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NEWS CONFERENCE

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AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH BILL GREENER

AT 11:30 A.M. EST

NOVEMBER 11, 1975

TUESDAY

MR. GREENER: We have one schedule item for tomorrow to give you. At 2:30 p.m. the President will attend the swearing-in of the new Librarian of Congress, Daniel Boorstin. The ceremony will be held in the Great Hall of the Library. Dr. Boorstin will become the 13th Librarian, succeeds L. Quincy Mumford, who retired last December after 20 years as Librarian.

The President's participation in this ceremony marks the first time that a President has been involved. The President is doing it for several reasons -- one, to demonstrate his personal admiration for Dr. Boorstin and his respect for the office of Librarian and, also, to emphasize the important role he believes the Library plays as an intellectual resource for the Nation.

The President met this morning in the Cabinet Room at 10:00 a.m. with a delegation of Israeli parliamentarians led by the Speaker of the Israeli Parliament, Israel Yeshayahu. Speaker Carl Albert and Ambassador Dinitz accompanied the group to the meeting. General Scowcroft was in attendance.

The meeting provided an opportunity for an exchange of views between the President and Israeli representatives of various backgrounds and political views on the Middle East situation.

The President reaffirmed his strong commitment in maintaining the momentum of negotiations aimed at a just and durable settlement in that area and to the survival and security of the State of Israel.

The Israelis expressed their appreciation for the long and continuing relationship of U.S. support and assistance and the President expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to meet with the group in view of the close relations which exist between our two Governments and the peoples.

I think we have a list of the people already posted.

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Q Did the President say anything about the UN vote?

MR. GREENER: Yes, he did. He reaffirmed his position as previously stated, that the U.S. deplores the characterization of Zionism as a form of racism and his belief that the adoption of this resolution undermines the principles on which the UN is based.

This is what he said in the meeting with the Israeli parliamentarians.

Q Do you have anything to add to that?

MR. GREENER: Anticipating that, let me say I have this statement to make: The U.S. Representative at the UN has already expressed the official U.S. reaction to the General Assembly vote. As you know, the President has previously spoken out on this issue and in the aftermath of last night's General Assembly vote, re-emphasizes his views of the deplorable nature of this wholly unjustified action.

I have one other announcement. The President will receive the Prime Minister of Denmark, Anker Henrik Jorgensen, for a meeting at the White House on November 15. Prime Minister Jorgensen will come to Washington following visits to Venezuela and Mexico.

I believe that is all the announcements I have.

Q Bill, following that up, did the President ever express to President Sadat, a prominent supporter of this resolution, his feeling that the thing was deplorable? Did he ever at any time when Sadat was here, to your knowledge?

MR. GREENER: To my knowledge it was not a subject of discussion.

Q Could we get the spelling on the Dane?

MR. GREENER: A-n-k-e-r H-e-n-r-i-k  
J-o-r-g-e-n-s-e-n.

He is the Prime Minister of Denmark.

Q Ambassador Moynihan also apparently had some things to say today about the likelihood of a Congressional response to this vote in the UN. Does the White House want, does it solicit, would it support some form of punitive action by Congress in retaliation for this vote?

MR. GREENER: Several Members of Congress, I notice on the wires, have made comments, but I have not discussed that with the President. I will, however, Jim.

Q Does the President anticipate any change in the United States' relationship to the United Nations as a result of this vote?

MR. GREENER: No. As for their participation in the UN, you mean?

Q Yes.

Q Or any financial support, Bill?

MR. GREENER: That is something that is a matter of Congressional action, isn't it?

Q Answer my question first. Does the President see any changed role for the United States in the United Nations or would he consider withdrawal because of this vote?

MR. GREENER: He will not consider withdrawal.

As for yours, that is a matter of Congressional action, Forrest.

Q Would he favor Congressional action along that line?

MR. GREENER: That was the same question Jim asked, and I said I would have to check.

Q Bill, isn't it a fact the law that created the NSC stipulated that the leader be a civilian? Can you tell us why it is taking so long for Counsel to research that?

MR. GREENER: Research what?

Q The question of whether General Scowcroft should resign his commission?

MR. GREENER: I answered that yesterday, Aldo. The Counsel advised General Scowcroft that he should retire from his commission and he is taking action to do that.

Q Have you found out whether he is retiring or resigning?

MR. GREENER: Yes, he is retiring. That is what I said yesterday.

Q Is he taking his military pension?

