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AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 12 NOON EDT

OCTOBER 27, 1975

MONDAY

MR. NESSEN: I think you have all seen a press plan for the coverage of the first day of President Sadat's visit, have you not? If not, you can get one.

Let me clean up one or two little things.

As you know, the President is going to California later this week, and I think you know the basic format, which will be the President will leave the White House early in the afternoon on Wednesday, fly to Los Angeles, where he will address a Republican dinner in the evening at the Century Plaza Hotel, and spend the night there.

The next morning he will do a television interview with the Metromedia stations, and I don't have the release time on that for you. After that, he will fly to San Francisco, where he will, at lunchtime, address a Republican luncheon.

Q That is the next day?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, on Thursday.

Q At the St. Francis Hotel?

MR. NESSEN: That is correct.

He will then fly to Milwaukee, where he will go to the Performing Arts Center for a Republican dinner, and will return to Washington late that night.

Q Where is the Metromedia meeting?

MR. NESSEN: In Los Angeles. That is the rough schedule for Wednesday and Thursday. We will fill in the details as we get a little closer to it.

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Q Will you brief Wednesday?

MR. NESSEN: I think not.

Q Is it a direct flight from Washington to Los Angeles, and are there other meetings that may be added to the schedule?

MR. NESSEN: No, that is pretty much the schedule.

Q Is it a direct flight out?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Can you give us guidance on travel later this week?

MR. NESSEN: No, I can't.

Q How about the reports he is going to Florida on Sunday?

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

Some interest was expressed in why the President had not called up the Boston Red Sox. He wrote a letter to Darryl Johnson, the manager of the Boston Red Sox, and told him in his letter that "It was an exceptionally well played series in which both teams can take great pride. I commend you and the entire Red Sox team for the fine fight in the best tradition of American sports."

Then he wrote a small personal note on there about "your team was great."

Q Has the President written off Massachusetts?

MR. NESSEN: He hasn't written off anything.

I am ready for your questions.

Q Has President Ford given Senator Tower any encouragement this morning on his antibusing?

MR. NESSEN: I frankly didn't sit in on that meeting, so I can't give you any description of what was discussed.

Q Senator Brooke asked the President for equal time to give the other side on the busing thing and has yet to receive word on whether he will be given some time. Do you know anything on that?

MR. NESSEN: I am not aware of Senator Brooke's request, whether it has reached here yet, but I will check it for you.

Q Ron, you are not going to give us any briefing on what the Senator talked about with the President?

MR. NESSEN: Of course, he asked for time to talk to the President about his views on busing. We know that.

Q Does the President agree with him?

MR. NESSEN: I think you know the President's own views on busing, Helen.

Q All he wanted to do was say how he felt about busing?

MR. NESSEN: He wanted an opportunity to tell the President how he felt about busing. That is right.

Q I am sure the President knows how Senator Tower feels about busing. What was the real purpose? Does he want to line him up in support of some legislation?

MR. NESSEN: What is Senator Tower's view in asking for the appointment? You will have to ask Senator Tower, except in general terms he wanted to talk to the President about his views on busing.

Q How does the President feel about a constitutional amendment to outlaw busing?

MR. NESSEN: Frankly, Walt, I have not asked him his views on the constitutional amendment proposal, so I just don't know.

MORE

Q We have been told by Presidential aides that the President's view is that he does not now favor a constitutional amendment. There seems to be some emphasis on it now. Can you give us any guidance on whether his position is going to change?

MR. NESSEN: I just told Walt I have not asked him about his views so I don't know his views on the constitutional amendment.

Q Isn't he on record somewhere as saying he favors a constitutional amendment?

MR. NESSEN: John reminds me he did comment on that point in a Chicago Times interview -- which I had not recalled -- but that would state his view on the constitutional amendment. I would have to look it up.

Q UPI reports Mr. Nixon is considering an offer to become a syndicated radio commentator. Does the President welcome this and what role with the President prefer that Mr. Nixon play in the re-election campaign?

MR. NESSEN: I think the President expressed his views on that, Les.

Q What were they?

MR. NESSEN: I will find out where you can find it.

Q Without asking on specific travel, does the President still intend to visit every State by the end of 1975?

MR. NESSEN: We are asked that here every day, Saul. The answer is the same, Saul.

Q Are they going to discuss the situation in Lebanon?

MR. NESSEN: Since the meeting has only just started, it is difficult to tell you what they will discuss. After the meeting, we will tell you what they did discuss.

Q Was the President informed of the bombings in the country today and has he done anything about it?

MR. NESSEN: He is aware of it, certainly.

Q Did he ask for any kind of a report?

MR. NESSEN: He assumes that the people who are responsible are doing what they are supposed to do.

Q Ron, did the Tower's visit here have anything to do with the fact there is an anti-busing amendment attached to the oil decontrol bill?

