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NEWS CONFERENCE

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AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 1:00 P.M. EDT

JULY 1, 1975

TUESDAY

MR. NESSEN: I think you have the morning announcements and the schedule for today.

The only thing I can add to it are the plans for getting to Fort McHenry, which we did not have in time to post this morning. There will be a bus leaving the Southwest Gate on July 4 at 6:00 p.m. You can go in your own car, also, if you like, although I am told that there may be some traffic and parking problems over there.

If you do want to go in your own car, the White House pass or a police pass or Capitol Hill pass are all good to get in.

As you see, there is no chopper to Baltimore and there also won't be a chopper to Camp David.

Q How will the President go?

MR. NESSEN: The President will go to Baltimore by chopper and from Baltimore to Camp David later that evening in the chopper.

Q Will he stick around for the fireworks?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, absolutely.

Q He is going to make a speech and there is the swearing-in ceremony of the nationalized citizens?

MR. NESSEN: And then there are fireworks, too.

Q But he will stick around for the full thing?

MR. NESSEN: That is right.

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Camp David on Saturday, as far as I can see, we have worked out a writing pool and all the cameras and still pictures. I will be up there, and there will be a number of other people from the office up there.

In fairness to the people who go up there to cover, the pool, as well as in fairness to the people waiting back here, we will release the report on the meeting simultaneously down here and up there. I will phone it down here and I am making sure we are all agreed on the exact time it is to be released so nobody gets a jump on anybody else.

I think we probably ought to open the trailer up there for filing for the writing pool.

Q What meeting, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: This is Suharto. We have announced Suharto.

Q Ron, are we going to be allowed into that trailer if we go up, or is only a pool going to be allowed in there?

MR. NESSEN: Only a pool should go up, really, plus the cameras and film.

Q So the actual briefing is going to be held back here, in effect?

MR. NESSEN: Such as it is, right.

Q Is there going to be a briefing or a readout?

MR. NESSEN: It is going to be a readout.

Q With no questions?

MR. NESSEN: I think we would be prepared to take some of your questions.

Q At Camp David?

MR. NESSEN: And also whoever is down here doing it.

Q What is the time on this?

MR. NESSEN: We will give you the exact schedule tomorrow, but as I understand it, there is a meeting in the late morning, then a lunch, and then a meeting after lunch.

Q Ron, I am puzzled about the best place to cover this story because if you are available for questions up there and there is filing from up there, how do the people who are here ---

MR. NESSEN: The statement will be released also from here and also someone will be here to answer the questions.

Q Your responses to questions up there will not be made available here; is that what you are saying?

MR. NESSEN: We could get it piped down.

Do you want me to do it all up there and have it all piped here on Saturday? That would be the best way, probably.

Q Ron, on Friday will you have an advance text before we leave at 6:00?

MR. NESSEN: The speech shop is working like mad to get it. They have a lot of speeches this week. I would anticipate an advance text of the Fort McHenry speech.

Q You have a lot of speeches? What else?

MR. NESSEN: Two today.

Q You have three on Thursday -- two in Cincinnati and one in Cleveland.

MR. NESSEN: And then the Fort McHenry speech.

Q Do you have anything on Thursday, like a getaway time and all that?

MR. NESSEN: We will put the schedule out tomorrow.

Q What about tomorrow? Do you have anything for tomorrow?

MR. NESSEN: On the schedule?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: No, nothing.

Q What about today? Anything special?

MR. NESSEN: There is this energy and economic meeting this afternoon, at 2:00. If there is anything that seems worth reporting on, I will come out and talk to you about it.

Q What is the general subject?

MR. NESSEN: I am not sure if he is going to talk about the decontrol today or not. I know it is a general assessment of the current standing of the economy.

Q Ron, in the Post interview this morning there was a brief mention that the President's decontrol plan was going up to the Hill this week. Was that a misprint?

MR. NESSEN: It was actually a misprint. What the President said, I think, if you look at the transcript, was he said he was going to make his decision this week and that it would go to Congress sometime after they returned from this July 4 holiday.

Q Are we in questions now?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Several major oil companies have announced they intend to boost the price of gasoline by two to three cents a gallon this weekend. I would like to know, one, the President's reaction; two, the specific effect this will have on inflation as viewed from the White House; and three, I would like also to know in the light of this announcement why the President would not consider perhaps some jawboning and asking the oil companies to roll back the price increase by perhaps a penny a gallon?

