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NEWS CONFERENCE

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AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 11:40 A.M. EDT

JUNE 25, 1976

FRIDAY

MR. NESSEN: You know that Arch Moore is coming to lunch today, the Governor of West Virginia, and with him this group of 22 delegates.

Q Twenty-two, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: I didn't count them, but I think that is right.

Q Ron, are these 22 in addition to Governor Moore, or is he one of the 22?

MR. NESSEN: He is one of the 22.

My plan was to go over and talk to him after lunch and see if he wanted to come down here and see you and, if he does, he will, and I have no problem with that at all. That will be at around 1:45 if he decides to come.

Q How about some of the others, Ronald?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think there was any plan for them to come over here.

Q Will you ask them to come?

MR. NESSEN: I will ask them but I don't think they will.

Q Why not a picture?

Q Are they here for the day or staying overnight, Ron, or do you know?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what their plan is. Maybe you can ask Arch Moore when you see him.

Q How come you are going after West Virginia delegates and not going more after the Virginia delegates who are uncommitted?

MR. NESSEN: Which ones?

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Q I said, how come you are going after the West Virginia delegates in such a big way and pay no attention to the Virginia uncommitted delegates?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know all that much background on this except that Governor Moore suggested to the President that it would be nice to have them in for lunch, and the President agreed to have them in to lunch.

Q Are we going to get the menu, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: I can get it if you are interested.

Q Is the PFC paying for the lunch?

MR. NESSEN: Either the PFC or the President, out of his own pocket. I didn't check.

Q Let's find out for sure, huh?

Q What time would you bring Governor Moore down?

MR. NESSEN: About 1:45 or 2:00.

Q Why not a picture, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: Because it is just a private lunch.

At 5:30, the President is meeting with the Executive Committee of the Republican National Committee in the East Room. If you would like to have open coverage of that, you can.

Mary Louise Smith will introduce the President and he will speak to the members and, as I say, if you want to cover that you can. Then there will be a reception in the State Dining Room and it will be the usual writing pool coverage of that.

Q How many people will be there?

MR. NESSEN: This is not a full briefing paper and I don't have the exact number.

Larry, do you know how many people will be there?

The Executive Committee is meeting in Washington and that is the reason they were invited in.

On the subject of Puerto Rico, I can tell you a few things. I mentioned yesterday that check-in for the press at Andrews is 6:00 a.m. and the take-off time is 7:00 a.m. The flying time is three hours and thirty minutes. The press plane arrives in San Juan at 10:30. Then there will be a helicopter movement of an expanded pool group over to the Dorado.

The President will arrive at the San Juan International Airport at noon and there will be an arrival ceremony there, including a statement by the President, an arrival statement. My plan is to hopefully get the arrival statement late this afternoon, embargoed for 6:00 a.m. and put it out then.

Q Are they on the same time we are?

MR. NESSEN: No time change there, correct.

Q No time change?

Q It is an hour later.

MR. NESSEN: No time change, according to my bible.

Q Ron, this pool moves out before he arrives at the airport, is that right?

MR. NESSEN: That part of the pool and then the Air Force One pool will go to Dorado at the same time the President does on another helicopter. In other words, there is going to be a pre-positioned, enlarged pool taken there by two helicopters before the President arrives and then the Air Force One pool will go with the President to the Dorado on a third helicopter.

Q But the wires will have one person? The Air Force One person will go over, or what?

Q Could we have two? One in the enlarged pool?

MR. SPEAKES: Talk to Doug Blaser.

MR. NESSEN: Here is the pool. No, the wires will each have one person plus one photographer for each wire.

Now, the first day will be taken up mostly with arrivals and the arrival schedule for the first day, that is the afternoon of Saturday, will be the Canadian delegation arriving first, after the President, then the Japanese, the German, the United Kingdom and the Italian. Those are all the arrivals tomorrow.

Then, in the evening, the President will have an informal reception and dinner with the guests which have arrived already.

My plan was to come down to the International Press Center in San Juan tomorrow night and bring with me others who can talk to you. That is Saturday.

Q You mean there is no coverage of these events?

MR. NESSEN: What events?

Q The reception, the dinner --

MR. NESSEN: That is why that pool is out there at Dorado, Helen.

Q There is pool coverage, then, of these?

MR. NESSEN: There will be pool coverage of most everything at Dorado.

Q Ron, is this a permanent pool that will stay at Dorado?

MR. NESSEN: It will be a rotating pool. It will be changed either once or twice a day.

