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NEWS CONFERENCE

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AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 11:57 A.M. EDT

JULY 9, 1976

FRIDAY

MR. NESSEN: You have the schedule for today.

The Dr. Cooper meeting, which should be beginning about now, is at the President's request, to give him an up-to-date report on the swine flu vaccination program. It may be possible to give you a read-out or some kind of a report on that meeting afterwards.

Q How about Dr. Cooper? Will he come out and talk to us?

MR. NESSEN: Let me check.

Q Are they considering dropping the flu vaccination program?

MR. NESSEN: Certainly not, no.

Q How about the Saudi meeting?

MR. NESSEN: He was invited to the United States by Defense Secretary Rumsfeld. He is the third ranking official in the Government of Saudi Arabia. He is the Commander of the National Guard and has an especially close relationship with the King. This will be the first meeting by the President with a senior member, or one of the very senior members of the Saudi royal family. He did, of course, meet the Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia last September.

Another purpose of this was to present Saudi Arabia's Bicentennial gift to the United States. It is a coffee service and an incense burner.

At 4 o'clock, the President will meet with Governor Cecil Andrus of Idaho. He is the newly-elected Chairman of the National Governors Conference. This meeting was requested by the Governor and it is to discuss future activities by the Governors Conference. If you are interested, we can have a photo at the beginning of that meeting.

Q Ron, on the Saudi thing, that was a personal gift, wasn't it?

MR. NESSEN: It is a Government gift, Dick.

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Q Did they talk about oil prices, or was this kind of a social thing?

MR. NESSEN: I am going to try to get you a read-out on this meeting dealing with the topics.

Q Is it over with?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, it is over with.

Q How long did it last?

MR. NESSEN: It lasted about 45 minutes.

Tomorrow, the President will not have anything but staff meetings in the morning before departure for the trip, so I would not think it would be necessary to come in in the morning before you go to the airport. But, I may have something later this afternoon, just to confirm that, so check before you go home.

We have a summary schedule of the President's trip to put out. It shows the press check-in at Andrews at 11:30 and the President departing the South Lawn at 12:20. The President will be making some remarks in Plattsburg during a program that will honor the United States Olympic Team, and I hope to have an advance text on that for you, hopefully by late afternoon, and we would make that for 6:00 a.m. release tomorrow.

Q What time does he actually speak?

MR. NESSEN: He speaks sort of early afternoon, right around 3 o'clock.

Q Ron, what is the President's view on the two Chinas' controversy?

MR. NESSEN: He is hopeful that it will be resolved.

On Sunday, there is the possibility that the President will go to church and may play golf, and I think I will be able to give you a more definite outlook for Sunday tomorrow.

On Monday, the President plans to sign, at 11 o'clock, the Airport and Airway Development Act Amendments of 1976. The reason I am telling you today is that you might want to have your aviation experts or whatever alerted to that.

Q If you could give us a bill number, it would help.

MR. NESSEN: It is H.R. 9771, Frank. This authorizes an airway trust fund authorizing grants to the States' localities and airport operators for development activities relating to airports and for the construction of equipment like radar and landing aids, and so forth.

One other matter, and that has to do with the Republican Convention. Those of you who are going or who need to alert your offices, there will be two sets of credentials required in Kansas City.

One is the regular White House trip credential, for those of you going as part of the White House party, and that will be given to those who fly to Kansas City aboard the White House charter. This is the same as any Presidential trip, and it will allow you access to the hotel where the White House Press Center will be, the Crown Center Hotel, but not to any other Convention activities.

The other credential you need is the regular Convention credential. It is available from Mike Miller, the Director of News Media Operations at the Republican National Convention, at 310 First Street, Southeast, Washington. The phone number is 484-6770. When you apply for that Convention credential, you should also indicate to Mr. Miller that you are going to the Convention with the President. That Convention credential will get you into the Convention Center, the Kemper Arena, and the other Convention activities.

Also, it appears that there will be no housing arrangements made for reporters traveling to the Convention on the White House plane, on the assumption that your offices have already taken care of housing for everybody.

Q But they haven't.

Q We were told just the opposite. It is a little late for that.

MR. NESSEN: Is that right, Aldo? Well, that is the way it has been resolved.

Q I am serious.

MR. NESSEN: I know, but I am just telling you that has been the resolution and I thought I should tell you as soon as possible that there will be no rooms provided for White House press people.

Q Does that have anything to do with the flap by the Reagan people at the number of rooms and facilities that the Ford people were seeking?

MR. NESSEN: No, it doesn't.

Q Does that include the pools?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Ron, it may be too late for that. I am serious.

MR. NESSEN: Ray Zook tells me that has not been completely resolved yet, and he is attempting to get rooms for White House press people.

Q All the offices are assuming the White House press will be traveling in the normal manner.

MR. NESSEN: At the moment, it does not look that way, but Ray is still working on it.

Q Do you know when the President will actually be going to Kansas City?

MR. NESSEN: No, I don't.

Q For those of us who go with our office staffs earlier, there will be no problem of our getting White House credentials in Kansas City, trip tags, will there?

MR. NESSEN: Either that, or you would not need them. I mean --

Q To get into the Crown Center Hotel.

MR. NESSEN: Your Convention credentials will get you in there.

Q I thought you said only the White House trip tag.

MR. NESSEN: I said that would get you only into the Crown Center, but the other credentials will also get you in.

Q Ron, how are we supposed to know when to go if we are not going to know when the President is going to go until the last minute? I mean, hotel arrangements have to be considered.

MR. NESSEN: It is not possible for me to tell you when the President is going since that decision has not been made yet, Muriel.

Q How do we tell the hotels?

MR. NESSEN: You better make reservations for the whole period, I would think.

Q Ron, how about those of us who are going out ahead of the President? Will we be kicked out of the White House Press Center?

MR. NESSEN: No. In fact, I think John will probably go the Wednesday before the Convention opens and get the press center opened up.

Q For our own background, does it look like he is going to go to Vail after the Convention?

MR. NESSEN: We have not thought that far ahead yet, Phil.

Q Ron, somebody has, because rooms have been reserved out there.

MR. NESSEN: I think it is a possibility.

Q Ron, appropos of the Convention, am I correct in my assumption that until there is a nomination the Republican National Committee is supposed to be neutral?

MR. NESSEN: I guess so. I don't know the answer to that.

Q Well, they are not supposed to take sides, are they?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think so.

Q Then, am I also wrong in my understanding that Mrs. Smith is going to the Convention as a Ford delegate?

MR. NESSEN: I am told she is, yes.

Q How does that square with the idea of the Republican National Committee being neutral, and the head of it is going as a Ford delegate?

MR. NESSEN: I don't see the conflict.

Q You honestly don't see the conflict, Ron, when the Chairman of the Republican National Committee is a Ford delegate? You see no conflict, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: I honestly don't.

Q You can't say that with a straight face, can you? (Laughter)

MR. NESSEN: Why don't we do this now. For the rest of the briefing, why don't we go and let the President do that part of it for about a half hour, and then, at the end of that, we will bring some still photos and silent cameras in.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Ron.

END (AT 12:08 P.M. EDT)

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