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B A C K G R O U N D B R I E F I N G

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH A U.S. OFFICIAL

AT 3:15 P.M. EST

NOVEMBER 28, 1975

FRIDAY

MR. NESSEN: As we promised, you see the senior American official before you who will first give you some details of the China trip on background and then answer some questions on background, and then if you have any other questions on other subjects, we can go on the record.

As you all know, the President plans an announcement at 4 o'clock. He will not start until you get over there but it might be good to hold this entire event to about a half-hour.

QUESTION: What will the subject be of the President's announcement?

MR. NESSEN: You will see very shortly.

QUESTION: Is it a sudden decision on your part to meet the --

MR. NESSEN: The senior American official is here.

U.S. OFFICIAL: The reason I am going on background on the China part is not because I have anything wildly startling to say but because the delicacy of our relationship makes it complicated to go on record beyond what I have already said in my Detroit speech.

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Basically, we consider the trip important, though no major announcements are going to come out of it. It is important for the architecture of American foreign policy and for the overall structure of international relations. For that reason, too, it is not likely that -- in fact, it is not expected, nor will it be attempted -- that anything that lends itself to any startling announcement is going to emerge.

There are three aspects to our relations with the People's Republic of China. One is the geopolitical relationship. That is to say, the interest that the United States and the People's Republic have in common in a structure of international relations that preserves their essential security.

The second is their aspect of normalization that is related to, largely, to Taiwan and the third is a series of bilateral issues such as exchanges, trade and so forth, that have been going on and will continue to go on.

What basically brought the United States and the People's Republic together is the geopolitical aspect; that is to say that the People's Republic of China decided and we decided that the overall security of the international order would be better maintained if the United States and China had a relationship of dialogue with each other than if they were in a position of permanent hostility. That has fueled our relationship up to now and will continue to fuel our relationship.

On the so-called normalization problem, we have stated in the Shanghai Communique that our objective was normalization and we have indicated a number of other things, such as gradual reduction of our forces. That process of normalization has progressed since the last meeting and it will continue to progress but there will be no significant change on that on this visit. For that reason, too, the bilateral relations, exchanges and so forth, which are important, are nevertheless subsidiary to the other two aspects and are used as the two sides find necessary but they are not an end in themselves.

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Now, precisely because the major element of the relationship between the United States and the People's Republic depends on the perception of the international order, it is essential that the top leaders of both countries meet at some intervals.

Now an American President has not met with Chinese leaders since 1972. Since that time there have been changes in the People's Republic. Chou-En-Lai, with whom we had conducted our discussions until the end of 1973, is no longer active and Teng Hsiao-p'ing has replaced him. President Ford, of course, took over here in 1974 and, therefore, the exchanges on the international situation between the two leaders are of great consequences even when they do not lead or are not intended to lead to any concrete announcements.

The most important results of the 1972 visit also were not what was in the Communique but what was the process that it started.

Now, in assessing this trip you also have to understand it is quite conceivable, in fact it is inevitable, that the Chinese perception of some international problems differs from our own. We are not there to convince the Chinese of the correctness of all of our perceptions, nor are we going there to be convinced by them of the correctness of all of our (their) perceptions.

We conduct a global policy, and we will not, as I said in Detroit, have our perceptions of our interests dictated by another country. We are opposed to expansionism and we have resisted it in the entire post-war period, what has been expressed in our two Joint Communiques with the Chinese as hegemony.

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But the methods by which we pursue this are our own, and we do not exclude a change in relationship with potential adversaries. That has not changed the fact that we have certain fundamental interests in common with the People's Republic of China, that we attach the greatest importance to that relationship, that from all we can tell the Chinese attach importance to this relationship as is witnessed by the fact that this trip is taking place in the face of many changes, and so I repeat, it is a trip of great importance to the architecture of our foreign policy but not a trip that can be measured by spectacular announcements.

The President will spend several hours each day talking to Chinese leaders, the rest of the time doing his own business or making cultural visits following, roughly, the schedule that in this sense that has become customary on American visits to China either by myself or by his predecessor.

That is all I want to say on the China trip. Why don't we take some questions on that and then go on the record on any other issues that you have.

QUESTION: A Georgia Congressman is getting up a petition, a resolution -- and I think he needs only four more votes in the House -- to make sure that President Ford makes no binding commitment on Taiwan when he is in China. What is your impression of this?

U.S. OFFICIAL: The question is, a Georgia Congressman is circulating a petition which seems to lack only four signatures to contain a majority -- House resolution, that we should make no binding commitments with respect to Taiwan. Any decisions that the United States makes on Taiwan would, of course, be fully discussed with the Congressional leadership. I do not believe that on this trip the process of normalization will be concluded so it will not be relevant to this trip, although progress towards it can be made.

QUESTION: How can you say that normalization continues or will progress if you can't really make any headway involving the Taiwan problem?

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U.S. OFFICIAL: I am not saying we cannot make any headway. I am saying that we will not conclude the progress of normalization. We will move towards it but we will not conclude it.

QUESTION: What sort of headway could you envisage on the Taiwan issue?

U.S. OFFICIAL: Well, first of all, this depends very largely on our own actions and anything we do is not really subject to negotiation until we get to the final phase of it. We have been, as was foreseen in the Shanghai Communique, progressively reducing forces in the Taiwan area as tensions in Asia diminished just as was foreseen in the Shanghai Communique.

We have increased our contacts with the Chinese, we have made progress in the liaison offices, so there is an area between full normalization and the status quo that can be explored, but it is not the principal purpose of the visit.

QUESTION: Are you making any progress toward getting the Chinese on both sides of the Straits to get together to talk over their problems?

U.S. OFFICIAL: That is assuming that that is what we are doing and what we are attempting to do.