MR. NESSEN: The situation is this: Somewhere between a penny and a penny and a half, that you can attribute to the latest \$1 increase in the oil tariff. On the rest of it, let me give you a little background.

The FEA allows the gasoline companies to go to a 10-cent margin; in other words, they can sell their gas at the pumps for up to 10 cents more than it costs them out of the refinery and out of that 10 cents they pay their overhead and their rent and transportation, and so forth.

At the moment, the oil companies are not making their 10-cent margin, they are only making about a 5-cent margin. The reason for that is that they just have come through a season of fairly slack demand.

Now they are moving into the season of higher demand for gasoline, and because of that demand they are going up and increasing their prices. They are still within the margin they are allowed by the FEA.

Q So, by that answer I am to conclude the President thinks this is an economically justifiable price increase?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think the President has addressed the question directly, but it is within the margin that they are allowed by the FEA.

Q Do you mean that there is a gasoline control? There is a control on gasoline?

MR. NESSEN: The FEA always has ---

Q On the price?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, absolutely.

Q Ron, expressed as a percentage, what would a 10-cent a gallon margin give them in terms of a profit margin?

MR. NESSEN: You have to remember that margin does not mean profit, Jim. Margin is the difference between their cost and what they sell it at, and out of that they have to pay their expenses. Different oil companies have different levels of expenses and debt service, and so forth. It really is not possible to get an overall figure of how much they are making.

Q You don't have an industry-wide profit margin at the 10-cent level?

MR. NESSEN: I don't. The FEA could help you with that, though.

Q Are you announcing the eventual nomination of General James as the first black four-star general?

MR. NESSEN: Joe Laitin tells me that is being announced at the Pentagon.

Q Has the President ruled out attending the European Security Council Conference possibly in late July, or does he still have hope or expect that it can be held?

MR. NESSEN: He still has the optimism from the direction it is going in that the remaining problems can be resolved, but there is no timetable for when they are going to be resolved, and therefore when the Conference will be held.

Q Can you be more specific on what the U.S. is holding out for here? We know what the Russians want. They want legalization of the status quo as far as post-World War II boundaries. What is the U.S. seeking in these negotiations.

MR. NESSEN: I think that is a vast oversimplification, Walt. There are many elements to that negotiation and the few remaining issues to be resolved don't relate to any of the points you mentioned.

Q What is the U.S. position; that is to say, what are we asking in return for what the Russians primarily want, which is the legalization and recognition of post-World War II boundaries?

MR. NESSEN: I just can't accept that a negotiation this complex, dealing with this many issues and with 35 countries involved, can be simplified to the point of saying "This is what they are getting. What do we want in return?"

Q That is the way Ambassador McCloskey simplified it to the Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in a memorandum which was given to me by the NSC, and that is the way the NSC people were explaining it to the people on the Hill.

MR. NESSEN: I cannot give you a detailed breakdown of the issues involved.

Q The timetable basically was for late July, and what I am really asking is, is the President still optimistic about making that kind of timetable despite the reports yesterday and today?

MR. NESSEN: He is optimistic that the negotiations seem to be going in the direction that would result in a successful conclusion at a signing at the summit, but as for the date, I just can't help you with the date.

Q Ron, this summit meeting, would it be the heads of Government of all European countries, Warsaw Pact and NATO?

MR. NESSEN: If it ends with a conclusion at the summit. If the treaty turns out to justify a signing at the summit, then presumably those leaders who wish to come would come and sign it.

Q Ron, on the timetable matter, when he was here, NATO Secretary General Luns said that the Finnish Government had asked for four weeks notice, which would mean it could not be held before the 28th, if the notice came today. He also said if it was not held by the 28th, it would not be held until October.

MR. NESSEN: I am told that Europe closes up in August and September.

Q So, what I am asking is, in view of the fact he and the President talked about this, could you get a clarification from the NSC as to whether it is going to be settled today or whether it is going to be held over until October.

MR. NESSEN: Bob, it is not possible to get a clarification on the date because the remaining issues have not been resolved and you cannot decide when you are going to have a signing until you have something to sign.

Q I understand that, but it seems to me since we now got to the date it is either going to be agreed to or it is not going to be until October, what Helen and I are trying to get at is, is it off for July now?

MR. NESSEN: It is just not possible at this point to say when it is going to be signed, if it is going to be signed.

