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NEWS CONFERENCE

#28

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH JACK HUSHEN

AT 11:54 A.M. EDT

SEPTEMBER 13, 1974

FRIDAY

MR. HUSHEN: Good morning.

We have posted the President's schedule for today.

This morning, he met with a number of staff members, including General Haig, Secretary Kissinger, General Scowcroft, Bob Hartmann and myself.

Q All separately?

MR. HUSHEN: No, General Scowcroft was, I believe, in with Secretary Kissinger, and Bob Hartmann and I were in together.

At about 10:45, as you know, the President dropped in to the meeting in the Cabinet Room of the black Republican leaders from throughout the Nation. A list of those attending that session has been posted. The President asked Stan Scott, who is Special Assistant to the President and who serves as liaison with minority groups, to arrange this and other similar meetings to provide the President an opportunity to hear the views of these individuals on problems facing black Americans and their proposed solutions.

In that regard, the President has asked these individuals to provide their ideas to him in writing through Stan Scott.

We hope to have two members of that group come up here and brief you when I conclude.

At noon today, as you know, Prime Minister Rabin will be meeting with the President and Secretary Kissinger. We expect to have a report on that meeting when it concludes.

In addition to that, we are going to have open coverage of his departure by car from the South Lawn. We will arrange that at the proper time.

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Q A communique?

MR. HUSHEN: Helen, I am just not sure; I think just a report.

The President is meeting now with Graham Martin, the United States Ambassador to South Vietnam. Secretary Kissinger is also attending that meeting. The Ambassador is in Washington for official consultations and today's meeting did provide an opportunity for the President and the Ambassador to review the situation in South Vietnam and for the Ambassador to receive the President's guidance before he returns to Saigon.

This afternoon at 2:30 the President will meet with Roy Ash, Director of the Office of Management and Budget, to discuss the message the President will be sending to Congress, hopefully early next week, on budget deferrals and recissions. As you may recall, this was one of the priority items the President listed in his message to Congress yesterday.

At 3 o'clock, the President will meet with Counsellor Kenneth Rush and L. William Seidman to continue their regular discussions of the economic summit and the meetings leading up to it.

Then, at 3:30, the President will meet with Governor Winfield Dunn, Chairman of the Republican Governors Association, to discuss the gubernatorial campaigns for this fall.

At the conclusion of that, he will meet briefly with 11 Republican gubernatorial candidates, whose names we will post. I think all of these individuals are challengers. There are no incumbents in this list.

Q Will they brief us following?

MR. HUSHEN: I don't think so.

Q Is that just for pictures?

MR. HUSHEN: Well, I know that is part of the meeting. I don't know if it is just for pictures.

I expect the President to be in the office tomorrow. Maybe we can give you a schedule later today.

That is about all I have to say on those announcements.

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Q Will you go back to the announcements, or do you want to go ahead?

MR. HUSHEN: Go ahead. I don't think I have any more announcements.

Q Well, Jack, to go back to Graham Martin, isn't the President satisfied with the way Martin has been performing and does this session today suggest there will be any change in the way Martin operates out of the embassy?

MR. HUSHEN: I can't give you any guidance on that until they get out of the meeting.

Q Was he called home to see the President, specifically?

MR. HUSHEN: I don't think he was.

Q When does he go back?

MR. HUSHEN: Next week, but we don't have an exact date set.

Q Jack, why is the Ford Administration asking the American taxpayer to pay the salary for former President Nixon's valet and maid?

MR. HUSHEN: Well, it isn't just former President Nixon's valet and maid, although that is a part of the package. President Ford believes that it is proper for the White House to carry the load for the time being until Congress enacts that supplemental request.

Q Why does it go to personal servants as distinguished from people who may conceivably be performing some Government function, such as Mr. Ziegler?

Q Who said he is?

Q I said conceivably, giving him the benefit of the doubt.

MR. HUSHEN: I said the President felt that it was proper for this White House to carry the load until Congress enacts the supplemental request.

Q Well, does the White House carry the load in terms of buying the former President some new clothes if he needs it? I mean, what is the standard? This is personal service. What is the point of it? You can say "carry the load" six or eight times, but it doesn't explain it, Jack.

MR. HUSHEN: Well, these are people who are on the White House staff who are detailed to San Clemente.