MR. GREENER: I don't know exactly the rules of it. I can only answer in my own context. As you know, I retired from the Air Force and I gave up 50 percent of the retired pay during the time.

Q Are you a double-dipper?

MR. GREENER: Oh, yes. (Laughter)

Q Does this mean he is still connected with the military; he is still getting his retirement pay from the military? Is he a legitimate civilian?

MR. GREENER: I would like to think we are.  
(Laughter)

Q Scowcroft and me.

Q Part of an elite officer class?

MR. GREENER: I presume that was a statement and not a question.

Q Bill, when do you propose to announce the dates of the China trip?

MR. GREENER: There is no change from yesterday and we should have something shortly.

Q What do you mean by shortly? This week?

MR. GREENER: As soon as we have an announcement, I will make it.

Q Bill, could you tell us how this place works now? In other words, beginning with the President's morning now that there have been these staff changes, who exactly does he see first thing in the morning? What group meeting, in terms of senior advisers? Do you or someone from the Press Office have private access with him and discussions in the mornings? Can you just give us a fill on exactly what his typical morning is like now with the staff changes he has announced?

MR. GREENER: This morning he met with Dick Cheney first thing. Following that --

Q What time was that?

MR. GREENER: 8:30 a.m.

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Q Before Scowcroft, has that changed?

MR. GREENER: This is the first --

Q This was the first meeting?

MR. GREENER: The first meeting this morning was with Dick Cheney.

Let's do put this in some context. What I am giving you is today's schedule, not necessarily what is followed every single day at the same time or in the same order.

Q Bill, right there, has Don Rumsfeld given up all of his White House duties?

MR. GREENER: No, he has not.

Q Which ones has he retained?

MR. GREENER: Which ones has he retained? He only had one duty.

Q He is not Chief of Staff anymore, is he?

MR. GREENER: No, he is coordinating and working with Dick on it. Dick is in the acting capacity at this point until confirmation.

Q You mean he is the deputy? Rumsfeld is now the deputy? They are interchangeable?

MR. GREENER: They were always interchangeable.

Q Cheney told us in the airplane that he had been sworn in and he now has the job.

MR. GREENER: I just said he is acting in that capacity.

Q So what is Rumsfeld doing?

Q After 8:30 what happened?

MR. GREENER: At nine o'clock I went in for my meeting with Max Friedersdorf, Bob Hartmann, Jack Marsh, Dick Cheney and Brent Scowcroft.

At 9:15, Secretary Kissinger and General Scowcroft went in.

Q What time?

MR. GREENER: About 9:30.

Q Is that the customary meeting where Kissinger would meet alone with the President before they made the change?

MR. GREENER: I don't know. I would have to check that for you, Tom. This is just this morning's schedule.

The remaining part of the schedule is the ten o'clock Israeli Parliamentarians, the 11 o'clock Senate Steering Committee --

Q Does the senior staff have a prewarm-up session or discussion session before Cheney goes in alone in the morning? He doesn't usually go in until 8:30. Is there a senior staff meeting prior to that?

MR. GREENER: There is a senior staff meeting every morning at eight o'clock, which Cheney chairs.

Q Who attends that?

MR. GREENER: Brent Scowcroft, Jim Lynn, Ron, myself, Bob Hartmann, Jack Marsh, Alan Greenspan, Friedersdorf, Simon sometimes, or most of the time, Cheney and Rumsfeld.

Q How about Seidman?

MR. GREENER: Seidman, yes.

Q Is Hartmann attending those?

MR. GREENER: Yes, he does, and Phil Buchen, the basic senior staff.

Q Bill, what is the purpose of the meeting with the Senate Steering Committee? Are they imploring him to quit moving so far to the left, or what? (Laughter)

MR. GREENER: Let me get the briefing paper.

Q Have you got a readout on that meeting? Did the Schlesinger dismissal come up at that meeting?

MR. GREENER: John Carlson is in the meeting, and we will have something on it.

Q Can you tell us why the President can't leave from Atlanta? Why does he have to fly back to Washington and change planes? Why can't the plane he is flying from Washington fly to Atlanta and pick him up there?

MR. GREENER: I don't really know the reason for him flying back, but I will be glad to check on it.

Q Bill, what about Angola? What does the President plan to do about that by way of recognition and, if so, who is he going to recognize? You said you would check yesterday.

MR. GREENER: I did check. I have it here somewhere. Just a minute.

