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

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AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN AND JACK HUSHEN

AT 11:35 A.M. EDT

JULY 24, 1975

THURSDAY

MR. HUSHEN: As soon as Ron gets free, he will be down.

Let me give you some information about the trip and bring you up to date.

The newsmen's notes we hope to have available by one o'clock this afternoon, notes on the trip, various pieces of information you will find of inestimable value. We hope to have that available about one o'clock or 1:30.

Because of the number of black tie events in Germany, we recommend that you take a tuxedo with you, even though you might not be involved in the State dinner or the journalist dinner, but just as a contingency. You may find you will need it.

Because of some of the logistical limitations, we also request you limit your luggage to one large suitcase, exclusive of any of your working gear, of course. Since we will be in Helsinki for four nights, there will be time to get laundry done. We are not going to bring in the Salzburg launderers to do it. (Laughter)

The press notes will say that there are phones everywhere but in the White House Press Center in the hotel we are staying at in Helsinki. There are plenty of LD's nearby, a few minute's walk.

There are phones in your rooms that will give you the same kind of service you need. You can have a phone installed in the Press Center, if you want to, but you run the risk of winding up with charges on the phone for calls that you did not make.

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Q Where is the Press Center in Helsinki, what hotel?

MR. HUSHEN: The Vakuuna.

Let me also call your attention to the list we posted on the board about the State dinner in Germany for the 50 U.S. newsmen. Those people who are listed are automatically invited. If others wish to go, let us know. We are limited to 50.

Q Is that black tie?

MR. HUSHEN: That is black tie. We hope to have the bible for Bonn available tomorrow. That probably will be the only schedule we are able to give you before we leave because the situation is still pretty fluid.

Q Can you give the list of hotels for each city before we go?

MR. HUSHEN: I think we can supply that. That may be in the newsmen's notes.

The State Department has graciously consented to assign John Trattner to the White House Press Office for this trip. Some of you may know John from previous Presidential trips. I think he was in Iceland. He was Press Attache in the American Embassy in France in 1971 when I first met him. He will be with us for the whole trip, and he will be able to assist you on matters both of CSCE and also for the other stops we will be making.

I think most of you are aware of the shots that are required, and I think for those who don't know, the White House Physician's Office has recommended two additional shots--gamma globulin for those individuals who are subject to chronic illnesses or who have had hepatitis, and a polio series for those who have not had it previously.

The nurse and the corpsman will be available in the Press Office at 12:30 today to give those shots to those who wish to take them.

Some of you have asked how the President plans to observe National Prayer Day. He will do so by attending a special communion service at St. John's Episcopal Church at 12:10 p.m. today. He will leave the White House about five minutes after 12. We don't know if he will go by car or walk.

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Q Is that the one over here?

MR. HUSHEN: That is true. The President would like to keep what is a small weekday church service just that, and not turn it into a media event. We will take a pool of writers into the church. The cameras are not allowed inside. The writing pool will be AP and UPI, U.S. News, Los Angeles Times, Storer Broadcasting.

Photographers and camera crews who wish to cover the President's arrival should walk over with this pool. You should assemble outside the press room door a couple of minutes to 12.

The President hopes to keep this, as I said, relatively low-key.

Q He will be back in time for his 12:30 appointment?

MR. HUSHEN: It is a short service.

Q That is 12:30, isn't it, with Captain Miller?

MR. HUSHEN: Yes.

Q Is there any special reason for him to go to church today?

MR. HUSHEN: It is National Prayer Day.

Q Does he have anything else on his schedule that you have not announced?

MR. HUSHEN: Not that I have.

Q This evening?

MR. HUSHEN: He may have something this evening. I don't have anything to give you now.

Q We are getting in a position now, we have to cover him every night and we never know in advance.

MR. HUSHEN: If we have something to announce for tonight, we will announce it at the 3:30 posting.

Q Can you give us some off-the-record guidance?

MR. HUSHEN: No, but let me call your attention to the fact that on June 12 the President proclaimed today as National Prayer Day. June 12 was the 200th anniversary of the date the Second Continental Congress called on all American citizens to unite and designated a Thursday in July for fasting and prayer.

This was the first national day of prayer, and we have copies of the President's proclamation available in the Press Office.

Q No fasting, Jack?

MR. HUSHEN: There may be. I don't know what his lunch plans are.

Q Jack, a housekeeping question. Is Ron going to give a briefing today?

MR. HUSHEN: He should be here momentarily.

