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PRESS CONFERENCE

GOVERNOR SPIRO AGNEW

AUGUST 8, 1968

GOVERNOR AGNEW: Mr. Nixon informed me that he has selected me primarily because he has some confidence in my knowledge of the problems of the cities, of county and state government, and we all recognize that there is a tremendous need to adopt a new set of criteria, a simplified set of programs that will allow the progressive steps to be taken in the urban communities and also stabilize and redistribute the population of this country -- at least provide the incentives which will allow the normal redistribution to come about as naturally as we do everything else.

I am looking forward to this challenge. I am most impressed with the fact that Mr. Nixon has indicated he views the vice presidency as an office that should have expanded responsibilities.

I had no intention of, in any event, considering any type of Federal appointment inasmuch as I am in the middle of my gubernatorial term. I am concerned to some extent about the fact that we have no lieutenant governor in Maryland, but I am persuaded by the best advice I can get, including that of my very fine personal friend and advisor, Rogers Morton, whom, incidentally, I have asked to nominate me tonight. I am persuaded by these people that the good of the party outweighs the considerations, the challenges, that have to be met with regard to what takes place in our state, and I am also persuaded that my presence on the ticket should provide a substantial boost to Republican candidates in our state.

I am ready for your questions.

Q: . . . civil rights' position.

A: My civil rights position cannot be simply described. I am on record with many, many statements on civil rights. I am pro civil rights. I am for the implementation of civil rights, not just the elaborate programming and distribution of money which is intended to bring about the equal opportunity and the justice that everyone talks about.

On the other hand, I expect fully that no civil rights can be realistically achieved without the restoration of order, without the abandonment of the condoning of civil disobedience.

I will work enthusiastically in civil rights, and I think that is one of the reasons I am on this ticket, because I have a record that I am proud of in this area.

Q: . . . do you consider yourself a compromise candidate between north and south?

A: Well, I don't know what geographic considerations went into my selection, because I wasn't in on the deliberations that led to it, and I suppose those questions could best be answered by those that made the recommendations to Mr. Nixon.

Q: . . . run in the northern city ghettos such as New York and Chicago?

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A: I certainly plan to run anywhere that votes are available; that the Republican party needs the strength and someone who is capable of articulating the positions and the desires to include urban areas.

I would welcome the chance to run in those areas.

Q: Selection by whom?

A: I am sorry, I didn't catch it.

Q: What time were you informed of your selection and by whom?

A: I wasn't watching my watch, because, frankly, when the phone call came I was rather shocked. I think it must have been no more than ten minutes before the public announcement.

Q: . . . poor people's campaign encampment in Washington. You said had you been president, you would have ordered the poor people off the government property and would have called out Army troops to do so.

A: That is not accurate.

Q: Would you recommend the same course?

A: That isn't accurate. What I said was, had I been President, I would not have permitted the encampment to have occurred in the first place. My decision and my statement on that had absolutely nothing to do with sympathy for or lack of sympathy for the objectives of the people who were demonstrating.

I simply ventured an opinion that the endorsement of such an encampment and the obvious results of the encampment, which are fully

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