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REMARKS OF THE VICE PRESIDENT  
AT THE  
NATIONAL PRESS CLUB  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

(AT 1:05 P.M. EST)

MR. ALDEN: I am Robert Alden of The Washington Post, President of the National Press Club. Once again it is my privilege to welcome you to this important news forum. Those of you here at the National Press Club and those listening to one of the 182 stations of national public radio that carry the Press Club speaker lunches.

Guests here in Washington are invited to submit questions on the cards that are found at your tables. Please pass them along to the head table and they will be asked of the Vice President as time permits.

Before introducing our speaker today, I would like to make known to you some of the distinguished guests seated at the head table among Club officers and members of the speakers committee. To my left, the wife of the Vice President, Mrs. Happy Rockefeller.

(Applause)

MR. ALDEN: To my right, the Vice President's Chief of Staff, who is making her first public appearance in this position, Mrs. Christian A. Herter, Jr.

(Applause)

MR. ALDEN: The Counselor to the Vice President, former Governor of Pennsylvania, the Honorable Raymond P. Shafer.

(Applause)

MR. ALDEN: Counselor to the Vice President and former Under Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, Mr. John E. Veneman

(Applause)

MR. ALDEN: Counsel to the Vice President, Mr. Peter Wallison.

(Applause)

MR. ALDEN: Assistant to the Vice President and Press Secretary, a long-time member of the National Press Club and a coauthor of that classic "Dateline Washington," Mr. Hugh Morrow.

(Applause)

MR. ALDEN: Nelson Aldrich Rockefeller and the National Press Club have one very important distinction in common. Both were born in 1908, Theodore Roosevelt's last year as President, Nelson Aldrich's last term as U. S. Senator from Rhode Island,

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and Walter Johnson's first full season as a pitcher for the Washington Senators.

(Applause)

MR. ALDEN: Some critics of Rockefeller and the Press Club have said we have been around too long. But the Vice President's family doctor a few months ago revealed that an independent laboratory study of Rockefeller's annual checkup showed him to be only 40.

(Laughter)

MR. ALDEN: I have no report from any doctor asserting that the National Press Club has the body of a much younger man. But an associate of the Vice President by the name of Gerald Ford told me only two weeks ago that he had paid his annual dues for National Press Club membership and hoped his check wouldn't bounce. Mr. Ford, like every President since T. R., is a member of this club.

This week through next Tuesday, the nation is turning its attention to New Hampshire and the presidential primaries taking place there. Nelson Rockefeller knows well the pitfalls of New Hampshire.

In fact, our speaker knows New Hampshire better than most of us. It was just a half century ago that Nelson Rockefeller matriculated to Dartmouth in beautiful Hanover. He immediately made himself well known as the freshman most in demand to beat rugs and move furniture for upper classmen and easily endured the indoctrination to undergraduate life.

Especially noted for his outstanding spelling, which almost caused him to flunk English, Nelson went on to become a member of the varsity soccer team, a Senior Fellow and president of both The Arts and the Dartmouth Pictorial.

There is no need for me to tell you about his brilliant careers in business and public life. His service as Inter-American Coordinator under FDR, his work in the Eisenhower Administration and his 15 years as Governor of New York are well known to you as well as his bids to become President of the United States.

You are familiar with his appointment as Vice President, the second such in U. S. history, and the extraordinary confirmation hearings. A few months ago he withdrew from consideration as vice presidential running mate in 1976 to give President Ford the widest sort of latitude as a candidate.

This withdrawal came after the Vice President had been subjected to another round of abuse that few politicians in America have withstood so valiantly and so often. No American alive on July 14, 1964, who followed the National Republican Convention at San Francisco that year, will ever forget the platform fight that began at midnight Eastern time.

In 11 remarkable minutes, Nelson Rockefeller faced one of the most hostile national convention audiences that a potential presidential candidate has had to endure in our two centuries as a nation. He was speaking in support of a minority amendment made by Senator Hugh Scott of Pennsylvania

that defended the right of dissent in a free society but repudiated the extremism of the far left and far right, namely Communism, the Ku Klux Klan and the John Birch Society. Rockefeller earnestly defended his point of view, but was interrupted many times as his vociferous opponents tried to force him from the platform with their jeers.

At one point, Chairman Thruston Morton, having virtually lost control of the convention, almost yielded to the mob. Rockefeller told Morton that the crowd actions were not his fault, and urged Morton to control the audience and he would continue his speech.