The final arrival will be the French, arriving at 1 o'clock on Sunday.

You know, I think there is a time difference because that is Atlantic Standard Time. Is there a time difference?

Q No time difference. Atlantic Standard and Eastern Daylight are the same.

MR. NESSEN: The French arrive at 1 o'clock on Sunday. The first session begins at 4 o'clock on Sunday, approximately. Some of these things are not completely locked up yet as to exact times.

In the evening on Sunday there is an informal reception and dinner by the President for his guests and, again, I was going to come down to the International Press Center Sunday night and bring others with me to brief.

Then, on Monday, there will be a morning session beginning at approximately 9 o'clock, a luncheon at mid-day, and an afternoon session beginning at approximately 1:30 -- this is on Monday -- a joint statement, or final statement, to be issued at around 3:15 Monday afternoon, and then the various departures following that, in this order: The French will leave first -- (Laughter)

Q Last in; first out.

MR. NESSEN: -- the United Kingdom, the Canadians, Germans, Italians. The Japanese plan to stay overnight in Puerto Rico. The President plans to leave the Puerto Rico International Airport somewhere around 8 o'clock, arriving at Andrews at 11:15. That is the rough schedule.

Now, just to give you an idea of the setup there, the three main locations are the International Airport, where there are full press facilities; the International Press Center, which is in the Condado Beach Hotel, and that has full facilities, including 30 long-distance phones, 2 mults and 30 telex -- 30 telex machines? Could that be right? Anyhow, those are two.

The third location is what we call the Satellite Press Center, which is out within the Dorado Beach complex, and I would say the overall press plan is to have a rather full, expanded pool out at Dorado all day every day, and these briefings down at the International Press Center in the evenings plus postings and announcements during the day, every public statement made at Dorado will be piped downtown and the piping will pass through a mult so you can record that for broadcast at the International Press Center.

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Q Ron, will the pool at Dorado be back in San Juan for your briefings every evening?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Ron, one other question. This purely White House business. Will there be a separate White House Press Room as we often have?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, there will be.

Q Where will that be?

MR. NESSEN: In that whole Condado Beach hotel complex there will be an International Press Center and then there will be a --

Q Is it in the same general area?

MR. NESSEN: Oh, yes, they are all together and the Puerto Ricans will have an information service office there, I will have an office there, there will be a USIA office, and then there will be a separate smaller White House briefing room in the same building, although not on the same floor.

Q Where will these things be piped in? Into the main International Press Center--the announcements from Dorado Beach?

MR. NESSEN: Into the International Press Center or the White House Press Center?

MR. SPEAKES. Both.

MR. NESSEN: Both.

Q Ron, if Jimmy Carter decided to go to this non-partisan, non-political conference, if he would like to be an observer, would he be welcome or not?

Q He will arrive last. (Laughter)

MR. NESSEN: I have not heard any plans for that at all, Les.

Q I know that but I am just asking because they might think about this, and you have stressed that it is non-political and non-partisan. If Governor Carter wants to go down there, would he be welcome or would he be not welcome?

MR. NESSEN: I have not heard any plans for him to come.

Q No, I just want to know. Would he be welcome or not, Ron? I know you have not heard of any plans but in the possibility that Governor Carter might want to go to this non-partisan, non-political economic summit, would he be welcome or not?

MR. NESSEN: I think I will wait for him to make the judgment as to whether he would like to come or not.

Q In other words, he would not be welcome, is that what we are to infer?

MR. NESSEN: No, I think what I said was that I will wait until he indicates his desire to come.

The weather forecast, I think I mentioned the other day that it is hot and humid, temperatures in about the mid-60s at night and in the 90s during the day. There is about a 60 percent change of showers in the afternoons.

Q Hear anything about a hurricane down there?

MR. NESSEN: No, I have not.

Q Let me ask one more question about the briefing procedure. If during the day you have some information you want to pass along or someone else does, the briefing would be conducted at the Press Center at El Dorado and it would be fed into the Condado, is that the idea?

MR. NESSEN: That is one way to do it. If I had something to announce out at Dorado I could do it to the pool there, it would be piped downtown or John could post it downtown or Larry, whichever way, or actually both.

Q But the briefings at Dorado would all be fed into the Condado?

MR. NESSEN: Everything that is done at Dorado will be fed downtown.

Q I have to ask again on the departure. Will the Cabinet members who are here come out and make a statement?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know of any plans for a departure ceremony of any kind.

