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NEWS CONFERENCE

#204

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 12 NOON EDT

MAY 5, 1975

MONDAY

MR. NESSEN: The President met this morning mostly with members of his staff.

At 12:45 the President will greet the Multiple Sclerosis Mother and Father of the Year. They are people who have multiple sclerosis and have demonstrated outstanding leadership and courage. They are selected each year prior to the multiple sclerosis hope chest campaign, which runs from Mother's Day to Father's Day.

This year the Multiple Sclerosis Mother of the Year is Mrs. Judie Smith, of Spokane, Washington, who has sons aged four and five and is active in community affairs.

The Multiple Sclerosis Father of the Year is Robert Flader, 43, of Norfolk, Virginia, a 21-year Navy veteran, who was a band leader at the U.S. Naval School of Music.

As I say, the ceremony is at 12:45, and there will be a pool going in and pictures, if you would like to take them.

Q Would you back up one item and tell us at the staff meeting which is held regularly which members attended this morning?

MR. NESSEN: It is a whole series of meetings with members of this staff that goes on each morning.

Q Do you want to mention that?

MR. NESSEN: Scowcroft, Hartmann, Rumsfeld, Marsh, Kissinger, Nessen and Friedersdorf, among others.

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The President will hold a news conference tomorrow at 7:30 in Room 450 of the EOB. If you care to, it will be open to full coverage, including television, if that is desired by anyone, and I would expect the President to spend most of the afternoon again meeting with staff members and preparing for his news conference.

Q This is tomorrow at 7:30?

MR. NESSEN: Tomorrow at 7:30.

Q There will be a briefing here tomorrow then?

MR. NESSEN: Why don't we say no now and take a look at it in the morning and see if anything has come up that would require one.

Q Did you mean he was going to spend this afternoon on it or tomorrow?

MR. NESSEN: Both.

We will say now no briefing and take a look at it in the morning and see if one is needed.

Looking ahead, after tomorrow, you know about the meetings with foreign leaders on Wednesday, the Prime Ministers of New Zealand, Australia and Great Britain, and on Thursday the Prime Minister of Singapore.

I think you have been given just before I came out here the announcement of a visit by Prime Minister Rabin in June on the 11th, and 12th. Did everybody get that?

The President is sending to Congress today a budget amendment in the amount of \$231,000, for the Civil Service Commission. We have the details of that in the Press Office, if you want to get them.

You also have a release showing the President has declared a major disaster area for the State of Missouri as a result of storms there on April 23.

The President is transmitting to Congress a request for approximately \$1 billion in supplemental appropriations for this fiscal year for the food stamp and child nutrition programs. This is caused partly by an increase in the number of participants beyond what was anticipated.

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The anticipated number was 15 million households. The actual number is coming in at about 18 million households. \$200 million of the request is necessitated by Congress declining to go along with the President's proposals on food stamps.

The Department of Agriculture is working to develop recommendations which would focus the benefits on the families which need it most and to provide administrative reforms.

We have copies of the President's letters requesting this extra billion dollars and also other information is in the Press Office following the briefing.

Q How does this fit in with the hold-down on spending? Just a factual question. Did you say \$1 billion?

MR. NESSEN: \$1 billion 15 million is the actual number.

Q How does this fit in with the holddown on new programs, spending?

MR. NESSEN: It is not a new program, and as I say, \$200 million of it is required by Congress declining to go along and the rest of it by the increase in the number of families on food stamps.

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Q Ron, in light of King Hussein's statements as to what Israel should give up, in light of your promise to track down questions, I am wondering if now you can tell us, please, is this what the President means by Israel being flexible, giving up the land it has occupied since the Six Day War or not?

MR. NESSEN: I have not been able to get the kind of answer I think you are looking for, Les.

Q Ron, have you gotten any answer, have you ever raised this issue with the President? It is a very important statement that he made that Israel should be more flexible but the Israelis are puzzled as to how they could be more flexible. What does the President want?

MR. NESSEN: I am not able to provide an answer, Les.

Q Would you take it and get an answer? Would you be willing to do that, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: I have brought it up, Les, and I am not able to provide you with an answer.

Q I see. Thank you.

Q Ron, Congress is reporting they are getting a lot of mail, negative reaction, to bringing the Vietnamese refugees in. What is the President's reaction to this? Is he disturbed by it?

MR. NESSEN: He believes that his views, as expressed in his statement last week, and elsewhere, reflect the way he intends to handle the problem and the way he thinks the majority of Americans do view the problem.

He believes that the kind of opposition you are talking about does not reflect the majority of the views of the American people.

Q Is the White House getting mail?

MR. NESSEN: I have not checked the mail on the subject of refugees, but I can.

Q Are you through? Are you ready for questions?

MR. NESSEN: I don't see anything else. Yes.

Q On that point, Senator McGovern, I take it, is proposing that we make it possible for South Vietnamese who want to go back to get back to South Vietnam, which would involve some expenditures and use of aircraft, and what not. Is there any reaction, White House reaction, to that, or position on it?

