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NEWS CONFERENCE

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AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH WILLIAM GREENER

AT 11:30 A.M. EST

DECEMBER 9, 1975

TUESDAY

MR. GREENER: The only announcement I have is that at five minutes to twelve we will ask the pool to gather for the picture of Crown Prince Hassan and the President in the Oval Office.

I have no announcements this morning.

Q Bill, is the head of the Selective Service Commission going to see the President today?

MR. GREENER: Not to my knowledge.

Q Are you sure about that?

MR. GREENER: No, I am not.

Q Will you check?

MR. GREENER: They will check on it.

Q Bill, what was the President's reaction of the Pike Committee's action on the Buchen letter?

MR. GREENER: Members of the White House staff who he has asked, together with some State Department staff, are working with the committee now to see if they can effectively give them the information they need without violating the Executive Privilege.

Q Well, what is the President's reaction to that statement that he can't control past administrations by Executive Order?

MR. GREENER: Well, as I say, they are now working on it, Sara. That is all I have at this point.

Q Bill, when will the President sign the New York aid bill?

MR. GREENER: The President has signed the authorization and you will be getting some paper on it right shortly here.

Q What was his question?

MR. GREENER: The question was when is the President going to sign the New York aid bill and I said the authorization, not the appropriation, he signed today.

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Q When did he sign it, today?

MR. GREENER: This morning, yes. You will be getting some paper on it right after the briefing.

Q Bill, when is the President going to see Rumsfeld and let him have a shot at the budget?

MR. GREENER: Well, as you know, Secretary Rumsfeld is in Brussels right now at the NATO meeting and there is no time scheduled yet. As soon as he gets back, I assume he will work it out.

Q Bill, what is the meeting with Kissinger about today?

MR. GREENER: NATO and SALT and the normal staff meeting. Also, as announced here earlier by somebody, Secretary Kissinger is going to be out in his own briefing room at 12:15 today and I am sure he will be able to answer any of those questions.

Q Any replacement for you yet, Bill?

MR. GREENER: No.

Q Bill, are there any other departures from this press department? Is anybody else going to leave around the first of January?

MR. GREENER: None that I have to announce.

Q In other words, you would deny a report that another deputy is leaving on the 1st?

MR. GREENER: Another unnamed deputy, you mean?

Q Yes. I don't know. I don't know whether he is or not, and I just wonder. Are you denying that anybody else is going to leave this press --

MR. GREENER: I am not denying or confirming, Les.

Q Neither confirm nor deny.

Q Bill, what is the President going to do on the HEW appropriation bill to which a busing rider has been attached -- veto or sign?

MR. GREENER: I have something on that for you, John.

First of all, let me point out that that particular bill is about a billion dollars more roughly -- they are still working on it -- than the President asked for and once the bill arrives here he is going to have to take a look at it in terms of the deficit.

As for the rider you are talking about, it is my understanding that that amendment only bars HEW from busing students and most of the schools desegregation plans have been ordered by the courts, not HEW.

Q But in pointing out this billion dollar overage, are you hinting at a veto then?

MR. GREENER: No, I am not. I said let's get it down here and we will take a look at it.

Q Bill, could I go back to what you said at the beginning about members of the White House staff working with the Pike committee to see whether additional information can be furnished without violating the claim of Executive Privilege.

MR. GREENER: Yes.

Q Two questions about that. This additional information, does it go beyond what Mr. Buchen referred to in his letter to Chairman Pike? Buchen talked about four additional years, 1961 through 1964, minutes of the Forty and 303 Committees.

MR. GREENER: Well, as you well know, you are right at the core of what they are working on.

Q Beg pardon?

MR. GREENER: I say, as you know, Jim, you are at the core of exactly what they are trying to work out.

Q That is what I am trying to get at. Is that what you are talking about?

MR. GREENER: Yes.

Q An additional four years of Forty Committee and 303?

MR. GREENER: That is what they are working on, yes.

Q Nothing beyond that? The White House is not offering some additional information beyond that? It is only that that you are talking about?

MR. GREENER: I don't know.

Q I am just trying to see whether this goes further than the Buchen letter of the other day.

MR. GREENER: Jim, they are exploring other areas but we have made no other offers.

Q Can you tell us what the other areas are that are being explored?

MR. GREENER: Not at this time, no.

Q Secondly, is there any way of characterizing this other than an effort to reach a compromise? The reason I ask that is because yesterday Nessen denied that there was any effort to reach a compromise on this thing. You seem to be describing a process of attempting compromise.

MR. GREENER: Well, I don't think, you know, how you want to characterize it. They are trying to make sure that the committee has the information they need and at the same time protect the Executive Privilege.

Q How would you describe that other than a compromise effort?

MR. GREENER: Just the way I just did describe it -- trying to make sure that they get the information they need.

Q Any further reaction to Senator Long's plan for a tax extension?

MR. GREENER: Not beyond what Ron said yesterday.

Q What was his question? Can't hear him today somehow.

MR. GREENER: The question was whether or not there was any additional reaction beyond what Ron said yesterday on Senator Long's tax extension.

