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NEWS CONFERENCE

#368

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH BILL GREENER

AT 12:09 P.M. EST

NOVEMBER 10, 1975

MONDAY

MR. GREENER: First of all, let me answer the question. Ron is en route to San Francisco, where he is making a speech before the National Association of Realtors and will be back tomorrow evening.

In reference to the travel this week, the President's speech tomorrow night is scheduled for 8:35 p.m. and all activities take place at the Charleston Civic Center.

The President's departure is at 5:30 from Andrews, and the press plane check-in time is 4:15 with a 4:45 departure.

Q What is the subject of the speech?

MR. GREENER: I don't have it.

Q What is this function? A fund-raiser?

MR. GREENER: Yes, it is a GOP fund-raiser.

Q How much a plate?

MR. GREENER: I don't have the details. I will get them.

The President's arrival is at 6:25. He speaks at 8:35, departs at 9:25 and is scheduled to arrive at Andrews at 10:20. We hope to have the bibles later today.

On Friday, we are looking for a press plane departure at about 8:15 in the morning. The President will first speak at a Convocation at North Carolina Central University in Durham at about 10:30.

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He will then go to Raleigh to the Royal Villa Hotel for a GOP fund-raising luncheon at 12:30. He then flies to Atlanta for a GOP fund-raising dinner.

Q No press conference in Atlanta?

MR. GREENER: There will be a local press conference there.

Q Is that a TV or like a regional one where they divide the questions?

MR. GREENER: It is a TV one. I don't know exactly how. It is not divided.

Q A TV press conference?

MR. GREENER: Yes.

Q What time?

MR. GREENER: I don't have the exact times on the Atlanta trip. It will be before the dinner.

Q What time will he arrive?

MR. GREENER: I don't have that. We will get it.

Q It is a TV press conference with us and them, or an interview?

MR. GREENER: A press conference for the local media.

Q A TV local interview down there with us not involved?

MR. GREENER: Correct.

Q For spot use or delayed broadcast?

MR. GREENER: It is my understanding for spot use.

Q Have you finished those details?

MR. GREENER: No. There is one last thing.

If we can, we are going to arrange to get the press plane out of Atlanta an hour ahead of the President, in which case we would then come back to Andrews and change planes. If that is not possible, we will fly from Atlanta to Paris. However, we are trying to arrange for the press plane to come back to Andrews.

Q When will you know that?

MR. GREENER: We will know that today sometime.

Those who plan to make both trips should have their luggage for Paris in the hands of the Transportation Office before leaving for North Carolina and Atlanta.

Q Can we bring it at the time we check in on Friday?

MR. GREENER: Yes. Ray asked me to bring up the fact that the sign-up sheet for North Carolina and Georgia is now being posted and will be taken down tomorrow night. This is a determining factor of whether the press plane will return to Andrews or fly from Atlanta to Paris.

Q What time will we leave for Paris, whether from Andrews or Atlanta?

MR. GREENER: If we leave from Andrews, around 11:00; if from Atlanta, an hour earlier, I assume.

Q What time does the President leave?

MR. GREENER: He comes back here and then departs from Andrews.

Q What time?

MR. GREENER: About 11:30.

Q As it stands now, if we are going to Paris, we have to leave from Atlanta?

MR. GREENER: Yes, as it stands now.

Q Why do we leave an hour earlier? What will he be doing in Atlanta?

MR. GREENER: He has some time in the hotel.

Q The President will come back here and leave for Paris?

MR. GREENER: That is the plan now.

Q If you are interested in going to Paris but not in going to North Carolina and Atlanta, you still have to go to North Carolina and Atlanta?

MR. GREENER: As it now stands, yes.

Q Will you have an announcement about that today?

MR. GREENER: We are trying to work it out, John, so that you do not have to do that. It depends upon the number of people that are only going on one trip or the other. That is why we urge you to sign up today if you are just going to Atlanta.

Q We can't make that determination because we are all signed up for Paris and some will not be going to Atlanta, if possible. I signed up for Atlanta, but I don't want to go. I have no choice if I want to go to Paris.

