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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN...

QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 2, 1976

Q. HOW DOES A PERSON'S PRIVATE MORAL CONDUCT AFFECT HIS ABILITY TO SERVE IN PUBLIC OFFICE?

A. AS A CHRISTIAN, I STRIVE TO LIVE UP TO THE MORAL CODE AS SET FORTH IN THE TEN COMMANDMENTS AND IN THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS.

AS A PUBLIC OFFICIAL, I FEEL THAT I AM RESPONSIBLE TO CONDUCT MYSELF PRIVATELY SO AS TO EARN THE RESPECT OF THOSE I SERVE AND THOSE WITH WHOM I WORK.

THE MOST EFFECTIVE PUBLIC SERVANTS I HAVE KNOWN WERE THOSE WHO HAD A HIGH MORAL CODE IN THEIR PERSONAL LIFE.

WE STAND IN DANGER TODAY OF LOSING THE SOUL OF AMERICA TO THE SEDUCTIONS OF MATERIAL GAIN AND MORAL APATHY, TO A NEW CODE OF CONDUCT WHICH REVILES THE BASIC TRUTHS AND MOCKS THE FUNDAMENTAL BELIEFS ON WHICH THIS NATION AND MUCH OF RELIGION WERE FOUNDED.

PUBLIC OFFICIALS HAVE A SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY TO SET A GOOD EXAMPLE FOR OTHERS TO FOLLOW, IN BOTH THEIR PRIVATE AND PUBLIC CONDUCT. THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, PARTICULARLY OUR YOUNG PEOPLE, CANNOT BE EXPECTED TO TAKE PRIDE OR EVEN TO PARTICIPATE IN A SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT THAT IS DEFILED AND DISHONORED, WHETHER IN THE WHITE HOUSE OR IN THE HALLS OF CONGRESS.

THE BIBLE SAID, "UNTO WHOMSOEVER MUCH IS GIVEN, OF HIM SHALL MUCH BE REQUIRED." PERSONAL INTEGRITY IS NOT TOO MUCH TO ASK OF PUBLIC SERVANTS. WE SHOULD ACCEPT NOTHING LESS.

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE HAVE SEEN TOO MUCH ABUSE OF THE MORAL IMPERATIVES OF HONESTY AND OF DECENCY UPON WHICH RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT AND CIVILIZED SOCIETY MUST REST. TO REMEDY THESE ABUSES WE MUST LOOK NOT ONLY TO THE GOVERNMENT, BUT, MORE IMPORTANTLY, TO THE BIBLE, THE CHURCH, THE HUMAN HEART.

Q. IN YOUR VIEW, IS THERE ANY THREAT TO RELIGIOUS LIBERTY BY BIG GOVERNMENT AND EXPANDING GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS?

A. I HAVE SAID ON NUMEROUS OCCASIONS THAT A GOVERNMENT BIG ENOUGH TO GIVE US EVERYTHING WE WANT IS A GOVERNMENT BIG ENOUGH TO TAKE FROM US EVERYTHING WE HAVE.

FREEDOM OF RELIGION IS PART OF OUR CONSTITUTION BUT GOVERNMENT CAN BECOME SO LARGE AND WE CAN BE BURDENED WITH SO MANY REGULATIONS THAT OUR INDIVIDUAL LIBERTIES MAY BE TAKEN FROM US LITTLE BY LITTLE. AS LONG AS I AM PRESIDENT, **UPHOLD THE CONSTITUTION AND** I WOULD **RESIST** GOVERNMENT INTRUDING INTO THE FREE RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS OF AMERICA.

Q. DO YOU PROPOSE ANY PRESIDENTIAL INITIATIVES ON PRAYER AND BIBLE READING IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS?

A. I BELIEVE THAT PRAYER IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS SHOULD BE VOLUNTARY. IT IS DIFFICULT FOR ME TO SEE HOW RELIGIOUS EXERCISES CAN BE A REQUIREMENT IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS, GIVEN OUR CONSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENT OF SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE.

I FEEL THAT THE HIGHLY DESIRABLE GOAL OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION MUST BE PRINCIPALLY THE RESPONSIBILITY OF CHURCH AND HOME. I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT PUBLIC EDUCATION SHOULD SHOW ANY HOSTILITY TOWARD RELIGION, AND NEITHER SHOULD IT INHIBIT VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION, IF IT DOES NOT INTERFERE WITH THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS.

AS LONG AS THIS IS THE CASE, I DO NOT PLAN ANY INITIATIVES.

Q. YOU HAVE ALREADY STATED YOUR OPPOSITION TO ABORTION ON DEMAND. WHAT ACTIONS DO YOU PROPOSE TO TAKE TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF SUCH ABORTIONS, ESPECIALLY THOSE PERFORMED AT GOVERNMENTAL EXPENSE?

