

faith and to believe in it, and to practice a life of difficulties and hardships and pioneering and to build for the future.

If we had the choice, if people would say to us, "Look, you can only have one friend in this world. Choose," I have no doubt whom we would have chosen. Throughout the years, in these very recent years, you know very well what you and your people mean to Israel.

I have personally very many things to be thankful for in my long life. I include even the difficulties that I had to face, because I can honestly say at least one thing: I never ran away from a difficult situation. I have more courage to face our young men and women at home.

We discussed at the table the heroes, the heroes of the wives and parents of your prisoners of war, the joy that we feel, all of us in the world, that they are coming back to their families. The difficulty to sit around at home for me with a group of these young wives—not very many, thank God, only 13 men in Egypt and in Syria—but I look at these young women, with their little children, and their husbands torn away from them, brave, courageous, or when I have to face widows, orphans, mothers, and fathers who have lost their dear ones—in moments of that kind, I have been able to be stronger in my ability to face these real heroes of all nations, because, Mr. President, you have made it possible for us to know we are not alone.

And again, I have been privileged—I don't know why—that in the last few years I should be the messenger to bring this great message to my people, young and old, and say to my people, "We are not alone; we have a friend." This people, through the man who carries the greatest burden and highest office, through its President, made it possible for us to know in the dangerous position that we still are, that we are not alone.

For this, Mr. President, for all that you have done, for your understanding of what we are striving for, for your not doubting that what we really want is an honest and real and true and lasting peace with our neighbors, that the greatest dream that we are dreaming is to cooperate with our neighbors, to cross the borders not with tanks but with tractors, to help, together with our neighbors, to build the area that has known so much bloodshed and so much war and so much destruction, to build together with our neighbors an area where people, men and women and little children, will be happy and will live and will find all this worthwhile.

When that great day comes—I said the other night to a group of friends, we have a song about peace, what will happen when peace comes, and the song has a refrain: This is not a fantasy, this is not a dream, this is true; if it won't happen today, then tomorrow; if not tomorrow, then the next day, but this is not a fantasy and not a dream.

Mr. President, when that great day comes, and I am convinced that it will come, we will always remember that in days of sorrow and difficulty and danger, we were not alone, we had a friend.

Ladies and gentlemen, to the President.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:01 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House.

## THE PRESIDENT'S NEWS CONFERENCE OF MARCH 2, 1973

THE PRESIDENT. I have one announcement for those who are members of the traveling press.

### MEETING WITH PRESIDENT THIEU

We have now set the date for the San Clemente meeting with President Thieu, and it will be April 2 and 3. Those of you who desire to go should make your plans, if you could, to leave on the Friday before, because I am going to California to attend a dinner on that occasion for John Ford on Saturday night, the 31st, and then the meetings will start the following Tuesday and will be concluded that week.

I will take any other questions you have.

### QUESTIONS

#### CEASE-FIRES IN LAOS AND CAMBODIA

Q. Mr. President, there has been considerable speculation and interpretation after the Laos cease-fire pact to the effect that the Communists gained more out of this than they did out of the Geneva Accords, and also a situation in Cambodia that no one seems to be able to interpret. Originally you hinged your peace settlement on all of Indochina.

What is your expectation in these areas, and how much confidence do you have that stability will be maintained?

THE PRESIDENT. Mr. Sheldon, first, with regard to Laos, the agreement there was made by the Royal Laotian Government, and it is an agreement which we, of course, supported and we accept. I have noted that various elements within Laos have questioned the decision by Souvanna Phouma to make the agreement that he did. But the key to that agreement, and what will make the cease-fire work is an unequivocal provision in the agreement that we made and that is for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Laos. We expect that to be adhered to, and when that is adhered to, we believe that the

chances for peace in Laos will be very considerable, and considerably more than after the '54 accords.

As I have pointed out, and as Dr. Kissinger has also pointed out, the situation in Cambodia is much more complex because you don't have the governmental forces there that can negotiate with each other. However, there has been an attempt on the part of the Cambodian Government to have a unilateral cease-fire that has not been reciprocated on the part of the opposition forces in that area. Once a cease-fire is agreed to or adhered to, we will observe it. Until it is adhered to, we, of course, will provide support for the Cambodian Government.