Q Does the President feel it is proper to carry those personal servants of the President on the National Park Service payroll?

MR. HUSHEN: It is my understanding that is the way they are carried.

Q Does he think that is proper?

MR. HUSHEN: It is my understanding they are budgeted through the National Park Service for administrative purposes.

Q Well, what would happen if Congress does not pass this, or if they trim that thing considerably, would they just still be on the White House payroll, or would that end, or how would that work?

MR. HUSHEN: At the time Congress acts, then those decisions would be made.

Q When will a new Press Secretary be appointed?

MR. HUSHEN: I can give you no information on that.

Q Is Jerry Warren being considered?

MR. HUSHEN: I don't know.

Q Is Ron Ziegler a Press Secretary, because I cannot get a phone call to him at all? He never returns any. Is there a spokesman for the President out there?

MR. HUSHEN: I don't know if there is a spokesman for the former President or not.

Q Well, you are paying them off the White House payroll. You ought to have some idea of what they are doing.

MR. HUSHEN: Well, they are detailed out to assist the former President.

Q Does the White House expect that special appropriation to pass in its present form, \$850,000?

MR. HUSHEN: That was the GSA request which we transmitted to the Congress. They are the experts on it.

Q They sure are.

MR. HUSHEN: I cannot say whether we expect it to pass in toto or not.

Q In view of the fact that Mr. Sampson was a Nixon appointee, did the White House consider sending anybody else to look into that routine?

MR. HUSHEN: I don't know whether that kind of consideration was given or not.

Q Jack, what does the White House know about the former President's state of health?

MR. HUSHEN: The President has asked Dr. Lukash, who is his personal physician, to keep him generally informed of the former President's health.

Q Is there anything to report now?

MR. HUSHEN: Well, we wouldn't be making any medical report from this room about the former President's health.

Q Jack, this morning the Washington Post strongly recommended that Nixon aides not only be removed from the White House but also be retired to private life rather than promoted to new positions in Government. Has the President seen this editorial and commented?

MR. HUSHEN: I do not know.

Q Following that up, if I may, and without mentioning the name of any priest, do you have any message for us about the definitive statements, because he told the Providence Journal that he is going to leave sooner rather than later.

I just wonder if there is going to be any farewell ceremony. I would like to cover it. Is there any information? You said you would try to get us definitive information.

MR. HUSHEN: I certainly concur in what Father McLaughlin said.

Q Do you have any date?

MR. HUSHEN: Sooner rather than later.

Q Jack, you say Ron Ziegler has been detailed to the former President -- is that the term you used?

MR. HUSHEN: That is the term.

Q I wonder who is Mr. Ziegler's boss right now?

MR. HUSHEN: Well, I think it would be the person to whom he was detailed, and I presume that is the former President. That is standard Government practice to detail people from one operation to another.

Q He is not on the Park Service payroll, is he?

MR. HUSHEN: No, no. He is on the White House payroll.

Q Jack, we have asked now -- we are in the sixth day since the pardon was proclaimed, and we have asked each day what transpired between August 28 and August 30 when in the first instance the President indicated that a pardon would be considered when the matter was brought to him, and on August 30 when he directed Mr. Buchen to make certain researches into the law on pardons.

Have you been able to get us an answer on that question?

MR. HUSHEN: Nothing more than I have given you in the past.

Q Following on that, yesterday, Jack, you indicated you would go back to Mr. Ford and try to find out for us to what extent or what role the former President's health played in the timing of the announcement of the pardon and you indicated then after the session was over that you would have something for us at this 11:00 today. What did he say?

MR. HUSHEN: I said I would try.

Q Did you try?

MR. HUSHEN: One thing I have learned here is don't make any unconditional statements.

I can say that the President is, of course, concerned about the former President's health. But, as he said in his statement, the health of the Nation was more important than the health of any one man, and that is his paramount concern.

Q What, more specifically, did you discuss with him? What we discussed with you or tried to get from you yesterday is the role that the condition of Mr. Nixon's health played in the decision-making process of the President in the timing of this pardon.

MR. HUSHEN: I can't give you anything more on that --

Q Did you ask him --

MR. HUSHEN: -- except to say that I think you will probably have a chance to address those questions to him in the near future.