Q Bill, I asked you this question a while back but I guess the China trip has made things be delayed but it is time to ask it again.

Before he went to China he got a letter from Senator Bentsen pointing out that the facts are that most of the heroin that is being sold on the streets throughout the United States and most of it that is causing the street crime is coming out of Mexico illegally and asking if Ford would not meet with Echeverria on this question.

Do you have any reply on that?

MR. GREENER: I have nothing on it but I will check on it for you, Sara.

Q Bill, is the President going to attend this Southern Republican meeting in Texas?

MR. GREENER: I have no travel announcements today.

Q Does he plan any travel between now and perhaps the Christmas season?

MR. GREENER: None that I am ready to announce, that I know of.

Q Well, Ron said yesterday there wasn't any.

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

Q Could this be a stop enroute to Vail or back?

MR. GREENER: No, that couldn't. There is no one there meeting, for that particular question.

Q Does he plan to address this Southern Republican meeting by phone or anything like that or send anyone in his place?

MR. GREENER: I think the Vice President is already scheduled to be there.

Q Is he going to have Rockefeller speak across the country frequently now?

MR. GREENER: I don't know the plans for that.

Q Bill, when is he going to meet with the leaders of Congress to report on the China trip?

MR. GREENER: I think it is scheduled for tomorrow.

Q Bill, there had been a tentative plan for the President to go down to Florida, I think, on the 12th which is pretty soon.

MR. GREENER: That would be Friday.

Q Friday, whatever. The 11th or 12th to talk to a fund raiser down there. I understand he is not going to go. Do you know why the President is not going to go?

MR. GREENER: No, I don't, John. You are asking me why we are not going on an unannounced trip?

Q I am asking you why there were originally tentative plans made and a lot of people thought he was coming down and now he is not going to go.

MR. GREENER: I think it is just a matter of the press of business here.

Q Congressional leaders are asking that if the President is going to veto the tax bill that he does it while they are still in town -- that is, before the 19th -- so that they can take a vote on whether or not to override. Do you know whether he will accommodate that request?

MR. GREENER: I don't know. If they get it here in time. His position is the same as Ron stated yesterday, that he would veto it if it did not have coupled with it a spending ceiling.

Q If it is a question of timing of the veto, would he try to accommodate them by doing it fast enough so that they could take a vote on override?

MR. GREENER: You know, you are playing "if" with me. They have not completed their action yet.

Q The man who heads the Domestic Council, has he already gone or is he going right away?

MR. GREENER: Going where?

Q Leaving the White House staff.

MR. GREENER: Not to my knowledge.

Q Bill, the daily question about energy, I guess. Has he made any decision one way or the other on that?

MR. GREENER: No, he has not.

Q Has he looked at it recently since he came back? I mean is he close to a decision on that?

MR. GREENER: Well, I just think we will have to wait and see what the final action is by the Congress and then he will make his decision.

Q Is it now clear then that the President will wait for both the House and Senate to act on that bill before he makes up his mind?

MR. GREENER: No, it is not. He may make a statement early. Is that what you mean, Dick?

Q Well, you said a minute ago --

MR. GREENER: He is going to have to take a look at the full Conference Report is all I mean and he has not made his mind up as yet.

Q On that same subject, has he seen the Conference Report? Has that shown up?

MR. GREENER: He has gone over the particulars of it with Frank Zarb but I don't know if he has actually got the document in his hand to look at it.

Q Two local issues, Bill.

What is the President's reaction to the report that the D. C. books of finances are so confused they cannot audit them?

MR. GREENER: He made no comment to me on that and I didn't ask him, Les.

Q How does the President feel about Congressman Gude's proposal to take the name of Hoover off the FBI building?

MR. GREENER: Again a subject I have not discussed with him, Les. I would be glad to check on it for you.

The President does not have an appointment to meet the head of the Selective Service today.

Q Bill, one other thing before we quit.

You said that he was meeting with Kissinger on NATO and SALT. I presume that both subjects are in reference to Kissinger's upcoming trip. Can you tell us anything about the SALT aspects of that conversation?

MR. GREENER: No, but as I say, he is having his own press briefing at 12:15. Ask him.

Q Has the President made up his mind on that common situs picketing bill?

MR. GREENER: No. As you know, that is not down yet. It is expected sometime next week.

Q Bill, when you were asked about whether the President was going to go to Houston for the Southern Republican Conference you said Vice President Rockefeller is already scheduled to be there.

MR. GREENER: No, I answered to the question "is anyone else going down?" and I said Vice President Rockefeller was already scheduled.

Q Were you implying that the Vice President would be acting on behalf of the President before those people? I would like to get that.

MR. GREENER: Not necessarily. I don't know, I would have to check.

Q Does the President plan to stay in the White House and work on domestic issues and foreign issues between now and Christmas?

MR. GREENER: So far as I know, yes.

Q So you are not playing games with us on whether there will be trips?

MR. GREENER: No, there is no trip.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END

(AT 11:43 A.M. EST)