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June 1, 1976

INTERVIEW OF THE PRESIDENT  
BY  
DON WAYNE  
WHIO-TV  
DAYTON, OHIO

THE OVAL OFFICE

2:07 P.M. EDT

MR. WAYNE: Mr. President, the American voter today listens to the candidates discuss the issues and the American voters exclaims when it is all over in November nobody will remember or do anything about the issues they talked about simply because, the voter says, as long as there is a difference in politics between the Executive Branch and the Legislative Branch, nothing concrete can be accomplished.

Now, you were not elected to this office, but do you feel as the President elected by the people -- will that give you any stronger power or authority to work with Congress to enact your legislative programs?

THE PRESIDENT: Don, I think it would. I became President under the most unusual circumstances. For the last 22 months I have been forced to deal with a Congress that had a margin of better than two to one in the opposition party. Many of them are my friends on both sides of the aisle, but it was not like I had gotten a mandate from the people.

I got a very strong vote from the House and the Senate, among both Democrats and Republicans, but it was such an unusual circumstance that if I were to win in November, certainly that would be a mandate from the people, and I think also it would result in a changed ratio of Democrats and Republicans in the House as well as in the Senate.

So, an election by the people in November would be helpful in getting a legislative program through the Congress.



MR. WAYNE: You don't think the Republicans could regain control of Congress, however?

THE PRESIDENT: I think the odds, Don, are against that, but I believe that the odds can shift. Instead of better than two to one against us I think they might be somewhere between three to two or at least something better than it is today.

MR. WAYNE: Your opponent, Governor Ronald Reagan, has had a campaign theme he has been hammering away at. It is "cut Federal bureaucracy, cut Federal bureaucracy." How much importance do you attach to that issue?

THE PRESIDENT: I would like to set the record straight first, Don. Since I became President, there has been no increase in Federal employees. As a matter of fact, one of the first acts I took was to cut back on a projected 40,000 increase in Federal employment that my predecessor had authorized, so since I have become President we have held the line.

I don't agree that we cannot cut back more in the way of Federal employees, but that is something that takes a little time. As we try to control Federal spending -- and I recommended a reduction of 50 percent in the growth of Federal spending -- inevitably you are going to have a tightening of the belt in Federal employment.

I think my record in this regard is a responsible one, and at the same time it permits the Federal Government to carry on those duties that it must, such as defense and the other domestic programs that are essential to the health and welfare of the people.

MR. WAYNE: Do you feel it is necessary and essential that more responsibility be transferred from Washington to State and local Governments? I ask you this primarily because the argument arises that Washington is what it is today because State and local Government did not have the energy nor did they have the sensitivity to provide to the people what they wanted and what they needed.

Do you agree with that argument?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't. I think you have to look at it this way -- and this is a very essential difference between myself and Mr. Reagan -- I believe that the Federal Government, through such programs as general revenue sharing, can collect the money and then turn the money back to the States and to the local units of Government in States like Ohio and then let the locally elected officials make the decisions as to how that money should be spent.

This is a program that I fought very hard for in 1972, and it has provided to the State of Ohio and to the many cities and towns and communities in Ohio good sums of money so they can help their police force, their fire departments, their health departments. But, the decision as to how that money ought to be spent is made at the local level.

Now, Mr. Reagan says, "Do away with general revenue sharing," and then you either have to increase local taxes or you have to do away with these local services that are supported by general revenue sharing. This is a very honest difference. I think the best way to do it is by general revenue sharing, and all local officials in Ohio as well as Governor Rhodes strongly support my position and they don't think the position taken by my opponent is very practical.

MR. WAYNE: Do you think there is too much Federal interference in education, too much Federal regulation?

THE PRESIDENT: It has been, to some extent, but it is not as bad as some of the opponents of Federal aid to education alleged at the time that legislation was enacted in the first instance. What I would do, however, is absolutely avoid any Federal interference in local education by what I call block grant funding by the Federal Government of a portion of local education.

For example, under the present law the Federal Government has about 26 categorical grant programs. These are very rigid, and there is some control at the Federal level of local educational policy. Under my proposal the same amount of money, or even greater in some instances, would go from the Federal Government to the school districts in Ohio, and the local school board would make the decision as to how that money should be spent.

I think this is the way to avoid Federal interference and, at the same time, provide Federal support for local education. Again, my opponent, Mr. Reagan, doesn't believe in any Federal aid to education. Again, I think that is the wrong approach. I think mine is the responsible one.

MR. WAYNE: Boston, Louisville, even in my own community of Dayton, Ohio --

THE PRESIDENT: My hometown, Grand Rapids, Michigan, too.

MR. WAYNE: -- school busing is an issue. We know, I think, fairly well where you stand on the school busing, but you keep talking about alternatives. The American voter is not sure what alternatives you are talking about. Are you talking about legislation, constitutional amendment? Can you clarify it?

THE PRESIDENT: First, let me re-emphasize my total opposition to court ordered forced busing to achieve balance in the school system. I think court ordered forced busing is the wrong approach to achieve quality education. The question then is how do you achieve quality education if you don't go along with court ordered forced busing. My answer is that we can improve, through some additional Federal money, school facilities.

I think we can improve the equipment that is available to make educational opportunities better available to the students. I believe that we can inaugurate what they call cluster schools or neighborhood schools in place of cross-town busing. There are a number of alternatives that were written by the Congress when I was in Congress, and subsequently signed by me when I became President, in what we call the Equal Educational Opportunities Act.

It lists seven alternatives, six of them ahead of busing, and if the courts would follow those guidelines, I think we could avoid most of the busing that would take place. Now, in addition to that, the Attorney General has drafted some legislation which would be an additional guideline to the courts that they should follow in these desegregation cases.

What it provides is that if there is segregation, then the court should take cognizance of those instances where there is segregation, but it would limit the courts remedy to just those areas rather than taking over a whole school system, as the courts did in the case of the Boston case and several others.

So, between the present law and that legislation which I am recommending, I think we can minimize to a substantial degree busing and, at the same time, achieve better educational opportunities.

MR. WAYNE: You have opposed most public works legislation, public jobs, what is your program to reduce the unemployment rate? Do you expect to do this by continued economic recovery?

THE PRESIDENT: Let me clarify one thing. In the budget that I submitted for the fiscal year that begins October 1, I increased the expenditures for public works, river, harbor and flood control projects throughout the United States, and in addition I recommended more spending for local water and sewer projects throughout this country.

