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#26

NEWS CONFERENCE

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH JACK HUSHEN

AT 11:40 A.M. EDT

SEPTEMBER 10, 1974

TUESDAY

MR. HUSHEN: Before I begin today's announcements and take your questions, I would like to make a few observations about the events that brought me to this podium.

Jerry terHorst is gone, and we will all miss him, especially those of you out there who saw him as one of your own who was working day and night to put into effect President Ford's policies and openness in this Administration.

In the short time that Jerry was here, he had gone a long way in swinging open the shutters which had closed off the communications between the White House and the press corps.

But those of us who worked so closely with him in the Press Office during the past month will also miss him. He is a professional in every sense of the word, and a man of great ability, an individual of the utmost integrity.

As you know, I came to the White House at the invitation of Jerry terHorst and by the appointment of President Ford. Jerry and I worked together for eight years at the Detroit News and then continued to be associated as I served as spokesman for Senator Griffin, and then at the Justice Department.

And, of course, it goes without saying that I have the greatest respect and admiration for him, and I think all of us are grateful for what he did to establish President Ford's press policies on such a firm foundation in such a short time.

There have been a couple of problems which I think can be cured as individuals who are new to the White House become more accustomed to their role and the role that must be played by the Press Secretary or by the Deputy Press Secretary.

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I know the President was disappointed in Jerry's decision, as I was, and we wish him well in his new role as a columnist for the Detroit News.

You should know that I do not share Jerry's belief that an individual should resign his position when he differs with a major policy matter. The person on this podium is communicating the President's views, not his own.

Finally, I would like to say --

Q It would save time if you would read a little slower and we won't have to ask you to repeat it.

MR. HUSHEN: I will get used to it.

You should know that I do not share Jerry's belief that an individual should resign his position when he differs with a major policy matter. I believe the person on this podium is communicating the President's views and not his own.

Finally, I would like to say to each of you that each of us on the staff of the Press Office pledge ourselves to continue the policy of openness and candor established by President Ford and implemented by Jerry Ter Horst.

Those of you who know me know that that has been my goal during the eight years that I have been speaking for Government officials. The Press Office is here to serve the President and to serve each of you. We will try to answer your questions, attempt to get answers when we don't have them, and continue to say we don't know when we don't know, and above all, to be as diligent as possible to protect the truth from any assaults, unintentional or otherwise.

Q Let's have that -- be as diligent as possible to what?

MR. HUSHEN: To protect the truth from any assaults, unintentional or otherwise.

Q We want you on the record on this, Jack.
(Laughter)

Q Did the President approve this statement?

MR. HUSHEN: No.

Q No, you say?

MR. HUSHEN: Wait a minute. Let me finish.

To save what I know will be a lot of questions in a specific area, Philip Buchen, the Counsel to the President, has agreed to come back to the briefing room today to answer additional questions and try to clear up some of the mistaken impressions that seem to be gaining credibility.

He also will have some documents which we will make available to you.

Q At what time?

MR. HUSHEN: As soon as you are ready to let me go.

Q Will that be for sound?

MR. HUSHEN: No, the same briefing rules will apply for Mr. Buchen as normally apply in here.

Q Are you ready for questions?

MR. HUSHEN: Let me get on with some brief announcements that I have here.

As you know, we posted today's schedule. I would like to point out that after the President's return from Pittsburgh yesterday, because of his early departure, he turned his schedule around and he met with Secretary Kissinger and Al Haig, and then held a two-hour meeting with staff members to discuss options open to him on the conditional amnesty program.

This morning the President again met with staff members, General Haig, Secretary Kissinger, General Scowcroft, Jack Marsh, Bob Hartmann, and myself.

Q Which staff members did he meet with yesterday on the amnesty question?

MR. HUSHEN: I don't have their names.

Q For two hours?

MR. HUSHEN: I can give them to you. They were primarily senior staff.

Q That was yesterday?

MR. HUSHEN: Yes, last night.

Q Why couldn't we have that yesterday? We asked you 50 times what they were doing.

Q What time did it end?