Q When?

MR. HUSHEN: I can't give you a firm date.

Q Does the President think the Nation is more healthy now as a result of the pardon? I don't understand what you mean by the "Nation's health".

Q How does that apply, Jack?

MR. HUSHEN: I think, if you read his statement, you will see what he means and exactly what he said.

Q Does he still believe that?

MR. HUSHEN: Yes, he does.

Q Jack, yesterday you were asked a number of times about what was the trigger of the timing, whether it was health or something else. Did you ask him about what it was and do you have any answer for us?

MR. HUSHEN: Nothing other than what I have said at this podium or what he has said in his statement on Sunday, or the brief statement on Wednesday.--

Q Does he have any plans for a press conference to discuss this?

MR. HUSHEN: -- but there is nothing more I can give you beyond that.

Q Jack, you said that the President was being kept advised by Dr. Lukash. Is Dr. Lukash examining the former President or conferring with his physician?

MR. HUSHEN: Dr. Lukash is not examining the former President. What information Dr. Lukash gets is coming to him from other people.

Q Has Dr. Lukash gotten a report from Dr. Tkach or somebody else in San Clemente?

MR. HUSHEN: It is my understanding he has some information. From whom it came, I can't say for sure.

Q To take it one step back, was it Dr. Lukash who asked General Tkach to fly to San Clemente today to examine the former President?

MR. HUSHEN: I don't think so.

Why would Dr. Lukash do it?

Q Well, a Major General in the Air Force generally gets some sort of an assignment from a Lieutenant General in the Air Force or General in the Air Force.

MR. HUSHEN: Well, Dr. Tkach was the former President's personal physician, and if there is a need for his services, I don't know why Dr. Lukash would be making the assignment.

Q Well, because you indicated that President Ford had requested Dr. Lukash to monitor and keep him informed of Mr. Nixon's health. In that context, Jack, how long has this instruction been in place? Was Dr. Lukash providing this monitoring in this information service as long ago as last week, say?

MR. HUSHEN: I don't think so. I think it has just been this spate of stories about the former President's health --

Q That would just be this week, then?

MR. HUSHEN: I believe so.

Q Jack, do you have any updated statements from the President of the continuing lopsided counts in reaction to the pardon both to the White House and Capitol Hill?

MR. HUSHEN: Well, lopsided counts, in terms --

Q I am talking of against the pardon.

MR. HUSHEN: The telegrams ran that way.

Q And the mail.

MR. HUSHEN: And the mail, which we are still counting. I don't know how many pieces we have. The phone messages, as I gave you yesterday, were more pro than con, and they have virtually dropped off now.

I think, to go back to what I said yesterday, I don't have any better reason than to think that the initial decision prompted a lot of people to write immediately and then on reflection, when they thought better of it or changed their opinion or wanted to support the President, they started calling.

Q Jack, some of us suspect that Rabbi Korff's organization may be responsible for a lot of those phone calls. Before President Nixon resigned, he had his organization flood the White House with telephone calls to such an extent that you couldn't even get the operators to answer. Do you know if that is being done this time, if that was the result of the decisions being different, if that explains the difference between the telephone calls and the telegrams?

MR. HUSHEN: Well, I have absolutely no information to that effect.

Q But has it been checked out, because I suspect that it has.

MR. HUSHEN: Has it been checked out?

Q I don't know, I haven't checked it out, but I suspect that that is what is happening.

MR. HUSHEN: I don't know, but I think we ought to see if we can find something out about that.

Q Did you ask Herschenson what he was doing meeting with Rabbi Korff, who I saw out here?

MR. HUSHEN: Yes, as a matter of fact --

Q What did he say?

MR. HUSHEN: If you will bear with me, I will tell you what he reported to us.

According to Mr. Herschenson, he and, of course, Rabbi Korff, had worked together over the past several months, and he said it was purely a courtesy call.

Q How long was the courtesy, Jack?

MR. HUSHEN: About 30 minutes.

Q 30 minutes to exchange courtesies?

Q Jack, yesterday you said you believed the President agreed with Senator Scott about not granting or considering pardons to anyone before trial. You said you would check further to see if flat out that was his position. Can you give us anything on that?

MR. HUSHEN: No, I didn't check it. I am sorry.