I would not want to indicate that the prospects in Cambodia are as, shall we say, positive as those in Laos. But we do believe that there, too, the withdrawal of the North Vietnamese forces, which has been agreed to in our agreement with the North Vietnamese, from Cambodia is the key thing.

If those forces are out and if the Cambodians then can determine their own future, we believe the chances for a viable cease-fire in Cambodia will be very substantial.

#### ECONOMIC AID TO NORTH VIETNAM

Q. Mr. President, could I ask you whether aid to North Vietnam was a condition of the cease-fire agreement? There seems to be some confusion about that.

THE PRESIDENT. No, Mr. Lisagor, it was not. The provision for assistance to North Vietnam on the economic side is one that we believe is in the interest of creating lasting peace and stability in the area.

That is a provision which we, of course, will have to have Congressional support for. We realize, as I pointed out previously in the meeting with you ladies and gentlemen of the press, there is considerable opposition to aid to North Vietnam. It is rather reminiscent to me of what I went through when I first came to the Congress and when you, Mr. Lisagor, were covering in the Congress.

The opposition to aiding Germany and aiding Japan—Japan being the most militaristic and aggressive force in Asia and Germany being the most militaristic people in Europe at that time—the opposition was very substantial.

I remember at that time my own District—I polled it as that was the time when Congressmen were starting the business of polling their constituents. And it was 68 percent against any aid to our former enemies. I voted for it. I voted for it, even though it was submitted by a Democratic President, because I was convinced that the chances for having peace in Asia and the chance for having peace in Europe would be considerably increased if the Germans and the Japanese, the two strongest, most vigorous people in those two respective areas, were turned toward peaceful pursuits, rather than being left in a position of either hopelessness, which would lead to frustration and another war, or confrontation.

I think that decision was right. I don't mean that the situation with regard to North Vietnam is on all fours with it, but I do say that if the North Vietnamese, after 25 years of war, continue to think that their future will only be meaningful if they engage in continuing war, then we are going to continue to have war in that part of the world, and it would not only threaten South Vietnam, but Cambodia, and Laos, and Thailand, the Philippines, the whole area.

If, on the other hand, the people of North Vietnam have a stake in peace, then it can be altogether different. And so we believe that once the Congress, both Democrats and Republicans, considers this matter—and we want them to consider it and give their judgment on it—that they will decide, as they did 25 years ago, based on that precedent and what happened then, that the interests of peace will be served by providing the aid.

The costs of peace are great, but the costs of war are much greater. And, incidentally, with regard to costs, I know that some of you have raised a question that I would like to address myself to as to whether whatever assistance we eventually do agree to and that we do present to the Congress, whether or not that assistance will require a cutting back on domestic programs.

The answer is no. As far as any assistance program is concerned, it will be covered by the existing levels for the budget which we have in for national security purposes. It will not come out of the domestic side of the budget.

Q. Mr. President—

THE PRESIDENT. By national security, I mean the whole area of defense and foreign assistance.

Q. Is this the area that the money for North Vietnam will come out of, the defense budget?

THE PRESIDENT. It will come out of the national security budget, which means the area of foreign assistance and defense—both. As you know, the two are interlocked because the Defense Department has some foreign aid programs, and there are some outside the Defense Department. But the whole national security area will absorb all of the assistance programs which we may agree to in terms of that.

Q. Can you say how much it will be?

THE PRESIDENT. No, that is something to be negotiated.

Mr. Alexander was on his feet a moment ago and then I will go to the rest of you.

#### BLACK AMERICANS

Q. Mr. President, I apologize for this question before I ask it.

THE PRESIDENT. Nobody else does. [*Laughter.*]

Q. The only reason I do so is because I think you should have a chance to answer it. But I was in Richmond shortly after your re-election, at a public meeting,

and a State Senator, who was a Negro, got up and asked me, when is Mr. Nixon going to stop kicking the blacks around? And I thought you might like to respond to that.

THE PRESIDENT. Well, I could not stop unless I started it, and I have not, I believe.