Q Was that June or July 12?

MR. HUSHEN: It was on June 12, 200 years ago that the Second Continental Congress designated a day in July, and on June 12 of 1975 the President issued his proclamation designating July 24 as National Prayer Day.

Those are all the announcements I have.

Q Can you take questions?

MR. HUSHEN: I can always try.

Q Do you have any comments on the Jack Germond story in the Star this morning?

MR. HUSHEN: No.

Q Is this the end of the briefing, if that is all the announcements you have? Is Ron going to appear today?

MR. HUSHEN: Yes, I think he should be here momentarily.

Q What is Friedersdorf saying about your head count --

Q How about answering the first question.

MR. HUSHEN: I don't have any comment.

Q What was the first question?

MR. HUSHEN: Do we have any comment on Jack Germond's story.

Q How about a comment on Dave Broder's story? (Laughter)

Q What do you mean when you say no comment? Are you aware of the story?

MR. HUSHEN: I read the story. I was not in the meeting with the President this morning, and I am not in a position to give you a comment on it.

Q There are a number of questions we would like to direct to Ron.

MR. HUSHEN: I am happy to go into a hold until Ron gets here.

Q Do you have the answers to some of the questions that we asked yesterday and the day before? For instance, the questions on Bentsen's telegram and complaint?

MR. HUSHEN: Senator Bentsen's telegram arrived here late Tuesday night. It was sent to the National Security Council for staffing purposes and for recommendation.

Q What about it now?

MR. HUSHEN: That is where it is right now.

Q Oh, for Pete's sake. That is pretty silly. They could do that in a few minutes. They certainly have already done their staff work on the Helsinki conference. You mean to tell me that the President has not even seen it yet, does not even know there has been a telegram received? It is still with the staff?

MR. HUSHEN: I believe it is.

Q So, the President of the United States is not replying to a question because the staff has not let him know about it yet?

MR. NESSEN: Sorry, but there was a good deal of stuff to check out this morning.

Did you run through the additions to the schedule?

The President is going to church.

Q Is he walking or riding?

MR. NESSEN: It has not been decided yet.

Q Is there something on the schedule tonight?

MR. NESSEN: The travel pool has been told he will be going to dinner tonight, and there will be a small travel pool taken.

Q Where is he going?

MR. NESSEN: I think when he goes out privately in the evening we tell the travel pool just before he goes.

Q Oh, nuts. (Laughter)

MR. NESSEN: He is going to Betty Beall's house for a farewell party for Caspar Weinberger.

He is going to call the Apollo astronauts after they have returned at about 6:15, and there will be, I think, similar coverage to what there was when he phoned the spacecraft in flight.

Have you mentioned we are going to have a State Department gentleman, whom many of you know, named John Trattner, traveling with us to help out with answers to questions.

Q There is a question on the table in connection with Jack Germond and Dave Broder's stories.

MR. NESSEN: What is the question?

Q Is the President considering a younger running mate, based on some stories in this morning's paper?

MR. NESSEN: I think the way I want to answer that and what I anticipate will be some other questions is this: You know what the President's views are on Vice President Rockefeller and having Vice President Rockefeller on the ticket again. They were stated on June 16 through a statement written by the President himself, and I would like to read it in case it has been forgotten.

The President said then, "My great admiration for Nelson Rockefeller is very well known. I selected him for Vice President because I respected his judgment, experience and ability. I wanted a good partner for a Vice President, and he exceeded my expectations. He has done a fine job in every way. Both of us in the coming months will be submitting ourselves to the will of the delegates to the Republican National Convention in 1976. I am confident both of us can convince the delegates that individually and as a team we should be nominated."

That was the President's view on June 16. It is his view today, and it continues to be his view. I think all of you have been around Washington long enough to know this is a favorite story every four years -- the President's relations with his Vice President.

The President's views have not changed. I really don't know what I can add to that. He has been asked about this at every news conference and at every interview. His views are clearly on the record.

All I can say is that I think it is a matter that the President's views have been clearly stated and have not changed. If you want to explore more deeply his personal views, I think it is a subject that needs to be addressed to him.

Q Ron, could you tell us what the President's view toward Bo Callaway is? That seems to be at issue here because these stories don't come from anonymous sources.

MR. NESSEN: I disagree that any relationship with Bo Callaway is at issue here, Peter. I talked to Bo this morning. He completely understands and agrees with what I am saying here, what the President has said, so does Vice President Rockefeller

The President has chosen Bo Callaway to run his campaign, so I don't know that there is an issue here.