Q On the arrivals, are the French the only ones arriving on Sunday?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q You didn't mention an Italian arrival.

MR. NESSEN: I think I said the Italians were going to be the last to arrive on Saturday night, I believe.

Q Oh, I see.

MR. NESSEN: There will be a little arrival ceremony at the San Juan International -- well, the Italians arrive at 8:45 Saturday night.

Q Who are they headed by, do you know?

MR. NESSEN: Their Prime Minister, as far as I know. Aldo Moro is the head of the Italian delegation, along with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mariano Rumor, and the Minister of the Treasury, Emilio Colombo.

There will be a little arrival ceremony at San Juan International Airport. Henry Catto, the Chief of Protocol, will be there as well as the officials of Puerto Rico and then each delegation will fly by helicopter from San Juan International Airport to the Dorado Beach area where they will be met by the President.

Q Ron, you mentioned you would be putting out leaflets. Is that the blue thing you have in your hand?

MR. NESSEN: Okay. We have actually two things, both of which are going to be handed out on the plane tomorrow with the bible. One is a grey folder and in it you will find the bible for at least the first two days, a pool list for at least the first two days as well as information concerning the Dorado Beach area and the Dorado Beach complex, Puerto Rico itself, biographical information on each of the delegations and other helpful facts.

In a somewhat longer press book here as far as background material, you have the original announcement of this meeting, a statement by the President. You have the Declaration of Rambouillet. You have some things that have happened since Rambouillet that grew out of that meeting and led up to this meeting and that is fairly lengthy.

Q And the latest delegate count.

MR. NESSEN: Then you have background information on the meeting in Puerto Rico and some of the areas to be covered. Then you have a breakdown of the press facilities, how many phones and telexes and so forth are at each location.

Q It would be nice to have that today.

MR. NESSEN: The problem is the State Department is printing it and they have not printed enough yet to give out.

Q You mean you are not going to have enough so the correspondents who don't go on the trip can have all that background information?

MR. NESSEN: No, I think there will be some available tomorrow once they get them all run off. We can have some here in the office.

Then you have a list of important phone numbers down there in San Juan, a chart of the International Press Center and a chart of the Dorado Beach area. In the back of the book you have a transcript of the news conference that Secretary Kissinger and Simon and Alan Greenspan held which is the basic background information for this conference.

Q When will that be available?

MR. NESSEN: I will check this afternoon and see how the printers are coming. It is purely a printing problem.

That is about it on the conference.

The question I was asked earlier about how many people are coming to the RNC reception, it is fluctuating and a final number is not in yet but it is somewhere around 250 people.

Q Will the President's remarks there be piped through the mult?

MR. NESSEN: I think we can pipe it through the mult, sure.

Q Ron, has any time been set by the President to meet with Puerto Rican representatives, the Governor, and have this Puerto Rican affair?

MR. NESSEN: I expect that the President will have an opportunity to meet with the Governor of Puerto Rico and with other officials in Puerto Rico.

Q Ron, did you say the reception for the Executive Committee of the Republican National Committee would have 250 people?

MR. NESSEN: That is what I am told.

Q That means a lot of guests coming from all over. Whereabouts? Washington?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have all the details on that right now, Sarah. I will get it for you.

Q There will be a list of guests, I guess.

MR. NESSEN: The RNC can probably put that out. I don't know if we have it here.

Q Let me ask another question about Puerto Rico.

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Is there any plan at this time to have a joint news conference by the principals at the conclusion?

MR. NESSEN: At the moment the only thing planned, and it is a little fuzzy, is on Monday at around 3:15 in the afternoon there is to be a joint statement issued.

Now whether that is done personally by the representatives, I would say we are sort of leaning in the direction -- right now I would say the odds are in favor of it being done personally by the heads of government as it was at Rambouillet. If you recall, everybody trooped over to that city hall and made little short statements. I think it would be something like that.

Q This would be done out at Dorado Beach and the people downtown would go out for this, is that right?

MR. NESSEN: There are two problems with taking everybody to Dorado Beach for the final statement. One is getting everybody there which is not too much of a problem, it is by bus, but then there are no filing facilities at Dorado Beach except very limited pool facilities. So then you would have to get on the bus and go to the International Airport to file and that would take a little while to get there. We have not really quite made that judgment yet.

Q The principals could not be brought down to the Condado?

MR. NESSEN: No, because they all begin departing almost immediately after that.