MR. NESSEN: Howard, I don't know what specifically they discussed. I did not sit in on the meeting. I know, generally, Senator Tower asked for the meeting to give his views on busing and to talk about his view of a constitutional amendment dealing with busing. The specifics of the meeting --

Q Will you find out something?

MR. NESSEN: I doubt if we will be able to relay the details of a private conversation, Fran.

Q Ron, I would like to ask you about the report that Navy flyers shot down in the Baltic Sea in 1950 might have been Soviet prisoners. Is the White House looking into that story?

MR. NESSEN: I am sure you know, if you have kept up with this story over the years, it is a very old story that periodically comes up. There is no change in what has been done.

Q Does that mean the President doesn't put any credence in the story we all saw in the Star Saturday or Sunday? Does the President think it is just hogwash or does he think there may be some substance to it?

MR. NESSEN: There have been, as you may know, a number of investigations over the years, really going back to the beginning of the episode. The latest investigation was made in 1973. The Soviet Union was asked to provide whatever information it could about these flyers and in January of 1974 the Soviet Union said that the flyers cannot be found in the Soviet Union.

The State Department has reached the conclusion, and has informed whoever has asked about this over the years, that the United States has used every means at its disposal to get further information on this and has not been able to reach the conclusion that the story suggested over the weekend.

So, unless there is some new evidence -- and I am not aware there is any new evidence -- the United States has not way additionally to proceed on the matter and believes that its conclusions are correct.

Q Ron, when will the Mideast Economic Aid package go to the Hill?

MR. NESSEN: This week.

Q Do you know when this week?

MR. NESSEN: No, I don't.

Q Secretary Kissinger said he already knew what the figures in that package were. That would indicate to me the talks with Sadat would not affect the economic aid for Egypt.

MR. NESSEN: I don't recall exactly what Dr. Kissinger's words were on Sadat but I know it has not arrived at the President's desk yet and there are some decisions that remain to be made.

Q Can we go back thirty seconds, please?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Unless there is some new evidence, the United States believes its conclusions are correct --

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Those conclusions are what, that these flyers are dead and not in the Soviet Union?

MR. NESSEN: That is correct.

Q Ron, since Parade Magazine published a question, "Is it true Ron Nessen and Henry Kissinger hate each other?" --

MR. NESSEN: Let's not waste everyone's time.

Q I wonder if you care to counteract this question or give me a response. Could you give me the courtesy of saying no comment or something. Could you? This is published all over the United States, apparently other people do wonder about this. Could you give me the courtesy of an answer?

MR. NESSEN: Next question.

Q Thank you, Ron, very much for your courtesy.

Q There is a story apparently in Newsweek this week about Henry to the effect he was rather piqued with the Chinese during his visit over there and he is now urging the President to visit other countries on his Chinese trip, Indonesia among the other countries, this against the Chinese wishes. Is there any substance to that?

MR. NESSEN: I think Henry can and did speak for himself following his trip to China. As far as any other stops on the trip to China, we don't have anything to announce at this time.

Q Will there be a further meeting after the present two days?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know yet. I will have to check.

Q When do you expect to announce the dates of the China trip?

MR. NESSEN: Shortly, as soon as a few more details are worked out.

Q Will we get the transcript from the President's and Mr. Sadat's remarks?

MR. NESSEN: Their remarks at the arrival?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: Yes, you will get that shortly.

Q Is there any reason why we should think the figures won't be the same as we have gotten all along, \$2.3 billion for Israel and \$700 million for Egypt?

MR. NESSEN: I know for a fact the paper has not moved to the President's desk yet and some decisions remain to be made.

Q Is the President considering visiting any other countries besides China on his Far East trip?

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

Q Anything else to your knowledge?

MR. NESSEN: I will just leave it at that, John.

Q Anything further on the Turner Shelton nomination? It was on Page 1 this time.

MR. NESSEN: I don't have anything on that.

Q There is a report the Senate met and reportedly said forget about Shelton.

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what the question was.

Q There is a report on Page 1 of the Star saying the Senate Foreign Relations Committee met and advised the White House to forget about the Turner Shelton nomination. I wondered if you know anything about this?

MR. NESSEN: I have nothing on it today.

Q Ron, do you expect anything soon on the President's reorganization time for the intelligence community?

MR. NESSEN: When you say soon --

Q Like this week?

MR. NESSEN: No, certainly not this week, or next week. I would say you are talking in terms of more than a month of when it will be announced.

Q Ron, President Sadat is going to Camp David early next week. Is that for the purpose of meeting with President Ford up there and are there any other meetings other than the one today and the one tomorrow that you have announced here?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have anything in the way of details on President Sadat's schedule yet.

Q This trip to Camp David then doesn't necessarily mean a meeting with the President?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Is your read-out going to be in writing or are you going to call people in?

MR. NESSEN: Orally, or verbally.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END

(AT 12:14 P.M. EDT)