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NEWS CONFERENCE

#60

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 11:33 AM EST

NOVEMBER 5, 1974

TUESDAY

MR. NESSEN: The President began working in the Oval Office shortly before eight o'clock this morning. The staff members he has met this morning include Don Rumsfeld, Bob Hartmann, Bill Timmons, Jack Marsh, Brent Scowcroft, and myself.

I think you probably know that the President is meeting right now with President Tolbert of Liberia. They began meeting shortly after 11:00. That meeting is still going on. We will have some information for you after the meeting is over.

This afternoon the President is expected to continue meetings with staffmembers. He will be concentrating on the fiscal 1975 and 1976 budgets, and the legislative priorities during the post-election session of Congress.

This evening the President plans to watch the election returns on television here in the West Wing.

As I mentioned to you yesterday, we expect to have a statement in writing from the President some time during the evening, and we will also have some of the senior counsellors and advisors available to you here during the evening.

Q Where is the TV, in his office?

MR. NESSEN: We haven't quite figured out yet where they are going to set up the TV set, but somewhere in the West Wing.

We are beginning the preparations now for the trip to Japan, Korea, and the Soviet Union, and I can give you a little bit of information today that I think will be helpful in planning your trip.

First of all, two shots are required, and one shot is highly recommended. A smallpox vaccination is required within the past three years, and a cholera shot is required within the last six months. In addition, Dr. Lukash highly recommends a gamma globulin shot within the past two months.

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For those who traveled with President Nixon to either the Soviet Union or the Middle East this past summer, unless your shots have expired you would only want to get the gamma globulin shot. In other words, if you went on the Middle East trip this summer and you got the smallpox and cholera for just that trip, both of those two shots are still good.

Many of you, I know, have your own doctors for these shots, but we have also set aside next Tuesday afternoon, November 12, starting at 1 o'clock, for shots to be given here in the lower Press Office. The shots will be given by the White House Medical Unit, and they will send you a bill for them. Tetanus and typhoid are not required for the countries we will visit.

Q Is a question in order on Tolbert?

MR. NESSEN: The meeting is not over. I do have a little more on the trip.

Q Is there anything more on the visas?

MR. NESSEN: I am getting to that. Visas will be required for Japan and for the Soviet Union. Korea has waived the visa requirement for those traveling with the President's party. Now Thym Smith of my office will be right here in the lower Press Office beginning right after this briefing and for the rest of the day to give you the visa applications for Japan and the Soviet Union, and he will also explain to you what needs to be done. You will be required to return these to Thym, along with ten color photographs.

Q Ten?

MR. NESSEN: Ten color photographs.

Q What size should these be?

MR. NESSEN: They will be regular passport size. Thym has that.

The photos will accompany the visa applications and will also be used by the host countries for your press credentials.

In addition, you will have to turn in your passports so that the visas can be stamped in them. The deadline for the visa applications, photos, and the passports is 3 PM Monday, November 11, next Monday.

So just to summarize now, you are going to need a smallpox shot within the last three years, cholera within the last six months, gamma globulin within the last two months, visa applications for the Soviet Union and Japan, and ten color photographs and your passport.

Q Ron, one of our people is leaving Sunday for Tokyo to make advance arrangements. What is he going to do? He can't go without a passport.

MR. NESSEN: Why don't you talk to Thym and we will see what we can do.

The deadline for the photos and the passports is 3 p.m. Monday. If you aren't getting your shots from your own doctor, they will be given here at 1 p.m. on Tuesday.

Q Ron, there is a report today that not all the White House press corps will get to go to Vladivostok. Is that true?

MR. NESSEN: I saw that report, but I don't understand it because the advance team only left yesterday and they haven't even gotten to the Soviet Union yet to make the advance arrangements.

We have one other announcement today, which is that the President is accepting Henry Peterson's resignation as Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Criminal Division.

Have you received the exchange of letters in your packet of information? No? Well, they are coming out right now.

Q Would you tell us why he is resigning?

MR. NESSEN: Why don't you take a second and look at the letter, Carroll.

Q Was it requested?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Mr. Peterson, as I understand it, decided to resign on his own, and I think now that you have the letter and can look it over, you will see that that is reflected in the letters.

Mr. Peterson has been a Government employee for nearly 30 years. In terms of his pension, he has the maximum service. As I understand it, Mr. Peterson is much sought after in private practice, and it was his decision to leave.

Q Is that what he is going to do, go into private practice?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know. You will have to check with Mr. Peterson on that.

Q Did the President try to persuade him to stay on, do you know, or Saxbe?

MR. NESSEN: Have you taken a look at the letters?

Q No.

MR. NESSEN: As I understand it, Bob, just to elaborate a little bit on your question, Mr. Peterson told Attorney General Saxbe that he was thinking of resigning effective at the end of the year, which is what he is doing. And at that time, Mr. Saxbe asked him to stay on until June of 1975 and Mr. Peterson thought he would rather move on at the end of the year.

Q Any replacement?

MR. NESSEN: Nobody to announce now.

Q Why is there no date on his letter?

MR. NESSEN: Is there not a date on his letter?

Q As a matter of fact, there is no date on either one.

MR. NESSEN: I have November 1 on his date, and was it cut off on your Xerox copy? Mr. Peterson's letter is November 1, and the President's letter is November 4 on my copies. It should have been on the others.

