Statement From Pre-Election Interview

With Nixon Outlining Plans for 2d Term

The Washington Star-News

WASHINGTON, Nov. 9—The following statements by President Nixon are taken from the transcript of an interview last Sunday with Garnett D. Horner, White House correspondent of The Washington Star-News. The President did not want the interview published in question-and-answer form, but he did authorize direct quotation. This summary contains virtually all of his remarks; the material omitted includes two brief comments put off the record at Mr. Nixon's request.

Foreign Policy

The first year will be a very busy one. We are going to move on SALT II We, of course, will be moving on the European Security Conference, and in a parallel channel we will be moving on the M.B.F.R., mutual balanced force reduction. We will continue the dialogue with the P.R.C. [People's Republic of China], although that is a long-range process. Nothing sudden is going to happen. There will be no change, no change whatever, in our policy toward Cuba, unless and until—and I do not anticipate this will happen—Castro changes his policy toward Latin America and the United States. The Middle East will have a very high priority because while the Mideast has been, over the past couple of years, in a period of uneasy truce or armistice, or whatever you want to call it, it can explode at any time.

Now, as far as the other parts of the world are concerned, I wouldn't want to leave the impression that Latin America and Africa will not get attention. They will, because none of our present policies are going to be sacred cows. I am going to look at the Latin-American policy and African policy to see how our programs can be improved in those areas.

Trade Policy Cited

In the international field we must move to get a more stable monetary system, and we must move in the trade field so that the United States can continue to get a proper break in our trading relations with other countries.

So I would say that while the next four years will not be as spectacular as the year 1972, where we had the opening to Peking, the first summit with the Russians and the Aug. 15th international monetary moves, that the next four years will build on those and will really accomplish more, because those were basically the first steps which opened the way for much bigger steps in the future.

For example, SALT-II will be more important than SALT-I. It is going to accomplish more. It is going to have more of a limitation, The European Security Conference, the Mideast, all of these areas. Let me tell you this on Vietnam—when I tell you I am completely confident that we are going to have a settlement, you can bank on it.

Assuming there is a Vietnam settlement, the Presiednt was asked about Southeast Asia's future for the next four years.

Well, it will have to be a future in which we continue to provide economic assistance, and some military assistance, as well, to our friends in that area, because the Communist nations are going to provide the same kind of assistance to North Vietnam. We will, as we have said, provide some assistance also to North Vietnam on an economic basis.

Our interest is not only to bring an agreement that ends the war now, but to have an influence on the events in the future, and it is much better to have a relationship with the North Vietnamese than not to have it.

Domestic Policy

I seldom recommend any speech, and particularly my own, for others to read, but I think in terms of setting of a candidate, setting forth his views, perhaps the most extensive exercise in that respect were the 15 radio and television speeches where I went into my philosophy, and I was also specific. All of that sets forth wy views in general in the foreign and domestic fields.

Being more specific, as far as what the agenda will be on the domestic front, we are going to start with what I said in the 1972 State of the Union, where of the six goals we had action only on revenue sharing. I don't mean that some of those programs that I laid forth will not now require modification, because after a year's experience, and because of some fiscal restraints, we are going to have to modify some. But the philosophical approach that I set forth in that State of the Union, and these 15 radio television speeches is the one that I will follow now.

So that you have something more direct I have noted that the suggestion has been made that this is on the assumption that I will win the election, which may prove to be untrue—but not facing the problem of re-election, I will now be more free to advocate some massive new social programs. Nothing could be further from the mark.

This country has enough on its plate in the way of new spending programs, social programs, throwing dollars at problems. What we need is, basically, reform of existing institutions and not the destruction of our tried values in this country. Consequently, the next administration will be one of reform, not just adding more dollars — reform in the field of education, reform in the field of health; reform in Federal-state relations; reform in all fields. Reform using money more effectively will be the mark of this Administration, rather than simply coming up with huge new bundles of money to throw at the problems. I don't believe that the answer to the nation's problems is simply massive new programs in terms of dollars and in terms of people.

