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

#595

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 11:40 A.M. EDT

OCTOBER 19, 1976

TUESDAY

MR. NESSEN: You know we have this presentation of the AMVETS Golden Helmet Award to the President in the Rose Garden at 12:15.

Q Is he going to wear it?

MR. NESSEN: It is a military type helmet as opposed to a football helmet. The President will speak there, in the Rose Garden.

Q He will speak?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Do you want to hear about travel plans?

About noon on Friday, the President will travel to Williamsburg. This will be a flight to Patrick Henry Airport in Newport News, and then drive to Williamsburg. The press will follow the same path of flying to Patrick Henry Airport in Newport News, and then bus to Williamsburg.

The President leaves about noon, so the press will leave about 11:00. I don't see any need for a briefing on Friday.

Then, as you know, the debate will be held that evening in Williamsburg at the College of William and Mary. After that, there will be a drive to Richmond. The overnight stay will be at the Sheraton Hotel in Richmond.

Q Is he making an appearance after the debate?

MR. NESSEN: We haven't gotten those details. The President will stay at the Governor's Mansion as a guest of Governor and Mrs. Mills Godwin.

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On Saturday, the President at 9:00 in the morning will deliver a speech on the capital grounds in Richmond. At 10:40 approximately the President will fly from Richmond, leaving Richmond at 10:40, to the Raleigh-Durham Airport in Raleigh, North Carolina.

Q There will be advances on all the speeches, of course?

MR. NESSEN: Probably not.

Q Are you going to have an advance for Thursday night?

MR. NESSEN: Thursday night's speech is the Al Smith speech?

Q Will we have an advance text?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know.

At noon on Saturday the President will speak at the North Carolina State Fair in Raleigh. At 1:45 the President leaves Raleigh to go to Columbia, South Carolina, where he will attend the second half of the Notre Dame-South Carolina football game, which hopefully will end in a tie. (Laughter)

After the South Carolina event, the President will fly to the West Coast. At the moment, I can't tell you the exact details of the West Coast trip except it will involve the States of Washington, Oregon and California. In what order, I can't tell you right now.

That West Coast portion of the trip will last until Monday. Then, during the day on Monday, the President will fly back east. Those are all the details I have for you at the moment.

Q "East" meaning East Coast?

MR. NESSEN: Eastward.

Q Which State will he go to first?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have that yet, which of the three States he will go to first.

Q He is coming east on Monday?

MR. NESSEN: Sometime during the day on Monday.

Q East Coast?

MR. NESSEN: Eastward.

Q For Friday, are you going to have a press room set up in Williamsburg before you go back to Richmond at which time people will be made available after the debate?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have all the details for you yet, but we will. It is only Tuesday.

Q Will there be a press room set up?

MR. NESSEN: There will be press facilities in Williamsburg, obviously.

Q A place where Cheney and others will be available afterward?

MR. NESSEN: It will have to be, because of the time problem.

Thursday, I think everybody knows, is really just simply an up and back to New York. It will take a couple of hours total.

Q What time do you think we will leave?

MR. NESSEN: Very late afternoon, like four or five o'clock.

Q Do you have any idea how far eastward the President will fly on Monday?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have the details yet.

Q Texas?

MR. NESSEN: Further east than Texas.

Q It is on abortion, isn't it, the Al Smith dinner speech?

MR. NESSEN: You say it is one or it is about?
(Laughter)

Q It is on, I said.

MR. NESSEN: It hasn't been written yet, so it would be incorrect to say it is about abortion.

Q Is it true Carter is going to duck out of that dinner because of the Catholic issue?

MR. NESSEN: You have to ask Al -- (Laughter) -- you have to ask Jimmy --

Q Ron, seriously, has something happened to you? I have never heard such a string of one-liners. Is that the swine flu shot or what?

MR. NESSEN: It may be.

Q Are you through with your announcements?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Did the President talk to General Brown at all personally?

MR. NESSEN: No, he didn't.

Q Why?

MR. NESSEN: It was handled by Secretary Rumsfeld.

Q Isn't that a little bit odd, that there would not be any personal contact for a matter of that importance?

MR. NESSEN: I think it was handled by Secretary Rumsfeld, who did see the President yesterday.

Q Rumsfeld did see him?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, he saw the President.

Q When?

MR. NESSEN: Either late morning or very early afternoon. It was in the 11:00 or 12:00 area.