Q So you don't know for sure if that is how he feels about it, right?

MR. HUSHEN: That is solid.

Q You said you believe that was his position, and I asked you in the briefing --

MR. HUSHEN: I will stay right where I was yesterday.

Q Well, where were you, though? That is what I don't understand.

MR. HUSHEN: I believe that is his position.

Q Are there any requests for pardons?

MR. HUSHEN: None that I know of.

Q Jack, there is a story in the Christian Science Monitor attributed to a source and discussed the matter of the President, saying he opposed any pardons for anyone involved in the Watergate scandals except Mr. Nixon, that is, those serving time or those about to face trial.

Is that true?

MR. HUSHEN: I can't answer that. All I could say is that he draws a definite distinction between the pardon of the former President and any other activities concerning Watergate defendants, as he said in that statement that we put out on Wednesday.

If you would like me to restate that, I will restate it.

He said then his pardon of the former President, under the unique circumstances stated by me in granting it, is not related to any other case which is or may be under study, but it is a unique decision.

Q Jack, does the President have any definitive feelings about the Wholesale Price Index?

MR. HUSHEN: Well, I think he is disappointed to see it go up, or to see the statistics. He believes it makes it more emphatic to continue the efforts to control inflation. He certainly didn't need to see the Wholesale Price Index to know that inflation was a problem.

Q Was he shocked by the increase? After all, it is one of the largest in post-war history.

MR. HUSHEN: Well, the word he was using was "disappointed", more than shocked.

Q I really don't want to belabor this, but I want to make sure I quote you accurately. Are you saying you really are not sure what his position is on the granting of pardons?

MR. HUSHEN: I can't give you any further guidance on that beyond what I gave you yesterday.

Q What you told us was you believe that is his position, right? You believe he agrees with Senator Scott?

MR. HUSHEN: Yes.

Q But you are not sure? I mean, you are no more sure of that than you were yesterday?

Q Would you list the possibilities as likely, unlikely, very unlikely --

MR. HUSHEN: The reason I can't go any further is that it was not a specific question we discussed. I just want to stay right where I am on it. I can't give you any further guidance on it.

Q Based on your statement yesterday, most people went out of here and wrote stories suggesting that you knew what you were talking about. Did you have reason to object to any of those stories which, in effect, took it for granted that you were reflecting the President's view?

MR. HUSHEN: No.

Q You think that is the President's view, but you can't tell us for sure that is his view. In other words, you didn't check with him after the briefing, because I specifically asked you that and put in a query in the afternoon.

MR. HUSHEN: No.

Q He hasn't objected to any of the stories, has he, or taken issue with any of the stories?

MR. HUSHEN: No.

Q I don't want to keep coming back to this, but why is it that we cannot find out or that you cannot find out from the President what factor or factors caused him to change his position on this pardon when obviously this is at the root of the telephone calls and telegrams and the root of this big attendance here and the root of our question.

Did he offer a reason why he couldn't answer this question?

MR. HUSHEN: I don't think what you referred to as the shortness of time between the two events is at the root of all the telephone calls. I think the decision might be causing a little more outpouring.

Q We won't argue that point. The point is that the President made a change in direction that came as a shock to a large number of Americans, and they are reflecting this shock. What bothers me is why we cannot get an answer.

When you put the question to him -- which I assume that you can, since it has been asked here every day for six days -- did he give you any explanation of why he chooses not to respond to this question?

MR. HUSHEN: My response to that question is that you may get a chance to ask that question directly of the President shortly.

Q Can you tell us when?

Q In what specific time frame? Next week?

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

Q Jack, can you give us some specific guidance here on when we are going to have a chance to ask about this? He is deciding to hold a news conference a little earlier?

MR. HUSHEN: That is the same question that Saul just asked me, and I cannot give you any specific guidance.

Q Back on the question of what triggered the President's change of mind on the pardon, you will agree, won't you, that his statement at the news conference was to the effect that the course of law should take -- it should go to the courts -- and then he would decide on a pardon for the former President, and then two days later apparently he changed his mind.

Do you agree that that is the case? He changed his position from --

MR. HUSHEN: I am not going to argue what he said at the press conference.