Now, what I opposed are these make-work projects, projects that are put together just to make work to meet an emergency. I strongly believe in building America by more highways, by more river, harbor and flood control projects and water and sewer projects, but these make-work projects I strongly disapprove of.

Now, five out of six jobs, Don, in this country are in the private sector. What we have to do really is to stimulate the private economy of this country because if it comes back like it is coming back at the present time, there are many, many more job opportunities than just make-work jobs that would hurt the treasury and add to inflationary costs.

MR. WAYNE: Can I go back to the people again. People say, "Well, you know the economic recovery has been good and it will probably remain this way at least through the election and then it is just going to go to pot."



THE PRESIDENT: That is a most unfair and, I think, politically motivated allegation by some people. We are in the process of the best, most sustained economic recovery at any time since the end of World War II. We are getting inflation under control. We have cut it by 75 percent. When I became President, it was over 12 percent per year inflation. It is down to 3 percent or less at the present time. We have gained 3,300,000 jobs in the last 12 months, since the bottom of the recession, and every economist that I talked to, whether they are liberal or whether they are conservative, all agree that our recovery today is in good shape. It is moderate in its approach and yet it is very, very solidly based.

So, if we don't get a lot of trouble from the Congress, I am absolutely convinced that we can look forward to a long stretch of good economic times.

MR. WAYNE: Considering your policy on the economy, how about Social Security? People are putting money into Social Security and they are saying, "When I retire I bet there isn't any Social Security. I put all this money in for nothing."

THE PRESIDENT: Don, here is another case where Mr. Reagan and I differ. I believe that the Social Security system, if properly funded, is a good insurance policy for the American working man. But, we have to make sure that the funds are there so that those now retired and those working and who will retire have enough income coming from the funds. I have recommended some reforms in Social Security that will guarantee the security of the Social Security Trust Fund.

Some of the suggestions by my opponent are less than enthusiastic I think for Social Security. But, I think this country made a commitment when it undertook the Social Security program and I intend to keep that Trust Fund solvent, and those that are now retired and those about to retire will have no worry if President Ford is elected.

MR. WAYNE: There is great distress still about the Washington establishment. It is not easy for people who have to eek out a living from day to day to read and hear about elected officials who indulge in immoral affairs and misconduct and try to charge it off to the taxpayer.

I am talking about the incident recently of Ohio Congressman Wayne Hays, and it seems when one story breaks about one rotten apple, or supposedly or alleged rotten apple, there are other stories that break and the public says there is no credibility in Washington.

THE PRESIDENT: It is my judgment that the overwhelming majority of Members of Congress, Democratic or Republican, are honest, hard working people and individuals of high moral character. I knew such members for 26 years, almost. Inevitably there are individuals in public life, like in other occupations, who don't live up to the accepted moral standards of this great country.

I can only say in my own case, my record was scrutinized by 400 FBI agents and approved by the Congress, the Democrats as well as the Republicans, so I have got some credibility there.

I have tried in this office where we are sitting today to conduct myself at a high moral level. I think I have. I have restored public confidence and trust in the White House.

MR. WAYNE: I know I am probably putting you on the spot here but in the case of Congressman Hays, now he has laid forth his story in the House. He has apologized to these people back home. After issuing an apology should we forgive the Congressman? I mean, is this the way it should work?

THE PRESIDENT: I think that is a decision that each individual has to make. None of us individually, I would hope, would condone such things, and whether we forgive or not is a matter of individual judgment, and since the Congress is a corps and a branch of the Federal Government I don't think I should involve myself at this stage certainly in passing judgment on a member of the corps branch of the Federal Government.

MR. WAYNE: I am sure you have had to make some painful decisions as President on the scope of American defense spending. Do you have specific established priorities as to whether more money should be spent on air power, more money on sea power or nuclear conventional weapons?

THE PRESIDENT: Don, last November and December when I was working with the budget people on the Federal budget for the next fiscal year I made all those decisions -- all the tough ones anyhow -- and the net result was we added about a billion and a half for next year over this year in strategic forces, the production items for the B-1 bomber. I think the B-1 bomber, assuming it passes its final test -- and I think it will -- is a very, very important weapon system for our strategic arms capability. So I am all for the B-1.

In the budget presentation to me I had to make some decisions on conventional forces. I recommended about four and a half billion dollars more for conventional forces including an acceleration of our tank production that had slowed down and now we are hoping to double or triple the production of tanks for the Army and for the Marine Corps.



Research and Development is another area where the United States must keep ahead. So I recommended about a billion dollars more for next year in order to have our scientists come up with both offensive and defensive weapons that would make our national security more certain.

So these are the general areas where I have recommended increases.

MR. WAYNE: As you well know, the B-1 bomber project office is located at Wright Patterson Air Force Base. You are not worried about -- do you think the B-1 is an aircraft that this country needs despite its tremendous cost?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. We are now flying roughly 400 B-52s, some of them 20 years old, most of them between 10 and 20 years of age. If we don't build the B-1 bomber -- and I strongly support the purchase of the B-1 bomber -- but if we don't buy it we will ask our young men to be flying in the next ten years planes that are getting older and older and older by the day. I don't think that is fair to the young pilots and the co-pilots, and, secondly, the B-52 in another ten years will not be an effective weapon system.

So the B-1 bomber which is a follow on to the B-52 -- and we expect to buy about 255 of them -- will be a very important add on to our strategic forces.

MR. WAYNE: Are you happy with the United Nations, Mr. President? Do you foresee any major changes of the American role or policy in that world organization?

THE PRESIDENT: About a year ago, Don, I appointed Ambassador Moynihan as our UN Ambassador. He went to the United Nations and really took some strong, affirmative stands and called a spade a spade. I think Pat Moynihan, as our Ambassador to the UN, did a good job. He retired and we now have a good successor to him in Bill Scranton. Bill has a little different technique but Bill is also a very strong advocate of new policy of strength at the United Nations.

So between Moynihan and Scranton I think we have been most forceful in presenting the American position. In addition, Secretary Kissinger went up there last fall and at the seventh Special Session made some very, I think, constructive recommendations in handling some of the problems in the under-developed countries, so overall our policies are good. We are, unfortunately, occasionally outvoted. I don't like that because I think what we are trying to do is right but we are making some headway and I think basically if we keep the pressure on we can do a better job and the United Nations can, too.

MR. WAYNE: Mr. President, voters seem to be somewhat disturbed over the cost, besides the mismanagement of certain anti-poverty programs, food stamps, Medicaid, model cities. There seems to be a feeling of uncertainty and anger over whether Washington and the expenditure of billions of dollars can ever really cure the Nation's social ills. What is Washington's role? What should Washington do on these programs?

