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AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 11:55 A.M. EDT

OCTOBER 11, 1976

MONDAY

MR. NESSEN: Good morning. Welcome back.

There will be a printed readout on the Allon meeting with the President very shortly after this briefing.

The President goes over, as you know, to the Columbus Day observance. The President leaves here shortly after 1:00.

Q Will there be a prepared text on that?

MR. NESSEN: We didn't have one, Helen. He will speak only briefly. He has been working on his remarks this morning and we haven't had time to get a text on that.

Q We will go over there independently?

MR. NESSEN: There will be just a travel pool. It will be piped back here through the mult.

Let me give you a couple of things about New York now, and then the other trip later in the week. We didn't have much time to leave a sign-up list up, so we actually didn't post one. What we did was ask people on the press plane coming back from Texas yesterday to sign up for this trip. If you have not signed up for the New York trip, you won't see a sign-up list. What you need to do is call Ray Zook directly at the Transportation Office. His telephone number is 456-2690. If you could do that by 3:00 today, you will get yourself on the trip.

Here is the way I see the thing unfolding. Tomorrow, the President leaves late morning -- somewhere around 11:00, a little after 11:00 -- and the press plane would leave about an hour ahead of time.

The President will fly into JFK and go by motorcade to a meeting with Jewish leaders of the area at the Yeshiva Flatbush High School. The President will speak there and then will meet with Jewish leaders there.

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Q Is that the full, proper name of it?  
I doubt it.

A Why don't we check out the exact name of that school, John.

MR. CARLSON: It is the Yeshiva of Flatbush High School.

Q Could you give more specific times for check-in, luggage and so on?

MR. NESSEN: We will post that this afternoon.

The President will be also in the Bureau Park and Bay Ridge areas of Brooklyn in the afternoon after the appearance at the high school.

Q You mean walking around?

MR. NESSEN: No, he will drive from place to place.

Q Are these street corner rallies? Is that what you are suggesting?

MR. NESSEN: Public squares, street corners, and so forth.

Q About how many?

MR. NESSEN: In addition to the Yeshiva of Flatbush High School, Bureau Park is the second one and Bay Ridge is the third one.

Q Will Buckley be campaigning with him?

A I don't know if he plans to. We don't know yet what the group will consist of.

After the meetings in Brooklyn, the President will go to his hotel, which will be the New York Hilton, for the night. The press will stay at the Essex House. We couldn't get enough rooms at the Hilton for the press.

At the hotel, at 5:00, the President will meet with editors and publishers of New York State newspapers. At 6:30, the President will attend a reception and then a dinner. This is the Salute to the President dinner. The Vice President will be there. This is a fundraiser for the New York Republican Party. This is just for the New York Republican Party. That is at 5:00 p.m.

Q Is that open or closed?

MR. NESSEN: I think it is a private meeting with the editors and publishers.

Q Is it an interview? Will it be published?

MR. NESSEN: I think it will probably be Q&A with the editors and publishers.

Q You say New York State as distinguished from New York City?

MR. NESSEN: New York State and City, I think.

Q Will we get a transcript that night? What are your arrangements?

MR. NESSEN: We haven't arranged that, yet.

Q Where is the dinner?

MR. NESSEN: The dinner is at the New York Hilton.

Wednesday, the President will go to Yonkers at 9:30 in the morning.

Q Is that a \$1,000 a plate affair again?

MR. NESSEN: We will check the price.

Yonkers, New York on Wednesday morning. That will be at the City Hall, and he will speak briefly and sign the general revenue sharing extension at the City Hall in Yonkers, New York.

At 11:00, White Plains City Hall; noon, the Rockland County Courthouse; at 2:15, motorcade to the Garden State Plaza. That is a shopping center at Paramus, New Jersey, in Bergen County. That is a rally and remarks. At 4:30, a public rally in Union, New Jersey. It is like a square.

Q Where is the Rockland County Courthouse?

MR. NESSEN: That is in New City, New York, west of the Hudson.

As I said, at 4:30, Union, New Jersey, a public rally there. And then, a reception for PFC officials from that area. Then, at 6:00 approximately, the President will leave from the Newark Airport to come back to Washington.

