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NEWS CONFERENCE

#427

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 11:36 A.M. EST

FEBRUARY 2, 1976

MONDAY

MR. NESSEN: The President made a phone call today that you may be interested in, to President Giscard at 9:58. It lasted to 10:04. Today is Giscard's birthday, and it was a happy birthday phone call.

Q How old is Giscard?

MR. NESSEN: We will find out.

Q What did he have to say for six minutes?

MR. NESSEN: He wished him happy birthday.

Q Is that all?

MR. NESSEN: Mostly.

Q Was it in French or English?

MR. NESSEN: I think probably English. Giscard speaks pretty good English.

I think you know they established a friendship at Martinique and have continued it elsewhere, and they do, from time to time, talk on the telephone.

Q Was it a better connection this time?

MR. NESSEN: I think they got a pretty good line this time.

Q Was that talked about in the phone call?

MR. NESSEN: I don't believe so.

At 2:00 this afternoon, as you know, there is the swearing-in for Elliot Richardson as the Commerce Secretary in the East Room, and that is open coverage.

At 3:30 the President will meet with his advisers in the area of intelligence, and this is to continue finalizing the recommendations that he will be sending and announcing on revising the intelligence community.

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Q Will there be any pictures?

MR. NESSEN: No, I don't think so.

Q Who will be there?

MR. NESSEN: We will post a list of participants, but basically I think Scowcroft, Rumsfeld and others involved in the intelligence area.

Q When do you look for these recommendations to go out?

MR. NESSEN: I think we are very close, John, and I would say in the next couple of weeks.

Q How about the State of the World? How close on that?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have a date.

Q Any chance this week?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Will Kissinger be represented in that meeting?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Will he be there?

MR. NESSEN: I will have to look at the list of participants.

Q He is out of town.

MR. NESSEN: As I say, if he is not there, he will be represented at the meeting.

At 6:00 the President has asked the Republican Congressional leaders to come in and discuss what he believes is an extremely important piece of legislation to increase and assure the supply of natural gas.

If you want to have some pictures at the beginning of that, we could, and I think we will bring down Congressman Brown, who is the manager of the bill, and Frank Zarb, afterwards, if you would like to hear from them.

Q How long is the meeting?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have a time. I would say somewhere around an hour or possibly longer.

Q Will the GOP Senators be in on this?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, I think both sides.

Isn't that right, Margaret?

Q Will they be in to see us afterwards?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, we will bring some people down to talk to you afterwards.

You know about the President going over to see the display of gifts for the Bicentennial that have been sent by other countries.

I can give you a rough outline of the New Hampshire schedule, if you would like to hear that.

Q Was Mrs. Ford there this morning?

MR. NESSEN: She was supposed to be. She did not go, I guess.

On Saturday, I think the President will be leaving a little before 10:00 from the South Lawn, and he will fly in to the Manchester Airport and have a mid-day meeting there with State and local officials of both parties.

Q Of both parties?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, that is right.

Q Why?

Q Who is sponsoring this meeting?

MR. NESSEN: It is to discuss legislation, the budget and so forth as it affects the State.

Q They announced in New Hampshire that meeting would take place in Concord.

MR. NESSEN: He is motoring to Concord, I believe, from Manchester.

That will be, as I say, on the budget and other domestic issues, and I will check on the place.

Q What Democratic officials will be there, can you tell us?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have the participants list now.

Then there will be a short reception for those people who attend that. He then, in the evening, will go to Nashua for the speech to the Fiftieth Anniversary Meeting of the New Hampshire Chamber of Commerce and will stay overnight in Nashua. I am sorry, it is the Nashua Chamber of Commerce.

Q Is it New Hampshire or Nashua? You said both.

MR. NESSEN: It is the Nashua Chamber of Commerce and the meeting is in Concord. He will motor to Concord.

Q Is that a political speech?

MR. NESSEN: I haven't seen the text yet, Jim. The pro rated share of the trip is being paid for by the PFC, but clearly there are some nonpolitical events, such as the meeting with the bipartisan State officials.

Q You are saying those meetings are taking place in Concord now?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

He will arrive in Manchester, drive to Concord and have the meeting.

Q Where will it be in Concord?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have the location. We will fill in the details later in the week. I just want to give you a rough outline.

Giscard is 50 years old today, incidentally.

Q Do you have an approximate arrival time in Manchester?