THE PRESIDENT: I believe that Washington has to be compassionate but at the same time it should not be wasteful. We can run some of these welfare programs -- and I use that in the broadest sense -- better than we have in the past. For example, the food stamp program has gotten way out of hand. In ten years it grew from expenditures of roughly \$200 million a year until this year we are spending approximately \$18 billion. The growth has been way out of proportion to the I think responsible management of a food stamp program. We are trying to cut back on the food stamp program, those that don't need it. At the same time, we expect to increase the benefits to the individuals who are deserving of extra food stamp care.

But by balancing it better than it is at the present time, we can save about a billion two hundred million dollars. What I am saying in using that illustration is that we can be compassionate with the poor who are deserving but we ought to get rid of those who are undeserving and should not be on welfare roles, food stamp roles or any of the others.

MR. WAYNE: Where do you stand at the present time on the energy situation and do you think we should build more nuclear reactors?

THE PRESIDENT: I firmly believe we have to build more nuclear reactors. We have 58 operating nuclear reactors in this country today. If we are going to become energy independent in the United States by 1985 we have to build approximately 250 nuclear power plants. The process is slow and there are some who are concerned about safety and reliability. But the safety record of nuclear power plants is better than most industrial plants in this country. The reliability has to be improved but they are very reliable compared to other methods of producing energy.

In order to improve safety and reliability, I recommended in the next year's budget substantial amounts of research and development so that our scientists and technicians can build better, safer, more reliable nuclear plants. If we were to stop nuclear plant construction we would become more and more dependent on foreign oil and that is I think too big a gamble.

At the present time we buy 40 percent or more of our crude oil from overseas and if you cut out nuclear power, it would have a serious adverse impact on our energy independence.

MR. WAYNE: Do you really expect to go to Kansas City with enough delegates to get the nomination on the first ballot?

THE PRESIDENT: We are optimistic, Don. It will be close but our best projections -- depending on the six primaries that are yet to be held on June 1st and June 8, plus the various conventions that will be concluded by the latter part of June -- I think we will have enough to get a first ballot.

MR. WAYNE: How much importance do you attach to the Ohio primary? Is it now critical to your campaign?

THE PRESIDENT: Very critical, Don. I am spending some extra time in Ohio because I think it is very critical. I believe that we can make some headway in Ohio because their interests are much like those of my home State Michigan and we did well in Michigan. I would hope that we could do well in Ohio.

MR. WAYNE: Do you think the American election process is still a valid process? Is there a necessity for reform in our election process?

THE PRESIDENT: I think the primaries are wholesome. I wish we could develop a regional primary system so that you would maybe have five or six regions and all of the States in each region would have their primaries on the same day. That would be very helpful to candidates. And I might add I think it would be helpful to the public as a whole. That is the principal recommendation that I would propose.

MR. WAYNE: That is bothersome to the public, the expenditure of funds for primary campaigns, the efforts, the time spent by a President and by the other candidates. They worry as it gets to convention time it is going to be brokered, everything is going to be done in the back room.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think the Republican Convention will be brokered in the back room. I think it will be right out in front of the public on that first ballot. My Democrat friends have a little different situation. They have more than two candidates and I don't think any one candidate is going to have a majority on the first ballot. When you have that situation you are quite likely going to have a brokered convention.

MR. WAYNE: You served in office 21 months?

THE PRESIDENT: Almost 22.

MR. WAYNE: It may be hard for you to spot one single accomplishment since you have been in office.

THE PRESIDENT: It is not hard. I would like to pick two, however. I inherited an economic mess. Inflation was at 12 percent or more. We have cut it to under 3 percent. We were on the brink of a recession. I think we have turned the economy around. We have added to the job force and the net result is we are on the road to a healthy economy. That to me was the major accomplishment of my 22 months plus the restoration of trust and confidence, through my openness, through my candor, through my forthrightness. This was important in the White House and I think I have done that.

MR. WAYNE: I think in your appearance before a committee prior to your taking the oath of office you said that you really would not run for President. What has changed your mind? Why do you want another four years here?

THE PRESIDENT: I have found that in the 22 months I have done the things that I mentioned, improved the economy, restored confidence and trust and achieved and maintained the peace. If I can have four more years as President of this great country, I believe that I can solidify those gains that I have been able to make in the last 22 months.

MR. WAYNE: You have mentioned some names of prominent individuals that you might find acceptable as a running mate. Governor Reagan has refused to mention any names. He claims that it is his belief it is in violation of the Federal Election Laws.

THE PRESIDENT: I would differ with him on the latter point. We have a wealth of talent in the Republican Party for potential Vice Presidential candidates. I don't like to mention one by name, although I have, because then you inevitably leave out some other very talented individuals, but you could take any one of a number of Governors, Governor Ray of Iowa, Governor Rhodes of Ohio, Governor Bond of Missouri, Governor Evans of Washington.

You have got members of the Senate, Senator Howard Baker, John Tower. You have got former Governor John Connally. You have got members of the Cabinet. We have got a lot of first class talent and I am not reluctant to mention how many good people we have in the Republican Party.

MR. WAYNE: But you have removed Ronald Reagan's name from your list?

THE PRESIDENT: I have not excluded anybody. Now, Mr. Reagan, I understand, has said he would not accept, but I have not excluded anybody, including him.

MR. WAYNE: Thank you, Mr. President.

END (AT 2:40 P.M. EDT)

INTERVIEW OF THE PRESIDENT BY NICK CLOONEY  
WKRC-TV, Cincinnati, Ohio, The Map Room, June, 1, 1976

MR. CLOONEY: Mr. President, it has been charged in at least one political column that I read recently and elsewhere that you deliberately brought busing into the primary campaign as an issue and since Cincinnati, as other communities, is going to be a court test, we have great interest in that. What is your response?

THE PRESIDENT: I have been against court ordered forced busing to achieve racial balance since the mid-1950s, so that is almost 20 years. I don't think court ordered forced busing is the way to achieve quality education. So, any allegation that this is a new thought on my part is totally without foundation. Last November I asked the Attorney General, as well as the Secretary of HEW, to come forth with some new approaches or new programs that might either alleviate the problems caused by court ordered forced busing or any other solution that they might find beneficial.

It was something done way last year, plus my long-standing record of being against court ordered forced busing, that I think certainly knocks in the cocked hat these allegations about my comments on busing being involved in the primaries. It is not true.