QUESTION: Can you be any more specific as to just what sort of things the two leaders can agree upon that would improve the normalization process, things that would happen as a result of this meeting?

U.S. OFFICIAL: I thought I just got through telling you that the primary purpose of the trip had to do with the overall structure of international relations and all the questions of what we can do to improve normalization which I said was not the principal purpose of the trip. I have given you the range of things that can be done and I don't think I want to go beyond that.

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QUESTION: The reason I asked is that you had just gotten done saying you expected the process to be continued as a result of this meeting so that is why I am asking you to be more specific, if you can.

U.S. OFFICIAL: The process of normalization will continue as a result of this meeting and, as I have said and as the President has said, we intend to complete it in one timeframe and under what conditions, this remains to be discussed.

QUESTION: When will you know just who it is that the President will be meeting with in China, or do you know?

U.S. OFFICIAL: I think we do know. The President will have most of his substantive meetings, I would expect all of his substantive meetings, his normal substantive meetings, with Teng-Hsiao-p'ing, the Vice Premier.

The normal procedure when Heads of State visit in China is that Mao receives the Head of State but it is also the normal procedure that the appointment is not scheduled for a specific time prior to the arrival.

We would expect on the Chinese side the Chinese Foreign Minister, Ch'iao Kuan hua, and one or two others would sit in on all of the meetings with at least Teng Hsiao-p'ing but you can expect that Teng Hsiao-p'ing will be the principal interlocutor of the President except for his meeting with Mao.

QUESTION: And he will meet with the Chairman? You fully expect that but you don't know for sure?

U.S. OFFICIAL: Well, it would be a most unusual occurrence if a President came to China and did not meet with the Chairman so we expect him to make it.

QUESTION: Since the People's Republic of China and the United States appear to be backing the same force in Angola, would you expect to discuss the Soviet intervention in Angola and whatever the PRC and the United States are doing there or can do together?

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U.S. OFFICIAL: Well, the general experience of all conversations between senior Americans and the Chinese is that there is a very systematic and searching review of the world situation so I would not be surprised if that problem were also discussed. We will not pursue coordinated policies with the Chinese in Angola but it is possible that we come to parallel conclusion.

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QUESTION: In your initial remarks, relative to the differences and the perception of problems, were you trying to prepare us there for a possibility that the President may encounter the same open disagreements with the Chinese of U.S. perception in the Soviet Union as you encountered in October?

U.S. OFFICIAL: What I encountered seems to be the standard reception that all Westerners are getting in China these days. Chancellor Schmidt received substantially the same lectures that I did. And I consider it very possible that either publicly or privately we hear substantially the same Chinese analysis that was then made.

This is a subject of discussion. We will not try to convince them of our point of view. I don't think it is imperative that we have exactly the same assessment as to the tactics that either side should use. We agree that the domination of the world by military force should be prevented.

Now within that area we can discuss -- this is the fundamental perception that needs to be discussed -- but I would not be surprised if somewhere along the line some comments would be whispered to you similar to the ones that were elicited by the group that accompanied me.

QUESTION: Can you tell us how you see the Soviet perception of the Sino-American connection beginning in 1972 to the present time, how it has evolved?

U.S. OFFICIAL: Well, I would think that 1971 is when it began evolving. I think perhaps the Soviet Union thought when it occurred that it was a more dramatic and more sweeping event than it turned out to be.

On the other hand, I think it is perfectly safe to say that neither Peking nor Moscow are enchanted by our relationship with the other and that both Peking and Moscow would be happier if we did not have the relationship with the other. Their increased happiness would not necessarily be translated into better relations with us. It might be translated into worse relationships with us.

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I would not say there is a direct correlation between joy and friendship with the United States but, be that as it may, we will not permit either side of this equation to tell us what relations we can have with the other and this applies to Moscow as well as to Peking.

QUESTION: Is that the main reason for this trip? Is that the real reason for the trip?

U.S. OFFICIAL: The reason for the trip is not a negative one of telling them what they cannot do. The real reason of this trip is to discuss as seriously as we possibly can our perceptions of the world scene with each other to see where we agree and to handle those areas in which we disagree.

There is no reason for the President to go to tell them what they should not say to us. This I am telling you for your guidance. They are free to say anything to us that they choose.

The major reason of the trip, which after all has been planned for a year, is to enable the leaders of both sides, who have not met each other, to check each other's perception of the world situation when 90 percent of their relationship depends on that perception.

QUESTION: Do you expect to discuss with the Chinese leaders the present state of detente and, more specifically, the present state of the SALT II negotiations?

U.S. OFFICIAL: And get some technical advice on how to handle the Backfire and Cruise Missile issue.

We have always made it a point to inform both sides of where we were heading in our policy with the other and so we will undoubtedly put before the Chinese leaders our perception of detente, just as they will no doubt put before us their perception of detente, but the perception of detente is not necessarily the same as the perception of what is needed. That does not prevent an agreement on the question of expansionism.

QUESTION: What can you tell us about Indonesia and the Philippines? What are the purposes of those trips?

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U.S. OFFICIAL: These two countries -- are there any more questions on China?

QUESTION: Is there anything about Korea? Will that be South Korea?

U.S. OFFICIAL: I would expect that the question of Korea will undoubtedly come up in the discussions.

QUESTION: Do you have any indication on whether the President will get to see Chou En-lai?

U.S. OFFICIAL: On that, we have no information. Chou En-lai has been too ill or, at any rate, has not been available for foreign visitors since early July. What the state of his health is today we don't know. It is not absolutely excluded but we have had no indication.

QUESTION: What difference does the absence of Chou En-lai make in the negotiations, in meeting with the Chinese leaders? Mr. Teng is a different man than Mr. Chou

U.S. OFFICIAL: Well, the basic Chinese policy as the basic American policy, is determined by permanent values and interests and it is not affected by personality. At the same time, these permanent values and interests have been translated into specific conclusions and this has to be done through one or more individuals.

