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PRESIDENT'S FIRST COUSIN: Philip Milhouse feeding a calf yesterday on his small farm in Grass Valley, Calif., in the Sierra foothills. He disclosed that he and his wife live on Social Security and welfare payments.

President's Cousin, on Welfare, Discloses Plight to Aid the Poor

GRASS VALLEY, Calif., Feb. 12 (AP) — Philip Milhouse, a cousin of President Nixon, and his wife said today that they were on welfare and were making the disclosure to help California Rural Legal Assistance and other legal aid programs for the poor.

Mr. and Mrs. Milhouse said that they have received Social Security and welfare benefits since Mr. Milhouse suffered a heart attack five years ago.

Mrs. Milhouse said that they had decided to tell about their welfare payments because they wanted to help other poor people get the same sort of legal assistance they received from the California group two years ago.

They first made the disclosure to The Los Angeles Times.

"It is sad indeed that justice today is according to the money you've got in your pocket," Mrs. Milhouse said.

In its editions today, the newspaper said that Mr. and Mrs. Milhouse, residents of rural Grass Valley, 40 miles northeast of Sacramento, lived on \$57 a month in welfare payments and \$270.10 in Social Security, and also received welfare aid to pay for a helper in their one-story house.

Mr. Milhouse's father was a brother of Mr. Nixon's mother.

Mrs. Milhouse, 47, was quoted by The Times as saying in a telephone interview that she and her 55-year-old husband hoped to get off welfare. She said she did not know whether

the President was aware of their plight.

Asked whether they had sought the President's help, she said, "Oh my God, no! We don't try to do things like that."

In Key Biscayne, Fla., where the President is on a holiday, the White House press secretary, Ronald L. Ziegler, said, "This is a personal matter for the Milhouse family and I think it would be presumptuous of me to carry it further."

Stating that the Milhouses were "a very self-reliant family," he noted that Mrs. Milhouse had been quoted as saying she and her husband had sought no aid from the President. He said that Mr. Nixon was "proceeding on that basis."

The Milhouses went to the controversial California Rural Legal Assistance in 1969 when the county decided they were not entitled to wages for the helper and transportation to their doctor, 30 miles away.

The agency, which provides legal aid for the poor, operates with Federal funds that Gov. Ronald Reagan recently tried to halt, questioning whether Government funds should support a service whose lawyers filed lawsuits against the state.

With the agency's intervention, the state agreed to pay for a helper for Mr. and Mrs. Milhouse but denied funds for trips to the doctor's office.

"I voted for Governor Reagan and, of course, Dick Nixon," Mrs. Milhouse was quoted by the Times as saying, "but it is a shame they are picking on C.R.L.A."