MR. HUSHEN: It ended about -- I think that meeting was from 5:00 to 7:00. The President met this morning at 11:00 with Mr. Edward Heath, former Prime Minister of Great Britian, and presently leader of the opposition party in the House of Commons there.

Secretary Kissinger also attended this meeting. Mr. Heath is in the United States on a brief private visit and the President wished to take the occasion to invite him to the White House and to renew their acquaintance and for an informal exchange of views.

Q Will you answer Ted Knap's question about who attended this meeting last night?

MR. HUSHEN: I said I didn't have the names. I would try to get them.

Q How long was that meeting?

MR. HUSHEN: Two hours, approximately.

Q The meeting with Heath?

MR. HUSHEN: I believe it is still going on.

Q It began at 11:00?

MR. HUSHEN: Shortly after 11:00, correct.

As you have seen from the schedule for today, there will be an arrival ceremony for Prime MInister Rabin from Israel on the South Lawn.

Following the arrival ceremony, the President and the Prime Minister will meet in the Oval Office where the President will have a second meeting with the Prime Minister on Thursday morning and there will be a formal White House dinner that evening.

While he is in Washington, the Prime Minister will also meet with Secretaries Kissinger, Schlesinger, and Simon.

As we announced on Friday, just for your information, this visit will provide the President and the Prime Minister the opportunity to review the Middle East situation, following discussions here this summer with Israeli and Arab representatives, and to discuss further progress towards a Middle East peace settlement.

They will also have the opportunity to discuss bilateral issues in the spirit of a long-standing, close relationship between the United States and Israel, and following the elements of cooperation announced in the joint statement issued in Jerusalem on June 17.

At noon, the President will meet with his economic advisers to look at issues raised in the September 5 conference of economists and determine if any consensus was developed.

They will also be discussing Secretary Simon's recent trip to Paris for the Finance Ministers' Meeting. Attending that meeting will be Counsellor Rush, Secretary Simon, Director Ash, Chairman Greenspan, Chairman Burns, and Bill Seidman.

We have one addition to today's schedule. At 1:00 the President will see Congressman Rhodes to discuss legislative matters.

Q When is that?

MR. HUSHEN: 1:00.

At 8:00 tomorrow morning, the President will meet with the Republican Congressional leadership to discuss what can be accomplished in the remaining weeks of this session of Congress. I would anticipate that the President will send a message to Congress on this subject. That should come sometime this week, but the time will depend on the discussion with the leaders tomorrow.

Following that, the President will participate in the labor conference on inflation in the East Room.

Q What time will that start?

MR. HUSHEN: It starts at 9:45.

The President will be in the East Room for the morning session and then will host a lunch for the participants in the State dining room. The conference will run until 3:45.

As in the case of the economist's meeting, the media seating is limited, and there will only be one seat per organization allocated.

Those of you who will not be going to Pinehurst tomorrow and wish to attend the conference, we ask that you make your desire known so we can assess our space needs.

Print media requesting space should call Morrie Feibusch at 456-2976. Electronic media should call Bill Roberts at 456-2100. By the way, that conference will be carried live on Channel 26 from beginning to end.

About 12:30 tomorrow, the President will depart the South Lawn en route to Andrews Air Force Base, Pope Air Force Base, and Pinehurst, North Carolina.

In Pinehurst, the President will participate in dedication ceremonies for the World Golf Hall of Fame. Then he will play golf with some of those who are being inducted, and then attend an evening dinner at which he will have brief remarks.

Q Who is he playing with?

Q What time does he arrive at Pope?

MR. HUSHEN: I don't have the names yet.

Well, we will have a detailed schedule for you later today. It is a long day, and it has taken some time to get it together, but let me just give you this for your own guidance.

The press bus departs from the southwest gate for Andrews at 10:45 A.M. Press check-in is 11:15. The press plane will depart at 11:45. It is a one-hour flight.

I expect the President to return to Washington about midnight tomorrow, and the press plane will be in as soon thereafter as possible.

Q If he leaves at 12:30, what time does he have lunch?

MR. HUSHEN: The lunch with the labor conference is at 11:45.

Q Have you tried to find out who he will be paired with in the golf tournament?

