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AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH JERRY TER HORST

AT 1:20 P.M.

SEPTEMBER 2, 1974

MONDAY

MR. TER HORST: I don't have very much for you -- just a few details of which I am sure you are all aware.

As you know, the President left Camp David this morning at about 9:30 and the trip to the White House took about 30 minutes by chopper.

At 10:30 this morning he met with Arnold Miller, the President of the United Mine Workers, in the Oval Office. That meeting lasted just a bit over 30 minutes.

The President and Mr. Miller discussed mine safety, problems connected with black lung disease, and Mr. Miller brought up the great impact of inflation on the economic status of members of his mine workers' union. And the President urged Mr. Miller to lend his good offices to United Mine Workers' participation in the summit meetings dealing with labor-management problems that are connected with the anti-inflation drive.

Mr. Miller assured the President that his union would participate.

Then at 11:30, as you know, we had the signing ceremony for the Pension Reform Bill in the Rose Garden, after which the President met for about, I believe, a little bit more than 40 minutes with Secretary of Labor Brennan.

That was the first opportunity Mr. Brennan had had to meet one-on-one with the President and, as you know, at 11:18 the President returned to Camp David on Marine One and he will be up there the rest of the day.

And then the first family and the President will return to the White House tonight along about 8:30 or 9:00.

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As you know, Mr. Brennan is departing for New Zealand this afternoon as head of the American delegation to attend the memorial services for Prime Minister Norman Kirk who was stricken with a heart attack last week-end, and Secretary Brennan will have the title of personal representative of the President with the rank of special ambassador.

Other members of the delegation will be Ambassador Armistead Selden, Jr., former ambassador for John F. Henig and Senator Vance Harke, Democrat of Indiana.

Tomorrow's schedule has been posted, I believe. He is meeting first with General Haig; then with Mary Louise Smith, who is Co-Chairman of the Republican National Committee; then a meeting with Dick Obenshain, who is the Republican State Chairman for Virginia.

He also will be meeting with other members of the staff and at 11:00 he is meeting with Kenneth Rush, Bill Seidman, and Alan Greenspan.

Following lunch there is a larger meeting of economic advisers in the Cabinet Room with the President.

At 3:00 he has a meeting with Paul Ribner, the National Commander of the Jewish War Veterans, in the Oval Office, followed by a meeting with James Wagonseller, who is the National Commander of the American Legion. And after that a meeting again in the Oval Office with Jack Streight who is the Imperial Potentate of the Shrine for North America, and Congressman John Rhodes and Leslie Arends will be at that meeting also.

That is the schedule for tomorrow. I can take any questions you may have.

Q Jerry, this meeting with the American Legion and the Jewish War Veterans, is that to get their views on amnesty?

MR. TER HORST: I am certain that they will touch on that, Ron. Again, though, also at the same time it affords the President an opportunity to meet with representatives of outside groups with whom he has not had the pleasure of having personal meetings since he became President. So this is another set of meetings in that long series that he began the day he became President.

Q What is the meeting with Mary Louise Smith about?

MR. TER HORST: That is on party matters, looking ahead to the '74 Congressional and Senatorial campaigns.

Q What is the economic meeting about?

MR. TER HORST: Well, the economic meeting is another meeting with the President to go over and refine and move along plans for the summit meeting on inflation, which, as you know, is for late September.

Q Jerry, do you have any better idea when the President is going to announce his policy on amnesty? Is that still up in the air?

MR. TER HORST: I can't give you a firm date on that. As I said Saturday, I would expect that we should have that decision before the week is out.

Q You can't firm it up from what you said Saturday?

MR. TER HORST: I can't at this point, no.

Q How about the Shriners, is that something --

MR. TER HORST: That is another courtesy call. They were in town and Mr. Streight wanted to see the President. They met before when the President was Vice President and previous to that as Minority Leader, and so he is coming in to see the President Tuesday.

