious matter in a very responsible way. And I think it's too early to pass judgement--there are many uncertainties--but it's my understanding that practically everybody is trying to avoid a military confrontation, or diplomatic head-to-head difficulty. And I hope that...

Q--- Will Mr. Kissinger be going over there again?

A--- I haven't talked with him about that.

Q-- Mr. Vice President, have you done any lobbying with Republicans on the House

Judiciary Committee in support of President Nixon, and ~~and~~ if you haven't, will you do that *under* the impeachment issue reaches the House floor.?



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A--I haven't done any lobbying with any member of the House Committee on the Judiciary.

If any Member asks me for my views--just in case they aren't sure of my sentiments--I'll

~~be glad~~ be glad to tell them and if it appears that any observations I might have ~~might~~ might be helpful, ~~but~~ I'll be glad to make that contribution, but I'm not going out in an arm-twisting lobbying effort. I think/is an insult to most, if not all, Members of the House. I never did it when I was a member of the House and when I was Minority Leader. If I couldn't persuade somebody I didn't go any further.

I have a lot of respect for Members of the House, both sides of the aisle, and as a result, I think I have a bit of respect from them.

~~Q--Mr. Vice President, going from one problem of the Administration to another for a~~
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moment, it appears ~~that the economy has~~ we might have ~~that the economy has~~ have suffered a recession, some for an economic summit conference.

members of Congress are calling ~~for a kind of summit conference~~
a former member

Do you feel, as ~~some~~ of Congress, that the Administration is counseling about the problems of the economy, and would you recommend to the enough with Congress ~~to call a summit conference~~?

President that he call in more/key members of Congress to discuss the economy ~~to call a summit conference~~?

A-- I think there ought to be a greater degree of cooperation between the Congress and the President. The Congress has kind of gone off on its own on a lot of these things, and failed to act on many others which would have helped to curb inflation. Action Congress could have taken might have helped avoid some of our difficulties. But, nevertheless, Congress and the President ought to work together. But let me add if I might, I'm not pessimistic about the economic reports that came out yesterday. As a matter of fact, it must have satisfied or influenced some people in New York City who actually were encouraged, by their actions on Wall Street. But more importantly, employment in the country is about two million more this year than last year. Our unemployment has stabilized ~~about~~ at about 5.1--5.2 per cent. And I'm glad to hear that economically, in this area, ~~the~~ conditions are pretty good.



-7-

A--(CONTINUED) Now our main problem is inflation. But the cause of inflation from the point of view of the federal government is the fiscal irresponsibility of the Congress and the federal government as a whole. And ~~also~~ if the Congress, working with the President, will hold the lid on federal spending, (which will include a number of vetoes) then I think that the federal government, if it tightens its belt, can ^{give} ^{both} ^{in licking} ~~some~~ leadership to ~~labor~~ and management in trying to act responsibly ~~and~~ / If in the last report of this problem of inflation. ~~We~~ can make the headway that was indicated/yesterday, where we have taken the increase in the cost of living from 12-point-8 per cent down to 8-point-7 per cent, ~~and~~ (and we're going to take it lower in this next quarter) ^{by} the end of the year I think we'll be down to around 7 per cent, which ^{it's} is too high ~~but~~ but/a lot better than 12 per cent.

Q-- Do you disagree with the view of some economists that ~~there is a possibility of~~ ^{we did indeed go through} a recession?

A--- Technically you could say we had, but when you look at the employment figures and ^{gainfully} find that we have 86 million people/employed in the civilian economy compared to 84 million ~~people~~ ^{year} ago, I think we're in good shape if we can lick the battle of inflation, and I think we will.

Q-- Mr. Vice President--on inflation,

Q-- Mr. Vice President, There's an increase in sentiment on Capitol Hill to do away with the Selective Service system. Now this seems to ~~mainly~~ coincide with the ^{grooming} of the all-volunteer service. In 1947, under President Truman, Selective Service was abolished for one year. They discovered at the cost of much manpower, time, and money that this might have been a mistake. Do you feel that this is the time to abolish Selective Service.?

A---I'm a strong believer in an all-volunteer military force. I think it's tremendously good that it ~~has~~ has worked--that we have met our quotas, and that our military manpower strengths ~~are~~ are up to the army, navy and air force and marine requirements. Even though we made the goal and the volunteer military force is working,



A(CONTINUED) I don't think ~~you should abandon~~ Selective Service. I think it is good, very necessary, essential to keep it on a standby basis, because in this/treacherous world in which we live, I think we have to have people registered, even though, under President Nixon, they are not going into combat, not going into the military service.