Q As acting Press Secretary, what I am trying to get, can't you tell him that that is the biggest question everybody has, and we would really like an answer. As someone said, it has been six days now.

Q Jack, the President said last night that he had thought a long time about a pardon for Nixon. A long time, in my opinion, is not a month. Was the President thinking of a pardon for former President Nixon before Nixon resigned?

MR. HUSHEN: Are you sure that was --

Q He said, "I thought about it a long time; it was not precipitous."

MR. HUSHEN: Well, yes, in response to your question, which I presume was, why did he act so hastily or precipitously?

Q I didn't ask the question, but I am glad it was asked.

MR. HUSHEN: Who asked it?

No, I can't go beyond that. He obviously gave it thought. There is no question about that.

Q Jack, was there an intervening or extenuating circumstance that triggered the final decision?

MR. HUSHEN: There is nothing more that I could say about that.

Q Answer Helen's question. As far as you know, did he give any thought to a pardon before he became President?

MR. HUSHEN: I don't know.

Q Would you ask that question? We would like to have the answer.

MR. HUSHEN: I will take your question.

Q Let me follow up on that for a minute and just ask something of your modus operandi. When you go in for your meeting with Mr. Ford, do you bring a list of the things in there, or does he tell you what he wants to unburden himself with for the day for our benefit to us? How does that work? Do you question him in some respect? Does he question you, or give you questions?

MR. HUSHEN: We have a general discussion. That consists of --

Q The reason I ask is because several times it has come up, would you ask, did you ask, or will you ask, and it occurred to me, are you allowed to ask?

MR. HUSHEN: I certainly am. Sometimes he will ask me, or sometimes I will ask him. Sometimes we just generally discuss certain issues.

Q Are you suggesting there will be a news conference tomorrow?

MR. HUSHEN: No.

Q Can you rule one out for the week, Jack? Please rule one out. (Laughter)

MR. HUSHEN: I think I can.

Q Can you rule one out for the rest of the day?

MR. HUSHEN: I don't want you to go out of here thinking there is going to be a press conference today, and I think you should not go out of here thinking there will be a press conference today.

Q How about tomorrow?

MR. HUSHEN: For your guidance only, I don't think there will be one this week, Saturday or Sunday.

Q Can you rule one out for Sunday morning?

MR. HUSHEN: Yes.

Q Is the President being kept informed about the health of other Watergate figures? (Laughter)

I ask specifically because one man you worked for at one time, John Mitchell -- there are occasional reports that he is suffering various sorts of nervous disorders based on his problems, and there have been reports of other figures.

So, that being one of the considerations in the President's pardon of the former President, is he being kept informed of these people's health?

MR. HUSHEN: To the best of my information the answer to that question is no, but I would refer you back, again, to the end of his statement that he made Wednesday about the difference between the President's case and any others.

Adam has a question over here.

Q Jack, we heard a good deal a month ago about keeping the public informed from the White House. I just wonder, when you read this transcript today, if you do, if you will count the number of times you have managed to give a direct answer to a question and then reflect on whether this is not exactly what it used to be two months ago in the previous Administration.

MR. HUSHEN: As to how many direct answers I have given to questions, there is only one question I really haven't given you a direct answer to. As I said, I cannot give you a direct answer to that question. That is something that is going to have to come from the President himself.

Q Jack, here's one where you may be able to give a direct answer. To the best of my knowledge, former President Nixon stripped former Vice President Agnew of his Secret Service protection after six months. In the light of this and recognizing a difference between Agnew and Nixon, are you suggesting to us that the President, if the Congress doesn't pass that \$850,000, is going to continue to pay for Nixon's valet?

MR. HUSHEN: I am not saying that.

Q Is the President concerned about former Vice President Agnew's health, or not?

MR. HUSHEN: We are in a transitory stage here where President Ford felt that the White House ought to carry the load for staffing assistants for the former President up until the time that Congress enacts the supplemental appropriation.

Q He won't continue providing him a valet if they don't pass this \$850,000, right?

MR. HUSHEN: I am not addressing myself to that. That will be crossed at the appropriate time.

Q Jack, Bill Seidman and others said before that there might be some action by the President on the housing problem prior to the conclusion of the summit. In light of some of the remarks being made down in Atlanta about the dreariness of the industry now, is the President contemplating any time soon action?

