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NEWS CONFERENCE

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AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 10:36 A.M. (Honolulu time)

DECEMBER 7, 1975

SUNDAY

HONOLULU, HAWAII

MR. NESSEN: We have had some questions, as I understand it, that people want answered. One has to do with where was the President on December 7, 1941. The answer is that the President went to church that morning with his parents in Grand Rapids. After that he went to his law office in Grand Rapids, getting there at about 1:30 and staying until 6:00 working on a brief. There was nobody else in the office, and he didn't have a radio.

He left the office about 6:00, went down to his car, turned on the radio in his car and that is when he found out about it.

Q You mean that many hours had passed?

MR. NESSEN: Right.

Q Is that the office he shared with Buchen?

MR. NESSEN: The other question had to do with the President's reaction to the reports that Indonesia has sent troops to East Timore. As I understand it, one question was, did the President discuss this with Suharto. The answer is that General Suharto raised in very general terms the situation in East Timor and expressed his concern about the situation there, but did not inform the President of any specific action that Indonesia planned to take.

The President has received some preliminary reports on the situation. He is following the situation, and it would be fair to say that the United States is always concerned about the use of violence, and the President hopes that the situation can be resolved peacefully.

Q Which ship was he attached to December 7, 1941?

MR. NESSEN: The President was not in the Navy on December 7, 1941. He was in private law practice.

Q Did the President ever ask Suharto if he would send troops there?

MR. NESSEN: As I say, it came up in general terms, and President Suharto didn't say what he planned to do.

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Q There were reports from Indonesian officials in Jakarta that the American Government had asked the Indonesians to hold off on the invasion of East Timor until President Ford left town. Is that true?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know where you heard that, Pierre, but that is not the indication I got from the President or at least the President did not participate in the conversation.

Q What did the President say to Suharto? What was his own response?

MR. NESSEN: As I understand it, it was Suharto who raised or carried on most of the discussion, and the President didn't participate in the way of a response other than to express the hope that it could be resolved peacefully.

Q How did the President hear of the situation in East Timor? Did he hear about it after he arrived here?

Q How does the President feel about his trip so far?

MR. NESSEN: Why don't we wait until he makes his speech. He is about to make a speech, Helen, in which he gives a report to the Nation on the trip and a report on his policy in the Pacific. I think the speech speaks for itself.

Q You don't know how he personally feels about the trip thus far?

MR. NESSEN: The speech reflects his personal feelings.

Q Is he tired, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: Probably less so than everybody else on the trip.

Q What was the question?

MR. NESSEN: Walt asked whether he was tired and I said less so than most people on the trip. He has the only bed on the plane. (Laughter)

Q Why is the President not staying overnight in Hawaii?

MR. NESSEN: He has some quite important business back in Washington.

Q Like what?

MR. NESSEN: You know legislation is coming down from the Hill, Helen, and you know about the budget, State of the Union and legislative proposals, the economic report.

Q Ron, has he been able to spend three and four hours a day on domestic issues?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, at least that much.

Q Every day?

MR. NESSEN: Most every day.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END (AT 10:40 A.M. Honolulu time)