Chou En-lai without a doubt was one of the most experienced diplomats in the world and a man of great subtlety and skill with whom we had all gotten to know quite well. I don't believe that the change to Teng Hsiao-p'ing has affected anything except his style of the policy which is blunter under Teng Hsiao-p'ing than it was under Chou but which is not significantly different in its main directions.

QUESTION: I take it you are ruling out any resolution of the foreign claims or the blocked assets in these negotiations.

U.S. OFFICIAL: I consider it unlikely.

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Now, on Indonesia and the Philippines, those two countries were profoundly affected by the collapse of Indochina and have attempted to define their new orientation in the interval and their relationship to the United States. They are, of course, traditional friends of ours.

The Philippines, which we have had a long and close relationship and Indonesia, as well, in the post-war period, both of these leaders have repeatedly invited the President to visit their countries if he came to Asia and, therefore, it seemed to us important on this trip to Asia to discuss with their leaders the role their countries can play and the relationship that the United States can have with them.

Again, these are not occasions in which in 24 hours great announcements can be made, but there is no substitute for a detailed exchange of views particularly as the orientation depends on their assessment of what the United States' role in the area is going to be and on their self-confidence in pursuing their national policies.

QUESTION: Can we go on the record now?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, let's do that. Let's take a minute now for the senior American official to leave the stage and Secretary Kissinger to come out.

If we do this in about 10 minutes we will be able to get to the other events of the afternoon.

END (AT 3:38 P.M. EST)

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 11:35 A.M. EST

NOVEMBER 28, 1975

FRIDAY

MR. NESSEN: At 2 o'clock the President has another in the series of budget meetings. This one is scheduled to last for two hours, although most of the ones that have been scheduled for two hours have been running between three and four hours. So it will take up a lot of his afternoon.

The subject -- the budget items to be discussed today are just sort of a miscellany of various portions of the budget that he is going over.

Then, that starts at 2:00 and actually he has a meeting at 4:20 with Secretary Coleman of the Transportation Department.

Q What is that about?

MR. NESSEN: That is to discuss the status of railroad legislation before Congress.

As you may know, the Congress is considering as one bill, one omnibus railroad bill, three separate pieces of railroad legislation that the President has sent up concerning the restructuring of the railroads as one piece, reform of the regulatory aspects of the railroad industry and financial assistance to the Northeast corridor passenger service. He sent up three pieces of legislation Congress is considering as one bill and the Secretary will talk to the President about that legislation.

Now, I have a fair amount of stuff to give you on China today.

First of all, there will be a background briefing by a senior American official at 3 o'clock in Room 450 of the EOB about China. And that will be followed --

Q Who is going to do that?

MR. NESSEN: A senior American official.

And that will be followed by Secretary of State Kissinger answering questions on other subjects on the record in the same room.

Q Why is there a feeling that none of the China briefing can be on the record?

MR. NESSEN: Henry thought that the senior American official could be probably more helpful in backgrounding you for the trip on that basis.

Q Then Secretary Kissinger will hold the normal press conference?

MR. NESSEN: In effect for the questions not relating to China.

Now, in the late afternoon I hope that we will have for you three items. One, an advance text of the President's departure remarks. The President will make brief departure remarks at Andrews tomorrow morning and we will have the text of that for you.

Q Are those for release tonight?

MR. NESSEN: No, I think they will be for release at the time it is delivered.

Q Nobody will hear them on Saturday morning?

Q How about flat P.M.'s?

MR. NESSEN: I think flat P.M.'s will do it.

Q 6:00 A.M. release?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q What time do you expect to have that today?

MR. NESSEN: Early afternoon, because the President signed off on all of them this morning.

Q What time does he depart?

MR. NESSEN: Let me get to that in a minute. Let me go through this in a logical order.

Then we will also have for you the advance text of the President's remarks upon arrival in Fairbanks. There will be a hanger up there where a number of State officials and energy officials are gathered and the subject of those remarks will be energy in general, Alaska's role in making American independent of foreign sources of energy and America's role in the Pacific, and we will have a text of that. That is a substantial speech of about 15 minutes or 20 minutes.

Then we will have, in addition, an advance text of very brief remarks that the President will make at a birthday party being given in Anchorage tomorrow night for Senator Ted Stevens.

Since the bulk of the Press Corps will have flown on to Peking before that event, you may be interested in those.

Q What does it cost to get into that birthday party?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know that it costs anything.

Q Is it a fund raiser?

MR. NESSEN: No. It is non-partisan, as far as I know.

Isn't that correct? Non-partisan?

Q Ron, I am sure you thought about this, but in this era of plastic pistols is it not possible for us to leave around the same time the President leaves?

MR. NESSEN: No. Leave where?

Q Alaska.

MR. NESSEN: Not and get to Peking the night before the President arrives which is what the Chinese have requested and what some of the press members have requested. There will be a pool with him at all times.

We also will have for you later today a detailed Alaska schedule. In the meanwhile, you already have a summary schedule.

Q We do?

MR. NESSEN: Yes. Wasn't that put out two days ago or something?

We also will supply you with a group of press notes at about 2:30 this afternoon and the main press books will be on the plane in the morning so you don't have to lug those around with you.

Just to give you a little bit of information you might want for overnights, the official party will be the President and Mrs. Ford and Susan Ford; the Secretary of State; The American Ambassadors to Indonesia, the Philippines -- is George Bush going to go from here or is he going to meet us there?

Q I understand he is meeting us there.

MR. NESSEN: Bob Hartmann, Counsellor to the President; James Lynn, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget -- as you know, the purpose of that is the President will be working about three to four hours each day on the budget and other domestic matters while on this trip -- Dick Cheney, the Assistant to the President; the Press Secretary; General Scowcroft; Philip Habib, the Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs; and Winston Lord, the Director of Planning and Coordination for the State Department. That is the official American delegation.

