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NEWS CONFERENCE

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AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 10:17 A.M. MDT

AUGUST 12, 1975

TUESDAY

(Vail, Colorado)

MR. NESSEN: We have a piece of paper we are passing out today with five resignations from various Administration positions. You will see that in a minute.

Q From the Press Office?

MR. NESSEN: No, don't say that so hopefully, Helen.

Q Who are they, anybody of importance?

MR. NESSEN: Kenneth Tuggle as a member of the Interstate Commerce Commission, James L. Agee as an Assistant Administrator for Water and Hazardous Materials of the EPA, Donald P. Whitworth as a Veterans Administration member of the President's Committee for Purchase from Blind and Other Severely Handicapped persons, Wallace H. Johnson as Assistant Attorney General for Land and Natural Resources and Eugene A. Cafiero as a member of the Highway Safety Advisory Committee.

The President is going to play golf this morning. Before he plays golf, he is going to have a golf lesson from Bob Wolfe, the Pro. After that he will play with the following three people. Mr. Wolfe, the Pro, Ted Kindel, who you know is an old friend of his.

Q Do you want to correct the spelling now?

MR. NESSEN: Was I wrong?

Q There seems to be a correction, so we don't know what it is.

MR. NESSEN: K - I - N - D - E - L, is that right?

Q Somebody should find out.

MR. NESSEN: That is the official spelling. Ted Kindel and his wife, Nancy. Bob Wolfe and the President will be the foursome.

As we promised, there will be open coverage for the first hole, and then hopefully we could slacken off a little bit on the golf coverage for the rest of the week.

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Q They will go, and then they will bring them back?

MR. NESSEN: After today, there will be a protective pool at the house and then after he finishes his game, they will pick him up and bring him home.

Q You expect him to play the rest of the week?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Has he done anything else in sports?

MR. NESSEN: No, a little dancing last night.

Tonight the President will have dinner at home again with a group of friends. The list I don't have at the moment, but we will get it by the end of the day.

Q Where is he going afterwards?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have any idea that he is going anywhere afterwards.

To anticipate your questions, there is no decision on whether to appeal the Appeals Court's ruling yesterday on the two \$2 import fee on oil.

Q Do you expect one today, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have any way of anticipating the date, Steve. I also have a feeling that it could be something that is not announced here at Vail. It could possibly be announced in Washington.

Q You mean while he is in Vail?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, possibly. Of course, I would let you know if somebody else makes the announcement.

Q Does that mean somebody else is going to make the decision?

MR. NESSEN: No, Bob, the President will make the decision.

Q Why wouldn't it be announced where the President is?

MR. NESSEN: Let's wait and see how and when it is announced. I am just offering that as a possible guidance for you. It might not be announced here.

Q Do you think it might come here this week?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know. If I make a guess, I would say yes.

Q What is the status of his discussions with Zarb, the legal counsel, Justice and all the rest?

MR. NESSEN: He is getting information from them by telephone.

Q Has he gotten a final recommendation from any of the people that he has been talking to?

MR. NESSEN: Not a final recommendation, no.

Q Ron, when you say it might come from counsel, do you mean the legal counsel department or the Justice Department?

MR. NESSEN: Helen is wondering where, if the announcement doesn't come from here, might it come from. I was only offering that up by the way of guidance. I don't have any specifics on how and when or by whom it will be announced.

Q Shouldn't you control that. After all, if it is from the President, shouldn't it be your decision from where it is announced?

MR. NESSEN: Why don't we wait and see how it turns out, Bob. It just hasn't been arranged.

Q Presumably, when you talk about guidance, you will be able to tell us in advance before a decision is reached if it is in Washington.

MR. NESSEN: Yes, I think I can.

Q You are not suggesting the decision might be announced in Washington without your knowledge, are you?

MR. NESSEN: No, I am not.

Q We sure would like to know where to look for it.

MR. NESSEN: I will let you know.

Q Is the President continuing to give consideration to meeting with oil company executives to do some jawboning?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think anything has changed on that situation, John.

