

**The original documents are located in Box 38, folder “Ford, Betty - Gun Control” of the Sheila Weidenfeld Files at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

10-29-75

FROM: Dick Parsons  
Associate Director and Counsel  
Domestic Council

TO: Sally Quennoville

☐ Action  
☐ Comments and Return  
☐ Let's Discuss  
☐ Direct Response  
☐ Draft Response  
☐ FYI  
☒ Per our discussion



## OUTLINE OF THE PRESIDENT'S HANDGUN LEGISLATION

### The President's Handgun Bill would:

- Ban the import, domestic manufacture and sale of cheap, highly concealable handguns -- "Saturday Night Specials" -- which have no apparent use other than against human beings;
- Restrict the issuance of Federal licenses to bona fide gun dealers;
- Restrict multiple sales of handguns (authorizing the purchase of no more than one handgun within a 30-day period);
- Impose a 14-day waiting period between the purchase and receipt of a handgun, during which time the dealer can check to determine whether the purchaser may lawfully own a handgun;
- Require the dealer to take reasonable steps to ensure that the purchaser of a handgun is not prohibited from possessing it under State or applicable local law; and
- Require the imposition of a mandatory minimum term of imprisonment on any person convicted of using a handgun in the commission of a Federal offense.

### The President's Handgun Bill would not:

- Require a Federal license to purchase a handgun;
- Require that handguns be registered with the Federal government;
- Prohibit law-abiding citizens from possessing handguns;
- Authorize the Federal government to keep records of everyone who buys handguns; or
- Apply to possession of long guns.



*Quote Card Made  
10/31/75*

N-4

integration, Senator John Tower (R-Tex.) said Monday. AP, UPI, NBC, CBS (10/27/75)

Presidency: News

Ford To Nominate New Chief Of Labor's Wage And Hour Division

President Ford intends to nominate Ronald J. James, a Chicago attorney, to be administrator of the wage and hour division of the Labor Department, sources announced Monday. James will succeed Betty Southard Murphy who became National Labors Relations Board chairman last February. -- UPI; (10/27/75)

Betty Ford Predicts More Interest In Handgun Control

First Lady Betty Ford has predicted increasing public interest in controlling the use of handguns. "I think that handgun control is going to be a much more popular issue now with all the things that have been happening, not just referring to my husband and his experience," she said Saturday after a speaking engagement in Cleveland. -- UPI (10/27/75)

Administration: News

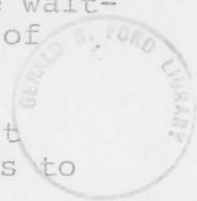
Ghost Of Ziegler Haunts Ron Nessen  
(Muriel Dobbin, excerpted, Baltimore Sun)

Thirteen months ago, Ronald H. Nessen, the new White House press secretary of the new Ford administration, said he hoped for a "trial reconciliation" with reporters rendered sullen and suspicious by the dishonesty dispensed by the Nixon administration during the Watergate scandal.

Unfortunately, instead of becoming reconciled to each other, President Ford's press secretary and the White House press corps appear to be on a collision course, a situation unlikely to expand public understanding of presidential policies.

Briefings at which the views of the President of the United States are supposed to be elicited and represented to the waiting world are rapidly degenerating into a daily exchange of kindergarten incivilities.

The press corps, gathered for the daily pounce, first groaned, then heckled. Not only were Mr. Nessen's efforts to



*File -*  
*Gun Control*  
*(Mrs. Ford)*



UP-032

R B

(VIOLENCE)

WASHINGTON (UPI) -- BETTY FORD PREDICTS THERE WILL BE INCREASING PUBLIC INTEREST IN THE ISSUE OF HANDGUN CONTROLS.

"I THINK THAT HANDGUN CONTROL IS GOING TO BE A MUCH MORE POPULAR ISSUE NOW WITH ALL OF THE THINGS THAT HAVE BEEN HAPPENING, NOT JUST REFERRING TO MY HUSBAND AND HIS EXPERIENCE," SHE SAID SATURDAY.

MRS. FORD ADDED THAT SHE HAD NO FEAR ABOUT HER HUSBAND'S PLANNED RETURN TO CALIFORNIA, WHERE HIS LIFE PREVIOUSLY WAS THREATENED BY TWO WOMEN CARRYING HANDGUNS.

"I THINK THAT ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN ANY PLACE AND I HAVE NO FEAR REALLY AS FAR AS CALIFORNIA IS CONCERNED," SHE COMMENTED AFTER A SPEAKING ENGAGEMENT IN CLEVELAND.

MRS. FORD DID NOT STATE HER OPINION ON HANDGUN LEGISLATION. PRESIDENT FORD OPPOSES GUN REGISTRATION.

THE U.S. CONFERENCE OF MAYORS, MEANWHILE, MOVED TO DISCREDIT THE POLITICAL POTENCY OF PRO-GUN LOBBY.

"MOST OF THE ALLEGED NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION VICTORIES OVER POLITICAL FOES CAN BE ATTRIBUTED TO FACTORS OTHER THAN THE ISSUE OF GUN CONTROLS," THE MAYORS' CONFERENCE SAID IN A 63-PAGE STUDY RELEASED OVER THE WEEKEND.

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*File card 10/31/75*  
*note made*

UP-145

(BETTY)

WASHINGTON (UPI) -- FIRST LADY BETTY FORD SAID TODAY HUNTERS AND COLLECTORS HAVE A RIGHT TO A "REGISTERED RIFLE" BUT DOUBTS HANDGUNS CAN BE BANISHED BECAUSE OF THE "BLACK MARKET."

MRS. FORD WAS ASKED BY UPI FOR HER VIEWS ON GUN CONTROL AFTER SHE TOLD REPORTERS LAST SATURDAY THAT SHE EXPECTED IT WOULD BE AN ISSUE IN THE PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGNS. NOT UNCHARACTERISTICALLY, SHE DIFFERED FROM HER HUSBAND SOMEWHAT ON THE ISSUE.

FORD IS UNALTERABLY OPPOSED TO A BAN ON HANDGUNS OR ANY REGISTRATION OF GUNS, BUT HAS PROPOSED THAT CHEAP PISTOLS BE OUTLAWED.

"I'M NOT SURE YOU CAN OUTLAW SATURDAY NIGHT SPECIALS," MRS. FORD SAID. "I THINK LEGISLATORS WILL TAKE A LONGER AND HARDER LOOK AT THE BILL ON HANDGUNS. THERE'S BEEN A RASH OF INEXCUSABLE KILLINGS AND LEGISLATORS SHOULD BE VERY CONCERNED."

"I REALIZE, HOWEVER, THERE WILL BE A PROBLEM WITH THE BLACK MARKET IF YOU BAN GUNS. I FEEL LIKE ITS PROHIBITION, IF YOU WANT TO GET GUNS THEY PROBABLY CAN THROUGH A BLACK MARKET. I THINK GUN COLLECTORS OR HUNTERS HAVE A RIGHT TO A REGISTERED RIFLE. BUT NOW IT SEEMS WE HAVE INDISCRIMINATE SALES ACROSS THE COUNTRY."

IN OTHER AREAS, MRS. FORD SAYS SHE WILL NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE WOMAN'S STRIKE TOMORROW BECAUSE SHE HAS OTHER "COMMITMENTS" AND HAS TO CATCH UP ON HER WORK.

UPI 10-28 06:59 PES



UP-146

R R

*Supposed to Congress on gun  
Dick Parsons 2562*