Q Does the President think that Mr. Peterson conducted a proper investigation of Watergate the first time around?

MR. NESSEN: Doesn't the letter reflect that, Helen? I think the President says in his letter that he represented the highest standards, that Mr. Peterson can take pride in his record of unique achievement. He praises him for his ability, integrity, candor and good humor and saying that he leaves with respect and admiration from all of us who were privileged to be your colleagues. So, I think that would indicate the President's feeling on his leaving.

Q Ron, is a question in order regarding the visit of Tolbert?

MR. NESSEN: Mr. Tolbert, yes.

Q I have a question, and I would like to follow it up, if I may, because one is contingent on the other. The President's reversal of his stand on Rhodesian chrome was due, as I understand it, to the fact that the President has for a long time certainly been an opponent of racial segregation, is that true?

MR. NESSEN: You better run that by me once again. I got lost on the first part of your question.

Q Well, the boycott of Rhodesian chrome is because Rhodesia has racial segregation and the President is backing this up. This is in keeping with Mr. Ford's opposition to racial segregation, isn't it? In other words, the President has been a long-time opponent of racial segregation, hasn't he?

MR. NESSEN: As far as I know.

Q Right. Then my question is, in discussing with President Tolbert, has he discussed the racial segregation that is written into the Liberian constitution in Article V, Section 12 and 13?

MR. NESSEN: Les, the meeting is still going on. I can't very well tell you --

Q I am sorry. Did he indicate to you he was going to discuss this?

MR. NESSEN: He didn't indicate to me that he was going to discuss that, but the meeting is still going on and we will give you a report on it when it is over, which I think is probably better.

Q Ron, I would like to repeat a question I put to you yesterday on the coal situation, in view of the collapse of the negotiations. Is the President thinking of invoking Taft-Hartley to head off a strike?

MR. NESSEN: Again, I want to refer your specific questions to Mr. Usery, who has a lot more detailed information than we do here. I do know that Mr. Usery hopes that the negotiations will resume and that the two sides will work out an agreement through the collective bargaining system.

Specifically on Taft-Hartley, Ralph, we don't have a strike. The President hopes that there won't be a strike. and I just think to talk about Taft-Hartley at this stage is very premature.

Q He can legally invoke it before the strike starts.

MR. NESSEN: I understand.

Q There is no intention of his doing that at the moment?

MR. NESSEN: I haven't heard of any, but on the other hand, I still believe that it is premature to talk about even the prospect since there is hope of resuming negotiations and there is hope of averting a strike.

Q Has the President been in touch with Arnold Miller on the other side since yesterday, or since he last talked to them last week?

MR. NESSEN: Not that I know of.

Q Ron, the President, how does he view the elections today? Does he think that there are going to be any severe losses? Does he have any feeling about what is going to happen to his own party and candidates?

MR. NESSEN: I think you have had an opportunity to talk to him about that, Helen, both at his last news conference and on the road. You have heard him talk about that, and I wouldn't want to go beyond what the President has said.

Q Does he have any optimism about it? Is he getting reports already or what is happening in terms of turnout?

MR. NESSEN: No, I heard him musing this morning about the effects of the weather, but he didn't reach any conclusion one way or the other.

Q How does he feel about the weather? Does he think it will affect it one way or the other?

MR. NESSEN: As I say, I didn't hear him reach any conclusions as to --

Q Ron, on that same subject, I know the President has been reluctant to discuss numbers, but is the White House willing to say anything as to what it might consider a respectable showing in this election?

MR. NESSEN: Do you mean in terms of turnout?

Q No, I meant in terms of House seats lost.

MR. NESSEN: It is just too late. The people are going to the polls and are making their decision right now, and I think it is too late to talk about numbers.

Q Ron, you indicated yesterday that there would be a wholesale reorganization of the Press Office. Are you ready to go beyond what you said?

MR. NESSEN: Did I say wholesale?

Q Okay, retail.

MR. NESSEN: Retail reorganization?

Q Can you go beyond your own statement?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have anything to announce yet on that.

Q Will the President have anyone from the Congressional leadership or any Republican leaders here tonight?

MR. NESSEN: I am told that Jack Stiles will be here because it is a tradition that the President watches election returns with Jack Stiles, who managed his first Congressional campaign, as you probably remember. I believe the idea of having some friends in from Congress, he may, but it appears that most everybody is out in their own district.

Q Ron, who is Jack Stiles?

MR. NESSEN: Jack Stiles is an old friend from Grand Rapids who managed the President's first Congressional campaign.

Q Does he still live there?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, he does.

Q Ron, there was a report a few days ago that Mr. Stiles was on the payroll as a consultant doing some kind of a job. Can you find out what that is?

MR. NESSEN: Well, I haven't seen the report and I don't know of any --

Q It was in the Post three or four days ago that he was a consultant.

MR. NESSEN: I didn't see that. We can probably get that answer for you while we are here.

Q Ron, has Mr. Sampson of GSA been asked to resign?

MR. NESSEN: There has been no decision made to replace Mr. Sampson.

Q Ron, let me ask that another way -- (Laughter) -- is it true that there is a search on for a gentleman to replace Mr. Sampson, or possibly even a lady?

MR. NESSEN: Since there has been no decision to replace Mr. Sampson, the rest of the question doesn't make any sense.

Q But your answer implies it is under consideration that he be replaced?

