

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 12:12 P.M. EDT

OCTOBER 15, 1974

TUESDAY

MR. NESSEN: The President spent most of this morning in meetings with staff members including Dick Cheney -- he is Don Rumsfeld's assistant, and as you know, Don is in Brussels to wrap up his affairs there -- with General Scowcroft, Phil Buchen, Jack Marsh, Bill Timmons, Bob Hartmann and myself.

Just about now the President should be meeting Miss Judy Miller, the Michigan Apple Queen, who will be accompanied by Senator Griffin.

Right after that, the President will meet with the Canadian Ambassador, Marcel Cadieux, to receive from the Ambassador a special set of coins struck in honor of Canada's hosting the 1976 Olympic Games in Montreal.

At 2:15 the President will meet with Secretary Lynn of the Housing and Urban Development Department, Roy Ash, Alan Greenspan, Bill Timmons and Ken Cole, to discuss pending housing legislation.

At 12:30 the President will meet with George Bush who, as you know, will be going to the People's Republic of China on Thursday to take up his post as Chief of the U.S. Liaison Office in Peking.

Ambassador Bush will arrive in Peking on October 21. The meeting today will provide the President an opportunity to present his views on our relations with the PRC just before Ambassador Bush departs.

At 1:00 the President and Mrs. Ford will have a private lunch in the Red Room to celebrate their 26th wedding anniversary.

Q Is that today?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, today. The 26th.

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If we could keep this OFF THE RECORD because it is a surprise for Mrs. Ford -- not the lunch part, but what I am about to say now -- the President has arranged for Tennessee Ernie Ford and his troupe, who have just returned from an international tour, to entertain Mrs. Ford in the East Garden.

This is a surprise for her and she doesn't know about it, so I would hope you would keep it off the record.

Q Right there, a while ago you handed out a pool list which said at 1:00 Tennessee Ernie Ford would be in the East Garden.

MR. NESSEN: Did we do that? Why is everybody hiding? (Laughter) You don't need to publish a pool list on the wires.

Q It is an addition to the President's schedule?

Q Is he some sort of favorite of Mrs. Ford's?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know.

Q Is there any particular reason for the selection of that group?

MR. NESSEN: Maybe he is related. He has the same last name. (Laughter)

Q Not to her. He would have to be Tennessee Ernie Bloomer. (Laughter)

MR. NESSEN: You know a lot of people in show business change their names.

Q Isn't this the group that recently toured the Soviet Union?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, they are.

Now, there are going to be arrangements for coverage of the entertainment part. The lunch will be private. I don't know what pool was posted, but I think we may have expanded the pool beyond what was posted.

The President has invited some members of the White House staff to watch the entertainment in the garden, too, and we will let you know exactly who is in the pool.

Q All White House staff?

MR. NESSEN: No, just some members of the White House staff.

Q Who else will attend the luncheon?

MR. NESSEN: That is all. Just those two.

At 3:30 the President will meet with a group of handicapped persons and others who work with the handicapped. This meeting will give the President an opportunity to hear the needs and problems of handicapped persons and their views on what the Government can do to help them.

At 4:00 the President will sign the Federal Election Campaign Act amendments of 1974 in a ceremony in the East Room. We are preparing the fact sheet which you should have soon, and all Members of Congress and the Senate have been invited.

So it is going to make that room fairly crowded, but some of you will have gone off anyhow for Kansas City.

The coverage is going to be limited somewhat, and I don't know exactly what the limits are, but everything will be piped back here so you can hear it here anyhow.

Q That is in the East Room?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q How soon on the fact sheet?

MR. NESSEN: About 3:00. If we can, we would like to get it earlier because a lot of people are leaving on the trip. There is no reason why we shouldn't.

At 4:25 the President will depart for Kansas City where he will address the Future Farmers of America this evening at 8:00 Eastern Time.

A few days ago I mentioned that the speech would be available for live radio and television coverage. The networks did not feel it was newsworthy to cover the President addressing the American people directly on what they, as individuals, and collectively can do to assist in the fight against inflation and the effort to save energy.

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So, for the first time in the Ford Administration, we have formally requested time from the networks this evening. The President is asking for this time because he feels it is important that the American people be able to hear directly what he has to say about their role in the inflation fighting and energy-saving battle.

Q Have they granted the President's request, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: I have not heard whether they have or not, Ralph.