MR. GREENER: Just sign up and put behind it where you want to go.

Q How are you going to know how many people will take their names off that sign-up list if the plane is coming back here?

MR. GREENER: I assume we will have to contact them. I don't know how many names are up there.

Q You will know later today?

MR. GREENER: We hope to know later today and will announce it.

Q The President is coming back here from Atlanta?

MR. GREENER: Yes.

Q As of now, the people intending to go to Paris should sign up for the North Carolina and Atlanta trip?

MR. GREENER: They should sign up if they are going on the Paris trip. They should sign for Atlanta and North Carolina.

Q We will not spend any time here, just get off one plane on to the other?

MR. GREENER: Yes.

Q Is there a possibility of a meeting with Assad after the Paris conference; I mean, another stop after Paris?

MR. GREENER: There are none planned.

Q On the Paris trip, is there any kind of background briefing on it?

MR. GREENER: We hope to have some sort of meeting on Paris on Wednesday or Thursday, yes.

MR. ZOOK: We already have the Paris sign-up list. If you want to go to Atlanta, sign up for Atlanta, then we will know what you are going to do in both cities and we will make the decision and let you know.

Q That is the opposite of what Bill said.

MR. GREENER: That is what I said originally. If you are going to Paris, we already have it, if you would like to go to Atlanta in addition to Paris. However, if you do not plan to go to Atlanta, unless you need to be there for the Paris trip, do not sign.

Q If Phil Shabecoff was signed up to go to Paris and doesn't want to go to Atlanta and doesn't sign up for Atlanta -- I have to go to Atlanta, if that is possible. How will I do that without screwing up your whole system?

MR. ZOOK: Just sign up. You sign for Atlanta; he will sign for Paris. That means he would rather go from here to Paris and you want to go to Atlanta.

Q I am signed up for Paris because I am going. I prefer not to go to Atlanta, but signed for Atlanta on the assumption I have to go to both.

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MR. ZOOK: I will talk to you after the briefing.

MR. GREENER: Ray, if you can explain this thing clearly, come on up and do it.

Q Can you tell us later today whether the press plane is coming back to Washington from Atlanta? If that occurs, everything will be worked out. The reporters just want to go to Paris and get on there and the ones who just want to go to Atlanta can fly down and back and get off at Andrews.

MR. GREENER: That is true, Fred. That is what we started with.

Q What is the outlook at the moment, Ray, as far as going from Atlanta or coming back? What do you think is going to be the position at the moment?

MR. ZOOK: We don't know until we see the sign-up list.

Q And we can't sign up until we know. (Laughter)

Q Ray, is it possible to work it out so the press plane can fly back to Andrews?

MR. GREENER: That is what we are trying to do and will let you know later this afternoon.

I have no further announcements.

Q Bill, on the President's reference to the fact you can't take away the restoration of credibility of the White House, at the same time he finally admitted there was tension between Schlesinger and Kissinger -- I was wondering, in the interest of re-restoring his credibility, would you deny there is tension between Mr. Nessen and Dr. Kissinger?

MR. GREENER: Let me correct the first part of your statement. He was asked not if there was tension between Schlesinger and Kissinger, he only referred -- I asked this specifically -- he was discussing the fact he felt the tension and that was his own personal view. As for the second one, I suggest you ask either Dr. Kissinger or Mr. Nessen.

Q You don't think there is any tension; is that it?

MR. GREENER: Between who and who?

Q Between Nessen and Kissinger -- you, as Nessen's Deputy, do not think there is any tension between Dr. Kissinger and Mr. Nessen?

MR. GREENER: I wouldn't care to characterize their feelings.

Q Are you saying the President misspoke himself yesterday? He was replying in direct response to a question about Dr. Kissinger and Mr. Schlesinger?

MR. GREENER: I am not saying he misspoke himself.

Q He just didn't speak very clearly?

MR. GREENER: I think he speaks very clearly, John. "I found, Mr. Broder, in the last month or so that there was not as comfortable a feeling in the situation that I desired."

Q What was the question?

