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NEWS CONFERENCE

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AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 12 NOON EDT

OCTOBER 2, 1974

WEDNESDAY

MR. NESSEN: Yesterday afternoon, in addition to the meetings you photographed, the President also met with Bill Timmons, Phil Buchen, Don Rumsfeld and Bill Seidman. He then went to Bethesda to visit with Mrs. Ford.

You have this morning's medical report on her condition.

Last evening, as he has been doing the last several days, the President talked by phone with Dr. Kissinger. This morning the President has met with several staff members since getting into the office just before 8:00. He met with Don Rumsfeld, Jack Marsh, Bob Hartmann, Phil Buchen, General Scowcroft and myself.

Q Separately?

MR. NESSEN: Separately and in groups.

At 12:15 today, the President will be visited by Senators Mansfield and Scott. They will be bringing to the President a document signed by the entire membership of the Senate expressing its collective best wishes to Mrs. Ford, and its hope that she will have a speedy recovery. We will try and get you copies of that document, if you would like to see it.

This afternoon at 2 o'clock, the President will meet again with the Economic Policy Board to continue the discussions relating to the proposals the President will make next week.

This evening at 6:30, the President will host a small private dinner for a group of friends in Congress. This will be a small group of six to eight Members of Congress. I don't have the list to give you right now. I think we are going to try and post it for you later this afternoon when it is all set.

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Q Does that mean he will not go to the hospital?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know how it is going to fit into his schedule.

For the remainder of the week, I expect the President to be devoting most of his time to the preparations for the economic proposals he will make next week. That will include more meetings with the Economic Policy Board.

The only other scheduled item for the rest of the week that we know about at this time is the meeting on Friday that we talked about before with the Prime Minister of Australia.

At the invitation of the United States Capital Historical Society, Mrs. Betty Ford will serve as a Co-Chairperson of the National Advisory Board for the Bicentennial Sound and Light Show, which will be installed on the east front of the Capitol for the 1976 Bicentennial celebration.

The First Lady is deeply appreciative of the invitation extended on September 20 by former Congressman Fred Schwengel, who is the President of the U.S. Capital Historical Society, and she is looking forward to active participation in the Bicentennial program.

Q Starting when?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think all the details have been provided yet.

The President himself has served on the Board of the Capital Historical Society since it was founded in 1962. He also cosponsored with Tip O'Neill the bill authorizing this sound and light show. It will portray the history of the capital from the laying of the cornerstone by George Washington to the present time, and it will be financed by private contributions.

I believe we put in your package some further details of this, and after the briefing -- you know former Congressman Swengel, many of you, and he will be here after the briefing to give you more details on this, if you would like.

Yesterday afternoon, the President met from 4:30 until 5:40 with 31 people on the issue of mass transit operating costs. The principal spokesmen for the group were Mayor Alioto, Mayor Beame, Mayor Daly and Henry Ford, II. There were other mayors there, of course, and business and labor leaders. Secretary Brinegar was there and the Administrator of the Urban Mass Transportation Administration, Frank Harbingen, was also there.

The mayors urged the President to support a stop gap two-year mass transit bill known as the Williams-Minish bill. The mayors reported that leaders in Congress had told them that there was virtually no chance of a long-term, comprehensive transit bill being passed this year.

Accordingly, the mayors felt that they had to have the short-term bill in order to help defray operating losses.

The President strongly reaffirmed his support for some limited form of Federal operating assistance for mass transit. He pointed out that the Administration has proposed this in legislation submitted to Congress on February 13 of this year.

In his message to Congress on September 13, the President reaffirmed the Administration's support of this six-year, comprehensive transit bill, and urged the Congress to move on it quickly.

The President pointed out in the meeting yesterday that the House had acted on the six-year bill, that he could accept the dollar levels of that bill, which for your information are \$11 billion over six years, and that the Senate had a companion bill which was introduced in June.

