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## A DILEMMA FOR THE PRESIDENT

# The Need for a New Look in Press Secretaries

BY ROBERT J. DONOVAN  
Times Associate Editor

WASHINGTON.—President Ford faced a dilemma over the choice of a new White House press secretary because the job as we have known it has become an outworn form.

It is an outworn form because it has not grown while the government has grown in size and complexity in the last generation.

The function of the White House press secretary has not been performed well for a long time. While part of the cause may be traced to some atrocious appointments by recent Presidents, it is not likely to be performed well until the job is upgraded and the office of press secretary modernized.

Here and there a President may strike it lucky by installing some respected journalist on his staff to field questions from his former colleagues in the press room, but by and large this practice is not likely to work well.

For one thing, the old Washington pecking order makes it difficult to take a working journalist and give him straight off the kind of authority in the White House that a presidential press secretary should have.

The woeful case of J. F. terHorst, Ford's first and highly respected press secretary, who resigned in the hullabaloo over the Nixon pardon, is a good example. In the crunch, terHorst did not have the authority to penetrate what was going on. He was misled by officials higher than himself, and thus unwittingly misled a reporter who inquired in advance if a pardon was being arranged. Because he had done, terHorst found his position intolerable, his credibility with the press at stake. This was a large part of the reason he resigned abruptly after Ford announced the pardon.

Another case in point is James A. Hagerly, the most successful and renowned of recent White House press secretaries. In his early years of service to President Eisenhower he was not nearly so effective as his reputation today would suggest. It was only after Eisenhower had his heart attack and came to feel dependent on Hagerly that the press secretary acquired a high place in the White House hierarchy and could act with great authority in the press office.

Hagerly's career also offers another lesson. He had been a skilled reporter for the New York Times in New York and Albany, but did not step from reporter to White House press secretary. In between assignments he had eight years of tough experience as press secretary to Gov. Thomas E. Dewey of New York, an experience that included Dewey's two presidential campaigns.

The press secretary's job is a highly specialized one, and not many reporters have the experience for it. Indeed, by trade they have instincts and interests quite different from those of the press secretary.

On the other hand, a press secretary

needs to understand reporters and how they work and what their needs are. Above all, he must have a sense of what is news and how his words will be played in newspapers and on the air. Whoever's fault it was, Ford suffered a disaster when his acting press secretary, John W. Hushen, said in the midst of the furor over the Nixon pardon that the President was considering pardoning everyone else involved in Watergate.

Certainly, the press secretary should have some grasp of the technical aspects of communications. An unfortunate example that comes to mind was the Truman-MacArthur meeting on Wake Island at a crucial moment in the Korean war. The late Charles G. Ross, then the White House press secretary, was slipshod about the communications problems, and a frantic planeload of reporters was stranded on the island with the biggest news story of the day and unable to file it because there were only facilities enough to service the press associations and one pool story.

Perhaps the ideal candidate for the press secretaryship is, as in Hagerly's case, a journalist once removed—a person with a background in newspapers or television who has gone on to other experience, some of it preferably in the government. A White House press secretary ought to have an intimate knowledge of how the government works and how to protect his position in the government.

The type of person who comes to mind is Robert McCloskey, who had some newspaper experience, then became the excellent press spokesman for the State Department for many years and is now an ambassador at large.

Since Vietnam and Watergate aroused such mistrust in the government, the give-and-take between the press secretary and

reporters has become far more intense than it used to be. The aftermath of the Nixon pardon suggests that this condition will continue. Hence, it behooves the President to find a press secretary with forensic skills, something that all writers and broadcasters do not possess.

Stature, integrity, a grasp of affairs, articulateness are what are needed in the White House press secretary. What field he comes from is not all that important, so long as he has assistants who can advise him on technical aspects.