MR. NESSEN: This is a rough schedule. We arrive up there at Manchester about 11:10. These times may vary a little bit because this was an early version of the proposed schedule.

Then, as I say, he will motorcade to Concord, New Hampshire to the Rundlett Junior High School.

Q Where is this now?

MR. NESSEN: Motor to Concord, and the place in Concord will be the Rundlett Junior High School. It is a 35-minute drive.

Then the President will talk a little bit about his budget and other domestic matters and then will answer questions from the State and local officials of New Hampshire.

Then, as I say, there will be a short reception. That briefing, incidentally, begins at 12:30.

Q Open?

MR. NESSEN: Yes. About 350 people are expected to be there.

I don't have the names yet, Jim, but I will by the end of the week.

Then, as I said, there is a short reception right there at the school. Then the President will have some staff time in the afternoon and will drive over -- let me back up a minute.

After the event in Concord, the President will drive to Nashua -- and it takes about an hour to drive there -- where he will then have almost three hours of staff time and then will go to the Nashua Senior High School.

Q Ron, I am told before he goes to Nashua he plans to meet with his workers in Concord, where the Ford headquarters are. Is that right?

MR. NESSEN: It is not on the Saturday schedule, but let me come to Sunday and I think you will see what happens.

Q Is that his staff from Washington for three hours?

MR. NESSEN: Working with his staff and some personal time and Mrs. Ford will be with him, of course.

Q Then to what high school?

MR. NESSEN: Nashua Senior High School.

Q For the Chamber of Commerce thing?

MR. NESSEN: That is where the Chamber of Commerce is. The dinner, as I said, begins at -- well, on the early schedule it began at 7:00, but it may begin slightly later than that.

Q Where will he be headquartered in Nashua?

MR. NESSEN: He will be staying at a private house.

Q Do you have the subject of his speech?

MR. NESSEN: I don't at this point. He will begin speaking at around 9:00 or 9:10. After that, he will get back to his Residence about 10:00 and will spend the evening there.

On Sunday morning, it is possible he may go to church.

Q In Nashua?

MR. NESSEN: Let me hold back on the church for a day or so, Fran, until we nail that down.

Then he will drive back to Concord -- what was that?

Q I am accusing you of crucifying the President.

MR. NESSEN: How is that?

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Q Nailing it down. (Laughter)

MR. NESSEN: He will be driving back to Concord at about mid-day Sunday, going back to the same junior high school where he was the day before. That is where his campaign workers and their families will be gathered. He will talk to them and say hello to them and shake hands with them.

Q How many?

MR. NESSEN: About 700, counting families.

Q Is that open?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Then we will drive to Durham, New Hampshire to the University of New Hampshire. It is about a 45-minute drive, getting there about 2:30 where he will have some staff time and personal time. He then will go to the University auditorium where he will have a news conference for local reporters beginning at about 4 o'clock. Full coverage of that, of course.

Then he will go back to the residence of the President of the University where he will have about another hour and 25 minutes of free time, and then he goes to the University gymnasium, getting there about 6:45, where he will speak at about 7:00 or 7:10. About 3,500 people will be there.

Q What is his topic?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have the text of that yet. It is a speech to the University students.

Q Is that political?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think so. I think he was invited to speak at the school.

Okay, then he is going to go and meet some student leaders for about a half hour, and then will drive to Pease Air Force Base in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, about a five-minute drive. He will leave there at about 8:30 and get back to Andrews at about 9:45 and back to the White House at about 10:05.

Q What is the departure time?

MR. NESSEN: Take-off is at about 8:30, arrive at Andrews about 9:45 and at the White House at about 10:05.

Q Will that meeting with the students be open?

MR. NESSEN: For pool coverage, yes.

Q Is he going to do any campaign work there?

MR. NESSEN: He is meeting with his campaign workers.

Q His meeting with students, will that be open?

MR. NESSEN: I just said it will be pool coverage.

Q There is a lot of driving. Will there be a lot of stopping on those drives?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know whether there will be or not.

Q You say Mrs. Ford is going along. Will she have a separate schedule?

MR. NESSEN: Mrs. Ford is going along, Susan and probably Jack. Susan and Jack will have a separate schedule and Mrs. Ford will have a couple of events of her own.

Q Who is the distinguished citizen in Portsmouth that will be favored with the President's --

MR. NESSEN: I need to check that. I don't have a name and description of who he is.

Q Will the evening event at the University be open to the public or is it just for students?