MR. NESSEN: Let me say this: I think some of you may know by now that Ambassador Brown testified this morning on the Hill and disclosed that the Administration is, or has, prepared legislation requesting \$507 million for Vietnamese refugee resettlement and relocation. We plan to pipe the State Department briefing in here today starting at 12:30, or just a little later, perhaps.

If Dean Brown is back from the Hill, he will appear at this briefing and will answer questions about this legislation. I have the legislation and could help out with some of the questions, perhaps.

Specifically, Bill, the refugees, as far as can be determined, most of them left voluntarily. If others, if some later decide that they would rather return, they are, of course, free to do so. As for how to pay for their return if they want to return, that issue has not been faced yet.

Q Ron, I wonder if I could go back to Ralph Harris' question for a minute. You did not seem very exercised, or officially indignant, or anything else, about this billion dollar addition to the cost of food stamps and child care programs which prompts me to ask you about various published stories that the revenues coming in are better than expected, tax revenues, and leads me to inquire whether or not your comparative calm on this additional billion dollars is due to the fact that revenues are exceeding expectations and whether or not this \$50 to \$60 billion deficit perhaps is going to be somewhat less than anticipated and the fiscal crisis perhaps not quite as great.

What I am really asking you is, is there a background of more money coming in that led you to take this billion dollar thing rather calmly?

MR. NESSEN: No, I think you have a couple of things mixed up there, Jim. This billion dollars will be for fiscal 1975.

Q I understand that.

MR. NESSEN: That is the year we are in now, and I did point out that \$200 million of it would not have been necessary if Congress had gone along with his food stamp proposals. And I pointed out the Agriculture Department is working on a number of things that would focus this more on the people who really need it and would carry out administrative reforms.

Now, on the question of whether revenues are greater than expected, if I understood Bill Simon correctly, the revenues are about what was anticipated or will end up as about what was anticipated. There may be a slight bulge now, but by the end of the fiscal year, it will be about what was anticipated.

Q In other words, these stories that they are returning ahead of expectations, you are describing merely as a bulge at the moment, but you are expecting it to come out pretty much this way, both this year and next year, in terms of spending?

MR. NESSEN: He was talking about this year.

Q Ron, does the Administration now have any further indications to confirm or deny the stories published by various papers here about the bloodbath taking place in Cambodia and does the Administration have any information as to what is now happening in South Vietnam?

MR. NESSEN: Yes. I think some of you probably saw the story in one of the news magazines -- I forget which one it was -- concerning Cambodia. I guess the fact is that the President did mention to some people last week that intelligence information had indicated that there had been somewhere between 80 and 90 Cambodian officers and their wives killed there. Bob Anderson, at the State Department, is prepared to provide more details of that.

The reports from Cambodia are incomplete and sketchy, obviously, but there is enough evidence of executions and repression to know that there are reprisals and killings going on.

Q Is this the beheadings that were reported?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have the details but Bob Anderson has some. There is tight censorship in Vietnam so it is not possible to verify reports that are coming from various places. There are those reports and it is not possible to verify them.

Q Vietnam?

MR. NESSEN: I am talking about Vietnam now.

Q What reprisals are you referring to in Vietnam?

MR. NESSEN: There have been some reports, as you probably all know, by people who stayed behind in the occupied areas for a week or so, or ten days after the occupation, and then came out and talked about policemen being killed in Danang, and those kinds of reports.

Q Ron, would the reports of the executions in Cambodia have a negative effect on the President's decision to ultimately recognize the new Cambodian government? Does it have to push any diplomatic recognition back months?

MR. NESSEN: I would not say one way or the other on that, Walt. That is really a premature question and I don't have the answer to it.

Q Ron, on Vietnam, are you saying that you cannot confirm or give any enlightenment as to those Vietnam reports as opposed to Cambodia where you do have some information to support it?

MR. NESSEN: I am just saying there have been reports and because of the censorship and the obvious fact that there are no Americans left, it is not possible to verify those reports.

Q Do you have any intelligence on this going on in Saigon?

MR. NESSEN: I don't, Phil.

Q Ron, two unrelated questions. Do you have anything to say today on the reports of withdrawal of American troops from Thailand. The second question is, is there anything on the reassessment of the Middle East?

MR. NESSEN: No. That is not completed yet. The question was, do I have anything on the reassessment of Middle East policy, and I say it is not complete yet.

Q Do you have any idea when that will be completed?

MR. NESSEN: It is on the timetable. Six weeks, which should be sometime during May.

Q Will it be completed before he meets with Rabin?

MR. NESSEN: It will be complete in May. He does not see them until June.

I think the Defense Department has announced the details of the withdrawal from Thailand. As we have said here before, it has been a subject of discussion with the Thai government that goes back quite some time before the collapse in Saigon. It will be continuing.

There will be another cutback between now and the summer and other reductions are expected to follow that. As we have said before, the troops are in Thailand at the request of the Thai government and if the Thai government decides they want no more American troops in Thailand, then, of course, they would all be withdrawn.

Q But they have said that?

MR. NESSEN: I am talking about an official document to the government, Jim.

Whatever the troop levels ultimately are, we do expect to continue a close relationship with Thailand.