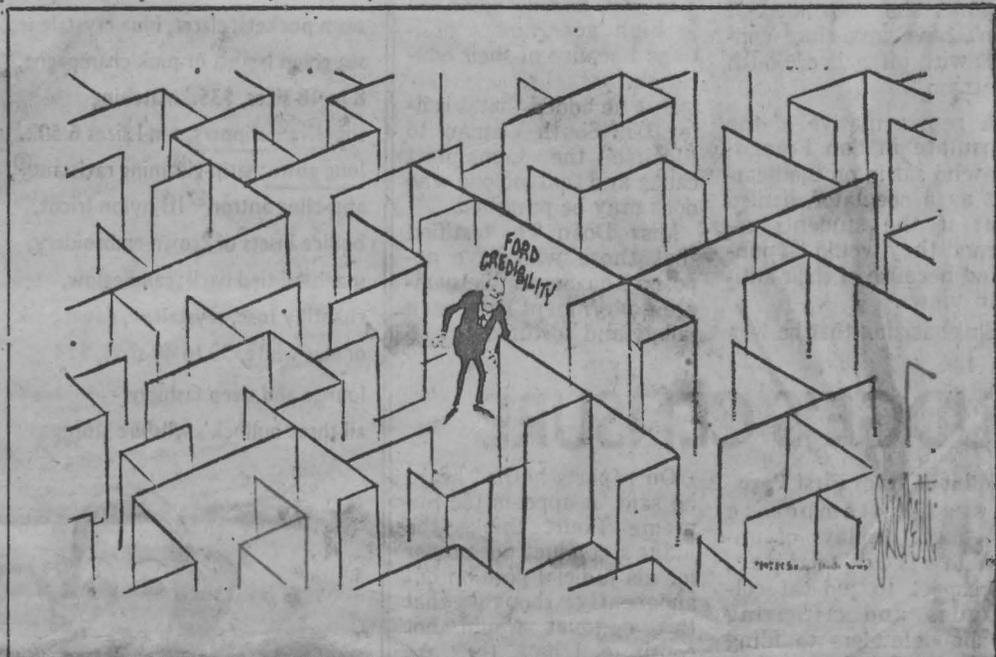
Looking around at random, Elliot Richardson would be a good press secretary. So would Burke Marshall, associate dean of Yale Law School and former assistant attorney general in the Kennedy administration. So would John Chancellor of NBC. So would George M. Elsey, president of the American Red Cross, a historian and one of President Truman's finest staff officials.

Many men of this quality would be hard to get as a successor to Ronald L. Ziegler. The job must be upgraded. Maybe the title should be changed to something like special assistant to the President for public affairs.

Whoever holds it should have high stature in the White House as well as in public, a man no other official would dare mislead. Furthermore, he should have assistants who can be entrusted with knowledge of what is going on. Otherwise they will not command the confidence of reporters, and thus cannot share some of the killing load of the office.

Late Thursday, Mr. Ford's choice was said to be Ron Nessen of NBC News.

In any event, if the President is going to deal with the critical problem of communicating with the country, he ought to take a hard look at the structural inadequacy of the press office itself. The choice of a new press secretary is only a beginning.





# New man at the White House briefing podium

## Press Secretary Nessen fights 5-year Nixon, Ziegler era with candor, humor

By Peter C. Stuart  
Staff correspondent of  
The Christian Science Monitor

### Washington

"Two Rons don't make a right," quipped a White House reporter at a small breakfast meeting.

The target of his jibe, Presidential press secretary Ron Nessen (succes-

sor to another Ron, the much-criticized Ron Ziegler) tossed back his head in laughter — and the incident illustrated two points about the man from whom Americans get most news about their President.

First, ex-newsman Nessen, who was covering the White House for the National Broadcasting Company until a month ago, remains enough of "one

of the gang" to enjoy a joke at his own expense.

"I am, in effect, the pool reporter" (a single newsman chosen to cover a news event and report back to the others), he explained after sitting in on a recent presidential meeting.

But secondly, the new press secretary still has not entirely satisfied his hard-to-please ex-colleagues on the opposite side of the White House briefing podium — where the questions lately have acquired a harder edge.

### A similar challenge

To an uncanny extent, Mr. Ford's press secretary finds himself facing much the same challenge as his boss in the Oval Office: to prove himself to his constituents — in this case, the White House press corps.