Q Jerry, did you have any opportunity to ask the President for any reaction to this NEWSWEEK magazine story that Haig will be leaving in a matter of weeks?

MR. TER HORST: No, I didn't, and there was really no need to, because that story keeps bouncing along. Every day there is a different version of the same one, and I presume there will be another tomorrow.

But the facts remain unchanged. The President has asked the General to stay aboard and the General has agreed.

Q Jerry, as you know, the United Mine Workers start negotiations tomorrow morning with the bituminous coal operations for a new wage contract. I wonder if the President and Miller spoke about that, and if the President expressed any interest or anxiety about that?

MR. TER HORST: Of course Mr. Miller did mention the fact that these negotiations were about to begin, but the President is leaving that whole area of the Government's concern to Mr. William Usery, whom, as you know, is serving as the President's chief negotiator and mediator on this problem, and to the President's delight is doing an exceptionally good job.

The President called him the other day and so told him on the telephone.

Q Jerry, do you know if they have been able to get the resignation from Donald Johnson of the Veterans Administration who has been holding onto his job, waiting for another appointment?

MR. TER HORST: Sarah, I understand that Mr. Johnson's resignation is expected shortly. I believe he wants to meet with some people here at the White House, but I would anticipate being able to announce that within a day or so.

Q Well, why do we have to be so gentlemanly and so persnickety about waiting on Mr. Johnson's convenience for this letter of resignation? Why don't they just say "give"?

MR. TER HORST: I think if you know Mr. Ford's style, he is not a man who is terribly pushy, but he has picked himself a new Director of the Veterans Administration, and Mr. Roudebush is there, ready to go to work, so it is just a matter of a very few days.

Q Jerry, will the President be doing any work this afternoon? Is he meeting with any staff?

MR. TER HORST: No, there is no staff going up to Camp David. It is strictly another private afternoon, and the President hopes that he can enjoy part of the Labor Day up at Camp David.

Q Jerry, is he spending much time on the amnesty?

MR. TER HORST: He took quite a large briefcase of homework, as he calls it. That was one of the matters that he has up there with him.

Q Jerry, I hate to be so dumb and I will show my ignorance by this question, but what happens to those people who did not desert, or evade, or go out of the country, those people who were here in the country but who got less than honorable discharges and who now can't get any jobs or any veterans' privileges because they are just in limbo? Are they going to get amnesty, too?

MR. TER HORST: That was one of the President's concerns in the meeting Saturday with Attorney General Saxbe and Defense Secretary Schlesinger. The President is approaching it from an overall viewpoint. He wants to make sure that, as I said then, whatever program of earned reentry into American society he determines, that program will also take cognizance of the problems of those that you describe and also the many thousands of young men who voluntarily served their country in Vietnam so that it will be a fair program, not one that is targeted to render a special favor to a special group.

Q Jerry, had the President asked to meet with the Commanders of the Jewish War Veterans and the American Legion?

MR. TER HORST: I am not aware just how that came about. I do know they had expressed an interest in seeing the President and this seemed to be a good time to do it.

Q Jerry, for how long has General Haig agreed to stay aboard?

MR. TER HORST: The President said he had asked him to stay aboard for the duration and his definition of the duration is indefinite and so I guess that will be my definition, also.

Q Jerry, apparently the President of Mexico made a speech Sunday some place down in Mexico and said that President Ford had promised him that they would meet on the border. Can you tell me if this was arranged the other day by Rabasa and where they are going to meet and when?

MR. TER HORST: I can't give you specifics on it but the President of Mexico is correct. The President of the United States and the President of Mexico do hope for a very early meeting on the border, which seems to be a very reasonable and likely place for them to do this. But I don't have dates for you yet, Sarah.

Q How about guidance on Philadelphia? Have you got any clearer idea of when and how?

MR. TER HORST: Yes, on BACKGROUND, I can tell you the President will go to Philadelphia on Thursday to participate in a Bicentennial function which I think is being called the "Reconvening of the Continental Congress and the Thirteen Original States".