MR. GREENER: "Mr. President, accepting the changes in your Administration were the simple truth, I am still puzzled as to what situation changed for you apparently during the month of October, early November. I noted, for example, when you were asked about possible differences between Mr. Schlesinger and Mr. Kissinger in an interview in Omaha on October 1st you said, 'I have two fine Secretaries and, if there are any differences, I will make the choice and sometimes it is healthy to have a different viewpoint as long as somebody can make a decision.' Did you decide it was unhealthy?"

Answer: "I found, Mr. Broder, in the last month or so that there was not as comfortable a feeling in the situation that I desire and that it was creating some problems. This doesn't mean that either of those individuals was not performing his job in a very effective way. But for me to do the job as well as I possibly can, I need a feeling of comfort within an organization."

Q He is not talking about Schlesinger and Kissinger?

Q Wasn't that affirming the tension between those two gentlemen that made him uncomfortable?

MR. GREENER: I am not going to expand on his comment. When I talked to him he said he did not feel comfortable with the tension that he felt.

Q What tension?

MR. GREENER: I am not going to characterize that, Jim.

Q Then he is saying that any interpretation of his answer that he was referring to tensions between Schlesinger and Kissinger, this is wrong?

MR. GREENER: I am saying he was speaking of his own personal feelings and made his own personal decision.

Q And not problems between the two of them?

MR. GREENER: That is correct. He answered Osborne on that in the final question on Monday night.

Q When does Mr. Rumsfeld go over to the Pentagon?

MR. GREENER: After confirmation.

Q Is he still here?

MR. GREENER: Yes.

Q He still has his office here?

MR. GREENER: Yes.

Q When does Mr. Kissinger vacate the White House?

MR. GREENER: I don't know. I will have to check on the exact schedule of when Brent gets sworn in.

Q Why is Mr. Rumsfeld still here when his replacement is already sworn in? What need is there here in the White House?

MR. GREENER: What need is there?

Q Yes. His replacement has been sworn in. Just why is he still needed here in the White House?

MR. GREENER: He is continuing to operate out of his office.

Q Is he doing anything other than preparing for his confirmation hearing?

MR. GREENER: That is the primary job he is doing. The question was asked Dick Cheney the other day on the airplane, has he taken over the job, and he said yes.

Q Has he gone off the payroll?

MR. GREENER: I don't know. I will have to check that, Sarah.

Q Would you find out?

MR. GREENER: Certainly.

Q Can Scowcroft keep his stars, uniform and so forth?

MR. GREENER: No. As we mentioned last week, that is something Counsel was checking into and Brent does plan to retire from the Air Force.

Q When?

MR. GREENER: I don't know the date.

Q What about Secretary Kissinger's chairmanships in the various committees? Has there been a determination on that?

MR. GREENER: Not as yet, John. That is also something the Counsel is looking into.

Q In answering Sarah's question, are you leaving the interpretation possibly that Mr. Rumsfeld is off the White House Staff?

MR. GREENER: No, I am not leaving any interpretation. I said I would check.

The question was asked, is he off the payroll?
I said I do not know. I will check.

Q On the stars, what kind of a retirement does he get? Can you tell us a little more about what his status will be -- General Scowcroft?

MR. GREENER: I can't except he would be the same as any other retired Three-Star General. I don't know what the pay is. Is that what you mean?

Q Would he be able to maintain some kind of status of getting full retirement and so forth? Are there any special arrangements?

MR. GREENER: I don't know, Helen. I will have to check.

Q He is not a permanent Three-Star, is he?

MR. GREENER: I don't know if he is temporary Three-Star and permanent Major General. Is that what you mean? I don't know how that works and will have to find out.

Q Is there a hassle over waiting on legislation to take care of his situation? Doesn't there have to be legislation? I think there does.

MR. GREENER: I don't think so.

Q I thought Scowcroft already asked for this.

MR. GREENER: No, he said he would abide by the Counsel's decision.

Q The Counsel said he has to retire from active military service?

MR. GREENER: That is correct, Helen.

Q When was this decided by Phil Buchen? I assume that was who did it.

MR. GREENER: Last week some time.

Q I know he was looking into it but it was never announced he had reached that conclusion.