Q-- Mr. Vice President, on the inflation--could you tell what programs the President plans to cut back. There is, as you know, a story in Washington that the President is will include veteran's benefits, social security benefits, aid to the handicapped and so forth? Has he indicated that those are some of the programs he will cut?

A--- As you know, Mr. Nessen, he approved an education bill for veterans extending their term from 8 to 10 years. He signed it I think last Friday or last Saturday/ I think the President will bend over backwards, as he has, to help the ~~veterans~~ Viet Nam ^{both--} veterans, ~~and~~ He got them out of the war,--and to also make sure that they when they are seeking are equitably treated ~~in~~ educational opportunities. But there are some programs that have come along, and I think one prospective target is the heavily inflated Labor-HEW Appropriations Bill, which I'm told ~~probably~~ ^{and above} probably calls for a two or three billion dollar increase over ~~the~~ President's budget. Now those are the kind of veto target bills that we will probably have the President acting on in the next month or two.

Q--- Mr. Vice President---What?

Q---That is the time, I'm sorry Mr. Vice President.

A-- That is ^{a good} ~~an~~ example, *there will be some others, I am sure* Thank you very much.

NEWS CONFERENCE
ROANOKE, VIRGINIA
JULY 19, 1974

Thank you, it's nice to be in Roanoke, to be with all of you. It's also nice to be here with Bill Wampler, Caldwell Butler, Lt. Governor Dalton. I have been here several times in the past as Congressman and Minority Leader, so it's nice to be back. I'll be glad to answer any questions. Yes.....

Q----Mr. Vice President, you said yesterday you would be highly selective in your campaigning around the country this fall for Republicans and that you might even support some Democrats. Would you refuse, for instance, to campaign on behalf of House Republicans who vote for the impeachment of President Nixon?

A----I'm not going to predicate my appearance or attendance in a Congressional District because a person votes for or against the President. That's a matter of serious independent judgment. There are other very serious and equally important votes in the regular legislative routine, so my appearance for Republicans will be on the basis of the quality of the candidate, his general support of the Administration but also for candidates that I think who are challenging the incumbents, who we think are attractive, and who are capable of doing a good job.

Q----You are supporting Congressman Butler now?

A----I certainly am. I think Caldwell Butler is a first-class member of the House of Representatives. He is a fine replacement for Dick Poff, who I think was one of the finest members of Congress that I ever serve with. This--

Q----But would that change?

A----This District seems to have a good tradition of outstanding Republican members of the House of Representatives.

Q----Could that support possibly change if Congressman Butler decides to recommend impeachment?

A----I thought I said a moment ago that I was not predicating my appearance for a Republican on the basis of that one vote. Actually, I would hope that a Republican as well as a discerning Democrat would vote against impeachment, but my appearance here or subsequently is not predicated on how an individual member votes.

Q----If that is so, why did you wait until right before the first impeachment note to say that you might not campaign for some Republicans this fall?

A----I don't think I said I wouldn't campaign for some Republicans. I don't recall having said that.

Q----Well, yesterday you said you would be very selective and might not go into some Districts.

A----Oh, I guess you have turned it around and put it the other way. I said I would campaign and support some Democrats, but that's not quite the way you phrased the question, and I think there's a significant difference and I'll repeat that today.

NOTE: LATER REPORTERS SOUGHT CLAIRIFICATION OF THIS POINT FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT WHO SAID HE DID NOT MEAN TO INDICATE THAT HE WOULD CAMPAIGN FOR DEMOCRATS. HE SAID HE HAS NO PLAN TO CAMPAIGN FOR ANY DEMOCRATS.

Q----Mr. Vice President, could you state some of the principles where you

might rule out going into a District if a man supports such and such...what would eliminate you going in?

A----I'm not going to draw a prescription today for 435 Districts. Each one we have to take on an individual basis, and I will make that independent judgment if and when I am invited to go into a District.

Q---Mr. Vice President, there have been suggestions for popular election of the Attorney General, and a permanent special prosecutor's office. Time-Life had this_____?

A----I don't think it's practical for a nationwide election for Attorney General. Over the years I think we have had some good attorney generals, fine attorney generals, under both Republicans and Democrats who were appointed in the traditional way as a member of the President's cabinet. I don't think we have to go the way of a national election for an attorney general.