MR. CLOONEY: But Mr. President, do you support busing as a last measure in integration?

THE PRESIDENT: Under the Equal Educational Opportunities Act, which was passed in 1974, which I signed, court ordered forced busing is the last resort in order to protect constitutional rights, but there are six other approaches that a court can take before it gets to busing. In addition, the Attorney General has recommended to me some legislation which would limit the remedy of a court when it finds segregation, to correcting those areas of a community where there is segregation instead of giving the court the authority to come in and take over a whole school system, as some Federal district courts have done.

So, the combination of the proposal made to me by the Attorney General and the legislation which was passed in 1974 would severely limit and, in some cases, eliminate court ordered forced busing.



INTERVIEW OF THE PRESIDENT BY DON WAYNE  
WHIO-TV, Dayton, Ohio, The Oval Office, June 1, 1976

MR. WAYNE: Boston, Louisville, even in my own community of Dayton, Ohio --

THE PRESIDENT: My hometown, Grand Rapids, Michigan, too.

MR. WAYNE: -- school busing is an issue. We know, I think, fairly well where you stand on the school busing, but you keep talking about alternatives. The American voter is not sure what alternatives you are talking about. Are you talking about legislation, constitutional amendment? Can you clarify it?

THE PRESIDENT: First, let me re-emphasize my total opposition to court ordered forced busing to achieve balance in the school system. I think court ordered forced busing is the wrong approach to achieve quality education. The question then is how do you achieve quality education if you don't go along with court ordered forced busing. My answer is that we can improve, through some additional Federal money, school facilities.

I think we can improve the equipment that is available to make educational opportunities better available to the students. I believe that we can inaugurate what they call cluster schools or neighborhood schools in place of cross-town busing. There are a number of alternatives that were written by the Congress when I was in Congress, and subsequently signed by me when I became President, in what we call the Equal Educational Opportunities Act.

It lists seven alternatives, six of them ahead of busing, and if the courts would follow those guidelines, I think we could avoid most of the busing that would take place. Now, in addition to that, the Attorney General has drafted some legislation which would be an additional guideline to the courts that they should follow in these desegregation cases.

What it provides is that if there is segregation, then the court should take cognizance of those instances where there is segregation, but it would limit the courts remedy to just those areas rather than taking over a whole school system, as the courts did in the case of the Boston case and several others.

So, between the present law and that legislation which I am recommending, I think we can minimize to a substantial degree busing and, at the same time, achieve better educational opportunities.

INTERVIEW OF THE PRESIDENT BY WJW-TV, Cleveland, Ohio  
The Map Room, June 1, 1976

QUESTION: Mr. President, as you know, in the City of Cleveland there is pending a decision by a Federal District Judge following a suit by the NAACP, the outgrowth of which when this decision comes, perhaps this summer, might be forced busing to achieve racial integration in the public school system in Cleveland. At this point what would be your advice to the City of Cleveland if this comes about?

THE PRESIDENT: My feeling is, number one, they have to obey the law. Because whether they like it or not, in this country the President and everybody else must obey the laws as decided by the Congress on the one hand or the courts on the other.

Number two, if it is a decision to have busing, I think that leadership in the community must make a maximum effort to try and do it in an orderly fashion. Now, I happen to be against court ordered forced busing to achieve racial balance because I think there is a better way to achieve quality education. But, at the same time, I fully believe in protecting the Constitutional rights of people, that there should not be segregation in our school system. That is unconstitutional according to the decisions of the Supreme Court. But I think there is a way in which the courts can get quality education by using a remedy that does not just take over a whole school system but takes the position that where there is segregation they ought to correct that but not destroy the whole school system.

QUESTION: As you indicate, Mr. President, for approximately the last 25 years segregation has been unconstitutional in this country. What remedies are there to get around busing, if any at all?

THE PRESIDENT: I think there are several remedies. I strongly am opposed to segregation. It is unconstitutional but I think other remedies can be utilized to improve education to achieve what we call quality education. We have what we call the Educational Equal Opportunities Act which lists six things prior to busing that the courts can utilize, neighborhood schools and other constructive devices, and in addition the Federal courts don't have to take over a whole school system in order to eliminate segregation in a part of the school system so either by using more judicious action by the courts on the one hand or the courts following the guidelines on the other, you can get the Constitutional rights protected and at the same time improve the opportunity for quality education.

QUESTION: Yet in a city like Cleveland there is a situation, the east side of Cuyahoga River is basically predominantly black and the west side is very predominantly white. What do you do in a situation like that?

THE PRESIDENT: This is where I think the school officials have to sit down with the court and with the leadership in the communities to try and work out the necessary remedies so you get a minimal amount of busing. This can be done. It has been done in a number of communities and if it is done properly what it achieves is the court orders being upheld without violence and at the same time you are able to get what you want really as quality education without violation of anybody's Constitutional rights. It can be done.

I could cite several communities where, with the proper leadership, sitting down with the court, with the Board of Education and handling it, we have avoided the violence that has taken place in several other places.

INTERVIEW OF THE PRESIDENT BY NEW JERSEY NEWS  
MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES, East Room, June 2, 1976

QUESTION: Mr. President, you said you are concerned about the busing legislation that is being drafted. What is the theory behind this legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: The legislation seeks to achieve a clarification of the various decisions that have been made by the Supreme Court on the extent of the remedy that local courts can utilize when they find a violation of constitutional rights. There have been some cases where the local district court has found a violation of a constitutional right, segregation. The court has then gone in and taken over the whole school district rather than trying to remedy the limited area where there was segregation within a school district.

Now, the proposed legislation seeks to limit the authority of the local district courts to remedy the precise problem and not to become a school board in every case.

QUESTION: Mr. President, won't that still be segregation in some school districts where busing is taken away from them?

THE PRESIDENT: Not according to the information that has been given to me by the Department of Justice.

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EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE  
UNTIL 11:30 A.M., SUNDAY  
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JUNE 5, 1976

OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

THE WHITE HOUSE

INTERVIEW WITH THE PRESIDENT

BY

HELEN THOMAS, UPI

BOB SCHIEFFER, CBS

AND

GEORGE HERMAN, CBS

ON

FACE THE NATION

11:50 A.M. EDT

QUESTION: President Ford, you say you are not making the assumption that Ronald Reagan will get the nomination or be elected, but the problem lies ahead of you now for Tuesday in California. Some political experts think you are going to have a really tough time at the convention if you don't win a good hunk of California's votes -- say 45 percent. Can you do it?