Q Was it before the news conference?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Colonel Bran Barber of the British Embassy said this morning the British Armed Services include approximately 295,000 men in the Army, Navy and Air Force. Will the President, as Commander-in-Chief of our Armed Forces, apologize for the description of Britain's Armed Forces as all they have got are "admirals, generals and bands" because as of 11:30 this morning John Smallwood of the Embassy says no such apology has been received at the Embassy.

MR. NESSEN: I think that was discussed in some detail by General Brown and Secretary Rumsfeld yesterday.

Q I want to know about the President, Ron. Will the President, as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, apologize to the British for this description?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have anything to add to what Secretary Rumsfeld said.

Q In other words, the President won't?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have anything to add to what Don and General Brown said yesterday.

Q Yesterday afternoon the Commerce Department put out a list of three dozen or so companies that had complied with requests from Arab countries to participate in the boycott against Israel. Now the President has said on many occasions that public disclosure of these companies is the best approach, rather than fighting them and that type of thing.

Exactly what does the President want to happen? These names have been put out. Are people supposed to not shop? Seriously, what --

MR. NESSEN: I think certainly disclosure was part of the President's action against the boycott, but if you look at the various steps taken through the Executive Order and other actions taken by the President last November, he believes that is the best way to handle the matter.

Q What did President Ford and Secretary Kissinger discuss this morning?

MR. NESSEN: A number of matters, a pretty broad review of foreign policy, but certainly the developing situation in Lebanon was one of the matters and the U.N. General Assembly session was the other matter.

Q Did they discuss the ramification of the boycott since the Secretary was opposed to making those names public?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know that is a fact, Dick. I did not attend the meeting, but I know that the two subjects I mentioned to you were among those they intended to discuss. I don't know about the boycott.

Q Was this related to the coming debates?

MR. NESSEN: In the U.N. General Assembly?

Q No, in Williamsburg.

MR. NESSEN: No, I don't believe they discussed that.

Q Did the Secretary also meet with the President late yesterday afternoon?

MR. NESSEN: Late yesterday afternoon? I don't think they did. No. They met yesterday morning, but they did not meet late yesterday afternoon.

Q But he was here yesterday afternoon?

MR. NESSEN: May have been.

Q Ron, did they talk about China and Russia at all, specifically what the Secretary said last Friday at Harvard that is just now coming to light that there seemed to be a warning to the Soviet Union not to take any military action against China?

MR. NESSEN: As I say, I was not in the meeting, Bob. I know the two subjects of Lebanon and the U.N. General Assembly sessions were matters that they intended to discuss, but what other matters may have come up, I wasn't there.

Q Would the President speak at the U.N. before the election?

MR. NESSEN: There are no plans to.

Q Has the President said anything about the conduct of the U.N. General Assembly's current session? He hasn't said anything yet, has he?

MR. NESSEN: There are some issues coming up for debate and the voting that need the President's guidance.

Q Can you check on what they might have said?

MR. NESSEN: About the U.N. session? I think the President's decisions will be revealed as Ambassador Scranton casts his vote.

Q Representative Holtzman said this morning that both Mr. Ford and the American people have a right to have this cloud about Ford's role in the 1972 Watergate investigation in the House cleared up before the election. Does Mr. Ford agree with that?

MR. NESSEN: I think the President gave you his answer last week at the news conference.

Q This is a different question.

MR. NESSEN: From my reading of the wires, it did not strike me as being a new question. I mean, the testimony that the President referred to last week at his news conference was primarily the questioning by Mrs. Holtzman. If you haven't seen the transcript, you ought to. I have some Xeroxed copies here that I would be happy to share with you because I have a feeling that perhaps it hasn't been read and that is why the President's reference to it the other night perhaps did not come across.

But, Mrs. Holtzman questioned the President, I guess, for better than two pages of -- at least it comes across as two pages in the transcript of the hearings -- and as far as I can tell, she raised all the questions then that she is raising now and the President answered them at that time.

At the end of that particular two pages of questioning, she said, "I would like to turn to another area." So, she did not indicate at that time that there were any questions remaining in her mind. That is why the President, I think, indicated the other night that he had felt he had answered all the questions two or three years ago when this matter came up.

Q Is it the President's view that he has fully answered this?