MR. HUSHEN: That shouldn't be any problem.

Q Jack, will the dinner that evening be open to coverage?

MR. HUSHEN: I will know better later today when we get the schedule posted.

On Thursday, the President will meet with the bipartisan Congressional leaders to discuss the Foreign Assistance Act and other foreign policy matters. That meeting will be at 8:30.

I just have a couple of other announcements, and you can have the release on both of them. The President is nominating the U.S. delegation to the Twenty-Ninth Session of the United Nations Assembly which opens September 17. And he is nominating the U.S. delegation to the Eighteenth Session of the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency. That session will be held from September 16 to 20 in Vienna.

Q Are we going to get the nominations?

MR. HUSHEN: You have the paper on it.

MR. ROBERTS: They are not out yet. They are ready.

MR. HUSHEN: I can give you the names now or hand the paper out as soon as we are done.

Q When you are done is all right.

MR. HUSHEN: Let me just make one announcement relating to the White House Staff.

The President has asked me to announce his appointment of Warren Rustand as Appointments Secretary to the President and you should have a release on this. That is there, too, and will be out shortly.

Q Jack, are you ready to answer questions?

MR. HUSHEN: I guess I have to.

Q Jack, in view of your announced interest in maintaining the policy of openness for the President, why did the White House attempt to keep Mr. terHorst's resignation buttoned up? And why was it not announced promptly on Sunday?

MR. HUSHEN: It was Jerry's wish to depart as quietly as possible. He knew that his decision was going to add to the controversy and he didn't want it to. That is basically the reason.

Q What is your status now, Jack?

MR. HUSHEN: As I told you yesterday, my status is the same today as it was two days ago.

Q Jack, it has been traditional that when the Republican leaders met with the President that they come out and brief. Will they brief tomorrow morning?

MR. HUSEHN: I don't know.

Q Jack, relative to your statement that the person standing in your place speaks for the President and not himself, have you been given any sort of assurance that you will know what the President's views on matters are, as your predecessor did not know, at least until the last minute on the pardon for Richard Nixon?

MR. HUSHEN: I hope to be operating under basically the same assurances, the same accessibility to the President. As I said in my opening remarks, there are still some people who are somewhat new to their roles here and have not learned, I guess, the kind of relationship that the Press Secretary must have.

Q Are you referring to Mr. Buchen?

Q Are you planning a news conference?

MR. HUSHEN: The President plans to maintain his accessibility to the news media. I don't want to say --

Q Jack, in view of all these questions, why doesn't the President just come out here himself and answer them now instead of sending you, who don't know, and Buchen, who possibly doesn't know about it?

Has there been any discussion of this, of the President coming out and answering these questions and getting them out of the way immediately?

MR. HUSHEN: I think Mr. Buchen will be able to answer most, if not all, of your questions.

Q Jack, in view of some of the pitfalls that Jerry did face, do you still maintain the White House has openness and candor, particularly in view of the queries that came into the White House last week regarding pardon that were sluffed off, and other questions where we were touted in the wrong direction?

Do you still maintain you have openness and candor?

MR. HUSHEN: I do.

Q Well, how can you?

MR. HUSHEN: It may be difficult for you to see it, but I certainly do from this side, and I would hope that those of you who saw how Jerry operated for the past month would tend to agree with that.

Q He had to resign to make the point, apparently.

MR. HUSEHN: Oh, no. His resignation was not because of anyone intentionally or unintentionally misleading him.

Q Jack, does the President still intend to hold a press conference this week as Jerry told us last week he would probably?

MR. HUSHEN: I would say probably not, but I would say probably shortly.

Q Has the President indicated to you that you will be the Press Secretary?

MR. HUSHEN: No.

Q Have you talked to him on the subject of your future since terHorst has left, Jack?

MR. HUSHEN: On the way to Pittsburgh yesterday morning, I said this is obviously going to be a question which will come up. And he said you will continue to act as the Deputy Press Secretary. And obviously that makes you, in effect, the Acting Press Secretary.

But the title, for any of those who are trying to describe me, the title should be the Deputy Press Secretary.

