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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 JACK HUSHEN

AT 12:49 A.M. U.S.S.R. TIME

NOVEMBER 24, 1974

SUNDAY

(Vladivostok, U.S.S.R)

MR. HUSHEN: We have a little bit of information, not for sound, not for film.

The third session just concluded. Secretary Kissinger will be down here at approximately 1:15 to brief. The dinner has been cancelled. Let me see if I can fill in some of the times on these meetings.

Q Jack, can you tell us why the dinner was cancelled?

MR. HUSHEN: You will have Dr. Kissinger to answer the questions shortly that you want to have answered. I want to give you an interim report to hold you until then.

The first meeting was from 6:15 to 8:15. The second meeting began at 8:45 and went two hours and 45 minutes -- until 11:30 -- at which time President Ford and Dr. Kissinger left to take a walk.

The President and Dr. Kissinger returned to the meeting at approximately midnight and as I told you, that meeting broke up at about 12:35.

In the third meeting in addition to the President and Secretary Kissinger, General Secretary Brezhnev, Mr. Gromyko, and the Russian Ambassador, Dobrynin, took part. The American side stayed the same.

Q Just two on two, Jack?

MR. HUSHEN: The second meeting was two on two.

Q How about the first one?

MR. HUSHEN: The first one was four on four, I think. No, it was more than that.

Q They had never been alone?

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MR. HUSHEN: In the first meeting it was the President and the Secretary of State, Helmut Sonnenfeldt, General Scowcroft, William Hyland who is Director of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research of the State Department and Ambassador Stoessel for the American side. That was the first meeting from 6:15 to 8:15.

Q Hyland is what again?

MR. HUSHEN: Bureau of Intelligence and Research at the State Department.

Q Was Saunders at that meeting, too, Jack?

MR. HUSHEN: Yes, he was.

Q He was there?

MR. HUSHEN: I am told he was.

We will have to get these lists and post them because there is some confusion on that first meeting.

Q When you say they walked, where did they walk? Did they walk down in the snow?

MR. HUSHEN: You will have to ask Dr. Kissinger that.

Q I thought he would go more to substance and we would ask those things of you.

Q Do you have any details on what was discussed?

MR. HUSHEN: It was cold out there because the President remarked about how cold it was when he came back.

Q So they actually were out, they went out in the weather?

MR. HUSHEN: Oh, yes, sir. They were outside walking around. The President put on his parka.

Q Wore his hat again?

MR. HUSHEN: Probably wore his hat.

Q Jack, could I be absolutely sure on the second meeting. It was the President, Secretary Kissinger, Secretary Brezhnev and Grczyko?

MR. HUSHEN: That is correct.

Q One interpreter?

MR. HUSHEN: I don't know the answer to that.

And in the third meeting the Russian Ambassador was at it.

Q Jack, we don't consider the meeting on the train a meeting?

MR. HUSHEN: I think we do. I am talking about these three meetings that have been continuations of it.

Q How long of a train meeting so we can run a rough program?

MR. HUSHEN: I don't know.

Q Do you know who participated on the train?

MR. HUSHEN: I do not.

Q Do you have the subjects?

MR. HUSHEN: Well, the subject of the first two meetings was predominantly the SALT talks. I don't know what the subject was of the third meeting.

Q Are we to conclude from your answer that it was different from the previous two?

MR. HUSHEN: You shouldn't. I just don't know what it was.

There was one thing that you should know. There was a statement that was drafted and issued by the Russians which we agreed to which reads as follows:

General Secretary Brezhnev and President Ford reviewed the general state of relations between the U.S.S.R. and the United States. The two leaders considered the improvement in U.S.-Soviet relations, which has taken place in recent years, to be a very important development. Having noted the successful development, they reaffirmed their mutual determination to make all necessary efforts to give it an irreversible character in the interests of the peoples of both countries and of strengthening international peace."

As I said, that was a statement that was drafted and issued by the Russians that we agreed to.

Q In the chronology of the meeting, at what point was this Russian statement issued?

MR. HUSHEN: Well, I am just not sure and I prefer not to guess.

Q Jack, did this refer to the talks on the train or the first meeting here?

MR. HUSHEN: Well, I think just generally, but why don't you save those kinds of questions for Dr. Kissinger.

Q Jack, for those of us who are not used to reading between the lines of Russian communiques, what does all this mean?

MR. HUSHEN: That is a question you can save for Dr. Kissinger, too.

Q What happened to the dinner, Jack?

MR. HUSHEN: Well, as I understand it, they were just snacking, the best I can describe it.

Q Are they still together.

MR. HUSHEN: The meeting just continued. I think it got to a point where it did not make any sense to be having a full-scale dinner as they had planned.

Q Were the first two meetings restricted to SALT or were other matters discussed?

MR. HUSHEN: Predominantly SALT.

Q But there were other matters discussed?

MR. HUSHEN: Well, I cannot rule that out, but I think Dr. Kissinger can help you out on that.