Q I have a follow-up. She said during those hearings she asked whether he would be willing to waive Executive privilege on the tapes. He apparently didn't answer directly, but he told reporters afterwards that he would be willing to waive privilege on the tapes for the September 15 to roughly mid-October period. Is he willing to waive privilege on the tapes?

MR. NESSEN: As far as I know, those tapes have been published long ago, and I have seen them quoted.

Q Other tapes?

MR. NESSEN: Mrs. Holtzman asked, as I say, two pages of questions. At the end of that two pages she said, "Let's turn to another area," so I don't know anything I can add three years after that was not explored then. Really, I think maybe you would like to take a look at her questioning, which was certainly very thorough.

I have here, if you would care to read it, the testimony before the Senate Rules Committee in which Senator Byrd asks, really, even a longer series of questions than Mrs. Holtzman did about this area. At the end he also went on to another subject, apparently.

Q Is it the President's view he has fully answered the question and he is not going to make any further statement about this issue?

MR. NESSEN: Lou, I don't know what the need is. If you take a look at the depth and intensity of the questioning, the areas covered, the issues raised, there have been no new questions raised, as far as I know, since this testimony of three years ago.

Q Ron, I don't know what the need is, either. I am asking you, though --

MR. NESSEN: I think that is what the President indicated at his news conference the other night, that all the questions being raised now were answered three years ago and the questions three years ago came from Mrs. Holtzman, came from Senator Byrd, but certainly came from Mrs. Holtzman. He answered them then and, of course, the answers remain the same today.

Q Ron, since you have reviewed this testimony, is there anything in the questioning on whether he had talked to Cook at all?

MR. NESSEN: I will let you review the questions because since the President has referred to this, I would think you would want to see what he said.

Q I do want to see what he said, but do you know offhand?

MR. NESSEN: I will let you look at it, Helen.

Q The answer he gave the other night was not a direct answer to the question that was put.

MR. NESSEN: Because these questions were answered --

Q Did he have conversations with Cook? That question was not answered the other night.

MR. NESSEN: I think Cook has said no to that.

Q Ron, there is new evidence now that has come to light --

MR. NESSEN: Mr. Ruff apparently does not think so, Bob.

Q I am sorry, but I am pointing out that John Dean brought new evidence to light.

MR. NESSEN: What was it?

Q The fact that the President conferred six times at least with Mr. Cook, which was not known at the time.

MR. NESSEN: Mr. Cook said there weren't --

Q Does Mr. Ford say so under oath?

MR. NESSEN: Read it and I think it answers your question.

Q It does not answer the question, Ron.

MR. NESSEN: Have you read it?

Q Yes, I have, and it does not even address itself to that question.

MR. NESSEN: I think if you read it, he is asked a question about Mr. Timmons or anybody else at the White House and he answers the question.

Q He answers that he does not recollect.

MR. NESSEN: No, I think it is a firmer answer than that, Bob.

Q Does he say he does not --

MR. NESSEN: Helen, why don't you read it?

Q Why don't you tell us? We are asking you. I don't see why you can't tell us.

MR. NESSEN: I will read you the full testimony if you would like me to.

Q Read me the answer to that question.

MR. NESSEN: I think I will read you the full testimony, since that is what the President referred to.

Q Ron, this is a filibuster.

MR. NESSEN: Helen would like to read it, and you would not like me not to read it.

Q Read what Helen asked you to read.

MR. NESSEN: I will be happy to hand out copies of it, too, either way.

Q Let's read it.

Q Ron, I have read and reread this. Don't waste my time.

MR. NESSEN: Apparently others have not, John.

Q Don't waste my time reading it to them.

MR. NESSEN: I will Xerox copies of the testimony and hand it out.

Q I read that testimony last night, Ron, and it does not say whether he talked to Cook.

MR. NESSEN: Cook says he did not have any conversations.

Q He does not say under oath anything of the kind.

Q Ron, has the President read Clark Mollenhoff's book about this same incident?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think so, Sarah.

Q I wonder if he would read it and say whether or not he disagrees with what Mr. Mollenhoff says. He has quite a bit more in there than Mr. Dean had.

MR. NESSEN: Let me read you one question and one answer and see if that can get us over this particular point until we have a chance to Xerox this.

"Mrs. Holtzman: 'What I wanted to ask you was, did you discuss with Mr. Timmons or with anybody else at the White House whether or not the allegations made by the Banking and Currency Committee had any basis in fact or not? Did you discuss with them, let's say up to the period of November 1?'