After furious pounding of the gavel by Morton, order was somewhat restored. Finally, Rockefeller was able to speak again. "This is still a free country, ladies and gentlemen," he said, as he tried to go on. Every phrase, every sentence by Rockefeller brought new waves of shouts and jeers from that convention. Finally, after 10 minutes, Chairman Morton said he was sorry but that Rockefeller's time was up.

Platform chairman Melvin Laird then yielded another minute to Rockefeller and Morton again pleaded with the convention, pointing out that the Governor of New York had been at the microphone for 10 minutes but had been able to speak for only four.

In spite of continued harassment, he finally finished. Those 11 minutes severely shook the Republican Party that year, highlighting a split that existed so sharply at no other time since the Bull Moose debacle in 1912.

The scars of July 14, 1964, have never fully healed and that may explain why Nelson Rockefeller has not yet become President of the United States.

But he displayed a profile in courage that will never be forgotten.

It is indeed my privilege to present to you the Vice President of the United States, Nelson A. Rockefeller.

(Standing ovation)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thanks very much, Bob. You are a very generous man in your interpretation. I appreciate it. You bring back some very exciting moments. The only thing I can say is that, far more eloquent than anything I was trying to say at that convention was the response. They made my point for me. We can't stand extremism of either the right or the left in this country. The American people are the center. What we are all interested in is getting rolling again.

(Applause)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I would like to thank Milt for his invitation and to thank all of the distinguished members of the National Press Club who are on the dais and in the audience and those wonderful associates of mine who are here, and say how thrilled Happy and I are to be back here with all of you.

It is a pleasure always to meet with representatives of the Fourth Estate, and especially with members of the National Press Corps who contribute so much to the spice of political life.

Thank you for your many kindnesses and courtesies. And like other public officials, I appreciate your analyses, interpretations and diagnoses of my actions, motivations and state of mind.

(Laughter)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: According to your current reporting, this 41st Vice President is relaxed. I agree -- if you mean physically and if you mean I am not running a temperature because of Potomac Fever. Indeed, I enjoy an immunity to that malady after several bouts with the virus itself.

You are not correct, however, if you mean that I am relaxed about the condition of the Nation and the problems that confront us. I am not. This is the principal reason I welcome this opportunity to be with you.

A distinguished predecessor of mine in this high office I hold, Thomas R. Marshall, said "This Country Needs a Good Five Cent Cigar." I think what this country needs today is a good loud alarm clock -- that will wake it from its lethargy and get it going on time to meet its problems.

(Applause)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Unfortunately, we are again witnessing that national election year practice of putting off until tomorrow what we should be doing today.

We are not having an informed debate on the grave issues that face this nation, that face America today -- energy, employment, inflation, transportation, crime, national defense, foreign policy, food and agriculture, health protections, reform of social welfare programs, problems of our cities, and other serious questions. We are not really examining the strengths of our society and discussing how to maximize them and utilize them to bridge our shortcomings.

In the plethora of primaries, we are witnessing mostly personality contests -- candidacies based not on party programs or issues but on personalities and promises. "With malice toward none and charity to all," they do not evoke the image of the Lincoln-Douglas debates.

This is, of course, not surprising, but it is disappointing. It is a matter of concern, not in itself so much, but as an evidence of the much greater and more serious question of the fractionalization of our governmental and political system.

Concern is being expressed, and with merit, over the ability of democratic government to really govern here at home and function effectively abroad if the splintering continues. It is becoming more and more difficult to identify authority and to focus responsibility in our government and in our party structure.

In a world that requires adaptation to rapid change, decisive action is becoming increasingly difficult to achieve and certainty of policies already enumerated more hazardous to assure.

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It is time we as a Nation give major attention to the basic problems. We should seek ways to shape and strengthen our governmental and political structures so as to promote the kind of political consensus upon which democracy depends and to insure governmental capacity to perform upon which our national survival depends.

This is no mean task: We have had piecemeal government and piecemeal politics for a long time now.

The founders of our country generally subscribed to a role for government that would establish a rule of order and a framework of policies in which individual and private activity would have wide freedom to pursue their own interests. They looked to "a government of law, not of men."

The role of government, however, was not just negative, nor passive. They looked to government from the early days of the Republic to encourage economic growth through positive government action -- national roads, postal services, granting homesteads on government lands and other public works and services.