Q Does he agree with what he said?

MR. NESSEN: I told you what the President's views are, and I just think it is going to waste a lot of our time over the next 14 months or however many months it is, if I have to respond or react to or agree or disagree with everything that Bo Callaway says.

He indicated on the phone today that in the overall conversation which he had last night, which lasted two hours or so, he feels that what he said over the whole period of two hours he believes is totally consistent with what he said before, what the President believes and what Vice President Rockefeller believes.

Q So, he said, well, two things. One, he speaks for the President, doesn't he, on political affairs?

MR. NESSEN: He is running the President's campaign.

Q And you say there is no divergence in his views from the President's views?

MR. NESSEN: Bo Callaway says when you look at everything he said over two hours he feels it is consistent with the President's views and with Rockefeller's views.

Q Ron, one thing he did say was, what he was saying last night was a change from the earlier position. Now you are saying that there is an agreement between what Callaway is saying and what the President is saying, but the President is saying there is no change.

Callaway is saying there is a change on the position on Rockefeller.

MR. NESSEN: I was not there, and I only read two newspaper stories.

Q If you read the one in the Star, you would see he is quoted as saying his position on Rockefeller now, the one he expressed last night, is a change.

MR. NESSEN: I am telling you that the President asked me to reread you his statement of June 16. It was his feeling then and it is his feeling now -- and I just think that we should not need to do this every day for the next 14 months.

Q There are a number of Republicans who have told some of us that they feel the Vice Presidency should be a showcase position for a young man with a bright face and a possible political future. Does the President share that view?

MR. NESSEN: You know what the President's views are on the Vice President. You know the President's views on the Vice Presidency and on the nomination, and I have nothing to add to them.

Q Ron, has Callaway seen the President's statement that you just read us? Is he aware of it? Did you ever mail him a copy of that?

MR. NESSEN: He is aware of it.

Q Ron, is there a possibility that when the President meets with the Vice President this afternoon he might bring in Mr. Callaway? Has the President ever had a meeting with both Rockefeller and Callaway together so he can get some slight coordination on this because they do seem a little bit at opposite ends.

Is he planning to have any meetings where Callaway and Rockefeller are there face to face with him?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know of any, Les.

Q You don't know of any?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know of any.

Q Over the years we tend to go in these sort of cycles. It used to be we used to try to find out did Nixon approve of what Agnew said.

MR. NESSEN: Right, I am glad to see somebody recalls all that.

Q And, of course, you know how that turned out.

Q You know what happened to both of them, Ron. (Laughter)

Q The fact is, that was part of an orchestrated high road-low road kind of thing. That is what this begins to appear to be.

Is this any kind of orchestrated effort where the President takes one posture and Bo Callaway then goes out and slings some mud at Rockefeller?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q No, it is not. Can you say, for example, that the President did not talk to Bo Callaway about Rockefeller after Callaway's initial statements to us on the day he assumed office?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what they talked about in their private meetings. I know Bo Callaway knows of the June 16 statement, agrees with it and follows it.

Q He agrees the President should say that, I guess is what you are saying? I am asking you, did they talk at all about Rockefeller? For example, did they talk in the past week about Rockefeller before Bo Callaway's remarks last night?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know, Marty. I have not been in all the meetings.

Q Can you check that for us?

MR. NESSEN: Probably not, Marty, because I don't see the point.

Q The point is whether this is an orchestrated effort.

MR. NESSEN: I said no.

Q That is my point. That is why I wanted you to check it.

MR. NESSEN: The answer is no.

Q Will you check it?

MR. NESSEN: The answer is no.

Q Did Mr. Callaway indicate these stories in the paper this morning are not correct, they are wrong?

MR. NESSEN: We did not discuss it.

Q You say he said his total conservation --

MR. NESSEN: He feels is totally consistent with what he said before, what the President feels and what Vice President Rockefeller feels.

Q Do you think they are all speaking the same?

MR. NESSEN: They certainly all believe the same thing.

Q Who called Callaway? Did you call him or did Callaway call you?

MR. NESSEN: He called me.

Q Why?

MR. NESSEN: I guess to talk about this.

Q Did he say the reports were not true?

MR. NESSEN: No, he did not. I said that to Phil.

Q Did he say they were true?

MR. NESSEN: Let's straighten that out now. He said that he believes that the total conversation of two hours, taken as a whole, is completely consistent with what he said before, what the President believes and what the Vice President believes.

