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NEWS CONFERENCE

#83

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 10:35 A.M. EST

NOVEMBER 29, 1974

FRIDAY

MR. NESSEN: This does not take the place of my regular morning briefing. I will have my briefing about noon today.

What I am about to say is embargoed for 11 o'clock, and that is a wire embargo. It should not go on the wires before 11 o'clock.

I am going to read you the text of a communique that is being issued here in Washington and in Peking for simultaneous release at 11 o'clock Eastern Time.

"Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, U.S. Secretary of State and Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, visited the People's Republic of China from November 25 through November 29, 1974.

"The U.S. and Chinese sides held frank, wide-ranging and mutually beneficial talks. They reaffirmed their unchanged commitment to the principles of the Shanghai Communique. The two governments agreed that President Gerald R. Ford would visit the People's Republic of China in 1975."

That is the end of the text of the communique. There is a personal comment from President Ford, which is as follows:

"I look forward to visiting the People's Republic of China sometime next year, and to continuing the process of normalizing our relations."

Q Will he also go to Moscow on that trip, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have any plans for that.

Q Can you give us any indication when this will be?

MR. NESSEN: No, I can't.

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Q Before the summit in Washington in June with the Soviets?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have any plans for the exact date.

Q If you don't mind, is the President going to hold a press conference today, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: No, he won't.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Ron.

END (AT 10:40 A.M. EST)

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 12:12 P.M. EST

NOVEMBER 29, 1974

FRIDAY

MR. NESSEN: Thank you for waiting.

There was one piece of information I thought you would want, and I was just able to get it.

We do have a lot of stuff today and, also, there is this one o'clock thing which you want to get to, I know.

The President came in at 7:40 this morning to the office and met with several staff members, including Dick Cheney, Jack Marsh, Bob Hartmann, General Scowcroft, Bill Timmons and myself, several times. At 10:30, the President began a meeting with staff members to discuss the Administration's land use policy. This is one of a series of meetings the President is holding on key issues to prepare for his 1975 State of the Union message.

The participants were Secretaries Morton, Butz, Dent and Lynn, Deputy Attorney General Larry Silberman, EPA Administrator Train, Council on Environmental Quality Chairman Peterson, Frank Zarb, Paul O'Neill of OMB, Ken Cole, Mike Duvall, and Norm Ross of the Domestic Council.

This was the first time the President had seen Secretary Lynn since he came back from a vacation in the Virgin Islands where he had begun to grow a beard. Secretary Lynn said, "I thought I would show it to you before I shaved it off." And the President said, "What are you trying to do, start a new style around here?" Obviously forgetting about David Kennerly. Secretary Lynn said, "No, I will shave it off by Monday morning."

Q Did he appoint a new budget director at the same time?

MR. NESSEN: He certainly did not.

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At 1 o'clock, the President will sign the first Executive warrants for clemency under the clemency program established in the President's September 16th Proclamation.

This will take place in the Cabinet Room, and you will have a chance to go in and take some pictures at the signing ceremony, and then Charles Goodell, head of the Clemency Board, will come out here and brief you and answer your questions. We do not have a list of the participants right now, but it will be posted. You will also get a packet of information at the 1 o'clock ceremony.

Q Was a list of some kind posted?

MR. NESSEN: We already had posted it. But we have not posted the list of the people who are getting clemency.

At 2 o'clock this afternoon, the President will meet with Mayor Frank Rizzo of Pennsylvania and Senator Scott of Pennsylvania. They requested this meeting to discuss the impact of some of the base closings announced by the Defense Department last week, particularly the Frankfort Arsenal in Philadelphia.

Q Can we stick with that a minute, or do you want questions later?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have too many answers on that, actually.

Q Is Schweiker not going to be there?

MR. NESSEN: The only two participants I have are Rizzo and Scott.

Q Why no picture?

MR. NESSEN: I did not know anybody would want one. We will see what we can arrange.