A. I HAVE A DEEP CONCERN ABOUT THE RISING TIDE OF SECULARISM. THERE IS AN APPARENT INCREASE OF IRREVERENCE FOR LIFE.

I DO NOT BELIEVE IN ABORTION ON DEMAND. I THINK THE SUPREME COURT WENT TOO FAR IN ITS 1973 DECISION WHICH INVALIDATED THE RIGHTS OF THE STATES TO MAKE THEIR DECISIONS ON ABORTION. I DISAGREE WITH THE RECENT SUPREME COURT DECISION WHICH PERMITS ABORTION WITHOUT THE PARENTS' PERMISSION.

AS PRESIDENT, I AM SWORN TO UPHOLD THE LAWS OF THE LAND AND I INTEND TO CARRY OUT THIS RESPONSIBILITY. IN MY PERSONAL VIEW, HOWEVER, THIS COURT DECISION WAS UNWISE.

MY POSITION HAS BEEN BASED ON THREE FUNDAMENTAL  
CONVICTIONS:

-- I AM AGAINST ABORTION ON DEMAND

-- THE PEOPLE OF EVERY STATE SHOULD HAVE THE  
CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT TO CONTROL ABORTION

-- THERE IS A NEED TO RECOGNIZE AND PROVIDE FOR  
EXCEPTIONAL CASES.

SOME PROBLEMS ARE BETTER DEALT WITH BY THE CHURCH  
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Q. MANY CHRISTIANS ARE MORE INTERESTED IN FREEDOM TO OPERATE THEIR RELIGIOUS AND NON-PUBLIC SCHOOLS WITHOUT INFLUENCE BY AND INTERFERENCE FROM GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES THAN THEY ARE IN SUBSIDIES. ARE YOU CONCERNED TO SAFEGUARD THIS FREEDOM?

A. THIS QUESTION GETS BACK TO THE SUBJECT OF BIG GOVERNMENT AND EXCESSIVE GOVERNMENT INTRUSION THROUGH A MORASS OF BUREAUS AND REGULATIONS. I HAVE ALREADY STATED MY OPPOSITION TO THIS.

THIS QUESTION ALSO SUGGESTS THE REAFFIRMATION OF SOMETHING THAT I BELIEVE IN VERY STRONGLY, THAT THERE SHOULD BE A WALL OF SEPARATION BETWEEN CHURCH AND STATE. GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO CONTROL ANY OF OUR RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS.

I HAVE A LONG STANDING COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY IN AMERICAN EDUCATION. WE NEED OUR NON-PUBLIC SCHOOLS. I ALSO HAVE A LONG STANDING COMMITMENT TO LIMITED GOVERNMENT, FREEDOM OF RELIGION, AND THE SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE.

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Q. IF ANY ALLEGED ABUSES BY THE F.B.I. AND THE C.I.A. ARE PROVEN TRUE, WHAT DO YOU THINK SHOULD BE DONE?

A. AMERICA'S INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES ARE VITALLY IMPORTANT TO OUR NATION'S SECURITY. THEY ARE ESSENTIAL IN WARTIME, BUT THEY ARE ALSO ESSENTIAL IN PEACETIME. THEY ARE THE BEST INSURANCE WE HAVE THAT WE WILL NOT BE CAUGHT NAPPING.

WE HAVE TO KEEP STRONG OUR INTELLIGENCE GATHERING ARMS, THE F.B.I. AND THE C.I.A. WITHOUT THE EXCELLENT CRIME FIGHTING SKILLS OF THE F.B.I. THIS COUNTRY WOULD BE AT THE MERCY OF LAWLESSNESS, AND WITHOUT THE INTELLIGENCE GATHERING MECHANISM OF THE C.I.A., WE WOULD BE AT THE MERCY OF INTERNATIONAL LAWLESSNESS.

AS TO PROVEN AND ALLEGED ABUSES, AS PRESIDENT, I WILL NOT TOLERATE ANY IMPROPER ACTIVITIES. I HAVE ATTEMPTED DURING MY ADMINISTRATION TO STRENGTHEN THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY AND AT THE SAME TIME TO ASSURE THE PREVENTION OF ABUSES BY THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY AGAINST AMERICAN CITIZENS.

WE NOW HAVE VERY SPECIFIC GUIDELINES DEFINING WHAT THE INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES CAN AND CANNOT DO. IF THOSE GUIDELINES ARE IGNORED, THE PERSONS RESPONSIBLE WILL BE HELD FULLY ACCOUNTABLE.

I HAVE GREAT CONFIDENCE THAT BOTH THE F.B.I. AND THE C.I.A. WILL DO AN EFFECTIVE JOB IN HELPING TO KEEP AMERICANS SAFE AT HOME AND AMERICA SAFE IN THE WORLD.

Q. DO YOU THINK THAT WORLD COMMUNISM IS A THREAT TO FREEDOM IN THE WORLD TODAY, AND IF SO, WHAT RESPONSIBILITIES DOES AMERICA HAVE IN THIS REGARD?

A. THE ACTIONS OF OUR ADVERSARIES, AS WE HAVE KNOW<sup>N</sup> THEM OVER THE LAST FOUR DECADES, HAVE INDEED BEEN A THREAT TO FREEDOM IN THE WORLD, BUT IT IS NOT NEARLY AS GREAT A THREAT TO FREEDOM AND WORLD PEACE SO LONG AS AMERICA IS STRONG AND DETERMINED.