Q What about what was printed, is that consistent?

MR. NESSEN: I am not a press critic. You have to ask Bo Callaway.

Q How can any paper take two hours as a whole -- how can any broadcast take two hours as a whole? Does he think it was ripped out of context? Did he say that?

MR. NESSEN: I am not --

Q That is a very important question, Ron, does he think it has been taken out of context?

MR. NESSEN: I have no way of speaking for Bo. We did not dwell on this at all.

Q When you talked to the President this morning and he asked you to reread the statement he made in June. Could you give us his demeanor? Was he irritated that this thing had come up again?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Do you know if anybody in the White House talked to Callaway before he went over there? Were his remarks cleared with anybody in the White House?

MR. NESSEN: I have no idea, but I don't believe it is normal for him to clear his remarks with anybody.

Q Is the President aware Callaway started out by putting on the record a gathering which is traditionally off the record last night? It seemed a deliberate thing to put this in the newspapers.

MR. NESSEN: The Post story said he had done that so I guess it was done.

Q People are asking, was the President irritated. Would it be fair to say the President is very pleased with Mr. Callaway's remarks?

MR. NESSEN: I would not characterize the President's mood that way.

Q He is not mad about it, is he?

MR. NESSEN: I did not see any change in his normal demeanor, Bob. What I believe your question suggests I think is quite wrong.

Q There is no mystery about what the question says. It says was he very happy about it.

MR. NESSEN: I believe I said there was no change in his mood one way or the other.

Q Does the President's Press Secretary see a discrepancy in this?

MR. NESSEN: Bob, there was no change in his mood one way or the other.

Q Why did he want that statement reread to us?

MR. NESSEN: To remind you what his standing permanent position is on the Vice President without any change.

Q Then he anticipated questions would arise from the Callaway statement?

MR. NESSEN: That is my job, normally, to go in there each morning and kind of run through with him what I believe will be the questions, and I thought this might come up today.

Q Is the President going to speak with two voices during the whole political campaign?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Is Callaway going to speak for the President. Let me nail that.

MR. NESSEN: Callaway is running the campaign and is the President's chosen director of the campaign.

Q Is Callaway likely to say again what he said last night?

MR. NESSEN: I have no idea what he is going to say in the future, Steve.

Q There is an obvious conflict between the June 16 statement and what Callaway said last night as reported, is there not?

MR. NESSEN: I would not want to judge that. I am just telling you what the President's position is.

Q Ron, does the President want Mr. Rockefeller to be his running mate in 1976?

MR. NESSEN: Again, the President's June 16 statement stands. He has been asked that question, I think, in a number of ways at every news conference and every private interview. I think you have the President's views spread on the record at great length and there is nothing I can say today because they have not changed.

Q What was the President's reaction to Bo Callaway's statement that all over the South a certain unmentionable man is leading Mr. Ford. I say unmentionable because I just don't hear that name ever mentioned here. What was the President's reaction?

MR. NESSEN: Oh, go ahead. Out with it, Les. You can say it.

Q Reagan. What was the President's reaction to that, of Callaway's report that Reagan is ahead of him all over the South?

MR. NESSEN: Let me just say that those who are in the pool to go to church at 12:15 with the President should meet right over here now.

The President is concentrating on being President. It is an extremely busy period here. He is not spending a great deal of time following the standing in every State. Bo Callaway runs the campaign.

Q No comment, in other words. He did not have any reaction to that, is that right?

MR. NESSEN: I am telling you what his reaction was.

Q Is that what he said. I don't have time to keep track of every State. Are you quoting the President now, Ron? (Laughter) I am interested, Ron.

MR. NESSEN: The President's reaction to that is that he is busy being President, it is an especially busy time for him. Bo Callaway is running the campaign and he is not getting into State-by-State analyses of who is ahead and who is behind.

The President, I think, nationwide you could say he is optimistic.

Q Ron, has the President discussed with the Vice President the desirability of getting around the country and meeting with the Republican groups and citizens generally to show how much support there is for him or to increase his support, or to reduce the hostility that does exist in some quarters?

MR. NESSEN: I don't want to accept your premise of hostility, and I don't know the content of every private conversation the President has had with the Vice President. I know if you look at the June 16 statement -- which contains quite a lot, it seems to me -- the President talks about both of us will be submitting ourselves to the will of the delegates in the coming months.

