

SJ211 *

TELECON
The Secretary/Vice President Rockefeller
8/17/76 6:20 pm

RELEASE IN FULL

R: Henry.

K: Nelson, how are you?

R: I just came back from the Nelson Galleries looking at the Chinese and Far East collection.

K: That speech yesterday was very good. You sounded relaxed and at peace.

R: Well, aren't you sweet. It went well and everything's good.

What happened last week after our breakfast was the best thing that ever happened to me.

K: I wanted to talk to you about the foreign policy, morality platform.

R: I don't understand what they are doing with it but Brent didn't object to it at all. I was going to get up on the floor. . .

K: It is construed by everybody here as a direct attack on/foreign policy that the world thinks is reasonably successful.

R: But listen, Henry, the whole thing is absolutely absurd.

K: You can be anti-Soviet but to have in the Republican Platform a call for the overthrow of the Soviet system is impossible. (Secretary reads from draft.) Now Helsinki was signed by everyone of our allies. It was signed by the Pope. It was signed by the President of the United States. How can the President permit this to happen and not look like a weak coward?

R: Well, I don't think it is going to happen.

K: My understanding is that no matter what happens he will let it go through. If he loses 16-C, he doesn't want another defeat.

R: Okay, I read you and I will go out and figure out how we block this thing. I just didn't take it seriously. Where did it come from?

K: It was produced by Jessie Helms and Company.

R: When I saw it I said look, this is something that ought to go straight to headquarters. You have no idea how this thing is being operated. But I understand what you are saying and I think we have got to have a very simple approach to this because in my opinion it is a condemnation of Republican foreign policy.



-2-

K: Look, I found that whole performance last night unbelievable to say the least. You were the only one who defended foreign policy. Baker gives a whole speech without even mentioning foreign policy. Do the Republicans really think they can win on domestic policy?

R: I have got to tell you Henry, that out here there is a real lack of reality and our relationship to the outside world. Mississippi's come out for him now and that changes the whole atmosphere.

K: When did that happen?

R: It just happened in the last hour. I will go to him on this thing now. I was waiting to see what Brent's reaction would be.

K: Brent tells me that he is totally opposed.

R: That is not the reaction I got but I don't know.

K: Did you get that personally from him?

R: No I didn't. There is no system here. You know who is handling it. Duvall is the one that is in charge of the platform.

K: But we both know he is a total fool.

R: Unfortunately, that is the case. But I think I can handle this. I think I can make an issue of it.

K: I will not support the President if he doesn't fight this.

R: I feel that he has probably never heard of it.

K: Oh, he has heard of it. I talked to him this morning. But they have done nothing to organize a fight on it.

R: All right. You have given me the whole thing. There has been one move after another by Jessie Helms and Company and I think the thing to do is just . . .

K: If I were Carter, I would run with this like crazy. We are throwing our strong card down the drain.

R: What was the President's reaction when you talked to him?

K: As always, he was very sympathetic.

R: Well you see everything is done here not on the basis of principle but on the basis of compromise.

K: If I were him I would say you are attacking the foreign policy of the United States and I don't want your nomination under these conditions.



-3-

R: All right. I have got the picture now and I will figure out the means of stopping this.

K: They are putting everything behind defeating 16-C.

R: Let me find out where it stands and how to stop it and I think I can do it. I am delighted you called because I really didn't have any idea. It was so absurd that I couldn't believe that anybody would take it. I really think we can handle it and let me get back and see what the score. Okay, I will get back to you.

R: Right.

R: Okay.

K: Thank you, bye.

R: Thanks Henry.