The President could not agree with claims by some leaders in the Senate that Congress could not complete work on the six-year bill this year. The President said the legislation could be passed this session and that he would personally meet with Senate leaders along with a delegation of mayors and take this matter up on a face-to-face basis.

The President recommitted himself to strongly supporting the six-year transit bill and stated that with proper changes in the Senate bill that it would be possible for a House-Senate conference committee to work out a compromise six-year bill acceptable to the Administration and to do it this year.

Q Was a date fixed for this meeting, Ron, that the President talked about?

MR. NESSEN: The meeting with the Congressional leaders?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: With the Congressional leaders and the mayors, a face-to-face meeting?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: No, we don't have a date on that for you.

Q Who is going to initiate that?

MR. NESSEN: The way the President left it, it was that he would personally meet with the Senate leaders and I think they will arrange a meeting.

Q What does the \$20 billion bill in the House begin with?

MR. NESSEN: When it started?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: The bill the Administration supports or would accept is \$11 billion over six years.

Q Ron, did the President ask some of the mayors to come back to see him next week? If I am not mistaken, he asked five or six.

MR. NESSEN: I think he is going to meet with five mayors and I think that is what he referred to. We don't have the complete details of that meeting yet, but I think that is what Peter was referring to.

Q Five of the same mayors?

MR. NESSEN: Why don't you wait until we can work out the details of the meeting and we will announce who is going to be here.

Q Ron, is the President determined to veto that stop gap measure under any circumstances?

MR. NESSEN: Well, I think you probably will have to say that the President still believes there is time for Congress to give final approval to the full six-year bill and I think we will wait and see what happens before we talk about the other bill.

Q What objections does the President have to the Senate version of the comprehensive bill?

MR. NESSEN: The President feels that what is needed in this case is a broader, long-term bill, and that provides more flexibility and continuity that goes beyond the narrow and limited programs in the Williams bill. The dollar figure -- as you know, the Government budget called for a \$9.3 billion in mass transit. In his speech in Pittsburgh, you probably remember he did say that the \$11 billion figure was as high as he would accept.

He thinks there are some problems with the way the program is structured in the House bill, and one of the problems is the treatment of Federal operating assistance for public transit, but he did say in Pittsburgh that he thought these problems could be worked out in a conference between the Senate and the House.

Q Is there a statement somewhere of the Administration's exact objections to the various kinds of bills? I mean, is there testimony that still stands up?

MR. NESSEN: I will find it for you, Mort, if there is. I am sure there is. I will find it for you.

I don't have any other announcements.

Q What about Father McLaughlin?

MR. NESSEN: Just a moment.

We gave you the daily packet of material, and we have a correction to make in the nomination of the two members to the Board of Parole. The first gentleman on the list is George J. Reed of Oregon, and he was chairman of the board from 1969 to 1972. He is not the chairman now.

Was there a question about Father McLaughlin?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: Father McLaughlin has asked me to distribute for him at this briefing a letter he has written to the President dated today. Where is Les? Did he miss it? (Laughter)

Q Did the President send him a letter?

MR. NESSEN: Father McLaughlin's letter, as you will see, tells the President that with a deep personal sense of gratitude for the opportunity of having been able to serve the Nation, he is submitting his resignation today as Deputy Special Assistant to the President, effective October 15.

Q What year?

MR. NESSEN: 1974. Father McLaughlin says in his letter, "During the period of transition the graciousness that you have personally shown to the aides of the former President has been deeply appreciated. Under your Presidency I am confident the Republic will prosper as we advance to our Bicentennial. You have already plowed straight and deep, and the people trust your leadership."

Father McLaughlin's post was not a Presidential appointment; consequently, no Presidential acceptance of the resignation is necessary, although I would anticipate that out of courtesy the President will reply to the letter.

Q Do you plan to reply to the resignation?

MR. NESSEN: I have accepted the resignation.

Q Is it with deep regret? What degree of regret?

MR. NESSEN: I have accepted the resignation.

Q Before it was offered or after it?

MR. NESSEN: You cannot accept a resignation before it is offered.