They expected government to provide a climate for development, and to set the basic legal guidelines, legal guidelines, for economic activity. But they did not expect that individuals' lives would be subject to detailed regulation by government.

Quite the reverse -- and hence there was real appeal in that phrase of Thomas Jefferson's, "That government governs best which governs least."

By contrast, for some considerable time now there has been a looking to government for the answers to most of our social and economic problems. This has taken the form of requests for more and more detailed and restrictive regulations. In addition, there has been an insistent and rising demand for government to provide more and more services -- traditionally the province of private, voluntary and individual effort.

Thus, government is being looked at not just as the source of the rules of law and the umpire to assure their fair application but more and more as a provider of goods, services and money. Indeed, we are living in a period when groups organize to get "theirs," so to speak, and governmental processes resemble a contest among these groups for who gets what and when. It is as though the old slogan "Uncle Sam Needs You" was reversed to "You Need Uncle Sam."

In this process, the pressures of special interest groups make it increasingly difficult to achieve the kind of compromise and consensus necessary to operate democratic government. It is demonstrated in the field of domestic legislation -- witness the stalemate on energy.

It is demonstrated in the field of foreign policy, where the Congress, in response to such pressures, is seriously limiting the ability of the President to deal with key issues in international relations. It is dramatically illustrated in the difficulty of holding down Federal spending, controlling Federal deficits, and having a rational Federal fiscal policy.

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operations. But again, if it needed to be demonstrated, we have now proved that Congressional committees are not the vehicles for handling of confidential intelligence information relating to national security -- and are hardly in a position to direct intelligence activity.

The relationship of the Presidency and the Congress in foreign affairs must be one of mutual understanding. But it must not tie the President's hands in the difficult tasks of world affairs today. This requires also a recognition by the people and the Congress that not all members will necessarily approve, condone or support the foreign policy of the United States as any President may conduct it.

The Congress has a formidable task to organize itself for both foreign and domestic policy to carry out its grave and far-reaching responsibilities in the national interest.

Here, too, power has been dispersed and thereby special interests or the interests of a minority of the people have thereby been given far greater weight. To find focal points of authority and responsibility within the Congress is more difficult now than heretofore. Competition, overlap and duplication of Congressional committees adds to the confusion. If seniority and the old traditions are not to be hallmarks of authority, then some other means must be found.

This brings us to consideration of the Executive Branch and the huge administrative machinery of the Federal Government. In the town meetings I have been conducting around the country for President Ford, I found a universal outcry at all levels against Federal Government bureaucracy and red tape. Frankly, both Congress and the Executive had better begin to do something about it. The number of forms people have to fill out, the number of permissions they have to obtain, the difficulties they have in getting answers to their questions are stifling initiatives throughout this country and building up a resentment that may well be felt at the polls.

The people are right. Why should our Federal tax laws be so complicated that the average citizen can't fill out his own return? Why should we have to pay someone to do it for him out of its complexity or fear that he may make a mistake and get into serious trouble.

Why has the number of lawyers in the Federal Government increased 180 percent since 1970? Why has the number of Federal Government accountants gone from 47,000 to 75,000 in this same five-year period?

As a society, we are getting so paranoid, so fearful of entrusting power to act to anyone, that we may face paralysis. This may be what has happened to our political parties. Our major parties served a real purpose over the years by uniting different groups, encompassing different regions of the Nation and helping bring about compromise on difficult issues.

They have been eroded by special interests and by candidacies who owe their being not to party affiliation or activity but to individual special interest identification.

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We can meet all these problems. But first we need to wake up and eliminate the thought that somehow, some way we will make it -- with someone else doing the heavy lifting.

Let's face the facts. We have been on a national negative kick for four years. We have been looking backward and we have been rehashing the past. It is time we face the future. It is time to determine our enlightened national self-interest. It is time to realize the opportunities are there if we would but have the will to grasp them. It is time that we all devote our energies to positive efforts for this third century.

And that is what I am going to talk about in the weeks ahead. I sure hope others do too.

Thank you very much.

(Applause, standing ovation)

MR. ALDEN: Mr. Vice President, this may go down in history as your alarm clock speech at the National Press Club.

(Laughter)

"If Reagan overwhelms President Ford, causing him to abandon his candidacy, will you enter the race to become the Republican presidential candidate?"

THE VICE PRESIDENT: For one, I don't think that is going to happen. I think President Ford is going to win New Hampshire. He is going to win Florida. He is going to win Illinois and going on to get the nomination. So this is a free country still?

