

SENATOR ROBERT MORGAN
PRESS CONFERENCE
ASHEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA
JUNE 22, 1979

FOR SOME TIME WE HAVE BEEN WATCHING CLOSELY THE EFFECTS OF THE CURRENT GASOLINE CRISIS ON THE TOURIST INDUSTRY IN NORTH CAROLINA. AS TIME HAS GONE ON, WE HAVE BECOME INCREASINGLY CONCERNED AS TRAVELERS, FEARING SHORTAGES OF GASOLINE WHERE SHORTAGES ACTUALLY HAVE NOT EXISTED, HAVE CANCELLED VACATIONS AND STAYED AT HOME.

MY GOOD FRIEND, BILL CECIL, AT THE BILTMORE ESTATE HERE IN ASHEVILLE, HAS KEPT ME CONSTANTLY INFORMED ABOUT THE SITUATION AS WE HAVE SEEN TOURIST REVENUES DECLINING AS MUCH AS 20 TO 30%. YOUR ECONOMY HERE IN ASHEVILLE AND WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA IS HEAVILY DEPENDENT ON TOURISM AND IF THIS TREND IS NOT REVERSED, WE SOON WILL HAVE A PROBLEM OF MAJOR PROPORTIONS.

FOR THIS REASON MR. WILLIAM CECIL AND I WILL MEET AT THE WHITE HOUSE NEXT WEDNESDAY MORNING AT 11:30 WITH PRESIDENT CARTER'S CHIEF DOMESTIC ADVISOR, STUART EISENSTAT, TO DISCUSS WITH HIM THE IMPACT ON THE ECONOMY-- ESPECIALLY THE TOURIST INDUSTRY-- OF THE CURRENT GASOLINE CRUNCH.

FRANKLY, WE DO NOT BELIEVE WHITE HOUSE AND ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS UNDERSTAND THE POTENTIALLY DEVASTATING EFFECT THE SITUATION CAN HAVE ON OUR TOTAL ECONOMY AND HAVE UNDERESTIMATED THE NUMBER OF PERSONS AND JOBS EFFECTED. WE ARE ALL WILLING TO MAKE SACRIFICES WITHIN REASON BUT WE CANNOT SIT BY AND SEE THE TOURIST INDUSTRY DESTROYED.

I INTRODUCE TO YOU WILLIAM CECIL, OWNER OF BILTMORE ESTATE AND PRESIDENT OF THE ASHEVILLE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, FOR HIS COMMENTS ABOUT OUR MEETING NEXT WEDNESDAY WITH MR. EISENSTAT AT THE WHITE HOUSE.