Q Since he was a member of your staff, Ron, can you now tell us something that my impression is that we never got completely clear, and that is what Father McLaughlin's salary was on this post.

MR. NESSEN: I think it is our policy below a certain level, it is the White House policy, that the salaries are not published.

Q In the future, will he be going into industry? (Laughter)

Q Will he go back to private practice?

MR. NESSEN: Father McLaughlin indicated that he might want to talk to you on Friday, so you can ask him your own questions.

Q Here?

MR. NESSEN: No, not here.

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Q Have there been any other Nixon hold-over resignations?

MR. NESSEN: We can tell you that Dick Moore, Special Counsel to the President, with a salary range of \$36,000 to \$38,000, has resigned effective October 9. There will be no replacement.

David Wimer, Special Assistant to the President in the area of personnel, will be leaving on Friday and we will have an announcement on his replacement sometime hopefully soon.

Q Salary range?

MR. NESSEN: I didn't get all the salary ranges on these.

David Parker, Special Assistant to the President, I believe in the area of appointments, has left the White House. His replacement is Warren Rustand.

Q That was several days ago, was it not, Ron?

Q What do you mean, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: I mean that he has left the White House.

Q Has he resigned? Has he been kicked out? Is he still in Government?

MR. NESSEN: He resigned.

Q When did he go off the payroll.

MR. NESSEN: I don't have the exact date. I am told that he is now at the Commerce Department.

Q You mean he got another Federal job?

MR. NESSEN: It sounds to me as if he is at the Commerce Department, Helen.

Q Is he at the Commerce Department?

MR. NESSEN: He is at the Commerce Department.

Q What is he doing?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know. He is not on the White House payroll and I don't have any responsibility for him.

Noel Koch, a speech writer, has resigned effective November 1.

Bruce Herschensohn, a Deputy Special Assistant, has left the White House, resigned, and is no longer on the White House payroll.

Q Were any of these accepted, besides Parker, still on the Federal payroll that you know of, gone on to other Federal jobs?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know.

Q Herschensohn has responsibility for what in the communications area?

MR. NESSEN: I am told he was a Deputy Special Assistant.

Q Ron, can you tell us how, after so many weeks of not letting these people go, you are suddenly dropping a whole list on us all at one time? Did Don Rumsfeld or somebody say something about it is time to get these people out of here?

MR. NESSEN: I felt that I have not been responsive to your questions about this and I have not been. Frankly, I have been here less than two weeks, as you know, and I have been trying to get my office organized and some of the people you asked about are on my staff.

It has taken a certain amount of time to simply find the files and find out where these cases stood and what sort of memos or letters had been sent to them. Of course Don Rumsfeld is even more recently on the job than I am and it has simply taken time to find out what the status of these people is.

The reason I have not wanted to give any sort of piecemeal answers in the time I have been here is that I didn't have firm answers. It took me until yesterday to get an adequate file of where the personnel matters stood and as soon as I got it, I gave it to you.

Q What is the status of Buchanan, Ray Price, Larry Higby, Len Garment and Ken Clawson?

MR. NESSEN: Well, a certain number of the people you mentioned have been detailed to San Clemente.

Q Which ones?

Q Transferred to the staff of the former President?

MR. NESSEN: That is right.

Q What is right?

Q I asked what is the last date they can transfer?

MR. NESSEN: What is the last date they can transfer?

Q By what date must they leave your staff?

MR. NESSEN: There have been no deadlines set. What I was about to tell you about the transfers to the former President's staff is that a certain number of these people, and I cannot give you the exact names now because it is not our responsibility to decide who he wants to keep on his staff and who he does not want to keep on his staff. He will decide who he wants to keep on his staff, and then once that is arranged and once he has a transition budget to pay them, they will be paid for and will be chosen by him.

Now, I don't have any other specific names to give you in terms of leaving. I think I should say that the matter of their continued employment here is being handled by their immediate superiors. The senior members of the White House staff are now in the process and have the responsibility for organizing their own staffs and having the people on their staffs who they want and in the jobs they want them in.