(Laughter, applause)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: And I don't visualize any possibilities of my becoming a candidate.

MR. ALDEN: One other of a number of other questioners who think you might run for President also asked, "If elected, will you move into the White House?"

(Laughter)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I would have to consider that.

MR. ALDEN: And now there are a number of questions about your Vice Presidential potential.

"If Gerald Ford or Ronald Reagan urge you to be the Republican Vice Presidential candidate in the next election, would you accept?" Somebody else proposed "A John Connally-Nelson Rockefeller combination."

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Those are two different subjects.

(Laughter)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: The answer to the first is no. The answer to the second is I don't visualize any possibility of it.

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MR. ALDEN: This one sounds like it came from Senator Proxmire.

"In view of the Administration's economy moves in spending, do you think it was wise for the Navy Department to spend over \$500,000 to renovate a home for the Vice President of the United States?"

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Well, the Congress voted for it. It wasn't \$500,000. It was \$380,000, which was done before we came on the scene and before I was confirmed. I have to say to you that one of the conditions the leadership of the Congress made was that we would furnish the house and make use of it. We have done that.

(Laughter)

MR. ALDEN: There are some questions here on world travelers. There are several questions asking about "your view of Mr. Nixon's second trip to Peking."

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I think it speaks for itself.

(Laughter, applause)

MR. ALDEN: "Do you think President Ford asked you to travel overseas next month simply to be out of the country during the period of the primaries and political campaigns?"

THE VICE PRESIDENT: You would have to ask Bo Callaway.

(Laughter)

MR. ALDEN: "What do you think of the future of your friend, Secretary Kissinger, and his policy of detente now that both he and his foreign policy are under attack?"

THE VICE PRESIDENT: First, I would say I think he is the greatest Secretary of State this country has ever had. Secondly, I would say that he has problems.

(Laughter)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thirdly, I would say that detente is, as he conceived it, grossly misunderstood and resulted in a lot of people thinking that the conflict was over and you could relax as far as the Soviets and their ambitions were concerned.

That was not the concept which he had. He recognized very wisely the dangers, the perils of nuclear conflict and international confrontation between the two major powers. Therefore this procedure was developed to create a framework within which those could be avoided.

But, as Mr. Khrushchev himself has said, this in no way affects their dedication to their long-term aspirations and efforts to achieve world domination for international Communism. I think we have to look at it realistically and take the necessary steps. I think there is a lot more that we have to do that we are not doing if we want to preserve freedom in the world.

(Applause)

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MR. ALDEN: "Do you believe much of Congress' interference in foreign policy has grown out of Secretary Kissinger's personal super secret conduct of foreign affairs?"

THE VICE PRESIDENT: No, I really don't. I think it goes back much more to what I was talking about -- special groups, special interest groups that relate to the individual Congressman's election and the fact that each individual Congressman thinks that he or she has to be responsible for foreign policy and that if it doesn't conform to his or her concepts, then they will introduce resolutions which, if there is enough support from special interest groups, will get passed.

MR. ALDEN: "You have endeavored to move the Nation forward to meet the energy problem without success. The Administration or Federal Energy Administration energy policy is a disaster. What can be done?" The questioner asks, "What can be done to get a new Federal energy Administrator and really get on with the job that needs to be done?"

THE VICE PRESIDENT: In my opinion, this is the key to the future of getting our economy rolling, protecting our security as a Nation, and not being subject to international blackmail. It can be very easily done by the passage of the President's Energy Independence Act. He made this a national goal a year and two months ago, when he made his major first State of the Union Address.

Just as one goes back to the history of this country, the railroads weren't built across the United States by private enterprise and a free market. It was because the government gave them the land. The automobile industry wasn't developed in this Nation to be the greatest force in our economy by itself. It was done because the Federal Government built the highways. You go right down the line. The aviation industry, with the aviation production in this country for commercial planes, is only the result of billions of dollars of Federal money spent for research on military planes which was then turned over and used by commercial.

Therefore, in my opinion if we want to achieve our national security through energy independence -- and God has given us the human resources and the natural resources -- it needs government to take those high risk areas and give them the support that is necessary.

A hundred billion dollars RFC type of investment bank for energy is essential. It must come, and it is just a question of when.

MR. ALDEN: "What is the main difference between the Executive Branch and Congress as regards the energy problem?"