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Q Ron, I think you said there have been discussions. Of course, there were sometime before the collapse of Saigon, but does this latest increment of the pullout that was announced today, is this verification in the President's views of the domino theory?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know.

Q Are you saying there is no correlation?

MR. NESSEN: I am not saying there is no correlation, I am saying we will just let the event speak for itself.

Q Ron, does the White House have any response to reports that the North Koreans have ordered this country to get out of South Korea?

MR. NESSEN: I have not heard that.

Russ?

Q Ron, going back to what he was asking about the budget and how the revenues are running, a lot of people on the Hill are saying that the \$60 billion budget deficit estimate of the President is overly optimistic to start with because he assumes \$8 billion in revenue this year from off-shore leasing which has been set back beyond what was planned when the budget message was drawn up.

They say it is going to be at least \$4 billion less and that the House and Senate and the budget resolutions they passed last week took that into account so really, you are not as far apart on the numbers as it looks like. Do you have any response to that?

MR. NESSEN: No, except there are others who say it is overly pessimistic and as Jim pointed out, some think the revenues will be better than anticipated. It is the best estimate that the President could obtain at that time.

Q So, he is standing by his own estimate of \$8 billion on off-shore leasing revenues this year?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what the specific breakdown is.

MR. CARLSON: That could be inaccurate, somewhat, but the exact figure is not determined now.

Q What is the reason for the big jump in the number of households needing food stamps? Is it a recession or a miscalculation or what?

MR. CARLSON: The recession is certainly the major contributant.

Q What is the reason? The recession?

MR. CARLSON: Yes.

Q Ron, you may have answered this earlier, but what is the status of this back and forth, whether we are getting the South Vietnamese aircraft that are now in Thailand. Are we satisfied that we are going to get them back, and if so, when?

They have indicated we would, and we have said we want them, but I wonder where it stands now.

MR. NESSEN: Well, at the moment the United States is talking to the government of Thailand about the matter. I don't have anything.

Q Ron, what about this flotilla of 26 South Vietnamese Navy ships on their way to the Philippines?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q What is the situation there? Are they large enough to sail on to Guam. Could they take all these refugees with them that far? We are going to give these ships back or what?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know the answers to those questions.

Q Ron, let me put the question this way: Secretary Schlesinger said he had no trouble in re-establishing title to aircraft and ships which we gave to the Vietnamese. If any of those ships were not purchased with military assistance funds, would we make an attempt to keep them?

MR. NESSEN: I think you have to take this up at the Pentagon, where they have the legal status of these vessels. I am just giving you this for general background because you should get the specific answers from the Pentagon. There is a provision that if military equipment is not used for the purpose for which it was originally intended, the title reverts; but I do think you need to check with the Defense Department on the exact status of these various categories.

Q Apropos of that, Ron, there are reports that we might have recovered a great deal more of the estimated \$5 billion in equipment unless Ambassador Martin had delayed things. Do you have any reaction on that?

MR. NESSEN: On the recovery?

Q Yes. We could have gotten much more equipment this report says. We could have gotten a lot more of the billions we lost except for Ambassador Martin, and I just wondered, does the White House agree with this or disagree?

MR. NESSEN: You mean he ordered the evacuation too soon?

Q Too late, and resisted getting equipment out.

MR. NESSEN: I don't follow you, you know. You mean he should have waited a while longer?

Q No, he should have started it sooner and let more equipment get out. That is just the report. I was not there, Ron.

MR. NESSEN: I don't know that report you refer to.

I don't know the report. I am not being contrary about it.

I just don't know the report you are talking about.

Q The report more specifically was that Martin resisted a DOD desire to get a lot of equipment out, resisted on the grounds that it would undermine morale, et cetera, et cetera.

MR. NESSEN: I see. Secretary Schlesinger has reported I think publicly, certainly privately, that quite a lot of equipment was gotten out. Again, you need to check with the Pentagon, but on the order of a half billion to three-quarters of a billion dollars worth of equipment was retrieved. Most of it was planes and ships and equipment that could be moved.

Q Are these the ones in Thailand?

MR. NESSEN: No, these are others.

Q But that still leaves \$5 billion, an estimated \$5 billion that was not retrieved, which is a lot more than a half billion, and the question was could more of this have been retrieved if Ambassador Martin had not dragged his feet on the evacuation?

MR. NESSEN: The President feels that Ambassador Martin accomplished an extraordinarily difficult task under very trying circumstances and accomplished it well. He was, after all, responsible for the lives and safety of Americans in Vietnam, which was one consideration, and another consideration was to maintain the operation of his mission there and, at the same time, as Secretary Kissinger has said, not to do anything that would cause a panic.

Q So the President thinks --

MR. NESSEN: The President thinks the results speak for themselves. He brought out the Americans safely and he, at the same time, because of the way he handled the evacuation, brought out tens of thousands of Vietnamese whose lives would have been endangered if they had not gotten out.

Q So there is no foundation to the reports we have seen heretofore that the President or the members of this Administration felt Martin was guilty of footdragging and the President has no criticism of Ambassador Martin. Is that correct?

MR. NESSEN: As the statement says, the President thinks the results speak for themselves, Walt.