If in the process of organizing their staffs these senior White House advisers decide that they no longer want the services of any individuals, then we will announce their departures to you, but the procedure is here now that the immediate superiors of each of these people will make that decision, and we will let you know as they make them.

Q Can you tell me something about the terms of the departure of the people you have announced? Have they been asked to leave? Are they leaving by mutual consent? If they were asked to leave, who asked them, Mr. Rumsfeld or the President? Will you be more specific? All you are saying is that they are leaving.

MR. NESSEN: I really can't. I think we will just have to say they all submitted their resignations and these resignations have been accepted.

Q Ron, my earlier question, are any of the others, aside from Parker, going to have other Government jobs?

MR. NESSEN: As far as I know, I don't know. As I described to you, the procedure to be followed now, Mr. Clawson would be my responsibility.

Q Ron, I asked about Clawson, and Warren, for example, who I would assume would both be your your responsibility.

MR. NESSEN: Who?

Q Clawson and Jerry Warren, I believe.

MR. NESSEN: That is right. They are both my responsibility.

Q Have you made any decisions yet?

MR. NESSEN: We will let you know.

Q What is their present assignment pending your decision on what they will be doing?

MR. NESSEN: I understand that Mr. Clawson has been doing some work in helping with the transition. He has no assignment in my operation.

Q Ron, he is still on your payroll.

MR. NESSEN: That is correct, but he has no assignment from me.

Q You have a staff of 50 people, don't you?

MR. NESSEN: No, I don't have a staff of 50 people.

Q Someone in your office said you have a staff of 50.

MR. NESSEN: That is the incorrect number.

Q What is Jerry Warren doing for you?

MR. NESSEN: Jerry Warren has been very helpful in providing some guidance in terms of what has gone before in the Press Office operation. Most of us in this office are new to it, and Jerry has been around a long time, and I think is well respected by all of you, and he is helping us find our way.

Q Ron, what is the justification for Mr. Clawson's continuing drawing of a salary if he has no assignment?

MR. NESSEN: As I explained to you, I am in the process of organizing my office, as are the other senior staff advisers here, and if in the process of that we come across cases of people who have no assignments, we will announce to you what decision has been made on them.

Q Ron, where is he now?

Q Ron, you said that certain people were detailed to San Clemente. Were any of these people ones I had rattled off?

MR. NESSEN: Let me hear the rattling off again.

Q It would help if we actually knew which ones were out in San Clemente or working on the San Clemente payroll.

MR. NESSEN: Buchanan, Clawson, Buzhardt. There is no San Clemente payroll, Jim.

Q You know, working on that staff or apparently working on that staff.

Q It comes under that amount of money that is being asked.

Q That branch office.

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Well, Bonnie, as I said before, that the former President will be given a sum of money by Congress to pay for whoever he wants on his staff, and then he will decide who he wants on his staff, and for the others, the procedure will be, as I say, that their superiors here in the building will decide whether their services are needed any more.

Q In the meantime, can you tell us who on the staff has been detailed to San Clemente?

MR. NESSEN: You want to know who on the White House staff has been detailed to San Clemente. I would rather give you an accurate list than just to try to pull out of my head the names I have heard mentioned, and I would prefer to give you the list accurately. We may be able to get it for you now.

Q May I follow up on that? The procedure is that White House personnel can be detailed to San Clemente for a specified period of time. Is that it?

MR. NESSEN: You mean to go out there and work a while and then come back, or if they stay out there they are lopped off the White House?

Q Yes. Is that the procedure? I am asking what is the procedure.

MR. NESSEN: I don't think we have refined it to that point yet.

Q Well, can somebody work on the White House staff and just be assigned out to the former President indefinitely?

MR. NESSEN: Not indefinitely. As soon as he has a budget to pay for the people he wants, then the detailing operation will stop.

Q Ron, can you tell us specifically what time or whether the time period is based on when Congress acts?

MR. NESSEN: I think the President has said before that he feels that the former President is entitled to and in fact by law is entitled to a certain amount of help during the transition period.