THE VICE PRESIDENT: If you had left off "the energy problem," there is getting to be less difference all the time. But when you add the energy problem, the difference is that politicians in a political year -- and there are a lot of people who want to see this situation as a political issue -- therefore, are not interested in solving it.

There are a lot of other people who don't perceive a problem at all. I was asked, believe it or not, at the Governors' Conference by none other than Governor Exon as

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to whether there really was an energy crisis. He said, "How could there be an energy crisis when there is plenty of gas in the pumps?" I said, "You have given us an example. We are importing 40 percent of our gas and the reason we have a crisis is because if that is cut off, and the Eastern Seaboard depends 80 to 90 percent on imported energy, we are gone. We are going to have an economic collapse and a national crisis, the likes of which we can't even dream about." And we have got it right now.

Therefore, I can't possibly understand how anybody cannot see this that has the capacity to look beyond -- I won't try to describe what to look beyond -- to look out into the future, excuse me, and recognize what our national interests are and recognize that this Nation didn't grow to its greatness just through a free market system alone without government's support of those key national concerns that relate to our economic growth of the free or American enterprise system.

MR. ALDEN: "Do you believe that the reestablishment of the Office of Science Adviser can assist and will help filter to the public in returning rational debate to Science and Technology issues instead of the emotionalism and sneering that runs around the country today?"

THE VICE PRESIDENT: No question. It is absolutely essential. I have a special way. I go up and sit at tables across from Senators and Congressmen so it is not testifying. So I preserve the proper amenities. It is the first time a Vice President has ever done this.

One of the items was on this bill and now it is passed by both Houses. It is in conference. It will be reconciled and adopted. We have already set up committees. Interestingly enough, one of the subjects that came up in those committees has been reported in the paper. That is, that one of the quakes out in the West Coast where the fall is in California, has risen a foot in the last 15 years. This is always usually a quirk of the major earthquake. This is the kind of information the President ought to have, to be getting way ahead of time as he did in this case, and then taking the actions necessary to minimize it, to warn the people, to take whatever steps can be taken.

There are many scientists who increasingly believe that you can set off explosions in neighboring areas which can reduce the possibility of a major earthquake.

These are the important roles that science can play in preventing what happened in Guatemala, the tragedy there, or in innumerable areas where there are breakthroughs that are both going to be positive factors in our future or that threaten us with negative factors in our future.

MR. ALDEN: "Do you believe that Congress has played too much politics in its oversight of the U.S. foreign intelligence activities, and what are your specific views on Senator Church's probe of the CIA?"

THE VICE PRESIDENT: As I said, I think the probes are justifiable and this is the rightful role of Congress. How they handle the information and what is done after they have gotten it, of course, is the key question.

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The exciting thing is how do you make a democracy function and keep public support of essential activities both for our domestic and international well-being, security and freedom? I think it can be done. I think we have learned a great deal out of this. Now let's hope we slow down and get back to work protecting the freedoms and individual rights of American citizens, which in some cases have been violated. I think it can be done. It is essential for our country that it is done.

MR. ALDEN: "How do you feel about leaks of confidential material?"

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Not very good.

(Laughter)

MR. ALDEN: "Years ago you headed a commission assigned the task of overseeing U. S. covert activities. Your commission eventually voted itself out of existence. What are your views on the prospects of such a commission today?"

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I suppose this refers to when I was Special Assistant for International Affairs under President Eisenhower, a job which then does not have what it subsequently did under the leadership of Dr. Kissinger.

I did set up what is the equivalent of the 40 Committee because I felt that there should be, on behalf of the President, a following of these activities, once they were approved, to see how they were carried out. I might say we talk a lot about peace, but let's not forget freedom -- that is what our country is all about. That is how we got started, to obtain our freedom. It wasn't peace that caused the American revolution. It was freedom.

If we want to preserve freedom -- and it can't be done through economic and diplomatic means and we are not going to get involved in another land war in Asia or somewhere else for we have just gotten out of one that almost tore our country apart -- then we have only the alternative of covert actions.

It is an unfortunate and unhappy gray area and it is a very difficult one. It is difficult for democracy. But it is one that is very prevalent in the world today and one that is in many areas destroying freedom.

Therefore, I think this Nation has to face up to this. I think the President has made recommendations which will help make it possible, where the legislation is requested, to have the public understand and a framework for the conduct of these to preserve freedom in the world, not only for ourselves but for those other nations who aspire to freedom.

Thank you.