Both men were thrust into office when their predecessors suddenly resigned. And, just as President Ford is striving to regain public confidence after the unpopular pardon of former President Richard M. Nixon, Mr. Nessen is trying to regain the confidence of the press after Mr. Ford's highly respected first press secretary, Jerald F. terHorst, quit over the pardon. (Mr. terHorst also was said to feel other members of Mr. Ford's staff were not giving him complete answers to his inquiries.)

One tactic: candor. "I'll inquire further. I don't know," Mr. Nessen will respond when stumped by a question.

### Access questioned

But Mr. Nessen, unlike old Ford family friend Mr. terHorst, has known the President less than a year, and some newsmen question his accessibility to Mr. Ford.

"I'm in and out of his office several times a day," he replies to such suggestions. "On trips we're constantly in touch. If I have questions during the day, I never have any problem getting in there."

The press secretary registers one complaint of his own: "questions that seem asked not to elicit information . . . that really don't have answers . . . that really raise philosophical issues." He explains them as "part of the five-year [Nixon-Ziegler] hang-over."

Such impatience betrays the only discernible gap in Mr. Nessen's other-

wise composed exterior. At press briefings, his dark eyes scarcely blink and his tanned face never pales.

The professional coolness has been honed over an 18-year career of wire service deadlines and television lights.



Nessen and boss face similar tests

AP photo

# Press Aide Pledges Openness

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Ford's new press secretary Ron Nessen, a veteran television correspondent, has taken over the job with promises to get as much news as possible from the White House to the American people.

He has promised not to knowingly mislead or lie to the White House press corps and says he sees no reason why a press secretary and the press should be antagonists.

The 40-year-old Nessen, who has been with the National Broadcasting Co. since 1962 and has covered presidential campaigns for 15 years, stepped into the \$42,500 a year job left vacant by the resignation 12 days ago of veteran Detroit newspaperman Jerald F. terHorst.

TerHorst quit as a matter of conscience because he said he did not agree with the pardon of former President Richard M. Nixon and because he felt he had not been fully informed of actions Ford was planning to take.

Personally introducing Nessen to the press in the White House briefing room on Friday, Ford promised him "my full backing and support."

Nessen said he has been promised that



RONALD NESSEN

he will be kept informed of what is going on in the White House.

He gave these views of his new job:

—He will not be a salesman for the President. "I am not going to try to sell his programs to you."

—His job is to report the actions of the

President, why they were taken and how they were arrived at. "A press secretary does not always have to agree with the decisions of the President."

—He is "apolitical," and the last time he voted was in 1960 for John F. Kennedy. "Other than that, I have no affiliation with any political party."

Nessen, who covered Ford when Ford was vice president, made some 57 trips, covering more than 100,000 miles, with Ford. When Ford became president, Nessen was assigned as the network's White House correspondent.

In taking over his new job, he started out by saying:

"I hope the White House press corps is ready for another Ron. I am a Ron, but not a Ziegler, I can tell you that," he said, referring to Nixon's press secretary, Ronald L. Ziegler, who lost his credibility with the press over the Watergate affair.

Nessen pledged: "I will never knowingly lie to the White House press corps. I will never knowingly mislead the White House press corps. And, I think, if I ever do you would be justified in questioning my continued usefulness in this job."



**REPLACES TerHORST**

# Won't Mislead Press, Appointee Nessen Vows

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Ford's new press secretary Ron Nessen, a veteran television correspondent, has taken over the job with promises to get as much news as possible from the White House to the American people.

He has promised not to knowingly mislead or lie to the White House press corps and says he sees no reason why a press secretary and the press should be antagonists.

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The Associated Press  
**PRESIDENT FORD WITH NEW PRESS SECRETARY  
Ron Nessen Is Promised 'Full Backing and Support'**

*Hall Street Journal*  
9/24/74

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### Advice to Mr. Nessen

Now that Mr. Ford has his new press secretary picked, we have a few words of advice for Ron Nessen before they start throwing him to the lions: Don't carry candor too far. Nothing will make the job more miserable than overeager attempts to answer reporters' questions, especially if the full answer isn't really in hand.