Q Are there any bilateral meetings?

MR. NESSEN: There are none scheduled at the moment.

Q What is going to happen all Sunday morning before 4:00 P.M. except for the arrival of the French?

MR. NESSEN: There may be church services on Sunday morning and it is possible that that is the time when the President would meet with some Puerto Rican officials.

Q Ron, I think we failed to ask Kissinger, Simon and Greenspan this question. I believe that transcript may prove me wrong but I don't think we got an answer to whether or not subjects other than economics would be discussed such as defense matters.

MR. NESSEN: I think the plan is to have this primarily a discussion of economic matters, although some of these economic matters get over into the area of political decisions, but I don't know of any plan to discuss specifically defense matters.

Q Ron, there is a world famous golf course at Dorado Beach. Is the President taking his clubs with him?

MR. NESSEN: As far as I know, there is no time for that.

Q Ron, one logistical question: What phone facilities do you have at that beach pool?

MR. NESSEN: For the pool at Dorado?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: That would be at the Satellite Press Center, and that is somewhere between 5 and 10 long-distance phones and 3 local phones, but you have to remember that the pool at Dorado is going to be an international pool so those 5 to 10 phones have to be shared with reporters from 6 other countries. We are going to have a line so that pool reports can be phoned down to the International Press Center.

Q Only 3 local phones to phone into bureaus in San Juan?

MR. NESSEN: That is what my rundown shows, yes.

Q Ron, can I ask a question unrelated to Puerto Rico?

MR. NESSEN: Is everybody finished with Puerto Rico questions?

Q I have a question. How will you compare the amount of actual meeting time in this one with the earlier ones? You have the formal meetings beginning at 4:00 on Sunday and the whole thing is over less than 24 hours later. Is this longer than the other ones, shorter, or what?

MR. NESSEN: I have to try to recall exactly what the schedule was at Rambouillet. It seems that a half-day of meetings on Sunday and then two full sessions on Monday, plus two dinners and a lunch -- I think that is about the same as Rambouillet, maybe slightly longer.

Q But they don't have a full day on Monday, do they?

MR. NESSEN: They have a morning session and an afternoon session, yes.

Q Ending at 2:15 or 3:15?

MR. NESSEN: Something like that.

Q That is not a whole afternoon. That is very little time.

Q Do you know how much this is going to cost?

MR. NESSEN: I don't, Bob, and I don't even know how you would begin to estimate it.

Q How many hours a day would you say they will be working?

MR. NESSEN: Well, I can add it up for you.

Q That is very little time.

Q Did the Vice President have anything to do with the selection of Dorado Beach?

MR. NESSEN: Not to my knowledge, he did not.

Q About what time do you expect the final briefing on Monday evening? Do you have any idea?

MR. NESSEN: Well, there was no plan to have a briefing on Monday evening. The plan was to have this joint statement or final statement by the various heads of Government at about 3:15 on Monday afternoon.

Q Will there be a briefing on that?

MR. NESSEN: That is not really determined yet. There is some time there on Monday afternoon as the various delegations are departing, but we have not nailed down the question of a briefing.

Q Will they meet on Sunday night?

MR. NESSEN: On Sunday night there is the opening session from 4 o'clock until some time prior to the dinner, which begins at 8 o'clock.

Q They won't have much time to really meet, will they, and discuss?

MR. NESSEN: No, I think they have quite extensive time.

Q How many hours?

MR. NESSEN: Well, four hours on Sunday plus dinner, which could, I suppose, be another two or three hours, so that is six or seven hours on Sunday and then Sunday afternoon from 1:30 to 3:00, which is another hour-and-a-half, and then the morning session on Monday, which is two hours and 45 minutes, plus the lunch which is another two hours. I don't know what that adds up to -- 15 to 20.

Q In other words, if they are going to give their final statement at 3:15 and they meet up until that time, they are going to have the final statement written before they even meet?

MR. NESSEN: I think one of the things out of their talks will come the final statement, Sarah.

Q Yes, but it looks like it is going to be all written and cut and dried before.

Q Ron, may I ask a question?

MR. NESSEN: Is that the extent of the questions?

Q Will Secretaries Simon and Kissinger come back on Air Force One?

MR. NESSEN: You mean coming back from Puerto Rico to Washington?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: That is the plan at the moment, yes.

Q Ron, did the President have any reaction to the Supreme Court ruling yesterday denying minimum wage to State government and municipal workers?