MR. ALDEN: A questioner says, "You have testified to having attended the Bilderberg meeting in 1974 and that your brother David has attended many. Another is scheduled for April 22 to 24 in Hot Springs, Virginia, where high government officials discuss U. S. policies with leaders of other nations. Their expenses are paid by federal funds. Do you believe these meetings should be open to the Press?"

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THE VICE PRESIDENT: I went to one. I think that an exchange of views among groups which have differing points of view in a democratic structure are essential. This is true within our country. It is true between those countries which adhere to the same objectives basically.

Therefore, I think these conferences have been very useful. As to a question about them being open to the Press, if you have people from foreign countries who are coming -- some are government officials and some are private citizens -- if they want to express themselves, frankly, let's say there somebody there at the only one I attended who were opposition groups from the existing government structures, they might be very hesitant to express opinions which were in opposition to their government stand if it was open to the Press or maybe their government wouldn't let them go. So there is a problem there.

I understand the desire for the press and the media being there, but this whole question is now a matter of great concern to the Senate because Common Cause has a suit up there. They are very worried as to whether one of their staff assistants can write them a memo on a subject without that now being subject to subpoena. How do you even communicate with your staff and get their opinions if nobody can write a memo and when you write a memo it is going to be subject to subpoena, then maybe they won't say what they think and you won't get the benefit of their thoughts.

This is a very serious problem in the conducting of affairs. I think this needs to be viewed very seriously. Sunshine laws have great appeal and it is a very sort of popular slogan. But let's examine it in relation to decision-making and in relation to responsible action, which I think needs to be studied here, aired, and studied. We need to find some balance in this field.

(Applause)

MR. ALDEN: "If you had to name one simple national issue for debate during the elections this year, what would you name as the most important?"

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I would have to put two, really. I think energy independence has got to be fundamental. I don't see how we can, in an industrialized society, preserve our security and freedom without energy. It is the basic of industry. It is a basic of our whole way of life. It is the basic of agriculture. We have the potential. Therefore, to me to get on with that business is fundamental.

The other one is to have a debate on the subject of our relations with the rest of the world, particularly with the intentions and how we cope with the means by which the Soviet Union are trying to carry out those intentions. I think we need a far more fundamental understanding of this. I think the Secretary of State has made some very important penetrating speeches on the subject. I think we need more of them.

MR. ALDEN: "How can we solve the housing crisis for low income families?"

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THE VICE PRESIDENT: Maybe I should have put this as the third item on that list of major subjects, having been associated with this area for a long time. Back in 1923, or maybe it was 1922, Al Smith passed a law in New York State which exempted from taxes any construction for housing in New York City for 13 years I think it was up to \$5,000 a unit, an apartment. This created the greatest boom in housing that New York City has ever enjoyed. It was at all income levels, and it was terrific.

As a matter of fact, I was talking to George Meany about it last week. He said he built a 2-apartment house under that law for \$12,000 and got a \$10,000 tax exemption, an \$8,500 mortgage.

I think we have to recognize there isn't enough taxpayers money to build the housing that is needed and that we must attract private capital back into it. There are various means of doing it. The greatest accumulation of private capital is taking place which might well be eligible, or a portion of it, which relates to the pension funds. Maybe a third of the pension money going into housing would be a major issue, or how do you get it in. Maybe you have to have some incentives so that those who retire are protected in the sense that there is a Federal guarantee of the investment by them. But that means if there is going to be a Federal guarantee, you can't have rent controls because if costs go up they have got to be able to raise the charges on the housing.

We have to face up to some hard issues. One of them is rent control. The other one is attracting private capital back into the market, because there just isn't enough taxpayers money to do it.

We can't get a free ride -- and I don't care who it is -- for very long because somebody has to pay for it and there aren't enough people left to pay for all the things we want to get free.

Thank you.

MR. ALDEN: Moving to New York, "How much of New York City's problems are traceable to the role of the State of New York?"

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We will be moving back soon. These cities are creatures of the State. This is under our structure, so that the State has the responsibility for the laws which govern the cities. On the other hand, we have a long tradition in this country of local home rule, and particularly in New York City which came into preeminence really long before the State itself did. It was the entity in New York State. So it had a long tradition of independence. It resisted very importantly the kind of inspection, auditing, and so forth, that all the rest of the communities in the State had.

It wasn't until 1971 that we were able to get legislation authorizing and requiring the control of the State of New York to audit the books of the City of New York. It wasn't until 1975 that we began to see that there were some very serious problems.

