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N E W S C O N F E R E N C E

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AT THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS OFFICE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 10:23 P.M. JAPAN TIME

NOVEMBER 21, 1974

THURSDAY

KYOTO, JAPAN

MR. NESSEN: I just have a couple of nuts and bolts things to go through.

First, the good news. We have obtained from the Soviet Union all 70 visas that we had been promised, and Ed Savage is on his way here by fast train even as we speak, with everybody's visa including the changes in personnel that some news organizations made.

We have a text of the arrival statement in Seoul tomorrow which is being run off now and you will get those tonight.

There will be a communique after the meeting tomorrow in Seoul. I can't give you the exact time, but it looks like in the 5:00 area.

Q Ron, will there be another meeting between the President and Park Saturday morning?

MR. NESSEN: Not that I know of.

There will be a briefing tomorrow afternoon at the Chosun Hotel in Seoul. It will be after the meeting and before the reception starts at 6:00, I think, so you should look for the briefing somewhere in the area of 5:00 tomorrow at the Chosun.

Q At the same time as the communique?

MR. NESSEN: About. I would hope we could get the communique out to you before the briefing.

Some of you have asked some questions about the explosion in the tunnel near the DMZ. We don't have all the details down here, but I am told that they put out a fairly full report in Seoul and the only thing we have to say is that it is a considerable distance from where the President's visit to Camp Casey is taking place.

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It is not considered any hazard to his safety, and the visit to Camp Casey is going on as scheduled.

Some of you have also asked about the incident at the American Embassy in Seoul today and again we don't have all the details. We do know that the Korean Government has expressed regrets for the incident, and as far as the Presidential party is concerned, the episode is closed.

Q What was the incident?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have all the details.

Q Was there any protest from our Government sent to President Park?

MR. NESSEN:

Did the American Government protest the incident at the Embassy? No, there was no protest by the American Government because the Korean Government offered deep apologies almost immediately after the incident.

Q Ron, did the Korean police enter the Embassy grounds, and do the Korean police have a right to come on the Embassy grounds without permission?

MR. NESSEN: Barry, we really can't tell you the details here.

Q And the second question -- which you should know the answer to -- do the Korean police have the legal right to enter U.S. Embassy grounds without permission?

MR. NESSEN: I am not sure of the circumstances under which they entered.

Q Any circumstances?

MR. NESSEN: The American Embassy in Korea has put out a full report of what really happened and we can't answer an international legal question because we don't know the details of what happened here.

Q You seem satisfied with the Korean Government's explanation --

MR. NESSEN: I am saying an explanation has been made. The Korean Government immediately apologized and so far as the Presidential party is concerned, the incident is closed.

Q Ron, are you saying the traveling White House does not have the full details of what happened at an Embassy in a country which the President is about to visit tomorrow?

MR. NESSEN: We have a rough outline of what happened, but to answer legal questions, I don't think we ought to do it here nor do I think we ought to give a report from here. It happened in Seoul and the Embassy in Seoul is giving out all the information.

Q Does the President consider any of these incidents enough to cancel his trip?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q He is going forward with everything as scheduled?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q When will we get the schedule?

MR. NESSEN: That is one of the next couple of items on my list.

Q Before we leave the Korean chapter, may I ask you, please, if the President expressed any reaction to the incident at the Embassy?

MR. NESSEN: Not that I am aware of.

So you can plan your wardrobe for tomorrow --

Q It's too late.

MR. NESSEN: -- the temperature is in the 30's and clear, or will be.

The schedule for tomorrow is about halfway done and will be done in about an hour. Meanwhile, if some of you want to write before an hour, the Press Office will give you the rough outline anyhow. What is holding it up is really the sort of details of press movements and so forth.

But to get to the President's schedule, you can get it right now from the Press Office.

Q Ron, this trip to South Korea is no surprise --

MR. NESSEN: The trip to Korea is no surprise?

Q Yes. We have known it was coming and that you would take a lot of reporters in with you. So why is the schedule not completed?

MR. NESSEN: It is just getting people on and off buses, times, and so forth -- purely mechanical.

Q Nothing is being rejiggered because of problems at the DMZ or at the Embassy?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Or a desire to cancel meetings with Park or something?

MR. NESSEN: No. How many ways can I say no?

Q Is the whole press corps going to the DMZ area?

MR. NESSEN: If you do, you will be going alone because the President is not going.

Q Camp Casey?

MR. NESSEN: Everybody is going to Camp Casey. Yes, everybody goes to Camp Casey. There is going to be a football game at Camp Casey which you will really find fascinating, I think. Is it really true they call it combat football?

Q What about those that don't want to go to Camp Casey?

MR. NESSEN: Jack, I would say there is no requirement that you go. We have a limited press staff and not enough to actually tie people up and force them to go to Camp Casey.

Q Do you have any advance word on protests tomorrow? Are protests expected in Seoul? Do you have any advance word on what we may expect by way of demonstrations there?

MR. NESSEN: I don't. I expect you will find very large crowds that are friendly, but I have no details on demonstrations.

Q Will the President meet any members of the political opposition in Korea?

MR. NESSEN: Check the Press Office for the schedule. I haven't looked at it.