At 4 o'clock, the President will accept diplomatic credentials from five new Ambassadors to the United States. This is in the Oval Office. The Ambassadors represent Luxembourg, the United Arab Emirates, Honduras, Granada, and Uruguay. Their names have been posted.

Tomorrow, the President is going to Philadelphia by helicopter to see the Army-Navy football game. Since we last met here and talked about the press going up in a helicopter, it turns out we have been able to locate an airplane, and it is a Piedmont airliner, but it is a 737. Check-in time at Andrews is 9:45. The plane takes off at 10:15. It arrives at Philadelphia International Airport at 11 o'clock. The buses will then take you to the stadium, which is called JFK Stadium, getting to the stadium at 12:30, which will be in time for the pre-game ceremonies.

There will be an 8-man pool going along in a helicopter, and we have managed to get the helicopter to come to the Pentagon pad. You should check in at the Pentagon pad at 11:15. The helicopter leaves at 11:30 and will get to the Philadelphia Navy Yard, which is the landing spot, arriving before the President.

The President leaves the South Lawn by helicopter at 11:40, getting to the Navy Yard at 12:50, which would give you a one hour and ten minute flight. Then, he gets in a motorcade and goes to the stadium, arriving at 1:05, which is a 15-minute drive. He goes in the West entrance, which is the Navy side of the field. He will sit on the Navy side of the field for the first half of the game and then will cross the field to the Army side and sit there for the second half of the game.

Assuming it is the normal length football game, we anticipate the President will be arriving back in Washington about 5:45. You can stay behind and file from the stadium before you return.

MR. SPEAKES: There are 17 seats on either side.

Q What happens to the rest?

MR. SPEAKES: That takes care of all the writers and camera crews.

MR. NESSEN: There are 34 seats at the stadium, half on the Navy side and half on the Army side, so each of you will be on the same side of the President for half the game. We are going to assign people to seats, unless you get any big Navy fans who don't want to sit on the Army side, but basically, we will post who sits on which side. Check that this afternoon.

Q Who is going with the President? Will any member of his family, say, Susan?

MR. NESSEN: They are still working on the list, but the President has invited a number of his aides to go along with him. I don't have the list yet, but I know that there are a number of people who are going from the staff.

Q Ron, the pool, as published, does not include any representatives of the daily newspapers. Why is that?

MR. NESSEN: Does it offend you that the magazine writer would be the pooler for the writers?

Q What is the sense of urgency that the magazine writer would be under, under those circumstances? There is a sense of urgency that certain newspapers in Philadelphia might file.

I think the idea of picking a magazine pooler was to get somebody who would not have to make a deadline, and therefor, could concentrate entirely on preparing the pool report.

Q It is traditional around here to have both a magazine writer and a newspaper writer as the regular pool.

MR. NESSEN: Let's knock off the TV sound man and put a newspaper writer on. Let's do this after the briefing and see if we cannot work it out.

Q It is, as many pools have been lately, Ron, heavily loaded in favor of television. We are all aware of the importance of television, but it is not the only news medium. When you talk about technicians, photographers, it is all TV.

MR. NESSEN: They are taking pictures for newspapers. AP and UPI are taking pictures for newspapers.

Q You rattled off --

MR. NESSEN: There is only two TV, a correspondent and a camera man. No sound man, no radio sound man, no radio correspondent or anything. But let's see if we can find a seat for a newspaper writer.

Monday evening, the President plans to hold a news conference at 7:30. The location is room 450 of the EOB. Those of you who are planning to attend should get there a half hour in advance and should go in the Seventeenth Street entrance of the EOB. If you do not have a White House press pass, call this office, my office, and we will get you cleared.

As always, there will be reserved seats for a large number of regulars.

Q Why is it being held there?

MR. NESSEN: Just because it seemed like a good place to hold it.

Q Will he be able to announce then the SALT figures?

MR. NESSEN: If the communique comes from the Russians he might.

Q It has not arrived yet?

MR. NESSEN: Not as of this morning when I checked last.