Q Would the President go to a summit where all the issues were not totally resolved with a reservation that perhaps they could leave some issues hanging until later?

MR. NESSEN: No, I think the plan would be to complete the document before a signing.

Q A related question. Does the President have any reaction to the Solzhenitsyn speech?

Q Is he familiar with it?

MR. NESSEN: I think the President's views on detente have been laid out a lot of times previously and he would have no --

Q He did not say anything about the Solzhenitsyn speech today?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Ron, what does the President think of the Government of India's expelling the Washington Post correspondent in New Delhi?

MR. NESSEN: As I said before, this Government has strong feelings in opposition to censorship and feelings in opposition to any action which hampers the free flow of information.

Q Does this expulsion hamper the free flow of information? I just want to try to pin you down a little more on this one.

MR. NESSEN: I just think I can't go beyond that.

Q The Government still has no comment on anything?

MR. NESSEN: On the events in India?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: It does not.

Q Ron, if I might, I would like to ask you a question about the President's interview with the three columnists, Mr. Broder, Mr. Childs and Rowan. The President said at one point in that interview -- the question was about possible prosecutions resulting from CIA investigations.

The President said two things. One, he would expect to be informed, and two, he would expect to consider the pros and cons of prosecution and especially the question of whether any possible prosecution had a national security impact.

It is the second part I want to ask you about because, as you know, Attorney General Levi said last week, although he would expect to inform the President, he would not expect the President to get into the question of whether or not the Justice Department should prosecute.

The President seems to be saying he would expect to get into the question of whether or not the Justice Department should prosecute.

I am asking you for clarification on what appears to be a contradiction in positions here.

MR. NESSEN: No, there is not any contradiction, Jim. What the Attorney General really said was, "I would feel obligated to tell the President, to communicate the position of the department, but I would not expect the President to tell the department what to do," and neither would I.

The President did not indicate yesterday that he would expect to tell the department what to do. So, I don't see the conflict. He would want to be informed of what the department wanted to do. He has great confidence in the Attorney General's capacity to investigate and where necessary to prosecute.

He believes the Attorney General is following the President's own belief of upholding the laws.

Q I don't want to hector you, but that is not all the President said, unfortunately. The President said he would expect to go into the pros and cons and it was quite clear -- absolutely clear from the context -- he meant the pros and cons of whether there should be prosecutions since he went on to say he would want to consider and get into the question of whether or not these prosecutions had a national security impact so you have not completely stated the President's position.

What I am asking you is if the President means to go into the question of whether or not the Justice Department should prosecute and how do you square that with Attorney General Levi, who said that he would not expect the President to get into that.

MR. NESSEN: From what the President said, I don't see how you draw the conclusion that the President would attempt to influence one way or the other. The President was offered the word "consult" in the question and rejected the use of the word "consult" and instead used the word "I hope to be informed."

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Q He went on to make reference to the fact there was a question of exercise of authority and whether he would exercise that authority or not was something he did not know at this point.

MR. NESSEN: No, no. He said whether he had the authority was something he did not know at the time.

Q Let me put it to you this way, if I can: Would you expect the President would make the final decision on whether or not there would be prosecutions of anyone in the CIA investigation?

MR. NESSEN: I would say that you are raising a hypothetical question. First of all, if the Attorney General investigated and found that there was someone who was in a position to be prosecuted, you are suggesting that the President might disagree with that conclusion, and that is hypothetical. I don't know that he would disagree with that conclusion.

Q I am not suggesting anything, Ron. I am asking you whether the President will make a final decision on whether there will be any prosecutions in the CIA investigations?

MR. NESSEN: I think what the President said and what he means is he would expect to be informed of the Attorney General's conclusions to prosecute after an investigation.

Q Ron, would he have to sign off on it before they could follow through with these prosecutions?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know. I don't know of a process where the President has to authorize a prosecution.

Q I know he does not have to authorize it, but is it contemplated that he would?

MR. NESSEN: I think what is contemplated is what he said, Fred, which is that he expects to be informed.

Q Ron, what did the President mean by saying he would expect to discuss the pros and cons of any prosecutions? What pros and cons?

MR. NESSEN: I think Jim is right, that the context there seems to be the pros and cons of any national security ingredients of a possible trial, but let me mention this to you:

If someone were investigated and the Attorney General decided he should be prosecuted, and then there was this discussion of the pros and cons of the national security elements of it, it is not right to leap to the conclusion that the only way out of that would be to cancel the prosecution.