We can think of several recent cases where the new White House press staff has inflated some essentially trivial stories by trying to tell an enquiring reporter more than they really knew. Take for instance, the flap over a rumor falsely linking Nelson Rockefeller and Watergate: This was originally a Jack Anderson production. The White House checked it out and found no proof.

But former Press Secretary Gerald terHorst told the press about this White House check before he knew the final results and consequently

had to call a confusing flurry of meetings to undo the damage. As we subsequently reported, the White House wound up blaming the affair on a "right-wing extremist organization" that didn't exist. The result was headlines all around and a great deal of embarrassment for everyone concerned. We wouldn't be surprised if the same sort of confusion produced the more recent bubble about across-the-board pardons for the Watergate crew.

Now we're obviously not an opponent of full, frank discussion of presidential decisions, or the behind-the-scenes thinking that produces them. Nor are we perverse enough to condemn someone for being too willing to help us. But the White House press room is a powerful sounding board. If the new press secretary doesn't know what he's talking about he'd be better off keeping his mouth shut.



*Boston Globe 9/24/74*

## Press secretary number 2

The appointment of Ron Nessen as White House press secretary promises to put President Ford's credibility, derailed by his pardon of Richard Nixon, partly back on the track.

In assuming office last month, Mr. Ford stirred hopes for a new era in American politics, in large measure because of his image as a man of candor and integrity. Symbolically, he moved in his first presidential appointment to replace Ron Ziegler, Mr. Nixon's press secretary and the scourge of the White House press corps.

But Ziegler's successor, J. F. terHorst, lasted only a month; he left, of course, because of differences with his boss over the pardon of President Nixon. If the first casualty of the pardon was Mr. Ford's unblemished reputation for integrity, then the second was terHorst, who resigned in protest.

Now President Ford has chosen Nessen, an NBC correspondent who has covered the White House. Like terHorst, Nessen has solid credentials as a newsman. He had five years of experience with United Press International before joining NBC in 1962. He won the George Polk Award for his coverage of the Vietnam War in 1965.

In contrast, Ziegler had worked in public relations before his stint at the White House. He had no experience as a professional journalist.

Ziegler's critics accused him, sometimes convincingly, of deliberate and frequent deceptions, resulting in some misleading news for Americans. He once described the Watergate break-in in the headquarters of the Democratic National Committee as a "third-rate burglary."

But in accepting his new post, Nessen said, pointedly, "I am a Ron, but not a Ziegler." In other times it might seem superfluous, but in this period of cynicism about government, it is reassuring for Nessen to pledge explicitly, as he did, that he will never lie to the press.

Mr. Ford's capacity to govern rests ultimately on his credibility with all Americans. If Nessen's covenant means that the President is committed to a policy of openness and honesty, then both Mr. Ford and the country will be the beneficiaries.

"If I mislead or lie to you then you are justified to question my continued usefulness in the job," Nessen told his former colleagues in the White House. We hope that no one will have cause to raise any such questions.



and that, he will be liable for perjury charges if he fails to tell the truth. President Ford's sweeping pardon for all criminal

coverup trial, Nixon would not be called as a witness for at least several days while jury selection

(Continued on page 44, col. 1)

figures in advance of the opening of Senate Rules Committee hearings on his confirmation Monday. He said he wanted to set the record straight because of "incomplete and here-

more misleading data" that had been leaked to the press.

In a statement distributed to reporters, Rockefeller said that the personal net worth of himself and his wife, Happy, was \$62.5 million. "In addition to my personal assets," he said, "I receive the income during my lifetime of two trusts with total net assets of \$120 million . . . Therefore, total assets owned outright and in the two trusts amount to approximately \$182.5 million."

"Did Not Include Art, Etc."

The total figure cited by Rockefeller was not believed to include a substantial amount that he holds jointly with his equally rich brothers. It is believed that all the brothers are the beneficiaries of trusts established by their father, the late John D. Rockefeller Jr. The former governor, in turn, is believed to have done much the same for his own children.

The \$62.5 million personal assets figure was nearly twice the

## Market Gains 22

The stock market rallied for the fourth straight session yesterday with the Dow Jones index surging 22.14 amid indications that the Federal Reserve may be easing up on money. Story on page 58.