Q Is that an evening appearance? Will he be there in the evening?

MR. TER HORST: I believe it is in the evening. Yes, I believe that is right.

Q He will fly up?

MR. TER HORST: He will fly up and fly directly back.

Q Jerry, is there any chance that he could announce his amnesty program at that function?

MR. TER HORST: I would not look for it then, no. I would not look for it there.

Q Do you have plans for a press conference this week, Jerry?

MR. TER HORST: This week is already one day gone. I would not think it is likely to have a news conference this week, but, again, I know we will have another one very soon.

Q Jerry, one other question. Could you clarify the President's thinking on wage and price guidelines? Is he leaning in the direction of having specific industry-by-industry guidelines?

MR. TER HORST: As I have said it before, and I can't change it any, because to my knowledge the situation has not changed any, the President intends to use the Cost of Living Council as a mechanism for monitoring wage and price

actions so that any changes or potential changes by an industry, or a major union, which would have the effect of increasing the pressures on inflation could be headed off at the pass, so to speak.

Beyond that, the President has not specified what other work the Cost of Living Council might do, whether they would use the mechanisms you described, or some other means. This is a whole area that is very much under serious study and it continues to remain under serious study.

By that I don't mean to suggest to you that the President has decided on wage-price guidelines because I know that he has not.

Q Jerry, on the matter of amnesty once more, please. The men who served time in prison and have been freed, have completed their sentences, how would they be affected in any amnesty? Would their record be wiped clean?

MR. TER HORST: I can't tell you specifically, Sol, how their situation will be affected by what the President does, except I do know they, too, are one of the groups whose problems will be considered in the program that the President announces.

Q On the theory they have earned their reentry by service in a penal institution?

MR. TER HORST: That is the theory presented to him, yes.

Q Jerry, do you know anything about the talks that Senator John Tower has allegedly been having with some international ministers on finance in Europe?

MR. TER HORST: I am not aware of those. I do know he has been in Europe and the Senator is very conversant with economics but I can't give you his schedule, nor am I aware of what it was.

Q Jerry, you said this was the President's first one-on-one meeting with Secretary Brennan. As you know, Mr. Meaney is always complaining about Brennan. Do you know whether the President told the Secretary that he would like him to stay on or expressed any confidence in him?

MR. TER HORST: The President specifically renewed to Mr. Brennan in person this morning the hope that he would stay on as Secretary of Labor and it is my understanding that Secretary Brennan agreed to do so and said he was delighted at the opportunity to serve President Ford in that capacity.

Q Is there any Cabinet officer the President has not asked to stay on?

MR. TER HORST: As you know, at the first meeting he asked them all to stay on. They have all agreed to do that and he said, rather than deal with them via memos, or other written matter, he would like to have them in one at a time and, thereafter, on a regular basis as the needs of the department require, to meet with him on a one-to-one basis because he likes dealing that way.

So, I am sure we will see a whole procession of these sorts of meetings regularly in the Ford Administration.

Q Does he have one planned with Brinegar or has he already had one?

MR. TER HORST: I can't recall precisely. He may have had a meeting. But, in any event, whether he has or has not really is not a critical omen of any kind.

Q Well, you people have people out recruiting, do you not, for high level jobs in government? Where are you going to put them if you keep all these people?

MR. TER HORST: Well, I think when the President makes known his structural changes at the White House, at that point it is his hope to match up any new jobs with new faces, if that is required. That is the way it will emerge.

Q When is that going to happen?

MR. TER HORST: I can't give you a date on it. I think, hopefully, something should emerge from the transition team study by way of a Presidential decision, oh, within the next several weeks.

Q Was the President on straight time or time and a half today?

MR. TER HORST: I don't know but I am on overtime.
(Laughter)

THE PRESS: Thank you, Jerry.

END (AT 1:37 P.M. EDT) #21