These times are a little bit loose and tentative, so stick with us if there are any changes.

Q Does he have anything in Washington the night he returns?

MR. NESSEN: Wednesday night? No, not that I know of.

Q What is the cost of that dinner?

MR. NESSEN: \$1,000 a plate.

Q What was the name of the place in Union, New Jersey?

MR. NESSEN: It is called Town and Campus.

Q Does he return from Newark Airport?

MR. NESSEN: On Wednesday night, yes.

Friday, the President will leave about mid-morning for Des Moines, Iowa. He will go by car to Ames, Iowa. At noon, he will speak to the students, faculty and guests at Iowa State University. It is just for people to come see the President.

The President will then go on a tour of parts of the campus and then travel to Boone County, Iowa.

Q Boone, like Daniel?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, with an "e" on the end. There, he will have lunch with farmers and visit a farm and watch them harvest the crop. It must be corn out there or it could be soybeans.

At 6:00, the President will leave Iowa. We go back to Des Moines, we think, and fly to O'Hare International Airport in Chicago and motorcade to Joliet, Illinois. He will spend the night at the Joliet Sheraton Hotel.

Q What time does he arrive there?

MR. NESSEN: It is a very short flight. I think it is 40 minutes. He will arrive somewhere around a quarter of seven.

Q How long is the drive to Joliet from the airport?

MR. NESSEN: Joliet is toward the southern -- it is about 30 miles.

Q Ron, once again, as we have discussed before, could I ask why this can't be posted to save a lot of time and questions?

MR. NESSEN: We can. I just thought I would run through it and answer some of your questions.

Q Anything in Joliet?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have anything to announce yet.

The President will board a whistle stop train known as the Honest Abe on Saturday morning at about 8:30.

Q Is that a new name?

MR. NESSEN: The train is actually called the Abraham Lincoln. It follows a regular run.

Q Who calls it Honest Abe?

MR. NESSEN: We do. (Laughter) It is the nickname of the train.

Q What time Saturday morning?

MR. NESSEN: At 8:30 we will leave from Joliet.

Q This is a scheduled train or laid on just for the trip?

MR. NESSEN: The train is laid on for the trip, but it follows a scheduled route.

Q Does the Abraham Lincoln run every day?

MR. NESSEN: It is a regular daily train called the Abraham Lincoln.

Q What line?

MR. NESSEN: Wabash.

The stops are Joliet at 8:30; Pontiac, Illinois at 10:15; Bloomington, Illinois at 11:30; at 1:00 p.m., Lincoln, Illinois -- the President will have lunch there and that will be a filing time, too -- Springfield at 3:00; Carlinville at 4:15; at 5:30 p.m., Alton, Illinois. That is the end of the train ride, so that would be 8:30 to 5:30, nine hours.

The President will motorcade from Alton, Illinois, to Lambert Field in St. Louis, Missouri, where there will be an airport public rally at 7 o'clock. After the rally, which will take about an hour, the President will leave at 8 o'clock to come back to Washington. That will be Saturday night.

Q Getting him back at what time?

MR. NESSEN: It is probably about a two-hour flight, and an hour ahead, so it is probably 11:00, roughly.

Q Ron, for reporters who want to cover it out of Chicago, local press and all that, what arrangements -- who do they have to call, see, or what do they have to do, or what?

MR. NESSEN: To get credentialed locally?

Q Yes, Chicago papers.

MR. NESSEN: I think we have already put a note on the City wire out there explaining credential details.

That takes us right up through the weekend. I don't foresee any other immediate travel after that prior to the third debate.

Q You think he will stay home most of the week before the debate?

MR. NESSEN: I just said I don't know of any other travel before the debate.

Q Sunday he will definitely be here?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Do you have specific times for leaving tomorrow?

Q What is check-in time?

MR. NESSEN: That is what I think we will post later in the afternoon.

Q What is the date of the third debate?

MR. NESSEN: The 22nd of October.

Q Is the President looking forward to it?

MR. NESSEN: The third debate? He looks forward to all of them.