Q Ron, the President said in the Chicago press conference it was up to the Vice President to seek delegates. He said, I will be seeking my delegates and the Vice President will be seeking his. The Vice President said he did not think the President literally meant that. The President repeated it when he met with three reporters the other day.

Are they turning up the volume around here in case the Vice President is hard of hearing?

MR. NESSEN: I think they are probably turning up the volume here in the briefing room, but let me say I think we are wasting a good deal of our time on this. There is nothing that I am going to be able to add to what the President has said publicly on this, no matter how long we tug at it.

Q Ron, you said what you say up here reflects the President's views. Does what Bo Callaway says about the campaign on these subjects -- does that reflect the President's views in the same way yours does?

MR. NESSEN: I think we have answered that three times, Fred, but I will answer it again, which is that Bo Callaway understands the President's views, the Vice President does, they all agree. Bo Callaway says that the totality of what he said last night is totally consistent with his past statements and with the President's views.

Q Can you answer my question? Yes or no, does he reflect the President's views when he speaks on these political subjects?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think, Fred, I am going to stand here for 14 months and approve or disapprove, on the President's behalf, everything that Bo Callaway says.

Q I am not asking you to approve it. I am asking you to say whether when he speaks he reflects the President's views. You can answer it yes or no.

MR. NESSEN: I just don't think I can give a yes or no. He understands the President's views. He feels what he said last night in its totality is consistent with the President's views, and I think --

Q Ron, what is the President's position on this business of a longshoreman refusing or maybe threatening, rather, not to load wheat for the Soviet Union?

MR. NESSEN: My understanding is it was not a firm decision not to unload the grain at all. That is a somewhat open question. The grain sale is relatively small, quite small, really, when you look at the total American wheat crop, which is 60 million tons, and you look at the amount of grain that the United States will need for its own domestic purposes this year, which is approximately 22 million tons, which leaves 38 million tons for export.

The Russians have bought 3.2. That is a really tiny portion. It is less than 10 percent of what is available for export. As people in the Administration, including the President, have said, it is believed it will have no or minimal effect on food prices.

I think if you talk to the farmers you will find that they feel it is quite a useful thing to be able to sell and ship their grain off overseas. It certainly is good for the American economy. It brings in foreign exchange. Agricultural products are the largest portion of American exports.

Q Did you talk to Mr. Gleason? Have you done anything about that?

MR. NESSEN: You mean me personally or the White House?

Q The White House.

MR. NESSEN: Not that I am aware of.

Q Why would there be any change in prices if it is less than 10 percent and it is so good?

MR. NESSEN: I have said, either no increase at all or a very minimal one.

Q Why would there be any?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know that there will be any.

Q The Secretary of Agriculture said there would be a nominal increase.

MR. NESSEN: If any.

Q Another question on the wheat, if I may. The Russians told the Agriculture Department starting from now on they are going to have to import between 7 million and 9 million tons of grain every year as a minimum. Has the President examined this as to its long-term impact on our agriculture policies domestically, and has he reacted to this in any way?

MR. NESSEN: He told Earl Butz last Saturday -- I think the meeting was -- that he wanted to be kept up to date on foreign grain sales and he wanted to have some paper presented to him showing how the situation on this year's grain sale is different, is quite different, from the situation in 1972, and Earl Butz has set up a system to provide the President with the information he needs, but if you are talking about 7 million to 9 million tons of all grain -- corn, wheat and soybeans -- that is a drop in the bucket, a bushel.

Q There has never been even a minimum before?

MR. NESSEN: I am not exactly clear what your question is. The President is following the situation closely and is aware of potential problems with it, but sees none at the moment.

Q Ron, when do you expect this report from Earl Butz?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think it is in a sense of a report. I think the term he used was a reporting procedure so that Earl Butz would send in material constantly to keep the President apprised of the foreign grain sales.

Q Ron, Bill Greener was asked yesterday -- and he did not have the answer -- whether the President recently wrote to President Assad of Syria.

MR. NESSEN: He did.

Q Can you tell us something about the letter?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q We understand it dealt with the Golan Heights. Can you confirm this?

MR. NESSEN: I can't give you the contents of letters to foreign leaders.

Q A couple of interrelated questions. One, do you have a progress report today on the talk Zarb is having on the Hill on energy? And secondly, can we expect a new decontrol plan will be sent up tomorrow?

MR. NESSEN: The only thing I can say on the oil decontrol question is that Frank is continuing his discussions with people on the Hill. He had one this morning and will have some more.

