

For the Record . . . Post 10-14-72

## The Scripture for Reelection

From WTOP TV Eyewitness news, Oct. 5,  
6 p.m.:

Max Robinson: President Nixon held a desk-side news conference in his Oval office today and commented on charges of corruption in his administration, the Vietnam War, and a tax increase. Eyewitness News White House correspondent Gil Butler reports.

Gil Butler: After recalling the corruption charges, the comparisons to Adolf Hitler, and the accusation that he's a warmonger, the President said he would not dignify the comments by replying. He went on to say that such tactics are turning off responsible members of the Democratic Party.

Noting that he'd been criticized for comments he made about the Manson murder case in California, Mr. Nixon declined comment on the Watergate incident, saying it was also under judicial process. He said the FBI investigation of the break-in made his own investigation of Alger Hiss back in 1948 look like a Sunday school exercise.

The President said Vietnam peace negotiations are at a sensitive stage and declined to talk about them. He said the election will have nothing to do with the timing of any Vietnam settlement.

Mr. Nixon says, "We will only campaign once a week until Congress adjourns" so that he can veto legislation which he said will lead to a tax increase. He pledged again: No new taxes next year. But he

hedged it by saying there may be a Congressional tax increase.

Gordon.

Gordon Peterson: Hugh Sidey was at the same news conference Gil was at. Here's what Sidey makes of it.

Hugh Sidey: There for a moment at Richard Nixon's most recent desk-side press conference we thought we were at the neighborhood mortuary. There was a quiet coolness of sacred chambers, the faint whiff of fresh flowers; with a little effort you could imagine organ music coming from the ceiling.

The President talked in such low voice that some of his words were lost before they crossed his desk. His eyes were frequently downcast. And in sorrow he refused to answer George McGovern's attacks on him and his record. There was a hint of pity as he assured his audience that McGovern was sincere in his beliefs, just wrong.

Nixon at the moment probably did reckon he was laying out the remains of his opponent and a little sanctimony and unction were appropriate. If anybody detected some of the old Nixon tricks—answering a question while denying he would answer it, evading a question while claiming he was answering it, and standing self-righteously in the shadow of the flag and God—well, he would have been right.

But the final conclusion after 30 minutes was that Nixon's sense of self-preservation, at least political, was fully intact. He may not have gained a vote, but he didn't lose one either. And that is the scripture of four more years.