There are a number of ways that someone could be prosecuted and the national security could still be protected. You could have a sealed record of the trial.

Let's say that the public disclosure of certain information would endanger the lives of agents. Those agents could be forewarned so they would not be in danger. If there was something that would come out at a trial that might embarrass a foreign government, that government could be notified in advance.

So these are the kinds of discussions of pros and cons or some of the possibilities, I should say, of things that would be discussed if a potential prosecution did involve national security.

Q Would you tell us more about this secret trial process?

Q Or a sealed record? What do you mean by that?

MR. NESSEN: This is what I was told by the legal counsel's office is a possibility.

Q There is a provision in the Sixth Amendment that persons accused are entitled to public trial and I wondered if they thought of some way to get around that?

MR. NESSEN: I would need to check.

Q Are you talking about the possibility of a secret or secret trials?

MR. NESSEN: No, I am saying this is one possibility raised by the legal counsel's office here.

Q Are they talking about a gag rule of a super form, or what?

MR. NESSEN: I think what I will do is check further and find out what provisions there are to keep a trial record sealed.

Q Ron, can we go back to this interview by the President, yesterday?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Can you tell us something about the technical arrangements for this interview? How was it arranged? Who invited these three men? When was it done, and so forth?

MR. NESSEN: It was pretty much the same arrangements that have been true of all the interviews, Joe. We have, I guess, several hundred requests for interviews on file, and the President reviews them periodically and accepts some of them, and that is what he did yesterday.

Q This was done yesterday? The invitations were issued yesterday?

MR. NESSEN: The invitations were issued by the President several days ago for yesterday.

Q I was wondering how come such important matters for so many millions of people in such an explosive situation as the Middle East, comes out in this form of interview? When I came here this morning at 10:00 there was no transcript. Of course, it was in the Washington Post. It was a very much shortened version.

There is a great deal in here that could be questioned, that could be certainly reported, and we don't get it until about 12:00 or 12:30.

MR. NESSEN: The President, himself, asked for a copy at 9:15, and we had to scramble around to find him one so you are not the only one that did not get his transcript on time. It did take some time to get them reproduced.

As for why serious matters were discussed in an interview, I think most of you here have requested interviews, and I am sure you all expect to discuss serious matters with the President when the time comes. The questions were serious questions and I don't know what further explanation I could give you.

Q Ron, to get back to this spy business, just for the record can you answer my national security question?

MR. NESSEN: On the NSA question? No, I am not, Bob, able to give an answer to that question.

Q May I just ask you why? It seems to me that is a matter that should be of concern to everyone, and a matter you would want to clean up.

MR. NESSEN: It is not a matter that I can give an answer to, Bob.

Q You can't give me a reason why?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Do you expect to ever be able to answer that question?

MR. NESSEN: I will just leave it where it is, Jim.

Q On the Middle East, the President yesterday in the interview said he had not delivered an ultimatum to Israel. But if you read the news reports, the Israeli press, the government is in a complete uproar about what they think is American pressure and an ultimatum is the word used in the Israeli press.

Now, are you doing anything to ease fears or to straighten out this dichotomy and obvious disagreement with the President's version as expressed in the interview, that he has not given any ultimatum to Israel? What are you doing about that?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know that anything of the kind, which you are suggesting, is taking place, Ralph. The President says it was not an ultimatum and I did outline in some detail what the meeting was about.

The President did outline for the Ambassador the American position. But the President does not -- and it seems to me was rather forceful in the interview in saying it was not an ultimatum.

Q It seems to me it is quite a serious situation when the entire Israeli press and Israeli statesmen and government officials disagree, and say there has been an ultimatum.

Q Could we phrase that a little differently because I wondered about this yesterday. You denied, the President denied there has been an ultimatum. Would you deny the characterization that the President is putting strong pressure on Israel to resume negotiations with Egypt?

MR. NESSEN: I think the President, himself, denied that yesterday.

Q I have not seen the interview yet because we just got back from the Sheraton Park.

MR. NESSEN: I think the question was asked both ways and I think he denied both strong pressure or any pressure, and he denied an ultimatum.

Q Ron, why did he see Dobrynin and Scowcroft?