Q "People hear what he has to say" -- will you go over that last part?

MR. NESSEN: About their role in the inflation-fighting and energy-saving battle.

Q Ron, is this a statement by the President or a statement by you at the President's request, or what is the status?

MR. NESSEN: It is a statement by me with the approval of the President.

Q What time does he want to go on?

MR. NESSEN: 8:04 Eastern Time.

Q Ron, do you agree with the judgment of the networks -- apparently not -- and if not, why not?

MR. NESSEN: I thought that was just what I read to you.

Didn't I just say that?

MR. NESSEN: Ron, do you think it is a news-worthy event or do you think it is a thing the President should be permitted, to be given the forum to speak to the people directly?

MR. NESSEN: As I said, because it is important, he feels it is important that the American people be able to hear directly what he has to say to them about their role.

Q You are not questioning its lack of news value?

MR. NESSEN: I would certainly not question a network's news judgment.

Q Technically where does this stand right now? Has someone from the White House contacted the networks, or is this statement the first --

MR. NESSEN: The networks have been contacted. The chairman of the network pooling committee has been contacted by telephone prior to this announcement.

Q Who is that?

MR. NESSEN: Frank Jordan of NBC.

Q Ron, did they give you a time by which they said they would give you a yes or no?

MR. NESSEN: On the request? I didn't make the phone call, so I don't know.

Q Could you tell us specifically how much time the President asked for and specifically which networks?

MR. NESSEN: He asked it of the pool chairman of the three networks.

Q ABC, CBS and NBC?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, the chairman of the pool this month is the NBC representative.

Q How much time did he ask?

MR. NESSEN: The speech is expected to run about 30 minutes or perhaps a shade longer.

Q The World Series starts at 8:30, doesn't it?

MR. NESSEN: I believe so, maybe 8:15.

Q Is Frank Jordan of NBC the pool chairman?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Does the President feel that his message will be distorted if it is carried in normal news dispatches or news broadcasting?

MR. NESSEN: We never said anything like that.

Q There was the implication there that it would be distorted, there would be something wrong if it were carried.

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MR. NESSEN: I don't see that implication in there, Phil. I said exactly what the President feels.

Q Ron, you said that you certainly would not question the networks' news judgment, but it seems to me the statement you read does indeed question the networks' news judgment.

MR. NESSEN: They made a judgment that the speech was not newsworthy, or they made the judgment that it was not newsworthy that the President was addressing the people on what they can do.

Q Are you quoting anybody at the networks when you say it was not newsworthy? There are degrees of newsworthy. There are various means of covering news events.

MR. NESSEN: I think you really need to ask the networks. As we said here the other day, the speech was available for television and radio broadcast, and none of the networks indicated that they planned to carry it.

Q Why?

MR. NESSEN: You should ask them.

Q It suggests that because you carry something live may not necessarily mean they don't consider it newsworthy. I wondered if that was something you or the White House had been told or whether that was your judgment?

MR. NESSEN: I think we were told they weren't going to carry it on the grounds that it wasn't newsworthy enough to carry live.

Q Who told you that?

MR. NESSEN: I have talked to all three networks.

Q Who told you?

MR. NESSEN: I told you the three representatives of the networks are Frank Jordan of NBC, Sandy Socolow of CBS, and John Lynch of ABC. Those are the three that I deal with.

Q Ron, did any of the radio networks -- did you also contact them, or you only contacted these three networks?

MR. NESSEN: Well, they deal with radio and television.

Do you mean like mutual and Westinghouse and so forth? No, they were not contacted.

Q Ron, I would like to try to get clear who originated the statement that you have just given us? Did the President originate this statement; that is, did he say to you, "Ron, I wish you to make the following statement." Or did you, after finding out that the networks were not going to cover it, go to him and suggest that this statement be made, and he approved it? Who was the originator?

MR. NESSEN: We talked about the idea that the networks had decided not to carry it live, and we agreed that we would request time.

Q I am not talking about the request for time. I am talking about the statements.

MR. NESSEN: The wording of the statement was approved by the President.

Q Ron, did you originate the wording of the statement and show it to him and he said that was fine, or did he say I would like the following said?

MR. NESSEN: The wording originated in my office, with his approval.

Q Was the President angry or upset by this decision of the networks?

MR. NESSEN: Not in the least.

Q How would you characterize his reaction?

