

This Copy For \_\_\_\_\_

NEWS CONFERENCE

#143

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 11:10 A.M. EST

FEBRUARY 12, 1975

WEDNESDAY

MR. NESSEN: I don't have all that much today. Maybe we can keep it short.

At 11 o'clock the President, right about now, is beginning a meeting with Vice President Rockefeller, Bill Seidman, Alan Greenspan, Jim Lynn, Arthur Burns, Frank Zarb, and Steven Gardner, who is the Deputy Secretary of Treasury. It is one of the periodic meetings to review the current state of the economy. Jack Hushen is in that meeting, and if there is anything to report, he will do it later.

The President is leaving the south grounds at 12:20 to go by motorcade to the Lincoln Memorial to participate in the wreath laying ceremony on Lincoln's Birthday. He will have brief, off-the-cuff remarks, which we will have available here in an as delivered text later on.

There is full coverage of that. There will be a travel pool, and the names of those have been posted. The travel pool will be meeting Bill Roberts here in the press room at 12:10.

At 2:00 o'clock this afternoon, the President is meeting with Vice President Rockefeller in the Oval Office for one of their regular weekly meetings.

Q What do they do in their regular meetings?

MR. NESSEN. They talk.

Q About what?

MR. NESSEN. About whatever they want to talk about.

Q Does the President sound off to Rockefeller for advice on domestic affairs or foreign affairs?

MR. NESSEN: I have not attended the meetings, so I do not know precisely what they talk about.

Q Ron, do you know whether or not they will discuss the Domestic Council organization today?

MR. NESSEN: I don't, Phil.

MORE

#143

Q Can you confirm that two Rockefeller men will be named to the Council as Director and Deputy?

MR. NESSEN: No, I cannot confirm that.

Q Can you deny it?

MR. NESSEN: I won't say anything one way or the other until we are ready to announce somebody for that job.

Q Can you give us a general indication of when this might come?

MR. NESSEN: I cannot.

We do have one nomination, however, today.

Mr. William G. Bowdler of Florida to be Ambassador to the Republic of South Africa. He will succeed John G. Hurd, who is resigning. Mr. Bowdler has served since 1973 as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs. He has also been Ambassador previously to Guatemala and to El Salvador. He is a career Foreign Service officer and I think you have copies of his biography.

Q Is that what we used to know as the Union of South Africa or is it some other country?

Q Is it South Africa, Johannesburg?

MR. NESSEN. Yes, that is your regular basic South Africa.

Q Can you tell us whether he is Republican or Democrat? Can you tell us whether he is white or non-white?

MR. NESSEN: I think you can check and see in your biography. I don't know if Foreign Service officers political affiliations are even jotted down anywhere.

Q He is the only NSC member who has been on the White House staff for quite a while, isn't he?

MR. NESSEN: The biography is here, if I can find it.

He was Deputy Assisstant Secretary of State. He was Ambassador to Guatemala and El Salvador, Executive Liaison Officer for Latin American Affairs at the White House, Deputy Coordinator of Cuban Affairs, the International Relations Officer of the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs, and so forth.

Q There was another question I asked you about, Ron. Is he white or non-white?

MR. NESSEN: I have no idea.

Q What does the coordinator of Cuban affairs do when we do not have any relationship with Cuba?

MR. NESSEN: What year was that?

Q 1963 and 1964.

MR. NESSEN: We do have this embassy down there representing our affairs. There are matters that needed to be taken care of. It is a State Department office, and you ought to check with them to find out precisely what the job was.

MORE

Q Do you know if he has ever been to South Africa?

MR. NESSEN: You need to check with the State Department.

Q Do you know why Hurd is resigning?

MR. NESSEN: I don't. You can check with the State Department.

Q With all that Latin American background, why is he going to Africa?

Q Seriously, I really would like to know the relationship between the Ambassador and the President.

MR. NESSEN: I will need to check that for you, Dick. I don't know.

There are some other routine announcements, which you have, some news about tomorrow's travel. The other routine announcements deal with a U.S. Attorney for Utah, a U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Texas, and the reappointment of U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Michigan.

Some details on the trip tomorrow.

The President will be leaving the South Lawn by helicopter at 2:50 tomorrow and will leave Andrews at 3:10. He arrives at JFK at 3:55 and will go to Wall Street by helicopter to the Wall Street pad, getting there at 4:30.

The press bus will leave the Southwest Gate at 12:45. I guess we won't have a briefing tomorrow. The check-in at Andrews is at 1:30 for those of you who want to go directly out there, although if you take your car to Andrews you never know where you are going to come back to. (Laughter)

The press plane will go to the Marine Terminal at LaGuardia, arriving there at 3 o'clock. The buses will take you to Wall Street, where you will arrive at about 4 o'clock, and that is a half hour before the President speaks, so you will have time to get organized.