MR. NESSEN: He did not, Tom, have any reaction to that.

Q How about today's?

MR. NESSEN: What was that?

Q Segregated case.

MR. NESSEN: Was that the private school ruling?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: That just came across the wires shortly before I came out here. Nobody has had a chance to read it yet.

Q Ron, could we go back to what he said on Face the Nation, for just a second? Is it fair to say there has been no change in his position; that he still believes that segregated private schools are maybe not desirable but should be legal? Is that correct?

MR. NESSEN: I didn't read it that way, John. I notice one of the wires incorrectly reported that, but I dug out the transcript and as I read it the President said quite clearly: "Individuals have rights. I would hope they would not, but individuals have a right where they are willing to make a choice themselves and there are no taxpayers' funds." So I read this as being a matter of individual rights.

Then, in the next sentence or two he specifically says, "The matter is before the Supreme Court and there will probably be a decision this term, but individuals have a right where there are no Federal funds." I think there is quite a distinct point between him saying, "I believe individuals have a right to make certain choices," and I think the way you, I believe, inaccurately described his views as saying he believes schools have a right to discriminate.

In fact, Judge Stewart, in his ruling today, made that distinction very clearly. Judge Stewart said in his ruling, "Parents have a First Amendment right" -- this is the majority opinion. This is Justice Stewart writing the Court's opinion in the case, drew the exact same distinction that the President drew on television, which I don't think has been carefully reported.

Justice Stewart said, "Parents have a First Amendment right to send their children to educational institutions that promote the belief that racial segregation is desirable and children have an equal right to attend such institutions."

Now, the President said he hoped that people would not make that choice, but he believes they have the individual right, and Justice Stewart seemed to say the same thing today.

He went on to say, in making the Court's ruling, "But it does not follow that the practice of excluding racial minorities from such institutions is also protected by the same principle." So, he made the same distinction the President made on the television that has not been made in some of the stories I have seen.

Q But the President's response on television -- if you are going to read the transcript, read, please, the question that I believe Mr. Schieffer asked, going into that question, because the question dealt not --

MR. NESSEN: The question dealt with schools. The President's answer dealt with individual rights.

Q Read the question, please, and then read the President's answer.

MR. NESSEN: I have the question, Walt. What I am dealing with here is the President's views and the President's views dealing with individual rights which is the point of the story.

Q But view his answer in context to the question.

MR. NESSEN: I don't assume anything other than the President's words, which went to the rights of the individuals.

Q It is not fair for you to peddle that answer unless you read the question.

MR. NESSEN: I am not peddling an answer, Walt. I am telling you what the President said, and it is quite clear he referred again and again to individual rights.

Q Read, Ron, his question, and then you will get an accurate answer.

Q Ron, where do we make the distinction between individual rights and schools?

MR. NESSEN: His whole answer had to do with individual rights; that individuals have a right to do this. And then he said --

Q A right to do what?

MR. NESSEN: Individuals have rights -- "I would hope that they would not, but individuals have a right where they are willing to make the choice themselves and there are no taxpayers' funds involved."

Q A right to do what?

MR. NESSEN: To choose what school they want to send their children to.

Q Was he, in fact, saying that they have a right --

MR. NESSEN: Why don't we have some factual questions and not philosophical arguments.

Q Would you say then the President is in agreement with the Supreme Court ruling?

MR. NESSEN: No, I am telling you that it came just before I came out here and he had no opportunity to read it and neither did I and neither did the Counsel's Office.

Q Justice Stewart's ruling is the same thing as what the President --

MR. NESSEN: I did that, John, because I think you inaccurately described what the President said on Face the Nation, and I thought I would take the opportunity to point out that there is a distinction, but, as for specific reaction to the Court decision, there is not any, because nobody has had a chance to read it.

Q Ron, can we just get that one thing straight? You read that, and I am paraphrasing you now, but I thought you were saying what Justice Stewart was saying was about the same thing as the President was saying.

MR. NESSEN: You asked me a question and I started off by saying, no, we don't have any reaction because we have not read it yet, but I think you misstated the President's views, and then I went back and I read the President's views and I said there is a distinction between the rights of individuals and the rights of an institution, and that distinction was made by the President on the TV and it was made by Justice Stewart in his ruling today by way of background and by way of sort of pointing out what I felt was a misstatement of the President's views.

But, to go back to your original question, no, there is no reaction to the Supreme Court ruling, because nobody has read it yet.

