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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

THE PRESIDENT'S BRIEFING BOOK

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

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FOR: WISCONSIN

APRIL 2-3, 1976

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ECONOMY

GENERAL DOMESTIC



## STALEMATE GOVERNMENT

Q. Unless there is a massive political shift , which looks unlikely, we are certain to have a divided government - Democratic controlled Congress, Republican President - if you are elected in November. Do you believe that is an effective way to run the government? Do you have any way, besides vetoes, of working with Congress, of getting legislation which will begin to solve some of our nation's problems?

A. I believe our governmental system has certain drawbacks but by and large it is the best system in the world to provide balanced leadership for the country. I would hope that the American people would attempt to remedy this situation by electing more Republicans to the Congress to work with the Republican President.

I have consistently attempted to work with Congress to pass legislation which is needed. There have been successes but far too many impasses. I think the Executive and Legislative branches must always work diligently to provide constructive solutions through give and take and compromise. I believe if we keep the nation's best interests at heart and not let personalities or partisanship get in the way, we can improve our batting average. There is no easy answer, only hard work.

## SOUTHERN STRATEGY

Q. Many political commentators have said your loss in North Carolina revealed your weakness in the South. Do you agree with this assessment, and do you have a Southern strategy for victory if you are nominated in Kansas City?

A. I believe that the North Carolina primary indicated a weakness in North Carolina. I don't agree that you can lump the South into one homogenous group that does everything alike. My strategy is to actively seek the support of voters in every southern state on the issues and the performance of my Administration. I believe if the people look at that record, the majority will decide to vote for me both in the primaries and Party conventions and in the general election in November.



## PRIVATE MAIL CARRIERS

Q: With the U. S. Postal Service in such a mess, do you support the bills that have been introduced in Congress to repeal the ban on private firms carrying first class mail so that we can get some competition and, perhaps, lower costs?

A: Some critics of the U. S. Postal Service have proposed that the interests of consumers would be better served if the Private Express Statutes, which guarantee the Postal Service a monopoly over first class mail, were repealed. While it is arguable that some consumers might benefit from the resulting competition, it is also possible that others in less populous areas might suffer a decline in service, or to forestall this additional Federal subsidies would have to be given to the Postal Service to maintain uneconomic routes. This latter step would violate the fundamental principle of the Reorganization Act of 1970 that mail users should pay for the service they receive.

I, therefore, do not believe that the repeal of the Private Express Statutes would be advisable at this time and that any solution for improvement of mail service or rate reduction requires extensive review by both the Administration and the Congress before drastic action is taken.

### Background

Secretary Simon and other Administration officials have publicly questioned the validity of maintaining the Private Express Statutes. At the request of the Postal Rate Commission, the Council on Wage and Price Stability filed a report which called for additional study of the impact of abolition of the Private Express Statutes.

Currently an OMB-led Administration task force is working with the Postal Service to examine ways of improving mail service. Review of the Private Express Statute is one facet of this study.

FLM  
4/1/76

## MAGNA CARTA

- Q. Mr. President: Did you pressure the Congress to send 25 of its members to pick up a copy of the Magna Carta in England? That seems like an excessive number.
- A. The decision to send 25 members of the Congress to England to bring back the Magna Carta was a decision reached by the Congress and not by me or anyone in my Administration. While there has been talk about the need to improve the consultation process between the White House and Congress, the question of Congressional travel has not been suggested as a topic of such discussion.

SGM  
4/1/76