I haven't answered . . . simply in terms of philosophy in general. When we talk about philosophy, I am not saying we are going to be more conservative, more liberal. Maybe I can describe it this way: I think if you would look at it in terms of the great debates in the British system in the 19th century, I would say that my views, my approach, is probably that of a Disraeli conservative — a strong foreign policy, strong adherence to basic values that the nation believes in and the people believe in, and to conserving those values, and not being destructive of them, but combined with reform, reform that will work, not reform that destroys.

The President was asked how he would solve domestic problems in the cities such as housing, education and health care.

We start with this: I feel very strong—you can't take an extreme right position, that if you ignore them the problems will go away. First you must start with an honest awareness of the fact that the problems are basically there. The debate, really, is not whether we do something about problems, not whether they exist, but what we do. That is what it's really about. What we have to realize is that many of the solutions of the 60's were massive failures. They threw money at the problems and for the most part they have failed and we are going to shuck off those programs and trim down those programs that have proved simply to be failures.

Now, how do you solve some of these problems? As we go into this next year, this is receiving the most intensive study within the Domestic Council, and we will be presenting to the Congress, in addition to what I have already presented in 1972, we are going to present to the Congress solutions to these problems that we think can more effectively deal with them.

But let me begin with some restraints that we have. First, there will be no solutions of problems that require a tax increase. Now, therefore, even if we wanted to go down the line or felt to solve a problem it was best to go down the line of more spending, huge new spending programs, we can't do it because more important than more money to solve a problem is to avoid a tax increase. I am convinced that the total tax burden of the American people, Federal state and local, has reached the breaking point. It can not go higher. If it does go higher I believe that we will do much to destroy the incentives which produce the progress we want.

So therefore, this gets back to our reforms. The reforms have to be ones which will make Government run better at less cost. The reforms also, insofar as any new programs are concerned, must be ones that are within our budget limitations.

success in getting action on our reorganization plans, as you know. We have had very little success in getting our special revenue sharing through, which, of course, also involves reorganization. In other words, our reorganization of the Cabinet, special revenue sharing—no action.

Now, what I have determined to do, and I am having this now studied within the Domestic Council and the Bureau of the Budget, is to accomplish as much as I can of that reorganization through executive action, obviously not doing anything which would be in violation of the law, but I am convinced that the thrust of our reorganization plan, the thrust of our special revenue sharing, is right, that it is needed, and I intend to accomplish it, as much as I can, through action at the executive level unless and until the Congress acts.

Big Government

I honestly believe that Government in Washington is too big and it is too expensive. I realize that it is difficult to thin it down in terms of the number of people, but you can be sure that we are going to make an effort. We can do the job better with fewer people.

And incidentally, that is going to cut across the board, including the White House staff. We can do a better job with fewer people. We have got to set the example on the White House staff. No agencies are going to be exempt in this respect.

There are certain areas, for example, like in the field of narcotics, crime, law enforcement, Social Security, et cetera, where you cannot make cuts because as the population grows, the need for more people goes up.

But there are other areas where you can. That includes the new agencies — HUD, HEW, Transportation are all too fat, too bloated. They came in and they did some good things, but we have to look at not only what they are doing right but at some of the things that they are doing that haven't proved out.

I instituted three months ago, through the Domestic Council, an examination of what we can reform in these areas; and second, in those things that we continue, we are going to find ways to do them with less people

But also, may I emphasize the old agencies are not going to be exempt—Interior, Agriculture, Defense, et cetera. Let's look at Defense just a moment

Minimal Cuts Possible

When I speak of Defense, in terms of the hardware of Defense, in terms of the military personnel in Defense, the cuts that can be made certainly are minimal, except when we get mutual agreement with other countries. But in terms of the masses of civilian employes who are getting in the way of each other over in the Pentagon and around the country, they are going to have to take a thinning down.

When we talk about thinning down, we naturally want to accomplish that goal with the least possible human dislocation. Generally speaking you will find that attrition—there is a huge turnover in government, to begin with. There are many people in government as we begin a new term—who perhaps will feel that they should leave, that they would like to leave. We are going to try to do it in a way that will consider the individual, but we have to accomplish the objective.

Now, let me say, as far as Presidential appointees are concerned, and all of those subject to appointments by the departments, as far as they are concerned, they have had their four years and I will expect all of them to submit their resignations. If it is found that any of them no longer are needed or that their jobs are no longer needed, then their resignations will be accepted. So, at that level we have no problem. When we get down into the other levels there is a problem.