What are the specifics you are inquiring about?

Q How many people are currently assigned to the White House --

MR. NESSEN: We are going to get you the names.

Q How long this procedure will continue.

MR. NESSEN: I understand.

Q And in Mr. Clawson's case, is he detailed out there?

MR. NESSEN: I will have to check that for you.

Q Ron, as a point of law, I think if I am not mistaken there is a fixed amount that the former President gets for a staff and that is \$96,000, so there is no mystery about it.

MR. NESSEN: No, I don't think there is a mystery about it. What I am saying is that by law he has \$96,000 to pay salaries, and it is not our responsibility to decide who he pays the \$96,000 to.

Q Await the amount that Congress will appropriate?

MR. NESSEN: No, I said he is going to await the appropriation.

Q After that appropriation, can you legally assign people from your office to supplement his staff out there?

MR. NESSEN: Can I or will I?

Q First, can you; and secondly, will you?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know the law on that, but the answer to the second one is no.

Q Also, you mentioned specific superiors?

MR. NESSEN: Well, you know the people that I have working for me and I am not clear enough on the organization of this building to know who the others work for.

Q Who is Ray Price's superior?

MR. NESSEN: I am telling you I don't know who everybody reports to but if you would like me to get that for you I will.

Q Can you get a staff list?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Ron, are Buzhardt and Garment still on the White House staff?

MR. NESSEN: So far as I know.

Q Ron, how much of this is benevolent severance designed to give even these people a chance to find other employment?

MR. NESSEN: Well, I believe the President has spoken publicly about that and has said that it is not in his nature to toss people out on the street.

Q Isn't that the answer to much of this delay, or is it, in severing these people?

MR. NESSEN: I would not steer you away from that.

Q Can't you tell us what is really going on and isn't it that fellows like Ken Clawson, you are giving him as much time as he needs within a reasonable amount to find a new job and isn't that a fair way to put it in the case of not just Ken Clawson but in the case of many others as well? You don't have an end date on this.

MR. NESSEN: I think I would just simply stick more or less to the idea that Bill brought up that this President has made clear that he does not want anybody shoved out of this building until they have had an adequate opportunity to find a career for themselves.

Q Do you have an end date for this adequate period at your opportunity?

MR. NESSEN: I think the best thing to do is to wait and we will announce them as they come up.

Q It could be through this year; it could be until December?

MR. NESSEN: I would suggest you wait. Do you want the salary ranges of some of the people I mentioned to you?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: I gave you Dick Moore's. David Wimer has a salary range of \$36,000 to \$38,000. David Parker, who left September 15, incidentally, in case I didn't give you that, has a salary range of \$33,000 to \$35,000. Noel Koch has a salary range of \$30,000 to \$34,000, and Bruce Herschensohn has a salary range of \$34,000 to \$36,000.

Q Do you know when he left?

MR. NESSEN: Didn't we get McLaughlin's salary range? The salary range of \$32,000 to \$34,000 for Father McLaughlin.

Q Should Bruce Herschensohn be replaced, will somebody else be doing that job?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what the job was.

Q Well, he was maintaining liaison with groups out in the country who were supporting --

MR. NESSEN: I think we just have to say that the President is organizing the White House in the manner that he wants it organized and giving the assignments he wants made, and he will assign his assistants to the tasks that he wants them to perform.

Q You may not be able to talk about what other White House officials are doing with some of the Nixon holdovers. If Clawson works for you, does he ever check with you in any capacity about what he ought to be doing or do you have any sense of what he is doing?

MR. NESSEN: I said that he does not have an assignment from me, and I don't think I probably ought to get into any more detail about our office procedures.

Q Is he in Washington?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know that.

Q For instance, Ron, he has been to California.

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Do you know when he goes?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, I do.

Q Does he check with you before he goes?

MR. NESSEN: I would rather not go any deeper into the procedures that we have.

Q Does he draw expense allowances for trips to California?