THE PRESIDENT: We are very encouraged by the last three days. I talked to some people in California and I have gotten reports from our people in California and we think we are coming from an underdog position with new momentum and we believe we are closing the gap, and we think that there is an opportunity to win California. That, of course, would be the ultimate, but we think we will do quite well in California.

QUESTION: Mr. President, how many delegates do you think you will have when you go to Kansas City and do you still think you will win on the first ballot?

THE PRESIDENT: Miss Thomas, I think we will win on the first ballot. At the present time we have 805 delegates. We expect to win a good share of the delegates on Tuesday. That will put us quite close to the necessary 1130 and if we do well on Tuesday, then I think we only need about 40 percent of the uncommitted delegates, so the opportunities look I think very good for us in Kansas City on the first ballot.

QUESTION: Mr. President, do you feel that you will have the delegates before the convention actually opens or do you feel as Vice President Rockefeller does that you probably will be 20 or 30 votes short, but you will have them by the time the first ballot comes around?

MORE

OVER



THE PRESIDENT: We believe we will have them by the time the first ballot comes around. There are always those, you know, Mr. Schieffer, who play a little cozy and have not quite made up their mind, but if we add up the committed and those that we think are honestly leaning our way, I think by the first ballot we will have the 1130.

QUESTION: But you won't necessarily have them by the time the convention opens.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I am not going to argue about whether we have them by the time the convention opens or not, the most important time is when they actually cast their vote in that first ballot.

QUESTION: Mr. President, let me get back just for a moment to Ronald Reagan. One of the most interest things, I think, that has been found by the CBS-New York Times polls is a statistic that came up the other day that said if the race were Ford versus Carter, 41 percent of those who call themselves Ronald Reagan people would defect and vote for Jimmy Carter. It also says 23 percent of those who call themselves Ford voters would defect to Carter if Reagan is the nominee. In light of that, aren't you going to have to put Ronald Reagan on the ticket if you are going to have the backing of your party and you have got to have the solid backing of the Republican Party?

THE PRESIDENT: I have said that I would not exclude any Republican that I have looked at or we have heard about that might qualify as being a Vice Presidential candidate and that would include Ronald Reagan. Now he has himself indicated he would not be interested in being Vice President but as far as I am concerned I would not exclude him.

Now we will have to take a look at the two people that the Democratic Party nominates in their July convention in New York City. We will have to see how the convention turns out in Kansas City, how we can best heal any wounds that the party might have as a result of the many primaries. Of course, the main thing is, is the person who is going to be nominated for Vice President fully qualified to be President in case something should happen to the President? Now all of those things have to be put into this formula and we will look at the kind of data you have indicated, but I think it is premature to make any commitment at this time.

QUESTION: But are you seriously saying that the choice of the Democratic Convention would really influence the man that you want for your Vice President?

THE PRESIDENT: It certainly is a factor in the formula. That has been the tradition in conventions over the years in our Presidential races. You can't ignore it. Democrats have done it, Republicans have done it and I suspect it will be a factor, not the controlling factor, but it will be a factor.

QUESTION: I know this is probably something you can't tell us in some detail. You usually give a list of the people that you are interested in that has been well published. Do you have one favorite yourself, in your bosom -- as they say in the church -- who you would like as your Vice President?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't decided on one person, Mr. Herman. I have several that I think fit a very good category of the kind of people, but it is very premature to make any final decision at this point.

QUESTION: Mr. President, you have said several times on several occasions that Reagan's statements on Panama were irresponsible. Yet you say all that would be forgotten when he gets into the White House he would be responsible. Are you saying that Reagan is only making campaign rhetoric now and does not truly believe in the things he says? You also implied there would be guerrilla warfare if Reagan became President and stopped the Panama Canal negotiations.

THE PRESIDENT: Sometimes in the height of a political campaign statements are made that on cool reflection candidates wish they hadn't said.

QUESTION: Are you referring to yours or his?

THE PRESIDENT: I am referring to several that have been made by my opponent in recent weeks. Certainly if a person becomes President he has to be more judicious, more careful, in what he says and how he says it and when he says it, and I think when you get in that Oval Office, Miss Thomas, it does make you far more responsible than you are when you are out on the political hustings.

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MORE

Busing



QUESTION: You know in a recent interview you volunteered -- or in answer to a question, I guess -- some information about your plans for alternatives to court ordered school busing. Could you explain them in somewhat more detail than they were explained, as I read them. They seemed a little indefinite to me, or are they still in that stage?

THE PRESIDENT: I think there are three points we have to make before we discuss busing.

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The legislation that we will propose will seek to limit, to minimize the corrective action or the remedy by the court to the actual instances where there is a violation of a person's constitutional right. That will minimize in many cases to a substantial degree the amount of court ordered forced busing.

QUESTION: Mr. President, the courts have already ruled on that point, if I understand it, in 1973 in the Denver case.

THE PRESIDENT: Are you talking about the Keyes case?

QUESTION: Yes, sir. Have they not, when they said that was not a remedy? You could not just remedy it in a specific area rather than the whole system.

THE PRESIDENT: The Attorney General and his associates informed me that that has not been totally clarified, and that is the purpose of actually seeking a case where the Department of Justice can go into a subsequent case and get a clarification.

That is why we are going to propose legislation, so that there is a legislative direction given to the court to make sure that we protect constitutional rights where there has been a violation and, at the same time, preclude the courts from becoming in effect the school board in a local community.

QUESTION: Let me ask you just a somewhat broader question, and you are the attorney and I am not, so maybe you can explain it to me. If the courts have already ruled that busing is a permissible way to achieve integrated schools and they have already ruled that integrated schools are a constitutional right --

THE PRESIDENT: A permissible remedy to correct an injustice.

QUESTION: -- how can you pass a law to limit that remedy if the courts have already ruled it is constitutional? Don't you need a constitutional amendment?

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QUESTION: To cut through some of the legal niceties which are a little hard on us, it seems to me -- perhaps I misunderstand it -- the final impact of this is to leave in place all de facto school segregation which has happened without the breaking of a law?

THE PRESIDENT: The courts already decided that.

QUESTION: So, that this is the direction which you wish to encourage law and legislation to continue?

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QUESTION: Mr. President, what chance do you think such legislation would have of passing, and what constitutional right is violated by being bused?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, the Congress, I think, would be responsive to some legislation of this kind because I think the public --

QUESTION: This year?