Conservatism

The President was asked his views about what some consider a strong conservative swing in the coutnry.

Well, let me begin by saying that the liberal establishment, during the four years I have been in office, thought that I was out of touch with the country. That is not true. What this election will demonstrate is that out across the country, and including, incidentally up in the Northeast, which is considered to be the playground of the limousine liberal set, you will find that a solid majority of the American people do not want to go to the far left. What this election will demonstrate is that when a candidate takes basically an extreme position on issues, he inevitably splits his party and assures his defeat, even when it is a majority party; always when it is a minority party, but even when it is a majority party, as is the Democratic party.

What happened here it that Senator McGovern's views, even though he won the nomination, probably did not represent even a majority of Democrats. They certainly represented a minority of the country.

Now, the Eagleton matter and the way McGovern conducted his campaign may have affected this election, by five points, no more. This election was decided the day he was nominated. The issue in this election was his views. Oh, it is true, the issue is also the man, one man against another. But in this election his views were clearly the issue and his views simply turned off the solid majority of the American people, most of the Republicans, a great number of Democrats, and a very solid majority of the independents.

Press Reported Honestly

So, I would respectfully suggest, and incidentally, let me say in all respect, too, that the great majority of the members of the press and the media tried to report this honestly. I understand that. I am not complaining about the reporting. They went after me. They went after McGovern. That isn't what is in issue.

What we have to realize is that what was on the line here was my position of a strong national defense, my position of peace with honor in Vietnam, my position of opposing, for example, busing for racial balance, my position against permissiveness, amnesty being part of that, against legalizing marijuana, being part of that. All of these things were involved.

Now, having said this, however, this does not mean that my position is over on the far right. Basically it means my position is simply in the center. In the field of foreign policy, I think most people would describe my position as being that of a centrist. In domestic policy, if you look at the Nixon proposals in the first four years —and I can assure you, Jack, that when you look at them over the next four years, this will be known as an Administration which advocated —and if we get proper support in the Congress after the election, was able to accomplish—more significant reform than any Administration since Franklin Roosevelt's in 1932; but reform in

White House photograph

President Nixon during the interview at San Clemente

a different direction. Roosevelt's reforms led to bigger and bigger power in Washington. It was perhaps needed then. The country's problems were so massive they couldn't be handled otherwise.

The reforms that we are instituting are ones which will diffuse the power throughout the country and which will make government leaner, but in a sense will make it stronger. After all, fat government is weak, weak in handling the problems.

Campaigns

The President was reminded that he had mentioned recently that the British system of limiting election campaigns to three weeks is better than our prolonged campaigns, and was asked if he thought anything could be done about it.

The trouble is that it would require mutual agreement, and you are never going to get either side to agree. I think what is involved here is that with the advent of television we have to realize that campaigns now bore the people to death, because they are simply too long and they see them on the tube a lot. Then you can read about it in the newspaper or put it aside, but when the evening news comes on, month after month—it isn't just two of the regular campaigns: you hear of the convention; you hear it between the conventions; but then the campaign begins two years before when they start speculating about who is going to run in the primaries and then the polls are taken. Then you have the primary campaigns.

By the time you get to the election, the people say, "Oh no; not more politics."

The other point is this: You have to realize that with the advent of television combined with radio, a candidate goes on, he has a massive audience, and they heard his speech and there are not very many speeches to be made. My own view, therefore, is that while many can say America is too big a country to have the British kind of approach, they overlook the fact that television makes this a country in which the candidates can communicate with the whole nation through television.

Better Communication

And I don't mean to underestimate what the press does, too. Press communication in this country is infinitely better than it used to be. It goes out on the wires and every newspaper —the P.M., and A.M., and so forth, radio gets it.

But the point I make is that it would be better for both parties, and certainly better for the candidates, and particularly better where a Presidential candidate is concerned—because we don't want to wear our people down to a frazzle before they take on the awesome responsibilities of this position —to shorten these campaigns.