I think it is very important, Mr. Alexander, that the people who happen to be black Americans in this country understand that the President of this Nation is one who first would not, of course, ever say that he would ever admit, and I trust there would be nothing in the record to indicate that he had kicked any group in the population around and particularly one that deserved far better than that because of what they have been exposed to through the years.

The second point I would make is that there has been some speculation I know in some of the press and particularly in the black press to the effect that because I did not get a substantial number of black votes, although greater than in 1968, that, therefore, now we don't owe anything to them.

Let me say that is not the issue at all. The issue is doing what is right. This Nation owes something to all of its people, and it owes something particularly to those who have been disadvantaged.

We, I believe, have done a very effective job in that respect in terms of what we have done—maybe not, in terms of what we have said, so well—and we are going to continue to do well, and we hope, eventually, that our citizens will recognize that we have done so.

#### RELEASE OF POW'S AND TROOP WITHDRAWALS

Q. Mr. President, could you give us your own delineation of what really entered into the recent agreement on the POW return and the resumption of troop withdrawal?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, Mr. Theis, I don't think that any useful purpose would be served by indicating what the content of the various messages were which went between the governments involved at that time.

Just let me say that Mr. Ziegler covered that, after a consultation with me, when he was first asked that question.<sup>1</sup>

As far as the POW's are concerned, that provision and the withdrawal provision cannot be linked to anything else. The suggestion, for example, that what brought about the POW return was some action on the part of the United States or some assurance on the part of the United States that we would do something with regard to getting better compliance with the cease-fire, that suggestion is completely wrong. That provision stands on its own, too.

It is in our interests and we are doing everything that we can to get both parties, North and South, to comply with the cease-fire, but as far as the POW's are concerned,

the agreement clearly provides that in return for withdrawal, the POW's will be returned. We expect that agreement to be complied with.

We made our position known publicly very clearly and privately very clearly. We accomplished our goal, and now to go into how we did it, I don't think would be helpful.

I want to say, too, that I have noted that in the morning press there was some concern expressed about the 30 POW's that are held by the PRG [Provisional Revolutionary Government]. I am not going to speculate about how that is to be accomplished, except to say that we had been assured that within 48 hours from yesterday that the POW's held by the North, this particular segment, and by the PRG, would be released.

Now, where they will be released and how is something else again, but we expect them to be released within the time frame, and I will not comment about what we will do if they are not, because we expect that they will comply.

#### AMNESTY

Q. Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT. Yes, Mr. Deakin.

Q. After your last press conference, Senator Scott suggested to some of us that we ask you again about the question of amnesty for draft evaders, as opposed to those who deserted military service after being inducted. Have you something further to tell us on your stand on amnesty?

THE PRESIDENT. No. I think I have made my position abundantly clear. I realize that many people disagree with it. I would suggest, incidentally, that if Members of the Senate and the House disagree with it, they should put it up for a vote in the Senate and House. I think that the Members of the Senate and the House would overwhelmingly approve my position.

Let me say it is not said with any sense of vengeance; it is not said with any lack of compassion. But I take this position because these men have broken the law, and if, at the end of the war, we broke every precedent that this country has had, this would be the first time in history that amnesty was provided for those who deserted or evaded the draft, broke the law rather than complied with it as conscientious objectors. If we did that, we could not have a viable force in the future.

I would also say I can think of no greater insult to the memories of those who have fought and died, to the memories of those who have served, and also to our POW's, to say to them that we are now going to provide amnesty for those who deserted the country or refused to serve. We are not going to do so, and I do not intend to change my position.

JOHN CONNALLY

Q. Mr. President, are you going to send John Connally on a mission around the world?

<sup>1</sup> For the text of Mr. Ziegler's remarks on release of American prisoners of war, see page 193 of this issue.

THE PRESIDENT. Well, he has been traveling around the world a great deal already, as you know, and I want you to know, Miss McClendon, seriously, that as Secretary Connally has traveled around the world, he, of course, has been traveling in his private capacity as an attorney, but he has, at my request, undertaken some informal discussions with leaders in various parts of the world.