MR. NESSEN: Ambassador Dobrynin comes in here from time to time and he discussed several matters with General Scowcroft.

Q Was this today?

MR. NESSEN: Yesterday.

Q You can't amplify at all?

MR. NESSEN: I can't, Helen.

Q Are there any plans for the President to see Solzhenitsyn?

MR. NESSEN: There are not.

Q Why is that? This is a very well-known figure and he is in Washington for the first time. Why is the President not interested in seeing him?

MR. NESSEN: I would not put it that way, Bob. The President has a busy schedule and a visit with Solzhenitsyn is not on the schedule.

Q The President saw a soccer player on Saturday.

Q He visited with Pele on Saturday so he is not too busy to visit with noted foreign visitors.

MR. NESSEN: Solzhenitsyn was not here on Saturday.

Q What was the President doing last night?

Q Ron, that is a silly flip answer. Do you know that, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: The President's daughter, Susan, is in town for, I think, only a day or so, and a family dinner had been planned for last night so she could be with her parents for the day or so that she is here.

Q Ron, don't you think that response that Solzhenitsyn was not here on Saturday and that is why while the President could take time to see Pele, he could not see him? Would you like to withdraw that? Don't you think that is kind of a silly flip answer?

This is not a ridiculous or hectoring inquiry. We are curious.

MR. NESSEN: Adam, I don't take it as a silly inquiry. I am just saying that the President does have a busy schedule this week. Indeed he does.

Q Does the President think a visit with Solzhenitsyn might be diplomatically embarrassing to the Soviet Union?

MR. NESSEN: I don't get the feeling that that is a factor, Tom, in not seeing Solzhenitsyn. The President has quite a crowded schedule this week.

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Q Ron, we all know the President can see anybody he cares to see, and that he can fit anyone he wants to see into his schedule. There must be a reason why he is not willing to see Mr. Solzhenitsyn or not interested and the suggestion from Tom is one obvious answer. Are there any others? Does he not want to hear Mr. Solzhenitsyn's views on relations with the Soviet Union or what are the reasons?

MR. NESSEN: I don't accept the fact that Tom's suggestion is a reason.

Q Is a possibility?

MR. NESSEN: No. I don't have knowledge that that is a fact. In fact, I don't know of any special reason why there is no meeting between the two except there is not.

Q Was there a Solzhenitsyn book on the President's reading list that you put out at one time?

MR. NESSEN: I don't recall that the President has read a Solzhenitsyn book.

Q He has said he has not read Solzhenitsyn works, but he also said on that same occasion that he knew that Solzhenitsyn was a very great writer. The President sees delegations of Boy Scouts and 4-H kids -- he has seen several of them recently -- groups certainly not as well known as Alexander Solzhenitsyn.

Are you completely unable to amplify on why he would not want to see one of the world's leading personalities and figures?

MR. NESSEN: All I can say, Jim, is there is not a meeting scheduled and as far as why there is not a meeting scheduled, I don't have any special reason to offer you.

Q Ron, does the President see dissenters?

Q Ron, is there any reason why you can't get us an answer on that?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what the answer could be, Phil. The fact is there is no appointment or meeting and they are not meeting.

Q Was a meeting requested, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: Not that I know of.

Q If a meeting were requested, would the President consider seeing Mr. Solzhenitsyn?

MR. NESSEN: I have no idea.

Q Ron, could you try to find out from the schedulers and the President if there has been any and why they wouldn't meet?

MR. NESSEN: An invitation to meet with Solzhenitsyn.

Q A request.

MR. NESSEN: There has been no invitation to meet with Solzhenitsyn.

Q He was invited to the dinner last night.

MR. NESSEN: And the reason for not going to the dinner last night was the scheduled family dinner to see Susan when she was home.

Q Ron, I missed your explanation of why you are sitting out here on this table and not over there.

MR. NESSEN: Only to try out the different location and bring a little more informality into the briefing.

Q Ron, with the completion of the swimming pool, do you have a list of the contributors or donors to the pool project?

MR. NESSEN: It is being pulled together right now. The National Park Foundation has intended to issue the list and to do it sometime in the future after they have had all the last-minute donations come in.

I am told that has been moved up a little bit and that Andrew Schuiling has the information. We will get that for you.

Q Has the President tried it out yet?

MR. NESSEN: The pool is completed and the President did look at it this morning, did not swim in it.

Q When will he swim in it?