Q Can you repeat Habib's title.

MR. NESSEN: Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs.

Now, as I say, we will have some loose press notes for you this afternoon at 2:30 and the press book on the plane.

Just to clear up one thing, Ted Stevens' birthday party is a birthday party and not a fund raiser and it is non-partisan.

Some additional information on the trip. Just to run through the baggage times again, if you want to turn in your bags today, you can bring them over to Room 87 of the EOB until 6:00 P.M. or you can bring them directly to the airport in the morning.

For those going on the Pan Am plane, the check-in time with or without bags is 6 o'clock at Andrews and the Northwest plane with or without bags, check-in time is 6:30.

The writers have been manifested on the Northwest plane and the photographers and technicians have been manifested on Pan Am. Right after this briefing we will post the manifest.

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Q Is it up?

MR. NESSEN: It is up.

The Pan Am plane will depart at 6:45 and the Northwest plane will follow at 7:15.

The President will depart from the South Lawn at 7:55 tomorrow morning, arrive at Andrews at 8:10. There will be the brief departure ceremony and then the President will take off for Fairbanks at 8:15 in the morning. The destination is Eielson Air Force Base in Fairbanks.

The Pan Am plane will arrive there at 9:15 Alaska Standard Time, and the Northwest plane will arrive at Eielson at 9:45 Alaska Standard Time, and the President will arrive there at 10:45 Alaska Standard Time and will speak at 10:56 Alaska Standard Time, and so on, and you should have these anyhow.

As you know, the two press planes will cover the arrival speech in Alaska and then the visit to the pipeline and then take about an hour to file at Eielson, or however long you need, and then will fly on to Peking with a refueling stop at Yakoda (Haneda), getting into Peking some time around 9:00 or 10:00 or 10:30 Sunday night Peking time, and you will go then to the Minzu Hotel, which is where the press center is located.

One other thought on preparations for the trip. For those who wear contact lenses it is suggested that you bring an ample supply of eye drops. We have been told that in the very cold weather of Alaska and also, to some extent, Peking, contact lenses tend to freeze to your eyes. (Laughter) You should maybe ask your doctor about that.

It is also extremely dry in Peking, as I mentioned the other day, and you might want to ask your doctor about that.

As for dress, suits and street-length dresses are suitable. It has been suggested that the women wear pants suits or ankle-length dresses for the evening functions.

In Jakarta and Manila the weather is in the 80s there and obviously you want to think about summer clothes -- suits for the men and summer dresses for the women.

There is a black tie function in Indonesia and we have been told, however, that the pool may wear business suits or dresses to that.

Q Are we going to be allowed to cover as guests?

MR. NESSEN: There are press guests at both the Jakarta and Manila dinners.

Q Which will require black tie?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, but those who are on the guest list have already been notified as far as we know.

On the refueling stop going into Peking, just to go back a minute, it will be at Haneda, the commercial air field in Japan, and not Yakoda, I am sorry.

Q How cold does it get in Alaska?

MR. NESSEN: With the wind chill factor it is about 40 below, I am told.

Q How long is that refueling stop?

MR. NESSEN: About an hour, hour and a half.

Q Can't we just skip Alaska?

MR. NESSEN: Where was I?

Oh, yes -- sightseeing. Be sure to take rubber-soled shoes, especially if you plan to go to the Great Wall. High-heeled shoes are normally not worn in the People's Republic of China.

Gloves, scarves and sweaters are suggested in Peking because the temperatures outside, and at times in the hotel, tend to be cold.

I just want to remind you again about the carbon paper and the plain paper because the Chinese Telex operators and so forth would prefer plain paper instead of the Western Union forms or ITT forms.

In Jakarta the press center is at the Hotel Indonesia, which some of you are familiar with.

The press center in Manila is at the Manila Hilton in the Coral Ballroom A and B on the third floor. More detailed press notes are coming at 2:30 this afternoon.

Q Are the wire services covering all these evening events?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Both AP and UPI? We have not been notified of any such.

MR. NESSEN: You mean covering or as guests?

Q Well, as guests, being there for the whole shebang.

MR. NESSEN: I have to look at the guest list. I forget, Helen.

Q Neither AP nor myself have been notified.

MR. NESSEN: Of what?

Q That we are on any kind of list.

MR. NESSEN: Well, I know that both AP and UPI are guests at the Manila dinner and the UPI is a guest at the Jakarta dinner, as far as I know.

I think that is all I have.

Q Ron, in Alaska could we have some advance information now on the pipeline deal like, for instance, contact clothes or something? Aren't there supposed to be special clothes for the people going up there?

MR. NESSEN: Everybody goes on the buses and the pool will be issued special parkas and boots by the Air Force.

MR. GREENER: No boots.

MR. NESSEN: I thought they asked for boot sizes.

No boots; special parkas.

The rest of the press will not be issued special clothes so if you want to stay on the bus you can do that, or if you get off the bus you have to wear your own special clothes.

Q Ron, of what use is it for the President to go look at a pipeline in the snow?

MR. NESSEN: I think when you see his remarks in Anchorage you will understand why he wants to go to the pipeline.

Q And there are phones up there?

MR. NESSEN: Eielson Air Force Base has a press center, that is correct.

Q There are none at the site, though?

MR. NESSEN: No, not at the pipeline.

Q How long a trip is it to the pipeline?

Q With or without the chill factor? (Laughter)

MR. NESSEN: Well, there is an hour and 20 minutes between the time he concludes his remarks at Eielson and the time he gets to the Pump Station Number 8. It is approximately an hour and 20 minutes.

