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OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT
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TV TAPING WITH JOHN LINDSEY
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AT THE INDIANAPOLIS CONVENTION CENTER
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(2:28 P.M. EST)

MR. LINDSEY: First of all, Mr. Vice President, do you get the feeling that you are surrounded by John Lindsey?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: That is a very happy experience.

MR. LINDSEY: Thank you very much.

As the overseer of the Domestic Council, you are also charged with preparing right now the options of the State of the Union address in January. What do you find are the primary issues in the country today?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: It depends, of course, which group you are talking about. If you are talking about State and local government, their concern is the tremendous number of individual programs, each designed to help some special group, but each having its own bureaucratic structure, its own regulations.

You can get help for the program if you improve and enrich your own programs, even if you are spending more money than you should. Then you are tied up in all kinds of red tape.

State and local government feel very strongly, and I share that feeling, that they would like to see this 1,006 programs which exists -- the Federal programs are growing all the time -- cut back and put into blocks. So that you get maybe five or six programs in the field of health or education or something which take the major areas instead of having 150 in that area, which causes the State and the local governments to set up all kinds of bureaucratic structures themselves filling out forms. You have inspectors.

In other words, we are getting our society so complex -- the cost of these things is becoming so great that we are already facing a Federal deficit this year of \$70 billion, \$60 billion or \$70 billion. That is with local government.

They want more responsibility placed back in State and local government and they are willing to accept it. They have the capacity. I think this is one area.

If you get into the business community, their concern is regulations, again of a different kind, though, where there are administered procedures -- because the laws are so complicated, you have to have administrators to set the

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standards and those are constantly changed. So business and industry and individuals can't tell if you make an investment, if the rules have been changed, then the amount of the investment you just find would be lost instead of a successful operation.

MR. LINDSEY: One of the issues you are concerned with, that is the issue of energy --

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Yes, sir.

MR. LINDSEY: I feel that the public is aware of the problem but is yet not concerned.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: That is very understandable. This is a problem of communications. I think you are absolutely right. The reason they aren't concerned is because there isn't a scarcity at the present time. The reason is we are importing 40 percent of our oil from abroad. We are paying five times now, almost six times as much for that oil as we did two years ago. They just increased the price 10 percent. This 40 percent cost the taxpayers on foreign exchange about close to \$30 billion.

The President's position is: let's become self-sufficient in energy. Let's produce this energy here at home.

We have been blessed with natural resources, oil, shale oil, atomic energy capacity. We have the resources in abundance. Instead of spending \$30 billion for importing, to pay somebody else, why not employ American labor that would take about a million workers to do that job.

MR. LINDSEY: This leads us to the energy independence authority?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Exactly -- which is to get this country rolling, really. If we don't have energy, we are not only vulnerable from a national security point of view, we can be blackmailed or have a cutoff and throw the economy into chaos. Or we could have the cost so great and the uncertainty as to price that the expansion of our industrial life would be limited. Therefore, you won't have the jobs.

MR. LINDSEY: Mr. Vice President, let me turn to this: We have done an ascertainment study that shows in our upcoming election for mayor. It is crime and law enforcement.

People are stunned and dazed at the growth and magnitude of the problem. Where can they turn?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: This is a very complex and difficult subject. As a Governor for 15 years, I tried to deal with this. There are two. One of the basic forces that encourages and really drives people to crime are drugs. People who get hooked on hard drugs and who don't have any means of splitting the habit, rob and steal day in and day out.

We figure that this cost in robberies and muggings about \$6 billion a year in New York State alone.

I tried for 10 or 12 years to go the route of helping cure those that are hooked, through treatment. There has been

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a great deal of State money and we took care of a great many people.

The tragedy was after they were so-called cured they went back, 80 percent of them, to drugs. Then we shifted and went to the course of really hard laws against pushing.

MR. LINDSEY: Were they successful?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: They were, as long as the police force arrested the pushers and the sharers.

I know we increased the number of courts. We got authorization for 100 new courts, and all the parts of the courts, judges and so forth, because everybody said we clogged the courts. I cut off pay boarding. We had a mandatory life sentence, not life imprisonment, but life sentence for anybody caught pushing or sharing drugs. It had a very severe effect for a while.

There is so much money in this business that the corruption is such that slowly the arrests weren't being made. An interesting thing, they said the jurors wouldn't convict them. That was wrong. The jurors were the best thing we had. They were tough because they all knew just the way you are saying about the people's feelings here. Those juries felt the same. They wanted to see these people paying for their crimes.

MR. LINDSEY: Talking about money and the problems -- just talking about New York City, I know your position is the government should not simply pick up the check for New York. However, New York Governor Carey says if we don't it will be a disaster.

Are we in a position of damned if we do and damned if we don't?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: No, I don't think so. I feel cities are creatures of the State. The State has acted. They set up a commission, a board to approve the city's budget for the next three years that will guarantee the budget on a balanced basis.

Okay, if they actually do this, and if this board has the muscle and if the city can carry out the program, then the city would be on its way back to solvency.

In the process, after they have taken the action, there may be the need for some help over this three-year period before their credit is reestablished in the country. They have got these short term notes that resolve the deficit that they have to settle.