Q Telecast, I suppose, and broadcast?

MR. NESSEN: It would be available if anybody cared to do it.

Following the news conference, the President will attend the Scout of the Year dinner at the Sheraton Park Hotel. The President is expected to have remarks there, probably about 8:30. That event is in Sheraton Hall.

Q Is that the Boy Scouts?

MR. NESSEN: That is the Scout of the Year dinner, yes.

Tuesday evening, the President goes back to Sheraton Park to speak to the American Conference on Trade, and that is also an 8:30 speech in Sheraton Hall.

In case some of you have forgotten what is coming up next week, Prime Minister Trudeau will be here on Wednesday for a meeting with the President and a working dinner in the evening and Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, of West Germany, will be here Thursday for a meeting and a State Dinner. You can get full details of the dinner from Sheila Weidenfeld's office.

The 1974-75 U.S Government Manual is now available from the Government Printing Office. A lot of you find this to be a useful tool, I think -- here it is -- so, we have a limited number of copies here for the regular people who cover the White House. We will have to limit it to one per organization and if you want any more copies, they are at the Government Printing Office for \$5.75.

Also, let me straighten out what may have been a misunderstanding by some people concerning the coat, the parka, that the President got in Alaska. It is, as you probably know, made out of wolf fur. And the coat the President got he then gave to General Secretary Brezhnev. This coat is made from the fur of the Alaskan gray wolf which is not an endangered species in Canada or Alaska. It is hunted and trapped there normally, and it is not an endangered species there. It is legal to hunt it and legal to trap it and to make coats out of it.

I think perhaps the misunderstanding may have come about because in the 48 Continental States, the Eastern timber wolf, the red wolf and the Northern Rocky Mountain timber wolf are endangered species.

Q Isn't it also true that a number of conservationist groups are concerned that the Alaskan wolf is about to become an endangered species?

MR. NESSEN: I had not heard that, Tom.

Finally -- I think it is finally -- we have had a little problem lately with ground rules on filing and embargoes. I think we really do need to observe embargoes and ground rules. We give things out embargoed, obviously, so you can spend time reading the material and getting your stories written before the official embargo time. And when you break the ground rules, you really are cheating your own colleagues and raise questions about whether we should continue the embargoed release of material.

I think I said clearly this morning that the announcement on the trip to China had a wire embargo of 11 o'clock and yet, the UPI ran a story at 10:44.

Also, in Vladivostok, on a somewhat related matter, the two wire services were the poolers on the train ride from the airport to Vladivostok and they both filed stories for their own wires before giving their colleagues a pool report.

So, I think, in fairness to your own colleagues, we should try to observe embargoes and other ground rules and what everybody understands to be the responsibility of poolers, I think.

Q Isn't it correct -- at least my office informed me that it was the case -- that Peking broke the embargo, moved it early. This may have been -- I don't know, of course -- but it may have been why UPI felt free to go early.

MR. NESSEN: Well, I had a couple of communications with Dr. Kissinger this morning and one of the reasons we moved the announcement from 11:00 to 10:30 was his fear of a leak or something, but I do think that if we start competing for who can break embargoes first, we are really defeating --

Q The point here appears to be, Ron, that the Chinese -- that it had come out from the Chinese in one fashion or another. When somebody breaks an embargo, then all consider themselves free, and I think this is probably what happened with UPI.

MR. NESSEN: I think somebody ought to maybe ask us whether, now that it is out anyhow, would it be all right to break the White House embargo, because otherwise, the rest of your colleagues don't know it is broken. We could go on the loud speaker and say, "The embargo has been broken elsewhere. Go ahead and run the story," rather than just unilaterally making the decision.

Q Ron, since we are discussing this matter of pooling, hasn't it always been traditional that the wire services, even when they are pooling, can file to their bureaus and such before sharing the information?

MR. NESSEN: That was never my understanding. When you have a pool, like when you have, say, a 4-man pool --

Q That is the way it has always been, Ron.