Q Does that mean the President won't be able to watch the Vice Presidential debate on Friday evening?

MR. NESSEN: No. I think one of the reasons for there not being any scheduled events at this time in Joliet was deliberately planned so that he would be able to go to his hotel and watch the debate. I expect him to watch the debate from his hotel in Joliet; that is, the Vice Presidential debate.

Q Ron, has he forewarned Senator Dole on his behavior during the debate?

MR. NESSEN: No, I think Senator Dole has proved himself to be a very capable campaigner and I am sure will be a very capable advocate of the important issues in this campaign.

Q Ron, does the decision not to do any campaigning next week prior to the debate have anything to do with the observation that was made generally to the press that he got in hot water as soon as he got out on the campaign trail last week?

MR. NESSEN: No, I think the pattern has been that he does take some time before the debates to review his material.

I think the other big reason is at the moment we have 122 bills here awaiting a decision. Some of them are tough calls, too, so he is going to need --

Q How many?

MR. NESSEN: 122 at the moment, and more coming.

Q Why doesn't he face them this week?

MR. NESSEN: He is facing them this week, Marilyn.

Q Ron, are you pressing for any changes in the debate format for the third debate?

MR. NESSEN: I mentioned out in San Francisco the idea of a requirement that the answer to the question and the rebuttal be responsive to the question. I think we probably concluded that the best way to accomplish that would be to have the questioners and the moderator keep that in mind as they go through the debate.

Q Keep what in mind?

MR. NESSEN: The possibility of calling it to the candidate's attention that he didn't answer the question or didn't rebut the answer.

Q Ron, the President was apparently very pleased with Dr. Criswell's endorsement or saying that he is going to vote for him, as well as the sermon. I was wondering if you could tell us who it was that arranged for him to go to the First Baptist Church? Was it the Baptist Minister that is on the staff? And is the President aware that on July 4, 1960, Dr. Criswell announced if Senator John Kennedy is elected it will sound the death knell of religious liberty in the United States?

MR. NESSEN: To answer the first part of your question first --

Q The President, you are going to say, is not aware of this?

MR. NESSEN: The invitation to attend the service was given by Reverend Criswell when he was here on September 30 to attend a meeting with a number of evangelical leaders. As you know, the trip originally was supposed to end Saturday night and return here Saturday night, and the President stayed over to accept the invitation from Reverend Criswell to attend the church.

The other part, Les, that is the first I ever heard of the quotation.

Q Surely the President looked up the background of Dr. Criswell before he accepted the invitation, didn't he? Did he not know that Criswell was a known baiter of Catholics, he was for segregation, for the Vietnam War and things like that?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know first whether that is an accurate --

Q Don't you people look up the background of people that ask you places?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know whether that is an accurate description.

Q Don't you look up the background of people who invite you places before you go there? The Secret Service always is giving us this bit about how they investigate people. Maybe they didn't do their job this time.

Q Ron, the Dallas Morning News -- and I have interviewed Criswell, I have him on tape on this -- the Dallas Morning News reported that after the Houston Ministerial Association, Dr. Criswell charged that Kennedy is lying, and if he is a good Catholic he shouldn't be President. You are saying the President was not aware of this?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know whether he was or not.

Q Would it be possible to check?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know whether it is an accurate quote, and I don't know whether he was aware of it.

Q It is in the files of the Dallas Morning News. I spent three hours going over it before I interviewed Dr. Criswell.

Q A Dallas paper yesterday also confirms the reports of his segregationist leanings.

MR. NESSEN: I don't accept any of these descriptions since I have not had time myself to look at them.

Q Aren't you Press Secretary to the President? Why didn't you look into this yourself?

Q Has the President stepped up arms aid to Israel for political reasons -- the election?

MR. NESSEN: On the question of arms aid to Israel, the publicly announced commitment to Israel is for \$1 billion in arms aid this year. Of course, that has been announced before and it is the case -- \$1 billion in arms aid, that is for fiscal 1977.

That has been previously announced. There has been no increase in that.

Q It is not \$1.5 billion?