No, wait a minute. I am sorry. It is about 40 minutes to get there by vehicle, by motorcade.

Q And everybody goes with him, right?

MR. NESSEN: Right.

Q Everybody?

MR. NESSEN: Everybody that wants to go.

Q To the pipeline?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Ron, what exactly is he going to see there?

MR. NESSEN: He is going to see one section of the pipeline near Fairbanks and one of the pump stations, namely, Pumping Station Number 8.

Q He goes by motorcade?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q How long a bus ride, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: Thirty to forty minutes.

Q Ron, could I ask you about your comment on the President's address up there? Will he be unveiling some new energy program or would you describe it as a substantive speech?

MR. NESSEN: It is certainly a substantive speech. I am not saying that he is making any major announcement on energy policy.

Q There is no change in the policy as has already been --

MR. NESSEN: That is correct.

Q He is not going to sign the energy bill at the pipeline?

MR. NESSEN: No, he is not.

Q Where will the other correspondents go?

MR. NESSEN: Where? In Alaska?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: Well, the other correspondents will all be taking off after they have filed on the pipeline and then the pool will accompany him to Anchorage to the Ted Stevens party, overnight, and on Air Force One into Peking.

Q Ron, you said the President would spend three to four hours a day on this trip on budget matters.

MR. NESSEN: And other domestic stuff.

Q Does that include in Peking he is going to spend that time?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Ron, does "other domestic stuff" include the appointment of a Justice to the Supreme Court?

MR. NESSEN: Well, that is one of the things he has under consideration.

Q Is it possible he will make the appointment while he is away?

MR. NESSEN: It is possible.

Q Ron, speaking of domestic stuff, there was one question the other night that was half-way asked but not answered at all. I wonder if I could ask it now?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q If any other city gets into the same trouble that New York is in and does the same kind of thing that New York is doing, can they expect the same kind of help that New York is getting?

MR. NESSEN: Well, as you say, the question was half-asked and I guess was not fully answered either. The fact of the matter is that given what New York City and State have sacrificed in order to handle their own financial difficulties, the President doubts very much that any other city will let itself get into that position.

Q That does not answer it either.

MR. NESSEN: Look, it is the interest that the Government pays plus one percent, Howard.

Q Ron, have the Chinese authorities been notified that three or four hours a day had been set apart for the President to attend to domestic matters and his Cabinet? Has the schedule been remade for any portion of this?

MR. NESSEN: Has the schedule been remade?

Q Or been arranged in regard to this requirement?

MR. NESSEN: Of course. Of course.

Q Who is he going to see in China?

MR. NESSEN: As we said before, the top officials.

Q That includes Mao and Chou En-lai?

MR. NESSEN: We have said all along that the President assumes that he will be conferring with the highest officials.

Q Well, what do you mean "assumes"?

MR. NESSEN: Well, I mean he assumes.

Q Ron, isn't there already set in concrete an agreement to see Mao?

MR. NESSEN: We assume that the President will be received by the highest officials.

Q Does that include Chou in the hospital?

MR. NESSEN: I think I will just leave it that way at the moment, Helen, until we get there and see.

Let me back up one other minute for a little detail on the China trip.

Some of your colleagues and even some representatives of your own companies are joining the press plane at Haneda during the refueling stop. In order to get the exact time when they should appear and at what gate and so forth, they should call John Sandstrom at the American Embassy in Tokyo and he will tell them the time and gate to join the press plane.

Q Ron, did you or anyone else advise the President not to debate or appear with Reagan or did he reach this decision on his own?

MR. NESSEN: I think the President gave you his views on that the other night, Les.

Q I know but that was not my question, Ron. My question was, did you advise him or did anyone else advise him?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Ron, another New York City question. Senator Allen of Alabama had vowed previously that he would filibuster against any New York City aid bill when it got to the Senate floor. I am wondering whether the President or other people from the White House have communicated with Senator Allen to dissuade him from this.

MR. NESSEN: I don't know whether Senator Allen has been contacted or not. I know that the reaction from the Hill has generally been favorable.

Q Ron, when you say that it is possible that we will have an announcement on the Supreme Court Justice from Peking or elsewhere along the stop, could you go a little farther on that? Could you give us any idea of where it might be or when?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q But he will be actively discussing this while he is on the trip?

MR. NESSEN: Considering it, yes.

Q Considering it?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Considering it or discussing it or both?

MR. NESSEN: Well, considering it.

Q Well, considering can be one thing; discussions, too.

MR. NESSEN: That is right.

Q Ron, you didn't say he had any idea of announcing it from Peking, did you?

MR. NESSEN: No. I am not making an announcement that he is going to name a Supreme Court Justice. I said it is possible.

Q Do you think it likely?

MR. NESSEN: I think it is possible.

Q Ron, when you said that the President's remarks in Fairbanks will include a statement on America's role in the Pacific, do you mean more than energy?

MR. NESSEN: That is right, the foreign policy and security role of America in the Pacific.

Q Ron, if the President does spend three to four hours a day in Peking on budgetary matters --

MR. NESSEN: And other domestic matters.

Q Well, okay, then forget it.

MR. NESSEN: You know, there is a constant flow of papers that come to the President wherever he is and they will continue to flow and they will be especially heavy during this season because Congress will be back in session. There is a Supreme Court Justice under consideration, there is a budget to finish, there is a State of the Union to write, there are legislative proposals to decide upon. All those things will be flowing to him wherever he is and he will be working on them every day.

Q Ron, is he going to do anything on the energy bill before leaving?

MR. NESSEN: We still haven't gotten a written copy of the conference report on energy.

Q It has not been passed yet, has it?

MR. NESSEN: No, it obviously has not been passed yet but we still have not gotten a written copy of the conference report agreement.

Q So the answer is no.

MR. NESSEN: Right.