The President is firm that any decontrol plan must include some basic minimums, in his view. One is a phased decontrol over a reasonable period of time, a windfall profits tax with a plowback provision and a method of refunding these higher energy costs to the American people. Beyond that, the discussions are underway and there is really nothing I can give you.

Q Bill commented yesterday it was hoped here a new plan could be sent up by tomorrow because there is a stipulation of five days.

MR. NESSEN: Five days before they go home. I simply don't have anything to report because nothing has progressed beyond Frank's talks with Members of the Hill.

Q Who did he meet with this morning?

MR. NESSEN: This morning mostly Senators -- Mansfield, Jackson, Hollings, Glenn, Pastore, Talmadge, Proxmire, Stevenson, Wendell Ford, Muskie, and there is a fellow here whose name I can't read.

Q What was that meeting about?

MR. NESSEN: It was a discussion to see whether there was any way to work out the kind of phased decontrol program that the President wants.

Q Is there any sense at all that the two sides are getting close enough together to at least consider a 30-day extension?

MR. NESSEN: I talked to Frank this morning and we are just not able to answer that question. I just can't answer that question.

Q Can I ask you some questions about Turkey? I want to know what Friedersdorf is saying about your chances when they vote on Turkish aid, and I am particularly interested in knowing -- the charges from the Hill are that Kissinger implied the Greek Government and the Cypriot Government are willing to acquiesce or even go along with a resumption of U.S. military aid to Turkey because that might get negotiations started on Cyprus again.

Is that the effect of what Kissinger said, from what you remember?

MR. NESSEN: On the first part of your question, Max did not give the President a head count this morning, at least while I was there. I read wire stories which say that both sides on the Hill, at least, are saying too close to call.

Q But is the President confident, or does the President feel it is too close to call?

MR. NESSEN: I frankly did not talk to him about it and he did not get a head count.

Q You were in that meeting with Kissinger. Did Kissinger imply the Greek Government was ready to go along with the resumption of U.S. military aid to Turkey, because that stirred up quite a protest from the Greek Government and the Cypriot charge d'affaires?

MR. NESSEN: I did not keep notes in the meeting. I listened but did not keep notes. I have been trying to find the time to sit down and review somebody else's notes of the meeting since then. I simply have not been able to, so I cannot answer the question.

Q Have you seen the text from the Greek Ambassador?

MR. NESSEN: I have not.

Q Is the White House recommending Banowski for Under Secretary of Interior?

MR. NESSEN: It is just normal procedure, Ted, that we don't talk about potential or possible nominations until or unless they are announced.

Q But it is not normal procedure if it is as according to the report that Secretary Hathaway indicated strong opposition to having Banowski pushed on him, but the White House persisted. Is there anything to that?

MR. NESSEN: I read that in one place. I have never heard that myself here. Mr. Banowski has not been nominated for anything, and I don't know what I could add to that.

Q Ron, while the President is in Warsaw, is it on his itinerary to visit the sight of the concentration camp at Auschwitz?

MR. NESSEN: I have not looked at the complete schedule.

Q Is it possible to check it?

MR. NESSEN: I think it is possible he might.

Q That he might visit it?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Ron, is there the slightest chance in the world that the President would not sign the CSCE final act if the Soviet participation and the events in Portugal is established?

MR. NESSEN: I would expect the President will go ahead and sign the CSCE final act. Because of all these years, two years of negotiation, there are many parts of that document which the United States feels are quite beneficial.

Q A number of people on the Hill, and some commentators, are suggesting that the Soviets are already making a mockery of it. Does the President agree?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what you mean by making a mockery of it.

Q CIA has apparently said they were sending \$10 million to Portugal.

MR. NESSEN: I am not familiar with that report.

Q Ron, this gets back to the question we had asked here for the last two days about the President getting some information which Senator Bentsen has been spreading and he sent a telegram to the President -- it arrived here the night before last -- and apparently the President has not seen it yet because it has been with the staff.

Is that normal, that when a Senator sends a telegram about something that is upcoming and involves the President's trip to Helsinki, that the staff does not let the President see it and keeps it and studies it and studies it and not even let him see he has a telegram on that subject?

MR. NESSEN: Let me straighten out one or two elements of your question, Sarah. The telegram arrived here on the afternoon of yesterday.

Q Not according to Mr. Greener and Mr. Hushen of your staff, who said it arrived here the night before last, late.

MR. NESSEN: I am sorry. It arrived yesterday afternoon, Sarah.