MR. NESSEN: On the matter of expenses, Government regulations provide payment of up to \$40 a day as a per diem. It is the common legal practice when a Government employee is assigned to duty outside his home area.

Some of the people you have mentioned have received up to \$40 a day when they have traveled. They must pay their hotel out of the \$40.

Q How about their plane fare?

Q In the case, for example, you mentioned of Ken Clawson being out in California, among others, and he works for you, he has gone out there on assignment but you don't know what the assignment was?

MR. NESSEN: That is right.

Q But he does get paid by the Government for an assignment that his superior does not know about? I don't understand how he would be getting Government pay for expenses for a job that apparently was not assigned to him.

MR. NESSEN: The list of people that are detailed to the former President, and this list was sent to Congress on the 23rd of September, include --

Q It only includes, it is not necessarily complete.

MR. NESSEN: This is the complete list. This is the list that was sent to Congress.

Ziegler, Bull, Price, Rose Mary Wood, Frank Gannon --

Q Who is he?

MR. NESSEN: A speech writer.

Q Does he work for you also, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Frank Gannon is not behind this room?

Q Are you sure?

MR. NESSEN: It is my understanding that he is not on my payroll.

Marge Acker, Diane Sawyer, Anne Grier and Nora Vandersommen.

Q Could we have some identification on those?

MR. NESSEN: Mr. Ziegler is the former Press Secretary.

Q No, just Marge Acker and Nora Vandersommen.

MR. NESSEN: I thought you wanted to go through the list.

Q Just Nora and Marge.

MR. NESSEN: Secretaries.

Q What about Ken O'Brien of the United States Marine Corps who I understand is still assigned as military aide to the former President?

MR. NESSEN: He is from the Defense Department assigned on the White House detail.

I will tell you what. If you have further questions on the personnel matters, let's take them and get the answers correctly so we don't have to have this conversation and get back to you tomorrow.

Q I would like to ask about Jack Brennan, Lieutenant Colonel in the United States Marine Corps, and Walter Tkach, Major General, United States Air Force.

MR. NESSEN: We will get the answers for them.

Q Ron, when is the last time you saw or talked to Ken Clawson, and do you know where he is this afternoon?

MR. NESSEN: Gentlemen and ladies, I think we have gone through the procedure we intend to follow and I really don't think it is going to be any more profitable to pursue this area.

Q Ron, this is an open Administration. Why can't you be open?

MR. NESSEN: Ask away, and I will try to answer when I can.

Q Ron, I asked the question before you read that list, and you never did respond to it, and the question was, in the case of Ken Clawson, for example, who is on your staff so you can respond correctly to it, he has been getting per diem expenses, and you said he traveled out to California and back.

For a specific assignment, did he go or what auspices was he traveling that he deserved to have expenses paid by the Government?

MR. NESSEN: He is, as I understand it, working on the transition.

Q Who assigned him; in other words, did you assign him to travel out there?

MR. NESSEN: I told you that he does not have an assignment from me.

Q Are you certain, Ron, that none of these people who are engaged in this Government travel are using this Government travel in search of another job? Would you say that with certainty today?

MR. NESSEN: I certainly would not want to say it with certainty because I don't know it for certainty, but certainly it violates regulations if they are.

Q That is why I was asking the question. If you don't know what he was doing, I don't know who does know. He reports to you.

MR. NESSEN: As I say, the ones we cannot answer here we will take and answer them tomorrow.

Q How often has Clawson been to San Clemente?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know.

Q But you know when he goes?

MR. NESSEN: I have heard when he has been there.

Q Well, how often have you heard that he has been there.

MR. NESSEN: Once.

Q What is the salary range and does he still have the title?

MR. NESSEN: Let's wait a moment on that one and let's check that, please.

Q Is he Director of Communications or have you given him a different title since he is under your payroll?

MR. NESSEN: I have not given him any title.

Q Does he still retain an office in Room 160 of the EOB?

MR. NESSEN: I am told he does not.