Q What you are telling us is that we should not take from what the President said on Face the Nation to mean that he thinks it is all right to have segregated academies as long as they don't get Federal funds?

MR. NESSEN: I think the words are fairly clear, Bob. The very first thing he says is "Individuals have rights."

Q You know, I recall one time he talked about Burning Tree Country Club and he said the reason that it was all right for them not to have women as members out there was because they didn't get any Federal funds. I know they have since taken in a black, I guess, but they have not taken in a woman. Should we take that to mean that he does not think that is right?

MR. NESSEN: That which is not right?

Q That people have a right to join the country club they want to belong to, the country clubs don't have the right to exclude blacks or women.

Q Golfers have rights.

MR. NESSEN: I don't know. I have not looked into the country club question.

Q That is the same philosophy as he stated on several occasions and you are telling us now that the philosophy he espoused on Face the Nation was not an approval of segregated academies as long as they didn't get Federal funds.

MR. NESSEN: All I was doing here was to say, number one, there is no reaction yet to the Court decision because nobody has had a chance to read it, but I thought that perhaps John had inadvertently misstated what the President said and that I wanted to take the opportunity to point out that there is a distinction.

Q I appreciate that.

Q We are all trying to figure out what it is you are trying to point out.

MR. NESSEN: I am trying to say that --

Q That he does not think that segregated academies are all right as long as they don't receive Federal funds, because many of us seem to think he took exactly the opposite track and that it is in line with what he stated earlier about Burning Tree and others?

MR. NESSEN: I have not --

Q I am not passing any judgment.

MR. NESSEN: I know that. I have not asked his views on --

Q I am asking what his view is.

MR. NESSEN: The question that you ask is something I have not explored. I mean, obviously this is the final ruling of the Court that applies to private non-church schools. I believe the Court was specific in that; that when it comes to private non-sectarian schools this is their ruling. And obviously the President will uphold the ruling in whatever way that is required of him.

Q Ron, what is confusing is that we all thought when Bob Schieffer asked the question on Face the Nation that the President was answering that question, but I gather he really wasn't -- he was making a statement on something else at that time, because Bob specifically asked him about the schools.

MR. NESSEN: Well, the President says individuals have rights. His entire answer has to do with individual rights, which, as I say, is the same distinction that Justice Stewart makes. Bob said, okay. That is fine. We understand his views on individuals, but what is his view on the rightness or wrongness of segregated schools turning people away, and I said I have not explored that particular aspect with him but, obviously, the Court's ruling today is the Court's ruling, and the President will uphold it.

Q Ron, could you tell us something about the President's one hour and fifteen minutes with 30 Jewish leaders last night at the White House, which didn't appear on the calendar despite your deep sense of history?

MR. NESSEN: What?

I sense there are other private school questions.

Q Before we leave this, could you explain the distinction? Are you saying that the President says it is all -- the distinction he apparently was trying to make in this program, are you saying that he is saying it is all right for parents to decide to send their children to schools which the Supreme Court today said are illegal?

MR. NESSEN: Well, the President said individuals have rights. He hopes that people would not choose a segregated school for their children and his own choice, as you know, as he pointed out on this program, was to send his children to integrated, private schools and integrated public schools. He would hope that people would not make this choice, but individuals have the right to make the choice and that is exactly what Justice Stewart said in his majority opinion today. It is not the same as the question Bob is asking for which I don't have an answer.

Q Does the President hope that the Congressional black caucus will stop segregating on the basis of race?

MR. NESSEN: I did not ask him about that.

Q Would you take the question, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: I will take the question.

Q Thank you.

Q Do you have a question? We can leave that other thing.

Q Saul's question.

Q I just wanted to clear something up. When you pointed out that he said individuals have rights, it is rights to send their children to segregated schools; is that right?

MR. NESSEN: To whatever school.

Q Segregated or otherwise?

MR. NESSEN: He says, "I hope they would not" -- meaning, he hoped they would not deliberately choose a segregated school because it is segregated.

Q He was referring to segregated schools when he said that they have rights?

MR. NESSEN: I think you have to go back to Bob's question because it was in the context of that.

Q So he was saying that he thought that individuals have rights to send their children to segregated schools?

MR. NESSEN: Anywhere they want to.

Q All right. So the question now that you cannot answer is whether or not the schools have the right to discriminate.

MR. NESSEN: I think the court ruled when it comes to private non-sectarian or non-church schools, the court ruled that today.

Q The question was his view.