MR. GREENER: I don't know the exact date.

Q Do you know what the explanation is -- because of a conflict?

MR. GREENER: I don't know. I will be glad to get an exact legal opinion if it is permissible.

Q I want to be sure. Are you saying the President maintains there was no real tension between Kissinger and Schlesinger, it is just that their difference of opinion created a tension that he, the President, felt but the two didn't feel about each other? Is that what you are saying?

MR. GREENER: I am not answering whether there was tension between Kissinger and Schlesinger. I am answering the President felt the change was necessary because he felt a tension because of the differences.

Q Did the President tell you why he had not mentioned this tension when he was continually pressed about it in the press conference last Monday?

MR. GREENER: He did not.

Q Was there anyone from your office in the meeting this morning between the President and the Congressional delegation on New York City?

MR. GREENER: John Carlson was in the meeting.

Q We got their point of view from them out here in the rain this morning. I wondered if you were going to tell us anything from the White House point of view?

MR. GREENER: I don't think there is a great deal of difference. I did listen to your interview out there with them.

The meeting was requested by Senator Mansfield and the four other Senators and the purpose was to discuss the legislation that is being proposed by the Senate Banking Committee. The meeting began at 8:30, lasted for about an hour and 15 minutes. The Senators reviewed with the President, as they told you, the legislation approved by the Senate Banking Committee. As you probably know, this legislation sets up certain requirements for the city and, if they fulfill these requirements, then loan guarantees will be given to them.

Q Does that mean that they would automatically get the loan guarantees or the President would have the authority to give loans, do you know?

MR. GREENER: I don't. We will check it.

Q I can check it myself.

MR. GREENER: The President and the Senators had a good exchange of views, as you were told. There was no substantive revision of the President's position or policy. The President stated that he would continue to monitor the situation; that he was encouraged by the progress that New York City was making. The President stated even though there were substantial differences between his views and the views of some of the Senators, he appreciated the chance to have the exchange.

Q Does the President feel that his hard line position is causing New York City to make the progress that he is encouraged about?

MR. GREENER: The President is encouraged that they are making some moves and is hopeful that --

Q Is he taking the credit for their making some moves? That is the question I am asking.

MR. GREENER: I don't think the President is doing it to take credit for it. The President is hopeful they will be able to work out their problems.

Q Senator Proxmire indicated that progress was being made in narrowing the differences between the President's view and the view of some Members of Congress on this. Do you or does John have any thoughts on what progress is being made toward drawing the two sides together?

MR. GREENER: I don't think so. I think also that Senator Proxmire reiterated several times that the President did not change his position.

Q Yes, he did, but he said in addition progress was being made indicating that the difference in positions had been narrowed?

MR. GREENER: I know of nothing beyond what I have said here, nor Senator Proxmire.

Q He said he was hopeful and we tried to press him on why he was hopeful.

MR. GREENER: His answer was, I am always hopeful.

Q Not really. He felt that the President -- he felt that he might change him around, that is the impression we got. Do you have that impression?

MR. GREENER: I have the impression the President has not changed his position.

Q You said there was no substantive change, Bill, earlier. What does that mean? Does that mean there was a peripheral change -- the door is open a little wider?

MR. GREENER: It is simply the use of the word, Bill, there was no change in his position.

Q Strike substantive?

MR. GREENER: You may leave it in or strike it.

Q It does create a little subtlety?

MR. GREENER: Strike substantive. There is no change in the President's position.

Q Is it the President's position he would veto the legislation that cleared the Banking Committee?

MR. GREENER: The President did say if the bill was on his desk at this time he would veto it.

Q He told that to those guys?

Q He said that this morning?

MR. GREENER: Yes.

Q What do you mean at this time? Do you mean in its present form? Is that what you mean? Was he holding out the possibilities the bill could be changed in such a way as to meet his objections?

MR. GREENER: Simply as the way it is presently drawn up he would veto it.

Q Did he suggest any way it could be revised and therefore be acceptable?

MR. GREENER: No.

Q So he just doesn't go for any legislation?

