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AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH JERRY TER HORST

AT 1:13 P.M. EDT

AUGUST 20, 1974

TUESDAY

MR. TER HORST: As you probably are aware, Bob Hartmann has agreed to come out here at about 2 o'clock. He could not come out earlier because of the President's request that he meet with him. I asked Bob if he would give you some sort of feeling for the manner in which the President went about the selection process of a Vice Presidential nominee, and since Bob is closest of anyone on the staff to that process, he has agreed to do so.

He will do it here in the briefing room and take your questions, but I cannot, unfortunately, bring him in here before about 2:00. So, we will call a briefing at that time.

Q Is that for sound?

MR. TER HORST: No, it is not for sound or film but Bob said he would be willing afterward to do something for the broadcast media, perhaps outside in a stand-up sort of thing.

Q Does that mean you don't want any questions on it at this point?

MR. TER HORST: Well, I really think if you are wise you would defer most of your questions to Bob because I am sure he can give you much better answers than I can give you, and he will certainly speak for both of us. I am trying to do that in the interest of saving time, but we have a lot to give you here today.

Q Jerry, I didn't follow that. When Hartmann comes out, he will brief here and then go outside?

MR. TER HORST: Yes, he is prepared to do a stand-up for camera outside, if you like, or in here, if you wish.

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Q Why don't you do it all at once?

MR. TER HORST: He doesn't want to do it all at once. He is going to do it in that fashion. You are welcome to do it in that fashion; otherwise, do it here as a normal briefing style.

Q What is the objection to sound in the press briefing room? The point is, can't we film it in here later?

MR. TER HORST: Instead of outside? Yes, I have no objection to where you do it. We will do it in the most accommodating way we can, but it is his request that we do it that way.

Q What is the rationale for not --

MR. TER HORST: The reason is that he wants to conform to the standard briefing rules in this room, and that is the way I think I would like to have him do it, too.

As you know, the President started the day with the bipartisan leadership meeting. They met for nearly an hour and a half, beginning at 8:30. That meeting was primarily to discuss the economy, but at the conclusion of the meeting, the President told the leaders of his choice for the Vice Presidential nomination.

On that particular thing, let me say that at the leadership meeting the President thanked the joint leadership for their support in expediting legislation for the Cost of Living Council to monitor wage and price actions, and the President said he also hoped for cooperation from Congress in helping the Administration reduce the fiscal 1975 budget to under \$300 billion.

At the present, as you know, it is projected at about \$305 billion. The President said he thought this objective was attainable with Congressional support and that he believed there was sentiment in Congress to cooperate.

Roy Ash, the Director of OMB, briefly briefed the joint leaders on the Administration's desire to work with Congress in this process under the new Congressional Budget Control Act, as well, of course, as with the appropriating and authorizing committees.

At the leadership meeting, Secretary of State Kissinger also gave a report on the situation in Cyprus and in that respect, he emphasized that he and the President had been conferring many times during all the recent days, and he wanted particularly to emphasize to the leadership what he said yesterday in his news conference at the State Department on behalf of President Ford is the American policy on Cyprus, which is strict maintenance of the ceasefire on Cyprus and an early return to the table by both parties.

The President then met briefly with the Cabinet to announce his decision on the Vice Presidential nomination and then called former President Nixon and Republican Chairman George Bush before making the announcement from the Oval Office, which you have all seen.

I can give you something on the call between President Ford and former President Nixon. Before President Ford brought Nelson Rockefeller into the Oval Office, the two men called President Nixon, who was at home in San Clemente. President Ford informed President Nixon that Governor Rockefeller would be nominated.

President Nixon told President Ford that he had made "a good choice" -- that is a direct quote from former President Nixon, "a good choice" -- and he also said that President Ford had "picked a big man for a big job."

President Nixon wished President Ford and Nelson Rockefeller success and told them he was certain they would have a highly successful Administration.

Unfortunately, I do not have anything I can give you on the President's call to George Bush, but I understand as seen by the wires that George Bush is on the wires with a statement concerning the selection of Nelson Rockefeller.

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Q Did Bush speak to the President as well?

MR. TER HORST: I can't answer that, Marty. I was not in the room.

