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

#234

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 7:32 P.M. (Salzburg Time)

JUNE 1, 1975

SUNDAY
(Salzburg, Austria)

MR. NESSEN: Let me say one other word about the schedule, as I see it, for tonight and tomorrow.

I don't anticipate any other briefings tonight. For those of you who may have some interest in the color from the dinner which is not provided by your poolers, Bill Greener or I will come back here after the dinner and be available for that.

Q What then?

MR. NESSEN: The dinner is over somewhere between 11:30 and 12:00.

Tomorrow, we don't have a firm briefing schedule. I would say that we would definitely have some information available after the meeting between the two Presidents, which concludes at about 12:05, so you should count on having something here between noon and 12:30 tomorrow. I cannot tell you who the briefer will be at this time.

Q Are you expecting a statement of any sort, or communique?

MR. NESSEN: That has not been decided yet, Helen.

So, late tonight for any color on the dinner, 12:00 to 12:30 tomorrow for the next substantive briefing about the meetings.

Mr. Bashir will be with you as soon as he comes to the front of the room to give you a briefing from the Egyptian side.

END (AT 7:35 P.M. Salzburg Time)

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 11:23 P.M. (Salzburg Time)

JUNE 1, 1975

SUNDAY
(Salzburg, Austria)

MR. NESSEN: There is a slight change in the schedule tomorrow. The meeting that was scheduled to begin at 10:30 will begin at 11:30. It will run the 90 minutes that it was scheduled to run.

The reason for the change is that the Presidents thought it was sort of a waste of time to have that hour between the end of the meeting and the beginning of lunch, so what they did was to simply tighten up the schedule and move the meeting back an hour so they will go directly from the end of the meeting out to the Klessheim for lunch.

Q Will it be the same place, at the residence?

MR. NESSEN: They will have the meeting at the residence and then go by car to the Klessheim for lunch.

Q Are all the pools simply pushed forward on that?

MR. NESSEN: Yes. Jack will get with you and move all the times by an hour.

I would still anticipate that we would now have a briefing at 1:30 instead of 12:30, but perhaps some bit of information to give you an idea of what the rest of the day will be like tomorrow and it is possible we will have a briefing on the end of the meeting at that time.

We simply don't know, so I would say that the next time when you will need to pay some attention around here would be between 1:00 and 1:30 instead of between 12:00 and 12:30.

Q Ron, did you say what time? What does that do to the pools tomorrow?

MR. NESSEN: Jack will get with you later. The pool times will be changed tomorrow.

Q Will there be a briefing at noon?

MR. NESSEN: Perhaps a fill-in on the morning session, perhaps the announcements of the time on a later meeting.

Q Before you go on, may I ask a question?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q The schedule carries nothing after about 3:00 or 3:15?

MR. NESSEN: Right.

Q Does he intend to do anything tomorrow afternoon?

MR. NESSEN: If the weather is good tomorrow, he hopes to get out and enjoy some of the countryside.

Q Can we go with him?

MR. NESSEN: Has he ever gone anywhere you didn't go with him, Helen? Well, one or two places.

Q Also, about tomorrow afternoon, can you say anything about a Kissinger conference?

MR. NESSEN: There is going to be a briefing after the meetings, but who will give it and the precise times, I don't have.

Q Can we assume it won't be the President?

MR. NESSEN: There are no plans for the President --

Q What is the information on a communique?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have anything on a communique at the moment.

Q Are you ruling out a communique tomorrow afternoon?

MR. NESSEN: There are no plans for it.

Q Are there plans for the Joint Communique?

MR. NESSEN: There are no plans for that, either.

Q Are their side meetings going on for Robinson, and others, or Sisco?

MR. NESSEN: No, there are no side meetings

Did your pool give you a fairly complete report on the dinner?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: Have you got the menu, the wine list?

Q This pool just arrived.

MR. NESSEN: I will put the pooler on as soon as I finish. She will give you the menu, wines, et cetera. She will tell you about the toasts.

Before dinner, the President shook hands with Chancellor Kreisky and the other hosts. He went into a short reception where he chatted with some of the guests. Then, he went into dinner. He sat at a small round table and the other guests sat at square and oblong tables.

After that, the diners adjourned to a room next door for coffee and a chat. Then, the President left, walked to the door with President Sadat, and Mrs. Ford walked to the door with Madame Kreisky.

I think that is about it. I will put Ann on to give you --

MORE

Q Will you come back to a couple of questions?

MR. NESSEN: On the dinner?

Q On the events.

MR. NESSEN: Such as what?

Q We would like to know what is happening as to the talks.

MR. NESSEN: You had a long briefing with Joe Sisco.

Q A very empty one.

MR. NESSEN: I won't be able to go beyond what Joe told you today.

Q Is there something wrong with the President's ankle? This is serious. We are really concerned.

MR. NESSEN: About what.