\$33 million reported earlier. Rockefeller said that the difference "is largely accounted for by the fact that the leaked figure did not include the value of art and real estate I have already pledged to be given away for public use and enjoyment after my death. . . . This factor alone accounts for \$20.5 million of the difference."

He said "the remainder is accounted for by updated appraisals of art and real estate which were not available at the time of my initial submission of data, plus some minor substantive changes."

# Ford Picks Nessen as Aide

Washington, Sept. 19 (News Bureau) — President Ford will name NBC News correspondent Ronald H. Nessen as the new White House press secretary, administration sources said tonight.

The sources said that Nessen, who has been covering the White House, would be appointed to the post tomorrow to succeed J. F. TerHorst, who resigned in protest over the presidential pardon granted former President Nixon.

Nessen, 40, will be the first television reporter named to the post. He has been with NBC since 1962.

In his career, Nessen has covered the Vietnam war, various political campaigns and the tax-fraud investigation that led to the forced resignation last year of Vice President Spiro T. Agnew.

Before joining NBC, Nessen was a Washington reporter for United Press International from

1956 to 1962. A native of Washington, he is a graduate of American University in the capital.

Nessen declined to confirm or deny his appointment.

White House sources privately confirmed the report. They said that Nessen had agreed to accept the job after having received high-level assurances that he would have direct access to Ford and the President's senior advisers and that he would be kept informed of all major policy decisions.

Nessen and his wife, Cindy, have a young son, Edward. Nessen also has a daughter, Caren, by a previous marriage.



Ronald H. Nessen  
First from TV ranks

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FRIDAY, SEPT. 20, 1974  
NAT'L WEATHER SERVICE FORECAST  
PARTLY CLOUDY, BREEZY AND MILD.  
Chance of showers. Temperature range 64-78; winds southwest 10-15 mph. Tomorrow, partly cloudy and mild.

**THE MOON**  
Sept. 15 Sept. 23 Oct. 1 Oct. 8   
New First Q Full Last Q

Daylight Saving Time  
Sunrise 6:41 a.m.; sunset 6:57 p.m. Moon rises 11:53 a.m.; sets 9:37 p.m. Morning stars: Saturn, Venus; evening stars: Jupiter, Mercury, Mars.

TIDES (By National Ocean Survey)  
Sandy Hook, The Battery, Willets Pt.  
A.M. P.M. A.M. P.M. A.M. P.M.  
1:39 11:59 — 12:25 2:54 3:09  
9:21 5:50 5:53 6:33 9:17 10:05

**TEMPERATURES IN NEW YORK**  
Thursday's Maximum 79 at 3:45 p.m.  
Thursday's Minimum 65 at 2:30 a.m.  
Highest this date, 90 in 1946  
Lowest this date, 44 in 1929

1 a.m. — 68	10 a.m. — 69	7 p.m. — 73
2 a.m. — 66	11 a.m. — 73	8 p.m. — 72
3 a.m. — 65	Noon — 76	9 p.m. — 71
4 a.m. — 65	1 p.m. — 77	10 p.m. — 72
5 a.m. — 65	2 p.m. — 76	11 p.m. — 71
6 a.m. — 65	3 p.m. — 75	Midnight — 71
7 a.m. — 65	4 p.m. — 79	1 a.m. — 79
8 a.m. — 66	5 p.m. — 77	2 a.m. — 67
9 a.m. — 67	6 p.m. — 74	3 a.m. — 69

Readings up to 5 p.m. September 19  
Mean temperature, 72; normal, 68; average below normal since Sept. 1, 8 degrees.

**PRECIPITATION**  
Yesterday, none; total since Jan. 1, 35.97 inches. Total this date, 1973, 40.85 inches. Total since Sept. 1, 6.19 inches.

**HUMIDITY:** 87% at 8 a.m.; 79% at 11 p.m.

**DAILY POLLEN COUNT**  
(By Long Island Jewish Hospital)  
(25 and above is considered uncomfortable)  
1974 1973  
For 6 Hours ended at 3 P.M.