Q---How do you shore up deficiencies and the abuses that have occurred in the past few years in the Attorney General's office?

A----Oh, I don't think this Administration has had any more difficulties with Attorney Generals than some others. As I recall, one of Mr. Truman's Attorney Generals had some trouble. And I think there are other instances in history. I think we ought to elect the President, and if he picks bad people, or doesn't do a good job, then the public at the end of four years has an opportunity to make a change. So to go to a nationally-elected Attorney General I think would be a step--a big step--in the wrong direction.

Q---Mr. Vice President, Ron Ziegler today said that Chairman Rodino is running the impeachment investigation like kangaroo court. He is the official

spokesman for the President. Do you agree with his characterization, which would be the White House characterization? If not, how would you describe the fairness of the proceedings?

A----It's my judgment that Mr. Rodino as Chairman of that Committee has done his utmost to handle it in a fair and proper way. I am not sure I would have made very decision precisely as the Chairman has made them, but that's a matter of independent judgment, and I certainly would not call the manner in which that Committee has operated a kangaroo court. They have had a great responsibility. I think they have tried very hard to do a good job. I think, of course I have said before, that some members of that Committee had agreed on impeachment before they heard the first bit of evidence, but that's understandable. I just would only say that as I said before too, I don't think that Committee ideologically is a cross-section of the House as a whole.

Q---But, sir, could I just follow that up one second?

A---Surely.

Q---You have seen the President frequently, including last Saturday. Does his spokesman's denunciation of the Committee as a kangaroo court reflect the President's estimation of the Committee?

A---I am not privy to the arrangements between the President and Mr. Ziegler so really can't -- uh --

Q---Well, that wasn't my question, what I asked was does the President think of it as a kangaroo court?

A---I have never discussed that with the President.

Q----Mr. Vice President, getting back to the Judiciary Committee for a moment, Special Counsel Doar today told the Committee that President Nixon was guilty of an enormous crime in the conduct of his office, and he recommended a bill of impeachment to the committee. Do you have any reaction to that statement?

A----I'm not going to pass judgment on every day-to-day proceedings in the House Committee on Judiciary. My views on the sufficiency of the evidence are extremely well known. I don't think there is sufficient evidence to convict the President of an impeachable offense. I have repeated it on a number of occasions. I'll simply say that I apparently respectfully disagree with Mr. Doar.

Q----Mr. Vice President, you have repeatedly said that you don't find the evidence there to impeach, but realistically speaking, given the office you are in your position as Vice President, with the possibility of succeeding is there really any other position you could take in impeachment?

A----Well, I don't think I ought to speculate on something like that. I think I can be objective, as I see the evidence, and I happen to believe very sincerely there isn't sufficient evidence, it's a personal view, to convict the President of an impeachable offense. And it doesn't have anything to do with the position I hold, it's simply my personal view.

Q----Mr. Vice President, being as this is Butler's District, I don't want to blow what you said earlier in the proceedings. Now, should he see fit to vote for impeachment, would you come back down here again this fall, if you could?

A----I don't have any hesitancy about repeating what I said and I'll make it on a personalized basis. I respect the independent views of Members of the

Congress on any issue, including this one. And if Mr. Butler would like to have me come back, in the future, under any circumstances, I would do so. But I also repeat, and I am sure he respects my view, that I don't think there is sufficient evidence that's been presented to convict the President of an impeachable offense.

Q---Mr. Vice President, the Chief Minority Counsel of the Judiciary Committee, has concurred the Mr. Doar and called for impeachment of the President. Are you satisfied with Mr. Jenner's performance as a staff member?

A---I have said in the past on more than one occasion that it would have been better for the Republicans to have another counsel representing them than Mr. Jenner, and my view hasn't changed.

Q---Mr. Vice President, Joseph Sisco is now overseas attempting to work out some agreement between Turkey and Greece. If his efforts should fail and the U.S. could not persuade the troops from either side to halt their military movements what would be your suggested recommendations as to US involvement especially in any buildup in troops, naval, air?

A---Well, I think the United States should make a maximum effort in this case to work with other nations, preferably through the United Nations, in order to avoid a confrontation between the Greek government and the Turkish government. I would hope that this long-standing dispute over the control of Cyprus would not lead to a head-to-head confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union. It's my judgment that our State Department and our Secretary of State working through the President have handled our participation this very serious matter in a very responsible way. And I think it's too early to pass judgment--there are many uncertainties--but it's my understanding

that practically everybody is trying to avoid a military confrontation- or diplomatic head-to-head difficulty. And I hope that...