MR. NESSEN: But that is when there are other people on the pool to take care of the writers, but in this case, they were the poolers. Like on Air Force One --

Q The underlying principle of the pooling arrangement has always been the wire services protect the organizations involved because between the two of them they go to everybody and the poolers protect their colleagues.

That is why, when it comes down to a situation where there is not enough room for everybody, the wire services have traditionally got the crack at it because they do the more important things.

MR. NESSEN: My understanding was that when the poolers are only the wire service and there are no other writers on the pool, that they still have an obligation to fill in the others before they file their own.

Q That has never been my impression and I don't think it is the impression of --

MR. NESSEN: This is kind of a mutually agreed upon thing and if that is agreeable to everybody, it is certainly agreeable to me.

Q Further on that, Ron, Dick Growald and I got to the hotel in Vladivostok well before the press buses and there was no one there to file the report to. As it was, we dictated one right after we filed and it took the White House some hours to get this pool report out. Hours. If we had waited that long, we would have -- I don't know what.

Q Nobody would have gotten it.

MR. NESSEN: I was saying this, thinking perhaps there was some unhappiness here, but if everybody is agreeable to that, it certainly is agreeable to us.

Q Everybody is not agreeable to that and I think we ought to have an understanding.

Q I am not agreeable to that.

Q As a matter of both common sense and fairness, if there is no special pooler, then I think there should be an understanding that the wire services should pool to the rest of us. If they take a different view, then I think we ought to have a discussion so we have a very clear understanding one way or the other.

MR. NESSEN: Maybe we should not take the time here; that we should indeed have a meeting on it and just make sure everybody understands what that particular ground rule is. I think that would be best.

Q Ron, for the protection of the outside press, the outside press is never included. It is always magazines and they cannot report to the outside press so they go in a week later and the outside press, who are not wires -- we understand the wires' problems -- but they should have outside press, too, because they are never included, not often enough.

MR. NESSEN: We will have a meeting about it. Somebody else wanted to say something.

Q Why didn't you go on the tube today and say since Peking had already let it out, you were letting it out here?

MR. NESSEN: I did not know it had been broken in Peking until I went back to my office and saw it on the wires.

Q Helen told you and you kept on with the embargo.

MR. NESSEN: You came to me and said -- by then it was 11 o'clock, wasn't it?

Q An hour before.

MR. NESSEN: Well, okay.

Q Did she tell you the reason?

MR. NESSEN: Then, I saw on my own wire that it had indeed been broken from Peking.

Q I think in a case like that, then you just have to lift the embargo.

MR. NESSEN: Yes, but I would like to be asked first and then we can announce it so everybody can break it. Radio probably would like to have it broken, too.

I don't have any further announcements.

Q Ron, who is advising the President on his appointments, especially the selection of new Cabinet members and things like that? Who is advising him?

MR. NESSEN: He has a number of people who advise him on that. Don Rumsfeld, Jack Marsh, Bob Hartmann, Bill Timmons. That is not an exclusive list, but that will give you an idea of who is advising him.

Q Ron, Cardinal Cooke, or at least the statement by the Archdiocese in New York to which Cardinal Cooke subscribes, has called for either an apology from Secretary Butz on this matter or Secretary Butz' resignation. I think I saw also that the President was going to have a meeting with Secretary Butz, or at least was going to ascertain the facts on the thing before making a decision.

Two questions: One, in what way is the President going to ascertain the facts? Is he going to have a meeting with Secretary Butz or how is this going to be done?

And secondly, what is your response to the Archdiocese statement?

MR. NESSEN: Basically, it was the long-awaited Earl Butz question.

As you probably noticed, this meeting that the President had this morning concerning land use policy included Secretary Butz. After that meeting, the President asked Secretary Butz to come to his office, where they spent about 15 minutes together, and which accounted for my being late coming out here.