The speech to the Security Analysts will deal with the economy. There will be a very brief question and answer session after the speech, in which the President will respond to questions by the Security Analysts.

I do not have the details of the evening speech. It is at the Waldorf.

Q That will be open, won't it?

MR. NESSEN: The Security Analysts?

Q Yes. I understand they requested it be open to the press.

MR. NESSEN: I don't know why it would not be.

Q What is the formal title -- New York Society of Security Analysts?

MR. NESSEN: New York Society of Security Analysts. The evening speech is at the Waldorf, and it is a dinner in honor of Governor Rockefeller by the New York State Republican Committee.

The President will speak. The speech will deal with the roles of the President and Congress in foreign policy, and some thoughts the President has about Congress' proper role in foreign policy.

We will have texts for you as early as we can.

Q What time will that be?

MR. NESSEN: It will be following dinner, so it sounds like a 9 to 9:30 speech to me.

MORE

Q Brief Q and A, can you give us an idea, 15 minutes?

MR. NESSEN: I think maybe even less than 15 minutes.

Q Do you expect the text before departure for New York, the speech?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know. It all depends on when they finish writing it.

Q Where at JFK will he land?

Q Ron, will we be able to get the first one here tomorrow?

MR. NESSEN: The security analysts speech?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: I hope so.

Q What time is the dinner, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know, 7:30 or 8:00 o'clock. We will have that out later today, I think.

Q Ron, will our New York people have any trouble getting in with New York press passes?

MR. NESSEN: No, because we told them enough ahead of time. They do have a credentials problem in New York unless you give them enough notice, but we told them last weekend to start credentialing people.

Q Ron, the nighttime speech, is that going to be for release any earlier than he delivers it?

MR. NESSEN: Any earlier than the speaking time?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: Did you want it for flat AMs, six o'clock, something like that?

Q That would be fine.

MR. NESSEN: Was that your thought?

Q That way we could --

MR. NESSEN: Let me look into it and see if that is possible.

Q Where does he arrive at Kennedy?

MR. NESSEN: What is that terminal he always pulls up to? We will find out.

Okay. That is about the size of it.

Q Ron, the Senate Finance Committee -- the continuing saga -- voted, I believe, eleven to two this morning the 90-day delay. Do you have any reaction to that, and secondly, what is the White House opinion of the suggested Dole compromise whereby the \$1 a barrel fee will stay in effect, but the rest would be delayed for 90 days?

MR. NESSEN: It is a two part question. Any reaction to the Finance Committee vote this morning. Did they vote in favor of delaying the tariff?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: That was part one.

Part two was, any reaction to Senator Dole's proposal.

There is no reaction to the Senate Finance Committee vote except the President just believes Congress is wasting time trying to delay action and he thinks they ought to put all this aside and start to work on his energy program which is aimed at cutting off dependence on insecure supplies of oil from the Arabs and others and also would provide a permanent tax cut for Americans and that is what Congress should be working on and not this.

The Dole proposal, the President does appreciate the Senator's interest in this matter, but prefers that the Congress get to the substance of the energy matter and not try to find formulas for delaying action.

Q Ron, the President said in his news conference that he will not tolerate delay or inaction. What can he do about it?

MR. NESSEN: He can do exactly what he is doing which is to try to inform the public of the substance of his proposals and increase his support in the public so that they in turn will let their Members of Congress know.

Secondly, he has scheduled a series of meetings for next week with Members of Congress, especially the Senate, to explain his position to them and attempt to pick up more support.

Q Will he go out of town next week, Ron.

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Will he go out of town the rest of the month on such tours as this?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have anything specific to give you today.

Q Yesterday the President announced the release of some impounded highway money to create jobs. Does he have anything else like that potentially available to him, and if he does, has he said anything about any plans to pull those things out of the hat?

MR. NESSEN: No. As I said the other day and as he said last night, he is keeping a watch on the economy, and if it does get worse or if he feels that there are other things he could do to create jobs, he would not hesitate to do them.

Q Ron, is he going to suggest any cuts elsewhere to make up for the increases in the fiscal 1976 budget that will be caused by the release of the highway funds?

MR. NESSEN: The effect on the budget is, in 1975, in the months remaining in 1975, there would only be \$50 million of this money spent, actually laid out. In 1976 the effect would be \$1 billion, about \$1 billion, perhaps a little less than \$1 billion, and the rest would go out in 1977 and 1978.

But, as he explained last night, the effect on jobs and the fact that some of that money will come back in the form of revenues he feels justifies this.

Q Do you have any figures on how many jobs get created in the rest of fiscal 1975 and 1976?