MR. NESSEN: I would characterize his reaction as the way he put it in the statement which is that he feels he would like to talk directly to the people tonight.

Q Ron, in television coverage of the President, undoubtedly the President will be seen at sometime tonight on television screens speaking for himself directly to the people. Do you mean that he is objecting because he is being edited? Is that what you mean to say rather than speaking directly?

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MR. NESSEN: No, it isn't what I mean, Phil. He feels like he would like to -- the speech is addressed directly to the American people.

Q When he is talking on the screen, he is addressing directly the people. What is the problem?

MR. NESSEN: Well, I don't know that there is a problem. We have requested some time for the President to speak to the people.

Q Ron, if this speech were so important, why didn't he formally request time in the first place?

MR. NESSEN: We made it available for coverage in the first place, Tom.

Q But when the networks decided they wouldn't cover it, then you came back and made the formal request. What changed your attitude from the moment you first made it available until now?

MR. NESSEN: There was never any change of attitude. It was made available and I suppose there was the expectation that it would be considered newsworthy enough to broadcast, and when it wasn't, he decided he would request time.

Q Ron, a number of voluntary measures for how the American people can help in inflation and energy saving have been discussed in the past. Since the speech has the degree of newsworthiness you are attaching to it, does this mean there are going to be a number of new suggestions, or whatever, from the President, that it is going to break a lot of new ground?

MR. NESSEN: I think I mentioned to a few of you who were here on Saturday that the President received ten recommendations from his Citizens' Advisory Committee, headed by Miss Porter, and that these recommendations from the Citizens' Advisory Committee would be outlined in the speech tonight, plus some others.

Q Ron, you said the wording of the statement you just gave us originated in your office. Did you write the statement, and second, did the networks have the benefit of an advance look at the President's speech? Did they make their judgment based on that?

MR. NESSEN: They have seen a copy of the speech at some point in this process.

Q It is fair to say he feels what he has to say is so important --

Q Just a minute. Did you write the statement you just gave us?

MR. NESSEN: It was written in my office, Russ, and I think I will let it go at that.

Q Ron, I want to get back, if I can, because it seems to me that we are at some point of departure on what the definition of newsworthiness is. If you read your first line in that statement, the suggestion is that the networks will only define newsworthiness as something that they would carry live. Is that what you are suggesting here?

MR. NESSEN: I am certainly not suggesting that, Tom. I am saying that the networks --

Q When you say the networks did not feel that it was newsworthy that the President would address the American people, et cetera?

MR. NESSEN: That seems to be the decision that the networks made.

Q But the decision of the networks not to carry it live does not necessarily mean the networks did not find his appearance there newsworthy, else why would we be going to the expense of sending reporters there and preparing for coverage on our other programs?

MR. NESSEN: I think the statement really says it, and I have a lot of other announcements to make, and maybe we should move on to that.

Q Ron, at what point did the networks see the speech?

MR. NESSEN: Why don't you talk to the networks about their decision and what it was based on?

Q But you made the speech available to them at some point. The question is, at what point did you make it available to them?

MR. NESSEN: Early this morning.

Q And they still decided not to cover on a voluntary basis?

MR. NESSEN: They didn't indicate otherwise.

Q What time did you ask for time, Rom?

MR. NESSEN: Just before I came out here.

Q Is the word "newsworthy" the one really to apply to this statement, or is it concern on the part of the President at not getting adequate exposure on what he personally considers an important message to the country for economic reasons rather than "newsworthy"?

MR. NESSEN: I think we probably have said what we want to say in the statement, and I don't really think a philosophical argument about newsworthy necessarily is going to advance it any.

Q Do you expect to have an answer back from the networks and when?

MR. NESSEN: The phone call was made just before I came out here, and what the answer will be, I don't know.

Q Do you expect them to notify you?

MR. NESSEN: I would think they would let us know one way or the other.

Q For the record, Ron, why was it insufficient to just have the Public Broadcasting System carry the speech?

MR. NESSEN: My understanding was that -- this was based on a very informal conversation -- that PBS was not covering it either, or perhaps they were covering it locally or regionally, but not nationally. I didn't check that out very thoroughly.

Q Ron, what will be the reaction if the networks continue to decline to cover?

Q Ron, I have a question that is not a philosophical one. The President made available this speech to the networks. They declined to take advantage of it. The President then asked for time, which is almost an order. Do you see an element of coercion in this?