Then you had a chance to question the man who has been nominated the 41st Vice President of the United States. In that connection, the President told the bipartisan leaders that he would be sending the nomination to the Hill this afternoon.

He told them that his choice had not been an easy one, that he had given the matter a great deal of thought and had solicited suggestions across a broad spectrum of the Republican Party as well as the Democratic leadership and many other people in the country.

But after reflection and meditation of many hours length he had come to the conclusion that Nelson Rockefeller was the man he felt best fitted to step into the Presidency, if that need arose. He said he would submit Nelson Rockefeller's name to Congress this afternoon and he asked for Congressional cooperation in giving prompt consideration and approval to his choice.

Then, as I just mentioned, after he left the bipartisan leadership meeting he went to the Roosevelt Room where the Cabinet had gathered. He briefly told that group of his choice and then they also went to the Cabinet Room and you saw everything from then on, I believe, on the tube, and I assume you have gotten a pool report.

Q Did the Congressional leaders have anything to say about how long confirmation hearings might be expected to last?

MR. TER HORST: No, they did not. I believe it was Senator Scott who did make the observation that they had been through the process once and knew how to go about it this time, which indicated at least he did not think the process would take extremely long.

After the President brought Governor Rockefeller out to the briefing room he went back to his office to meet with Dr. Kissinger, Ambassador Rumsfeld, Bob Hartmann, General Haig, Treasury Secretary Simon in a series of very brief staff meetings.

Beginning at noon the President held the first of what will be a series of sort of open door Congressional meetings. As you may recall in the President's address to the Joint Session of Congress last week, he said his door would always be open to Members of Congress and today he met briefly with these members: Representatives James O'Hara, Democrat of Michigan; George Brown, Jr., Democrat of California; James Quillen, Republican of Tennessee; Edwin Forsythe, Republican of

New Jersey; and Senators Bob Dole of Kansas, and Clifford Hansen of Wyoming. He also is meeting with ~~Senators~~ Warren Magnuson, Democrat of Washington, and Norris Cotton, Republican of New Hampshire.

Senator Magnuson is Chairman and Senator Cotton is Ranking Republican of the Appropriations Committee in the Senate and they are meeting on the Labor-HEW appropriations bill. I think we have posted the list of the names of the Congressional open-door session.

Q Did they ask to see the President?

MR. TER HORST: I believe the President initiated that meeting.

Q All these meetings?

MR. TER HORST: Yes. This afternoon at 2:00, the President will meet with his economic advisers to continue their discussion of plans for the economic summit and to discuss other economic matters.

At 3:00 o'clock the President will meet with David Packard who is chairman of the Business Council to discuss plans for the economic summit. At 3:30 he will meet with the transition group. We will post a list of those who participate in that meeting after it is underway and we see who is all in there.

In regard to the economic session, because it will come up this afternoon again and because it did come up at the leadership meeting this morning, the President asked William Seidman to serve as his Executive Director of the economic summit program. As you know, Mr. Seidman is a certified public accountant and a partner in the international accounting firm of Seidman and Seidman, whose headquarters are dual, Grand Rapids and New York.

Q Has he maintained that relationship?

MR. TER HORST: No, he is on leave from the company.

At the leadership meeting, Mr. Seidman told the joint leaders that he was preparing for them a series of proposals on how Congress and the President could jointly mount a meaningful fight on inflation. As you recall, in his speech to Congress, the President said that he had accepted the offer of the concurrent House-Senate resolution originally sponsored by Senator Mansfield for a kind of summit session dealing with economic problems, and this is in carrying forward on that promise and that objective.

The first proposal that has been made is that the leadership pick a delegation of four members of both chambers to meet with four members whom the President has chosen to serve as a steering committee and to talk together about the process of setting up possible subcommittees on specific areas in the economy, such things as bringing in labor, management, consumers, and also dealing with specific targets in the economic problem area, like inflation, monetary policy, high interest rates and so on.

It is still very fluid. I am sorry I can't give you a rundown, but it is now up to the Congressional leadership to respond to the President's proposal and see after maybe the steering committee meets, hopefully in the next week, we will have some more information on how to proceed from there. But the target is an economic summit meeting perhaps in early fall. It would not, obviously, be held before Congress recesses, and I would say it might be possible, if things move along well in this cooperative venture, for a summit meeting in late September, early October.

