

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Office of the Vice President  
(Syracuse, New York)

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PRESS CONFERENCE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT  
AND SENATOR BOB DOLE  
HANCOCK INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT  
SYRACUSE, NEW YORK

AT 1:10 P.M. EDT

QUESTION: Senator Dole, President Ford said that he would like to see a health care program for the Nation that would be affordable to everyone. Now, your opponent, Senator Mondale, says that President Ford never proposed such a program and, in fact, has opposed measures to set up such a program, such as the Ribicoff proposal for the national catastrophic health insurance. Can you comment on that?

SENATOR DOLE: The question is whether or not the President has ever proposed health insurance such as the so-called Ribicoff plan. Well, there are other catastrophic plans. I am a cosponsor of one. The President has proposed such a plan and Congress hasn't acted on it.

The President means what he said last night in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and what he said before. We have got to provide adequate health care. I don't care how much money you may have, you may be wiped out if you don't have some catastrophic illness protection.

The same is true of the poor. We have got to provide more care, better benefits, more programs. We have seen, though, I might add, what some of the Democratic programs have resulted in -- a great deal of fraud and abuse and many of the benefits not going to the right place.

QUESTION: Senator, you have been campaigning all day now with the Vice President. Have you picked up any tips that might change your own campaign style at all?

SENATOR DOLE: Well, I am picking up all I can. I learned how to handle uninvited guests, I guess, at the last stop. He does a fantastic job in that area. In addition, we have had a chance last night and between every stop to visit with members of his staff and with the Vice President himself about how he looks at the campaign. That has been very helpful to me, believe me.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I am learning a lot myself, and I wish I had his sense of humor.

QUESTION: Mr. Rockefeller, when you addressed the rally over there, you mentioned it would take enough American voters making the right choice to welcome a Ford-Dole ticket. With the GOPs having fewer than 20 percent of the voters, will you have enough come election day?

MORE

THE VICE PRESIDENT: The question is will the President have enough votes, come election, because the Republican Party is a minority party? The polls right now in New York State, as of last weekend, show a four-point differential between President Ford and his opponent, in favor of his opponent.

The weekend after election, which was two weeks ago, showed a three-point differential. When you consider that at a convention you expect the candidate, who gets lots of attention, to rise in the polls and then drop afterwards, a one-point drop is extraordinary.

Now, some of you may remember, who have been around here in the old days, I used to start 24, 35 percent behind, and I thought nothing of it. Malcolm and I just started rolling and hit the line and just slipped over and would get elected. So four points is nothing. That is just a challenge.

He is an underdog now. He is in a fighting position. That is the position to be in. And as it starts to slip, that is when you see this thing just roll across the line. President Ford is going to carry New York and the country.

He has got a follow-up question if he makes it short.

QUESTION: These Republican rallies are largely staged. What do you accomplish in gaining up this momentum by making these stops?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: He is asking why we have Republican rallies that are staged. Well, to begin with, you don't have a rally that isn't staged unless you go on the streets in New York the way we campaigned there. You have an orchestra, and the people gather to hear the orchestra, and then you get up and you've got a rally.

But what I've got to tell you, the fact that you are here in attendance and that some of your colleagues in the various media are here in attendance, then they are reported and that gets the waves out. That is like dropping a stone in the lake. You might not get a fish, but you make a lot of ripples.

QUESTION: Senator Dole, you reiterated in your remarks to the rally that people should look at the platform. Yet we have been told today repeatedly by the Vice President that the President isn't wedded to the platform.

SENATOR DOLE: I think that is what you may think you want to hear. But I think we have both said it is a very broad concept. It is a distillation of the views of Republicans all across this land.

Ours was not written secretly. It was written in open meetings, attended by the press. It was written for the most part by the delegates, with input from Governor Reagan and input from President Ford and other interested groups.

That is the difference in the two platforms. Unity doesn't necessarily mean unanimity. That doesn't mean Mr. Rockefeller can't disagree with parts of it or others can't. But it is a platform upon which the Ford-Dole ticket is running.

QUESTION: Will you give us your views quite specifically of those points of the platform that criticize detente, the Helsinki agreements and implicitly the Secretary of State Kissinger?

SENATOR DOLE: I don't find that criticism. I was on the Platform Committee. I was there when that very thing was discussed. I don't see any criticism either direct or implied.

QUESTION: What about the Helsinki agreements?

SENATOR DOLE: I don't see any there. In fact, I think we underscored the immigration hope, as far as Jewish immigration was concerned. I think there was one early plank discussed. It wasn't presented. Now, I don't know which one you have reference to.

QUESTION: The amendment to the platform, Senator, the so-called morality amendment, the Reagan amendment.

SENATOR DOLE: That was the amendment offered to the general platform on Wednesday evening, a compromise position reached with the Vice President, Senator Hruska --

Was Senator Helms there?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: No.