Q When does Zarb come?

MR. NESSEN: Zarb will come toward the end of the week. I don't have the exact arrival time yet, but probably Thursday.

Q Did anyone else come in?

MR. NESSEN: No, no one else has arrived.

Q Do you anticipate a text on the President's Friday speech?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, I do.

Q Is Zarb coming to confer with the President on this issue or to attend the symposium?

MR. NESSEN: He has long been scheduled to attend this symposium and long scheduled to come out and talk generally about the next steps of the energy program.

Q Are you prepared to discuss any new Interior Secretary?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have anything to announce on it.

Q Did the President do any business today?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q What?

MR. NESSEN: He was up there working with Don when I arrived and he stayed and worked with Don after I left. They are doing a lot of paperwork.

Q How much?

MR. NESSEN: Whatever has come out to the President.

Q When do you think there may be an announcement on the Secretary of Interior?

MR. NESSEN: I just don't have any timetable on that, Carroll.

Q Can you give us any feel for what kind of business he is doing? Is it routine or is he looking at possible Cabinet appointments?

Q Any bills signed?

MR. NESSEN: As far as I know, there were no bills signed today. I can't go into detail on the paperwork he was doing.

Q Ron, what is the President's reaction to the return of the check by the Cuban Government to Southern Airways?

MR. NESSEN: It is a welcome development. The President is pleased by the fact that the Cubans sent this back to Southern Airways.

Q Was there any further reaction?

MR. NESSEN: At the moment, I think that is about the only reaction, Don. I can't take it beyond that.

Q What does he think of Senator Sparkman's suggestion that we take an active step in reply or response to this?

MR. NESSEN: Carroll, I don't have anything more specific beyond the welcoming of the return of the check.

Q Has the President talked to Secretary Kissinger by telephone since he has been here?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Today or yesterday?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think he talked to him this morning.

Q How is he getting his reports? By courier every day?

MR. NESSEN: No, there is the secure teletype line. He is getting the same stuff he gets in the morning in Washington.

Q Is the Cuban thing one of the things he discussed with Kissinger?

MR. NESSEN: Not that I am aware of, no.

Q Do you expect Kissinger to be coming out here?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have anything to announce.

Q Ron, the President spoke very favorably the other day about the oil companies' decision to hold gasoline prices down. Has there been any suggestion that might be an incentive to trade, if they get together and decide --

MR. NESSEN: There was only one oil company. Union Oil Company, I believe, announced it would hold its price increase to 2 cents between now and the end of the year, and that pleased the President.

I think what we have talked about here before was the idea if you called in all the oil companies and get them to agree to something, some of the President's advisers are somewhat concerned that might raise some anti-trust or price fixing questions.

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Q Is that being considered now? Is that why he is holding off?

MR. NESSEN: As I told John, nothing has changed in that situation, Helen, since we talked about it over the last couple of days.

Q Has the President read the text of the Court decision?

MR. NESSEN: I don't believe he has read it himself, no.

Q Ron, is there any reaction now further on Mrs. Ford's comments, and what sort of reactions is the White House getting?

MR. NESSEN: I haven't any idea, Fran. I don't know what kind of reaction it is you are looking for.

Q Are there telephone calls, wires or anything whatsoever?

MR. NESSEN: I see on the wires -- Sheila is keeping up with that. She can help you on that.

Q You don't know anything?

MR. NESSEN: I don't myself, no.

Q The question on Kissinger coming out, you said you have nothing to announce. Is there a mystery on this?

MR. NESSEN: I have nothing to announce on Kissinger coming out.

Q There are no plans for his coming out?

MR. NESSEN: As of now, there are no plans to announce that Kissinger is coming out.

Q Did the President have a briefing with Scowcroft this morning?

MR. NESSEN: Every day.

Q Did you see the President this morning?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, I just got back.

Q Is the President planning to meet with John Lindsay?

MR. NESSEN: At this symposium?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: No, I haven't heard of any idea of meeting John Lindsay.