Q Does he have a busy schedule? (Laughter)

Q Ron, could I ask a question about the Middle East? This must be a misprint in here. The President said, "I can't give you the span of the duration" --

MR. NESSEN: Duration.

Q Well, the question becomes, he mentions here several months. Could be a period of several months. Does that mean that he is giving the Israelis several months to respond to whatever proposals he has made before he puts down a comprehensive proposal?

MR. NESSEN: I can't give you the span of the duration.

Q It is not clear from the Q and A how that works.

MR. NESSEN: The President said he does not think you can specify right now what the period would be. It could be several months. It could be longer.

Q But that is what we are talking about, the period from now until the time the Israelis have to --

MR. NESSEN: I don't know. You put it on the Israelis. It is not something that you should put on the Israelis. It is the span of time that he is talking about before or during which a decision would be made to resume the interim step-by-step approach.

Q He is saying that if a step-by-step agreement is not reached in a period of several months --

MR. NESSEN: A period. He did not specify. He said several months or it could be longer.

Q So the story that he has given the Israelis is two to three weeks to come up with a response is not correct?

MR. NESSEN: He says he can't specify. It could be two or three months or longer.

Q But did he tell the Israelis two or three weeks or did he tell them they had several months?

MR. NESSEN: I can't go into the details of what he talked to the Israelis about other than what I have done.

Q The Israelis have the impression it is two to three weeks. Is that a false impression?

MR. NESSEN: They have the impression it was an ultimatum and the President said it was not an ultimatum.

Q Is the President upset about all these leaks that are coming out in the Israeli press and on the radio?

MR. NESSEN: I think the State Department issued a statement on behalf of the President concerning a specific leak. I have not heard him speak personally of the subject since then.

Q Why should the President take umbrage at news coming out from anywhere?

MR. NESSEN: I don't remember the exact words of the statement.

Q I don't understand how you can berate a foreign country for having its free press operate in the way every press should operate.

MR. NESSEN: If I recollect correctly the wording of the State Department statement, it did not go so much to the problem of the information coming out, but if I recall it was the publication of a map and the map was alleged to represent something and the map did not represent what it was alleged to represent.

Q That is all you have to do, is to say it does not represent it.

MR. NESSEN: I thought that is what the State Department said.

Q To go back to my question, which has been picked up by others. Is the President not concerned at all about the impression or as you see it misimpression in Israel of what he has said and how he has delivered his comments to the Israelis?

MR. NESSEN: If he is, Ralph, I have not heard him say it.

Q Ron, last week you said you would give us the position on wiretaps. Do you have one?

MR. NESSEN: The position on that is that the Government will undertake no wiretaps that violate the new Supreme Court ruling.

Q Ron, the National Security Agency, Court of Appeals, do you include them in that?

MR. NESSEN: The Court of Appeals ruling. It was not the Supreme Court ruling.

Q Ron, I have a question, again, on the Middle East. If the position of the President and the U.S. Government is to be fair and enhanced on this thing in the Middle East, why isn't the Egyptian Ambassador summoned and given a talk about what the American position is?

MR. NESSEN: The President had an opportunity to meet President Sadat in Salzburg where they had a long series of formal meetings, and also a chance to talk at lunch, and the Egyptians know what the American position is, as do the Israelis.

Q Later on, he spoke with Mr. Rabin here for a couple of days. He had a working dinner, too, and so on. Why, then, did he call in Ambassador Dinitz and not Ambassador Ghorbal, since time elapsed even longer since his discussion with President Sadat?

MR. NESSEN: I think after the last meeting with the Syrian Foreign Minister the White House said it would continue to remain in consultation with the various parties working toward a peaceful settlement in the Middle East.

Q Ron, will the President make his formal announcement in Chicago, the announcement of his candidacy?

MR. NESSEN: He will not.

Q Ron, back to the warrantless wiretaps. Did you mean to suggest the Administration would not seek to have that ruling of the appeals court overturned?

MR. NESSEN: I am told the Justice Department is in the process of reviewing that ruling which is quite a lengthy one -- I think 156 pages, if I am not mistaken.

Q Does the President support the legislation that has been introduced on the Hill, that the Government would have to get a court order for all wiretaps whether they involved national security or criminal contact?

MR. NESSEN: I have not checked that, Tom, but I will.

Q Ron, before you were going to add something to what you had begun to say about the review. Have they decided whether or not to appeal?