THE PRESIDENT: I would hope so. I can't promise it because I don't control the Congress, but I do believe there is a great public sentiment for a limitation or a minimization of the court in the remedies that they have pursued.

QUESTION: What was the second?

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THE PRESIDENT: Busing is simply a remedy to achieve a correction of an alleged act by a school board to violate somebody else's constitutional rights. Busing itself is not a constitutional right, nor is it a lack of a constitutional right. It is only a remedy.

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QUESTION: Before you change the subject, before you abandon schools altogether, just to explore one further item, private schools, the private white academies that have been founded in parts of the South, would you leave those as being perfectly legal?

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QUESTION: But a segregated private school, if that should be his choice?

THE PRESIDENT: I think in a private school a person ought to have an individual right.

QUESTION: What if those schools get some kind of Federal aid?

THE PRESIDENT: If they get Federal aid, Mr. Schieffer, that is a totally different question and I certainly would not, under those circumstances, go along with segregated schools, under no circumstances.

QUESTION: That would include any kind of tax break, Federal tax break?

THE PRESIDENT: That is right.

QUESTION: Would you approve of a private school turning someone away on the basis of color?

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THE PRESIDENT: Individuals have rights. I would hope they would not, but individuals have a right, where they are willing to make the choice themselves, and there are no taxpayer funds involved. Now, this is a matter before the courts at the present time, and I think there will be a Supreme Court decision probably in this term or the next term, certainly, but individuals have a right where there are no Federal funds available.

I would hope they would not, and our own children have always gone to public schools, which were integrated, and they have gone to private schools where they were integrated. So, my own record is one of our children and my own belief in integration.

But, I think individuals do have some rights, where they are willing to make the choice and pay the price.

QUESTION: Are you working for a Middle East conference this year? You said you were talking actively to the Israelis and other Governments to move off dead center the status quo. Is there a possibility that there could be a Geneva conference this year?

THE PRESIDENT: It is not likely that there would be a Geneva conference this year. I don't rule it out entirely, but it is not likely. We are, however -- I am talking to the heads of Government when I see them, as I did with Prime Minister Rabin of Israel when he was here. We are talking with foreign secretaries. We think momentum has to keep going beyond the Sinai II agreement.

If we stop the momentum, the pot begins to boil again, so we are trying to deal bilaterally, urging other nations to get together to move forward. But the prospect of a Geneva conference in 1976 I think is somewhat remote.

QUESTION: Does the Syrian intervention in Lebanon have your blessing?

THE PRESIDENT: We have objected to any foreign intervention in Lebanon. We don't believe that military intervention is the right way to solve Lebanon's political problems. About eight weeks ago I sent Ambassador Dean Brown as my special emissary to Lebanon, and he was very helpful in trying to bring some of the parties together, and I think we made a significant contribution in seeking a political settlement without any military intervention.

I repeat, the United States Government is opposed to any military intervention in Lebanon. I think it could be destabilizing, even though thus far it has been done with restraint.

MORE

QUESTION: Are you doing anything about it?

THE PRESIDENT: We have let all parties know that we oppose any military intervention.

QUESTION: Mr. President, in almost every campaign speech it seems to me you say something about the economy which goes along the lines that everything that should be going up is going up and everything that should be coming down is coming down.

THE PRESIDENT: That is true, and it is getting better every week.

QUESTION: Then that gives point to my question, which is that the CBS-New York Times polls of voters have repeatedly shown a very strange phenomenon. Only about a third of the people we have queried in various States around the country expect their economic state to be better a year from now. The rest think it is going to be the same and a very large proportion -- in some places, more than half the people -- think they are going to be worse off in a year.

What is going on? MORE

THE PRESIDENT: I am giving serious consideration to his like I am to all of the other Republican potentialists. I think we have to have an open mind about all of it, say, 10 to 15 individuals, including him.

QUESTION: Mr. President, one of the last times we had you on this broadcast when you were Congressman Jerry Ford was asked you about the Warren reports on the assassination of President Kennedy. A great deal more information has come out about motives in the case of the assassination of President Kennedy, information which was not obviously available to you as a member of the Warren Commission at the time. Do you agree with those who say that, therefore, the Warren Commission report should be reopened, the thing should be restudied?

THE PRESIDENT: I think in the very limited area a reopening might be desirable. The Warren Commission did make a massive effort to try to find a motive, and we had academicians, we had lawyers, we had all kinds of people trying to find out.

QUESTION: Everything but the information --

THE PRESIDENT: If you look at other surveys you find that consumer confidence has been going up and up every month or whenever --

QUESTION: Until recently.

THE PRESIDENT: There was a slight drop in recent -- I think the last week or so but for the last nine months it has been going up very steadily and over the last year it has gone up 100 percent.

Now, I think there was a little apprehension that developed because we had a wholesale price index figure that went up .8 percent for the month of April. But now that we had the good news of Friday where the wholesale price index went up .3 -- then I also saw, as you did, that we had good unemployment news and we added some 300,000 more to our employment figures, so I believe public confidence after that just 30-day setback will again start climbing and if it continues, as all of us think it will, we will have a continuous process of economic growth and stability.

QUESTION: Mr. President, could I just for a tiny minute get back to politics. I must say I am struck by how nice you are being to Ronald Reagan today. At the beginning of the broadcast you talked about how you thought he would grow in office if somehow he wound up there at the White House. You talked about how you have obviously taken note of some of the statistics I cited about how many Reagan voters were going over to Carter. Would it be fair to say that you are not just including him, and you are not excluding him as a Vice Presidential possibility, but you are giving serious consideration to Ronald Reagan as your running mate?

THE PRESIDENT: I am giving serious consideration to him like I am to all of the other Republican potentials. I think we have to have an open mind about all of, say, 10 to 15 individuals, including him.

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THE PRESIDENT: And we never were able to find a motive. And if there is some additional, I think, constructive information available, I think it ought to be reopened in that very limited area.

QUESTION: You say "if," do you not think that there is?

THE PRESIDENT: I have not had an opportunity to examine the detailed information and until I have personally examined it I don't think I ought to pass judgment on it.

QUESTION: Mr. President, you said repeatedly that yours is an open Administration, anybody can come in and talk to you. Has anybody come in and talked to you about getting rid of Secretary Kissinger as a means of improving your chances.

THE PRESIDENT: Absolutely not.

QUESTION: Nobody in the Administration?

THE PRESIDENT: Nobody in this Administration has come to me asking that I fire Secretary Kissinger. I happen to think he has done a first class job towards peace and that is the responsibility of the Secretary, to carry out my foreign policy. It has been successful, so I want him to stay.