Q Ron, is it true that Washington had to telephone some third echelon Embassy people up there during the final hours because Martin could not tell Washington just what was going on?

MR. NESSEN: No. I was there during a number of phone calls to Ambassador Martin. In fact, I was amazed at how fast you could get through to the Embassy in Saigon. The phone system is better --

Q Has Ambassador Martin requested a new post, and does the President plan to nominate him for it?

MR. NESSEN: I have not heard yet what the plans are. He is still out there and will be coming back here first. I don't know what the future is.

Q Ron, in his Notre Dame address, the President specifically tied in events in Thailand and the Philippines to the domino theory. Now, you would not talk about that today. I just wonder if this is part of the President's admonitions that we put Vietnam behind us and we do not deal in recriminations. Is that the basis for your not talking about it today?

MR. NESSEN: No. My basis is, as I said, I think things speak for themselves.

Q Does the President have any reaction to the death of Ambassador Keating?

MR. NESSEN: I expect we will have a statement to give you either during this briefing or shortly after this briefing on the death of Ambassador Keating.

Q Ron, does the President's foreign policy reassessment include reassessing the system of arriving at foreign policy decisions specifically including possibly splitting Dr. Kissinger's present double responsibilities?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Does not include that?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Ron, there were some reports that a number of the refugees have brought with them substantial amounts of money in gold and other valuable assets. Does the President feel that those who can afford to pay for their own expenses, and so forth, should be required to do so?

MR. NESSEN: I think something to keep in mind is that when you are talking about gold, there are two categories of gold that you are talking about. There was the South Vietnamese government foreign exchange gold and that was not shipped out of South Vietnam. The other gold is the gold that belongs to individuals. It was legal to own gold in South Vietnam and whether any Vietnamese have brought out their own jewelry and privately owned gold, I have no idea.

If they did, of course, it would be perfectly legal for them to do so.

Q That was not the question.

MR. NESSEN: the question had to do with the payment of their fares, I believe.

Q Expenses in the United States.

MR. NESSEN: Expenses and so forth. I just have not gotten into that much detail of the management of the refugee program, but as I say, Ambassador Brown will be briefing at the State Department and is available for questions otherwise, and can answer that question.

Q Ron, there have been reports -- I have no idea how correct they are or how definite they are or anything -- but there have been reports that President Thieu has been considering the possibility of setting up a government in exile.

MR. NESSEN: I think that was answered, was it not, by -- well, go ahead and ask the question.

Q My question is whether the United States would look with favor and approval on the establishment of a government in exile of South Vietnam?

MR. NESSEN: My memory is that Dr. Kissinger said publicly within the past couple of days that the United States would not recognize a government in exile. I forget what the occasion was. It may have been the press conference the day of the evacuation.

Just to tidy up one detail here on the lost material. The \$5 billion figure -- if that is the correct figure and I don't know what the total is -- whatever it was, much of it was not in a position to be retrieved in the last week or so, or two weeks or three weeks, because if you recall, that was equipment lost in Military Regions I and II. So, the timing of the evacuation had no relevance to the retrieving of that material.

Q On Saturday, Jerry Warren said that he expected Secretary Kissinger to leave his post as Secretary of State at the end of Mr. Ford's current term of office. Have you ever heard the President say anything to that effect? Have you ever heard Dr. Kissinger say he planned to leave after Mr. Ford's current term in office?

MR. NESSEN: What the President has said is he wishes Dr. Kissinger to stay on until at least the end of this term.

Q Do you have any knowledge whether or not former President Thieu and former Vice President Ky, either one or both, might come to the United States? Ky certainly is on the way.

MR. NESSEN: I have no independent knowledge of that.

Q Ron, is the President having a political meeting today to discuss the campaign announcements, and this sort of thing?

MR. NESSEN: Not that I know of. In fact, I feel sure he is not.

Q Do you expect him to have anything to say in regard to the campaign tomorrow night?

MR. NESSEN: Tomorrow night? You mean in the way of announcements? I don't think he will make the announcement tomorrow, but I think he would certainly be prepared to answer your questions on his plans.

Q Ron, how does the President feel on this so-called affirmative action; that is, entrance to medical schools, law schools, and so forth, giving special preferential treatment to minorities and whatever. I asked this six weeks ago and you said you would take the question.

MR. NESSEN: I don't know the answer to that, Les.

Q Would it be possible to get that by the next briefing?

MR. NESSEN: We will try.

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Q Ron, Kissinger indicated in an interview this morning that we might recognize the government in Vietnam. We are still looking at it. Has the President indicated in the past few days that he is encouraged by the way the transition is occurring and that there may be a chance that we will recognize the government in Vietnam?

MR. NESSEN: No, he has not indicated either way what the outlook is for possible recognition.

Q Ron, you said earlier that Secretary Simon said today that we will end up at the end of fiscal 1975 about what had been anticipated. It is my recollection -- though I don't remember the exact figures -- that Treasury last week said that the receipts were running at a level that would bring us in several billion dollars higher than had been anticipated.

Are you telling us now that there is a dip coming that will bring it back to what had been anticipated?