MR. NESSEN: It is 3,500 people and I don't know whether they invited the public or just the students. I will check it for you by the end of the week.

Q Apart from the meeting with the Ford workers, is there any other fairly political event on this thing?

MR. NESSEN: Not that I see.

Q But you are not ruling out that either the Chamber of Commerce speech or any other speech may have a political flavor to it?

MR. NESSEN: Like what?

Q The President may give reasons why he wants to keep his office and why he wants to be elected?

MR. NESSEN: I haven't seen either speech so I don't know what he will say.

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Q You are not ruling out he may give a political speech?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what you mean by political speech and I haven't seen either speech so I don't know what he will say.

Q This is the campaign trip that we have been hearing about, isn't it?

MR. NESSEN: It is being paid for by the PFC.

Q You mentioned pro rata before.

MR. NESSEN: The people who are considered political people, their transportation and expenses will be paid by the PFC.

Q Does that include the President?

MR. NESSEN: His transportation, yes, and expenses.

Q Why are they being paid? Just because of this one meeting he is going to have?

MR. NESSEN: I think you recall the ruling of the FEC of a couple of months ago that after January 1 speeches to large groups and so forth need to be counted as campaign trips.

Okay, that gets us through that.

Q Speaking of the FEC, does the President have any reaction to the Supreme Court's action?

MR. NESSEN: We put out a fairly lengthy statement Friday night, Saul, and I was just going to say I don't have anything further to give you on that. He is awaiting a report from the Attorney General and from the Legal Counsel's Office and I believe he said after he got those he would get together with Members of Congress and find out what, if any, steps were needed. Of course, in the meanwhile he said that he would follow the letter and the spirit of the 1974 law. There has been no change since Friday.

Q So far as you know, in New Hampshire, this constitutes his only political activity prior to the February 24 primary; is that right?

MR. NESSEN: He has been asked whether he planned to or would come back and he said there are no plans to but, you know, it is always possible.

Q Ron, do you have a tentative date scheduled for a meeting with the leadership on that Federal Election Commission?

MR. NESSEN: No, because it depends on when Phil Buchen and the Attorney General give the President their recommendation and report.

Q When do you expect that?

MR. NESSEN: Some time this week.

Q Can we rule out skiing?

MR. NESSEN: For the President, yes.

Q How about you?

MR. NESSEN: You can rule that out. (Laughter)

Q Will Susan be skiing?

MR. NESSEN: My understanding is she may be, and Jack also.

Q Can you tell us where they will be skiing?

MR. NESSEN: You need to check with Sheila because I frankly don't know.

A couple of other things that may interest you, I guess there was a report from Brookings on the Marine Corps and whether it was properly preparing for its role -- anticipating your questions -- the Pentagon is always reviewing the preparedness of all the services and making any changes necessary to meet the contingencies and to fulfill its role and, in addition, the Commandant of the Marines is testifying this morning before the House Armed Services Committee on the role of the Marines.

There was also a Library of Congress study over the weekend that discussed the United States military forces in relation to the Soviet military forces. Some of the things they point out are the reasons why the President has attempted to reverse the trend in military spending.

As you know, the Defense Department budget has continually become smaller in relation to other parts of the budget over the last 20 years and in real dollar terms the Defense budget has been just about completely flat over the last 20 years and that is why the President has proposed turning this trend around and that is why he has opposed so strongly the reductions made by Congress over the last couple of years in the Defense Department's budget.

Q Who did you expect to ask you that question?

MR. NESSEN: I thought somebody would. (Laughter)

Q What was the second report?

MR. NESSEN: The Library of Congress.

Q When did this come out?

MR. NESSEN: Over the weekend.

Q Are you ready for other questions?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Has the President had the record checked to determine whether President Nixon did give North Vietnam an unqualified commitment for economic assistance from the United States?

MR. NESSEN: John, it just doesn't matter. We are not going to be able to talk about what private communications went back and forth, if any, on that issue. Regardless of whether this was a private communication, there was certainly a public -- as part of the Paris peace accords. Part of the Paris peace accords dealt with possible economic aid to North Vietnam after the war, and the President was part of the delegation that went to Paris to witness the signing so he was familiar with that particular section of the Paris accords and, in fact, there were discussions which opened on the matter in 1973 with the Joint Economic Commission that was established. They discussed the matter. They never did settle on any specific numbers as far as money went.