MR. NESSEN: You will have to infer what you want, Helen.

Q Is it being contemplated?

MR. NESSEN: No decision has been made to replace Mr. Sampson.

Q In the event of a prolonged coal miner's strike, does the White House or does the President, the Administration, have any sort of emergency contingency plans to deal with the resulting energy shortages?

MR. NESSEN: Well, you know we are saying that Mr. Usery hopes to resume negotiations and settle this through collective bargaining. There is hope to avert a strike, so I think it is really just premature to talk about a long strike or any strike. The President has seen an analysis of the economic consequences of a strike, and it is not a happy prospect because no strike is good for the economy. But at the moment there is the hope of averting a strike, and I don't think we ought to look down the road to the worst possibilities.

Q But you are aware of the statements by union officials that the strike is virtually inevitable now, and that is why I raise that question.

MR. NESSEN: I am saying that the hope at the White House is to avert a strike and settle it by collective bargaining.

Q Ron, I would like to go back to a question of a few days ago that related to the President's statement at his press conference that Israel should settle its problems with Jordan or the PLO, and you will recall at the time I think that you told us two things: One that this was not a change in policy, and two, that we should check with the State Department.

MR. NESSEN: Yes.



Q My understanding is that when reporters checked with the State Department two things happened, one, the first thing that happened was the State Department referred them back to the White House, but, subsequently, the State Department, it is my understanding, did issue a statement in which it said that our policy had always been to prefer and to encourage negotiations between Israel and Jordan, and that we felt that this was the most productive approach.

In light of that State Department statement, why did the President add the three words "or the PLO"? Now that we have this statement from the State Department, why did he add the words "PLO"?

MR. NESSEN: I don't see any conflict between the President's statement and the State Department's statement.

Q I didn't ask whether there is any conflict. I am just saying that the State Department issued a statement saying that our policy had been to encourage negotiations between Israel and Jordan. The President, however, said between Israel and Jordan or the PLO. I am merely asking why it was that the President added these three words, or the PLO?

MR. NESSEN: I assume he added them because -- Jim, I am just going to have to say that the President's remarks represented no change in American policy.

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Q Ron, to follow up, since the State Department has issued "just Jordan" and the State Department's policy has not been to recognize the PLO and Scali voted against the recognition or entertainment of the PLO, I am wondering how you can say this when it is an obvious contradiction. And I have a follow-up.

MR. NESSEN: Go ahead and ask your follow-up.

Q I am just wondering in this connection if the President ever discussed the possibility of urging the British Government or North Ireland to deal with the IRA and does he distinguish any basic, other than geographic, difference between the PLO and the IRA?

MR. NESSEN: I don't understand the question, Les.

Q I am asking, has the President, since he has mentioned the possibility of dealing with an organization like the PLO, I am wondering if the President has ever discussed the possibility that Northern Ireland should conduct its agreements with the IRA and does he see any basic difference between the IRA and the PLO other than geographic?

MR. NESSEN: I don't see the connection between the two issues, but if you would like me to get you an answer, I can try.

Q Ron, I wonder if I could possibly try to get at it this way. Since you say the President's statement at the press conference represented no change in American policy, since making that statement has the President been concerned about the possibility that this would be interpreted as a change or a shift or an addition or whatever you want to call it to American policy? Has he been concerned that this might be viewed this way, even if it isn't, and has he done or does he plan to do anything to -- if he is concerned -- to try to correct that impression beyond what you have said?

MR. NESSEN: Well, I am not aware of any concern on his part, Jim.

Q Ron, what is the United State's policy toward the PLO?

MR. NESSEN: Well, I believe that we have referred people to the State Department, and Jim indicates that the State Department has done what we said they would do, which is to put out a clear statement of American policy toward the Middle Eastern negotiations and the PLO.

Q It is not a statement of policy towards the PLO, that is what I was asking about, not towards the negotiations but towards the PLO.

MR. NESSEN: I am told they did. Did they not, Jim? That was certainly what they promised to do, and I have not heard from anybody that they didn't do it.

Q Jim said that they had issued a statement only mentioning dealing with Jordan, no mention of the PLO. So, our question is, since the President, who formulates foreign policy, has brought this up, what is the President's policy? What is the U.S. policy on the PLO?

MR. NESSEN: That is available at the State Department.

Q They didn't answer that, they don't even mention the PLO, Ron.

MR. NESSEN: You ought to ask them the specific question about what is the American policy toward the PLO.

Q They did, and the answer was Jordan and they referred it right back to the White House.

MR. NESSEN: I have been told by others that the State Department was forthcoming that day on policy toward the PLO.

Q On background, could you tell us what the State Department said then?

MR. NESSEN: I haven't gotten their policy statement, Bob. I could get it, but I still think it is better to refer these kinds of questions to them for the kind of detail that you are obviously interested in.

Q It is not exactly a detail. It is a fairly important point. The State Department has, as a matter of fact, not answered the question about what our policy is towards the PLO.

MR. NESSEN: Were they asked the specific question?

Q I don't know whether they were asked specifically that, but they were asked the question based on the President's statement and we would like an answer based on that.

MR. NESSEN: Why don't you do it this way. Refer your questions to the State Department and in the meanwhile, I will talk to Bob McCloskey and explain to him that I have referred these two questions to him and that it would be helpful to get clear answers to them.