Q On that subject, Ron, whose office is Mr. Rumsfeld occupying? Will he have the old Haig office?

MR. NESSEN: Physical office?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Ron, I have a question on the Father McLaughlin letter. There has been a lot of controversy about his leaving even up to a year or two before President Ford was sworn in, and I am just a little curious about his being permitted to have a letter being released resigning. It seems to lend a little more to this whole thing than perhaps it might deserve.

MR. NESSEN: What was your question?

Q Can you tell us what your thought processes were that allowed him to publicly release a letter of resignation when in fact they have asked him to leave for perhaps the last 18 months, that he has been invited to leave and has refused to leave.

MR. NESSEN: Well, without accepting any of what happened before I came here, Father McLaughlin asked me-- there has been considerable public interest in his continued employment and questions almost daily here, and he felt that since he was resigning that you would be interested in what he had to say to the President and asked me to distribute the letter.

Q Ron, why is he being permitted to remain another two weeks?

MR. NESSEN: There are certain personnel procedures, the amount of time remaining, and so forth.

Q Ron, how long has it been, and you, after all, have been here something over a week, how long has it been since Father McLaughlin has done anything for his Government salary?

MR. NESSEN: He tells me in personal conversations that he is doing a certain amount of work.

Q Do you know what it is?

MR. NESSEN: I think it is liaison work.

Q Did he have any assignment from you, any work that you had given him to do?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Or your predecessor, Mr. terHorst?

MR. NESSEN: I cannot speak for Mr. terHorst.

Q Do you happen to know?

MR. NESSEN: I do not happen to know.

Q Who was he doing the liaison between?

Q What was he liaisoning on?

MR. NESSEN: He mentioned, among other things, charitable and religious groups, refugee problems.

Q In addition to the President not wanting to throw people out the door, what is his personal feeling about them hanging on? Has he been apprised of this daily questioning and so forth?

MR. NESSEN: He reads the transcript of our briefing, Helen.

Q Every day?

MR. NESSEN: When he has the time.

Q Is that why you are injecting names in all the time?

MR. NESSEN: That is not true, Helen. I was doing it because I thought I was among friends.

Q Before we didn't even know that you had talked to McLaughlin. Now we know you have, and I am not sure you answered the question before. Did he tell you what he is going to do now?

MR. NESSEN: He did not.

Q Did you ask?

Q Ron, does the President think that there is anything inconsistent about his preparing to ask the American people to sacrifice in the name of saving money and having dozens of people continuing on the payroll of the White House obviously doing no work or very little work and being allowed to extend their tenure indefinitely or almost indefinitely?

Isn't there a little inconsistency between an inflation fight and paying these people salaries which they are not earning?

MR. NESSEN: Well, I would merely call attention to two things: One, the point that Bill Theis raised which is the President's stated desire not to put people out onto the street with undue haste, and secondly, the procedure I told you is to be followed.

Q Ron, as you check the names of the people, could you please find out whether Manolo and Fina Sanchez are on the Government payroll?

MR. NESSEN: I am sure they are.

Q The Government payroll?

MR. NESSEN: Let me just make sure we understand something about the San Clemente payroll. The President has said, and this is on the record, that he thinks it is up to the White House to provide support for the former President until Congress acts on the appropriation.

Q In terms of the appropriation now, have you been able to determine whether he supports a slash or he still supports the \$850,000?

MR. NESSEN: Did you say still supports the slash?

Q If I did say "still", I didn't mean to say "still". Just "supports".

MR. NESSEN: I think I pointed out to you the other day that a certain amount of the requested funds were for items over which President Ford has no control and also part of the request was based on the need for a vault to store papers in, and of course that part of the request was based on the assumption that such a vault would be needed.

I also pointed out that the GSA and the former President worked out this request and that the formality of it was that the President signed it. Obviously he would not put his name on something that he was opposed to.

The matter is before Congress. Congress does have the power of appropriation in our Government, and he will wait and see what they come out with.

THE PRESS: Thank you Mr. Secretary.

END (12:45 P.M. EDT)