Q You know what the written language contains, though, do you not?

MR. NESSEN: We have a pretty good idea now, yes.

Q Has the President been able to decide on that basis whether or not to sign it?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Is Frank Zarb going on this trip?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, he is going as far as Alaska -- on a charter plane. (Laughter)

Q Is that facetious, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: That is a joke.

Q How is he going to get back, Ron, now that you bring it up?

MR. NESSEN: I think they have commercial air service. They have military planes coming back.

Q You mean commercial air service has reached Alaska, Ron?

Q Is it still the view of the Administration that there will be no major breakthroughs in the discussions with Chinese leaders?

MR. NESSEN: Well, I think you will have an opportunity to talk to the senior American official this afternoon about that, but overall the purpose of the trip is to maintain our relationship with the People's Republic. There are two important nations which have, after a long period of estrangement, re-established relations and there has been some interval now between meetings of the leaders of these two nations and so it seemed appropriate on the basis of the continuing relationship to have another meeting of the leaders of the two nations after a long interval. I would not look for what you might consider to be a breakthrough or a major new development, but at the same time the President considers it just as important to maintain the existing relationship, to discuss those areas of agreement and also to define and discuss those areas where the two nations have differing views.

Q Could I ask as a follow-up question to that? Assuming the President meets with Vice Premier Teng Hsiao-P'ing is it the President's intention to invite him to visit the United States because we have now two American Heads of State going to the PRC and no Chinese of similar stature coming to visit this country. So will he invite --

MR. NESSEN: Well, the President's view on that is that the niceties of protocol really should not in any way stand in the way of what he considers to be the proper time for the heads of these two Governments to get together and maintain their relationship.

Q Does that mean the Chinese will not come?

Q How do you answer my question?

MR. NESSEN: The answer to your question of whether he is going to invite him to the United States is that I don't know at this point.

Q Thank you.

Q And the Chinese won't come until there are normal relations?

MR. NESSEN: I just don't think that really has much to do with this trip. It is appropriate that the leaders of these two --

Q They have told us that, however?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know that they have or not.

Q Leaving aside this trip, just asking that as a question.

MR. NESSEN: I don't know but I think you are looking in the wrong direction if you are trying to understand what this trip is all about.

Q Will he discuss a successor to Bush?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know that, Helen.

Q Will he bring Bush back with him when he comes back?

MR. NESSEN: The hearing schedule for George Bush and his confirmation to be CIA Director has not been set yet.

Q Is it possible he will announce a successor to Mr. Bush while he is in Peking?

MR. NESSEN: No, I doubt that.

Q Ron, has the President been in telephone contact or any other with former President Nixon recently, or in any contacts has the subject of the China visit come up?

MR. NESSEN: No, I am not aware of any contact with the former President.

Q Ron, is it possible that Mr. Bush might return on Air Force One with the President?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have any indication that he will.

Q How will we be getting the schedule? Are we going to get it every day?

MR. NESSEN: Well, you went on the last trip and I anticipate that it will operate very much the same, which is that the Chinese and American delegations will agree on the schedule very late each evening for the following day and that we will then get you the schedule very early in the morning.

Q I would like to ask another question on the China trip relative to the phrase "low key" which has been used by both the Administration and reporters to describe this. Why was it decided this should be a low key visit?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what a high key visit would be. The President has been to China before, has seen the sights. There has been another American President in China so that is not the kind of unprecedented event that the previous visit was. We have said all along that the primary purpose was a serious working visit to maintain this relationship, and that is what it is.

Q Ron, do you have any sort of a rundown of schedule, the kind of thing they will be discussing?

MR. NESSEN: The kind of things they will be discussing?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: I suggest you save that question for Dr. Kissinger this afternoon, or the senior American official who will precede him on the stand.

Q Is the President concerned about the apparent lack of funds available to the Republican National Committee since he has been spending quite a bit of that money? It is reported that they may have to furlough their staff a few weeks around Christmas.

MR. NESSEN: The President has said that in his effort over the past several months now concluded to maintain a strong two-party system, which he believes in, he has raised something like \$5 million for the Republican Party. I don't know about this other aspect of it.

Q How much do you figure that he has spent of their money since he has been making these trips?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know myself. The RNC publishes its records quarterly, though, and you can check it out in there.

Q Did you get any reaction to the New York City thing -- public, telephone calls?

MR. NESSEN: The reaction is very, very light. The President asked about it this morning and it is almost too light to be even mentioned. I will mention it if you want me to but it obviously does not mean anything.

You are in a giggling mood today, aren't you?

Q The mail was not delivered yesterday.

MR. NESSEN: That is right. I guess mailgrams were not delivered yesterday either. Well, that may account for it.

Mail, telegrams and phone calls as of about 10 o'clock this morning were 36 in favor of the President's stand, 106 against, 2 with miscellaneous comments. So you see it is really too light to make much of.

Q Ron, is there any estimate of the cost of this trip to China?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know.

Q Is anybody able to estimate this with rough figures?

MR. NESSEN: The State Department is in charge of it so I suggest you check with them.

Q To go back to the New York question that Howard raised that you said was half-asked and half-answered, I don't think I understand the answer you gave this morning either.

MR. NESSEN: I am not sure it is possible to go beyond that, Dick. The answer is that given all that New York City has gone through and all it and the State have now committed themselves to do to get their financial situation back in order, the President feels that this would be a lesson to any other city or State unit of government to keep itself out of that kind of trouble.

Q Well, the point is obviously no city wants to get itself into this type of situation. What I am wondering whether you can answer is, obviously there are other cities which are in precarious circumstances.

MR. NESSEN: I don't know that for a fact.

Q Well, there have been a number of stories about a number of cities which were facing serious problems.

MR. NESSEN: I guess written by the same people who talked about the municipal bond market collapsing, too.