Q Ron, I am not trying to make a comparison between the two issues at all, but when the President wanted to make his own personal view extremely clear on the subject of a gasoline tax, he said there will never be a gasoline tax as long as I am President.

I am wondering if you can say on behalf of the President whether or not he would make a similar statement that as long as he is President there will never be an American encouragement of or participation in negotiations with the PLO.

MR. NESSEN: That is a great leap. I am certainly not prepared to say that today.

Q There has been a good deal of confusion and concern about this, including -- or intensified by -- Secretary Kissinger's statement of yesterday or the day before that Israel and the Arab nations should bring their negotiating positions closer together.

Are there circumstances, speaking as the President's spokesman, are there circumstances and eventualities under which the United States believes that Israel should negotiate with the PLO?

MR. NESSEN: Again, Jim, I really think for detailed diplomatic questions the State Department is the best place to go. And I will do what I told Bob I would do, which is to call Bob McCloskey and see if we can get the process straightened out to the point where when I refer you to the State Department the State Department is responsive.

Q Ron, there is a rumor that the press plane may depart a day earlier than the President for Tokyo. Is that true?

MR. NESSEN: Some of you have asked me about that and even expressed a desire for it in terms of getting a night's sleep before you arrive. I suggested it to the advance people that they take a look at the possibility and the answer is that we are all going to basically do that, that the President will arrive in Japan one afternoon and, aside from the ceremonial arrival, there will be no other events that day so that we will all get an afternoon and evening's sleep before the actual visit begins.

Q So, the idea is rejected then?

MR. NESSEN: I don't mean to say rejected, but the idea is that everybody needs some sleep after that trip, and we will all get it by arriving in the afternoon and having no other events that day.

Q Are you saying the 17th or the 18th?

MR. NESSEN: We haven't locked up the official departure time, yet, Helen. I would expect that we would be leaving Sunday morning the 17th.

Phil?

Q The report on the coal strike, a possible coal strike on the economy, two questions. Did the President request this report, this analysis, and who made it?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know that he specifically requested it. It came to him in the course of receiving documents on whatever situations may arise. Bill Simon prepared the analysis.

Don?

Q Ron, has the President's speechwriters and any of his advisers started to draft any response to what the election outcome means? Are there any advance declarations for what is going to happen today?

MR. NESSEN: What is going to happen today?

Q Are there any alternative -- has anyone in the White House already explained why the Republicans had a disaster if indeed it turns out to be a disaster?

MR. NESSEN: Is there going to be a disaster?

Q I don't know.

MR. NESSEN: If you don't know, how can we write a statement, John?

The answer is no, there are no draft statements prepared.

Q Ron, may I take advantage of a quiet day to bring up an old subject? Maybe this was asked while I was not here previously. It is the matter of the list of White House employees. Has that ever come forward, and if not, why, or where is it?

MR. NESSEN: I have asked Don Rumsfeld, or I have passed on to Don Rumsfeld the interest in both a White House staff list and a White House phone directory.

Q We had gotten the same answer from terHorst that one was not available. I don't see any problem on this, except the White House doesn't want us to have it because there is a payroll that goes up there, all you have to do is take the payroll and give us the names on there, unless there is just a matter of some kind of block somewhere.

MR. NESSEN: You are leaping ahead in thinking that we have rejected the idea. I am saying that the idea has gone to Rumsfeld. The White House staff is still in the process of being reorganized, and I think what Don has in mind is coming to grips with this once the White House staff is stabilized and we can put out an accurate staff list.

Q The White House staff never stabilizes, at least it hasn't in the past three years.

MR. NESSEN: I would think it would stabilize a little bit after the first of the year.

Q If we could just find out who was working for the White House last week, and we wouldn't have to be current. It would be extremely helpful for us to know who all is over here and what kind of position they hold.

MR. NESSEN: It is in the works, John, that's all I can say.

Dick.

Q Is the United States speeding up its arms shipments to Israel?

MR. NESSEN: Let me say this, Dick, just as a general point, that I think we really do have to make it a practice here not to comment on every individual columnist every day. I think that as a general practice we ought to do that. I know what you are saying is that you are asking the question and not referring it to a columnist.

It is a policy of the Government, and has been for a long time, not to discuss the details of arms shipments with other countries.

I do understand that the State Department had a fairly extensive briefing yesterday on this subject. And I would also remind you that when President Ford met with Prime Minister Rabin of Israel on September 13 he stated, and this is a quote, or they stated ---

Q What was the date?

MR. NESSEN: September 13, a statement following the meeting between the President and Prime Minister Rabin. It was stated, "The President and the Prime Minister reviewed the ongoing US military supply relationship and the President reaffirmed the continuity of that relationship."

That, together with the briefing at the State Department yesterday, and the fact that it is long-standing policy not to discuss the details of arms supply relationships, I think we are going to have to leave it at that, Dick.

Q For your information that subject was not raised at the State Department yesterday.

MR. NESSEN: I understand there was a briefing on the subject at the State Department yesterday.

Q Ron, one of the problems that keeps coming up year after year in these briefings is, of course, that we don't cover the State Department. It may be that this briefing was reported in some morning newspaper that I haven't seen or something. But the ones I have seen, I didn't see it. Can you on a background basis tell us what the highlights of that briefing were?