Q Jack, when you say there are some people in the White House who don't yet understand the relationship which has to exist between the President and the Press Secretary. Would you include Mr. Buchen?

MR. HUSHEN: Well, I don't want to get into naming some names and omitting others. (Laughter)

Q Is it a large group or many?

MR. HUSHEN: No, it isn't a large group. They have to understand --

Q Does the President understand?

MR. HUSHEN: I believe he does. They have to understand -- the senior people in the White House who know the things that are moving through the White House, have to understand that it does not serve the President to have a Press Secretary standing out here who doesn't know what is going on and, therefore, may unintentionally mislead people.

Q Can you tell us why terHorst was lied to and who lied to him?

MR. HUSEHN: Well, I think "lied" is a very strong word.

Q Well, misled. He used the word "lied", but misled.

MR. HUSHEN: Jerry did? I don't think he did.

Q Use whatever description you want to. Why was the news kept from him at the time when he asked questions about it, why and who?

MR. HUSHEN: Well, let's just save that question until Mr. Buchen has completed his briefing.

Q Are you going to be back?

MR. HUSHEN: If you are not satisfied, I will be happy to take your questions.

Q How about amnesty? When is the President going to make a decision?

MR. HUSHEN: As you know, I mentioned the meeting last night. There was another meeting this morning. Many of the complexities that I spoke about yesterday are being ironed out. I don't want to get into a firm figure, but certainly no later than the end of the month.

Q Jack, there has been some speculation that discussions on conditional amnesty will now get broader, perhaps talk about more liberalized conditional amnesty as a result of the pardon. Is that possible? Is that under discussion?

MR. HUSHEN: I wouldn't speculate along those lines.

Q Jack, I wanted to ask this question, when I asked --

MR. HUSHEN: I think Phil Jones had the floor.

Q We didn't hear the question.

MR. HUSHEN: The question was will there be now possibly broader amnesty, more liberalized, as a result of the pardon for the former President. I suggested that he not speculate along those lines until they see what the program is going to be.

Q Jack, have you a newer count now, maybe more recent than your count on the plane coming back, as to the number of telephone calls received by the White House on the pardon and how they are running and, if you have anything on a count on mail or telegrams, if there has been time for that?

MR. HUSHEN: We have not been able to tabulate the mail yet. I don't mean to indicate that it is flooding through the doors at the rate that it doesn't allow tabulation, but that is generally further behind.

Telegrams and mailgrams, as of 11:00 this morning, were about six-to-one on the basis of about 16,000.

Q Six-to-one?

MR. HUSHEN: Against the pardon. For those of you who are interested, I am told by the man who handles this program that there are at least several other examples in which the telegrams far outweighed this, such as the Saturday Night Massacre, President Nixon's decision to review the Calley conviction, the Cambodian incursion, and even the Amchitka nuclear explosion.

Q In the same amount of time, Jack?

Q You mean in total numbers, or larger?

MR. HUSHEN: Larger, much larger from the point of telegrams -- those four examples. So they do not describe that as anywhere near the level of those.

Q Would you call this a mini-massacre, Jack?

MR. HUSHEN: Let me just add the final one. As of midnight last night, the tally on the telephones has changed around, I think rather significantly.

Those supporting the President's decision were more than 5,700; those in opposition, 3,900.

Q Was anything done to stimulate telephone calls?

MR. HUSHEN: Absolutely nothing.

Q Jack, you said there were 16,000 telegrams. One of the wire services carried a story yesterday saying there was 20,000 on Sunday alone. Was that a bad figure?

MR. HUSHEN: Well, I don't think we got 20,000 alone on Sunday. I will have to check that. I know there are some that have not been tallied yet.

Q 16,000 total; is that your figure?

MR. HUSHEN: These are the number tallied as of 11:00 A.M., Tuesday.

Q Are they all in? Have all those that have been received been tallied?

Q Jack, do you have something for us now in the light of these figures and in the light of the many statements on the Hill by Congressmen on both sides of the issue and other obvious signs of controversy over this thing? Do you have for us at the present time the President's reaction to all this?

For instance, there have been stories saying he was somewhat shocked by the volume or the amount of protest. Is that the case? What is his present reaction now to this flap?

