

The original documents are located in Box D20, folder “Joint Leadership Press Conference, August 5, 1966” of the Ford Congressional Papers: Press Secretary and Speech File at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

Copyright Notice

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. The Council donated to the United States of America his copyrights in all of his unpublished writings in National Archives collections. Works prepared by U.S. Government employees as part of their official duties are in the public domain. The copyrights to materials written by other individuals or organizations are presumed to remain with them. If you think any of the information displayed in the PDF is subject to a valid copyright claim, please contact the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

STATEMENT BY REPRESENTATIVE FORD

DEMOCRATIC SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE, ORVILLE FREEMAN, MET IN WASHINGTON LAST WEEK IN A CLOSED SESSION WITH A NUMBER OF DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES FOR REELECTION TO CONGRESS, TO DISCUSS DEMOCRATIC TACTICS AND TECHNIQUES OF THE COMING CAMPAIGN.

A REPORTER FROM THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE WAS PRESENT AND RECORDED THAT DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL DISCUSSION IN DETAIL. AMONG OTHER THINGS, HE WROTE:

"SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE ORVILLE FREEMAN HAS TOLD DEMOCRATIC CONGRESSIONAL CANDIDATES AT A CLOSED BRIEFING THAT THEY MUST OVERCOME DEEP RESENTMENT IN FARM AREAS AND SHOULD STAY AWAY FROM DISCUSSION OF INFLATION. . . .



"A CANDIDATE FROM COLUMBUS, O., TOLD FREEMAN THAT A POLL IN HIS DISTRICT SHOWED THAT THE MAJOR ISSUE WAS INFLATION AND HE SOUGHT ADVICE ON HOW TO HANDLE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE INCREASED COST OF LIVING.

"I'VE BEEN TRYING TO FIGURE OUT AN ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION FOR SIX YEARS," FREEMAN REPLIED. 'SLIP, SLIDE, AND DUCK ANY QUESTION OF HIGHER CONSUMER PRICES IF YOU POSSIBLY CAN.'

"DON'T GET CAUGHT IN A DEBATE OVER HIGHER PRICES BETWEEN HOUSEWIVES AND FARMERS," HE CAUTIONED. 'IF YOU DO, AND HAVE TO CHOOSE A SIDE, TAKE THE FARMERS' SIDE. IT'S THE RIGHT SIDE, AND BESIDES, HOUSEWIVES

AREN'T NEARLY AS WELL ORGANIZED.'"

THESE ARE UNBELIEVABLE STATEMENTS BY THE DEMOCRATIC SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE. THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WILL FIND THEM UNBELIEVABLE. AMERICA'S FARMERS AND AMERICA'S HOUSEWIVES WILL FIND THEM NOT ONLY UNBELIEVABLE BUT INTOLERABLE. A STRONG REACTION TO THEM IS BOTH CERTAIN AND DESERVED.

THE ATTITUDE REVEALED BY THESE STATEMENTS HAS CONSISTENTLY CHARACTERIZED THE JOHNSON-HUMPHREY ADMINISTRATION. ITS FAILURE TO TELL THE WHOLE TRUTH ABOUT INFLATION, ABOUT VIETNAM, ABOUT TAXATION, ABOUT THE POVERTY PROGRAM, ABOUT GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT, ABOUT FOREIGN AID, ABOUT THE BUDGET, HAS BEEN ALMOST UNEQUALED IN OUR POLITICAL HISTORY.



AS THE DAYS GO BY WILL THE JOHNSON-HUMPHREY ADMINISTRATION AND ITS DEMOCRAT-CONTROLLED CONGRESS CONTINUE TO "SLIP, SLIDE, AND DUCK" THE GREAT AND CRUCIAL ISSUES THAT CONFRONT THE NATION? WILL THE GREAT UNORGANIZED OF THE NATION -- THE HOUSEWIVES, THE MAJORITY OF WAGE-EARNERS, THE SMALL BUSINESSMEN, THE INDEPENDENT PROFESSIONAL PEOPLE, PARENTS AND THE YOUNG PEOPLE BE INCREASINGLY IGNORED BECAUSE THEY DO NOT FIT THE FREEMAN FORMULA OF "SLIP, SLIDE, AND DUCK" UNLESS THEY'RE ORGANIZED?

AMONG THE GREAT UNORGANIZED, TOO, ARE OUR SCHOOL CHILDREN -- THE VERY ONES WHOSE DAILY SCHOOL MILK SECRETARY FREEMAN AND THIS ADMINISTRATION SEEK TO CUT BACK SO DRASTICALLY!

IN FURTHER REFERENCE TO OUR FARM POPULATION, THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE STORY CONTINUES:

"'THERE IS A REACTION FAR DEEPER AND MORE BITTER THAN I COULD EVER HAVE ANTICIPATED AMONG THE NATION'S FARMERS OVER RECENT REMARKS BY ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS CONCERNING FARM PRICES,' FREEMAN TOLD THE CANDIDATES. 'FARMERS KNOW WHAT A TREMENDOUS MINORITY THEY ARE AND THEY ARE VERY SENSITIVE.'"

ARE WE ASKED TO ASSUME FROM THIS DISPARAGING REFERENCE THAT OUR FARMERS ARE AN UNIMPORTANT, AS WELL AS A SENSITIVE, MINORITY? ARE WE EXPECTED TO CONCLUDE FROM THIS THAT THE GREAT UNORGANIZED MAJORITY OF AMERICANS ARE TO BE DISREGARDED

BY THE JOHNSON-HUMPHREY ADMINISTRATION
IN THE MONTHS AHEAD? CAN WE EXPECT, THAT
NOT ALONE ON THE ISSUE OF INFLATION, BUT
ON EVERY OTHER ISSUE OF IMPORTANCE TO OUR
PEOPLE, THIS WRETCHED PHILOSOPHY, THIS
UNWORTHY ATTITUDE, THIS SHOCKING FREEMAN
FORMULA, WILL PREVAIL?

THEREFORE, OUR QUESTION-OF-THE-WEEK:
MR. PRESIDENT, WILL THE DEMOCRATS
"SLIP, SLIDE AND DUCK" EVERY ISSUE?



TEXT

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, U.S.
OFFICE OF THE MINORITY LEADER
PUBLIC DOCUMENT
OFFICIAL BUSINESS

Re: "Slip, Slide & Duck"
JOINT LEADERSHIP AUG. 5, 1966
PRESS CONFERENCE Gerald R. Ford
M.C.

READING TEXT

JOINT - LEADERSHIP

PRESS CONFERENCE

AUG. 5, 1966