MR. HUSHEN: As you know, Mr. Rush and Mr. Seidman are meeting with the President today, and maybe we can get some idea after that meeting if there is anything contemplated.

Q Jack, when do you expect a statement on war resisters' amnesty?

MR. HUSHEN: When do I?

Q Yes, in the near future?

MR. HUSHEN: Yes.

Q When?

MR. HUSHEN: The only date that I have given so far is before the end of the month. That certainly looks good to me. We have had several meetings on it. A lot of the decisions have been made. I just can't go beyond that.

Q Jack, can you tell us why the tapes are going to be destroyed after ten years without the public looking at them, historians looking at them? I am not talking about people who have subpoenas, but --

MR. HUSHEN: Just people who want to look at them?

Q That is right, after ten years, why are they going to be utterly destroyed? Why is this going to be blotted out of history? Why is history going to be rewritten, or a blank space, not rewritten.

MR. HUSHEN: I think Mr. Buchen handled that.

Q He didn't really give an answer.

MR. HUSHEN: That is a problem for the lawyers. I couldn't enlighten you any more.

Q Was Mr. Ford happy with that? Wasn't President Ford unhappy with that?

MR. HUSHEN: He didn't indicate any emotion one way or another about it. It was a very complicated subject reaching that agreement between the former President, the General Services Administration and the White House to get the tapes and documents out of the White House, but still in safekeeping.

Q Jack, have you been able to determine why the President authorized you to say last Tuesday that that entire matter is under study in answer to a question about pardons for other Watergate figures?

MR. HUSHEN: Yes, but I am not going to have anything further to say about it.

Q Jack, can you explain why the President would use an emissary who is under investigation in the Justice Department for such a delicate negotiation, something that means so much to the American people?

MR. HUSHEN: Well, you are still innocent until you are proven guilty.

Q Was he aware of the investigation?

MR. HUSHEN: I believe when Mr. Becker first came to the attention of President Ford, it was to assist in the confirmation hearings as Vice President, and at that time, I believe --

Q Jack, that was the second time.

MR. HUSHEN: All right, the second time, then.

Let me just finish this. Mr. Buchen told me that Mr. Becker said that he had had some problems, most of which had been resolved satisfactorily. The only remaining one was a question of a tax deduction, and he had given the necessary documentation and had heard nothing furthermore on it and just assumed that that matter was closed. I think, you know, we were generally aware of it.

Q Jack, how close is the President to making his choices for the board of the new Legal Services Corporation?

MR. HUSHEN: I don't know.

Q Is that matter now before him? The law has been passed, and he should select the 11 members.

MR. HUSHEN: I just can't give you anything until I check it.

Q Jack, does the President support the idea of Democrats on the Judiciary Committee yesterday that in view of the pardon, Jaworski should be asked to put out into public light all the information he has against Mr. Nixon?

MR. HUSHEN: I don't know whether he does or not.

Q Could you check on that?

MR. HUSHEN: I haven't raised that question with him.

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Q Jack, you suggested that maybe Mr. Seidman and Mr. Rush would have something to say after the meeting with the President. Do you mean to bring them in here to talk to us or what?

MR. HUSHEN: What I meant in trying to answer that question was maybe something would come out of there which would result in either myself or possibly someone else giving an answer to that question.

Q But not this afternoon?

MR. HUSHEN: We do not plan to have them brief, no.

Q According to some press reports from Boston, it appears there have been some violations of the U.S. Code with respect to civil rights statutes in the stoning of children being bused to school. In view of the President's ultimate responsibility for enforcement of the U.S. Code, has he issued any instructions to the appropriate agencies of Government to look into that matter, or be prepared to take any action?

MR. HUSHEN: I think you probably will find that the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department is closely watching that situation and, if there is an indication of violation of civil rights, the Federal Bureau of Investigation would investigate.

Q Can you say at whose orders Tkach did fly out to California?

MR. HUSHEN: I don't think I know at whose orders. I think it was a request from San Clemente.

Q He can just call up a Major General and say, "Come out"?

Q What was the question?

MR. HUSHEN: At whose orders did Dr. Tkach fly to San Clemente, and I cannot answer that.