"Mr. Ford: 'I do not remember discussing those allegations with anybody on the White House staff in 1972.'

"Mrs. Holtzman: 'Okay.'"

Q Does that not say "I do not remember"?

MR. NESSEN: But if he doesn't remember, Bob, then obviously he does not remember.

Q The question he was asked the other night was, does he now remember after Mr. Dean has said he talked six times with Mr. Cook and he refused to answer the question.

MR. NESSEN: Mr. Cook says there were no such conversations and the President said all the answers that he gave three years ago remain the case.

Q He still does not remember then?

MR. NESSEN: That is correct.

Q Mr. Cook is not under oath.

MR. NESSEN: Look, Sarah, a three-year old story is a three-year old story.

Q The fact remains, doesn't it, Ron, that regardless of whether the President talked with Cook or not, that the President did have a part in blocking the Patman investigation, right?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know. I wasn't here then.

Q That is the basic question. That is true, is it not?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know. I wasn't here then.

Q Does the President deny he was involved in blocking it? He voted against it. He was the leader of the Republican minority in the House.

MR. NESSEN: The Republican minority and five Democrats on the Patman committee voted --

Q He has acknowledged that?

MR. NESSEN: Of course he has acknowledged that. He acknowledged it three years ago, and I can read you that portion, but what I don't understand is why am I standing here today reading you three-year old testimony when nothing has occurred, as the President said the other night to change his testimony of three years ago.

I don't understand that. But, let me point this out, if I may: The Judiciary Committee and its chairman, Peter Rodino, and its members held these hearings and reached conclusions which I assume you have all seen.

They did not even mention this particular part in their final report.

Q Ron, how can you say nothing new has happened when a person who has proved himself credible on some very critical issues has come up with something new?

MR. NESSEN: All I am saying is the President was asked this last Thursday night -- whatever night the news conference was -- he was asked this three years ago under oath by Mrs. Holtzman. He gave his answers then. The answers are the same today and you know, I suppose, we could go around this bush all day and not get anywhere because nothing has changed.

Q Ron, you say the President has always admitted that he had something to do with blocking this investigation. That was the Rodino committee. Now, this matter is before the American people at a critical time of an election campaign and people look at it differently.

Isn't that the reason why we are reconsidering it?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know why we are reconsidering it, Sarah. I know the President was asked all these questions by Mrs. Holtzman three years ago. As far as I can tell, they are the same questions and the same answers. So, I don't know where we go with this now.

Q Ron, is it not a fact that Dean in his testimony before the Ervin Watergate committee testified that everything of substance was said on today except the details of the six conversations with Cook? He named Cook and he named Timmons. Isn't that a fact?

MR. NESSEN: My understanding is that nothing has changed essentially in anybody's story in three years. That is why I do wonder why I am standing here reading you three-year old testimony and watching people take notes, which I don't quite understand.

Q Do you say when the President says, "I don't recollect," that that is a flat denial? Does that constitute a denial to you?

MR. NESSEN: Look, the President was asked all the questions three years ago and gave all the answers. The questions are the same today. The answers are the same today.

Q The questions aren't the same today.

MR. NESSEN: The questions are the same today, and the answers are the same today.

Q Ron, apparently the chairman of the Senate Watergate committee did not think so. Sam Ervin, when he said over the weekend that Mr. Ford -- and I would like you to tell me whether the President had any reaction to this -- said that Mr. Ford for partisan reasons appeared to have blocked the Patman investigation. That is the chairman of the Senate Watergate committee.

MR. NESSEN: Again, read the Senate testimony, read the House testimony in which the President explains why he did work together at the request of Republican Members of the committee, and I think it was five Democrats also who voted against the hearing. I really don't know why we are doing this three years later.

Q Ron, are you saying here to us that the reason those people on that Banking and Currency Committee voted against Patman, are you trying to say that that was not instigated and started by the White House and Mr. Ford and the Republicans?

MR. NESSEN: Sarah, I had a whole different role in life in those days, and I cannot speak for what went on then.

Q Are you trying to say he did not know that happened? You are trying to act like the Members of the committee on their own voted this. I think you will find if you look into this that Congressman Garry Brown and others freely admit that they did it because they were asked to do it by the White House.

