

## POOL REPORT

Statler Hilton to Rochester Airport  
October 31, 1976

President Ford arrived on time at the 9 am mass at St. Stanislaus Church in Buffalo. The church bells were ringing and there were signs displayed reading "Poliana Wita Ford" which freely translated would mean, "Polish People With Ford." The President was met by the Auxiliary Bishop of the Dioceses of Buffalo Bernard McLaughlin, and by the St. Stanislaus Pastor, Mons. Chester A. Meloch. There was the traditional Polish ceremony on the steps of the church of the President eating the bread dipped in salt offered him by young people dressed in ethnic/Polish costumes.

The President was escorted to the front pew of the church and on the back bench was your pool and Joe Garagiola and Ron Nessen among others. The Pastor, Mon. Meloch delivered a short sermon on God's love after which under the Church announcements portion of the service he read a very strong anti-abortion letter from Bishop Edward E. Head, Bishop of Buffalo. Here are some of the quotes:

"Just as it was necessary to have the 13th Amendment to outlaw slavery, so it is necessary to have a Constitutional Amendment to outlaw abortion on demand. As it was once said that just as this nation cannot exist half slave and half free, so it now can be said that this nation cannot exist half alive with death at will of the unborn."

"Abortion is a direct assault on the lives of those who are least able to defend themselves -- the unborn. The Constitutional Amendment will give them maximum possible protection to the unborn and will correct the Supreme Court decision of January 22, 1973 and assure the constitutional rights of the unborn."

"We had denied the unborn the right-to-life on which the fabric of our society depends. We have inverted the moral values and made meaningless the value of life."

The Bishop's letter went on to say that some have stated their personal opposition to abortion, but that this personal opposition must lead to action.

Earlier Monday Meloch in welcoming President Ford said in coming to this Polish/American Church, 'President Ford gives recognition to the contributions of Polish and other immigrants to the goals of our country. At the same time, the President acknowledges that Poland as well as other countries under foreign dictatorial domination have a God-given right to freedom, self-determination and self-rule. Freedom, the Pastor continued, is a gift of God, it cannot be fully enjoyed until all captive nations and people are liberated throughout the face of this world.

Further quote from the pastoral letter on the abortion:

"It is true the Church is not endorsing any political candidacy or party. It is true the Church is neutral on these matters. However, the Church is not neutral with regard to basic human rights, especially the right to life of the unborn child."

The Bishop Head letter said that more than one million babies have been denied the right to life.

After the service, Ron Nessen told your pool (Garcia) the letter on abortion was not expected, it was a surprise, but Nessen said he could not comment on the letter.

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Later at GOP reception, Ford left holding a newspaper in front of him, The Buffalo Evening News, headlines saying "New Poll -- Race Is Too Close to Call".

The President in remarks criticized Carter again on taxes, told the crowd Carter says Ford's proposal for a tax cut will help the rich. Ford said, "He has been wrong so many times that this is just another error." Paraphrasing Carter is one way one day, another the next, you can't tell what his position will be two days from now. These remarks were delivered at a rally in the hotel ballroom at which the local Buffalo Evening News reporter said was attended by 1600 people. The President made similar remarks at an earlier \$100 a plate fundraising dinner across the hall at the hotel.

Outside the hotel, across the street, about ten demonstrators protesting saying, Ford is a fascist, and don't vote, they're all the same. Minor demonstration.

#### Airport in Buffalo:

Ford worked the crowd, shaking hands. When he ran out of tarmac, charged off into the mud to continue working the crowd.

Further quotes from the President's remarks to the GOP rally:

"This is the countdown with 50 some hours away."

He repeated many of his standard themes about inflation, less government, and tax reduction, and was cheered lustily.

He introduced to the rally Joe Garagiola, who waved aloft a banner "Italians for Betty" and urged everybody to get out and vote. He said it was the first time he had revealed publicly how he was going to vote.

Lucian Warren - Buffalo News  
David Garcia - ABC

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