MR. NESSEN: His view is that he certainly is going to uphold the ruling of court today.

Q On another --

MR. NESSEN: Let me catch Saul on the Jewish leaders.

There was a meeting yesterday part of a sort of continuing series of meetings with various groups representing different organizations and so forth. As you say, it was scheduled for about 30 minutes, I don't know how long it actually lasted. These are Jewish leaders in the sense that they are leaders in their local communities. These are not national Jewish leaders. It is just part of sort of an ongoing series of meetings he had.

Q Why was it off the record?

MR. NESSEN: It was not off the record.

Q Yes, it was.

Q Why were we not informed about this? Everyone this morning was taken by complete surprise. Why was it not communicated to us last night?

MR. NESSEN: You know we have been through this before, Ralph. There are a number of meetings that the President has from time to time which are not on the schedule.

Q Are you going to give us a list of all those who attended and the communities they are from?

MR. NESSEN: I could if you would like.

O Yes, we would.

MR. NESSEN: All right.

Q How many are for Israel?

MR. NESSEN: As the President indicated in welcoming the group, he said I think it is important that meetings like this take place because they are a reflection of my efforts these two years to restore in our people confidence and respect for their government by having an arrangement by which people can come in and express their views so it was really more of an opportunity to hear their views and discuss the subjects they were interested in.

Q Were you present?

MR. NESSEN: I did not go.

Q Was a request made to the President to increase U.S. military assistance to Israel? Do you know that?

MR. NESSEN: I did not attend so I don't know.

Q Will you find out about that please and let us know?

MR. NESSEN: Whether the military aid to Israel was discussed?

Q Yes, and whether they asked for an increase.

Q And what the President's response to that request was.

MR. NESSEN: All right.

Q Ron, did the President invite them?

MR. NESSEN: Yes. It was sort of mutually arranged. I mean, as I said, it was one of a series that the President has been having, not with just Jewish leaders but with various segments.

Q Ron, you don't just sort of usually come around and have a meeting at the White House.

MR. NESSEN: Obviously people come to the White House at the President's invitation, of course.

Q I want to ask you about the meeting the day before with Republican candidates. Can you give us a list of the Republican candidates who saw the President?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have that list myself, no.

Q Does the White House have it? They had his picture taken with each one of them. Were any of the candidates backing Reagan instead of Ford?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know. I don't know who was there.

Q Ron, would you also check and see whether the President attempted to turn some of these Jewish leaders who had been publicly pledged to the candidacy of Senator Jackson around to his candidacy rather than Governor Carter's?

MR. NESSEN: Well, from the outline of what was anticipated that could possibly arise, it all has to do with -- there is nothing that has anything to do with politics in here.

Q So will you make public for us, for those who don't have it, the text of the President's letter to the Anti-Defamation League regarding the comments of former Vice President Agnew?

MR. NESSEN: We have that. Where is that? We were supposed to have it.

Q A footnote with regard to a dark chapter in history.

MR. NESSEN: It was supposed to be ready today.

Yes. The answer is yes.

Q Ron, Ohio's Archbishop Joseph Bernardin, President of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, has denounced as what he termed morally offensive the Democratic Platform Committee's proposed statement that the Constitutional Amendment barring abortion is undesirable. Now isn't this proposed Democratic statement precisely what the President believes? That is the first part of my question.

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what the Democratic Platform says about abortion.

Q It was in the paper this morning, Ron. It said that it is undesirable to have a Constitutional Amendment barring abortion. That is what it said. Now isn't this exactly what the President's position is?

MR. NESSEN: I think you know the President's position.

Q That is right.

Then what I would ask is since Ronald Reagan supports just such an amendment, does the President feel that Archbishop Bernardin is, in effect, participating in the election? I mean kind of raising an issue that might win votes for Reagan or what?

MR. NESSEN: None of the above.

Q Ron, it looks like the Congress is not going to be finished up with the tax bill by June 30 when, as you know, the present tax cuts expire, so they are talking about a 60 to 90-day temporary extension. How would the President feel about that?

MR. NESSEN: Well, I don't agree with your conclusion that there is no possibility to pass a --

Q I didn't say no possibility. I said it looks like things are going kind of slow up there.

MR. NESSEN: The President still believes that Congress ought to extend and increase the tax reduction, increase it by the \$10 billion that he proposed, and by such methods as increasing the personal exemption from \$750 to \$1,000 and there is certainly time to do that. The President believes it should be done and can be done in the time remaining before the expiration of the current tax.