MR. NESSEN: No, that was fiscal 1976. Fiscal 1977 is another \$1 billion. There has been no increase in that. The President has approved certain additional items of military hardware which Israel requested.

As I say, these don't affect the overall commitment at all, the total amount. There has been an agreement in principle on this matter and the details have yet to be worked out.

Q What are these extra items?

MR. NESSEN: As always, I am not prepared here to list the items. I will tell you that they do not include the Pershing missile -- do not include the Pershing missile.

As the contracts for these items go forward, they are, as required by law, sent to Congress, and Congress has 30 days in which to disapprove of the sale. That is the normal procedure for making public the specific items, so that is the procedure I think I will stick to.

Q Could you tell us what areas, Ron? Is it missiles for aircraft, electronic sensors, anything at all?

MR. NESSEN: I think I will stick to standard procedures, Bob.

Q Ron, why do you deliberately and specifically disclose the Pershing missile is not included?

MR. NESSEN: Because I saw stories saying that it was, and I thought I would take this opportunity to set that straight.

Q Since Congress is not in session, how does Congress --

MR. NESSEN: These contracts will go forward over the future months, Helen.

Q How come the deal was made last week? Does it have anything to do with the American election?

MR. NESSEN: That is just unworthy of an answer, Helen. That is silly. It is just not something that I even am going to deny.

Q Ron, when do you expect the first of these contract offers to be sent up to Congress so we can begin to identify what they are?

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

Q Ron, when you say they approved certain additional items of military hardware requested, that infers, and I assume you mean, these were not previously supplied to Israel?

MR. NESSEN: The item, whatever it is -- they are new items that have not been on the list before or increases in some items that have already been --

Q They are both kinds of arms that have never been sent, and what?

MR. NESSEN: When we say approved additional items, we are talking about new items in the sense of items that have not been sold to Israel before as well as additions to previous sales of that item to Israel.

Q This is all within the \$1 billion figure? That is not affected?

MR. NESSEN: That is correct.

Q Where do you get that kind of detail?

MR. JANKA: That is the kind of detail that has to be worked out.

Q This includes both types?

MR. NESSEN: It includes both new items never been sold before and increases in items previously on the list. The \$1 billion is all military. There are additional categories of aid, economic aid, and so forth.

Q But you are not giving them more economic aid and more military aid?

MR. NESSEN: The \$1 billion in military sales remains.

Q Did the President tell Mr. Allon about that today?

MR. NESSEN: No, Mr. Allon knew about that before.

Q When was the approval? You say the President has approved it?

MR. NESSEN: Last week.

Q But this is being announced today? It has not been announced before?

MR. NESSEN: I wouldn't say this is a formal announcement.

Q Has it been disclosed before?

MR. JANKA: It was disclosed to Israel.

Q What is the rationale for all this new stuff?

MR. NESSEN: The same rationale for all military sales, Helen.

Q Which is what?

MR. NESSEN: That it is in our interest to sell these goods to Israel.

Q Can you give us a ball park figure within the \$1 billion, how much of the \$1 billion?

MR. NESSEN: It is an agreement in principle, but the details have not been worked out yet.

Q You can't say it is an additional \$300 million within that \$1 billion?

MR. NESSEN: I really can't break it down.

Q Within the time frame, when did the Israelis make the request for these specific items? And number two, when did the President make the decision to supply them? And three, when were the Israelis told?

MR. JANKA: It is part of an ongoing discussion for arms sales and, simply, the decision was made last week. You have to remember the fiscal year started October 1, to start this clock running on the \$1 billion.

Q When did the Israelis make the request?

MR. JANKA: I don't know. It is part of an ongoing discussion. There are new requests and revisions of the requests all the time.

Q When was the decision transmitted to the Israelis? Last week?

MR. JANKA: These were both made last week.

Q The decision was made and transmitted last week?

MR. JANKA: Yes.

Q Ron, it is not true that the Israelis said the Pentagon was holding up things and they wanted them to speed it up?

MR. NESSEN: Are you asking me did the Israelis say that?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: I don't know whether the Israelis said that.

Q Was anybody for the Pentagon at these discussions?

MR. NESSEN: Of course.