Q Was that a quote from him -- if it were on his desk this morning he would veto it? That leaves the possibility if New York City were to change its position and balance its budget and just need some cash flow, there might be a possibility of assistance?

MR. GREENER: I think we are just grasping at straws. The fact is the President has not changed his position on New York City from the statements he has previously made.

Q Bill, there has been some talk on the Hill in various committees of putting these two concepts together in one bill; that is to say the President's bankruptcy proposal and the loan guarantee proposal with perhaps one behind the other in some sequence or some combination.

Two questions about that: First of all, was that possibility discussed this morning, and is the President in any sense open to consideration of that kind of combination?

MR. GREENER: The first is that it was not discussed this morning and the second one is that the President has made his proposal and that is: He was hopeful and is hopeful that New York City will be able to work their way out of this problem.

Q That is not what I asked. I asked whether the President is open to any consideration of a combination?

MR. GREENER: Without seeing the specifics, I have not discussed it with him and do not know, Jim.

Q What does the President plan to do about diplomatic recognition of Angola tomorrow, and will he recognize it? If so, which army will he recognize, or will they just withhold? I want to know about the President, not the State Department.

MR. GREENER: I have not discussed it with the President.

Q He knows it is coming tomorrow -- I see, okay.

Q Would the White House like to revise its remarks on the snows of New Hampshire which have irritated the skiers and everyone else up there? (Laughter) They are up in arms. He lost a lot of votes in New Hampshire.

MR. GREENER: These are the reported remarks of the Press Secretary.

Q Nessen's remarks.

MR. GREENER: I can only report what the President said before. He has skied in New Hampshire, enjoys skiing in New Hampshire. (Laughter)

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Q What about Vermont?

MR. GREENER: I don't know if he ever skied there.

Q Has he ever said the conditions were icy there and the snow uncertain, as Mr. Nessen said?

Q Will you refresh us, Bill, those of us who didn't work Saturday, on Ron's quotes on the snows in New Hampshire?

Q After that, we have a few questions about the plumbing in West Virginia. (Laughter)

MR. GREENER: What was the question again, Fran?

Q Has the President ever said anything about the conditions being icy in New Hampshire and the snow uncertain there as to why he doesn't want to ski in New Hampshire?

MR. GREENER: I have never heard him say it.

Q Ron must have.

Q Has the President received any encouragement from Frank Zarb that a compromise may be struck by the conferees on the energy bill, one he could sign? On Meet the Press yesterday the President seemed to be falling back a little bit on a certain veto to hopes that a compromise may come out.

MR. GREENER: The President has asked Frank, as you know, to continue working with the conferees to see if an acceptable formula allowing for some proper flexibility can be achieved. The major problem right now is that it continues to rely too heavily on imported oil. This is what he said yesterday.

Q Who is paying for Ron Nessen's speech traveling?

MR. GREENER: Who is paying for the trip?

Q Who is paying for Ron Nessen to go into primary election States and speak on behalf of the President?

MR. GREENER: Ron is addressing the National Association of Realtors.

Q Are they picking up the tab?

MR. GREENER: No, they are not.

Q Is the Government?

MR. GREENER: It is regular Government travel, yes.

Q Has it been explored, the possibility of this being a violation of the Hatch Act since Mr. Ford is an announced candidate and Mr. Nessen is an advocate and proponent of his views?

MR. GREENER: Ron is out there speaking as the Press Secretary and has been invited by the National Association of Realtors.

Q I understand that. I am asking if he is, as a Federal Employee, speaking on behalf of an announced Presidential candidate.

MR. GREENER: You are assuming the subject of the speech, aren't you?

Q Yeah. (Laughter)

Q I am assuming he is not going to put any negative spin -- although that is an erroneous assumption based on the statements about West Virginia and New Hampshire. But based on what should be a normal speech, I would assume it would be favorable to the Administration and favorable to the candidate.

MR. GREENER: It is a normal thing for members of the White House staff to speak around the country at various forums.

Q At Government expense?

MR. GREENER: Yes.

Q Why are the taxpayers paying for a speech by the Press Secretary to the National Association of Realtors? Why isn't the National Association paying that travel expense?