Secretary Connally, as you know, is very knowledgeable in the field of energy, and without getting involved in anything involving his client-attorney relationship, he is studying the situation with regard to energy from the private sector, and is making recommendations to me and to our energy group.

As far as any future trips are concerned, there are none officially planned, but if he travels privately, and if I can prevail upon him to undertake a mission that would be semi-public in purpose, I can think of no better man to undertake it.

Q. Mr. President.

#### WELFARE REFORM

Q. Mr. President, Mr. Weinberger yesterday—I am sorry.

THE PRESIDENT. Either one. You start.

Q. Mr. Weinberger—

THE PRESIDENT. He will always get his; don't worry.

Q. —said that the Administration was never comfortable about the Family Assistance Plan, and he seemed to include you in that. I wonder if you could give us your views on that, and why you introduced it in the first place if you were not comfortable with it?

THE PRESIDENT. No. Mr. Weinberger is expressing, I think, the views that we had after we ran into a situation in the Senate which clearly indicated that we were up against an impossible legislative problem.

First, with regard to Family Assistance, I thought at the time that I approved it—and this view has not changed—that it was the best solution to what I have termed, and many others have termed before me, the welfare mess. I believe that it is essential that we develop a new program and a new approach to welfare in which there is a bonus not for welfare but a bonus, if there is to be one, for work.

That may be over-simplifying, but basically, in our welfare system today, because of varying standards and because the amounts for food stamps and other fringes have gone up so much, we find that in area after area of this country it is more profitable to go on welfare than to go to work. That is wrong. It is unfair to the working poor. The Family Assistance Program I thought then, and I think now, is the best answer.

Now, there are many who object to it, and because of those objections there is no chance—and we have checked this out. I have made my own judgment of the political situation, and I have talked to MacGregor, and I have talked to Timmons, and I have talked to Bryce Harlow about it. There is no chance we can get it through the

Senate because of objections, on the one side, to any Family Assistance Program at all, on principle, and to actions, on the other side, if we put up the program, to raise the price tag so high that we could not possibly afford it.

So we have to find a different way. I have told Secretary Weinberger, therefore, to go back to the drawing board and also to go to the Members of the Senate on both sides and to bring me back a program which will stop this unconscionable situation where people who go on welfare find it more profitable to go on welfare than to go to work. And I think we will find an answer. Family Assistance may be part of that answer, but I know we are going to have to change it in order to get a vote—a proposition that will get the votes.

Now, Mr. Mollenhoff.

#### L. PATRICK GRAY

Q. Mr. President, Mr. Gray has been up before the Senate Judiciary Committee, and he has been under attack for political speeches in 1972, and there is a controversy about whether those are or are not political speeches. I wonder if you have looked at those, whether you have a view on that? And it seemed to me the most vulnerable point was a memo from Patrick O'Donnell from the White House that was distributed to all the surrogates for the President that went to Pat Gray on the Cleveland situation, and it involved a setting out of how crucial Ohio was in the campaign in 1972. And I wonder if you felt that was a breach of your instructions relative to the politics of Pat Gray and whether you had investigated this?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, Mr. Mollenhoff, that is a very proper question. I mean I would not suggest other questions are improper, but it is a very proper question because when I appointed Mr. Gray, as you remember, I said I was not going to send his name last year because I felt that we should wait until we got past the political campaign so that the Senate could consider it in a non-political and non-partisan atmosphere, and the Senate is now doing that.

As far as Mr. Gray is concerned—and not the individual, but the Director of the FBI—he must be, as Mr. Hoover was before him, a non-partisan figure. He should not be involved in making political statements and that does not mean, if we look at Mr. Hoover's record, that he will not say some things that may sound political at times, but it means that he must not become involved in partisan politics, supporting a candidate, opposing a candidate, and Mr. Gray, on the basis of what I have seen, had no intention of doing so. If there was anything indicating that during the campaign that we were trying to enlist him in that, it certainly didn't have my support and would not have it now.

I would also say, too, that the current Senate investigation or hearing, I should say, of Mr. Gray, is altogether proper. They should ask him all these questions. I want the people of this country to have confidence in the Director of the FBI. I had confidence in him when I nominated him.