MR. JANKA: I don't know what discussions we are talking about. The ongoing discussions, the Pentagon is always represented.

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Q Mr. Ailon said there had been some concern in Israel, or at least on the part of the Israeli press, that the U.S. may not be living up to its commitments.

MR. NESSEN: The billion dollar commitment?

Q The commitment to supply arms to Israel, yes.

Q It has been \$4.4 billion the last two years.

MR. NESSEN: As the President said the other night in the debate, 40 percent of all the aid to Israel, since its birth in the 1940s, has been in the last two years.

Q Ron, there is no connection between the meeting today and this announcement, or whatever you want to call it, and the President's meeting tomorrow with the Jewish leaders?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think I am even going to deny that because I don't think it is obvious.

Q Ron, is he going to discuss more economic and military aid now?

MR. NESSEN: I think you have to understand the process, Dick. I mean, the contact, the communications, the dealings between our country and Israel are continual. They go on 365 days a year, except on the sabbath, of course.

Q They haven't bought the limit yet, though, have they?

MR. NESSEN: The billion dollar limit?

Q Yes.

MR. JANKA: We just started the fiscal year.

Q So, there are ongoing discussions?

MR. NESSEN: There are always ongoing discussions.

Q Ron, would you describe these more sophisticated weapons?

MR. NESSEN: I can't really characterize them, Fran.

Q Would you describe them as offensive or defensive?

MR. NESSEN: I just can't describe them.

Q This transition quarter money the Congress wanted and the President did not want, is this related to that?

MR. NESSEN: There was a small amount put in, about \$250 million or \$300 million, maybe.

Q \$275 million -- \$75 million economic, \$200 million military.

MR. NESSEN: Thaanks, Jim.

Q This is fiscal 1977?

MR. NESSEN: We are talking about a billion dollar commitment of credit sales to Israel in fiscal 1977.

Q Ron, since this is totally nonpolitical and not involved in the Presidential election, I presume the President won't talk about it tomorrow, he won't mention it to the Jewish leaders?

MR. NESSEN: I would be surprised if he did.

Q Ron, if they are going to have to take less of some of the weapons they are going to get in order to get these new ones --

MR. NESSEN: I don't know if that is a correct assumption.

Q How else can it be? That was my earlier question.

MR. NESSEN: There was a commitment of \$1 billion in military credit sales this year. Now the list that you add up, at the bottom you get \$1 billion had not been made up, and it is being made up now.

Q The rest of the question was, if they find money and don't have a requirement for credits, could they buy those other items that might be excluded by the new items?

MR. JANKA: It depends on whether they have to come under FMS, under the kind of equipment they do buy commercially outside our military channels.

Q Ron, on 60 Minutes yesterday, Alex Butterfield said when Nixon left the White House he left certain conditions, one of them that Butterfield was to be fired, or was to leave the White House. Is that correct, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: As I told Mike Wallace when he called me about it two weeks ago -- but he forgot to quote it last night -- that is just ludicrous.

Q What is ludicrous, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: The suggestion by Mike Wallace or Alex Butterfield or whoever that somehow Nixon left behind an instruction that Butterfield was to be fired by a certain date.

Q Why was Butterfield fired, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: I think we went over this at the time, Stan, and I think all involved agreed that it was a matter of wanting to improve the administration of the FAA. And, as I understand it, most of the reporters who cover the FAA understand exactly that goal.

Q Ron, I wasn't here at the time. Does that mean that the administration of the FAA was inadequate under Butterfield?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think it is fair at this time to talk about Alex Butterfield's administration of the FAA, but as we said at the time, there was a desire to improve the administration of it.

Q If I can get back to this Israeli discussion, there is something troubling me. Deputy Prime Minister Yigal Allon said that he and the President discussed the supplying of arms and were promised including certain new ones that were under discussion, a long time ago. Now, a long time ago on its face sounds longer than a week ago.

MR. NESSEN: I said in response to the initial question that these were items that the President has approved which Israel has requested.

Q We didn't say they requested them last week.

MR. NESSEN: I didn't say the request was made last week.