QUESTION: Thank you very much, President Ford, for being our guest on Face the Nation today.

END

(AT 12:15 P.M. EDT)

INTERVIEW WITH THE PRESIDENT BY HELEN THOMAS, UPI  
BOB SCHIEFFER, CBS AND GEORGE HERMAN, CBS ON  
FACE THE NATION

June 5, 1976

QUESTION: You know in a recent interview you volunteered -- or in answer to a question, I guess -- some information about your plans for alternatives to court ordered school busing. Could you explain them in somewhat more detail than they were explained, as I read them. They seemed a little indefinite to me, or are they still in that stage?

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EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE  
UNTIL 11:30 A.M., SUNDAY  
JUNE 6, 1976

JUNE 5, 1976

OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

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THE WHITE HOUSE

INTERVIEW WITH THE PRESIDENT

BY

HELEN THOMAS, UPI

BOB SCHIEFFER, CBS

AND

GEORGE HERMAN, CBS

ON

FACE THE NATION

11:50 A.M. EDT

QUESTION: President Ford, you say you are not making the assumption that Ronald Reagan will get the nomination or be elected, but the problem lies ahead of you now for Tuesday in California. Some political experts think you are going to have a really tough time at the convention if you don't win a good hunk of California's votes -- say 45 percent. Can you do it?

THE PRESIDENT: We are very encouraged by the last three days. I talked to some people in California and I have gotten reports from our people in California and we think we are coming from an underdog position with new momentum and we believe we are closing the gap, and we think that there is an opportunity to win California. That, of course, would be the ultimate, but we think we will do quite well in California.

QUESTION: Mr. President, how many delegates do you think you will have when you go to Kansas City and do you still think you will win on the first ballot?

THE PRESIDENT: Miss Thomas, I think we will win on the first ballot. At the present time we have 805 delegates. We expect to win a good share of the delegates on Tuesday. That will put us quite close to the necessary 1130 and if we do well on Tuesday, then I think we only need about 40 percent of the uncommitted delegates, so the opportunities look I think very good for us in Kansas City on the first ballot.

QUESTION: Mr. President, do you feel that you will have the delegates before the convention actually opens or do you feel as Vice President Rockefeller does that you probably will be 20 or 30 votes short, but you will have them by the time the first ballot comes around?

MORE



THE PRESIDENT: We believe we will have them by the time the first ballot comes around. There are always those, you know, Mr. Schieffer, who play a little cozy and have not quite made up their mind, but if we add up the committed and those that we think are honestly leaning our way, I think by the first ballot we will have the 1130.

QUESTION: But you won't necessarily have them by the time the convention opens.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I am not going to argue about whether we have them by the time the convention opens or not, the most important time is when they actually cast their vote in that first ballot.

QUESTION: Mr. President, let me get back just for a moment to Ronald Reagan. One of the most interest things, I think, that has been found by the CBS-New York Times polls is a statistic that came up the other day that said if the race were Ford versus Carter, 41 percent of those who call themselves Ronald Reagan people would defect and vote for Jimmy Carter. It also says 23 percent of those who call themselves Ford voters would defect to Carter if Reagan is the nominee. In light of that aren't you going to have to put Ronald Reagan on the ticket if you are going to have the backing of your party and you have got to have the solid backing of the Republican Party?

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Now, in some cases the court has taken an illegal act of a school board -- relatively small part of a total school system -- and taken over the whole school system, and the court, in effect, has become the school board. I think that is wrong. The Attorney General agrees with me.

The legislation that we will propose will seek to limit, to minimize the corrective action or the remedy by the court to the actual instances where there is a violation of a person's constitutional right. That will minimize in many cases to a substantial degree the amount of court ordered forced busing.

QUESTION: Mr. President, the courts have already ruled on that point, if I understand it, in 1973 in the Denver case.

THE PRESIDENT: Are you talking about the Keyes case?

QUESTION: Yes, sir. Have they not, when they said that was not a remedy? You could not just remedy it in a specific area rather than the whole system.

THE PRESIDENT: The Attorney General and his associates informed me that that has not been totally clarified, and that is the purpose of actually seeking a case where the Department of Justice can go into a subsequent case and get a clarification.

That is why we are going to propose legislation, so that there is a legislative direction given to the court to make sure that we protect constitutional rights where there has been a violation and, at the same time, preclude the courts from becoming in effect the school board in a local community.

QUESTION: Let me ask you just a somewhat broader question, and you are the attorney and I am not, so maybe you can explain it to me. If the courts have already ruled that busing is a permissible way to achieve integrated schools and they have already ruled that integrated schools are a constitutional right --

THE PRESIDENT: A permissible remedy to correct an injustice.

QUESTION: -- how can you pass a law to limit that remedy if the courts have already ruled it is constitutional? Don't you need a constitutional amendment?

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THE PRESIDENT: The Constitution permits the legislative body to give guidelines in certain court cases--and according to the Attorney General he believes that this proposed legislation is constitutional--it will simply limit the remedy to the instance where there has been a violation of a constitutional right. According to him, that is constitutional.

QUESTION: Then it is your interpretation that the Keyes case did not invalidate --

THE PRESIDENT: As I understand it, it was a dictum, not a final judgment.

QUESTION: To cut through some of the legal niceties which are a little hard on us, it seems to me -- perhaps I misunderstand it -- the final impact of this is to leave in place all de facto school segregation which has happened without the breaking of a law?

THE PRESIDENT: The courts already decided that.

QUESTION: So, that this is the direction which you wish to encourage law and legislation to continue?

THE PRESIDENT: We would recommend, as the court has said, we correct the violations but we only correct the violations, not make a Federal district court a local school board.

QUESTION: Mr. President, what chance do you think such legislation would have of passing, and what constitutional right is violated by being bused?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, the Congress, I think, would be responsive to some legislation of this kind because I think the public --

QUESTION: This year?

THE PRESIDENT: I would hope so. I can't promise it because I don't control the Congress, but I do believe there is a great public sentiment for a limitation or a minimization of the court in the remedies that they have pursued.

What was the second?

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QUESTION: The second is, what constitutional right is being violated by being bused?

THE PRESIDENT: Busing is simply a remedy to achieve a correction of an alleged act by a school board to violate somebody else's constitutional rights. Busing itself is not a constitutional right, nor is it a lack of a constitutional right. It is only a remedy.