At that meeting, Secretary Butz showed the President a statement, which he has issued from the Agriculture Department, which you may, no doubt, have seen on the wires. Have you?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: The President told him that the statement issued by Secretary Butz at the Agriculture Department was not adequate and that what was needed was to add an apology to any and all individuals who were offended by the Secretary's remarks.

For his own part, the President said he disapproved of the remarks, disavowed the remarks, and that the remarks in no way represented his own views. Following that, the President told the Secretary that he did not feel that this comment, much as he disapproved it, justified Secretary Butz' dismissal.

Q Did the President seem angry?

MR. NESSEN: I think I will let the tone of these remarks speak for themselves.

Q Did the President concede that one who does not play the game should not make the rules?

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

Q Well, that is what the remark was all about.

Q The question is carrying out the remark. Are you going to answer that?

MR. NESSEN: I think the President's remarks to the Secretary are pretty clear.

Q Ron, let me put it another way: Does the President object to the sentiment expressed by Butz, as well as the tone?

MR. NESSEN: I said he disapproves, disavows and in no way do they represent his views.

Q What are his views on family planning?

MR. NESSEN: I thought somebody might ask me that. Do you mean in terms of birth control?

Q Yes, I do.

Q Let's follow this up. Does Butz intend to apologize?

MR. NESSEN: Well, the President told him to. We will have to see what he does later in the day.

Q What is the answer to the other question?

MR. NESSEN: I frankly don't see the need to open up a whole discussion of the President's views on family planning, which have been on the record in terms of votes he has taken and positions. I think he has spoken, it seems to me, forcefully concerning his views about Secretary Butz' remarks. I don't know that we need a long dissertation on his remarks about family planning.

Q For or against?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think it is that simple, Jim, that you can say he is for it or against it. Secretary Kissinger spoke of the role of birth control in connection with the Food Conference in Rome. You could certainly take that as Administration position. What the HEW is doing in terms of birth control, I think you can take that as an Administration position. I just do not think that the President's personal views on it really have any part in his reaction to Secretary Butz' remark.

Q Ron, on another subject, if I may, is the President going to back the Brookes bill regarding only one mansion or place to be guarded by the Secret Service, and in connection with that, have you followed up -- you said you would check about the Secret Service agents in Key Biscayne and the 300 thousand dollarsworth of Armed Forces personnel to keep the White House lunch at \$2.00. You said you would check on those two items. What have you found, and is the President going to back the Brookes bill?

MR. NESSEN: On the Brookes bill, I think I will have to find out because I don't know. The Secret Service agents in San Clemente, the Secret Service is under the Treasury Department.

Q I mean in Key Biscayne,

MR. NESSEN: The Secret Service agents are under the Treasury Department, and you have to check with the Treasury Department as to whether they have any agents there and, if so, why,

On the White House Mess, I was not able to come up with a determination of whether you are right on the \$900,000 figure because it is fairly complex and it takes time to figure out that number, and I do not have it today.

I looked into the matter, though.

Q Ron, a clarifying question on Secretary Butz. Is the President's annoyance at what the Secretary said concerning birth control, or that it was done in dialect?

MR. NESSEN: What I have told you about the President's reaction refers to the entire comments that Secretary Butz made,

Q May I ask you for the last sentence again about the fact that the statement does not justify his dismissal?

MR. NESSEN: He told the Secretary he did not think this comment alone justified his dismissal.

Q Is he going to be a member of the Ford Cabinet in 1975?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know of any change,

Q Who else was in the Oval Office?

MR. NESSEN: Nobody,

Q Just you were there?

MR. NESSEN: No, I was not,

Q Ron, did the Secretary offer to resign?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have any indication that he did, Jim.

Q Did he agree to elaborate on his statement?

MR. NESSEN: That is my understanding.

Q Ron, is the President a bit annoyed that he is having to spend so much time lately reminding very senior members of his team not to make ethnic and racial slurs? That is the second one, and has he said something about, "We have to get these people straightened out," or a little awareness group? I mean this in a serious way.