MR. NESSEN: I would rather not for the reason I was not there, nor have I read a transcript. However, I have seen a UPI story, Number 100 of yesterday moving at 4:07 PM, which seems to be a report based on talks with State Department officials, which leads me to believe that the State Department did talk about this issue.

I, as a general policy -- let me say at this point, since it has come up in several different ways today, the coal situation and the State Department and the question that Bob asked about on the PLO -- I really think it is important that the White House Press Secretary not be the fount of all wisdom in the Government. Maybe we

had too much of that over the last five years, and as a policy I am going to refer out to the appropriate departments and agencies detailed questions in their particular areas. That is going to be my policy. I have started it, and perhaps some of you who would like to get all the news in one place will not be happy about that, but I think in the interest of accurate and detailed information it makes sense, and it also is in keeping with the President's policy of giving more authority to the department and agency heads.

Q Ron, this is a question that only the President knows, only the President can decide. This is one of the biggest questions affecting the people of the world today, whether the United States is going to step up, or give heavy arms at this point over there, and it comes from the White House, and I think for us not to be given something on this -- it has nothing to do with the column, it has to do with the greatest question before the United States people today. And I think this has been apparent in some of the news broadcasts for several days. I think it is too bad that you have to go to the UPI ticker to get your news.

MR. NESSEN: That is not the case at all, Sarah. I mentioned that because some people thought the State Department had not spoken on this issue.

Q I realize that, but I think we should not have to go to the State Department, to some background briefing, and something they have given obviously to some few people over there. I think we should be able to come to the White House and get it, or if we don't get it here, it means the American people are being denied something that vitally affects peace.

MR. NESSEN: I don't agree with you.

Q I concur with that. The President does make foreign policy, and we have to have explanations here. We are not able to run over to the State Department every time the President makes a statement, and I think you ought to be able to clarify it.

MR. NESSEN: I have given you as much clarification as I can give you in keeping with the policy of not discussing details of arms agreements.

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On the broader subject of referring questions to departments, Sarah, it does probably mean more phone calls and more visits, but on the other hand I think one of the criticisms of the former Secretary was that all Government information was concentrated in his hands, and as I understand it that was not a popular policy, and I am going to make it a policy, and it is in the interests -- it is not to get out from under giving you answers or to make you run all around town, it is in the interest of fuller and more accurate answers on detailed questions.

Q I appreciate that because I think lots of times we get fuller stories if we do that. But as regards foreign policy, as regards this question, the story can only come from one source and that is the White House.

MR. NESSEN: I don't agree with that, Sarah.

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Q Ron, I would just like to say that your policy as enunciated is remarkable more for its similarity to the past five years than its contrast. That is precisely the way questions of very heavy import were handled. They were parceled out and you didn't get the answer.

MR. NESSEN: I hope our policies are not identical to those of the former Press Secretary. Perhaps the difference is that the agency and department information officers and officials are aware of the President's desire and he said this publicly and privately that they follow his example, and my example, of being open and candid and forthcoming.

Q Ron, you took a question before and that was the question, did King Faisal know about the pardon of Mr. Nixon two days in advance, having been asked for a special conference with our ambassador to Saudi Arabia. You took the question, and I never got the answer to it.

MR. NESSEN: As far as I can determine the answer is no.

Q Did not?

MR. NESSEN: As far as I can determine.

Q Ron, after associating myself completely with Mr. McManus' point, because your policy is precisely the same Catch-22 that Mr. Ziegler gave us for five solid years, let me put the following question to you and let me ask you first, do you think under any circumstance the State or Defense Departments could answer this question, has the President of the United States authorized a substantial and major arms shipment increase to the state of Israel?

MR. NESSEN: Do I think the State or Defense Departments could answer that question?

Q Yes, and in the second half I put the question itself to you.

MR. NESSEN: I am going to have to say, Jim, that it is a longstanding policy not to discuss the details of arms shipments.

Q It is not a detailed arms shipment. I am not asking you what weapons are going. I am asking you whether a policy decision has been made, Ron, by the President of the United States to authorize and to direct a major increase in the shipment of arms to the state of Israel. That is not a matter of details of an arms shipment; that is a matter of a policy decision.

MR. NESSEN: I am saying you had two parts to your question. One was the theoretical question of could the State or Defense Departments answer that question. Theoretically, they could if it were American policy to answer such questions. And on whether what is my answer to that question, I am going to have to stick to what I have said.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Ron.

ENd (AT 12:10 P.M. EST)

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH JACK HUSHEN

AT 12:50 P.M. EST

NOVEMBER 5, 1974

TUESDAY

MR. HUSHEN: President Ford met with President Tolbert at about 11 a.m. today. The meeting lasted 45 minutes.

The two Presidents had not met previously, and they took advantage of President Tolbert's presence in the United States on a private visit to become acquainted.

For your information, President Tolbert is here to receive the "Family of Man" award in New York.

They had a wide-ranging and cordial conversation on world issues of mutual concern and in particular on African issues.

President Ford was particularly interested in receiving President Tolbert's views concerning recent events in the Portuguese-African territories and what these events mean for the future of Africa.

The President reaffirmed to President Tolbert that African interests will be taken seriously in the foreign policy of President Ford's Administration, and President Ford's primary goal is to increase our understanding of the problems and aspirations of Africa and to find new ways in which we can be helpful.

The meeting also included a review of our bilateral relations with Liberia, which are excellent.