Q In any case, the point I am trying to make is if another city --

MR. NESSEN: You know, I am not going to answer a question that starts with "if," Dave.

Q Is the President prepared to extend similar aid --

MR. NESSEN: I don't know of any other city that asked for or needs it.

Q That is not the question, though.

MR. NESSEN: I am not going to answer a question that starts with "if."

Q I didn't start it with "if." I said, is the President prepared to extend similar aid to other cities in serious problems financially?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know of any city that needs it or has asked for it.

Q Ron, there is a suggestion from the Vice President's brother that three New York State agencies may need Federal assistance. Will the President look kindly on that?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know that they have asked for it or need it either, Jim.

Q Ron, I think the question here is, are you going to treat all the cities equally or is New York going to get special favor?

MR. NESSEN: Well, I don't know of any other city that has gotten itself into the mess that New York City has got.

Q That is not the answer.

MR. NESSEN: That is my answer.

Q The question is, are you going to answer the question?

MR. NESSEN: I am not going to answer a question that starts "if."

Q It does not start with "if." It started with "is."

MR. NESSEN: It has an implied "if" in the middle of it.

Q You have not answered it yet. Are you going to treat all cities alike or not?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know of any other city that has gotten itself in that mess.

Q That is not the answer. Are you prepared to treat all the cities alike or not?

MR. NESSEN: Another question.

Q Are you not going to answer?

Q Ron, how about answering that one? That is a good question, Ron.

Q Ron, are you going to answer that question?

Q Why not answer when he started with "is," Ron? This is only fair. (Laughter)

Q He didn't say "if." He said "is."

Q To get at that in another way, Ron --

Q Just answer the question.

Q Is the President drawing the line at New York City for short-term loans?

MR. NESSEN: As I said, I don't know any other city that has gotten itself into this mess.

Q Suppose in the instance there is one, Ron, there is that possibility? Then what?

Q That is an "if," Les.

Q Does President Ford favor the audit of the District of Columbia that Senator Eagleton suggested?

MR. NESSEN: I have not talked to him about that. I don't know what his view is on that.

Q Ron, one other thing on New York --

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q The Washington Post has reported this morning that New York City officials, State and City officials, I think, are saying that the City is still going to have something on the order of a \$750 million deficit.

MR. NESSEN: Right.

Q I believe that the President said at the news conference the other night that in fact the deficit would be reduced to zero. Was he under the impression at that time that there would be no deficit at the end of this fiscal year?

MR. NESSEN: I am glad you asked that question, Dick, because I think it is important to straighten that out.

The Washington Post, I think, is perhaps mixing two things together. First of all, I call your attention to the President's remarks the other night in the section beginning, "This is only the beginning of New York's recovery process and not the end. They must continue" -- the officials in New York -- "to accept primary responsibility" and so forth.

Now the President was talking about this. When New York City and State first came to the Federal Government they said that there would be a \$4 billion estimated cash deficit during this fiscal year, which they needed to be paid for through loans or guarantees or direct money somehow from the Federal Government.

After having adopted the Carey plan, the New York City deficit that needed to be made up by the Federal Government was reduced to zero. In other words, there is a deficit in the City's budget this year but the Carey plan provides various ways to finance that deficit and, as you know, it involves an advance from the State and City taxes, moratorium on debt payments and restructuring of the debt, contributions to the pension fund by the employees and loans by the pension funds to the City.

So there is a \$724 million deficit but the Carey plan provides the way to pay for that deficit; the Federal Government does not pay for it, the Federal Government's role in financing that deficit was reduced to zero instead of \$4 billion, which was where the City and State started.

MORE

Q Well, that is not, as I recall what the President said, is it?

MR. NESSEN: It is my understanding that that is what he said.

Q Ron, could I ask you a slightly different angle on one of those other questions, please?

Q Ron, how extensive a visit was Fu Man Chu given of the White House this morning?

MR. NESSEN: Who?

Q Fu Man Chu was shown through the White House today.

Q What was the question?

MR. NESSEN: Who is Fu Man Chu?

Q A member of the Chinese basketball team.

MR. NESSEN: No, I am sorry.

Q Ron, when I heard you answering or responding at least to those questions about if in another city, you left me with the impression when you said, "I don't know if there are any other cities in this kind of trouble" that the White House views the New York City situation as unique, so let me re-phrase the question this way. Is it the view of the President and the White House that the situation in New York City, as it existed before the President's announcement Wednesday, was a unique situation?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know of any other city that has gotten itself into the mess that New York City has.

Q So that is a yes, isn't it?

MR. NESSEN: My answer is the way I would like to word it, Walt.

Q Ron, just to follow up, are you reluctant at this time to make any comments about what might happen in other cities because doing so this would be regarded by them as an open invitation?

MR. NESSEN: I am saying what I am saying because I don't know of any other city that has gotten itself into this mess and I would say what New York City and State have finally undertaken to bail themselves out would be an object lesson to every other city and State to keep itself out of that kind of --

Q Ron, before the President goes to China, is he going to do anything else about starting the investigation on Martin Luther King?

MR. NESSEN: The Justice Department, as I understand it, is already reviewing that case and the President will await their report before deciding what, if anything, to do next.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END

(AT 12:13 P.M. EST)

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 4:30 P.M. EST

NOVEMBER 28, 1975

FRIDAY

MR. NESSEN: I will take care of some of the questions.

First of all, let's get the biography and the statement distributed here.

MR. HUSHEN: They are in the bins.

MR. NESSEN: Let me just anticipate some of your questions and then see if you have anything beyond that.

As someone asked, I think Helen, the President did telephone Judge Stevens early this afternoon. This decision was actually made while my briefing was going on this morning, frankly, because it was right after that that the President called me in and the arrangements were made and he was concluding a telephone conversation with Judge Stevens when I went in so that would have been around 12:30 roughly.