Just so we keep ourselves credible, I wouldn't be surprised if Henry and his wife came out for a weekend in Vail.

Q This weekend?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Next weekend?

MR. NESSEN: No, this coming weekend.

Q Is it for business or for pleasure?

MR. NESSEN: Both business and pleasure.

Q Does it have anything to do with the Middle East?

MR. NESSEN: What the topics would be that he would discuss with the President if he came, I don't have at the moment, but I think you would know by the time -- if he comes -- what it is.

Q Ron, your reluctance to state this a half dozen questions ago raises a little bit of doubt that maybe there is something very pressing in this trip.

MR. NESSEN: No, the only reason I am reluctant to say flat out Henry is coming, it is not 100 percent sure that he is coming, and there is nothing of a pressing nature that is going to send him rushing out here.

The fact he is bringing Nancy with him indicates in part it is a social weekend. I am sure he will take the opportunity to talk some business with the President if he comes, but I wanted you to know that it is a possibility, so if he does decide to come, it doesn't seem like some last minute emergency trip.

Q Would they be staying with the Fords?

MR. NESSEN: No, he will not be staying with the Fords.

Q Is there any possibility of something pressing sending him rushing off someplace else?

MR. NESSEN: No, there is nothing pressing either way to bring him here or send him away.

Q Is there any linkage between renewal of the step-by-step resumption and the request for aid?

MR. NESSEN: I think we said all along there was not any linkage between the reassessment; that the reassessment was not aimed at any punitive steps towards any of the parties involved. None of this has changed any.

Q Are there any benefits?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what you mean.

Q On the part of the Israelis to go along with step-by-step diplomacy in return for aid?

MR. NESSEN: I don't see any link between those two.

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Q Is he going to meet with the former Governor of Colorado, John Vanderhoof, or former Governor McCall of Oregon while he is in Colorado as a candidate, possibly?

MR. NESSEN: I haven't seen that on his schedule at all.

Q Does the President have any new feelings about the sale of grain to the Soviet Union in view of the latest figures and Secretary Butz' request that they stop grain sales for the time being?

MR. NESSEN: What do you mean, any feeling?

Q He has been saying right along, or I think it was his impression, there would not be any sharp increase in prices for American consumers. Is he now more than concerned about that possibility than he was?

MR. NESSEN: No, I think Secretary Butz said he wasn't, either.

Q Butz suggested, did he not, that we would have to reassess the level of sales based on the downturn in our own crop production.

MR. NESSEN: The crop is larger than any crop has ever been before, as you know.

Q But less than the agricultural estimate.

MR. NESSEN: If I read Earl Butz correctly, this is a pause for reassessment. I think, if you recall the last -- when was the other grain sale where there was a halt of two or three months and then when the size of the crop was determined the sales went ahead. I think you also recall last December, at the time of the Rome food conference, American aid was put on hold for a couple of months until the size of the crop could be determined and then the aid came in at quite a large figure, so I don't sense or --

Q Is that happening again now, Ron, that we are putting it on hold?

MR. NESSEN: I forget what exact words Butz used, but obviously he is the Administration spokesman.

Q Could you tell us whether former Secretary Hickel is under consideration to be Secretary of Interior?

MR. NESSEN: I am not going to get into a guessing game. So many names have been mentioned. I think I will just wait until the man is chosen and announce it.

Q Ron, back on the grain thing --

MR. NESSEN: John has given me some material he has gotten in from Washington on this. What Secretary Butz did was to ask for a suspension of further sales to Russia until we had more complete figures on the final crop size.

This is really just sort of playing it safe. I do think you ought to keep in mind that the crop is very, very large this year.

Also, the Soviet Union can only unload two million tons of grain a week from ships, and they have already purchased 14 million tons, not all of it in the United States, but they have purchased 14 million tons overseas. So, it will take them seven weeks to unload what they have already bought.

So, merely suspending any possible future sales doesn't really affect their plans because they have seven weeks to unload already.