MR. NESSEN: These are not firm figures, but there are estimated figures that directly -- and I am not sure all these jobs would be created in 1975; they would be created as these projects get underway -- directly the estimate is perhaps 56,000 jobs and indirectly -- that is, people who work for suppliers and others -- would be 70,000, for a total of 126,000, approximately.

Q But that is over the whole life of the construction projects that are involved. Isn't there a direct relationship between the amount of money expended in each fiscal year and the amount of jobs created?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have those figures, Mort, if there are.



Q Ron, why did the President say 140,000 if it is --

MR. NESSEN: I think it was a slip of the tongue. He had the same list I had, and I think the number slipped his mind.

Q Are you saying the budget deficit for fiscal 1976 will then remain at \$52 billion and will not be increased by this due to the tax revenues you expect to get back?

MR. NESSEN: No. I don't think the offsetting tax revenues will make up for the total amount.

Q What deficit will be added, then?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have the exact figure.

Q Ron, what Senators is the President going to meet with next week and when is that?

MR. NESSEN: He has a number of events next week. He is going to meet the GOP Steering Committee Monday evening.

Q House or Senate?

MR. NESSEN: Senate GOP Steering Committee.

Q Is that a dinner?

MR. NESSEN: A dinner, right, and breakfast Tuesday with the House and Senate Republican leadership and then again Tuesday at dinner with the Senate Wednesday Club.

He is meeting the Wednesday Club on Tuesday, is that permitted, and on Wednesday he will have the Tuesday Club. No, on Wednesday he will have the Southern Senators of both parties.

Q Dinner, is that?

MR. NESSEN: Breakfast.

Q Will they have grits?

MR. NESSEN: I would not doubt it a bit, Helen.

Also Wednesday, at a reception, he will have the Republican freshmen House Members.

Q Dinner?

MR. NESSEN: Reception, and Thursday he will have the bipartisan leaders of the Senate and House for breakfast.

Q The reception for freshmen, is that both parties or Republicans?

MR. NESSEN: House Republican freshmen.

Q What is the purpose of these meetings?

MR. NESSEN: As I say, to win additional support for his program.

Q What is this going to do --

Q When is the last one?

MR. NESSEN: Thursday, breakfast with the House and Senate bipartisan leaders.

Q What is this going to do to the White House food budget?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know, Fran.

Q Ron, in addition to trying to win support, is the President willing to listen to the bipartisan Congressional leaders and consider changes in his energy proposal that they may suggest?

MR. NESSEN: Well, the President is always willing to listen to ideas from Congressional leaders. At the moment, he has heard no proposal for a comprehensive energy plan that he could work on a compromise.

Q Aside from a comprehensive proposal and a compromise, is he willing to consider -- the question was is he willing to listen and consider changes proposed by members of the bipartisan leadership?

MR. NESSEN: He is always willing to listen.

Q And consider --

MR. NESSEN: That is very hypothetical, Ted. Do they have any suggestion and what is the quality of their suggestion? Why don't we wait until they are here and see what they have to say.

Q Ron, they have suggested already that perhaps the million barrels a day reduction could be phased in more gradually.

MR. NESSEN: I think the President answered that exact question last night. I think he was asked that last night.

Q Ron, did you finish the week's schedule?

MR. NESSEN: That is the schedule of meetings with the Congressional Members next week.

Q When is he going to meet with the Northern Senators?

MR. NESSEN: I would suspect -- he has met with Senators from the East and North and West and South and he will continue to.

Q Ron, the Governors are in town next week for a national convention. Is he going to meet with them?

MR. NESSEN: I have not seen the schedule for next week and I am not sure.

Q You just gave us a list.

MR. NESSEN: I mean I have not seen that schedule for next week.

Q Ron, do you have any fresh evidence that the President is picking up support for his economic and energy proposals as a result of these trips?

MR. NESSEN: I think somebody asked him that last night and he felt that he had made some headway with the Governors. Yes, he thinks that his explanation of his program is getting across.

Q I am talking of hard evidence, polls, letters, anything like that, that might be reflective of a change or polarization of the public sentiment?

MR. NESSEN: Well, I don't know that public sentiment was ever against the program. I have not seen anything that goes specifically to that.

Q Has he had any reports from any Members of Congress that they have gotten overwhelming mail that they should straighten up and go get behind the President?

MR. NESSEN: I will have to check into that.

I have a couple of points that were asked earlier. The President's plane will land at JFK at the TWA training facility. All the press plane pilots will be there. And the President's remarks tomorrow night in New York are at 9:30.

Q Are they open?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, full coverage.

Q Is the President going to let the food stamp bill become law?

MR. NESSEN: There has not been any decision made on that, Helen.