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Q Has the President picked his four?

MR. TER HORST: Yes, the President's four members of the joint steering committee with the Congressional leadership will be Kenneth Rush, Roy Ash, Treasury Secretary Simon and Alan Greenspan, the new Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers, and Mr. Seidman will serve as Executive Director for the entire project.

Q Jerry, this steering committee is directly related to the plans for the summit?

MR. TER HORST: Yes, the steering committee's job is to come to a decision on how best to build up recommendations that can be presented at this economic summit for not only public education but also for decision-making by the President in an executive sense, and by Congress in a legislative way, if that becomes necessary.

Q Any decision on the format?

MR. TER HORST: Not yet. It will have to await the outcome of the first and maybe several steering committee meetings, and I don't believe the leadership has yet picked their four because they obviously were just presented with the President's proposal this morning.

As a result of the leadership meeting this morning, the President has asked me to issue you the statement in his name, which you have.

Looking ahead to tomorrow, I don't have all of tomorrow's schedule on hand to give you at this moment, but I do want to call attention to the fact that the President will sign the omnibus education bill tomorrow afternoon at 2 o'clock in the auditorium at the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

Around briefing time tomorrow we will try to have some available information for you on the ceremony itself and on the bill from here, and will probably just take a protective pool from here to go up there with the President and those who want to cover that signing ceremony will have to make your own arrangements to be there.

As you know, the Black Caucus meeting is scheduled for tomorrow in the President's office at 10:30, at the President's invitation, accepted by Congressman Rangel on behalf of the black Members of Congress last week.

Also, I have an announcement that on Friday, August 30, the President will keep a commitment he made as Vice President to address the summer commencement at Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio.

We still haven't worked out all the details of the trip, but I thought it would be useful to you to have that announcement today.

Q Out and back, Jerry?

MR. TER HORST: As far as I know, it will be in and out. We will go there and come directly back.

Q Do you have the hour of the speech?

MR. TER HORST: I don't have that, Bill. Our advance people are out there now, and I am not quite sure of the time frame.

Q Not out of town speaking before that?

MR. TER HORST: I am not aware of any, Helen. I would not look for any.

Q Is it day or night?

MR. TER HORST: Daytime appearance.

Q Will he get another honorary degree?

MR. TER HORST: You will have to ask Ohio State about that.

I have a few other announcements, also.

The President will nominate Mrs. Shirley Temple Black to be Ambassador to Ghana. You have a release on that, I believe.

You also have releases on the President's quarterly report to Congress as required by the Jackson-Nunn Amendment, and the President's Proclamation of Columbus Day.

The President has signed H.R. 7682, a private bill, and we will post some information on that.

The President is accepting with deep regret the resignation of Henry M. Ramirez as Chairman of the Cabinet Committee on Opportunities for Spanish Speaking People. Mr. Ramirez is returning to private life, and we do not have a successor to announce to you today. Mr. Ramirez held this post from his appointment on November 24, 1971.

Q Where is he from, do you know?

MR. TER HORST: He has been in Washington for several years.



As I said earlier, from time to time we will announce departures of members of the White House staff. This is just such an occasion.

The President today is accepting the resignation of John J. Chester as Special Counsel to the President, effective August 31. As you know, Mr. Chester worked with Mr. St. Clair on legal matters for the past seven months.

Q Are all the Watergate lawyers gone now?

MR. TER HORST: No, there are still some there. Some of them have already gone back to Justice, it is my understanding, to resume posts that they held there, and others will be leaving shortly. I don't have a breakdown on that for you, Helen, but I would assume over the next several weeks all of them will have severed their connections here.

I also want to call your attention, just for information purposes, to the posting we put up yesterday indicating that Ollie Atkins, who is known to all of you, is staying on as Director of the White House Photographic Department. He is on an extended leave of absence from Curtis Publishing. He has been named as a Vice President there and a senior editor of the Saturday Evening Post here in Washington, but he has agreed to delay taking that job until such time as he completes his assignment for President Ford as Director of the White House Photographic Department.

I believe those are all the announcements. I will try to take your questions.