Q Ron, loading may be the problem instead of unloading. Our dock workers are making noises they won't load the ships. Has the President talked to Gleason about this?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Ron, given this new doubt about the level of U.S. sales, does the President have any new words of reassurance for the consumer?

MR. NESSEN: I think if you read Earl Butz yesterday, I think all the words of reassurance are there, Steve. You know the size of the wheat crop, which is almost completely harvested, so there is no question of it going bad.

The wheat crop is about 60 million tons, of which the United States needs only 22 million tons for its domestic needs. That leaves 38 million tons for export.

The corn crop originally was estimated as six million tons in the July report, and then the August report, which came out yesterday, lowered that by 196 million bushels, which is really a relatively small decline, but what you have to remember is that the crop this year is 3 percent above the all-time record.

The previous all-time record is 26 percent above last year's crop. Butz did give the assurances yesterday that there would be only a minimal effect, if any, on American prices, but the suspension is, as I say, to be just on the safe side.

Q You say the 26 percent was the figure--

MR. NESSEN: 26 percent above last year's crop.

Q That is the projected figure for this year?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, projected as of yesterday's latest estimate.

Q Ron, is it your understanding that the President will not get the control extension until the 27th?

MR. NESSEN: The 27th or 28th is my understanding.

Q When will the President announce what measures he might take to offset the effects of his probable veto? Will that come when he finally makes the veto?

MR. NESSEN: He hasn't yet made all those decisions, John, so I can't tell you when he will announce them. He hasn't made the decisions.

Q Has he got the bill yet?

MR. NESSEN: No, I just said to John, Congress doesn't plan to send it to the White House until the 27th or 28th. That is the six-month extension you are talking about.

Q I think maybe what John is getting at is, if the President announces the steps before taking action on the bill, it might have some impact on how Congress reacts in voting on whether or not to sustain his veto.

Would you expect his actions would be announced at least along with the veto by that time?

MR. NESSEN: I think that would be fair to say, at the time, if not before the veto.

Q It could be before.

MR. NESSEN: He has not made the decisions yet.

Q When you said the crop was 26 percent above last year, Ron, is that for corn only or corn and wheat?

MR. NESSEN: No, that is all the grains, isn't it, John?

The corn crop alone is 26 percent ahead of last year's and 3 percent above the record. We are talking about corn on those figures.

Q Grain futures have been going up very sharply since the announcement of the Soviet sale? That inevitably has to have an effect on the price we pay for bread, whether we have 38 million more tons of grain we need or not.

MR. NESSEN: I don't understand the grain futures market. Butz has said before that the actual wheat content of a loaf of bread makes up a very tiny component of its price. He said, and the President believes, that there will be no effect or minimal effect on the price of a loaf of bread from these sales.

Q But feed grains and other grains are involved in the price of meat and everything.

MR. NESSEN: As I say, one of the reasons for the suspension is to be on the safe side until further assessment can be made.

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Q Are you saying, in fact, then the President definitely will take some steps to minimize the impact of inflation?

MR. NESSEN: He is considering them, but he hasn't made any decision yet.

Q Well, is it safe to say that he will, in fact, take some steps regardless of whether he has made decisions of which ones?

MR. NESSEN: I wouldn't say that until he has made the decision of whether to take steps and, if so, which ones.

Q How can you have a California trip at the end of the month when there is just, what, about four days? Will he go back to Washington and then go back West?

MR. NESSEN: We haven't announced a trip to California, Helen.

Q If he makes a trip to California, when will it be?

MR. NESSEN: I will have to take a look at my schedule and see if there is one. I haven't looked at it that closely.

Q There are reports out of Washington on the President's foreign travel. Can you explain to us what the situation is on that? Obviously there may not be any definite dates, but what are his tentative plans on Asia?

MR. NESSEN: I think he has said publicly himself on many occasions that he looks forward to going to China toward the end of this year, but no date has been set and no other stops have been arranged.

Q Is he considering any other stops?