The question you asked me was, "Do we intend to recognize the Angolan independence yesterday?" The answer is we are following the situation in Angola closely, and we are concerned for its people, but we are not prepared to make any decisions on recognition at this time.

I am sure you know the quote yesterday from Secretary Kissinger in which he said, "The U.S. has no other interest except the territorial integrity and independence of Angola. We strongly support the case of the Organization of African Unity for a cease-fire and for negotiation among the three factions that are involved there to form a coalition Government." Starting with "The U.S. has no other interest" is a quote from Kissinger's press briefing.

Q Is the U.S. continuing aid to the Portuguese in getting the folks out of Angola?

MR. GREENER: Margy will check.

Q How about the speech in Charleston? Will we get that in Washington or on the plane?

MR. GREENER: We hope to give it to you this afternoon. We had hoped for it this morning, but we didn't have a sign-off from the President.

Q What is the status of the negotiation with Hanoi and Saigon over the MIAs?

MR. GREENER: First of all, we believe Vietnam has a unilateral obligation based on the Geneva Accords and the Paris agreement to provide a full accounting of all of our MIAs, and we plan to continue to make all necessary efforts to achieve as full an accounting of our missing men as possible.

Q Bill, I came late. I am sorry, but you may be repeating something you said earlier, but is the President taking any action of some kind, some material steps, to show the country's displeasure --

MR. GREENER: We made a statement, and I said I would check on that particular question asked.

Q When do you think you will have something?

MR. GREENER: As soon as the briefing is over I will go in and ask.

Q Bill, while you are pursuing the Air Force One question, could you also see if Air Force One still flies at a reduced rate of speed to conserve fuel?

MR. GREENER: I will check.

Q What do you have for us on a briefing on the Paris trip? You said you would have something Wednesday or Thursday. This being Tuesday, are you going to have a briefing?

MR. GREENER: We expect to have one tomorrow afternoon -- either tomorrow afternoon or Thursday afternoon.

Q On the China trip, do you have a date?

MR. GREENER: We don't know yet, that is why we have not announced it.

Q ABC this morning had rather a significant report about reaction in West Virginia to statements made by the Press Secretary in regard to plumbing, electricity and so forth. I was wondering, is the President aware of this or what is the situation?

MR. GREENER: I don't know if the President is aware of it.

Q Are you aware of it?

MR. GREENER: I am certainly aware of it.

Q Does the Press Office have any comment about this memorial outhouse?

MR. GREENER: I am sure if you watched it that closely, you also saw the statement that Ron has expressed his regret and apologies for having said it and also pointing out --

Q Was that in an exclusive ABC interview?

MR. GREENER: It was not. It was in answer to the letter he received from the people. In addition to which in the letter he points out that he has formerly worked in West Virginia, enjoyed it and enjoyed the people and the State.

Q Has Ron apologized to the people in New Hampshire about their skiing conditions?

MR. GREENER: I don't know of any apology.

Q Bill, is tonight's speech supposed to have any significance or is it just a routine speech? (Laughter)

MR. GREENER: It is a speech by the President, and I would assume that makes it significant in and of itself.

Q Do you have copies of Nessen's speech yet?

MR. GREENER: He made extensive changes on it, and I talked to him (Laughter) about ten minutes ago, just before coming down, and he said he would call in those changes to Connie and we could go ahead and type it up.

Q We will get it this afternoon?

MR. GREENER: Yes.

Q What is the status of the Americans who are supposed to go to the Sinai to police the cease-fire actions?

MR. GREENER: Secretary Kissinger said yesterday the options are before the President now, and we expect a decision from the President shortly.

Q Today is shortly after yesterday. That is why I asked.

MR. GREENER: We don't have an answer today.

Q I don't think you have been asked about this. If you have, I will withdraw it. Time Magazine has an interview with former Governor Reagan in which, among other things, Governor Reagan said perhaps President Ford was in Congress too long -- although he doesn't precisely explain what he means by that -- and he doesn't think generally speaking that the President is doing a very good job, or very distinguished job, words to that effect.

Does the White House, or the President himself, or the White House, have any comments on these statements by Mr. Reagan?

MR. GREENER: No, as the President has stated, he plans to run on his own record and expects to win the nomination and the election based on the record he is doing as President and the time he spent in Congress.

Q Bill, is the President hopeful that Congress approves his economic aid request for Egypt as it was sent to the Hill?

MR. GREENER: Yes.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Bill.

END (AT 11:50 A.M. EST)