Q I take it then that you are not prepared to say at this time what he would do about a short extension.

MR. NESSEN: I am not ready to accept the idea that a short extension is needed but there is time to give a full extension, an increase of an extra \$10 billion in the tax cut by such methods as increasing the personal exemption.

Q Yesterday I asked about the Senate Intelligence Committee report, about the FBI and CIA withholding information on the assassination of President Kennedy from the Warren Commission and you said it was being studied. Is there anything further you would like to add to that today?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have anything more on that.

MORE

Q I, then, would like to ask a follow-up question. Inasmuch as the FBI and the CIA are alleged to have withheld information from the Warren Commission on the subject as grave as the assassination of a President of the United States, what assurance does President Ford have that these same agencies are not withholding information from him?

MR. NESSEN: Oh, he has faith in the integrity of the people who are involved and the people who are running it.

Q Even in view of their recent track record? I mean, for example, you say he has faith in them. The FBI was supposed to stop breaking in private offices and buildings and that was stopped some time ago, according to the FBI. Yet we have a recent report that they are doing it all over again. Does he still have faith in these people?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, he does.

Q Ron, are you just saying that on your own? You don't know whether he does or not, do you?

MR. NESSEN: Yes. (Laughter) I do, I do. (Laughter)

Q Ron, any word today on what the President plans to do about the jobs bill?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Is that down here yet?

Q I have one question. Why does he have faith in these people?

MR. NESSEN: Because he believes that Ed Levi and Clarence Kelly and George Bush are honorable and honest men who understand the explicit instructions the President has given as to the way he expects those agencies to operate and conduct their affairs and he believes that they are following his directions.

Q We heard the same thing said about John Mitchell and Richard Helms, and all those folks.

Q Did anybody ever ask you what the President thought of Jimmy Carter's foreign policy speech the other day?

MR. NESSEN: They did, and I said I was not going to comment on it.

Q Still not?

Q Does the President believe that the selection of the officials for the Republican National Convention is fair from the point of view that he and Governor Reagan will do battle?

MR. NESSEN: I think they were selected by the RNC, Dick.

Q I mean, does he think it is fair? He has no disagreement with it?

MR. NESSEN: I didn't ask him, but I don't think he would second-guess the RNC.

Q Does he have any comments on the rule changes in Minnesota which prompted this big flap out there at the convention?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Is he pleased with the way things are going in Minnesota?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know that he is keeping up with it that closely.

Q Does he feel he would be a stronger candidate in the South than Ronald Reagan would?

MR. NESSEN: I think he said over and over again, John --

Q Did you say you don't know whether the President was watching the Minnesota --

MR. NESSEN: I don't know that he is keeping up with all of the details of it. I think he said over and over again, John, that he feels that he is the strongest candidate in November.

Q Does he plan to confer with Howard Baker before he gives his speech?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know that, Sarah.

Q Ron, do we have anything more on the Fourth of July vis-a-vis the question of where is the President going to go to church? I understand it may be Christ Church in Alexandria or over here, or what?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think a final decision has been made as to what church he will go to. I expect him to go to church.

Q Did you get us some money for the District of Columbia for medical emergencies during the crowds that will be here?

MR. NESSEN: I did not get any money on that, but --

Q Are you going to do it?

MR. NESSEN: I will have somebody check for you.

Doesn't anybody want to know about the great New Jersey sludge?

Q No.

Q Is that a movie?

Q Yes, yes, we would love to know it, Ron. What else do you have lurking up there?

MR. NESSEN: The great New Jersey sludge.

Q Sewage?

MR. NESSEN: Well, the Vice President and Jim Cannon, and an Associate Director of the Domestic Council named George Humphreys, and representatives of the EPA, the Interior Department, the Coast Guard and the Corps of Engineers went up there last evening to inspect the situation by boat and helicopter, and will be back here late this afternoon. They are also meeting, or met this morning, with local officials.

For further information on this, I want to refer you to our newly designated sludge expert, Margaret Earl.

Q Ron, how much is it going to cost to dredge the New York Harbor for the tall ships?

MR. NESSEN: I didn't know it was being dredged, Sarah.

Q It is part of a release you all put out today.

MR. NESSEN: The whole harbor is being dredged?

Q It does not say how much. It says it is being dredged for tall ships. It is being dredged 18 feet and there are an awful lot of those tall ships.

MR. NESSEN: I don't know.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END (AT 12:30 P.M. EDT)