Q Ron, the White House has some ability to talk to the governments of the countries the President is visiting and participate in the making of arrangements. I wonder if you don't find it ironic, then, that in a sort of stable democratic country like Japan, the President is enveloped in security --

MR. NESSEN: I think "cocoon" is a word some used in their stories.

Q And in a country beset by all sorts of problems, including the tunnel explosion in the DMZ, and the incident at the Embassy, the President is still going in a big motorcade to downtown Seoul. Can you explain the security arrangements between Seoul in Korea and in Japan?

MR. NESSEN: I don't understand your question. I mean an explosion in the tunnel at the DMZ doesn't have anything to do with the President's reception in Seoul. The incident at the Embassy was something totally isolated and has nothing to do with his visit. I don't see where that would affect his security.

The President's security arrangements in Japan, as Dr. Kissinger said, are the responsibility of the Government of Japan and the overall security in Korea is the responsibility of that host government.

Q Then can you tell us, how has the President felt about this security shield?

MR. NESSEN: I think any of you that rode around on the bus today must have gotten the feeling that he wasn't enveloped in a plastic cocoon or whatever somebody said about it. He drove up and down the streets. There were people on the streets. He drove within a few feet of demonstrators. I don't think you could call Kyoto a plastic cocoon.

John.

Q Has the government done anything, or will it do anything, to prevent invasions of Embassies? Korea or anyplace else?

MR. NESSEN: I think what you ought to do, John, is find out what happened in Seoul before we refer to this as an invasion of the Embassy. I don't think we ought to give the details of what happened at the Embassy in Seoul here, but your people in Seoul can find out easily. I don't want to use the word "invasion".

Q Has the President asked that any action be taken?

MR. NESSEN: I said that the Government of Korea has offered deep apologies almost immediately after the episode and it is closed.

Q Ron, in your answer before as to whether the President would meet with the opposition -- that we should look at the schedule -- like whether we are going to have a pool for something, don't you know whether he is going to meet the opposition or not? That is a policy question.

MR. NESSEN: John, can you get me a copy of the schedule?

The answer is no.

Q Ron, did the President see or hear any of these demonstration parades tonight?

MR. NESSEN: Tonight? You mean during dinner?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: No. All we could hear was the Kychon music and the soft slurping of sake.

Q How did the President enjoy the evening?

MR. NESSEN: Very much.

Q Was this his first contact with Geisha girls?

MR. NESSEN: He has been to Japan before, but based on the kind of questions he asked during dinner, I think so.

Q What was he trying to find out?

MR. NESSEN: He wanted to know how long they trained and why some wore the white make-up and some didn't, and what was the symbolism of the dances, and so forth.

Q Ron, the President met with members of the opposition party in Japan or opposition candidates. The opposition party in Korea won 46 or 47 percent of the vote in the last election. So why would he not meet the opposition there?

MR. NESSEN: I don't make up the schedule, but you will have a chance to ask at the briefing tomorrow afternoon in Seoul.

Q This is a policy question. They would have gotten instructions from you, wouldn't they?

MR. NESSEN: Not from me, they wouldn't.

Q In terms of the matter at the Embassy today, does the President know all the details?

MR. NESSEN: He knows a rough outline of what happened.

Q If he only knows a rough outline, how can he say the matter is closed?

MR. NESSEN: Because the Embassy in Seoul has suggested that is the proper attitude to take toward the episode.

Q They don't take it very seriously then?

MR. NESSEN: No -- I shouldn't say they don't take it very seriously. I should say they consider it closed.

Q In reference to the schedule, I don't want to put words in your mouth, but are you saying he is not meeting the opposition leaders because there is no time in the schedule?

MR. NESSEN: No, I am not saying there is no time. I am saying you will have a chance to ask about that tomorrow.

Q You say you don't make up the schedule?

MR. NESSEN: No, I don't.

Q Ron, who will be at the reception in Seoul?

MR. NESSEN: Have we got a list, Jack?

Q Is there a reception by the legislative members?

MR. NESSEN: Who is the host? Whoever is the host makes up the guest list. The guest list will be on the schedule.

Q Ron, is it a fact that the South Korean Government wanted to have the President attend a mass rally somewhere in downtown Seoul and the American Government refused to go along with that suggestion?

MR. NESSEN: I haven't heard that, Marty.

Q Does the United States Government have anything to say about what the President does in the country that he visits, or is the schedule entirely up to the host country?

MR. NESSEN: No, not entirely up to the host country.

Q Is the schedule checked, and does the American Government have a veto over items suggested by the host country?

MR. NESSEN: I think the President's schedule for foreign visits is formally worked out in negotiations with the host government.

Q Do you know what the situation is in Vladivostok? I understand that Brezhnev had to land 600 miles away because of the weather.

MR. NESSEN: I understand there was an 8-inch snowfall there.

Q Will the President be able to fly there on schedule, and so forth, or are you changing location?

MR. NESSEN: I haven't seen any change in the schedule. They are probably used to 8 inches of snow.

Q Ron, you may have commented on this before I came in, but did the President have any reaction to the demonstrators he saw today?

MR. NESSEN: I didn't hear him express any.

Q He was aware of some of the protestors?

MR. NESSEN: He passed within about 8 feet of them in a couple of places. I don't see how he could not have seen and heard them.

Q Did he ask for any translation?

MR. NESSEN: One was in English, if I remember correctly.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END

(10:30 P.M. JAPAN TIME)