Q Did Governor Rockefeller talk to Mr. Nixon?

MR. TER HORST: Yes, he did.

Q Do you know anything about that conversation?

MR. TER HORST: No, I understand they did it simultaneously. President Ford and Governor Rockefeller talked to former President Nixon simultaneously.

Q Conference kind of call?

MR. TER HORST: Yes, that is my understanding.

Q The other question, is Shirley Black's appointment in the mill, or is that strictly a Ford appointment?

MR. TER HORST: No, I understand that has been in process.

Q Jerry, did the President and Governor Rockefeller get the former President out of bed? It was before 7 o'clock where he is. Was he awake when the phone call came?

MR. TER HORST: I don't follow you Norm.

Q In California, it was before 7 a.m.

MR. TER HORST: I can't speak to it. I just don't know.

Q Is this transition group out of business now?

MR. TER HORST: The transition committee is going to be laying before the President options on alternate ways that they think he could usefully develop a White House structure that would serve his purposes. I don't have any details to give you on it, but the President has indicated he will make that selection very quickly, and then will be able to announce it.

Q Does this wind up their work?

MR. TER HORST: Essentially, it does wind it up because Ambassador Rumsfeld is leaving to return to Brussels tomorrow.

Q What was the purpose of that meeting of the Domestic Council late yesterday afternoon?

MR. TER HORST: That was essentially for them to get acquainted with the President and to give him a chance to talk to them about his views on domestic legislation and how they could best serve him in presenting things for his consideration and how he could have impact on what they are doing. I would say it was more of an orientation meeting and get acquainted meeting than a truly substantive meeting, although obviously they did take up pending legislation.

Q That would indicate he plans to keep the Domestic Council?

MR. TER HORST: No, I can't read that into it for you. I think we will just have to wait until he sees the options that the transition people put before him and make that decision. At the same time, I also don't want to indicate its status either way. Right now it is there, it is functioning, and doing the work the President has asked them to do.

Q Jerry, on the Black Caucus, did you say half would be there, and if so, why half?

MR. TER HORST: No, I didn't say half. I said, "On behalf."

Q I am sorry.

Q Can you tell us what the President's position is on the Byrd amendment regarding the Rhodesian chrome situation?

MR. TER HORST: Yes, the Ford Administration favors repeal of the Byrd amendment which, as you know, would return the United States' position to that position of the United Nations.

Q May I follow that, please? Is the reasoning because chrome is no longer involved in national security? Do we have enough chrome? What is the rationale behind the switch in his position?

MR. TER HORST: I can't give you the details, Helen, but Secretary of State Kissinger testified for the repeal of the Byrd amendment and I am told that was a rather full appearance by the Secretary in great detail and perhaps you could find it in the testimony.

Q Can you tell us whether the Government has taken steps to prevent Rhodesian chrome from funneling out through South Africa into the United States?

MR. TER HORST: I can't tell you at the moment, but I am sure in taking this position that the Government of the United States will live up not only to the spirit of the repeal if indeed it is repealed, but also to the letter.

Q Jerry, the President having been a target of one of the most exhaustive probes in Congressional history as far as confirmation is concerned, does he have any reaction to Mr. Rockefeller's reticence in undergoing such a full disclosure?

MR. TER HORST: No, I would not think so. It is very unusual and I thought it was awfully generous of both the President and Nelson Rockefeller to agree on Mr. Rockefeller's appearance here in advance of his testimony on the Hill. The members, as we all know, of Congressional committees, are rather insistent on hearing it first from nominees rather than hearing it in the newspapers or on the air, and I think Governor Rockefeller's position was in answer to that point.

Q Has he agreed with the President, if I can follow up, to full disclosure? Was that discussed before he was nominated?

MR. TER HORST: I think if you could wait for Mr. Hartman<sup>n</sup> to brief here, I think we can tackle that point and do it much more directly than I could now and at least we won't replot the ground.

Q Along that line, how much investigation of Governor Rockefeller did the President make in light of what has happened in a couple of recent Vice Presidential possibilities?