Q Jack, the Star has in its hands documents which show or say that Haldeman appealed for a pardon before Nixon left office and he tied it to amnesty. Did President Ford have President Nixon in mind when he offered conditional amnesty to the Vietnam resisters?

MR. HUSHEN: There is no way I can answer that question. That is something again that you would have to address to the President.

Q Jack, aside from Mrs. Dean's letter, are there any other applications or requests for pardons that have come into the White House?

MR. HUSHEN: None that I am aware of.

Q Jack, do you know whether President Ford has heard the actual tapes or read the transcripts of the tapes which have been sent over in response to subpoenas from Judge Sirica's court?

MR. HUSHEN: I do not.

Q I wondered, does he know what the contents of those are yet?

MR. HUSHEN: As far as I recall, the President was not listening to those tapes.

Q He said he had no time prior to taking over the office.

MR. HUSHEN: He certainly has less.

Q I was wondering whether the contents of those tapes may have prompted timing of the pardon for President Nixon?

MR. HUSHEN: I don't have anything I can tell you on that.

Q Jack, does the President still intend to try to secure a place in the military for General Haig?

MR. HUSHEN: That question is still being looked at. No decisions have been made and you know, of course, of General Haig's desire and interest to return to the military. Beyond that, I have nothing I can say.

Q Jack, before we close here, without meaning to change the subject actually, I want to get back to Chile. I raised the question yesterday about the President's awareness of the stories over this week of U.S. efforts by the CIA to destabilize the Chilean government and whether or not the President was aware of it, and whether that was going to be his policy.

Did you have an opportunity to discuss that with the President?

MR. HUSHEN: I did not. But I would again say what I said to you yesterday, that the State Department is adequately equipped to handle those questions.

Q This is a major policy question on what the CIA does in terms of foreign governments. It is not the State Department. The President makes the foreign policy so I think the question is legitimate here.

MR. HUSHEN: All right.

Q In addition to that, there has now been raised the question of perjury on the part of Administration officials who have testified before Congressional committees about Chile and denied that there was any intervention in the affairs of the Chilean government.

Now it rises to the level of Presidential concern as to whether people in the Administration have told the truth and will tell the truth in the future. So I wish you could get some response from the President about that.

MR. HUSHEN: All right, I will make an attempt.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Jack.

END

(AT 12:35 P.M. EDT)

* * *

1:31 P.M. EDT

MR. HUSHEN: I can give you a brief report now that the meeting with President Ford and the Israeli Prime Minister is concluded.

As you know, the meeting was in the Oval Office. It lasted approximately 30 minutes.

In addition to the President and Mr. Rabin, those attending for the American side were Secretary of State Kissinger, and General Brent Scowcroft, and our Ambassador to Israel, Ken Keating.

On the Israeli side, their Ambassador Dinitz and the Director General of the Prime Minister's Office, Mordechai Gazit.

As you know, the President and the Prime Minister met for 40 minutes on Tuesday and then again yesterday for an hour and 15 minutes, so they spent quite a bit of time together.

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In the meeting today, they again discussed in depth the issues involved in shaping the course of negotiations over the next few months, and to review bilateral relations between our two countries.

The President was pleased to become reacquainted with Prime Minister Rabin and the talks were described as friendly and useful to both sides.

Both leaders reaffirmed the importance of maintaining the momentum of negotiations on a genuine peace settlement in the Middle East. And they made progress in moving toward an understanding of how these negotiations might proceed.

The President reaffirmed the long-standing friendship for Israel and also reaffirmed the continuing U.S. support for the security and well-being of that country. The President welcomed the increasing commercial contacts between the United States and Israel in keeping with the close ties between the two countries.

The President and the Prime Minister reviewed the ongoing U.S. military supply relationship and the President reaffirmed the continuity of that relationship.

That is the end of our statement.

I might be able to give you a little more help, but we can't go too much beyond that.

Q Can we start with the last sentence; what does that actually mean?

MR. HUSHEN: Well, it means what it says.

Q What does it say?

Q Does that mean he is going to continue to supply arms at the present levels that have existed in the past without any change?

MR. HUSHEN: Well, all I can say is that it is an ongoing relationship. I can't enlighten you as to whether or not there is going to be any changes.

Q Jack, can you translate it in terms of dollars or military hardware?