Q That isn't what they said, and I am sure that is not right. Mr. Bentsen sent it the afternoon before yesterday.

MR. NESSEN: Maybe we can straighten it out after the briefing, Sarah.

Q Ron, you said there were several aspects of CSCE which were of special value to the United States. Could you tell us what they are, in the President's view?

MR. NESSEN: Certainly so. As you know, the document is divided into four segments. I think actually all four segments contain items which were of particular interest to the United States, and the Western allies and the neutral countries. There are provisions for increased trade and economic relations, which are helpful.

Perhaps the most helpful segments of the document and the ones that the United States and the Western allies were most insistent on including are those which provide for increased contacts, visits across borders, the possibility of marriage between citizens of different countries in that area, freer access to journalists -- which would be of some interest to the people here, the reunification of families, which is of special interest.

That whole section of the document which deals with increased human contact across the borders is of special interest to the United States. The section relating to borders provides that borders should not be changed by war or by force. That seems to be a helpful element of the treaty.

It does provide for the peaceful negotiated change of borders, which is also helpful. The final segment of the treaty provides there is another meeting to be held in 1977 at which the progress and results of the document are assessed and see how well it has worked and that also is felt to be helpful.

Plus, the event that took place before the negotiations ever began at the insistence of the United States and the Western allies which were, as I mentioned to you, a new four-party agreement on Berlin and a new agreement between the Federal Republic of Germany and its neighbors to the East.

In addition to which, another factor that was insisted upon before the negotiation of this document began, was beginning on the MBFR document, so in many ways it is quite a beneficial document which the President feels he should sign.

Q Do you think the President will take up the question of Soviet money being poured into Portugal which has been affirmed by CIA with Brezhnev when he meets with him?

MR. NESSEN: I have not seen the story you refer to.

Q Vernon Walters spoke at a luncheon in which he said this.

MR. NESSEN: I do not have the agenda for the talks with Brezhnev in Helsinki.

Q If that story is true about the Soviet Union pumping \$10 million into Portugal, would the President be upset with that?

MR. NESSEN: I have not even seen the story, Walt.

Q It was out yesterday, Ron, and it came up in the Sonnenfeldt-Hartman briefing and we did not get a straight answer over there. That is a rather serious charge.

MR. NESSEN: I don't have the President's views on that.

Q Please, Ron, this would all be cleared up and you would have the information if you would just read the telegram sent down here by a certain Senator to the President and it is here in the White House.

MR. NESSEN: I would like to tell you about the telegram, Sarah, if we could ever get off the issue of when did it arrive.

Q I am just quoting Mr. Hushen's and Mr. Greener on your staff.

Q What is the President's reaction?

MR. NESSEN: The telegram arrived yesterday afternoon.

Q That is not true. (Laughter)

Q Has the President seen the telegram yet?

MR. NESSEN: He has. The telegram has been brought to his attention and a letter has been sent to Senator Bentsen saying that the telegram was brought to the immediate attention of the President. Just to give you a little background, the normal procedure for any communication from Congress is to first send an answer saying we have your communication and that has been done, and it was brought to the immediate attention of the President, and a detailed reply will be sent and that is where it stands now.

Q Ron, has any other Senator or Congressman sent a letter or communicated with the President in opposition of his going there and signing the treaty?

MR. NESSEN: It is not a treaty, but I am not aware of any other communications.

Q Why is he meeting with ethnic leaders on Friday morning?

MR. NESSEN: I believe this is in connection with Captive Nations Week.

Q Is it a coincidence that it is on the eve of his leaving for Europe?

MR. NESSEN: Captive Nations Week was proclaimed by Congress, Aldo, and it is in connection with Captive Nations Week, which was established by Congress.

Q Ron, there is certainly a discrepancy here in his meeting with those people and then going to Europe to sign an agreement that they would certainly be opposed to. Do you think they will tell the President when they come in -- do they plan to talk to the President about the Helsinki trip?

MR. NESSEN: I would ask you if you were quite sure the leaders he is going to see on Friday would be opposed to a document which does provide for crossing borders, for reunification of families, for many of the items that I am sure those people favor.

Q I am sure that they might favor that, but they also have a lot of differences about this document he is going to sign.

MR. NESSEN: We ought to wait and let them speak for themselves, maybe.

Q Is the report correct that Dr. Kissinger, sometime presumably after Mr. Ford became President, informed Mr. Ford of what Dr. Kissinger knew about a CIA participation some years ago in a plot to overthrow the Allende Government?