MR. NESSEN: As I say, I had a different role in life in those days, so all I can do is call your attention to a Senate hearing transcript, a House hearing transcript, which are available, which I will Xerox for you, a committee final report, which makes no mention of this. You have the President's words that the answers he gave to the questions three years ago remain his answers to the questions. I just don't know where it goes from here.

Q Does the President share Senator Baker's view that the public now knows all there is to know about Watergate?

MR. NESSEN: I have not asked him that.

Q Will the President have any more press conferences before the election?

MR. NESSEN: Possibly.

Q Do you have anything on the GNP and inflation rate?

MR. NESSEN: The GNP growth in the third calendar quarter of the year, as I understand it, went up 4 percent, which was about the same as the second quarter, and was about in line with the expectations I think the President mentioned. In fact, in his news conference last week he said he expected it to be about 4 percent.

Q What about the inflation rate?

MR. NESSEN: Most forecasters outside of the Government, as well as those in the Government, anticipate that the growth rate will accelerate above 4 percent in the current calendar quarter. That is the fourth quarter of calendar 1976.

Q The President said there would be a dip. There was a pause, a dip.

Q In GNP?

MR. NESSEN: I think we have had our dip, our pause. In fact, I think he said we are coming out of our dip or pause.

The inflation rate was 4.4 percent in the third calendar quarter of the year, which was down from 5.2 in the second quarter and, of course, the President is pleased by the drop in the inflation rate. In fact, it was lower than expected. We had anticipated an inflation rate of 5 percent in the third quarter. This was 4.4, which was below.

Q Ron, there is an AP report that was published in the New York Post that quotes Mrs. Ford last week as saying, "President Ford and I have both visited Poland and many of the nations that are supposed to be under Communist rule."

I already checked with Sheila, and no comment, and I would like to know, does the President want Mrs. Ford to clarify this statement like he clarified his on this subject after six days of thoughtful analysis?

MR. NESSEN: I have to look at what Mrs. Ford said and where.

Q When could I check back with you to get an answer on this, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: What are you doing next summer, Les?

Q Ron, I am not clear on the Arab boycott question. Just what is anticipated now that there is disclosure? What is the President's view of what is to happen to these companies or is there any policy that the Administration has as to what steps ought to be taken against the companies that don't comply?

MR. NESSEN: I think you have to look at the whole package of actions that he took last November and together they constitute the Administration's actions against the boycott.

Q What was that? I was not here.

MR. NESSEN: I will dig it up.

Q More specifically, would the President like to see consumers boycott these companies because they are carrying on this compliance with the Arab boycott? I mean, really, what good is disclosure going to do? What does he hope to accomplish through disclosing these names?

MR. NESSEN: I will check and see what further steps we expect to be taken, but Richardson might be able to help you faster than I can.

Q Ron, I don't think the question was about further steps. I think the question goes to what is expected of the American people now that -- we are not talking about any governmental action. We are talking about what is anticipated or what is expected or what can we look for in terms of action by the American people as a result of these names being disclosed?

MR. NESSEN: I will get somebody who can come and talk to you more fully.

Let me go back and quote to you another answer from the President's responses to Mrs. Holtzman three years ago, since I have the feeling that there has been a good deal of discussion and writing about this issue without a very thorough review of the actual transcript.

At one point -- in fact, this is the question just previous to the one I read to you earlier -- Mrs. Holtzman is referring to the President's testimony and other testimony on the Senate side concerning the Patman investigation, and the President said, "I said over there -- and by over there I mean the Senate committee -- that I did not discuss the action that I took, which was to call two Republican meetings of Members of the Banking and Currency Committee, with Mr. Timmons or anybody else."

The key words in there are, "I did not discuss the action that I took," so that is, I think, a notch beyond the next answer.

Q With Mr. Timmons or anybody else in the White House?

MR. NESSEN: I think that is implied.

Q After reading your public schedule, I am still the the dark about what the President is going to do this afternoon. Is there any chance he might elucidate us in more detail on these questions?

MR. NESSEN: He still has all these bills.

Q Speaking of which, is he going to sign the attorney's civil rights bill today?

MR. NESSEN: I am not familiar with that one. He is going over legislation. He will have staff meetings.

Q With whom?

MR. NESSEN: I will have to get the exact schedule for you. I know he is seeing Cheney, as always, in the late afternoon. He has the speechwriters coming in for a session on the weekend speeches.

Q Is he doing anything to prepare for the debate?