I think you have to think of this as something --

Q Was it as long ago as 10 months ago, as some of the Israeli press has been reporting?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know.

Q Do you think this gets into Carter's claim that we have become an arms merchant of the world?

MR. NESSEN: I think the President answered that very well in the debate, Helen.

Q Ron, does the President believe that people living in Poland are under domination of the Soviet Union?

MR. NESSEN: Let's not go around that track again, Ted. It was handled pretty well last week, I think.

Q I don't think it was, because I think it is still not on the record any place.

MR. NESSEN: I think the President was asked that direct question by Annie or Tom Jarriel, one or the other. I will get you the transcript and you can --

Q He said that he had talked about domination, if any.

MR. NESSEN: No, I think you missed perhaps one of the events on Saturday(Friday), which was a news conference in the parking lot of the City Hall in Glendale in which that question was asked, and the President answered it. I will get you a transcript of it.

Q In connection with this, does the Administration still believe that the three Balkan Republics should have their freedom and national liberties?

MR. NESSEN: I will have to look up what our position is on that. I don't want to wing it, Joe.

Q Can we have a transcript of that press conference in the parking lot at Glendale?

MR. NESSEN: I will be glad to get it for you.

Q If the President cares so much about anti-boycott legislation, why didn't he contact John Tower during the last week of Congress when Tower five times raised objections to appointing conferees to work on this Export Administration Act and tell him that this was important legislation he wanted to go through?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know the details of the last days, but I do know the Administration had a responsible compromise which it advocated and pushed in those final days, and Congress failed to take any action on the matter, as the President mentioned --

Q It was the action of John Tower that prevented Congress from taking any action on it.

MR. NESSEN: I don't know that, because I don't know the details of the conference activities. I know the Administration did push a compromise on this, which didn't get done because Congress went away without doing it.

Q Ron, since, as you noted, in the Savannah Morning News and the L. A. Times, they both disapproved Jimmy Carter's very strong statement "As a matter of fact, I have never advocated any cut of \$15 billion in our defense budget," I am wondering if you believe Governor Carter is a liar or if it is just that he is merely forgetful when it comes to defense billions?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know. I think the facts speak for themselves and don't need any comment from me.

Q What is your opinion? Do you feel he is just forgetful or deliberate?

MR. NESSEN: You saw the fact sheet I put out on Saturday.

Q I saw that, and I wonder if you could possibly answer the question. Do you think he is forgetful or deliberately lying?

MR. NESSEN: I think that is probably a question you need to direct to Governor Carter.

Q Ron, given what you know today, you mean you would have to look up the position on Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia, the three Balkan Republics, to say whether or not they are under Soviet domination?

MR. NESSEN: I am just not going to wing that answer from here, Bob. I am going to find the answer and give it to you.

Q Ron, this gentleman over here asked why the President didn't contact Tower during that period when Congress was considering the Arab boycott matter. My question is, did the President contact Tower at any time during that --

MR. NESSEN: I don't know. I know we had a compromise which we advocated and pushed through the Congressional Liaison Office.

Q That came later, Ron. As some people have charged, they say that was not much more than what we already had on the books.

The point I am asking you is very vital. Did the President -- was he in communication with John Tower at any time about the Arab boycott status on the Floor?

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

Q You ought to be able to find that out very easily. Will you do that?

MR. NESSEN: I will check into it.

Q Ron, on the Butterfield matter, I think maybe four or six months, or maybe more than that, elapsed after Butterfield was fired and a new FAA Administrator was brought on. Why, in the absence of anything outstandingly bad, didn't they wait until they had another Administrator? It seems strange that he would be fired and then for months and months and months there was no Administrator and people were asking why. I asked here once and there was no answer, no reason.

Q Especially given your desire to improve the administration of the FAA.

MR. NESSEN: I haven't looked at that period for quite a while. I will check back and find out what I can about it.

Q On the Arab boycott, isn't it true that you said here that the President is opposed to legislation dealing with the boycott?

MR. NESSEN: Overall, the position was that the President was opposed to legislation because he had already taken effective action, I guess in November 1975, it was. But, it appeared at one point anyhow that Congress did want to pass legislation in that area and so the President advocated what he believed to be a responsible compromise. As it was, Congress walked away without doing anything.