**DAILY ALMANAC**

**TODAY'S FORECAST**

NEW YORK **64-78**

Legend:  
 FAIR  
 P. CLOUDY  
 CLOUDY  
 SHOWERS  
 RAIN

**HOW CITIES FARED YESTERDAY**

City	Temperatures		Inches of Rain	Today's Weather
	High	Low		
Albany	73	42	—	Shower
Anchorage	47	43	.16	Rain
Atlanta	82	44	—	Fair
Boston	68	54	—	P. Cloudy
Buffalo	72	46	—	Showers
Chicago	84	52	—	Fair
Cincinnati	82	56	—	Showers
Cleveland	78	49	—	Showers
Denver	81	47	—	P. Cloudy
Detroit	81	47	—	P. Cloudy
Fort Worth	89	70	—	P. Cloudy
Houston	89	75	—	P. Cloudy
Los Angeles	76	62	—	P. Cloudy
Miami Beach	87	80	—	P. Cloudy
Minneapolis	66	56	—	P. Cloudy
Montreal	87	67	—	Clear
New Orleans	87	67	—	Fair
Orlando	92	74	—	Fair
Philadelphia	82	61	—	P. Cloudy
Phoenix	91	73	.36	Showers
Pittsburgh	78	52	—	Showers
Salt Lake City	83	56	—	Fair
San Francisco	61	38	—	Clearing
Santa Juan, P.R.	87	73	.33	P. Cloudy
Seattle	86	58	—	Fair
St. Louis	83	61	—	Fair
Washington	85	66	—	P. Cloudy

**SEPTEMBER 1974**

Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.
15	16	RUSH HASHMAN	18	19	20	21
22	AUTUMN	24	25	YOM KIPPUR	27	28
29	30					

**OCTOBER 1974**

Sun.	Mon	Tue	Wed.	Thur	Fri	Sat.
		SUCCOth	2	3	4	5

**AIRDEX®**  
Yesterday: Air quality was rated acceptable for 24 hours ended at 3 a.m.  
Today: Air quality is expected to be acceptable. — Air Resources Dept.

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## Ford Picks Nessen As Press Sec'y



Nessen

WASHINGTON (UPI) — President Ford will name Ronald Nessen, NBC-TV White House correspondent, as his press secretary, White House officials said Thursday.

Nessen, 40, would succeed J.F. terHorst, Ford's first presidential press secretary who resigned September 8 in protest when Ford granted former President Nixon an unconditional pardon.

White House officials said Nessen had been offered the position and Nessen himself acknowledged he had talked to the White House about it, although he said any announcement would have to come from them.

Nessen would be the first television correspondent to take the permanent position of presidential spokesman. He has wide experience in the reporting field, including employment with United Press International from 1956 to 1962. He joined NBC in 1962 and covered Washington beats, including the White House, during the Lyndon B. Johnson era.



## NESSEN MAY GET TERHORST'S POST

NBC Correspondent Called  
Choice for Press Aide

By MARJORIE HUNTER

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Sept. 19—Ron Nessen of NBC News has been chosen by President Ford as the White House press secretary, according to several sources close to the President.

John Hushen, deputy press secretary, declined to confirm or deny reports that Mr. Nessen, NBC's White House correspondent, would succeed J. F. terHorst as the President's chief spokesman. The appointment is expected to be announced tomorrow.

Mr. terHorst resigned in protest against Mr. Ford's pardon of former President Richard M. Nixon and is now a columnist for The Detroit News. He was chief of the paper's Washington Bureau when appointed press secretary.

Mr. Nessen, 40 years old, became NBC's White House correspondent when President



United Press International

Ron Nessen

Ford took office. Previously, he had covered Mr. Ford as Vice President, traveling 113,000 miles with him, according to an NBC biography.

He and the Vice President became friends, the biography notes. Mr. Nessen was host recently at a backyard party in Bethesda, Md., at which the President was honored by correspondents assigned to cover his Vice-Presidential period.

### Wounded in Vietnam

Mr. Nessen was born in Washington and is a graduate in history of the American University here. He worked five years with United Press International before joining N.B.C. in 1962. He was on the network's Washington news staff from 1962 to 1965, serving as White House correspondent in 1964 and as correspondent for the Huntley-Brinkley report covering President Johnson during the election that year.