Attending the meeting, in addition to the two Presidents, were Liberia's Foreign Minister C. Cecil Dennis, and General Brent Scowcroft.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Jack.

END

(AT 12:53 P.M. EDT)

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH JACK HUSHEN

AT 10:10 P.M. EST

NOVEMBER 5, 1974

TUESDAY

MR. HUSHEN: The President had dinner in the residence tonight with Mrs. Ford, with his sister-in-law, Janet Ford, with Jack Stiles, who we gave you some information on earlier today, with son Steve, and with Jim Brown from Utah, a friend of the Ford family.

Q You still don't know where in Utah?

MR. HUSHEN: No, I can get a city.

Q What is the fellow's name?

MR. HUSHEN: Jim Brown.

Q What was he, a school chum or what?

MR. HUSHEN: He is from Utah, is it Ogden?

MR. ROBERTS: It is Tremonton.

Q Did he go to school with him or what?

MR. HUSHEN: At approximately 3 minutes to 10:00 the President entered the Roosevelt Room after arriving in the Oval Office at approximately 7 minutes to 10:00.

In the Roosevelt Room at the time the President entered were Don Rumsfeld and his wife Joyce, Jack Marsh, Dean Burch, Ron Nessen, Jack Stiles, Gwen Anderson, Bill Timmons, Bob Hartmann, Dick Chaney, and his wife Lynne, Bill Walker, Terry O'Donnell, and Colonel Rick Sardo, Marine Colonel Rick Sardo. His first name is A-m-e-r-i-c-o. These ladies and gentlemen were in the Roosevelt Room when the President entered there at approximately 3 minutes to 10:00.

MORE

Q Who is the Colonel?

MR. HUSHEN: Colonel Americo Sardo of the Military Aides Office.

The President shook hands with -- I'm sorry, I think I forgot to mention Roy Ash and his son Charles.

The President said hello, was smiling. He shook hands with other people, Roy Ash, he was introduced to Roy Ash's son. The President was very happy with the projection of the Milliken victory in the Governor's race of Michigan. He watched all three color television sets which are on, commenting on various races as they were discussed. He expressed interest in the Fifth District race in Michigan, which is his former seat. And that is about it.

Q What kind of interest did he express on the Fifth District race? What did he say?

MR. HUSHEN: It was not a projection. There was nothing on it at the time it was discussed. He asked what the vote was and was told that Goebel was slightly behind. He said, "I think we can still win it." Then he briefly explained to those close to him how the vote comes in in the Fifth District, which is generally the Democratic vote comes in early.

Q What channel? Where was he getting the projection from? I haven't seen that anyplace tonight.

MR. HUSHEN: Milliken has been projected as the winner I think on two channels, including your own.

Q Can you give us any kind of overview about how he feels?

MR. HUSHEN: I cannot.

Q When will we get it?

MR. HUSHEN: I would expect the kind of questions you would like to have answered will be answered by people more qualified.

Q Is there going to be a Presidential statement?

MR. HUSHEN: There is no change from what Ron Nessen told you this morning.

Q Ron told us the President's counsellors would be available to us for questions, all we had to do was ask for them. I would like to ask for Mr. Burch.

MR. HUSHEN: The requests have been relayed and the response is that there really is not a trend -- (Laughter) -- at this moment to come out and be talking. I expect someone will be out.

Q At what time, Jack?

MR. HUSHEN: I can't give you a time. (Laughter)

Q Do you have an estimate?

MR. HUSHEN: Many of the races, for instance, don't even have a voter tally yet. The polls are still open in parts of the Country.

Q Jack, can you get Mr. Timmons to come out?

Q Do you have any rough estimate?

MR. HUSHEN: On time?

Q Yes.

MR. HUSHEN: I do not. I just do not. They know of your interest.

Q Jack, forgive me if this is repetitive, but did the President say anything about any specific races? (Laughter)

MR. HUSHEN: Yes, as the statistics were flashed on the screen he would have a comment. I am not going to go into the specific comments. First of all, I was not there long enough.

Q Had he watched any television at the residence before he came down?

MR. HUSHEN: Not that I am aware of. I mean I didn't ask him that.

Q Jack, is there information about the election returns coming to the Roosevelt Room from any other source other than the TV sets? In other words, are they phoning to districts?

MR. HUSHEN: Bill Timmons is keeping track of the Congressional races, and he is getting some information phoned in.

Q Don't you have some sort of wire or teletypes in there?

MR. HUSHEN: It is coming in from his office, I am not sure where.

Q Don't you have some sort of wires or teletype machine set up?

MR. HUSHEN: Not in the Roosevelt Room.

Q In the Oval Office? I saw some sort of printers in there as I walked up earlier this evening I thought?

MR. HUSHEN: There are TV sets in the Oval Office, but there is no teleprinter.

Q Is anyone watching them?

MR. HUSHEN: No.

Q Where is the President right now or when you came out?

MR. HUSHEN: He is in the Roosevelt Room.

Q Jack, is the President going up to the Republican Headquarters later?

MR. HUSHEN: I think Ron ruled that out today, and I know of no change.

Q You mean nobody will come out until they see a trend, is that what you are saying?

MR. HUSHEN: I think that is not totally inaccurate. I think they want to have something to say.

Q What time do you expect the President's statement will be ready?

MR. HUSHEN: I don't know. I can't shed any light on that.