Q Do you know, was that all discussed on the train?

MR. HUSHEN: I do not.

Q You are still planning to return to Washington tomorrow?

MR. HUSHEN: I have no indication that there has been any change in that, Helen.

Q Did the Russians draw up this statement and what did they do, present it to Ford and ask if he agreed or how did that go?

MR. HUSHEN: I am not sure of the specifics. Dr. Kissinger will be able to help you out there, too.

Q Jack, from the schedule you gave us it would appear that the second and longest meeting is the one that took place at dinner. Can you tell us how that developed, if they decided to have a meeting at that stage instead of having to go to the scheduled ceremonial route?

MR. HUSHEN: I can't answer that.

Q Jack, if that is all you know, why don't we have about a 5-minute recess until Dr. Kissinger gets here?

MR. HUSHEN: That is fine with me.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Jack.

END (AT 1:00 A.M. U.S.S.R. Time)

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NEWS CONFERENCE

#79

AT THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS OFFICE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 2:01 A.M. (U.S.S.R. TIME)

NOVEMBER 24, 1974

SUNDAY

(Vladivostok, U.S.S.R.)

MR. NESSEN: I can clear up a couple of loose ends about the times and participants in the meeting if anybody cares.

Q Yes, we care.

MR. NESSEN: I know everybody wants to file, so let me do this quickly now. It is just some loose ends, Walt. All I want to do is get the sequence of the meetings and who was at what and also tell you about this little meal the President had afterward and something about tomorrow.

Now, from 6:15 to 8:15 was the first meeting. Do you all know who the participants were in that meeting? ARE there any questions about that?

All right. That is when the Secretary and the President took their walk. They came back at 8:45 and met until 11:30 and there were only four participants at that meeting -- you know who they were.

There was then a break and they came back at midnight and met until 12:30. It was the four participants plus Dobrynin.

Q The walk was when, now?

MR. NESSEN: Between 8:15 and 8:45.

Q And not after 11:30?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Wait a minute, Jack. You are right. I am sorry. 8:15 to 8:45 the President stood in the lobby of the Conference Hall talking to some of his aides. The walk was between 11:30 and midnight.

During the break, from 8:15 to 8:45, the President stayed in the lobby of the Conference Room and talked to his aides.

The break from 11:30 to midnight was the period when the Secretary and the President took their walk.

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The final meeting broke up at 12:30. It was decided at that time that it was so late that they would not have the dinner tonight. The President then walked several hundred yards back to his dacha with the Secretary and other members of his staff. When he got there he went in the dining room and had a snack.

Q What?

MR. NESSEN: I am going to tell you in just a second.

The guests at the snack were Dr. Kissinger, Robert Hartmann, Don Rumsfeld, Richard Cheney, David Kennery and myself.

The snack consisted of black and white bread, cheese, various cold cuts, caviar, a Russian soup called salianka. It is a thick soup with peaces of sausage and beans and onions and other stuff. And for dessert, vanilla ice cream.

The two leaders will meet again tomorrow morning at 10 o'clock. I can't give you the participants at this time.

Q This morning at 10?

MR. NESSEN: I am sorry, this morning, Jack.

You see, the midnight briefing gets later and later. It will be the dawn briefing soon.

That meeting is expected to last until 2 o'clock at which time the banquet that was postponed from tonight will be held. Now, if you assume that it does end at 2 o'clock, that the banquet lasts two hours, which would make it 4 o'clock, if we take an hour to do our briefing and so forth, which will be 5 o'clock, a two hour train ride back to the airport, 7 o'clock.

Q Train ride back to the airport?

MR. NESSEN: That is correct.

So, that would give you a 7 o'clock take-off time if all those assumptions hold true.

Tom?

Q The President or all of us?

MR. NESSEN: How long is the bus ride?

Q Two hours, twenty minutes.

MR. NESSEN: That is as much as I can give you on the schedule tomorrow. It is obviously loose. I think I told some of you on the plane today that this is an exercise in flexibility for all of us and it remains that way tomorrow.

Q Is there any possibility, Ron, that we will stay over?

MR. NESSEN: There is no indication at all that he is going to stay another night here. As the Secretary said, our departure is almost certainly going to be delayed past the original schedule but this 7 o'clock take-off I am talking about would be true if all these other assumptions hold.

Q What time will the President arrive back in Washington?

MR. NESSEN: My understanding is that if you leave here at 7 o'clock at night you get to Washington at 7 o'clock the same night.

Q You have an hour briefing here. You are going to have to allow some time to file.

MR. NESSEN: Well, you can take as long as you want to file.

There also may be another way of doing this. As I say, we have got to stay flexible about tomorrow. It is possible that we could brief during the banquet -- that is, during the 2 o'clock -- but let's stay flexible.

Q What time --

MR. NESSEN: I don't have a time on the communique, Helen. I think some of that depends on the meeting tomorrow.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END (AT 2:08 P.M. U.S.S.R. Time)