MR. TER HORST: The President made a sufficient check into Governor Rockefeller's background to satisfy himself that he would have no problem whatsoever in securing Congressional confirmation, obviously. And as is well known, Governor Rockefeller's life has been practically a public life for two decades, so it is not as though he were coming out of private life in a situation where he had not been living in the glare of the spotlight.

But obviously once his name goes before the Congress, then the Congress, I am sure, will give him the same careful scrutiny, including the FBI checks and all the other requirements the committees laid on Mr. Ford when he was Vice Presidential nominee.

Q How did the President assure himself or make a sufficient check to assure himself?

MR. TER HORST: Can I defer that again to the Hartmann briefing? I think you will find it more productive than if I try to tackle it for you here. The reason I am bringing Mr. Hartman<sup>n</sup> out for you is because he was the man closest to the selection process and I think it would be more forthcoming for me and hopefully for you if we follow that.

Q Jerry, Senator Scott says he did not think it was a good idea for Governor Rockefeller to campaign before he is confirmed. Yet on Wednesday the Governor is scheduled to make a GOP fund-raising dinner appearance in Newport, Rhode Island. Does the President have any views on that issue?

MR. TER HORST: As you recall, President Ford, when he was in the status of being a nominee for Vice President, undertook some assignments on behalf of the party and Governor Rockefeller has been addressing Republican groups for years and years and years and I can't imagine that this would be such an outlandish idea to anybody on the Hill.

Q Jerry, on Friday you took a question on who in the White House made an informal approach to the Justice Department for that ruling on the Nixon tapes and who in Justice responded informally. Do you have those names now?

MR. TER HORST: No, I don't have those names. I

presented your request to Mr. Buchen and he is seriously considering a method or a format in which he can personally respond to them and if you will give me a little time and be a little patient, perhaps we can help you in that area too.

Q The Mutual Security Assistance Act of 1961 provides that any country receiving aid, military assistance from the United States and using that for purposes other than internal security or self defense shall suffer an immediate suspension of the aid.

Now it seems clear that Turkey in invading a foreign island has used the arms they have gotten from the United States for other than an internal security or self defense purpose, and I am wondering when or if the President is going to take care that that law be faithfully executed and suspend the aid?

MR. TER HORST: On behalf of President Ford, Secretary of State Kissinger addressed himself rather extensively to the whole question of Cyprus and the Turks and the Greeks and American policy toward both those allies, and I think I would refer that question to the State Department.

Q I did, and all the Secretary said was, "I will seek legal advice." But he is not the one who has to execute the laws. It is the President.

MR. TER HORST: I would refer that to the State Department.

Q How long does the President think it should take for his nominee for Vice President to be confirmed?

MR. TER HORST: I haven't heard him express a timetable. I do know that he is anxious to have it done as rapidly as possible and the leadership assured him they would endeavor to do that. As I think I mentioned, Senator Scott said having been through the process once, he was certain it probably should not take as long as it did with Mr. Ford.

Q In view of your announcement that it will be late fall before this economic --

MR. TER HORST: No, early fall.

Q -- before the summit occurs, does this mean the President will not present his policies and programs before that time?

MR. TER HORST: Some of these policies may be enunciated before that time as they already have a little bit, Phil, going back to last week's speech to Congress when he asked for Cost of Living Council legislation. That is one part of it already. You have another statement today indicating another facet of the President's policy.

Some of these things have to be done from time to time because the need is urgent and cannot wait for completion of the summit conference, but in terms of developing a total package, it is the President's great hope that this can be tackled jointly, not only by the Executive branch but with full support of the Hill because he believes in this way, if the Legislative and Executive branches show a united front, they will then be meeting the people's request that the Government act in concern on the whole front.

In terms of the summit itself, I think you will see that the President will play a very active personal role in that summit meeting and will not just leave it to others.

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Q In that connection, Senator Mansfield still says he is in favor of controls, and I am wondering why this came out now, this statement, particularly in light of the sentence that says, "I therefore ask labor and business leaders in this country to act on that basis." Is there some particular economic reason relating to wage contracts?

MR. TER HORST: Yes, I think there is, Marty, and it is really the obvious one, and that is if labor and industry gain a perception or a feeling that the Government is about to enact wage and price controls, there is naturally a tendency on both sides of labor and management to move now on price and wage actions anticipating they might not be able to do it if there was going to be a program of wage price controls.