MR. NESSEN: No, I say it is a very long and complicated ruling by the appeals court. It is being reviewed by the Justice Department. And that decision has not been made yet.

Q Ron, but on that, a minute ago -- apparently meaning up until the time a decision is made as to whether to carry the thing to the Supreme Court -- you said that the Government would abide by the Court of Appeals decision.

MR. NESSEN: Correct.

Q On wiretapping, the Federal Communications Commission says that the term "wiretapping" includes the interception of oral communications through the air. That is by microwave. This, of course, is what is involved in the reports about the National Security Agency.

Does the White House accept the interpretation? When you say you are going to abide by the Court of Appeals ruling on wiretapping, does this also include transmission by microwave through the air? Do you accept the FCC's definition of wiretapping to include that form of interception, also?

MR. NESSEN: You better let me check that one, Jim, before I answer.

Q I just wonder why you can't get an answer to that or why you would not think that is a question that ought to be answered, Ron.

MR. NESSEN: Bob, I think it is a fairly well-established principle that matters involved in national security are not always answered publicly.

Q Right.

Q Are matters involving violations of the Communications Act of 1934 and the Safe Streets Act of 1968 answered by the White House?

MR. NESSEN: We would certainly try.

Q This is the issue in this particular case.

MR. NESSEN: I said I would check on the microwave issue.

Q It is very simple. All we are trying to find out is, is the Government monitoring people's telephone conversations?

MR. NESSEN: Bob, I told you that is a question I am not going to be able to answer. It involves national security and I am not going to be able to answer it.

Q You mean national security includes monitoring people's telephone calls? You are saying that is part of national security, to eavesdrop illegally on people's phone calls.

MR. NESSEN: Bob, the question you raise involves national security and I am not going to be able to answer it.

Q Can you say any wiretaps are being done, abiding by the Court of Appeals ruling?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Any wiretaps, whether by the National Security Agency or not?

MR. NESSEN: As far as I am aware, they are.

Q We will have to check to see what you mean by wiretaps.

MR. NESSEN: Whether they involve microwave transmission.

Q Ron, does the President have any comment on the State of Pennsylvania going on strike?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q That is an internal matter.

Q Ron, to pursue this warrantless wiretaps issue a bit more, how was the decision made by the Government to abide by that lower court ruling? Was it the President's? The Justice Department's?

MR. NESSEN: The President, his legal counsel and the Justice Department.

Someone, I guess, might want to know the reaction to the fight at Panmunjom yesterday, I suppose it was.

The United States is seriously concerned by the incident and by the injury to Major Henderson, and instructions have been given to the United Nations Command to protest it, through appropriate Military Armistice Commission channels, to protest these unprovoked actions by the North Koreans at Panmunjom.

The Defense Department, I understand, has more of the actual factual details of the incident and also a report on the condition of Major Henderson.

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Q Is that the President's statement or yours?

MR. NESSEN: It is mine. I understand the State Department is also saying something along the same lines.

Q Are we going to have to send a gunfighter or old 79er in to wrap it up?

Q How seriously hurt is he?

MR. NESSEN: The Pentagon has a health report on Major Henderson. I don't have it here.

Q Ron, on the Middle East again, did the President work out with Senator Humphrey any timetable on submission of a Middle East-Israeli aid request?

MR. NESSEN: No. That is still under review.

Q As I understand it, Humphrey was going to introduce one of his own in the middle of June and that somehow has been put off. Is that by agreement with the White House, and is there a new timetable?

MR. NESSEN: No, there is no new timetable. The aid request will go up after the review is completed.

Q You are talking about the review of the Middle East as a whole or the review of the aid program?

MR. NESSEN: The review of the aid program.

The President has been advised by the Justice Department, through the legal counsel's office, that there are not now any taps which violate the ruling of the Court of Appeals. This is with Jim's question about the microwave transmission still pending.

Also, the President has issued orders -- he will not authorize any taps which violate that court ruling.

Somebody asked me a question about the legislation, didn't you. Was that Tom?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: The answer to that is that the President I think has a longstanding and well known concern for the protection of privacy and he is now making a study of the requirements of that proposed legislation, and I will have his decision on it at some future time. I don't have it today.

Q Is the crime bill going up yet?

MR. NESSEN: There is not many days left this week to send it.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Mr. Nessen.

END (AT 1:45 P.M. EDT)