I believe that the Senate will find, based on his record since he was nominated, that he has been fair, he has been efficient and that he will be a good, shall we say, law man in the tradition of J. Edgar Hoover, and I am sure that the Senate will overwhelmingly approve him.

Q. Mr. President, do you think it is fair and efficient for Mr. Gray and the FBI not to question Mrs. Mitchell when they think there was cause to because her husband was a former Attorney General and campaign official of yours?

THE PRESIDENT. With regard to other questions on Mr. Gray, it has always been my practice, as you ladies and gentlemen know, not to comment on a hearing while it is in process. This is a matter that was brought up in the hearing.

I am sure that if the Members of the Senate feel that that was an improper activity on his part, they will question him about it, and he will answer on it, but whether it is this hearing or any other hearing, I will not comment on a hearing while it is in progress.

My answer to Mr. Mollenhoff stated a principle. Your question goes to a matter that the committee has a right to look into and the answer should come from the committee.

#### HOSTAGES IN THE SUDAN

Q. Mr. President, we have a crisis, of course, in the Sudan where a U.S. Ambassador is being held hostage and one of the ransom demands is that Sirhan Sirhan be released. I wonder if you have any comment on this, particularly on that demand?

THE PRESIDENT. Last night I was sitting by the wife of Mr. Rabin and we were saying that the position of Ambassador, once so greatly sought after, now, in many places, becomes quite dangerous.

As you know, we had a problem in Latin America last year; we have one here this year. I don't mean to suggest it is that hazardous everywhere, but it is a problem and it is a risk that an Ambassador has to take.

As far as the United States as a government giving in to blackmail demands, we cannot do so and we will not do so.

Now, as to what can be done to get these people released, Mr. Macomber is on his way there for discussions. The Sudanese Government is working on the problem. We will do everything that we can to get them released, but we will not pay blackmail.

#### OBSERVANCE OF THE VIETNAM CEASE-FIRE

Q. Mr. President, are you disappointed or are you concerned that the cease-fire agreement in Vietnam has not

been observed as scrupulously as you might have liked up to now?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, let's look at what has happened. A cease-fire agreement is always difficult. You may recall I have mentioned that on occasion, that it is particularly difficult in the case of a guerrilla war. I have often been, as some of you gentlemen and ladies have, at the demarcation line in Korea. Many people forget that 20 years after the Korean cease-fire where you have a demarcation line, a clear line between the one side and the other, where they have no guerrilla war, there are still incidents, not many, but there are still incidents. They were running as high 3 years ago as 100 a year.

Now, in Vietnam, where you have a guerrilla war situation, where the lines are not so clearly drawn as to which side is held by the PRG and which side is held by the South Vietnamese, there will continue to be violations until the situation becomes settled between the two sides.

What is important, however, is to note that the number of violations, the intensity of the fighting, has been reduced. It is not zero yet. I doubt if it will become zero in any time in the foreseeable future because of the fact that a guerrilla war having been fought for 25 years, off and on, is not going to be ended by one agreement, not in 1 month, not in 2 months, but the main point is, it is going down. And we expect adherence to the agreement from both sides. We will use our influence on both sides to get adherence to the agreement.

#### WAGE-PRICE GUIDELINES

Q. Mr. President, may I ask you about the 5.5 percent wage settlement? The leaders of labor seem to feel that that 5.5 percent ceiling is now more flexible in Phase III than it was in Phase II, but Secretary Shultz and the Director of the Cost of Living Council, Mr. Dunlop, the other day told us it is not more flexible, that it is just as hard a ceiling as it was before. Could you straighten this out for us?

THE PRESIDENT. What we have here as most important is not the 5.5, but the bottom line, which is 2.5. Now on that there is unanimity. The leaders of labor, the leaders of management, this very prestigious and powerful committee representing strong elements in both areas, agreed to the goal toward which we would work in our wage-price discussions this year, to achieve an inflation level at the consumer level, retail level, of 2.5.