MR. GREENER: For the very reason that Tom brought up, and that is that it would therefore become a conflict of interest, automatically.

Q Bill, the budget for travel this year is \$2.3 billion, so isn't this one of the trips that could be classified as not essential?

MR. GREENER: Not in my opinion, no.

Q Bill, has a decision been made as to who will pay for the Boston trip?

MR. GREENER: No, it has not. They are still looking into it and, as you know, the President has stated he expected, whatever the decision, to be up to the spirit and letter of that law.

We should know an answer to that sometime either early tomorrow or Wednesday.

Q On Mr. Nessen's trip, could we get an advance text of Mr. Nessen's speech?

MR. GREENER: You may, as soon as it is approved.

Q Approved?

MR. GREENER: By him.

Q When is he giving it?

MR. GREENER: Tomorrow. He is working on it on the airplane. We have a draft here. He will call in the changes and you may have the advance text.

Q Is he traveling a military airplane or commercial?

MR. GREENER: Commercial.

Q Why should the Government pay for Ron's travel out there? The National Association of Realtors would pay for any Congressman's travel and give him an honorarium, too. Why should the Government pay for this?

MR. GREENER: As I said, Sarah, it is a conflict of interest if he allows the agency or the organization that is sponsoring the conference --

Q No, it isn't.

MR. GREENER: Yes, it is.

Q No, it isn't. It would still be a Hatch Act violation if he goes out there and makes a political speech anyway you take it. That is not the point. They could legally pay for that. Why should the taxpayers pay for that?

MR. GREENER: This is the decision of the counsel and if --

Q Of Mr. Buchen or who? Who was the counsel who made that --

MR. GREENER: It is in the White House Standards of Conduct, which is published and open and free for you to see.

Q It is in the Standards for him to be paid for travel to go out and make speeches like that on behalf of a candidate? No, it is not in the White House official standards --

MR. GREENER: You are assuming he is going out and making a speech on behalf of a candidate.

Q What is the subject of his speech?

MR. GREENER: The major portion of the speech -- he had three points. Let me see if I can remember the three key points. He is speaking first on his job as Press Secretary. He is speaking secondly on the energy problem and third -- I don't remember, but I will check.

Q Does he take Q and A as is the custom at many speaking appearances such as this?

MR. GREENER: This is a huge crowd, Tom, and I don't believe it is set up for Q and A.

Q Did they ask the President and Ron is speaking instead?

MR. GREENER: Pardon me?

Q Did this realtor's group initially invite the President to speak and since he is not speaking, Ron is sent as a replacement?

MR. GREENER: Not to my knowledge. The President spoke to them last year, as did the Vice President.

Q Is Ron going to denounce the Congress in this speech, as he does every time he makes an assertion here about energy?

MR. GREENER: Sarah, as I said, I do not have the advance text of the speech. As soon as he calls back in with the changes, we will type it, print it and hand it out.

Q Is the President going to China?

MR. GREENER: The President still plans to go to China, yes.

Q Has the advance left yet, and what is the delay?

MR. GREENER: The advance has not left, and the plans are still continuing.

Q When do you expect an announcement of the date? This week?

MR. GREENER: Shortly. I don't know the exact time.

Q Is it correct the advance team is not going to leave until after the European trip?

MR. GREENER: I have no details as to when the advance team will leave, Fran.

Q Have the Chinese indicated a set of dates on which they think the President ought to be there?

MR. GREENER: Plans are continuing and the President does plan to go. As soon as we have an announcement, Jim, I will make it.

Q That is a euphemism for the trip is in trouble, isn't it, Bill?

MR. GREENER: I don't think so. Those of you who listened to the Secretary of State in his press conference know he indicated we still plan to go.

Q Can we go to China without going to Atlanta?
(Laughter)

Q On the Ways and Means Committee, Bill, what is the President's position on that now, the tax bill?

MR. GREENER: The President still feels that unless there is some indication from the Congress that there would be a spending ceiling, that he would have to veto that legislation.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Bill.

END (AT 12:40 P.M. EST)

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