MR. NESSEN: I don't agree that it is tantamount to an order, but it is a request for time.

Q Ron, did you consider the fact the World Series comes on at the same time?

Q Yes, that is a legitimate question, and I tried to ask it a while ago.

Q Was the President aware that if his request is granted, it will mean that the World Series will be pre-empted?

MR. NESSEN: My understanding is that the speech starts at 8 or shortly after Eastern time, and the World Series starts about 8:30 or so Eastern time, and that there wouldn't be any or very much overlap.

Q Has the President every been turned down on a request for time; not this President, but any other President?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know. I certainly would have to look that up. I don't know the answer to it.

Q When will the text be available to the rest of us?

MR. NESSEN: Very soon. It is being typed now.

Q Will the Democratic Party be justified in asking for equal time after the speech?

MR. NESSEN: There are equal time regulations and I would assume if they want it -- and I am not clear on what the equal time regulations are -- but I suppose if they wanted equal time, they would make their request to the networks, too, as we have.

Q For the future, does this mean when you offer something to the networks, they better take it or you will request time later if they don't?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think you ought to draw any precedence from this.

Q Ron, can I get the chronology of this straight in my mind. You made the speech available to the networks, they did not pick up on the invitation, so you showed them the speech, they still didn't pick up the invitation, so then you put in a formal request that they carry it, is that correct?

MR. NESSEN: Go over that again.

Q The speech was made available for coverage and the networks did not accept the invitation, so you made the speech available to the networks, gave them a look at it, and they still elected not to carry it live so you then -- they formally requested that they carry it live. Is that the chronology?

MR. NESSEN: That is the chronology.

Q Since it is possible that other broadcast organizations may feel the pressure of events, could you now dispatch a White House runner to Westinghouse Broadcasting at 1625 K Street, N.W., with a copy of the advance text?

MR. NESSEN: I think you are going to have the copy here before we could dispatch a runner to 1625 K.

Q I can't go. I have to cover the White House. Could you send them a copy? I didn't get the answer?

MR. NESSEN: I said that everyone will have the text here shortly, and you can send copies to your office, if you would like.

Q You always give copies in advance, is that right?

MR. NESSEN: In this case, that is what we did, yes.

Q Can we find out if the request for time for the President's speech has ever been turned down?

MR. NESSEN: Let me just elaborate on that a bit. That has always been the procedure in dealing with live broadcasts of speeches. Is not Westinghouse a member of the pool?

Q Westinghouse broadcasts every President's speech.

MR. NESSEN: Westinghouse is a member of the pool, and the three networks are your representatives in the pool, as I understand it.

Q They don't make our decisions for us.

Q We don't make our decisions for ourselves.
(Laughter)

Q The procedure, you were saying the procedure is that the pool always gets an advance, this far in advance.

MR. NESSEN: No, I didn't say that.

Q What is the procedure you were saying that is generally followed?

MR. NESSEN: I don't remember saying anything about the procedure generally followed. I think I started to say that the three network pool representatives are representatives of all the broadcast organizations.

Q Ron, I would like to make a request --

Q Do you have any other news for us?

Q Can we find out if the President of the United States has ever been turned down, any President, in a request for time from the national networks?

MR. NESSEN: Jack, there is a question of whether a President has ever been turned down for time, which we might see if we could find out.

Q Ron, one further question on this subject. Do you think by raising this issue of the networks declining the White House request and issuing this statement, as you have done, that the effect will be to concentrate coverage of the President's trip to Kansas City on this controversy between the White House and the networks and detract from or obscure or relegate to a place of secondary importance what the President has to say in a speech tonight in Kansas City?

MR. NESSEN: I would certainly hope not, Jim, and it was never the intention, and first of all, I don't agree there is a controversy between the networks and the White House.

Q Whatever you want to call it, this episode.

MR. NESSEN: I would hope not. When I was working out there, I always had the feeling that sort of intramural procedures of this kind were of great interest in this room, but were not of any great interest in the country, and I would hope that the interest would be in the content of the speech and not the manner of its coverage.

Q You don't think they would be interested in a Presidential or at least a White House statement denouncing the networks for a news judgment?

MR. NESSEN: I don't agree with you that it was a denunciation of the networks and their news judgment.