MR. LINDSEY: You are talking about establishing credit in the country. What do you find the national attitudes are about government politics, the specific parties? Are they turned off or turned on to our policy?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: There has been a tremendous amount of cynicism which is unfortunate. I think it is partly Vietnam and partly Watergate, and the fact I think

we partly over-promised and under-delivered. We raised expectations and we didn't fulfill them.

I say "we" in the sense of politicians and elected officials. It was all in good faith, but we just thought we could do more than we have the money to do. We find we can't do it. There has been a period of real cynicism. As you say, people are turned off.

I think that is beginning to change. I think the expectations are now getting back to reality.

MR. LINDSEY: What is your comment on the President's popularity has stayed the same even though recent weeks of campaigning have occurred? Is this reflected in the turn-off, that they don't care?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: He hasn't been campaigning as much as he has been going out to fund raising dinners to help his party raise some money to pay off debts. That is, I don't think he has been campaigning in the sense that you say.

What I think his popularity relates to are the issues and the ability for him to help get the solutions to those problems.

As the problems are solved, the economy has started to pick up. There are 1.4 million more people working now than there were in May. This is what people want. There is still need for about 2.6 million more jobs to get back to what is known as full employment.

Then there is going to be a need for 1.4 million, 1.5 million or 1.6 million jobs a year for the people coming out of school, in college. That takes a growing economy. People worry about growth and the ecology. Therefore, that has to be balanced out and it can be.

He knows there has to be energy if there is going to be growth. He wants to have that produced here in the United States. In other words, this is a complicated, interrelated situation. I think we are getting ahold of it. I think things are getting around. I am optimistic about the future.

MR. LINDSEY: I don't want to take your time and belabor points, you have stated your position. You are not going to state your position on the Vice Presidency for 1976?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: That is very simple. I am not a candidate and I think the President ought to select his running mate after he is nominated. He ought to be totally free to pick a person at that time whom he feels is the right one for the job.

MR. LINDSEY: Are you quoted correctly that you didn't mind if you were not the Vice President in 1976? Is that in any way a shift on not announcing the position?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I didn't say it in those words. I said I am totally relaxed, whatever the President decides. Whatever he wants, that is fine with me, because

I have great confidence. I figure you can serve your country in lots of different ways. That is all I am interested in.

MR. LINDSEY: They continue to insist you are vigorously campaigning.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Everybody is entitled to their own opinions. What I am doing is doing the same thing the President is doing, going to fund raising occasions to help the party. You can't go there and not say anything. You have to say something. So I talk about the programs of the President, what he is doing, and the way he is facing the difficult questions which this Nation has to deal with.

I think he is a man of tremendous courage and great integrity. That is what we need.

MR. LINDSEY: A comment briefly on the news item of former President Nixon wanting to return to public life in six months, perhaps in the role of a commentator or something of that nature.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: That is not a political thing. That would be, I think, up to one of the TV stations to see whether they would take him on as a commentator.

MR. LINDSEY: You are well-known for a fine sense of humor. We always talk about the deep issues and the heavy things. But you always have a ready smile.

What has touched that sense of humor and brought forth that ready smile?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Well, that is a good question. I have to think about that. After the announcement was one. I have a mansion and Happy and the Admiral's house. We have had a series of housewarmings to thank you for giving the Vice President a house or making it available to him. They took it from the Navy. There was the Chief of Naval Operations. Every time an Admiral comes to the house, or Naval official, I apologize to them for taking the house.

It is a lovely place. She did a beautiful job in fixing it. I expect to be back here.

MR. LINDSEY: I wanted to ask you about that. You will be back in Indianapolis on November 25 with a White House forum, the type you just had in Denver yesterday, and it will be open to the public.

Are you looking forward to that?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Yes. We want to get, and the President wants to get through the Domestic Council, the public's participation in what do they feel are the changes that would make their Federal Government more effective on the domestic scene, how can they get the things that are needed more efficiently with less bureaucracy, less red tape, less confusion and complexity.

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How can Washington make it possible for State government, local government, to have greater responsibility without all of this delay that results in our society and how does private enterprise do its thing without the complexities which grow out of a lot of things in Washington?

These are the questions which we want to discuss. On the other hand, how we more effectively meet the needs of the people who can't meet their own needs.

The President is deeply concerned about people who have problems through unemployment due to illness, due to whatever it is. There is a wonderful opportunity to readjust the structure of our government to meet the changing times.

MR. LINDSEY: You are working on the Bicentennial. Are you excited and enthusiastic about the Nation's response to it? Is it good?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Well, it is. I think it is wonderful to take strength and heart and inspiration from our past, which is extraordinary.

I think the challenge is how do we assure our coming generations the same kind of opportunities which we have enjoyed that we will have the wisdom to structure our society and conduct ourselves so that their future will be equally bright and that we can achieve new opportunities and scale new mountains, as it were, for the future just as this country has in the past.

I hope a lot of people will come to that and it will be open to the public. We have sort of a free exchange during the course of the day on these subjects.

MR. LINDSEY: Mr. Vice President, thank you for your time.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: You are very kind. Thank you for letting me be with you. I am delighted. Best of luck.

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(AT 2:45 P.M. EST)