MR. NESSEN: I know you do, Bob. I think the President's attitude toward both of these episodes has been relayed by me. You know, he did spend ten minutes with General Brown that day -- I think we told you that -- and 15 minutes today with Secretary Butz. So, I do not think you could say he is spending so much time on this problem.

MORE

Q No, but does he wonder why people -- it seems sort of basic, both of these questions.

MR. NESSEN: I have not asked him that directly, and I have not heard him speak directly to it. I get the feeling he does not think that this is something that is a pattern or that is endemic in this Administration. These are two isolated episodes.

Q Is there going to be a muzzle memo or anything?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think so.

Q There are many stories appearing in the papers, Ron, about White House sources giving names of people for the new Cabinet. Who are the sources, and what are the names?

MR. NESSEN: I have seen those. I would not presume to give away anybody's sources. I don't know who the sources are, anyhow.

Q Ron, can you tell us now about this mysterious phone call that delayed the briefing?

MR. NESSEN: It was not a phone call. I went in to see the President after his meeting with Secretary Butz to find out what had transpired.

Q Ron, can I ask you about the Frankfort Arsenal meeting?

MR. NESSEN: I know little or nothing about it.

Q I ask you a little more general question. The base closing decisions announced by the Pentagon apparently have the approval of the President. Is the President open to reconsideration of any specific base closings ordered by the Pentagon?

MR. NESSEN: I think the President is willing to listen to any complaints of this kind and take them under advice.

Q So, if other mayors and Members of Congress want to come in and talk about the same subject, he is open to that?

MR. NESSEN: I think he is.

Q Is the President giving any kind of review, formal or otherwise, to his well-known and publicly announced opposition to gas taxes, increases?

MR. NESSEN: Not that I am aware of, Tom.

Q Ron, on the Peking matter, do you see that coming at the end of next year, and I assume that will be arranged through diplomatic channels.

MR. NESSEN: I don't have even the vaguest notion at what time of the year it is going to come, Nick.

Q Ron, all the new House Members -- and I guess Senators, too -- all the House Members of both parties are coming to town this weekend.

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Is the President going to see these people at any time?

MR. NESSEN: It has been talked about, Sarah, and there is nothing I can announce right now.

Q Ron, I would like to ask you a question relating to the Rome conference. Father Hesburgh sent a letter to the President urging that the United States increase its shipments of food to needy countries, starving countries, by two million tons immediately and another two million tons next year, and four Senators have requested a meeting with the President some time ago -- Senator Clark, Senator Humphrey, and two others -- on this question of increasing food shipments.

Can you tell me why Father Hesburgh has not received any answer to his letter, when he will, and if the President is going to meet with these four Senators?

MR. NESSEN: I do not know that Father Hesburgh has not received a reply. He certainly will receive a reply if he has not. I have not heard anything about a meeting with the four Senators, but I just want to repeat again what the President's position is, which is, as stated by Secretary Kissinger in Rome, the United States will increase its food aid.

The only question is by how much, and as we have said again and again, the decision on how much will be made after the next crop report is in, which will be about the middle of December. The commitment will be reviewed every three months after that.

The President is doing it this way so he can be sure that the increase in our food aid commitment does not have an adverse effect on the prices that American housewives pay in the supermarket.

I also want to emphasize, Jim -- I don't know if you were here last week when we gave out some figures on the amount of food aid -- were you here when we did that?

Q I don't remember it.

MR. NESSEN: Would you want to hear them again?

Q Sure.

MR. NESSEN: So far in this fiscal year -- that is less than six months -- the United States has committed the following food assistance under Public Law 480: 300,000 tons of grain to India, 300,000 tons of food to India; 250,000 tons of food to Bangladesh, and 300,000 tons of food to Egypt, and other amounts, smaller amounts, to many other countries. That is in less than six months.

Secretary Kissinger has promised that there will be an increase in the American food aid commitment, so that is where it stands.