But the whole issue then became moot for several reasons: One, because there was no feeling in Congress that they wanted to give North Vietnam economic aid under the circumstances; and secondly, because North Vietnam violated two provisions of the accords -- one, by sending arms and men into the South and then violating the accords by starting the war up again; secondly, by failing to live up to the commitment they made to account for the Americans missing in action. So the whole question of economic aid became moot.

Q Ron, do you know whether Secretary Coleman will confer with or consult the President before he makes the Concord decision?

MR. NESSEN: I don't expect him to, Peter.

Q He has not so far?

MR. NESSEN: Not that I know of.

Q Ron, can you give us anything further on this Executive Order on exports of nuclear materials, why the President decided to issue it at this time?

MR. NESSEN: Do you know that, John?

We will check on that and find out.

Q Ron, can you tell us whether the United States did, as the British report, supply \$20 million of the CIA funds for the recruiting of mercenaries for Angola?

MR. NESSEN: The United States is not giving any money to Britain to recruit mercenaries for Angola.

Q Did it?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q That doesn't seem to square with what the Secretary of Defense said on television yesterday.

MR. NESSEN: I did not hear him say anything on that subject, Peter.

Q He was asked about it and he didn't deny it. He evaded it. He certainly didn't flatly say no money was going; in fact, he inferred, if I heard him correctly, that there had been money sent in the past.

MR. NESSEN: To whom?

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Q To other countries?

MR. NESSEN: The question was, have we given \$20 million to Great Britain to recruit mercenaries, and I am saying the United States has not, and is not, giving any money to Great Britain to hire mercenaries.

Q To any other countries to hire mercenaries in Great Britain?

MR. NESSEN: We have said before -- and it is still absolutely true -- the United State is not, and no agency connected with the Government is recruiting, or hiring or training American mercenaries.

We have also said limited amounts of money are being given to some countries which share our goals in Angola. We are not actually able to determine how every last cent of it is spent.

Q Do you have anything specific on messages to Congress?

MR. NESSEN: No. We are looking for one later this week, hopefully.

Q Does that include South Africa, this gift of money?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think I will go into the details, Howard.

Q Presidential press conferences?

MR. NESSEN: Not at the moment.

Q This week?

Q Do you know what the message is going to be on later this week?

MR. NESSEN: I think probably the first message that will go up will deal with problems of the elderly.

Q Ron, I have a small point, maybe, but I was wondering on the question of private assurances to North Vietnam. I just wondered, since, as you say, it was discussed publicly in the various peace accords and the fact it is all moot, what would be the basis for withholding information like that? Certainly no security could be involved.

MR. NESSEN: If there was a letter or message to North Vietnam. Just a matter of policy, Bob, that if you open the door to disclosing private correspondence, or say there was no private correspondence, there is no place to stop, and you cannot conduct diplomacy by publishing all your correspondence.

Q When you say private communication, do you mean private as differentiated from public and therefore secret, or private as differentiated from official?

MR. NESSEN: I was only answering Bob's question or the other question.

Q You used the word "private" twice in your answer. What do you mean by private? Do you mean unofficial or unpublic?

MR. NESSEN: Unpublished.

Q Unpublic and therefore official. If there was a private communication, it was official, not an unofficial or personal promise, such as the issue arose in regard to South Korea at one time a couple of years ago regarding some letters from then President Nixon?

MR. NESSEN: I don't recall that one.

You know, I didn't raise the issue, but whatever people are talking about I think relates to a story that said that the former President indicated, as you say, in an unpublished message of some kind. I am not saying there was or wasn't.

Q Ron, does the President think we should give them aid?

MR. NESSEN: The President's last position on relations with Vietnam were stated in the East-West speech at Honolulu, which I think you know, or I can get it for you, if you don't. It was basically that we are looking to the future and not to the past in our relations but that our relations will depend on their actions.

On the specific question of aid, as I said, I think for the moment that is moot for the various reasons I mentioned.

Q What is the President's position on abortion?

MR. NESSEN: I am not able to give it to you today, Jim.

Q Will you be able to tomorrow?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q How about Wednesday?

MR. NESSEN: Possibly.

Q Speaking of aid to North Vietnam, how much of our stuff did they take over when they took over South Vietnam?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have those figures, Howard. The Pentagon can give them to you.

Q I suppose for the record, as much as anything, to try to round it out, these stories, of course, come out of Congressional people that have gone to Hanoi recently, but for the record, has the United States received a request from North Vietnam, or Vietnam, I guess, you could say, a contemporary request, a recent request for any form of aid?