SENATOR DOLE: I wasn't part of the compromise, but I don't find that alien to anything our party stands for. President Ford has said it is our platform. There has been no effort to run from it.

But here Carter writes his own platform and has the audacity to say, "This doesn't really reflect my view," and it is his platform.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I would like to make a comment, because I was in the meeting where that was discussed between 1:00 and 2:00 in the morning. The position taken by the President and by the Secretary and by Roman Hruska, who spoke from the podium at 2:00 in the morning, was that the President perceived no objection, because the Republican Administrations for the past eight years have been guided by the principles enunciated, the moral principles, in this platform. And on the basis of this they have achieved peace for the world or for America.

Now, that is exactly what was said, exactly the position. They were only moral principles. There was no criticism. And those principles have been the ones that have guided the Administrations, plural, for the past eight years.

QUESTION: Mr. Vice President, would both you and Senator Dole comment on how significant you feel

abortion is on this campaign.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Personally, if you want my opinion, this is not a Presidential issue.

SENATOR DOLE: I have said virtually the same thing. I have never gone out, to try to make it an issue.

QUESTION: Senator, you talk about fuzziness on the Carter side. The Carter side talks about trust. Isn't the campaign evolving into those issues, and all the other issues getting blurred in the process?

SENATOR DOLE: He says we talk about fuzziness and he talks about trust. Is the whole campaign being blurred in the process? I don't think so. I think we have a record of experience. We have a President with a record. We have an Administration with a record. We are running against a man with virtually no experience on the Federal level.

President Ford is experienced in foreign affairs. He has got 29 or 28 years in domestic affairs. He has been where the action was. That is one of the major and significant differences -- experience.

The other is trust. You don't have to say "Trust me" of President Ford. You know you can trust President Ford. You are not buying a pig-in-a-poke. You are not buying anything else for that matter. He hasn't promised anything.

And on the other hand -- I don't want to make a speech -- somebody says we are giving a circuitous answer. But the point is, you look at their platform. Look at the programs, and they add up to \$100 billion or more. You don't find that in the Republican platform. You do find concern about spending, concern about the American people, a way to halt inflation. I think there is a vast difference.

QUESTION: Mr. Vice President, how do you think Senator Dole will run in New York City, which is a large part of New York State, considering he voted against Federal loan guarantees, even when President Ford finally voted in favor --

THE VICE PRESIDENT: He voted to shut off the debate, not against the money.

QUESTION: But he then voted against the Federal loan guarantee.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: My personal feeling is they are going to do well. I tell you, when the President said what he said about New York City, everybody was concerned. But what it really was was what you call shock treatment. It was telling it like it is and saying, "There is an end and you have got to face your problems or you are going to go bankrupt."

This was not well-received, but it was a very tough, honest statement of the facts. And the results have been

that the city and the State have taken the steps that were necessary. The President did ask the Congress to make available funds to the city if they met these criteria, which they did.

And he has also got the bankruptcy laws rewritten, because had the city gone bankrupt because they didn't take the steps, the bankruptcy laws as they existed in the Congress were such that it would have been impossible and there would have been absolute chaos.

QUESTION: I am not making myself clear. The Vice President voted against the --

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Only to close the debate.

SENATOR DOLE: That was not the only issue in New York. I have discussed this with you in New York City, and I understand it got a very nice headline. I voted for urban renewal and mass transit, food stamps, a great many programs that affect people. You know, our record is there. We are not promising anything. It is there.

I could go into some of Mondale's votes in the City Bankruptcy Act and things of that kind. But I voted to shut off debate. They had the 51 votes necessary for the bill. They had to stop the debate. It is hard to make that the key vote.

We have got a good record. We are running on the record. We are going to carry New York State.

QUESTION: Senator, you have mentioned twice, now, inflation in your remarks here and the remarks next door. But you have said nothing about unemployment, which many people say could be a time bomb for the Ford campaign if it doesn't improve. Will you change your strategy and hope employment will go away? Will you say anything about your remarks --

SENATOR DOLE: We would like to have it go away. That is not a strategy. ~~That~~ is a firm desire and wish on the part of the President. It is coming down. Inflation has been cut in half. As the Vice President said just a few minutes ago, we have got 88 million people in the work-force, put three-and-a-half million back to work in the past 18 months.

We are still concerned about that 7.9, but we think we are doing it in the proper way. We can't do it with the Humphrey-Hawkins bill that will cost \$78 million.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: The President in his speech last night or the night before said that he was giving very serious consideration to proposing a job scholarship program, a financial aid to young people between the ages of 16 and 19. That is where the high unemployment is. That is 40 percent of the blacks and minority groups and 23 percent of the rest of the youth. Now, that is an area where he is very concerned, and he is working on a program. He mentioned that in his speech, and I think that is going to

be a very important part of this, because that is where the whole desire of young people is, to become part of the society. And they can't get in and get the jobs. This is going to help them tremendously.

Thank you all.

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(AT 1:24 P.M. EDT)