Q Jack, with all the Republican victories that are both in existence and forecast, the only comment you have given us really is that he is very pleased about the Milliken projected victory in Michigan. Is that as complete a list of comments as you can give us at this time? Wasn't he unhappy with anything?

MR. HUSHEN: Considering the amount of time I was in the room ---

Q When you were in the room, was there anything he was unhappy about?



MR. HUSHEN: Well, it wasn't that kind of a discussion. The President --

Q Was he happy about Mathias and Javits?

MR. HUSHEN: That didn't come up. It was not something that was being tallied at the time I was discussing --

Q Was the President serious? Was that his mood, or ebullient, mulling over things, or aware?

MR. HUSHEN: I think that can be better described later on.

Q Jack, will you take a request from us to the President that we would like his reaction to races other than Milliken? Could you take that to him and tell him we would like that?

MR. HUSHEN: I would expect you would get it.

Q Would you ask him about the Wilbur Mills race? Can we have something on that?

Q Was the President still in the Roosevelt Room?

MR. HUSHEN: Yes, as far as I know he is still there.

Q How long do you think he will stay? Does it look like he is going to sit down a while?

MR. HUSHEN: He was sitting down when I left.

Q Are people sitting around that big table in the Roosevelt Room? Are TV sets up on that table there?

MR. HUSHEN: TV sets are on platforms at the far end of the room.

Q Are they having cocktails and food up there?

MR. HUSHEN: No.

MORE

Q Jack, during the short time you were there certainly there were a few desultorious comments that the President was making about each race as it came on. Can you give us from your notes, or can you recall a few of them?

MR. HUSHEN: No, I talked to the President briefly to find out who he had dinner with. He and I discussed the Goebel race, as I told you, and the Milliken race, and then I went around the room to find out who was there.

Q Was this a party where wives were invited?

MR. HUSHEN: I don't know.

Q They had some there?

MR. HUSHEN: There were two wives there. I don't know if all wives were invited.

Q Does he plan to make any phone calls to winners or losers?

MR. HUSHEN: I don't know.

Q Would you let us know? Would you find out who he has called, if anyone, later on?

MR. HUSHEN: All right.

Q Who do you expect will come out and address us?

MR. HUSHEN: Me? (Laughter)

Q Anybody?

MR. HUSHEN: How about when we have something to tell you.

Q Jack, in all seriousness, we were led to believe that we could televise the activities in this room tonight. We don't just set this stuff up for practice.

MR. HUSHEN: I understand that. And I understand what Mr. Nessen said at the briefing this morning. I am out here to try to give you some flavor of what is going on at the moment.

Q That is what we are here for, to try to give the people more flavor.

MR. HUSHEN: For me to stand here and read the names of 20 people that are in the room doesn't seem like something we need to put on sound and film.

Q We would like to put the stuff here on television.

MR. HUSHEN: What was the question you would like me to take?

Q We would like to make that editorial judgment ourselves.

Q Yes, we will decide what we think is news.

Q Jack, has he written the statement or is he going to write a statement?

MR. HUSHEN: I don't know.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END

(AT 10:22 PM EST)

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 11:50 P.M.

NOVEMBER 5, 1974

TUESDAY

MR. NESSEN: This is a statement by the President.

"The people have spoken and for 26 years I have accepted the verdict of the people, which is the essence of our system of free government.

"First may I congratulate every citizen who did his duty by voting today. I have not seen the total turnout, but I am sure it was greater than anticipated in many places.

I also congratulate the winners of both parties and extend my sympathy to those who lost. The willingness of candidates to fight for their convictions and their party is an important ingredient of representative democracy. And those who lose often come back to win another day.

"There was no argument about the number one issue in this campaign: inflation and its crippling effect on our economy and on the lives of all Americans. The mandate of the electorate places upon the next Congress a full measure of responsibility for resolving this problem. I will work with them wholeheartedly in this urgent task which is certainly beyond partisanship.

"Also beyond partisanship, I am confident, is the necessity of keeping America strong both economically and militarily as the leader of the Free World, of moving forward toward a safer and saner international order, of strengthening our cooperation with old allies and old adversaries alike. I am confident that the new Congress will work wholeheartedly with me in this urgent task."

MORE

Q Ron, will you take any questions?

MR. NESSEN: I can try.

Q Has the President given any personal remarks that you have observed in the last 15 or 20 minutes of the trend?

MR. NESSEN: As I think Dean told you, he is unhappy with the number of Republicans who have lost and he is especially unhappy that many of his old friends from Congress have lost.

But, as he says, he thinks it is time to look ahead now to the problems ahead and particularly the inflation problem, and he looks forward to working with this Congress to solve those problems because he believes that the American people want that problem solved.

Q Is there any discussion going on now as to how he might have to adjust to operate with a Congress so overwhelmingly Democratic?

MR. NESSEN: The President believes that the program he sent to Congress is the proper program to deal with the problems of both inflation and of the downturn in certain areas of the economy. Congress hasn't touched that program yet. They will be coming back here next week and the President at the moment sees no need to change his program.

Q Ron, if the Democratic leadership comes back with a new set of proposals on the economic front, would the President reconsider his own proposals in light of that, in light of the election results?

MR. NESSEN: In light of the election results, it seems to me that there is nothing in the election results that says anything about his economic program.

