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NEWS CONFERENCE

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AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 3:50 P.M. EDT

JUNE 4, 1975

WEDNESDAY

MR. NESSEN: The President was applauded as he went into the Cabinet meeting. You probably heard that from outside the door, and he said, "I want to start off with some good news." He said, "I have just been told that the veto of the so-called jobs bill has been sustained." He said, "That is a very significant victory." That is the direct quote.

The rest of it was along the line that that was a very significant victory in holding the line on what he considers to be excessive Government spending. He said, "Otherwise" -- meaning if it had been overturned -- "it would have opened the floodgates." That is the quote.

Q The beginning was a quote, too, wasn't it?

MR. NESSEN: "Very significant victory" is a quote.

Q The other is, "otherwise, it would have opened the floodgates?"

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

This is a paraphrase on holding the line on what he considers to be excessive government spending. Then, Max came in towards the end of the meeting, Max Friedersdorf, with the last official count of the vote, and it sort of reopened the discussion. And the President said it was a great victory, and then, he said, "The next big one is the vote on the strip mining veto." And he said, "That is vitally important."

Q I am not sure when you are quoting and when you are not.

MR. NESSEN: "The next big one..." is a quote -- "is the strip mining bill," then, "It is vitally important to sustain it."

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Secretary Dunlop reported that Congressman Esch of Michigan has introduced, I believe, already the version of the jobs bill which the President himself prefers and has recommended. I think you recall that one. It has \$1.6 billion for public service jobs, plus \$412 million for summer youth jobs.

Also, there is one other feature in there.

Q How many jobs?

MR. NESSEN: We will get that for you.

Secretary Dunlop indicated Congress really should vote quickly on this because the summer is here already and kids will be getting out of school shortly.

Then, the President said, "Well, let's get down to what the real purpose of the meeting is," and that was a review of his trip. He said, "There were no real disappointments and many favorable benefits. If I had to do it again, I could not ask for any more success."

The quote continues, "There are many things to be finalized but overall it was highly successful."

Then he reviewed briefly each phase of the meeting, the NATO talks, and also the bilateral talks in Brussels, and he pretty much exactly gave the same report that we were giving as he went along. He referred to the Sadat meeting as being what he called -- he said, the quote "the atmosphere was excellent."

Then he talked about the three possibilities for continuing negotiations which you know about, a resumption of step-by-step diplomacy, a convening of the Geneva Conference for an overall settlement, or some combination which would have a Geneva Conference but would also have step-by-step interim agreements worked out under that umbrella. He said that obviously no choice has been made among the three, but he repeated what he said publicly, that the United States did not think a stalemate could be allowed to go on.

Then he said that he concluded his meeting with what he called a "very inspirational meeting with the Pope." Then at another point he said, "It was a superb meeting on a wide range of topics."

Then he said -- to sum up his trip he said, "We made good friends, broadened personal relationships, and affirmed the foreign policy of the United States." Then he became somewhat more personal and talked about the bad weather in some places and the attractive sites he had seen, and he also mentioned the many good meals that he had and that he had gained one pound on the trip. This is the kind of thing that Helen likes, and Fran.

Q How much does he weigh now?

MR. NESSEN: A pound more than when he left.

Q Is there any plan for reporting to the Nation?

MR. NESSEN: No plans.

Q Didn't he get any more specific than this?

MR. NESSEN: As I say, he ran down each of the stops, and he gave kind of a very brief, general summation, which was given out as we went along. He did not add anything to what has been said publicly.

Q Didn't any of the Cabinet members question at all?

MR. NESSEN: Yes. Then, there were some questions, a couple of questions, and then, since the meeting had not taken as long as he expected, he reverted to the more normal routine of a Cabinet meeting, which was to call on each of the members for a report on what their departments were doing in their areas.

He asked Carla Hills how the Housing Compromise bill was coming along and Secretary Coleman on the Railroad Revitalization Act.

Q Are you saying he is not planning to make a report to the Nation?

MR. NESSEN: There are no plans now.

Q Did they get into any other specifics?

MR. NESSEN: Let me answer Frank's question about this substitute bill that Congressman Esch has introduced. It is the original proposal of the Ford Administration, and it is something that has been favored all along. It would be \$1.6 billion for 300,000 public service jobs. And just to refresh your memory a little bit, the money for these public service jobs runs out on December 31st, and this proposal would continue the 300,000 jobs through July 1st of 1976. The other part of it is \$412 million to pay for 760,000 summer jobs for youths.

Q Is the President going to give the same report now to the leaders?

MR. NESSEN: I assume so, Helen.

Q In consideration of the newspapers, are you saying they are not going to get any more than this?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know. The President has not spoken to them yet.

Q What I mean is, there are no further insights into the Middle East thing, or anything?

MR. NESSEN: I did not hear anything that went beyond what you were told by senior officials and others on the record and by the President himself.

Q I had two questions about the talks. One was, whether or not the President has made a formal acceptance of Sadat's invitation to visit Cairo for him and Mrs. Ford?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q The other question was, if any specific amount of money proposed for Egyptian economic aid was ever mentioned?