Q When does he have to decide on that, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: The 19th, that is a week from today, he has to decide.

Q Ron, does the President intend to make Carla Hills Secretary of HUD?

MR. NESSEN: I think we will just have to wait until he picks somebody for that job until we announce it.

Q When is he expected to do that, soon?

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

Q Does the President have any reaction to the current heavy absenteeism in Congress in the past couple of days?

MR. NESSEN: I think that is a matter for the Members and their constituents to think about. He has made his views clear on the need for action.

Q Ron, you said a minute ago the President thinks his message is getting across. Were you referring to his travels around the country or in his past meetings with Members of Congress?

MR. NESSEN: Both.

Q Ron, what is the President's reaction to the National Science Foundation report on how long our oil supply is going to last that contradicts those of the Administration advisers?

MR. NESSEN: Well, that is just being studied over here to see what they base their figures on. A quick study indicates that some of their figures do not jibe with some of the figures we have here. For instance, they estimated that the reserve oil was something like 117 billion barrels and the FEA -- the geological survey, I should say -- estimates reserves at 200 billion to 400 billion. The Academy of Science estimated 113 billion.

The White House is reviewing their study to determine how they arrived at it. But a quick look at it indicates that they came up with a figure of 113 billion barrels of oil reserves in America.

The U.S. Geological Survey estimates that actually the reserve is 200 billion to 400 billion barrels. In developing the President's program it was decided to err on the conservative side and so a figure of 150 billion barrels was used by the FEA in putting together the program, which is only slightly above the Academy of Science's estimate and far below what the Geological Survey thinks is there.

Also the President's program is not based entirely on oil. In fact, it is based on reducing oil consumption and making greater use of nuclear, coal, geothermal, solar and synthetic fuels and others. But when we have had time to look at this more thoroughly I can give you some more perhaps.

MORE

#1433

Q Ron, does the President agree with General Weyand that the aid to South Vietnam will have to continue for five to ten years?

MR. NESSEN: I think the President said to the Chicago Tribune that three more years of an adequate appropriation would -- if he could work that out with Congress -- he would think that would be all.

Q On what is he basing his judgment if the military commander there says it will take five to ten years?

MR. NESSEN: Based on his belief that South Vietnam has the will to defend itself and an economy that can support itself if the violations and attacks by the North would stop, and that it has an economy which would allow it to feed its own people and purchase its own arms, if they can survive in the shortrun.

Q Everything is "iffy" then?

MR. NESSEN: No. I say they are based on his belief.

Q If the attacks on North Vietnam do not stop, does that mean the President thinks it will take longer than three years?

MR. NESSEN: That is hypothetical, Ted.

Q Excuse me. You are the one that put the if in there. You said three years if the attacks by North Vietnam stop.

MR. NESSEN: Which we would hope they would do.

Q Is oil a consideration in his thinking?

MR. NESSEN: I said before it was not a consideration in his thinking.

Q Ron, if it is not, why then does he feel to have the economy survive in the longrun, but not the shortrun, is he not saying subtly it will take some time to bring that oil on stream?

MR. NESSEN: I think we said before when we talked about oil here, that whatever oil they may have, if they have any, could be a basis for giving them a solid and prosperous economy.

Q Then he does disagree with the military commander?

MR. NESSEN: Why don't I just stick with his words, Helen, that he thinks three more years of adequate appropriation would be all that is needed.

Q You are not conditioning that now on the stopping of tax, are you? He didn't.

MR. NESSEN: I am not conditioning it on anything, and I am not changing anything he said. I am sticking with precisely what he told the Tribune.

Q So, he is going to continue to ask the American people for three years for aid to South Vietnam?

MR. NESSEN: Helen, I am not sure, as I said before, that there is any need to reopen a great Vietnam debate about the \$300 million that was asked for.

Q Why not?

MR. NESSEN: Because Congress voted authorization of \$1 billion for this year and Congressman Ullman said on television that he thought the President's request for next year would go through with very little change. There does not seem to be any mood for a major moral debate about Vietnam.

Q Ron, does the President feel that in light of the North Vietnamese violations, the United States, if Congress would agree, would be justified in going back into Vietnam in some way to violate the Paris accords?

MR. NESSEN: I think he said himself there are no plans to do that.

Q Does he feel it would be justified in light of their violation of the Paris accords?

MR. NESSEN: There are no plans to do it.

Q Does he feel it would be justified?

MR. NESSEN: There are no plans.

Q What does the President think about President Thieu closing five newspapers in Saigon, particularly since we tried to keep live newspapers in Chile?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what he thinks about that, Helen. I will have to check for you.

Q But he does believe in freedom of the press?

MR. NESSEN: He certainly does.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Ron.

END (AT 11:40 A.M. EST)