I must say, I am very pessimistic whether or not it can be done. It is competitive, and being as competitive as it is, I think we are still going to find that all the television does, instead of shortening the campaign, is add one other burden you didn't have previously.

For example, as I did these radio addresses, I thought how good it would have been to have been President during the period Franklin Roosevelt was President. I mean, doing a radio speech is infinitely less taxing than having to do it on television.

Official Family

With regard to appointments, I think I will stay away from that, due to the fact that if I answer it with regard to Kissinger, then I would have to answer with regard to others.

The problem of the relationship between the President's international affairs adviser and the State Department has always been a difficult one. It is particularly at this time because we have had so many initiatives that had to be undertaken at the Presidential level. But I think Bill Rogers put it very well. He said, "When the team is winning, you don't complain because the second baseman may be getting more publicity than the shortstop, because it may be that he has a chance to be up at better times, and so be it."

But what I am getting at is that there is going to continue to be some friction, competition, and I think it is not unhealthy, between departments and major White House advisers. Kissinger on the one hand in the foreign field, Ehrlichman in the domestic field. But that is the way it is going to have to be with them or their successors.

The Press

Even though you didn't ask the question, let me say with regard to this whole business of press relations and so forth, you may want to carry something in this respect.

We want to have good relations with the press. We expect to. When people talk about numbers of press conferences, though, I respectfully suggest that you go back and look over this year. It was my view that it would not have been in the best interest of the country to have held press conferences during periods of delicate negotiations.

On the other hand as we go into the next year, we are going to have an open Administration, contact with the press, and so forth, but only when it serves the public interest. Whenever I find that we are engaged in very sensitive negotiations where it wouldn't be useful to have a pres conference, I won't have one. Where we are not, I will. That is the way it is going to be.

The other point I should make is this: I thrive on the idea that I always gain from criticism, and was never short of it, but there should not be a double standard for the press. On both sides, give us hell.

A Summing Up

The President has often indicated he would like to be remembered on the world scene as a President who brought in a new era of peace, and he was asked how he would like to be remembered on domestic affairs as well.

Let me say on the world scene I would change it just a little. Whether the United States, as the only nation powerful enough in the free world to play this role, steps up to its responsibility and leads the way to this new period of peace, this is the real issue: Whether we step up to it or turn isolationist.

That is why I thought that was one of the great issues of this campaign. A weaker America, turned inward, in my view wouldn't have been good for the people in this country at home. But that is debatable. It would have been a disaster for the world, because without the United States on the world scene, smaller nations would be living in terror, because where there is a power vacuum, that vacuum is filled.

The United States now has a relationship with the Soviet Union and the Chinese, one of whom is a superpower, the other who has the potential in the future, which is a healthy relationship, but it is one in which our strength must always be maintained until we have mutual agreement to reduce.

Now, on the domestic scene: I think that the tragedy of the 60's is that so many Americans, and particularly so many young Americans, lost faith in their country, in the American system, in their country's foreign policy. Many were influenced to believe that they should be ashamed of our country's record in foreign policy and what we were doing in the world; that we should be ashamed of what America did, and all.

Many Americans got the impression that this was an ugly country, racist, not compassionate, and part of the reason for this was the tendency of some to take every mole that we had and to make it look like a cancer.

Now, let us understand: This is not a perfect country. There is much that needs to be corrected. But I don't say this in any jingoistic sense — I hav seen the world, and I don't know any young person abroad, if he had the chance, who wouldn't rather be here than someplace else.

Moles Into Cancers

What I think we have to do is not simply to reinstill in Americans a pride in country, a majority of the Americans do have a pride in country. You see how they respond.

But they must not do it on blind faith, "My country, right or wrong but my country." We want them to know why this country is right. Now, taking the foreign field, we want to make the American people feel proud of their country's role in the foreign field. I think the trips to Peking and Moscow helped in that respect. I think the people saw that the United States was leading the world in peace and that we were the only ones who could do it. They were proud of our country.

We are going to continue to exert that kind of leadership.

At home, as we move toward equality of opportunity, and it will not come overnight, but as we move toward equaltiy of opportunity, as we move toward dealing with the problems of the environment, whether it is clean air, or a better health system, or improvement in education, as we make progress in all of these fields, I think that we will reinstill some of the faith that has been lost in the 60's.