MR. NESSEN: I think Dr. Kissinger said at his news conference last week that we have had no communications officially with North Vietnam for some time, if I am not mistaken.

Q That refers from us to them, but what about my question?

MR. NESSEN: I am not familiar with any, but I think the State Department might be able to give you a more accurate answer.

Q In your response on abortion, is the President trying to decide what his position is or you haven't asked him?

MR. NESSEN: It is a complex matter, and he does want to word his position properly, and he is working on it.

Q I take it then he has some philosophical basis, but he just hasn't quite decided how he wants it explained, is that it, or is it that he has no philosophical basis?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, he has a view on abortion, which I would think fairly soon we will give you.

Q Does he agree with Mrs. Ford?

Q If he has an opinion, why doesn't he say what it is?

MR. NESSEN: Because it is a complex issue, and he wants to make sure his views are properly and fully explained, and it is taking him a bit of time to put down the proper words to explain his view.

Q So, in other words, what I said, that is a long way of saying what I said. He is considering how he wants to explain it. He knows what he believes, but he hasn't decided how he wants to phrase it yet?

MR. NESSEN: I think I will stick to my explanation of what the process is.

Q Is he going to issue a statement?

MR. NESSEN: The views will be known, I think.

Q Have you decided on the form for doing that?

MR. NESSEN: Why don't we wait until later in the week and see how it all turns out?

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Q Hasn't he stated his view on abortion?

MR. NESSEN: Not since I have been here.

Q Yes, he has. You gave them to me.

MR. NESSEN: If I remember correctly, one of Jerry terHorst's first briefings involved the President's position on abortion.

Q I wrote the story and I will go up and get it and quote it.

MR. NESSEN: Wasn't it based on what Jerry terHorst said in one of his first briefings?

Q No, you told me.

MR. NESSEN: I don't recall it if I did.

Q Then there was another explanation when the Cardinal came down here from New York and the people in the Domestic Council talked about it.

MR. NESSEN: I don't recall it but you will have it soon, I think.

Q Is his position changed any from what it was when he expressed it a couple of years ago?

MR. NESSEN: I think we should all wait and see what it is, Ted.

Q Does he agree with Mrs. Ford on the subject of abortion?

MR. NESSEN: I think we will all wait and see.

Q Is he planning to ask for television time to explain this? Is it going to be a big policy position paper?

MR. NESSEN: He is not asking for television time and it will not be a big policy position paper.

Q Does he expect to be asked about it at his news conference he may have this week?

MR. NESSEN: Let's wait until later in the week. Don't you like surprises?

Q I understood you to say there will not be a news conference this week.

MR. NESSEN: None is planned at the moment.

Q Speaking of news conferences, what is the definition of "local reporters" that you are planning for this news press conference in New Hampshire?

MR. NESSEN: Probably New Hampshire reporters; reporters from New Hampshire.

Q Will that include reporters that cover New Hampshire such as the Boston Globe?

MR. NESSEN: I have not been putting the list together and I am not sure how wide a circle they will have at the news conference.

Q Ron, are any of the events in New Hampshire, particularly the news conference, going to be carried on kind of State television?

MR. NESSEN: I am not sure. I think perhaps so.

Q Perhaps the State educational TV network?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know.

Q Can you tell us the President's position on Metro funding, when he is going to announce what he is going to do about it?

MR. NESSEN: Is that an issue on which the President has to decide?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: In what sense?

Q He is supposed to okay the amount of funding.

MR. NESSEN: I will look it up for you, Fran. I don't know myself.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Ron.

END (AT 12:07 P.M. EST)

This Copy For _____

N E W S C O N F E R E N C E

#428

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 5:55 P.M. EST

FEBRUARY 2, 1976

MONDAY

MR. NESSEN: Each of you should have two letters, and I will answer whatever questions you may have.

Q Did this letter come as a surprise to the President?

MR. NESSEN: The President had no prior knowledge that Pat was going to send the letter.

Q He was in here -- what day was it? Did he not mention that the last day of his leave from the university was coming up?

MR. NESSEN: He did not discuss the matter at all at that meeting.

Q Did the President feel a bit miffed that he wasn't informed a bit previously and all of a sudden gets a letter on the 31st?

MR. NESSEN: I have not heard him indicate that response.

Q Does the President think that Moynihan is going into politics?