Q Apparently with the fall this morning there were several missteps this evening.

MR. NESSEN: I think all of you saw the President slip on his way down the steps of the airplane, and then I am told that he made a misstep when he was leaving the meeting this afternoon at the end of the meeting this afternoon.

Q What happened then?

MR. NESSEN: I noticed the man in front of me coming down the steps tonight also slipped. I think a TV technician almost fell down the steps. I don't know if your pool had the same experience we did coming up and down those stairs, but the carpet is wet and quite slippery.

Q The report is that he stumbled up the stairs, Ron. Was there a misstep going up the stairs?

MR. NESSEN: I have not heard that.

Q Have you talked with Colonel Blake tonight?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Colonel Blake is aware of the misstep going up the steps and the misstep coming down the steps. Is it possible we could have Colonel Blake in to brief us?

MR. NESSEN: I know you are kidding, Russ.

Q Ron, there have been various versions of what took place tonight, including one that the President was grabbed by President Sadat to keep him from tumbling down the steps. Is there anything you can tell us to enlighten us?

MR. NESSEN: I am told he made a misstep, as a number of people did, going down the steps, or going up the steps, and that is all I know.

Q Ron, has anybody asked the President of the United States what happened today?

MR. NESSEN: No, not that I know of, Phil. I certainly didn't.

Q He told Helen Thomas what happened to him this afternoon.

MR. NESSEN: Then Helen knows what happened.

Q Has Dr. Lukash examined him?

Q We would like to know if the President is really tired. Is there something he is misgauging. Is his balance off because he is exhausted?

MR. NESSEN: No, the President is tired. I am tired. I assume you are tired.

Q You said he never got tired.

MR. NESSEN: I don't remember saying that.

Q Well, it was in a pool report, and you know it as well as she knows it. You reported it, that the President never gets tired, on this trip.

MR. NESSEN: I don't remember saying that.

Q Ron, has the President's football knee required medical attention since he left Andrews a couple of days ago?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q What is the story on the President's football knee? Does he have a serious problem with his knee? Does he have any problem with his knee?

Q Which one is it?

MR. NESSEN: I assume this is unrelated to the missteps he is having today. You are asking a general question about his knee?

Q Now your office is putting out the fact he does tire because of this, is that right, because of the knee, and sometimes when he is tired?

MR. NESSEN: I have never heard it. I think Dr. Lukash has told some of you when the President sits in one position for some time the knee, one of his knees, becomes slightly stiff.

Q Which one is that?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know.

Q Will you find out which knee that is?

Q Can you explain to us when the first queries about this went into your office. These instances were denied. What is the reason for that?

MR. NESSEN: Bob, the fact is that everybody clearly saw the President slip on the steps coming down the airplane. The other one or two missteps were so minor that people who were walking close to him who I talked to didn't notice anything; that is, Bob Mead, Terry O'Donnell and three or four people who were close by him, and the missteps were so minor that they didn't notice anything and that is the report I brought back to you.

Q Could we hear what Ann has to say about this?

MR. NESSEN: Is this the end of the misstep controversy?

Q Is he going to get more rest because he is so tired?

MR. NESSEN: He is going to go to bed tonight. I don't know how long he is going to sleep.

Q What I mean is, isn't he taking too rigorous a trip?

MR. NESSEN: I haven't heard him say it was too rigorous a trip.

Q Ron, has he complained anytime today about his leg being sore as a result of the first fall?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Did Dr. Lukash at any point today look at his knee for a bruise or anything?

MR. NESSEN: Dr. Lukash talked to him, and he has no symptoms whatsoever from his slip at the airport.

Q What can you say about the President hurting himself this morning?

MR. NESSEN: I thought we had said he had no injury of any type.

Q Did you talk to him?

MR. NESSEN: I talked to Dr. Lukash.

Q I thought you said he didn't talk to him.

MR. NESSEN: Yes, he talked to him, but I don't know what time.

Q Does the White House feel this incident is being overplayed?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think the White House ever comments on news coverage, Phil.

Q Do you have any vignettes you could add to the --

MR. NESSEN: Maybe the pool could talk to you. They talked after dinner. They walked out together. I think what Joe told you today about a warm and friendly relationship was reflected in the demeanor both before dinner and during and after dinner.

Q Did they speak English together?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, the meetings were carried on in English.

Q I can never recall the President walking out arm in arm with anyone before. Has that happened before? Has he ever been that close with anyone before?

MR. NESSEN: I think the President told you during the trip to Vladivostok, in the drive around Vladivostok, Brezhnev held his hand. It was pretty cozy. (Laughter)

Q Ron, there is no relationship between the one-hour postponement and fatigue?

MR. NESSEN: No, it was a dead hour in the middle of the day that they decided to close up by starting an hour late.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Ron.

END (AT 11:35 P.M. Salzburg Time)