MR. NESSEN: No, I am saying I heard Secretary Simon talking about this subject today, but that for the hard facts of it you ought to go to the Treasury Department.

Q Ron, has President Ford talked with former President Nixon since -- I think on the evening of his State of the World Message he talked to him. Has he talked to him since then concerning the collapse?

MR. NESSEN: Not that I am aware of. But I don't ask that question every day. I am not aware of any call.

Someone asked earlier about the mail count. The mail count on refugees -- and this is over a period of one month -- 7,600 letters have come in on Vietnam refugees over a one-month period. Those in favor of American assistance to the refugees, in favor, 4,456. Those opposed to American assistance to the refugees, 2,936. Those who had a comment but did not come down on one side or the other, 199.

Q Would that have included reactions to the baby lift, do you know?

MR. NESSEN: No, that was a separate category. This is just refugees.

Q Do we have a category on views not on aiding refugees but on allowing refugees into this country? I think they are two different items.

MR. NESSEN: This is the only breakdown we have on refugees.

Q Are you including those that express a sentiment pro or con -- with the understanding, of course, that not all of them do -- but do these totals include letters expressing a pro or con position on actual settlement of refugees in this country?

MR. ROBERTS: I would think so, but I did not ask that question.

MR. NESSEN: Bill will check by phone right now.

Q When did the period end, Ron, covered by that month?

MR. NESSEN: Is this up until this morning, also ask them, Bill.

Q Is this telegrams and telephone calls?

MR. NESSEN: This is pieces of mail.

Q Only mail?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Ron, was there any sentiment expressed on the baby lift?

MR. NESSEN: We will get that for you, if there is a separate breakdown on the baby lift.

Q The point being, Ron, the question we are concerned with -- at least as I understand it -- the question was dealing with the high feelings about resettlement of refugees in this country. What I would like to know is whether a substantial number of these letters deal with that specific subject or whether indeed we are getting something here that deals with other matters concerning the refugees, in which case these figures mean something else entirely.

MR. NESSEN: Right. The legislation which goes to the Hill today -- and I do recommend you get the details from the State Department because there are quite a few details -- does provide for the resettlement of some in other countries.

Q Ron, has the President taken note of a statement attributed to a Vietnamese girl in Salt Lake City -- in Anthony Lewis's column in The New York Times this morning -- that Americans in the Saigon Embassy were demanding very large sums of bribes from Vietnamese trying to get out?

MR. NESSEN: I saw that story, John, and I did not specifically ask him whether he had seen it. I know he reads the Times and the Op-Ed page. If he did read it, he did not make any comment on it.

Q Do you think if he did he would ask someone to check into it?

MR. NESSEN: I will check to see if he has asked someone to check on it.

Q Wouldn't that be a violation of law, if Government officials were demanding bribes for anything?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, it would, Jim.

Q Wouldn't you think the President would be interested in that question to the extent of asking the Attorney General to look into it or something along that line?

MR. NESSEN As I told John, I will check. I do think, again before this gets hardened into accepted wisdom, that you are talking about one waitress in Salt Lake City having heard this perhaps second, third, fourth hand.

Q You might be able to find a FBI agent that could go out and talk to her, maybe.

MR. NESSEN: I say I will check, Jim.

END (AT 12:40 P.M. EDT)

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 1:05 P.M. EDT

MAY 5, 1975

MONDAY

MR. NESSEN: Let me clear up two old questions and then move on to the reason I asked you back.

The mail count on the orphan lift, or baby lift -- this goes back a period of five weeks -- up to this morning. Those in favor of the baby lift, 4,214. Those against the baby lift, 2,421. Those who called with various comments but could not be categorized, 163.

Fran, and others, asked me last week about whether the President had written letters or in other ways communicated with the families of those last four Marines killed in Vietnam. The answer is yes. He has written to both the wives and the parents of those Marines killed in Saigon.

Q Are you going to give us copies of those?

MR. NESSEN: These are private letters of condolence, Sarah. I think we probably ought to leave them that way. They are short letters expressing sadness at the death of their sons or husbands.

The reasons I asked you to stay was there had been every anticipation that Ambassador Brown would appear at Bob Anderson's briefing to give details of the refugee bill. As you heard, he was detained on the Hill and I think since the bill has been announced as being there, it is only right that I give you some details of it.

The title of the bill is "The Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1975." The terms of it run through the end of the fiscal year 1977. So that would be June 30, 1977. The amount of money called for is \$507 million. Let me do the breakdown of the money, first.

Q Correction. On the fiscal year, it won't be June 30 when it gets to 1977. It will be in October.

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MR. NESSEN: The end of the 1977 fiscal year. I guess by then we will be up to the September 30 fiscal year.

Let me give you a breakdown now on the \$507 million. First, let me say that parts of this apply to an estimated 150,000 refugees in the initial stages, but it is based on the assumption that about 20,000 will be resettled in other countries, other than the United States; that 130,000 will settle here, that 20,000 will settle in other countries.