MR. HUSHEN: I certainly wouldn't describe the President as being surprised by this. He knew that this was going to be a controversial decision. He still thinks it is the right decision and he is firmly convinced that he will be proven right in the long run.

Q Jack, I wanted to ask this question: When I asked how the President's \$850,000 request for Nixon could be reconciled to his plea for Americans to fight inflation, I recall that Jerry terHorst replied that he understood that this was in line with what was provided to other former Presidents. You may remember that.

Now, when I phoned the Press Office to ask how Jerry had been led to this understanding, I was referred to two Nixon holdovers, Mr. Carlson and Mr. Bowter of GSA, who maintained the same thing.

My question is this: How can Administration spokesmen give out this information when this morning Senator Montoya's office received a second set of figures from GSA of the computed total of everything paid to Lyndon Johnson which, during the five years 1969 to 1973, amounted to only \$266,000 more than Ford is asking for Nixon in one year? Can you explain this?

MR. HUSHEN: It sounds like we are going to have to check on it.

Q Would you, and let us know?

MR. HUSHEN: Yes.

Q Second, is the President going to pardon or ask for any pension for Mr. Agnew, or hasn't the Agnew family suffered enough?

I mean that is a high office, too.

MR. HUSHEN: I can't give you any response on that.

Q Jack, can you tell us what Rabbi Korff was doing here today and who he saw?

MR. HUSHEN: Somebody said Rabbi Korff was here today and who he saw. I didn't know he was here.

Q Could you check that please?

Q He was; he saw me.

MR. HUSHEN: Does that satisfy you? (Laughter)

Q He claims that he never said, as he was quoted in two daily newspapers, that he never said Father Drinan was to be compared to Rasputin.

Q Mrs. Dean is now talking about a pardon for John Dean; what is the President's feeling about pardon for any of the other people involved in the whole Watergate thing?

MR. HUSHEN: I am authorized to say that that entire matter is now under study.

Q You mean for all the Watergate --

Q Jack, will you expand on that?

Q Can you give us a little more on that?

MR. HUSHEN: No.

Q Is that a reversal of your former statements?

Q Will Mr. Buchen be able to give us something on that?

MR. HUSHEN: He may.

Q When we asked Mr. Buchen the other day whether pardons were under consideration, first, for the defendants in the September 30th trial and, later, for Mr. Dean and others who are actually serving prison sentences, he said in words to the effect the President had not given that any thought whatsoever, and now, you are saying the matter is under study. What has changed, and what has happened that caused a change?

MR. HUSHEN: I think we will have to stand where we are for the time being.

Q Can we get the question of Mr. Shabecoff a moment ago?

MR. HUSHEN: That was Mr. Lord's question.

Q No, following that, Mr. Shabecoff's question.

MR. HUSHEN: I didn't hear that.

Q I asked would Mr. Buchen be able to give us that.

Q I want to ask, is it across-the-board, Mr. Dean, or all the Watergate defendants and also those who have served or are currently in jail, everybody?

Q Just a minute Jack, excuse me. If you nod and we are writing, we can't hear your answer, and it also is not on the record. I am sorry, I didn't hear your answer.

MR. HUSHEN: Restate the question.

Q Mrs. Dean has talked about a pardon for her husband; is the President considering, at this time, pardons for Mr. Dean and any or all of the other Watergate defendants, people involved in the whole Watergate matter?

MR. HUSHEN: I will restate, that matter is under study.

Q Jack, when would you expect a decision?

MR. HUSHEN: I can give you no further guidance at this time.

Q Can you tell us when this determination was made to put it under study?

MR. HUSHEN: No.

Q The President, in his Senate confirmation hearings, led the Senate Rules Committee to believe that he would not consider pardoning the President because he thought the American people would not stand for it.

He has now pardoned the President. Does the President believe he would have been confirmed if he had told the Senate Committee he would pardon Mr. Nixon?

MR. HUSHEN: That is a question you will have to address to the President. All I can say --

Q I will be happy to.