Q The point is, of course, that Senator Tower did say he would not give unanimous consent to the appointment of Senate conferees and if the conferees were appointed, he would conduct, what was reported as saying, an educational process to stop the bill between the filibusters.

The question, of course, that remains unanswered is whether or not the Administration tried to persuade Tower to change his mind, which we don't have an answer to.

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what direct contact was made with Senator Tower, if any, but I do know that the Administration did advocate a compromise and Senator Tower, in whatever approach he may have taken in the conference, was acting on his own and not for the White House.

Q As Chairman of the Senate Republican Policy Committee, it puts him in a position of representing the Republican Party in the Senate.

MR. NESSEN: I think if you ask Senator Tower he will tell you he was asking for his own and, as I said this morning, he is not acting for the White House.

Q Could you give us a readout on the Allon --

MR. NESSEN: There will be a printed readout available shortly.

Q Ron, the President has said on a number of occasions that he had to stay in Washington in order to oversee what Congress is doing. Now you are telling us that you don't know whether he had contact with the head of the Republican whatever thing on a very important issue. These don't seem to fit together and it is rather confusing.

MR. NESSEN: I think your confusion is coming from the fact that I say I don't know, because I have not researched the matter. I don't know how that fits into the other part of the equation. I think it is probably unrelated.

Q Why wasn't Butterfield given some other job in the Government, because he served with distinction for over 20 years?

MR. NESSEN: As I say, I have not looked into that period for a long time. I will have to check my records and the White House records and sort of reconstruct it if there is that much interest in it.

Q Ron, when the White House criticizes Congress, it is by implication criticizing the Democratic leadership, or the Democratically-controlled Congress. Do you think it is entirely honest to blame Congress for failure to do something which resulted from an action by the Republican leader, or one of the Republican leaders?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know. I will let you make those interpretations.

Q Ron, has the President ever rebutted to your knowledge Governor Carter's description of Dr. Kissinger being as far as foreign policy is concerned the President of this country and, if not, why not?

MR. NESSEN: I will have to look up the transcript, Les.

Q Do you know if he has ever rebutted this? I don't recall that he has, and I just wondered if you know?

MR. NESSEN: I will have to look up the transcript.

Q Ron, can we assume, since the President wanted to have a reasonable compromise, as you called it, on this Arab boycott legislation, can we assume he was not in favor of Tower's actions, he did not like Tower's actions on this?

MR. NESSEN: I say John Tower was not acting for the White House.

Q Was the President opposed to his actions?

MR. NESSEN: The President wanted the reasonable compromise.

Q The President has a lot of influence on Tower. Did he not call Tower to get him to change his mind?

MR. NESSEN: Now we are back to where we started a few minutes ago, and the answer again is that I will check for you.

Q Will you answer my question? Was he opposed to Tower's actions?

MR. NESSEN: John Tower did not act for the White House. The President wanted the compromise to pass.

Q Then he was opposed to Mr. Tower's actions?

MR. NESSEN: Right.

Q Is this political meeting this afternoon to try to pick up the pieces?

MR. NESSEN: What pieces is that, Helen?

Q Is there some feeling that things might not be going right?

MR. NESSEN: No, I think Jim Baker gave you an excellent characterization of where we all feel the campaign is now in terms of accelerating momentum. This meeting will be to give the President really their views and to assess where the campaign is now and the remaining three weeks of the campaign.

Q What is the President's mood at this stage?

MR. NESSEN: I think Jim Baker, who had just come out of the President's cabin when he came back to talk to you yesterday, was giving a very accurate reflection of the President's mood yesterday.

Q Ron, the Washington Star reports that on Friday night you had what they termed "a shouting encounter" with angry reporters. Since the transcript doesn't indicate volume, I was just wondering, is this accurate, and who shouted first? Can you tell us something about this and how many times have you had shouting encounters? (Laughter) I gather this was over the Polish situation. Could you tell us just what that was and did you start it or did they start it, or what?

MR. NESSEN: Let's see now--or what.