MR. NESSEN: He hasn't heard anything one way or the other to indicate that.

Q Has he named a successor?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have a successor to name today.

Q Will you soon?

MR. NESSEN: I would think he would be named soon, correct.

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Q Does he leave promptly, because we are President of the Security Council this month. What happens?

MR. NESSEN: Pat, as you see from his letter, was concerned that his period of tenure ran out on January 31. He has worked out an arrangement with Harvard that would allow him to stay another month because Pat is the Chairman of the Security Council for February. When that service ends at the end of February, he will then return to Harvard.

Q Ron, doesn't it strike the President as odd that Mr. Moynihan would be in the White House just last week and didn't mention this at all?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know. You will have to make your own judgment on how you would characterize it, but the fact is he didn't.

Q How does that strike you?

MR. NESSEN: I am just handing out the letters, Bob.

Q What did they discuss when he was in here, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: U.N. business.

Q They did not discuss his staying on or leaving?

MR. NESSEN: My understanding is they did not.

Q What day was that, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: I guess it was last Wednesday or Thursday.

Q Is there any new indication that Moynihan wants to get any support or whatever he wanted? He brings that up from time to time.

MR. NESSEN: Bob, I think if you read the letter you see Pat talks about his strong desire to return to Harvard. I think you know Pat, and I know Pat, and I think you know Pat has never been shy about stating strong personal feelings. There is certainly nothing about that in the letter.

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Q This is the first time he decided to be diplomatic though, Ron. (Laughter)

Q But is it fair to say this came as a surprise to everyone here?

MR. NESSEN: The letter arrived without any prior indication that it was coming.

Q Ron, didn't the President make a statement supporting Moynihan after the meeting last week?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, and in his letter accepting the resignation repeats it.

Q Why did he make that statement last week?

MR. NESSEN: He didn't make a statement. I was asked some questions about it, and I reaffirmed the President's support for the way he conducted his office at the U.N.

Q When did the letter actually arrive here?

MR. NESSEN: The letter arrived on Saturday.

Q Did Moynihan, ever since he was offered the job of U.N. Ambassador, say he would resign and return to Harvard on January 31, 1976?

MR. NESSEN: You really need to talk to Pat about this, but by way of guidance, you ought to ask Pat the details of some somewhat lengthy and complicated negotiations he has had with Harvard which, at one time, he thought would allow him more time at the U.N.

I really shouldn't speak on those, except I know they took place and that at one time Pat thought that Harvard would give him -- as you see, they have given him a one-month extension, but at one time he thought they would give him a longer extension.

Q Was the President aware of that when he appointed Moynihan to that job, that he would only stay on until January 31, 1976?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know.

Q I just wondered if you had any indication Secretary Kissinger might be going back to Harvard?

MR. NESSEN: No, I think he voluntarily passed his tenure period, if I recall. I understand Dr. Kissinger will also be writing a letter to Pat expressing his regret and support for the way --

Q Has he been instructed to write a letter, or is he doing this voluntarily?

MR. NESSEN: I believe it is an expression of his true feelings, Peter.

Q What would be the political impact of the Moynihan resignation?

MR. NESSEN: I have never heard of it talked about in political terms. I don't know what the political -- I don't see a political factor in it.

Q A man who had the strong support of labor, strong support of the Jewish community in this country, who quits after making mention that he is not properly supported by the Administration -- that sounds like someone who, if he does go into politics, is going to make Henry Kissinger an issue. Would that be helpful?

MR. NESSEN: First of all, I don't know anything about Pat's plans for going into politics. You need to ask him if he has any. Secondly, his letter spells out the reasons he is leaving, which is to return to his Harvard professorship.

Q Did Moynihan discuss with the President when he saw him the possibility that Harvard might not extend his tenure?

MR. NESSEN: Not that I am aware of.

Q Harvard has fairly hard and fast and rigid rules about how long you can be on leave, and Kissinger passed up that time voluntarily. Now, Moynihan must have known at the time that all these negotiations were going on.

MR. NESSEN: As I say, you need to check with Pat, but I know that he was in negotiations with Harvard and had hoped to get a longer period of time.

Q But how was that communicated to the White House, that he hoped to get a longer time?

MR. NESSEN: I am not sure. I don't know.

Q Did the President ask Moynihan, as President Nixon did Dr. Kissinger, to forego his tenure and remain on?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know, Jim.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END (AT 6:00 P.M. EST)