MR. NESSEN: I just haven't been that close to the scheduling process, Peter. There is just nothing arranged.

Q What about the report that he is not going to India? There was an agreement in principle he was going to India. Is that off now?

MR. NESSEN: I don't see how you can say it is off, Ralph, when it was never on.

Q I thought it was on, that is the whole point.

MR. NESSEN: As you know, he has agreed in principle to visit a great number of countries and those trips are arranged at the mutual convenience of the two countries. There are no arrangements to go to India. There is an agreement in principle to go to India at some point, as there is with a lot of countries, but there is nothing arranged.

Q Was there an agreement in principle to go to India this year?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know whether there was just an agreement to go or an agreement to go in 1975.

Q Then, are you saying he is not going this year?

MR. NESSEN: He has agreed to go, but there are no arrangements to go.

Q Are you saying there are no arrangements to go at this stage of the game?

MR. NESSEN: I don't see one way or another, Ralph, because nothing has been arranged.

Q The only trip you see is the one to China?

MR. NESSEN: That is the one he has talked about publicly and the only one I know about overseas.

Q Are there plans to go to Pakistan?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q To Iran?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q To the Philippines?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q You think China is definitely on?

MR. NESSEN: He said that publicly.

Q There has been some indication that due to business, it might be pushed into 1976?

MR. NESSEN: All I have to go on is what he said publicly that he looks forward to going by the end of this year.

Q Have there been any indications from Peking they would prefer it not be this year?

MR. NESSEN: No, I think you have read yourself -- wasn't there a Congressional delegation that recently went and came back and said the Chinese were looking forward to the visit. I know of one other recent traveler who came back and told the President he had gotten that impression, the Chinese were looking forward to it this year.

Q Will the President go to China before his meeting with Mr. Brezhnev?

MR. NESSEN: There is no date set for either one of those, Steve.

Q Would one have to follow the other? Would there be diplomatic reasons for doing that?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what they would be.

Q Is there a date set for a summit meeting with Mr. Brezhnev?

MR. NESSEN: No, that has not changed since I think some of you talked to the President about it in Helsinki.

Q Are the Kissinger-Gromyko talks in Geneva?

MR. NESSEN: Not that I know of.

Q Has the President been concerned about the situation in Portugal?

MR. NESSEN: I think he said himself he is watching it very closely. Posting time will be between five and six.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END (AT 10:46 A.M. MDT)

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 4:55 P.M. MDT

AUGUST 12, 1975

TUESDAY

(Vail, Colorado)

MR. NESSEN: All I have for you tonight is a note to the press about the President's dinner plans. Thym is passing those out now.

I assume he is going to play golf tomorrow. I don't have the foursome yet. I will give you that tomorrow at a regular briefing at 10:15 in the morning.

Q Can we get some answers to some queries that are hanging?

MR. NESSEN: What were they again, Fran?

Q Rustand's comments on the Solzhenitsyn thing in Arizona, is that correct?

MR. NESSEN: I am told that Bill Greener talked to Warren, and as I understand it, that is not what Warren said. Also, I think Bill said there was no AP correspondent there, as far as Warren could determine.

What was the other one?

Q Are you saying it was not so? What is the true story?

MR. NESSEN: All I have is what Warren told Bill, which is, that is not what he said.

Q Is it true that there was some sort of an agreement?

MR. NESSEN: There is a wire story which quotes Warren Rustand as saying something to the effect that the reason that Solzhenitsyn did not initially have an appointment with the President is that there was some kind of arrangement made at the time Solzhenitsyn left Russia that would prevent -- I don't have the wire copy in front of me. You ought to see it.

Q Was there an arrangement between the United States and the Soviet Union, not to exile Solzhenitsyn?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have any knowledge of any such arrangement.

Q Is it true or isn't it? You don't have any knowledge? Have you called the President? Have you called Kissinger?

MR. NESSEN: I have talked to Dr. Kissinger.

Q What does he say?

MR. NESSEN: I think Kissinger can speak for himself.

Q This affects the White House. It's a definite policy.

