

The original documents are located in Box 120, folder “Politics” of the Ron Nessen Papers 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. Ron Nessen donated to the United States of America his copyrights in all of his unpublished writings in National Archives collections.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.

PRESIDENT: The best thing I can do for any political benefit is to do the best job right here in this office and it seems to me, with all of the problems we have, both at home and abroad, if I do a good job here, the political benefit will be automatic.

I don't think it is the right time, therefore, to start generating a political effort.

The minute I do that, establish a committee and raise money and get an organization going, then perhaps some of the decisions I make here on nonpolitical matters become suspect. People start to say, Well, he is a candidate officially. He decided this because there is a political benefit to gain.

I would rather push aside for the time being any perception that what I do in the decision-making process is related to an affirmative candidacy.

So, I will put that off as long as I can, the establishment of an organization, because I think its existence would tend to undermine the credibility of whatever decisions I make.

175

POLITICS

Q: How soon will you announce that a political committee has been established to elect the President?

A: I don't think I will ever make that announcement. And judging from what the President said in his interview with the Los Angeles Times, it will be some time before the decision is made to create such a committee. I also noticed that Bob Hartmann was quoted as saying that he didn't think a decision has been made, and I think he would know. I would refer anyone who has political questions to Bob, since that is his area of responsibility.

Q: Does the President meet with political groups when he's making the various trips around the country?

A: The President meets with many people from ~~various~~ various walks of life. He talks with local government leaders, private citizens and even some state and local political officials.

Q: Why don't you announce it when he meets with political people?

A: The President usually tries to set aside a few hours when he's on these ~~trip~~ trips to take care of any personal business he might like to conduct. Any private meetings that occur during that period are not announced.

Q: Didn't you once say that if any part of a trip was political, all of the cost of the trip would be paid for by the Republican National Committee?

A: I believe I said that if a trip included a political event, such as a speech at a fund-raising dinner or an appearance on behalf of a candidate, then the RNC would pay for the trip, even if non-political events also were scheduled. I hardly think that a private chat with a few Republican chairmen constitutes an event of that nature.