Now, I will give you this by categories of money. \$185 million is for what is referred to as daily maintenance. The way that breaks down is \$15.00 a day per person for 30 days at the staging areas. The staging areas are Guam and Wake. Another \$15.00 per day per person for 60 days -- and that is 130,000 people, those are the ones coming to the United States -- at the processing centers, which, as you know, are Pendleton, Chaffee and Eglin. That is food, utilities, medical care, and so forth.

The next category is \$99 million. That is to fly people from Guam and Wake to Pendleton, Eglin or Chaffee at an air fare calculated at \$530 per person, plus \$30 million, which is part of the \$99 million, for the airflights carrying material, food and medical supplies, and so forth.

\$30 million of the \$99 million is for cargo flights. The rest of it is for \$530 per person for 130,000 people to get them from the Pacific to the three processing centers.

The next category is \$78 million, which is based on \$600 per person, which will be paid by the Government to a list of volunteer organizations which will take care of transporting and resettling 130,000 people in the United States.

I will give you more details of that category in a moment.

The next category is \$125 million in what is known as subsequent welfare and medical expenses. This will be administered by HEW and it breaks down further, if you care for a further breakdown. Welfare and social service, \$15 million.

Q What does that mean, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: I am going to get to that in a moment.

Medicaid, \$30 million. Language and vocational training, \$30 million. Public health service, \$15 million.

The final category of this \$507 million is \$20 million, which would be approximately \$1,000 apiece for 20,000 people to transport them to other countries.

Q The \$125 million for subsequent welfare and medical expenses, how long does that run?

MR. NESSEN: The whole program ends at the end of the 1977 fiscal year.

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Q So, it runs through 1977, right?

MR. NESSEN: Right.

Q Was that \$20 million to transport 20,000 people?

MR. NESSEN: At \$1,000 apiece. Transport and administration, \$20 million; \$1,000 apiece for 20,000 people to take them to and administer their resettlement in other countries.

Q That is from Guam and Wake?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Ron, is this the agreements that we make or have made with these other countries to take them --

MR. NESSEN: I am coming to that. It is still an estimated number, but that is the estimated number from other countries. Let me tell you what has been spent so far. As you know, people have raised the question of where is the money coming from that has been spent so far.

Most of it has come out of the Postwar Reconstruction Fund, which was budgeted at \$98 million. To date, \$70 million has been spent on the evacuation. \$70 million has been spent to date on the evacuation. Now, most of that has come out of the Postwar Reconstruction Fund. If you remember, the President signed a waiver that allowed him to dip into that fund.

Some of it has come from whatever small amounts were left over in other refugee accounts, but most of it is coming out of that \$98 million. What is left in that \$98 million fund will provide money for about another week of refugee efforts.

Q Couldn't he just take 20 percent out of that \$98 million?

MR. NESSEN: No, I guess not. I think I probably led you to believe that, but I am told that is not the case; that he can dip into it and draw it down to zero, which is the plan.

So, we have spent \$70 million so far, most of it out of the \$98 million, which was for post-war reconstruction, the rest of it out of some leftover refugee funds. The remainder of that \$98 million will be used up in about a week.

Q Will it be necessary to reimburse that fund now because there is no reconstruction money?

MR. NESSEN: No, it will not be reimbursed. To tell you how that \$98 million will be spent -- most of it has already been spent and the rest of it will be gone in a week -- \$30 million of it was to rent or contract for private ships for part of the evacuation.

\$33 million of it was used to get the people air transportation from Saigon to Guam and Wake, \$300 per person, 110,000 people. And \$35 million of it was used to set up the staging areas at Guam and Wake and to open the three processing centers.

Q How much was that?

MR. NESSEN: \$35 million total. \$20 million of it to establish Guam and Wake staging areas; \$15 million of it to set up Eglin, Chaffee and Pendleton. Total \$98 million. That money has been and will continue to be drawn out of the Postwar Reconstruction Fund, bringing that down to zero.

Q In figuring the cost you add \$98 to \$507.

MR. NESSEN: The \$507 million is a new request. The \$98 million requires no new appropriation.

Q Excuse me, I don't think I have the answer to that.

MR. NESSEN: If you want to do a story saying "the total cost would be," you can add it together. If you want to say what the President is asking Congress to do today, you will use the \$507 million.

Q Just to make sure I understand that. The \$98 million that will have been spent would not come out of the \$507 million?

MR. NESSEN: That is correct.

Q Ron, does he have to replace this \$98 million?

MR. NESSEN: I am told he does not have to replace the \$98 million.

Q Does he have to have this legislation back within a week now or you will run out of money?

MR. NESSEN: The money will run out in a week.

Q What happens?

Q Is there any other source you can turn to?

MR. NESSEN: Apparently not.

Q Ron, the message that you sent to Governors. What did you say in there? Will you give us copies of that?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have it here. It was a message from Dean Brown. You will have to get it from the State Department, Sarah.

Q That is a little peculiar, that he would do it and not have it come from the White House. The White House usually sends messages to the Governors, not the State Department. Another thing. Are you going to give any of this money to the States that take these people?

MR. NESSEN: I am getting to that. I want to give you a further breakdown of how that money is going to be spent. Let me give you a few tidbits and as I go through this, I will come to the information you want.