MR. NESSEN: Dr. Kissinger tells me he did inform the President of the details of that shortly after the President became President.

Q Ron, the details of the agreement that you set forth. Do you know, is there any muscle in that agreement, anything punitive?

MR. NESSEN: As I told Dick, there is written into the document, the fourth section, a provision for a 1977 reconvening of the countries to review how the document has worked out in the meanwhile and, of course, there is the strong moral obligation to live up to the provisions.

MORE

Q In addition to that, Ron, if any of the agreements -- I am thinking specifically of borders being changed by force, which has happened in recent times and can happen again -- if any of the agreements should be violated, is there today any punitive structure?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know why you would want to hypothetically talk about violations of something that has not even been signed yet.

Q Are there any provisions in the agreement the President doesn't like but he intends to sign it anyway?

MR. NESSEN: This was worked out over two years and these negotiations were very long and arduous, and it is a document that the United States can and is happy to sign.

Q Ron, isn't it true the United States still is on record as being opposed to the Soviet occupation of the Baltic states?

MR. NESSEN: I have to check on what the status of that is.

Q Ron, the post of Under Secretary of Interior has been vacant since May 1st, and the Secretary himself is ailing. Does the President have any plans to name somebody to be Under Secretary fairly soon?

MR. NESSEN: Well, I just can't give you a timetable. Certainly the job will be filled.

Q Does he have anybody under consideration now?

MR. NESSEN: We just don't normally talk about who may or may not be nominated or when.

Q Can I follow that? Would he appoint someone over the objections of the Secretary?

MR. NESSEN: It is a hypothetical question, Ted. I don't know how to answer it.

Q It is not hypothetical. There have been any number of reports saying the White House is pushing Banowski and Governor Hathaway is opposed to him, and my question is, would the White House still insist that Banowski be named Under Secretary even though, if it is true, that Mr. Hathaway has said he does not want him?

MR. NESSEN: Too many ifs in this question for me.

Q Ron, is there any connection between the United States going to sign the Helsinki agreement and the urgency that the Administration puts on securing a new SALT agreement with Russia?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think there is any direct connection. I think the President has said before these are all elements of reducing the tensions and reducing the danger of war, and they all move down different tracks at different speeds.

This one is done, MBFR is coming along. SALT is coming along. I think the President has said himself in one of the interviews this week that he thinks he would probably talk to Mr. Brezhnev in Helsinki about SALT.

If you are suggesting, does one depend on the other or does one help the other, the answer is they are all parts of the same process which is to reduce tensions and reduce the threat of war.

Q Will you have a briefing tomorrow?

MR. NESSEN: My idea about tomorrow would be this: Let me come out here at 10:00 and see what it is we can dispose of at 10:00, and get everybody over there at 11:00 for Henry's briefing. Let's see how much needs to be cleaned up after 10:00 and we can decide after that briefing whether there is need to come back here early in the afternoon.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Ron.

END (AT 12:30 P.M. EDT)

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 6:08 P.M. EDT

JULY 24, 1975

THURSDAY

MR. NESSEN: The President is deeply disappointed by the refusal of the House of Representatives to partially lift the embargo on the shipment of arms to Turkey. It is the President's strong conviction that this negative vote can only do the most serious and irreparable damage to the vital national security interest of the United States, including our normally excellent relations with the Government of Turkey, U.S. security interests in the Atlantic Alliance and the Eastern Mediterranean, and U.S. efforts to assist the Governments of Greece, Turkey and Cyprus, to reach a just and equitable Cyprus settlement. It will also seriously affect important interests elsewhere.

The President and members of his Administration worked hard to persuade Members of the House of Representatives that vital national defense interests are at stake in this issue.

The President is very proud of those 206 Members of Congress of both parties, as well as the Members of the Senate who supported a similar measure for casting their votes in the national interest.

The President deeply appreciates the efforts of the bipartisan leadership of Congress and the Members of the House and Senate Committees on International Relations and Foreign Affairs who supported this legislation.

The President will continue to make every effort to assist in achieving an equitable settlement of the Cyprus dispute. The President will work to reassure our allies -- Turkey and Greece -- of our continuing desire to maintain strong and effective relationships with them despite this setback.

The President hopes the House of Representatives will reconsider its failure to act affirmatively.

Q To what does the President attribute the defeat?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have any answers to any questions, Walt.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Ron.