Q Now, you get back down to that question of your original statement that the networks decided it was not newsworthy.

MR. NESSEN: Not newsworthy enough to carry live I think is what we are talking about.

Q If you make that distinction, I think there is quite a difference.

MR. NESSEN: Maybe I didn't word what I said precisely enough, but I think what I said, should have said, was the networks didn't find it newsworthy enough to carry live.

Q Some of us would like to hear the other announcements.

Q Are you amending your statement?

MR. NESSEN: To say newsworthy enough to carry live, to be precise, that is what I would like to say.

Q Ron, if I could have one last question on this, in the past few years from that podium we have heard of the need for the President to speak directly to the American people.

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Is this President concerned that his views are being filtered or edited and not reaching the American public in the way he wants them to?

MR. NESSEN: I haven't seen any sign of that at all. I think we are talking about a speech, which is a rather special speech in the sense that it is directed at the people and what they can do to fight inflation and save energy, and I wouldn't draw any other inferences from this. I have never heard him say that he is being filtered. I think you all know him well enough and his attitudes towards the press and his generally good relations with the press.

Q Do you find us overly sensitive, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: On the question of turndowns, we don't have any records here from previous Administrations and the networks would perhaps be able to give you an answer to that. Some of the people on the staff who have been around for a long time don't recall any turndowns in recent years, but you should check with the networks.

Q Ron, I didn't hear you answer, but somebody asked what would be the White House response if you were turned down?

MR. NESSEN: Well, I don't think -- what response would there be?

Q The President, as I understand it, would have legal authority to command time?

MR. NESSEN: I certainly wouldn't look for that, John.

Q Ron, is there any thought of the Republican National Committee buying time tonight for the President?

MR. NESSEN: There is not, Phil.

Q Does the President have authority to compel the networks --

MR. NESSEN: It is academic because he doesn't plan to.

Q That is one of those laws included in the repeal, one of the emergency laws included in the repeal, one of those emergency laws included, isn't it?

MR. NESSEN: It is academic because he doesn't intend to.

The schedule for today and tomorrow on the road you either have or shortly will have.

We are announcing that Stanton Anderson has asked the President to withdraw his nomination to be Ambassador to Costa Rica for personal reasons.

The President has acceded to Mr. Anderson's request and will not resubmit the nomination when Congress returns.

Q Do you expect to get a similar request from Mr. Flanigan?

MR. NESSEN: I have not heard to anything like that, Jim.

Q Do you have any background on Mr. Anderson, please?

MR. NESSEN: Mr. Anderson is currently the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Congressional Relations.

Q Thank you.

Q Do you have a substitute?

MR. NESSEN: Not to announce today.

Q Will Mr. Anderson be continuing in that position, the one he now holds, or is he going to resign altogether?

MR. NESSEN: As far as I know he is staying where he is.

Q You don't have a hometown on him, do you?

MR. NESSEN: I don't. You could get that from the State Department.

Q Ron, did his previous connection with the Nixon Administration have anything to do with his request that his nomination be withdrawn?

MR. NESSEN: As far as I know, this was initiated by him, this request, and he cited personal reasons. And beyond that, I don't know of anything along that line.

There have been some questions that have come up concerning Secretary Kissinger and when he would meet the President to report on his trip to the Middle East. Secretary Kissinger departed Algiers early this morning and after a stop in Morocco to meet with King Hassan, he is on his way to Washington. He is expected to arrive at Andrews Air Force Base early this evening.

The Secretary has been sending daily reports to the President who has been following carefully the progress of the Secretary's talks in the Middle East.

The President, of course, welcomes the Secretary's return.

The President will be in Kansas City tonight when the Secretary returns, so he plans to discuss the trip with the Secretary by phone soon after the Secretary returns home this evening.

Q Could you be more precise on arrival time?

MR. NESSEN: I can't be, just early evening.

That is about it. Okay.

Q Ron, last Thursday you said that it will take time to pull together some figures when asked about the \$850,000 for San Clemente.

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q And the President claims this is in keeping with what has been given to other former Presidents.

Now, I am just wondering, have you pulled the figures together, because there are figures given by the GSA to the Appropriations Committee of the Senate, and they indicate there is no such case. They tabulated everything paid to Lyndon Johnson and found that in five years, it only cost a quarter of a million more than was proposed for Mr. Nixon for one year.

MR. NESSEN: Well, I have some figures on President Johnson.