Q Ron, I mean, could you --

MR. NESSEN: I thought that was a choice you offered.

Q Who started it, and why was there a shouting encounter? You have never shouted at us in this room, that I can recall.

MR. NESSEN: Rarely ever.

We have about six minutes before the pool has to leave.

Q That means no comment, I gather?

Q On the boycott matter, as I understand it, what he signed last week was an Executive Order permitting --

MR. NESSEN: It was a memo, I think, really, Charlie.

Q But perspective rather than retroactively, which goes back to the Commerce Department and the Administration previously, which was that these things would be held to 12 months and then to some extent, released.

But why -- never mind his language in the debate, I am not talking about that -- but why does the Administration oppose the retroactive release of the names of American corporations that have complied with the Arab boycott?

MR. NESSEN: I think Elliot Richardson has been explaining the position right along since last week and I don't really have anything to add to his explanation of it.

Q Ron, with respect to the Rhodesian Constitutional Conference, did the President, in a conversation with Callaghan, discuss that matter?

MR. NESSEN: Which conversation with Callaghan?

Q You said he talked with him by phone concerning the British pound.

MR. NESSEN: So far as I know, the phone conversation last week was primarily about the pound and the economic situation.

Q What I am getting at is, are you aware of any pressure that may have been applied to Great Britain to go ahead with these constitutional talks in light of the crisis that is pending over Rhodesia?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what pressure would be needed and I don't know what crisis it is that would interfere. So far as I know, the British are on track --

Q Ron, what kind of campaign travel schedule is being planned for the period after the third debate, the final ten days? Will that be moderate, light or what?

MR. NESSEN: I wouldn't characterize it with one of those words. There will be travel during that period, obviously, but I don't have anything to tell you about it today.

Q Ron, Jimmy Carter says that the Ford Administration is what he terms less open than the Nixon Administration because, among other things, the President hasn't held a full-scale White House press conference since February. My question is: Since this is your field of expertise --

MR. NESSEN: Thank you, Les, that is the nicest thing you have ever said.

Q What is your answer to this questionable charge and has there been a full-scale -- I don't recall that it has, but I don't think it is less open than the Nixon Administration certainly, and I just wondered, what is your feeling on it as the President's press officer?

MR. NESSEN: As you know, I make it a practice never to respond to campaign stump speeches.

Q Ron, will we be able to see Senator Dole this afternoon following his meeting with the President?

MR. NESSEN: I think I can make him available and perhaps some Steering Committee people, too, if you are interested.

Q Yes, we are.

Q What time?

MR. NESSEN: Let's see, the Steering Committee meeting starts at 2:30 and the meeting with Dole at 3:30.

Q Is the Steering Committee staying for the meeting with Dole?

MR. NESSEN: No, it is the other way around. Dole is coming to attend the meeting of the Steering Committee and then meet with the President.

Q So, the Steering Committee will come out first?

MR. NESSEN: Yes. I would be around about 2:00 or 2:15 if I were you.

Q Is James Baker going to be here this afternoon?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, he is.

Q What time?

MR. NESSEN: He is attending the Steering Committee meeting.

Q What time will you bring these people out, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: After the meeting.

Q You said we should be here before they go into the meeting?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, I think so.

Q Do you expect new positions on the campaign as a result of this meeting?

MR. NESSEN: No, I don't know of any that I anticipate --

Q You say you are bringing these people out before they go in?

MR. NESSEN: No, but I said I would be here before they go in just in case.

Q Does the President think the campaign is on the right track?

MR. NESSEN: I think Jim gave just a great summation of where we are last night, Tom, and it certainly reflected the President's view of where we are.

Q I am confused. What are you expecting at 2:00?

MR. NESSEN: I am just suggesting that you be here at 2:00.

Q When is the list going up for Friday?

MR. NESSEN: The sign-up list? I will find out.

Q Would the President, if elected, sit down with the Senate and House conferees, who have been the conferees on the boycott, and work out a compromise for this legislation on the boycott?

MR. NESSEN: That is very hypothetical. I can't tackle that.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END (AT 12:40 P.M. EDT)