I might also point out that New York City's bookkeeping hasn't been changed in 300 years, and that that makes it a little

difficult to keeping in touch. Because every time some new program is taken on they just add a new account and they are all related to numbers. This has gotten to be a little bit complicated. They set up semi-independent agencies over which they say they don't have control, so that you have a rather confused situation. They have had a great deal of pride. They do not want State intervention.

Not until they got into a crisis did Governor Carey get the support he needed in the Legislature to set up a commission and a board to get into it. Not until that got into a further crisis did they accept Federal aid and support.

Now I think everybody has focused on the problem. It is a tough one. It is going to take some time, but I think that everybody is learning the hard way and we are all going to come out, if we survive, much more intelligent, realistic citizens.

Thank you.

MR. ALDEN: "Today's New York Times mentions possible reprieve for Attica insurgents. What is your view?"

THE VICE PRESIDENT: It is a popular issue. I will tell you that. I have to say, ladies and gentlemen, that if you have people who are violating the laws and who are involved in the process of the murder of someone else, it is pretty hard to justify a reprieve. I refused to give amnesty for the members of the prison who had taken 54 guards hostage and their final demand, after we agreed to reforms, was that all of them get amnesty and get free passage to a non-imperialist country, which gave me the impression that there must be some politicizing of this operation and that it wasn't just a reform movement. So I didn't have the right, nor would I if I had, to give amnesty.

Obviously, the free passage to a non-imperialist country has got to be one of the slogans of the extreme left. So I question it myself.

The problem is complicated by the fact that up until recently only one guard has been indicted. There was a lot of feeling on the part of the prisoner groups and their representatives that there had been more indictments of prisoners than there had been of guards in connection with the action that was taken. These are all difficult question in a society. But the only way we can preserve a democratic society is to have some form of accepted law by which we live and that, if somebody doesn't live by it, that it is enforced. Therefore, I cannot get too enthusiastic, regardless of its political popularity, about the idea of amnesty.

Thank you.

MR. ALDEN: Back to politics. "Can anyone to the right of Ford be elected?"

THE VICE PRESIDENT: By whom?

(Laughter)

MR. ALDEN: A question on extremism. "Didn't you suggest to President Ford that he resurrect and use the same argument of extremism versus moderation against Reagan that you

used against Goldwater in 1964?"

THE VICE PRESIDENT: No, sir. I have not been consulted on campaign strategy.

MR. ALDEN: There are some more questions about your future. "Will you serve as Secretary of State in case President Ford wins in November and Dr. Kissinger returns to Harvard?"

THE VICE PRESIDENT: No, sir.

MR. ALDEN: "Have you considered or been approached about the ambassadorship to the U. N. after next January?"

THE VICE PRESIDENT: No, sir.

MR. ALDEN: "If you should deem it appropriate and necessary that you enter the presidential race, how would you cope with the reluctance of Happy that you again be embroiled in a national contest?"

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I don't think it is going to come up as an issue.

MR. ALDEN: "Your remarks today indicate the growth of a role for yourself much like that of an elder statesman detached from the heat of battle. Would you comment on your view of this role?"

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I think there is a lot to that. The only thing is I don't think it is detached from the heat.

MR. ALDEN: "When you say you are immune to Potomac Fever, does that mean you are making a Sherman-like statement?"

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I could, but I don't really see any reason why I should.

MR. ALDEN: "What program currently do you consider your foremost contribution as a Vice President?"

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Getting the seal changed, the wings of the eagle up instead of down.

(Laughter)

MR. ALDEN: Before asking you the final question, I would like to present to you the National Press Club Certificate of Appreciation.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Believe me, I am grateful.

MR. ALDEN: We also have a new National Press Club necktie for your trips around the country and your world travels coming up in the next few weeks.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: It has a nice Bicentennial flavor to it too. I appreciate both of these very much and the privilege and opportunity of being here.

MR. ALDEN: And now for the final question.

"What is it like to sleep in a \$35,000 bed that I

understand was marked down to \$22,000?"

(Laughter)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: It had been on display for a long long time in the gallery and I thought there should be some discount. After three months of negotiation, that is the price we settled on. I have to say that both of us think it is outstanding.

(Laughter)

MR. ALDEN: Thank you, Mr. Vice President.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

(Standing ovation)

END

(AT 1:55 P.M. EST)