MR. HUSHEN: You may get the chance. All I can say is, those of you who have reread his statement on Sunday, hypothetical questions don't seem to take on the same aspect as they do when you are sitting in the Oval Office.

Q Did the President personally authorize you to make that statement, or did some other official in the White House?

Q Which statement?

Q The statement about the entire matter being under study about pardoning?

Q You said you speak as Presidential spokesman.

MR. HUSHEN: The President authorized me to make that.

Q Jack, does not a statement like that, at this time, short circuit the trial that is scheduled for the other Watergate defendants that is supposed to begin on September 30th? Can that trial go on if the President has under study pardon for all of those defendants in the trial?

MR. HUSHEN: I believe it can.

Q What was your answer?

MR. HUSHEN: The answer was yes.

Q Has that point been discussed with the President or by the President?

MR. HUSHEN: I can't respond to that; I don't know the answer to that.

Q Doesn't it include the whole -- all those who are facing trial?

MR. HUSHEN: Yes.

Q Jack, is there under study, under consideration, or has a decision been made on any way to get the entire Watergate story on the record -- some sort of Warren Commission on Watergate to study the matter and what really happened?

MR. HUSHEN: I am not aware of it.

Q Jack, have you had any further discussions with the President so that you could tell us what caused him to bring up the question of pardon on the 30th, and specifically, to what extent he was influenced by reports that Mr. Nixon was in bad shape, physically and mentally?

MR. HUSHEN: I have talked about this with the President.

Q Question, please, Jack?

MR. HUSHEN: I guess basically the health issue.

Q The question is; have you talked with the President, and can you tell us to what extent he was influenced by reports of former President Nixon's mental condition?

MR. HUSHEN: Well, I cannot, obviously, put myself into the President's thinking processes to know what influenced him. I think his statement about "threatening the former President's health" is getting undue attention, because it was not in the advance text. But I think a reasonable man could conclude that when serious allegations -- as you may find out more about today -- are hanging over the former President's head, it could threaten his health. I think that is all the President said.

Q Excuse me, may I follow that up, Jack. The question is, had the President told you so you could tell us whether he was influenced or impressed by reports of health problems involving Mr. Nixon, and where did those reports come from? Jack, is there anymore you can say on that?

MR. HUSHEN: I really can't go much beyond that.

Q Can you say whether health was a prime influence, or the major influence that made the President change his mind?

MR. HUSHEN: No.

Q What was?

MR. HUSHEN: I can't say because I don't know what his thought processes are on the matter.

Q Did the President meet with Walter Tkach on Friday? Did the President see Walter Tkach on Friday?

MR. HUSHEN: He did not, and I will just try to set that to rest as best I can.

Q Question?

MR. HUSHEN: "Did the President see Dr. Tkach on Friday when he was here?"

It is my understanding Dr. Tkach has been on leave for about the past three weeks. He is getting a new assignment by the Air Force and was in the building merely to clean up some last minute details.

Q Did he see the President while he was cleaning up those last minute details?

MR. HUSHEN: I prefaced that by saying no; I guess you didn't hear that.

Q Did he see anyone else on a policy level on Friday?

MR. HUSHEN: No. In fact, he did talk to Dr. Lukash. But as I said, Dr. Lukash told me that Dr. Tkach had not seen the former President recently, but the reports were not negative, or not unfavorable as far as the health of the former President was concerned.

Q Jack, you said something here that got by me here, and I think it sounds very significant to me. You said something to the effect that President's don't take the same position in the Oval Office as they do during the hearings, is that correct? And if it is correct, why should we hold hearings, and how can we believe a man that is a nominee?

MR. HUSHEN: What I said was that the hypothetical questions that come to you as a nominee look a lot different when they come to you as the President, and you may respond to a hypothetical question in a different way than you would when you are confronted with the actual situation.

Q Jack, is this study of possible amnesty for other Watergate defendants such a study, or consideration, that it will result in a decision to be announced by the White House?

MR. HUSHEN: I can't go into any details on that at all.

Q Jack, does this study apply only to those who have already been convicted or pled guilty?

MR. HUSHEN: I can't go into any details on that at all. All I can say is that it is under study, period.