MR. NESSEN: I don't see that.

Q What did he tell you?

MR. NESSEN: I think Henry ought to speak for himself.

Q Was the President acting on Mr. Kissinger's advice because of this agreement when he declined at first to meet with Mr. Solzhenitsyn?

MR. NESSEN: The reasons for initially not being able to fit Solzhenitsyn into the schedule are exactly as we stated them at the time.

Q Does the invitation still stand?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, he has an open invitation.

Q There was either an agreement or there wasn't an agreement.

MR. NESSEN: What we are doing, we are starting off with a wire story quoting Warren as saying something he didn't say.

Q What did Warren say?

MR. NESSEN: Fran, I can't stand here in Vail and tell you what Warren said to some people in Scottsdale.

Q What did he tell Greener?

MR. NESSEN: He said -- you know this is just wrong for me to stand here and tell you what Warren said in Scottsdale. You are all busily writing stories about it, and it is not right to do this.

Let me tell you what I know, but I am not going to tell you what I believe Warren said, that is not right.

Henry says -- And this isn't right either. (Laughter) I am reluctant to do even that, but just in the interest of trying to cool off what I sense is your burning interest in this, Henry Kissinger said to me that the decision initially not to -- the decision initially not to see Solzhenitsyn was not based on any arrangement made with the Soviet Union at the time that Solzhenitsyn left.

Q That leaves the implication it might have been made later.

Q Or before.

MR. NESSEN: Helen --

Q No, I mean, this is a very qualified statement.

Q The simple question is, was there any arrangement made? Did the U.S. have any role?

MR. NESSEN: I have no knowledge of any such thing.

Q Did you ask Mr. Kissinger?

MR. NESSEN: I certainly talked to Henry about that.

Q We are not asking you what Warren said in Scottsdale. We are asking you what Warren told Greener today, which is an entirely different thing.

MR. NESSEN: No, it isn't.

Q Yes, it is. What did he tell Greener?

MR. NESSEN: If you want to know what Warren said in Scottsdale--

Q No, we are asking what did he tell Greener?

MR. NESSEN: They had a private conversation, and all he said was he didn't say what the AP reported him as saying.

Q Your job is to go out to people we don't normally want to bother or have access to and collect for us the answers to questions that are raised.

MR. NESSEN: I am not Warren Rustand's press agent, and he said he did not say what the AP quoted him as saying. I told you what Henry said, that the decision not to see Solzhenitsyn was not based on any arrangement made with the Soviets.

Q Ron, Bill Greener is here. Would he be willing to answer that question?

MR. NESSEN: I find it the wrong thing to do, Ann.

Q Will you give us that statement that Henry Kissinger says, without the qualifier, "at the time Solzhenitsyn left" --

Q And initially.

Q -- in other words, that it was not based on any arrangement made with the Soviet Union, period.

MR. NESSEN: I am not going to stand here and toy with Henry's words, Dick. You must know that.

Q In other words, this is the way he wants it put?

MR. NESSEN: The decision not to see Solzhenitsyn initially -- the word initially there means since then the President has issued an open invitation. What is the other word that gives you trouble?

Q The last part of the phrase, "at the time Solzhenitsyn left."

MR. NESSEN: That is what we were talking about here. That is the thrust of the AP story, of what Warren says.

Q What I am getting at is, would it be fair to say there was no such arrangement made with the Soviet Union at any time?

MR. NESSEN: I have no knowledge of any.

Q What do you mean by no knowledge?

MR. NESSEN: That I don't know of any such arrangement.

Q You speak for the President of the United States, and you can ask if there is such an agreement or not, can't you?

MR. NESSEN: I will.

Q Did you ask Kissinger?

MR. NESSEN: I talked to Dr. Kissinger about that, and this is Dr. Kissinger's answer.

Q Did you discuss it with the President?

MR. NESSEN: I have not talked about it this afternoon with the President.

Q Did you accept this from Kissinger and not press him as to what the whole story was?