As you know, all the refugees are being processed through Guam and Wake. They are getting housing and food. The Immigration and Naturalization Service is there for screening and they are getting health care.

The international organizations have gone to Guam and Wake to help out. They include the International Red Cross, the ICEM, the International Committee on Emergency Migration, and the United Nations.

People from those organizations are there on Guam to help out. The health condition is described as very good and no unusual health problems exist. For instance, out of 30,000 refugees on Guam, less than 100 have been hospitalized. Most of those were for either maternity care, pneumonia or mild diarrhea. No serious diseases.

The Immigration and Naturalization Service, as I said, is there. They are processing the people as quickly as they can. The ones who have their documents in order are moving very quickly through there.

The Public Health Service Center for Disease Control has established a surveillance system to identify and treat any illnesses, but, as I say, no serious illnesses have shown up.

The volunteer agencies which I mentioned are really playing the key role in resettling these people after they have arrived at the three military bases in this country. Bill will Xerox this and bring it back.

Just to quickly tell you what they are: The U.S. Catholic Conference Migration and Refugee Services; American Fund for Czechoslovak Refugees; Church World Service; Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service; United Hias Service, Inc.; Tolstoy Foundation, Inc.; International Rescue Committee; American Council for Nationalities Service; Traveler's Aid-International Social Services, along with the Red Cross and Traveler's Aid.

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Q These are the outfits that are going to be picking up the tab?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, sir, and I will tell you how this works now.

The refugees get to one of the three bases in the United States. Some of them already have local sponsors. The ones who don't have local sponsors will get local sponsors through these volunteer agencies.

Before they leave, it is required that they have a vigorous health screening, that all children ages one to five receive immunizations for measles, rubella, polio, diptheria, whooping cough, and tetanus.

The volunteer agencies have the responsibility for finding housing, for getting the children in school, for helping the refugees find jobs, and to help them learn the English language. So, it is the private organizations that take over once the refugees reach these three bases in the United States and it is their responsibility to take care of all those and they are doing it already.

Q What is the responsibility of the sponsors?

MR. NESSEN: The local sponsor is to, as I understand it, assume financial responsibility and do these other things.

Q In other words, if they have to go on welfare, the sponsor would have to pay the bill? If they don't get a job?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have that much detail and I think that is something you ought to check back with Dean Brown.

Q Ron, two things. These volunteer organizations, are they paying for their workers there or are they being kept up and paid by the Government?

MR. NESSEN: Some of this money is earmarked to the volunteery agencies. Now, whether they use it to pay employees or whether they use it for the actual costs, I don't know, but that is something Dean Brown will have to help you on.

Q The other thing I want to ask -- we did not have enough Immigration and Naturalization Service agents and they did not have enough money to carry on their regular work. Like, sometimes they could not even send back hundreds of illegal immigrants to Mexico because they didn't have enough money. What are you doing about the Immigration and Naturalization Service under this budget? You do not seem to have any money.

MR. NESSEN: There is no money here provided for that which leads me to believe that they do not require any extra money.

Q But they do. They have already said they don't have enough people to go around and they also said they would not take any -- this would mean they would have to pull men off other stations if they send them to Guam and Wake.

Q Ron, would the \$1,000 per person be used to fly Vietnamese back to Vietnam if they so desire?

MR. NESSEN: Tom, I talked to the President about that this morning and it is just a question that has not come up yet. Obviously, if they want to go back they can go back but how they will get back and who will pay for it has not been decided.

Q What other countries have expressed an interest?

MR. NESSEN: Let me get to that.

As I said, the \$98 million postwar reconstruction does not have to be replenished. The President signed a waiver which allows him to dip into that and use it without paying it back. I apologize if I misled you earlier on the details of how that worked.

Q I am sorry I missed it.

MR. NESSEN: I did, I think, a week or so ago say, one, it had to be replenished and two, only 20 percent of it could be taken out and that was incorrect, and I apologize. He does not have to and does not plan to.

The other question on what happens at the end of the week is -- what obviously happens is that the money runs out if Congress does not pass this by the end of the week.

Q He cannot go to some other fund and take the old 20 percent route you described before?

MR. NESSEN: Not that I am aware of.

Q Ron, any of these people that returned to South Vietnam, would he be expected to reimburse all the expenses paid on his behalf?

MR. NESSEN: That is something that just has not come up yet.

Q What about the 40,000-some --

MR. NESSEN: Who want to go back, who say they want to go back?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, sir.

MR. NESSEN: It just has not been dealt with yet, Steve.

Q Is any of this money going to be put in the hands of the individual refugees, any of it, or will all of it be spent by agencies, private or governmental?

MR. NESSEN: I don't see anything on here to indicate that there is going to be any --

Q Neither do I.

MR. NESSEN: I do think some of these more detailed questions should go to Dean Brown. I am trying to sketch in the highlights of the bill because it was not done, as I thought it would be, at the State Department.

Congress is being assured, as this bill goes up, that every effort will be made to insure that the resettlement, to the extent possible, will not be concentrated in any few areas of the country and will not result in economic or social hardships.