The President has also notified pertinent Members of Congress who will deal with this nomination after that, in the 1:00 or 2:00 area. The Attorney General has notified officials of the Bar Association of the choice. The President read as part of his decision a number of important decisions that Judge Stevens has made during his five years on the Bench.

Q Can we have some of those cites on some of those decisions?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have them here but they are certainly easy enough to find in the records of the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals.

Q If the President read them, they are here at the White House.

MR. NESSEN: I will see what I can get from Phil.

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Q You are talking about 100 volumes.

Q What rating did the ABA give him?

MR. NESSEN: As I understand it, the ABA gave him -- you should check with the ABA -- but he was given a high rating by the ABA, and I am sorry I cannot give you the precise rating.

Q What did Judge Stevens say, Ron, when the President called him? Could you tell us?

Q Question?

MR. NESSEN: I was asked what was Judge Stevens' reaction.

I didn't, of course, listen in on the phone conversation but from what the President said he was extremely surprised. Let me put it that way.

Q Did the President know this man?

MR. NESSEN: I was about to say that it was coincidental, but perhaps of some interest, that Judge Stevens was one of those who was a guest at last week's dinner for the Judiciary and that was in his role as a Judge of the Circuit Court rather than being brought in and looked over. It was normal that he would attend in his role as Judge.

Q Was he the only one of these Circuit Judges nominated who was here last week?

MR. NESSEN: Was he the only Circuit Court Judge who was here last week? No.

Q Is he the only one of the 30 Court Judges nominated who was here?

MR. NESSEN: You mean among the others who the President considered, was he the only one here last week?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: Phil Buchen is rounding up some decisions of Judge Stevens for you.

Since we are not going to tell the names of the others who were considered, I can't very well answer the question.

Q Why did the President decide not to choose a woman, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: I think, as he said himself, after this careful search and receiving the views of others, he picked Judge Stevens because he believes he is the best qualified to fill the vacancy of the Supreme Court.

Q Why did the President decide to announce today after earlier telling us that he would not submit the nomination before going to China?

MR. NESSEN: That is right, he is submitting the nomination on Monday after going to China.

Q Did he intend to kind of be technically accurate but throw the public off the track?

MR. NESSEN: No, he felt that once he had made his decision it was proper to announce it as speedily as possible and submit it.

Q Did he intend to throw the public off the track at the time when he made that statement at the press conference, or what was the purpose of telling us one thing that implied that he would not be doing this and then announcing it now?

MR. NESSEN: Next?

Q What is his religion and party, please?

MR. NESSEN: As far as I know, we don't know what his religion or party is and neither one of those were a subject of consideration when the various candidates were considered, and you will have to ask Judge Stevens because I don't have it.

Q How long has the President known him?

Q Just saying he is qualified--what impressed the President about him?

MR. NESSEN: Well, one thing the President mentioned on the phone and has mentioned since is the quality of his decisions which we will have here for you.

Q Can you in any way characterize what sort of judicial philosophy the President was looking for and what Stevens seems to have?

MR. NESSEN: No. The answer to that is that the President was looking for the best qualified person to fill the seat and believes he has picked such a person.

Q Ron, had he met him before the dinner the other night?

MR. NESSEN: I am not sure. We will have to ask Phil Buchen about that.

Q Ron, is he a strict constructionist as the President thought he would seek out?

MR. NESSEN: Tom, we are going to have the decisions here for you as soon as they come down and you can make your own judgment on that.

Q May we go back to one question for a minute?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q You were asked, "Why not a woman?" And you said after a careful search he picked Judge Stevens because he was best qualified. Do we interpret that to mean that there was no woman as well in the country as Judge Stevens?

MR. NESSEN: There was no person in the country the President believed was as well qualified for the Supreme Court.

Q Ron, what were the criterion the President had in mind for choosing Judge Stevens?

MR. NESSEN: The single guideline that he had was to pick the best qualified person.

Q Did Judge Stevens ever run for public office?

MR. NESSEN: No, he did not.

The President's meeting with Judge Stevens the other night at the Judicial Dinner was their first meeting.

The decisions will be coming from Buchen shortly and we will get some Xeroxes made.

Q At this dinner the other night, did the President take him aside and have any little, quiet discussion?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know. He didn't indicate that to me.

Q Could you tell us what happened between Wednesday night and today that made the President decide to make the announcement?

MR. NESSEN: He made his decision.

Q Simple as that?

MR. NESSEN: Simple as that.

Q Who recommended him, Ron? What was the timetable of this? I mean, there are an awful lot of Circuit Court Judges.

MR. NESSEN: It is going to take me a little while to put together the timetable for this. I don't have it at the moment.

Q Did he read decisions of any other Judges?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q To what extent did Phil Buchen's decision count?

MR. NESSEN: As the President said, he received the views of a number of people in public office, in the bar, in the Judiciary and in private life and Phil was certainly one of those who expressed his views.

Q Did these decisions lean in some direction that appealed to the President or what?

MR. NESSEN: I would rather have you read the decisions yourself.

Q Was there a recommendation from either Senator Percy or former Governor Oglivie for Judge Stevens?

MR. NESSEN: I say I don't know. I have not had time to put together the --

Q Ron, is Buchen sending down the decisions themselves or simply the citations?

MR. NESSEN: Are we getting citations or decisions?

MR. GREENER: I don't know.

MR. NESSEN: We will get them.

Q Ron, an awful lot of Chicago Judges have been investigated and private citizens and other groups out there too -- making sort of a profession of investigating Chicago Judges. Has this Judge figured in any investigations that you know of?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Ron, do you know what his reversal rate was on appeal?

MR. NESSEN: I don't.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END

(AT 4:40 P.M. EST)