QUESTION: But isn't it the law of the land to desegregate the schools in this land?

THE PRESIDENT: Where there has been a specific violation of a person's constitutional right. It is not beyond that, and that is the real point at issue.

QUESTION: On another subject, Mr. President --

QUESTION: Before you change the subject, before you abandon schools altogether, just to explore one further item, private schools, the private white academies that have been founded in parts of the South, would you leave those as being perfectly legal?

THE PRESIDENT: That case is now before the Supreme Court. I think that the individual ought to have a right to send his daughter or his son to a private school if he is willing to pay whatever the cost might be.

QUESTION: But a segregated private school, if that should be his choice?

THE PRESIDENT: I think in a private school a person ought to have an individual right.

QUESTION: What if those schools get some kind of Federal aid?

THE PRESIDENT: If they get Federal aid, Mr. Schieffer, that is a totally different question and I certainly would not, under those circumstances, go along with segregated schools, under no circumstances.

QUESTION: That would include any kind of tax break, Federal tax break?

THE PRESIDENT: That is right.

QUESTION: Would you approve of a private school turning someone away on the basis of color?

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THE PRESIDENT: Individuals have rights. I would hope they would not, but individuals have a right, where they are willing to make the choice themselves, and there are no taxpayer funds involved. Now, this is a matter before the courts at the present time, and I think there will be a Supreme Court decision probably in this term or the next term, certainly, but individuals have a right where there are no Federal funds available.

I would hope they would not, and our own children have always gone to public schools, which were integrated, and they have gone to private schools where they were integrated. So, my own record is one of our children and my own belief in integration.

But, I think individuals do have some rights, where they are willing to make the choice and pay the price.

QUESTION: Are you working for a Middle East conference this year? You said you were talking actively to the Israelis and other Governments to move off dead center the status quo. Is there a possibility that there could be a Geneva conference this year?

THE PRESIDENT: It is not likely that there would be a Geneva conference this year. I don't rule it out entirely, but it is not likely. We are, however -- I am talking to the heads of Government when I see them, as I did with Prime Minister Rabin of Israel when he was here. We are talking with foreign secretaries. We think momentum has to keep going beyond the Sinai II agreement.

If we stop the momentum, the pot begins to boil again, so we are trying to deal bilaterally, urging other nations to get together to move forward. But the prospect of a Geneva conference in 1976 I think is somewhat remote.

QUESTION: Does the Syrian intervention in Lebanon have your blessing?

THE PRESIDENT: We have objected to any foreign intervention in Lebanon. We don't believe that military intervention is the right way to solve Lebanon's political problems. About eight weeks ago I sent Ambassador Dean Brown as my special emissary to Lebanon, and he was very helpful in trying to bring some of the parties together, and I think we made a significant contribution in seeking a political settlement without any military intervention.

I repeat, the United States Government is opposed to any military intervention in Lebanon. I think it could be destabilizing, even though thus far it has been done with restraint.

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QUESTION: Are you doing anything about it?

THE PRESIDENT: We have let all parties know that we oppose any military intervention.

QUESTION: Mr. President, in almost every campaign speech it seems to me you say something about the economy which goes along the lines that everything that should be going up is going up and everything that should be coming down is coming down.

THE PRESIDENT: That is true, and it is getting better every week.

QUESTION: Then that gives point to my question, which is that the CBS-New York Times polls of voters have repeatedly shown a very strange phenomenon. Only about a third of the people we have queried in various States around the country expect their economic state to be better a year from now. The rest think it is going to be the same and a very large proportion -- in some places, more than half the people -- think they are going to be worse off in a year.

What is going on?

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THE PRESIDENT: If you look at other surveys you find that consumer confidence has been going up and up every month or whenever --

QUESTION: Until recently.

THE PRESIDENT: There was a slight drop in recent -- I think the last week or so but for the last nine months it has been going up very steadily and over the last year it has gone up 100 percent.

Now, I think there was a little apprehension that developed because we had a wholesale price index figure that went up .8 percent for the month of April. But now that we had the good news of Friday where the wholesale price index went up .3 -- then I also saw, as you did, that we had good unemployment news and we added some 300,000 more to our employment figures, so I believe public confidence after that just 30-day setback will again start climbing and if it continues, as all of us think it will, we will have a continuous process of economic growth and stability.

QUESTION: Mr. President, could I just for a tiny minute get back to politics. I must say I am struck by how nice you are being to Ronald Reagan today. At the beginning of the broadcast you talked about how you thought he would grow in office if somehow he wound up there at the White House. You talked about how you have obviously taken note of some of the statistics I cited about how many Reagan voters were going over to Carter. Would it be fair to say that you are not just including him, and you are not excluding him as a Vice Presidential possibility, but you are giving serious consideration to Ronald Reagan as your running mate?

THE PRESIDENT: I am giving serious consideration to him like I am to all of the other Republican potentials. I think we have to have an open mind about all of, say, 10 to 15 individuals, including him.

QUESTION: Mr. President, one of the last times we had you on this broadcast when you were Congressman Jerry Ford we asked you about the Warren reports on the assassination of President Kennedy. A great deal more information has come out about motives in the case of the assassination of President Kennedy, information which was not obviously available to you as a member of the Warren Commission at the time. Do you agree with those who say that, therefore, the Warren Commission report should be reopened, the thing should be restudied?

THE PRESIDENT: I think in the very limited area a reopening might be desirable. The Warren Commission did make a massive effort to try to find a motive, and we had academicians, we had lawyers, we had all kinds of people trying to find out.

QUESTION: Everything but the information --



THE PRESIDENT: And we never were able to find a motive. And if there is some additional, I think, constructive information available, I think it ought to be reopened in that very limited area.

QUESTION: You say "if," do you not think that there is?

THE PRESIDENT: I have not had an opportunity to examine the detailed information and until I have personally examined it I don't think I ought to pass judgment on it.

QUESTION: Mr. President, you said repeatedly that yours is an open Administration, anybody can come in and talk to you. Has anybody come in and talked to you about getting rid of Secretary Kissinger as a means of improving your chances.

THE PRESIDENT: Absolutely not.

QUESTION: Nobody in the Administration?

THE PRESIDENT: Nobody in this Administration has come to me asking that I fire Secretary Kissinger. I happen to think he has done a first class job towards peace and that is the responsibility of the Secretary, to carry out my foreign policy. It has been successful, so I want him to stay.

QUESTION: Thank you very much, President Ford, for being our guest on Face the Nation today.

END

(AT 12:15 P.M. EDT)