Q It is very interesting.

MR. NESSEN: We will take that question and get you the figures, Les.

Q Thank you very much.

Q Is the President going to meet with the new Portuguese President on Friday?

MR. NESSEN: The answer is yes.

Q What was the question?

MR. NESSEN: Is the President going to meet with the new President of Portugal? He is going to meet with President Francisco da Costa Gomes Friday here at the White House.

Q Any time?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have a time yet.

Q Under what circumstances is the President of Portugal here? Is he coming just to meet the President or is he here for some U.N. business? Do you know anything of the background of that?

MR. NESSEN: President Ford invited the President of Portugal to come here for an exchange of views on developments in Portugal and other matters of mutual interest to the two countries, which are allies in NATO.

Q Will they discuss, Ron, the status of the Azores in the event of another Middle Eastern war and, specifically, will the President renew the United States' position that we hope that the Azores would continue to be available for the use of U.S. transport planes?

MR. NESSEN: Well, Jim, I don't have an agenda for the meeting.

Q I guess I should have phrased that, would you expect that subject to come up?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have an agenda and I wouldn't address that specifically, but the President is looking forward to a review of the full range of U.S.-Portuguese relations. I will leave it at that.

Q An all-inclusive range?

MR. NESSEN: A full range. Semi-exclusive.

Q Ron, last week you were asked whether U.S. ships were carrying nuclear weapons to Japan.

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q You took the question, and do you have an answer?

MR. NESSEN: I think since I took the question you probably know that Acting Secretary of State Ingersoll gave an oral statement to the Japanese Ambassador. Have you seen the oral statements? You probably have.

Q I am aware of that, and that statement didn't seem to quiet the controversy or fears expressed in Japan.

MR. NESSEN: Well, I believe we are going to stick to the statement, and what I said to you the other day, which is that the United States has faithfully honored its commitments to the Japanese.

Q But since then, Ron, there has been reports that there is a secret transit agreement. Is that the case? It comes back to the basic question, are U.S. ships carrying nuclear weapons to Japan?

MR. NESSEN: I am going to stick with the answer I gave you and suggest for more specific questions you ask the State Department.

Q Ron, at the risk of repeating something, if so, I apologize beforehand. When did the President first learn of Mr. Jaworski's resignation, and what did he do when he learned about it? Did he make an effort to dissuade him?

MR. NESSEN: Well, he learned of it Saturday and, given the letters that Mr. Jaworski published, there was no effort to dissuade him.

Q Did he discuss it with him?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know that they had a direct conversation. I don't know of any.

Q Will the President continue with his plans to go to Japan if Mr. Rockefeller is not confirmed by then?

MR. NESSEN: There has been no change of the plans to go to Japan.

Q Ron, is the President still fully supportive of the Rockefeller nomination?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Is he concerned, is the President concerned about these various statements that are being made by Members of Congress. There have been several of them, all of them to the effect that either the nomination is going to be considerably delayed or even possibly rejected. Is he concerned about this?

A second related question. Did he tell former Governor Rockefeller a few days ago, when the Governor called, not to worry that this thing was going to be okay? That is two questions.

MR. NESSEN: Yes, I got the thrust of this. I don't see any sense of concern on the President's part about Governor Rockefeller being confirmed. He believes that when the appropriate Congressional committees have heard all the testimony on this subject that there will be no adverse effect on his confirmation.

The first part was about the conversation the other day?

Q The second part was.

MR. NESSEN: I mean the second part was.

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: The Governor called the President on Saturday late in the afternoon or sometime in the afternoon, and the purpose of that call was to tell him that he had sent this telegram of apology to Arthur Goldberg and then, in the course of that, they had a discussion of the gifts and so forth.

Governor Rockefeller told the President that these gifts had been made to people who were friends of longstanding, and that there was nothing that he ever expected to get in return for the gifts. That was basically what the conversation was about.

Q Did Governor Rockefeller offer to take back the nomination?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q I asked you, though, whether the President went on or whether the President said in that conversation to former Governor Rockefeller words to the effect, don't worry, everything is going to be all right, or something along that line?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know all the words said by both parties in the conversation, Jim, so I can't answer your question specifically, but the President's feelings are there will be no adverse effects on Governor Rockefeller's chances.