Now, in order to get to that level, it is going to be necessary that wage demands be within the ball park which will reach that level. As far as the wage guidelines are concerned, and the price guidelines, the same guidelines are in effect now as were before January 11th. However, what we have done is to recognize what we found in Phase II. In Phase II, actually the wage settlements in all of the various settlements, and I have examined them, a great number of them, you had very few that were 5.5. Some were as high as 7. Some were as low

as 3. But what mattered was that in the end, the average worked out so that we almost achieved our goal of 3 percent. We got to 3.4.

Now what we are concerned about is to see that in the negotiations in the year 1973 those negotiations are undertaken with enough flexibility—some will go a little higher, some will go a little lower—but with enough flexibility so that we don't have a wage-price push which would destroy the goal that everybody unanimously agrees we should try to achieve of 2.5 at the end of the year at the retail level. I am sure that confuses you.

#### THE AMERICAN DOLLAR

Q. Mr. President, what kind of trouble is the American dollar in in Europe, in your judgment?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, the American dollar, I think, is being attacked by international speculators. I know that when I use that term my sophisticates in the Treasury Department shudder because they believe these great forces are not determined by speculation and the rest. But as I look at the American economy, as I look at the American rate of inflation, I would say that the dollar is a good bet in the world markets today.

The United States has the lowest rate of inflation of any major industrial country. The United States has certainly the strongest economy of the major industrial countries. The United States also has a program, which we believe is going to work, for continuing to control inflation. We have a very tight budget, or I should say a responsible budget. Let me point out, it is not a budget which is cut; it is a budget, however, which does not go up as much as some would want it to go, and therefore, one that will continue to cool the inflationary fires. And, of course, under these circumstances, we believe that the dollar is a sound currency and that this international attack upon it by people who make great sums of money by speculating—one time they make a run on the mark and the next time it is on the yen, and now it is on the dollar—we will survive it.

Let me say there will not be another devaluation. I would say, second, we are going to continue our program of fiscal responsibility so that the dollar will be sound at home and, we trust as well, abroad. And we also are going to continue our efforts to get the other major countries to participate more with us in the goal that we believe we should all achieve, which we set out at the time of the Smithsonian and the other agreements, and that is of getting an international monetary system which is flexible enough to take care of these, what I believe are, temporary attacks on one currency or another.

Q. Can we do anything to bring these speculators under control?

THE PRESIDENT. We cannot, because I would say for the most part they are operating in the international area, and all that we can do is to keep our dollar as sound as we

can at home, to keep our economy as sound as we can, to be as responsible as we can so that the run on the dollar does not mean a weakness of the American economy or of the dollar, in fact, that we spend here at home.

#### RENT CONTROLS

Q. Mr. President, are you possibly giving any thought to reviving the Rent Control Board?

THE PRESIDENT. No, we are not. Rent controls have an enormous public appeal, particularly when you see some of the gouging that goes on in individual cases. The difficulty with rent control, however—and any of you who have visited Paris or some of the other major cities which have had rent control almost since World War II and see what has happened to rents, particularly of new dwellings, know what I am talking about—the difficulty with rent control, if you put a rent control ceiling on that is not economically viable so that the builders and those who will rent apartments and so forth cannot and will not make their investment, all that happens is that you get a shortage of housing, the pressures go up, and also you find that the landlords don't keep up the places.

No, I do not think that rent controls is the right answer. I think the answer to the problem of rents is production of housing which will deal with it.

#### THE WATERGATE CASE

Q. Mr. President, now that the Watergate case is over, the trial is over, could you give us your view on the verdict and what implications you see in the verdict on public confidence in the political system?

THE PRESIDENT. No, it would not be proper for me to comment on the case when it not only is not over, but particularly when it is also on appeal.

I will simply say with regard to the Watergate case what I have said previously, that the investigation conducted by Mr. Dean, the White House Counsel, in which, incidentally, he had access to the FBI records on this particular matter because I directed him to conduct this investigation, indicates that no one on the White House Staff, at the time he conducted the investigation—that was last July and August—was involved or had knowledge of the Watergate matter. And, as far as the balance of the case is concerned, it is now under investigation by a Congressional committee and that committee should go forward, conduct its investigation in an even-handed way, going into charges made against both candidates, both political parties. And if it does, as Senator Ervin has indicated it will, we will, of course cooperate with the committee just as we cooperated with the grand jury.

#### CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS AND EXECUTIVE PRIVILEGE

Q. Mr. President, yesterday at the Gray hearings, Senator Tunney suggested he might ask the committee to ask for John Dean to appear before that hearing to talk

about the Watergate case and the FBI-White House relationship. Would you object to that?

THE PRESIDENT. Of course.

Q. Why?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, because it is executive privilege. I mean you can't—I, of course—no President could ever agree to allow the Counsel to the President to go down and testify before a committee.

On the other hand, as far as any committee of the Congress is concerned, where information is requested that a member of the White House Staff may have, we will make arrangements to provide that information, but members of the White House Staff, in that position at least, cannot be brought before a Congressional committee in a formal hearing for testimony. I stand on the same position there that every President has stood on.

REPORTER. Thank you, Mr. President.

Q. Mr. President, on that particular point, if the Counsel was involved—

THE PRESIDENT. He always gets two. (*Laughter*)

Q. —if the Counsel was involved in an illegal or improper act and the prima facie case came to light, then would you change the rules relative to the White House Counsel?

THE PRESIDENT. I do not expect that to happen, and if it should happen I would have to answer that question at that point.

Let me say, too, that I know that, since you are on your feet, Clark [Mollenhoff], that you had asked about the Executive Privilege statement, and we will have that available toward the end of next week or the first of the following week, for sure, because obviously, the Ervin Committee is interested in that statement, and that will answer, I think, some of the questions with regard to how information can be obtained from a member of the White House Staff, but consistent with executive privilege.

REPORTER. Thank you again.

NOTE: President Nixon's thirtieth news conference was held at 11:08 a.m. on Friday, March 2, 1973, in the Briefing Room at the White House.

## “Heart-of-the-Year” Award to the President

*Exchange of Remarks Between the President and Dr. Paul N. Yu, President of the American Heart Association, at the Presentation Ceremony.  
March 2, 1973*

DR. YU. Mr. President, each year the American Heart Association has been privileged to honor a distinguished American with the “Heart-of-the-Year” Award. For the past 4 years, Mr. President, you have graciously consented

to present the award in our name. This year we would like very much to have you keep it.

Mr. President, we are really extremely pleased and proud to present the 1973 “Heart-of-the-Year” Award to you in recognition of your consistent support and encouragement of the voluntary action in the health field. Your support has helped make it possible for us to expand the role of the volunteer and of our voluntary health agency to fight the number one health problem—heart and blood diseases.

As you know, the goal of the American Heart Association is to conquer heart and blood vessel diseases through the support of cardiovascular research, education, and commingled services. We are very confident that with the sustained guidance, support, and encouragement we will achieve our goals.

So, Mr. President, please accept this award as a small token of our great appreciation.

The citation reads: “1973 Heart-of-the-Year Award. Presented by the American Heart Association to President Richard M. Nixon for his consistent support and encouragement of voluntary programs combatting the nation's most serious health problem—heart and blood vessel diseases.”

Thank you very much.

THE PRESIDENT. Thank you very much, Dr. Yu.

In accepting this award, Doctor, I want to accept it on behalf of those of you who deserve it, and that is the volunteers both here in the District of Columbia and all over this Nation.

I noted in my talking papers that I was to mention the fact that I should accept it because, and make note of the fact that this Administration has committed approximately \$100 million to research in the field of heart disease.

But I cannot take the credit for that. The taxpayers of America, all of the American people, have made it possible to do research and go forward.

That is the governmental side, but what is done on the voluntary side, which you represent here today, is equally important. This is the seed money, and then the volunteers will go far beyond that in finding, certainly, a solution to this problem.

Just let me say one thing personally. As you presented this here in this Oval Office of the President, I think about the two Presidents—the three Presidents—who preceded me in this office. President Eisenhower, of course, had a heart attack in 1955, and eventually that was the cause of death; and that President Johnson had a heart attack while he was in the Senate, and that that was the cause of death.

I think back over my public life of going to visit President Eisenhower in Denver right after his heart attack, which is something that I will never forget, and also going to visit President Johnson when he was in Bethesda Hospital. I am not suggesting by that that Presidents are