I SEE CLEARLY THE EXPANSIONIST DESIRES OF SOME COUNTRIES AND THEIR LEADERS, AND AS PRESIDENT I HAVE STERNLY RESISTED THEIR EFFORTS. IT IS ESSENTIAL TO WORLD STABILITY THAT AMERICAN DEFENSES AND THOSE OF OUR ALLIES BE MAINTAINED. AS PRESIDENT, I HAVE CONSISTENTLY PROPOSED THE NECESSARY FUNDS TO MAKE SURE OF OUR MILITARY CAPABILITY IN ORDER THAT WE MAY PLAY OUR NECESSARY ROLE IN HELPING TO MAINTAIN PEACE AND STABILITY IN THE WORLD.

WHILE I HAVE OFTEN STATED MY OPPOSITION TO THE BASIC PHILOSOPHY OF OUR ADVERSARIES, I WOULD NOT LIKE TO SEE US RETURN TO THE COLD WAR OR RETURN TO AN UNCONTROLLED ARMS RACE. CONFRONTATION IS NOT ONLY COSTLY; IT IS VERY DANGEROUS. THEREFORE, WE CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN LINES OF COMMUNICATION AND TO CREATE AN IMPROVED CLIMATE, ONE WITH A MINIMUM OF DISTRUST, SO THAT HOSTILITIES ARE MUCH LESS LIKELY TO OCCUR.

FROM THE STANDPOINT OF THE WORLD-WIDE MISSIONARY EFFORT, I RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF WORLD PEACE AND WORLD STABILITY, FOR ONLY THEN CAN THESE HUMANITARIAN EFFORTS FLOURISH.

Q. DOES THE CURRENT STATE OF CRIME AND PUNISHMENT CALL FOR ANY REFORM IN THE AMERICAN JUDICIAL SYSTEM, AND IF SO, WHAT DO YOU RECOMMEND?

A. AS PRESIDENT, I HAVE CALLED FOR THE ENACTMENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE CRIMINAL CODE TO REPLACE THE HIGHLY COMPLEX AND CONFUSING SET OF LAWS NOW ON THE BOOKS. TO KEEP A CONVICTED CRIMINAL FROM COMMITTING MORE CRIMES WE MUST PUT HIM IN PRISON SO HE CANNOT HARM MORE LAW-ABIDING CITIZENS. TO BE EFFECTIVE, THIS PUNISHMENT MUST BE SWIFT AND CERTAIN.

I DISAGREE WITH THE CONCEPT OF SO-CALLED VICTIMLESS CRIME. IN MANY INSTANCES, ALTHOUGH IT MAY NOT BE POSSIBLE TO IDENTIFY A PARTICULAR INDIVIDUAL WHO IS THE VICTIM, SOCIETY ITSELF IS OFTEN THE VICTIM. FOR EXAMPLE, PROSTITUTION IS A MAJOR SOURCE OF INCOME FOR ORGANIZED CRIME. AND CLEARLY DRUG ABUSE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR MOST OF THE MORE VIOLENT CRIMES IN AMERICA TODAY.

SOCIETY HAS MADE A JUDGMENT THAT THESE ACTIVITIES ARE ILLEGAL AND I FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT THOSE CONVICTED OF SUCH OFFENSES SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO JUSTICE. THE LAW MUST BE FAIRLY, BUT FIRMLY, ENFORCED. MORE IMPORTANTLY, THESE OFFENSES THREATEN THE MORAL FIBER OF OUR NATION.

Q. SOME POLITICAL OBSERVERS FEEL THAT FOR THE FIRST TIME IN OVER A DECADE RELIGION HAS BECOME AN ISSUE IN A PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN. HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THIS EMPHASIS ON THE RELIGIOUS VIEWS OF CANDIDATES?

A. I BELIEVE A CANDIDATE'S PERSONAL RELIGION IS A PROPER CONCERN FOR VOTERS WHEN THEY ARE CHOOSING THEIR PRESIDENT.

IF I AM ASKED ABOUT MY BELIEFS, I WILL RESPOND FOR I AM PROUD OF THE CONVICTIONS I HOLD.



Q. IF YOU ARE ELECTED TO A FULL, FOUR-YEAR TERM, WHAT IS YOUR FOREMOST HOPE FOR AMERICA?

A. MY HOPE IS THAT IN WORKING TOGETHER WE CAN BUILD AN AMERICA THAT DOES NOT MERELY CELEBRATE HISTORY, BUT WRITES IT -- THAT OFFERS LIMITED GOVERNMENT AND UNLIMITED OPPORTUNITY -- THAT CONCERNS ITSELF WITH A QUALITY OF LIFE MARKED BY STRONG AND FREE RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS, HOMES WHICH NURTURE THE YOUNG, WEAVING A STRONG MORAL FIBRE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS, AN AMERICA WHERE THE OTHER BASIC INSTITUTIONS IN EDUCATION AND INDUSTRY ARE SOLIDLY GROUNDED AND PRODUCTIVE FOR THE GOOD OF ALL WHO LIVE IN THIS GREAT LAND.

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