MR. NESSEN: I am relaying to you what Dr. Kissinger said, and that is going farther than I think I really should go.

Q In effect, we have to say -- and I think you understand -- that you are leaving open the possibility that an arrangement was made subsequently?

MR. NESSEN: Do you have some sort of evidence of that?

Q We are asking you if you can say whether there was any arrangement made after that. You are saying you don't know.

MR. NESSEN: I don't know of any. Do you?

Q No. That is my question.

Q Is it fair to say that you are denying there was any agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union at the time Solzhenitsyn was exiled from his home country?

MR. NESSEN: Fran, what I am doing and what I hope everybody here understands I am doing is relaying to you what Henry Kissinger told me.

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Q Ron, it would help -- maybe this is not a story if Warren was misquoted --

MR. NESSEN: That is where we started, and I thought we ought to stop.

Q If we could have a readout on that to go along with this --

MR. NESSEN: Warren says that what he said was, he was discussing the ways in which decisions are made by this President and that this President, before making a decision, gets advice and recommendations from a wide range of people.

On the question of seeing Solzhenitsyn, he had a range of recommendations from both people whose work is in the domestic area and people whose work is in the foreign area. And then Warren said, according to his conversation with Bill, something to the effect that it was even rumored in Washington that an arrangement had been made with the Soviet Union.

But, again quoting Warren quoting himself to Bill quoting him to me -- if that is the way stories get written -- but I don't know anything about such an arrangement.

Q So he was referring to a rumor?

Q Where did he get that rumor? Do you have any idea?

MR. NESSEN: I have no idea, Bob. This is what Warren says he told his audience in Scottsdale, there was such a rumor in Washington, but he doesn't know anything about it.

Q Having been on our side of this problem before, I am sure you are aware that the story now raises the suspicion somehow that the United States Government had an arrangement that in some way involved Solzhenitsyn.

I think what we are trying to get at is, are you, as a former reporter, satisfied that no such arrangement ever existed?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think that is a proper question or one I can answer, Bob. The man that was involved at the time was Dr. Kissinger, and Dr. Kissinger's response when I talked to him on the phone, I relayed to you.

Q Yes, but you didn't ask him this?

MR. NESSEN: I didn't work in the government at that time. President Ford was not President at that time.

Q But you still have the possibility to ask that question and you seem to be avoiding it which is why we are kind of suspicious about it.

MR. NESSEN: All I want to do is state what I know, Bob.

Q Why aren't you willing to find out, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: I have talked to any number of people, Bob, and I talked to Dr. Kissinger. I also talked to people at the NSC, and they know of no such arrangement either.

Q Wouldn't it be simple for Dr. Kissinger to say he knew of no such arrangement? It is supposed to be an arrangement strictly between Kissinger and the Soviet Union, and it would be quite simple, if it were not true, for him just to deny it.

MR. NESSEN: Fran, I am limiting myself to what I know about and that would seem to me to be the best policy for me.

Q Was there any understanding about the thing, any informal understanding?

MR. NESSEN: What I want to say to you, I am absolutely sure is going to be taken in the wrong way. Dr. Kissinger had some informal conversations with the Soviet Union at the time of Solzhenitsyn's departure.

Q Where, when, how, what?

MR. NESSEN: Dr. Kissinger will have to speak for himself.

Q Did he tell you what those informal discussions were about?

MR. NESSEN: I have no indication that they involved what the Warren Rustand story reports.

Q Do you have any indication what they were about?

MR. NESSEN: I think that is all --

Q Why do you throw us something like that and not explain it?

MR. NESSEN: I was asked a question and I felt I wanted to answer it to the best of my knowledge.

Q Did Henry say the informal conversations were about Solzhenitsyn? You have not quite said that.

Q Is it fair to say that Mr. Kissinger --

Q Question.

MR. NESSEN: Ralph says, is it fair to say they involved Solzhenitsyn. I think that would be fair to say.

Q Is it fair to say we more or less assured the Soviets that we would not try to, as a Government, make hay out of Solzhenitsyn?