MR. NESSEN: During the talks?

Q Yes, either --

MR. NESSEN: I thought somebody answered that last night, and the answer was "No," as far as I know.

And on the invitation, as far as I know -- do you mean has it been accepted in principle and then the date is set later?

Q Right.

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

Q Could we take a look at the plans for the rest of the week?

MR. NESSEN: Well, you know, he is speaking at the Holton Arms School tomorrow, at Susan's graduation. We will have a text out later this afternoon. I guess, if the speech is early enough in the day, we might as well go ahead and make it for p.m. papers.

Q It is a 10:00 A.M. speech.

MR. NESSEN: If it is 10:00 A.M., we will make it for p.m. papers. I haven't even looked at the schedule for the rest of the week.

Q How about the rest of tomorrow, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: I think he has a meeting tomorrow with Republican leaders. I have to find out what time that is. That is to discuss legislative strategy.

Q Ron, has this essentially been largely a formality, inviting the Cabinet over, the leaders down, to personally tell them about the trip?

MR. NESSEN: It is a first-hand report from the President on his trip, yes.

Q What you seem to be saying, if they have been following this in the newspapers, they are not going to find out anything additional from him.

MR. NESSEN: You could turn that around, Dick, and say that it demonstrates what a full report we have given to the press along the way, that we have not held anything back, couldn't you? I would hope you would.

10:00 is the Commencement at Holton Arms -- tomorrow, we are talking about. Then, a bunch of staff meetings, staff people, and then Republican leaders are coming in at 6:00 tomorrow.

Q 6:00 P.M.?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, sir.

Q Who is that?

MR. NESSEN: I say Republican Congressional leaders. This afternoon is both party leaders. It is to discuss legislative strategy. And then Friday, he sees the Vice President in the afternoon.

Q Ron, did the Vice President show up at the Cabinet meeting?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what you mean, "show up."

Q He was not there when the photo was taken?

MR. NESSEN: He did not attend, no.

Q He didn't come at all?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Is he still in Annapolis, or what held him up?

MR. NESSEN: I don't even know where he is today. Is he in Annapolis? Did he give the commencement speech there?

Q Is he going to read the report on Friday, of the Vice President?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, and have a bunch of staff meetings. I think you are probably right that he is going to read the report.

Q What about Scali? Will he see Scali?

MR. NESSEN: In what sense?

Q About a job.

MR. NESSEN: I think we said he was being considered for another high foreign policy position.

Q What is it?

MR. NESSEN: Well, I can't tell you until it is arranged, Helen.

Q When is the crime message going to come out?

MR. NESSEN: I anticipate some time this month.

Q Not imminently?

MR. NESSEN: It won't be this week. There is some more work to be done.

Q We heard Scali had been offered the job of Ambassador to Australia; is that true?

MR. NESSEN: Somebody asked me that along the way. A lot of people asked me that along the way, and I said it was absolutely not true that he was going to Australia, but I can't seem to convince anybody of that.

Q You don't have anything on the new Ambassador at all?

MR. NESSEN: When we have something, Trudy, we will announce it. It will not be Australia.

Q Are you going to brief tomorrow?

MR. NESSEN: I would just as soon not.

Q You have to.

MR. NESSEN: I figured I did. Why don't we save it maybe until early afternoon. Let's take a look at it tomorrow, 3:00. Do you want to aim for 3:00?

Q If he comes back at 11:00, why can't you see him at 11:30?

MR. NESSEN: Well, he has some other staff people and then I am going to get in and see him.

Q 1:00?

MR. NESSEN: Wouldn't that ruin everybody's lunch? 1:00 is fine with me.

Q 1:00 is better than later.

Q 1:00 would be beautiful.

MR. NESSEN: We will aim for 1:00. I think I can make it by then.

Q About 10 days ago a bunch of Republican officials who were here said that the President gave them the clear impression that he was going to be announcing his candidacy within about a month.

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Do you have anything to tell us on that?

MR. NESSEN: I would say that sounds about right to me.

Q About a month from then?

MR. NESSEN: From the time the people told you it was going to be about a month, I think that is about right.

Q Sometime in the next week or two?

MR. NESSEN: No, I think it is a little longer than that -- sometime this month. I would anticipate sometime this month.

Q Ron, if you are going to try to brief at one o'clock -- you have the Republican leaders coming in at six, and we are talking about lunch hours and such -- is there anything like three or four scheduled tomorrow?

MR. NESSEN: He has some staff people he is meeting with tomorrow.

Q But nothing on the schedule?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q So, we could probably get a lid for a short period in the afternoon?

MR. NESSEN: Sure. Let's say we brief from 1:00 to 1:30. Then, you could go away until 4:00, something like that.

Q Ron, how long was the Cabinet meeting?

MR. NESSEN: It started pretty much on time, at 2:00, and it broke up, I guess, at 3:10.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Ron.

END

(AT 4:07 P.M. EDT)