Q----Will Mr. Kissinger be going over there again?

A----I haven't talked with him about that.

Q----Mr. Vice President, have you done any lobbying with Republicans on the House Judiciary Committee in support of President Nixon, and if you haven't, will you do that when the impeachment issue reaches the House floor?

A----I haven't done any lobbying with any member of the House Committee on the Judiciary. If any member asks for my views--just in case they aren't sure of my sentiments--I'll be glad to tell them and if it appears that any observations I might have might be helpful, I'll be glad to make that contribution, but I'm not going out in an arm-twisting lobbying effort. I think that is an insult to most, if not all, Members of the House. I never did it when I was a member of the House and when I was Minority Leader. If I couldn't persuade somebody I didn't go any further. I have a lot of respect for Members of the House, both sides of the aisle, and as a result, I think I have a bit of respect from them.

Q----Mr. Vice President, going from one problem of the Administration to another for a moment, it appears we might have suffered a recession, some members of Congress are calling for an economic summit conference. Do you feel, as a former member of Congress, that the Administration is counseling enough with Congress about the problems of the economy, and would you recommend to the President that he call in more key members of Congress to discuss the economy?

A----I think there ought to be a greater degree of cooperation between the Congress and the President. The Congress has kind of gone off on its own on a lot of these things, and failed to act on many others which would have helped to curb inflation. Action Congress could have taken might have helped avoid some of our difficulties. But, nevertheless, Congress and the President ought to work together. But let me add if I might, I'm not pessimistic about the economic report that came out yesterday. As a matter of fact, it must have satisfied or influenced some people in New York City who actually were encouraged, by their actions on Wall Street. But more importantly, employment in the country is about two million more this year than last year. Our unemployment has stabilized at about 5.1--5.2 per cent. And I'm glad to hear that economically, in this area, conditions are pretty good. Now our main problem is inflation. But the cause of inflation from the point of view of the federal government is the fiscal irresponsibility of the Congress and the federal government as a whole. And if the Congress, working with the President, will hold the lid on federal spending, (which will include a number of vetoes) then I think that the federal government, if it tightens its belt, can give some leadership to both labor and management in trying to act responsibly in licking this problem of inflation. If we can make the headway that was indicated in the last report of yesterday, where we have taken the increase in the cost of living from 12-point-8 percent down to 8-point-7 percent, (and we're going to take it lower in this next quarter) by the end of the year I think we'll be down to around 7 percent, which is too high but it's a lot better than 12 percent.

Q----Do you disagree with the view of some economists that we did indeed go through a recession?

A----Technically you could say we had, but when you look at the employment figures and find that we have 86 million people gainfully employed in the civilian economy compared to 84 million people a year ago, I think we're in good shape if we can lick the battle of inflation, and I think we will.

Q----Mr. Vice President--on inflation,

Q----Mr. Vice President, there's an increase in sentiment on Capitol Hill to do away with the Selective Service system. Now this seems to coincide with the grooming of the all-volunteer service. In 1947, under President Truman, Selective Service was abolished for one year. They discovered at the cost of much manpower, time, and money that this might have been a mistake. Do you feel that this is the time to abolish Selective Service?

A----I'm a strong believer in an all-volunteer military force. I think it's tremendously good that it has worked--that we have met our quotas, and that our military manpower strengths are up to the army, navy and air force and marine requirements. Even though we made the goals and the volunteer military force is working, I don't think you should abandon Selective Service. I think it is good, necessary, essential to keep it on a standby basis, because in this very treacherous world in which we live, I think we have to have people registered, even though, under President Nixon, they are not going into combat, not going into the military service.

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A----As you know, Mr. Nessen, he approved an education bill for veterans extending their term from 8 to 10 years. He signed it I think last Friday or last Saturday. I think the President will bend over backwards, as he has, to help the Viet Nam veterans, both--he got them out of the war--and to also make sure that they are equitably treated when they are seeking educational opportunities. But there are some programs that have come along, and I think one prospective target is the heavily inflated Labor-HEW Appropriations Bill, which I'm told probably calls for a two or three billion dollar increase over and above the President's budget. Now those are the kind of veto target bills that we will probably have the President acting on in the next month or two.

Q----Mr. Vice President---What?

Q----That is the time, I'm sorry Mr. Vice President.

A----That is a good example, there will be some others, I am sure. Thank you very much.

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