MR. NESSEN: I have never heard that.

Q What was the substance of the conversations?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have any knowledge of what the informal conversations involved, and I think you have to ask Dr. Kissinger.

Q Did you just learn of these conversations from Dr. Kissinger in your conversation today?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think I need to tell where.

Q Did the United States Government in some way, through Dr. Kissinger, try to assure the Soviet Government we wouldn't embarrass them over Solzhenitsyn?

MR. NESSEN: Bob, I have no knowledge of that.

Q Did the President instruct Dr. Kissinger to have conversations with the Soviets?

MR. NESSEN: You will have to ask the former President. We have a different President now.

Q Has there been any conversation about Solzhenitsyn with the Government under this Administration?

MR. NESSEN: Not that I am aware of.

Q That doesn't answer the question. You raise a very important point and leave us all dangling. You imply that Kissinger made a deal with the Soviet Union concerning Solzhenitsyn.

MR. NESSEN: I don't see that implication, Bob.

Q What were they talking about?

MR. NESSEN: You will have to ask Henry.

Q Did the President ever ask Henry about that?

MR. NESSEN: Not that I know of.

Q Would it be fair to say the conversations involved Solzhenitsyn?

MR. NESSEN: You will just have to ask Henry. He indicated he will talk about this subject.

Q Will you indicate when?

MR. NESSEN: No, I won't.

Q Does that mean he won't be out this weekend?

MR. NESSEN: I haven't heard of any change of plans.

Q Did you talk to him since he held that two and one-half hour unscheduled meeting with Dinitz, the Israeli Ambassador?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what time it was or whether there was any meeting like that.

Q Was this meeting with the Soviet officials in Washington or on the hotline?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have any details on the informal conversation.

Q Does Warren Rustand still work for the United States?

MR. NESSEN: He certainly does. Did you hear otherwise?

Q No.

MR. NESSEN: What would raise the question?

Q I just asked.

MR. NESSEN: Was there any indication that he does?

Q I just asked.

MR. NESSEN: What would bring up the question?

Q There were a few things he said in Arizona.

MR. NESSEN: What did he say in Arizona? I told you what he says he said.

Q Has he asked the AP to correct what they put out?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know. You will have to ask Warren.

Q Can you, for the sake of accuracy, tell us exactly when Solzhenitsyn left the Soviet Union?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have any idea.

Q Ron, would there be a way you could clarify this by talking with Kissinger again right now and ask him what kind of arrangement he made with the Soviet Union?

MR. NESSEN: He indicated he would be talking about this subject himself.

Q When?

MR. NESSEN: As soon as anybody asks him the question, I suppose.

Q Can we call him right now?

MR. NESSEN: You are perfectly free to, if you wish.

Q On the White House line, so everybody can have it?

MR. NESSEN: If you want to.

MORE

Q On another subject, can you tell us why the White House is refusing to turn over papers, and documents to the Church Committee involving Chile?

MR. NESSEN: The Church Committee has subpoenaed two batches of documents from a period in 1970. Those documents are currently in a position where they cannot be released by the White House because of an injunction granted by Judge Bryant at the request of the former President.

Senator Church initially wrote a letter asking for these documents and was told by a return letter that the White House was powerless to give these documents because of Judge Bryant's injunction.

Then the Church Committee arranged for a subpoena of the documents which was delivered this afternoon, Washington time.

The subpoena is now for an answer on August 25, 13 days from now. The Civil Division of the Justice Department is looking into the subpoena because of the complications caused by the injunction that currently covers their status.

Q What is the President going to do? Are you saying he is going to play golf tomorrow?

MR. NESSEN: Well, he will work in the morning, then play golf and work again in the afternoon. I don't have any other plans for him.

Q Ron, the AP out of Sacramento is saying the President will address the California legislature on the 5th of September.

MR. NESSEN: I would say that is under consideration. I would have to look up the date, Don, but there is such an appearance under consideration.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Ron.

END (AT 5:13 P.M. MDT)