Q Ron, one of the points Father Hesberg and the Senators are making is that if these shipments of food are to be increased, the commitment has to be made very, very soon. I think they are saying it should have been made already since the ships have to be found to transport it, and there is some competition, of course, with ordinary commercial shipping; in other words, they are citing urgency because of the logistics of it.

Can you give us any kind of time frame? You say it will be made after the crop reports come in in mid-December, which is --

MR. NESSEN: -- a little more than two weeks.

Q -- a little more than two weeks away. You are saying, in effect, there will be no decision until then, is that right?

MR. NESSEN: That is what we have said ever since Rome. Let me make one other point about Rome, because Dr. Kissinger talked to me about this several times.

He feels that perhaps these demands for immediate commitments may have overshadowed another point of discussion at Rome he considers quite important, and that is the long-range reorganization of the world feeding system, farming, and distribution, that really the problem of world hunger is not going to be solved by an immediate large American increase in its shipments, that the real solution to the problem lies in the long-term structural change in the way food is distributed and grown, and that a beginning was made to that in Rome and that in the long run he feels that that is just as important or more important than the immediate problem of increasing the food aid commitment.

Q But he realizes that the U.S. is taking really a rap on this, doesn't he, that we are ignoring the presently hungry as Kissinger plans for the future, and so forth. There is a present problem.

MR. NESSEN: He realizes the United States is taking the rap. He does not agree with the rap.

Q Ron, FatherHesburgh also pointed out the American food aid has dropped from a high of 18 million tons in the early sixties down to nine in the early seventies, and now to three million tons. Is this accurate, and does the Administration have any comment on the seeming drastic reduction over the years?

MR. NESSEN: Give me those food figures again.

Q Eighteen million in early sixties, to nine in the early seventies, to three million this year.

MR. NESSEN: Let me check those figures. I have not done that much research on the subject.

Let me correct something for Larry here.

Senator Schweiker will attend the 2 p.m. meeting. I am sorry I did not have that.

Q Ron, when will the White House begin its program of trying to restructure the planning and distribution of food?

MR. NESSEN: When will they begin? They have begun. That was one of the points that Secretary Kissinger made in his speech at Rome.

Q But when are we going to have action on this?

MR. NESSEN: Sarah, the structural change in the world distribution and growing system is not something the United States can do alone, and the Rome conference, as you know, agreed to set up these various international bodies to work on this problem.

To make a major structural change in the world food system is not something you can put into effect in a week or so.

Have you read the Secretary's Rome speech?

Q Is there anything you plan to say in the way of conferences in the next few months, in this country, as we are getting into a new planting season early next year, anything that will be done in that regard?

MR. NESSEN: In terms of changing the world structure?

Q Maybe we should change our own to conform to this, but is there anything in the way of action that you plan in this country on this soon?

MR. NESSEN: I suggest you read the President's message to Congress on the conference, which included a number of steps to increase production, change or drop marketing orders and assure farmers of adequate fertilizer and so forth. The President has addressed this problem because it is a domestic problem as well as an international problem.

Q That is all part of it. You do not plan anything new or different?

MR. NESSEN: At the moment, I am not aware of anything, Sarah.

Dick?

Q Could you just get straight the Butz thing? One final question. Did the President tell the Secretary to make an apology or resign?

MR. NESSEN: I beg your pardon?

Q You said the President told Secretary Butz that what he said, his statement, was not enough and that an apology was needed. You say it is your understanding, I think, that the Secretary is going to make that apology. Did the President in effect then tell the Secretary to either make the apology or get out of the Cabinet?

MR. NESSEN: Not that I am aware of.

Q Ron, did Dr. Kissinger express any chagrin about not getting to see Mao Tse-tung for the first time since he has been going there and, number two, is there any indication that any Chinese leaders might be visiting America?

MR. NESSEN: I have not talked to Dr. Kissinger about not seeing Chairman Mao, so I do not know what his reaction to that is. I know of no plans for Chinese leaders to come to the United States.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Ron.

END (AT 12:57 P.M. EST)