MR. NESSEN: It is possible he might do some reading in connection with the debate.

Q Do the White House speechwriters work on the speeches?

MR. NESSEN: As far as I know.

Q Has the President personally approved all the ads that are being run in the campaign, TV and so forth?

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

Q Ron, is any portion of the speechwriters' salaries or any portion of Cheney's salary being paid by the President Ford Committee or the Republican National Committee for that time that they spend on political tasks?

MR. NESSEN: I think the PFC has dealt with that issue. I will have to dig out the ruling for you.

Q Is George Bush going to campaign for the President?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q There was a piece in the paper yesterday indicating he was expected down in Texas. Is that just flat not right?

MR. NESSEN: I saw George in the hall here and he volunteered to me he had read that piece in the paper and he said this was an invitation he had accepted in June to speak to a banker's group and to one other sort of businessman's group and to talk to some college presidents about CIA recruiting on campus and he said he totally avoided the press, totally avoided any political figures in Texas, and that these appearances had absolutely nothing, in even the most vague way, to do with politics and he intended to keep it that way.

Q How about Anne Armstrong? You told us she came back to talk about Southern Africa. Now we find she is going to speak in Chicago, in New York and Houston.

MR. NESSEN: In a political sense or as Ambassador?

Q That is what I am asking you.

MR. NESSEN: I don't know about her schedule of speeches. I know why she was called back.

Q Getting back to Bush, will he be making any more appearances like this in Texas or anywhere else?

MR. NESSEN: He did not indicate he had any further appearances scheduled.

Q Ron, I wonder if I could ask a housekeeping question in your area of expertise, just so we get some idea of what you feel is a proper question or an improper question or a relevant question. Do you feel that it was wrong in any way for Barbara Walters to ask the President if he looks on women with lust?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q It was in order?

MR. NESSEN: I never try to tell reporters what questions to ask.

Q In other words, you would have tried to have gotten an answer if this had come from anybody here.

MR. NESSEN: No. I say I never try to tell reporters what questions to ask.

Q Suppose this question came from this room rather than from Barbara Walters? Would you have seriously taken it into the President and said, "Do you look on women with lust"?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know. That is pretty hypothetical.

Q Ron, what was the President's answer to that question?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know. It was on the air, Fred.

Q He said no. He said campaign issues are so much he does not have time for that.

Q I didn't see the show so that is why I wondered what the answer was.

Q He said he doesn't think about those things.

Q Specifically, Ron, what States are we going to between now and the election, do you know?

MR. NESSEN: I have already said obviously Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Oregon, Washington and California.

Q Where else?

MR. NESSEN: The rest of the schedule is not precisely arranged yet, but you can be sure it will be concentrated on the major States with the largest number of electoral votes and where the President believes he has certainly a chance to win.

Q Is he going to all the big eight or the big ten?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know right now, but certainly most of them.

Q Does the President think he is going to win this election?

MR. NESSEN: He thinks it is a dead heat right now and that the last two weeks will determine who will win the election, and he expects to be the winner.

Q Ron, but this is a change. I remember a dozen times you said the President expects to win the nomination in Kansas City and to win again in November. I have heard the President say that dozens of times, "We expect to win."

MR. NESSEN: I thought I just said that.

Q I thought you said he said it is going to be a dead heat. That is a little different.

MR. NESSEN: It is a dead heat now.

Q It is a dead heat now, but by November 2 it will be a winner for Ford?

MR. NESSEN: Right, that is correct.

Q On what does he base this dead heat business? Is there some specific poll that he has access to?

MR. NESSEN: The Yankelovich poll showed a dead heat. There was one 40 to 42. Most of them are within the margin of error of the polling technique.

Q Ron, with this big trip coming up, does the President or the President's committee pay any of the cost of the Transportation Office that the Army personnel handles?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know. Whatever is proper. We have handled the expenses properly from the very beginning and expect to do so in the last two weeks.

Q How about putting out an accounting for us so we can make an independent judgment on that concern?

MR. NESSEN: I think the FEC has ruled on most of these issues.

Q That is an incorrect statement. The FEC has not ruled on this issue and has said it will not rule on it unless it gets a formal complaint. It has not received a formal complaint, so it has not made a ruling. I checked on that myself.

MR. NESSEN: The expenses of this campaign are being handled in a proper way, as the President instructed at the very beginning.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Ron.

END (AT 12:15 P.M. EDT)