Now, the HEW will reimburse State and local social service organizations and health organizations for the costs that they may incur in providing income assistance, health maintenance, social service and educational services.

So, that is where the HEW money goes. It is to reimburse State and local organizations.

Now, on the question of third countries taking in 20,000 of these refugees. I don't think I brought all my material out with me, but part of it has to do with the refugees who are already in third countries who fled to third countries, and the first step of the process is to see if the third countries, where they are now, will allow them to stay there.

And then, as I understand it, Canada has agreed to take in 3,000, I believe, and these are still matters of negotiation. The 20,000 is an estimate of those who will settle in third countries.

Just to put the final bit of information that I have out. Just to give you some idea of the magnitude of this as it compares with earlier refugee efforts, from 1945 until 1952, the number of displaced persons who settled in the United States -- these are presumably Europe and I guess some from Mainland China probably -- 450,000 in the years between 1945 and 1952; 450,000 displaced persons settled here.

Q Those are the legally settled people you are talking about now?

MR. NESSEN: From 1953 to 1956 the number of people fleeing Eastern Europe who settled in the United States, from 1953 to 1956, the number of people from Eastern Europe was 189,000.

The Hungarians who came here after the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 numbered 30,701.

Q Is this separate from the 189,000?

MR. NESSEN: It is separate, yes.

And from 1959 until the present time, the number of Cubans who fled to the United States was 675,000.

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Q What was that date?

MR. NESSEN: From 1959 until the present moment, 675,000. That gives you a total, since the end of World War II, of refugees and displaced persons from all areas of 1,344,701.

Q Are you including in this the people who came in with temporary visas and who stayed on illegally or other illegal aliens? Do you have any figures on those?

MR. NESSEN: I believe these are the legally settled people.

Q But you don't have any figures on the illegals?

MR. NESSEN: I do not.

Q Do you have any figure on how much it has cost us to support these people?

MR. NESSEN: The 1,344,000?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: I don't have that figure.

Q Ron, you gave the mail earlier on the baby lift. Do you have any mail reaction on the total concept of 130,000 refugees coming into the United States?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, Bill did check that, and he says the mail count we gave earlier does include comments on resettlement as well as assistance, but we don't have it broken down on the specific point, so the numbers I gave earlier -- not on the baby lift, but at the earlier briefing -- was about two to one in favor, but that includes assistance to refugees and refugees settling here mixed together and not broken down.

Q Ron, you mentioned money to HEW for job training. Do you by chance know what sort of job training these people will receive?

MR. NESSEN: No, I don't have that much detail for you, Walt.

Q Ron, you said Congress will be assured that, to the extent possible, they will not be concentrated in any one section of the country.

MR. NESSEN: Right.

Q How will this be done? Will there be quotas or what?

MR. NESSEN: No. I think the voluntary agencies are working along that line. If you missed the mail count earlier --

Q I did, if you have a moment to give it.

MR. NESSEN: The mail count -- this is for a period of one month back from today. As of today going back one month, letters coming in dealing with both money assistance to refugees and the question of refugees settling in the United States, not broken down. In favor of that, 4,465. And opposed to it, 2,936.

Q You said 56 last time, 4,456.

Q 4,456 is probably right. That adds up.

Q On the opposition again?

MR. NESSEN: Opposition, 2,936 and assorted comments without coming down one side or the other, 199.

Q On these organizations that you have given us, these volunteer organizations, did they call the Government, the Administration, and say, "Hey, we are ready to help." Were they drafted and why has all this been dumped on them?

MR. NESSEN: Phil, I don't have that answer. My assumption is that they volunteered but again, that is something that Dean Brown's office can provide you with.

Q Ron, you said your money would run out in about a week. Can you be more precise about that? Do you mean next Monday or when?

MR. NESSEN: I can't be precise as to the exact hour it runs out, but the fact sheet from which Dean Brown is working says only one more week. I don't know whether that is six days or eight days or what, but it is a week.

Q Ron, how will HEW reimburse the States and local communities?

MR. NESSEN: Again, I think you ought to get this from Dean Brown. As you know, all these welfare programs are administered by the States, and they are reimbursed now for their expenses and I assume a separate category would be set up for this. There was one for the Cuban refugees.

Q Are those people eligible for things like unemployment, that sort of thing?

MR. NESSEN: Bob, I think you need to nail that down with Dean Brown.

Q When you say one more week, are you suggesting the food is going to run out then if you don't get money?

MR. NESSEN: The money to pay for the food will certainly run out in a week.

Q There seems to have been possibly a shift in the mood in this country. There was initially some hostile reaction, but a couple of towns and cities seem to have gotten ashamed of themselves and they have had welcoming ceremonies. Is the President aware of that and has he been encouraged by it?

MR. NESSEN: He called Governor Pryor of Arkansas Friday night to congratulate him for the welcome he gave to the refugees who arrived at Fort Chaffee because he did think it was more in keeping with what he believes to be the American mood. He also pointed out to some of us with favor remarks of Governor Askew in Florida.

Q Did he call Governor Brown, also?

MR. NESSEN: No.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Ron.

END (AT 1:35 P.M. EDT)