Q Governor Rockefeller called to tell the President about the Goldberg book and the use of that in his campaign in 1970. What was the President's reaction to that specific incident?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what response he gave to Governor Rockefeller, but generally, his response is that such campaign tactics are regrettable and he feels that Governor Rockefeller's public apology and disavowel of any connection with this indicates the Governor's attitude toward any such campaigning.

Q Could you run through that once more?

MR. NESSEN: Starting where?

Q The last part -- he feels that --

MR. NESSEN: -- he feels that Governor Rockefeller's public apology and disavowel of any involvement in the book indicates the Governor's attitude towards such campaigning. Even though Governor Rockefeller knew nothing about the book, the President admires him for assuming the responsibility and making the public apology, and the President has complete faith in Governor Rockefeller's integrity.

Steve.

Q You said you don't see any sense of concern on the part of the President?

MR. NESSEN: Right.

Q Is this based at all on assurances, personal assurances by Rockefeller that there is no more of this stuff to come out?

MR. NESSEN: I think it is based on his phone call with the Governor and just based on his general knowledge of the situation.

Q Did Governor Rockefeller give any assurances that there would be no further bombshells?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know the full extent of their conversation. This is the way the conversation was described to me.

Q Ron, did the Governor at any time say to the President, you can withdraw my name if it is making you uncomfortable?

MR. NESSEN: Not that I know of.

Q Has there been any change in the plans for Governor Rockefeller to do some speaking between now and election day?

MR. NESSEN: There hasn't been any change, but as I understand it, the Governor is not going to do very much speaking because he is not confirmed yet. But I don't think that is a change.

Q Ron, Anne Armstrong said about a week ago that there had been a meeting between Rockefeller and the President and he decided, even though he had not been confirmed yet, he would do some speaking.

MR. NESSEN: Some speaking. That is right.

Q Is he going to continue?

MR. NESSEN: As far as I know.

Q This was the only conversation they have held in recent days, Saturday's telephone call?

MR. NESSEN: As far as I know.

Q I would like to raise another question of policy.

MR. NESSEN: Okay.

Q It concerns the People Magazine spread on Susan Ford and the large number of photographs provided to them by the White House photographer, and I would like to know if it is the policy of the White House to permit a man on the Government taxroll to compete with private photographers in doing their jobs and also in the use of selection of certain organizations to have this largess.

MR. NESSEN: I am aware of the problem, and I sort of became aware of it only recently. I have asked my staff to get together the information so that I can understand exactly what happened and what the policy is and I can't give you an answer today on that because I haven't had time to sit down and look at it and talk to the people, but I will let you know how it comes out.

Q Ron, on another issue, the President, as I understand it, is going to South Korea right after he goes to Japan. He is planning to do that?

MR. NESSEN: That is my understanding.

Q Ron, is the President aware of, or has he shown any concern about, the imprisonment by the regime in South Korea of the Catholic Bishop as well as numerous Protestant clergymen in Korea and, if he has, does he intend to bring it up, or anything? Does he know about it and has he shown any concern?

MR. NESSEN: I am sure he knows about, Les, and I think we have said before that Korean internal politics were not a factor in deciding to go to Korea.

Q Can you just get this straight for perhaps a parochial reason, but this party, this little luncheon for Mrs. Ford and the entertainment, do you want us to keep this off the wires until after the party?

MR. NESSEN: I would appreciate it if you kept the Tennessee Ernie Ford part off the wires until after the party. I think it is fair to let her be surprised by the entertainment for her anniversary.

Q Ron, Les also had a question whether the President would take up the matter of imprisonment in South Korea.

MR. NESSEN: I don't know. It is very far ahead to say what will be on the agenda of those talks.

Q How do you make your judgments as to when to intervene or take an interest in the internal affairs of other countries and when not? Quite obviously, the emigration of Soviet News has been one of great interest into this Government and yet, in the case of South Korea, you say we are not concerned with internal affairs. On what basis do you make your judgments?

MR. NESSEN: I didn't say that, Jim. I said Korean internal politics were not a factor in deciding to go to Korea.

Q Are they a factor to the extent of the President being concerned about the imprisonment of people in South Korea?

MR. NESSEN: The President and the Government are always concerned about human rights everywhere.

The House has just sustained the President's veto on the continuing resolution. I would expect we would have a statement in the relatively near future.

Q You will post copies?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END (AT 12:56 P.M. EDT)