MR. HUSHEN: I cannot.

Q Can you say whether it has increased from like four days ago when Rabin was not here?

MR. HUSHEN: I cannot. As you probably all know, he has a press conference scheduled for 2:30 this afternoon.

Q What is this progress in negotiations, progress in understanding on how negotiations will proceed? Does that mean that the President and the Prime Minister decided on who Israel should negotiate with next on withdrawal of Israel forces from Arab lands?

MR. HUSHEN: Would you restate that?

Q You spoke of they made progress in moving toward an understanding on how the negotiations may proceed. I am asking, are you speaking of negotiations on the possibility of further withdrawal of Israeli forces from Arab countries.

MR. HUSHEN: I can't get into that specifically, but the next step would be consultations with other parties in the Middle East dispute to resume and, Secretary of State Kissinger will continue these consultations when he meets with the Arab Foreign Ministers at the United Nations General Assembly later this month.

Q Jack, did the President or Secretary of State have any objections to Israel having its negotiations with Egypt about withdrawal in the Sinai Desert?

MR. HUSHEN: I can't give you any help there.

Q Jack, you said the negotiations were described as friendly and useful to both sides. Who made that description?

MR. HUSHEN: That was the consensus of the participants.

Q Should we consider this a joint statement or is this purely a statement from our own Government?

MR. HUSHEN: From our own Government.

Q Will there be a joint communique?

MR. HUSHEN: No.

Q Why not?

MR. HUSHEN: Because that was a decision reached between the President and the Foreign Minister.

Q Was there any invitation for the President to visit Israel, do you know, or the Middle East in general?

MR. HUSHEN: I don't know.

Q Was there any discussion, can you tell us whether there was any discussion about the Palestinian problem?

MR. HUSHEN: Again I can't go into any details of the meeting.

Q When will Kissinger be going, Monday?

MR. HUSHEN: To the United Nations?

Q Do we know?

MR. HUSHEN: Next week.

Q Will he go with the President?

MR. HUSHEN: I would presume he would be going up there with the President on the 18th.

Q Well, the President is thinking up to October 18, which is a long way off.

MR. HUSHEN: Next week, September 18.

Q Jack, was more or less accomplished in these meetings than the President had hoped at their outset?

MR. HUSHEN: I am not in a position to answer that.

Q Jack, can you discuss the extent to which the President described Congressional cut-backs in foreign aid to Mr. Rabin?

MR. HUSHEN: No. There was some general discussion at the bipartisan leadership meeting yesterday morning, but, as to what was discussed on that point with the Prime Minister, I can't answer that. In fact, I can probably be of not very much help regarding details of the meeting.

Q When was the decision made not to issue a communique -- today, yesterday?

MR. HUSHEN: I presume it was made today.

Q Jack, were there any discussions of whether the Secretary is going to the Middle East in October, late October, or so, to continue discussions?

MR. HUSHEN: I don't know. I would refer that question over to the Secretary of State.

Q Could we ask -- maybe Les can answer this -- when you referred to the progress in moving toward an understanding of how these negotiations -- are you speaking of the peace conference, are you speaking of the bilateral negotiations, like one-on-one, Israel with one Arab country? What are we talking about, Jack?

MR. HUSHEN: I can't give you any detail, Helen.

Q Why? The understanding on what negotiation?

MR. JANKA: The negotiations that have been going on, the same way, the consultations that have been going on all summer long and the ones that will proceed in the future.

Q Can you tell us what the progress was? Was any progress made toward a meeting of minds that you read in the statement? What is the progress? Was there any progress in moving towards an understanding?

MR. HUSHEN: I can't go beyond that statement.

Q Can you tell us where the talks broke down?

MR. HUSHEN: No, nor could I even say that they did.

Q Jack, as a matter of principle, don't you think it would be more useful in the future on foreign affairs matters if we had a briefing from somebody who really was familiar with the subjects? It is nothing personal against you.

MR. HUSHEN: I understand that. It is just a decision on how far we are going to go into something.

Q No, it is not that. The guy who would give the briefing would at least know the obvious. Again, it is nothing personal against you, but a briefing on this basis is almost misleading in part.

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MR. HUSHEN: That may be true.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Jack.

END

(AT 1:42 P.M. EDT)

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