So, in an attempt to head off that kind of action in the business and labor communities, it was felt useful both by the President, with strong support from the Hill, to indicate that the President is not going to ask for wage and price controls, and his reading of the Congress and the general feelings of the leaders as expressed today was that it is not ever likely to pass Congress in the foreseeable future.

Q Can you tell us what the public reaction to the President's amnesty statement yesterday has been and why that statement was not in the advance?

MR. TER HORST: The general reaction has been mixed, and that is no surprise. As the President himself said, in discussing why he chose this particular audience, he felt that it would be -- I think his word was "act of cowardice" to give it to a hand-picked audience.

Beyond that, the President is fully aware to be truly effective a program of earned re-entry into American life by deserters and draft dodgers is something that will require the support of veterans groups, particularly, as well as other areas of American life, and so that is the reason he chose that particular audience.

Now, as to why it was not in the advance text that you received on the plane, the reason is simply that the President was still going over the language aboard the plane, and we were working feverishly up to the last minute, hoping we could produce copies of his remarks before he actually got around to giving them.

Q When I asked about public reaction, I am talking about the reaction coming to the White House by phone.

MR. TER HORST: I haven't checked it. I don't know. We can check it, if you wish.

Q Jerry, what are the purposes of his open door meetings with Congress? Did the President have something specific in mind that he wanted to talk to Congressman Brown or Congressman Quillen about, or was he just calling them in to say, "Hi, and how is it going," and talk to him about whatever they want to talk about?

MR. TER HORST: Yes, it is essentially that. It is a mix, really, Fred. There is no particular agenda. It is a case where he has said, "My door is open, and if you would like to see me, call the White House and we will arrange it."

So, rather than doing them one at a time over a long period of time, he decided it would be easier for him and perhaps better for the Members of Congress for them to come in in groups, but this is being done on their initiative. There is an open invitation from the President to Members of Congress to participate in this, if they care to.

Q I thought you said it was the President's initiative.

MR. TER HORST: The President's initiative in offering the invitation.

Q But is it correct then that he invited them all when he spoke to them the other night, and that these this morning were a result of their having called the White House, Congressman Brown, Quillen, or the others, O'Hara, and said, "I would like to see you at some point."

MR. TER HORST: A number of Congressmen have indicated to Bill Timmons that they would like very much to meet with Mr. Ford and talk to him at the White House and it is through Bill Timmons' office that this is being arranged.

There was obviously a lot of give and take in this whole process, but it is very informal and the basis for it is the President's open invitation, "If you would like to see me, see Bill Timmons, and we will arrange it."

Q Jerry, these are group meetings, are they?

MR. TER HORST: No, they are meeting individually.

Q How much time per each?

MR. TER HORST: Obviously you can see it is not a lengthy time.



Q Are they having individual pictures made, for example, since they are candidates?

MR. TER HORST: That could be true; I wouldn't be surprised. But if you notice, there are Democrats on there, also.

Q My basic question still remains. Maybe you don't know the answer, but I would like to get it a little straighter, if I could. Was there any particular reason that he met today rather than next week or next month with Congressman Quillen, for example, or was it just that the Congressman's schedule was open today?

MR. TER HORST: I think that is probably it, but if you really need guidance on that, I will see if I can get more for you on the precise mechanism or how the process came about.

Q You said Bob Hartmann would brief on how the Vice Presidential nominee was chosen. Will he also talk about why, what factors went into it? If not, I have some questions on it.

MR. TER HORST: I think Bob expects to be responsive to that whole area, Ted, not only how, but why and so on.

Q With regard to the other question on the Mutual Security Assistance Act, in view of the fact that a lot of us in the past several years have been caught in a losing ping-pong game between the White House and State Department on such questions, will you go on record now as saying the White House wishes that question to be answered by the State Department?

MR. TER HORST: Yes, I can go on record as saying that. I can also say that it is very obvious that this is a very delicate and difficult question to answer because both sides in the dispute are allies of the United States in the Middle East, and therefore, that relationship must be preserved for the good of the Middle East community and our own security.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Mr. Press Secretary.

END (AT 1:55 P.M. EDT)