His economic program was designed very carefully after a series of meetings around the country, a dozen meetings with representatives of every segment of the economy, followed by a summit meeting on the economy here, where experts in every field participated and the President sat there all day and listened.

That was followed by a series of meetings with his own economic advisers which developed this economic program, and he sees nothing in the election results themselves to lead him to change that program.

Q Ron, does the fact that so many Republicans didn't go along with his economic program, particularly the surtax, does that mean you can't really say that a Republican loss means the President's program was repudiated?

MR. NESSEN: He doesn't think the election results said anything about his economic program. He believes the economic program, as he said himself, was written without any partisanship in mind and certainly the surtax is an example of the fact that there was no effort to play politics with the economic program. If he had wanted to, he wouldn't have proposed the surtax.

He believes that dealing with the economy -- as he says in the statement I have just read -- is beyond partisanship.

Q Ron, are you saying on the one hand that the number one issue was, as the President said, the inflation, the economy, and you are just telling us he doesn't think the election results, these large Republican defeats, said anything about his economic program?

Aren't those mutually inconsistent?

MR. NESSEN: No, not at all. It is clear that the public, the voters, want something done about inflation and something done about the downturn in some areas of the economy, which is caused by inflation and, as Dean told you, that is the mandate for the new Congress.

But I don't see what you can interpret from this vote that would say it was a rejection of his economic program by the voters.

Q Can I ask you then, has the President learned anything at all from this vote, this election? Will he be doing anything differently, tailoring either his style of leadership, or programs he introduces, or anything of the sort?

MR. NESSEN: The President has said himself -- and I think many of you have known him for a long time and watched him when he was Republican leader of the House -- the President is a man who believes in cooperation, in bipartisanship and he is offering cooperation and bipartisanship to this new Congress because he believes it is necessary to solve these problems, and he hopes and expects that the Congress will act in a similar vein.

Q The question was, really, did he learn anything, will he tailor anything differently because of these election results, these large Republican defeats?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think so because I don't know what you can make of the election results in terms of approval or disapproval of his programs. His own popularity has been rising steadily.

Q Ron, does he expect the new Congress to spend the dome off the Capitol?

MR. NESSEN: He hopes not.

Q Let me try this one more time. At this point can you say whether he will amend or change his economic program --

MR. NESSEN: I have not heard --

Q -- to reflect the larger Democratic majority?

MR. NESSEN: What effect does a large Democratic majority have on what he believes to be the proper course for curing the problems of inflation in some areas of economic lag.

Let me ask you a question. What is it in the election results that you see as a call for changing his economic program?

Q Apart from the issue, the fact that he will be dealing with a Democratic majority that has to make it easy to override a veto.

MR. NESSEN: I said that he believes in cooperation. He believes this is an area of a national problem which requires cooperation and bipartisanship and on his part he will show that and he expects the Congress to do that also.

Q Ron, does the President feel as confident about the surtax now as he did yesterday of getting through Congress?

MR. NESSEN: I think so.

Q Ron, the President did not mention Watergate in his statement. Does he feel that played a part in the defeats?

MR. NESSEN: I haven't heard the word mentioned all night.

Q Dean Burch mentioned it.

MR. NESSEN: Out here I have, but back there I have not.

I guess that is it.

Q How late do you expect them to watch the returns?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know. We will let you know when he goes.

Q Has he made any telephone calls personally to anyone?

MR. NESSEN: He has congratulated Mayor Washington by telephone, who won a very large victory in the Washington, D.C. election for Mayor, and he talked by phone to Senator Scott, the Republican Leader of the Senate. And he may have made a few other calls that I am not aware of.

Q Where was Scott, in Philadelphia?

MR. NESSEN: Somewhere in Pennsylvania.

Q What was it in connection with?

MR. NESSEN: Just in looking ahead to the next Congress.

Q Does he plan to call Bob Dole, or has he?

MR. NESSEN: He is making some other calls while I am out here, and I obviously have no way of knowing who they are to because I am out here.

Q From the Oval Office?

MR. NESSEN: He is spending part of the time in the Oval Office, and part in the Roosevelt Room.

Q Can you describe his mood right now?

MR. NESSEN: He has laughed a lot tonight, and has a lot of friends around him, and Mrs. Ford, and Susan, and the dog.

Q Where are they?

MR. NESSEN: His sister-in-law, Jack Stiles, Jim Brown, and there is certainly no gloomy mood in there.

Q Ron, he does not consider any of the election results a personal defeat for him?

MR. NESSEN: Certainly not.



Q Ron, can I ask a question? If he hadn't made this great effort -- it was really a tremendous job of going to all these States -- would it have been a greater defeat?

MR. NESSEN: Among my many talents, fortune telling is not one of them.

Q It isn't fortune telling, but do you think it had an effect? It is not fortune telling.

MR. NESSEN: I think as Dean pointed out to you in answer to the same question, in some places he campaigned the Republicans lost, in some places he campaigned the Republicans won, in some places they lost, and in some places it is not clear who is going to win. So it is very difficult to draw any pattern from his campaigning.

Q But do you think if he hadn't gone, would it have been a greater landslide for the Democrats? Mr. Burch didn't like the word "landslide", but what would you call it?

MR. NESSEN: I think the election results speak for themselves. I really don't need to put a label on it.

Q You wouldn't put an adjective?

MR. NESSEN: No. I got out of that business. That is yours now.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END

(AT 12:00 PM EST)