Q Why is that question under study more urgent than the question of amnesty or leniency, which Jerry terHorst said there would be no grass growing under that decision?

MR. HUSHEN: You are talking about the announcement of the conditional amnesty program?

Q Yes.

MR. HUSHEN: The grass isn't growing under the program. What has happened is that, as we got into it, we found it was much more complex than we had thought. The ramifications of that were greater than we thought, and these things had to be ironed out. And as I said yesterday, the President personally wants to make sure that this has his stamp of approval on it.

His attention has been focused elsewhere for awhile, and I think the fact that there was a very lengthy meeting last night and another one this morning and my attempts to clarify, or to get away from the indefinite postponement which was misinterpreted, indicates we are moving.

Q How long did the meeting last this morning?

MR. HUSHEN: I don't know.

Q Jack, can you give us some guidance on when we can expect some word on this study that is now in progress, and will it come from the President?

MR. HUSHEN: No.

Q Can you tell us who is conducting the study?

MR. HUSHEN: I cannot tell you.

Q Can I clarify; this means anybody who has already been convicted in connection with the Watergate or anybody facing trial, is that right?

Q All persons connected with Watergate, involved in Watergate?

MR. HUSHEN: That is correct.

Q Does that mean that he is in fact considering pardons for all of these people, or is he just reviewing it?

MR. HUSHEN: The question of pardons is under study.

Q Who is doing the studying?

MR. HUSHEN: I cannot say.

Q Did the consideration for the pardons for all those in Watergate begin simultaneously with, or subsequent to the pardon for Mr. Nixon?

MR. HUSHEN: I cannot say, I don't know that.

Q Jack, if it began before the pardon for Mr. Nixon, why did Mr. Buchen tell us it was not under consideration?

MR. HUSHEN: I am not saying it did begin before.

Q All right, then it began after, right?

MR. HUSHEN: I am not saying it began after.

Q Jack, is a study being made of amnesty for other persons indicted or convicted for burglary, obstruction of justice, of conspiracy and other crimes, not perjury, not connected with Watergate?

I am sorry I'm not smiling; this is a serious question.

Q Yes, is there a general study of pardons? I would like the answer, too.

Q So would I.

MR. HUSHEN: Well, I think the answer to that is no.

Q Jack, can you tell us if he is contemplating the pardoning of a man like Colson, how can he keep anyone else in Allenwood?

(Laughter.)

MR. HUSHEN: Your questions sounds like it is being asked after the fact. The only thing I said here was that there was a study now under way, and anybody that goes beyond that and says that we are about to do something would be misleading the American public.

Q You are not saying Mrs. Dean's letter prompted the inquiry, are you?

MR. HUSHEN: No, I am not.

Q Okay, it started before the letter?

Q Did a request from any Watergate defendant prompt the study?

MR. HUSHEN: I don't know of any. I don't know of any request except for the one I heard about on the radio this morning from Mrs. Dean.

Q Jack, can you say why the President is now authorizing you to say this?

MR. HUSHEN: No.

Q Did the reaction to the pardon for the former President prompt the review or the study of pardons for the others?

MR. HUSHEN: I cannot answer that.

Q Jack, when did the President authorize you to say this?

MR. HUSHEN: In our meeting this morning before I came out here.

Q Jack are you aware of the impact of what you have just said is going to have on the American people, and particularly when you stand mute when we ask you other questions about this study about who authorized it and who is making it? Is the White House aware of the impact this is going to have?

MR. HUSHEN: Well, I think those factors are taken into consideration, but again, Peter, let me caution you, all I said was, there is a study. Don't try to predict the results of the study.

Q But the fact that you make a statement from the White House podium that there is a study under way is of great significance, Jack, and my question is, are you aware of the significance of it. You don't have to answer that question. The President has chosen to authorize you to say that this is under study. That is not an insignificant statement.

MR. HUSHEN: I understand that.

Q When we are through here, can we break this off and file and then have the Buchen briefing?

Q Like 15 minutes from now?

Q Yes, we need some time, Jack.

MR. HUSHEN: All right, why don't you break it off?

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END

(AT 12:32 P.M. EDT)