I think we have somewhat digressed from your question, but I think what we are talking about here is that we have passed through a very great spiritual crisis in this country—during the late 60's, the war in Vietnam by many was blamed for it totally. It was only part of the problem and in many cases it was only an excuse rather than a reason. But we saw a breakdown in frankly what I could call the leadership class of this country.

I am not saying that critically because many lost faith in many of our institutions. For example, the enormous movement toward permissiveness which led to the escalation in crime, the escalation in drugs in this country, all of this came as a result of those of us who basically have a responsibility of leadership not recognizing that above everything else you must not weaken a people's character.

Conservative Judges

Now, let try to get at it another way. One issue you haven't touched on is the whole area of the courts. I said several times that I intend to continue to appoint conservative judges to the court. I do. The courts need them and they need men like Rehnquist and Burger and Blackman and Powell on their court, not reactionary judges but men who are constitutional conservatives, because the trend had gone too far in the other direction. I don't mean that there weren't well-intentioned judges calling them as the ysee them. But I don't believe that that was the right trend for this country and I think we have got to continue to reverse that trend in the whole field of law enforcement.

Drugs, etc.—We are going to continue a very strong program here because the whole era of permissiveness has left its mark.

Now, having said that, I do not mean that we turn to reaction. I do not mean that we turn to an attitude which does not have compassion for those who cannot be blamed for some of the problems that they have. But I feel very strongly that this country wants and this election will demonstrate that the American people want and the American people will thrive upon a new feeling of responsibility, a new feeling of self-discipline, rather than go back to the thoughts of the sixties that it was government's job every time there was a problem, to make people more and more dependent upon it to bive way to their whims.

Welfare Mess Deplored

The welfare mess is an example. This escalation of the numbers on welfare, much of it is a result simply of running down what I call the work ethic. Now, I understand that is considered to be reactionary, to suggest people ought to work rather than go on welfare. And I do know there are some who can't work and must go on welfare. But on the other hand, another thing this election is about is whether we should move toward more massive handouts to people, making the people more and more dependent, looking to Government, or whether we say, no, it is up to you. The people are going to have to carry their share of the load.

The average American is just like the child in the family. You give him some responsibility and he is going to amount to something. He is going to do something. If, on the other hand, you make him completely dependent and pamper him and cater to him too much, you are going to make him soft, spoiled and eventually a very weak individual.

So, I would simply sum it up by saying that when you are looking in the next four years at the domestic front and the international front, it will be an exciting period. Internationally, because of instead of withdrawing from the world, as our opponents advocated, in so many areas we are going to continue to play a great role in the world because that is the only way you can have the peace we talk about.

On the domestic front, it will be exciting because it is going to be a different approach. The approach that has always been considered to be the most certain vote-getter in the past has been who is going to promise the most to get the votes. In others, it was a question of how much you were going to promise, how much money were you going to promise to pay out for this program or that program. This is the first campaign in history, I think you see probably the first campaign of a candidate who didn't go out with a whole bag full of goodies.

'Stuck By the Program'

I have stuck by the program I have and I haven't laid out a lot of new goodies. This is a case where the American people were confronted with a choice of one candidate who promised to spend billions more of their money, basically, as they put it, to help them, and the other candidate said, "No, we are not going to promise to do that; we are going to promise to give you the chance to help yourself."

The American people will speak on that issue. It is our responsibility to find a way to reform our government institutions so that this new spirit of independence, self-reliance, pride, that I sense in the American people can be nurtured. I think it is out there.

Now, I realize what I have just said in many quarters in Washington in which we live, and the Georgetown cocktail set that will be tut-tutted by those who are living in another era. They honestly believe that the answer to the problem is always some new massive government program. I totally disagree with that. Sometimes a new program is needed. But what we need now, rather than more Government, is better Government. I realize that is a cliché, but rather than more it is better and many times the better is not the fatter, but the leaner.

We are going to change the way we are going to do this and rather than Government doing more for people and making people more dependent upon it, what I am standing for is Government finding ways through the Government programs to allow people to do more for themselves, to encourage them to do more for themselves; not only to encourage them, but to give them incentive to do more for themselves on their own without Government assistance.