He was a correspondent for NBC in Vietnam in 1965 and 1966 and was wounded by a hand grenade fragment. He won the George Polk award of the Overseas Press Club for his Vietnam war coverage.

Mr. Nessen married Young Hi Song, whom he met in Vietnam, and they have a son, Edward, 1½ years of age. A son by a former marriage, Keven, 18, is a student at the University of Iowa.

Reached tonight at his home by The Associated Press, Mr. Nessen would not confirm that he had accepted the \$42,500-a-year job.

"I've talked to them about it, so I assume I'm under consideration," he said. "Any announcement will have to come from the White House."



FORMATION OF FEDERAL AGENCY

# 5th Try Due to Halt Anticonsumer

By JIM LUTHER

WASHINGTON — (AP)— The fate of a bill establishing a federal agency to guard consumer interests may rest with one senator.

A fifth and final attempt to stop a filibuster may come next week if sponsors can guarantee the leadership that they will win, sources say.

The bill had been pronounced dead after the Senate refused on Thursday by a 64 to 34 vote to choke off the filibuster launched by opponents two months ago.

That was the fourth try at ending debate and bringing the bill to a vote. It fell two votes short of the required two-thirds majority.

Colodaro's Democratic senator, Floyd Haskell, voted for cloture, while Republican Peter Dominick, voted against.

Traditionally, the Senate stops trying to halt a filibuster after three attempts fail. Senate Democratic Leader Mike Mansfield agreed to allow the fourth vote on Thursday, because sponsors of the bill earlier had come within two votes of break-

ing the stalemate. Historians say the Senate has never gone to a fifth effort to end debate, but it may do so next week on the consumer bill because of a clerical error. And one senator, whom sponsors of the bill decline to identify, could hold the key to passage of the legislation.

NOT ON FLOOR

A source close to Mansfield said the majority leader may allow the fifth vote because Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, D-Mass., was not able to get to

the floor Thursday in time to vote for halting the filibuster.

Kennedy missed the vote because of a problem with the Senate's "bell system," which keeps senators who are out of the chamber informed on what the Senate is doing.

A roll call usually lasts 15 minutes. Five bells are sounded when senators have 7½ minutes left to get to the chamber. Mansfield said the warning was sounded on Thursday with only 6½ minutes remaining, and Kennedy rushed in just as the final vote was announced.

A Senate aide who has worked on the consumer bill says there are indications that one senator voted against ending the debate because Kennedy failed to register his vote.

DID NOT VOTE

If that is correct, the future of the bill might rest with Sen. J. W. Fulbright. The Arkansas Democrat opposed the first three debate-ending motions but did not vote on Thursday.

The absence of Fulbright and the addition of Kennedy and the unidentified senator would give sponsors the margin needed to

bring the vote.

There pass the be halted.

The bill dependent ty to repr ests before g u l a agency wo ry power CALLED

Sponsors h a m A. hailed the on in the



UPI Telephotos

RON NESSEN

Declined confirmation.

## Nessen To Become Press Aide

WASHINGTON — (AP)— Ron Nessen, White House correspondent for NBC television news, has agreed to become President Ford's press secretary, sources report.

Announcement of Nessen's appointment was scheduled for Friday, formally climaxing Ford's intensive search for a successor to Jerald F. terHorst, who resigned Sept. 8 to protest the pardon of Richard M. Nixon.

Contacted Thursday night at his home, Nessen declined to confirm he had accepted the post. "I've talked to them about the job," he said. "Any announcement will have to come from the White House."

But two reliable sources said Nessen had agreed to join Ford's staff after receiving high-level assurances he would have full and ready access to the President and would be kept posted on policy decisions as they develop.

Nessen, 40, was assigned to NBC's White House staff when Ford succeeded Nixon as President on Aug. 9.

He had traveled 118,000 miles with Ford while covering his eight months as vice president, developing a rapport with Ford and his top aides.

That friendship has been displayed on social occasions since Ford became President.

For example, Nessen and his wife, Cindy, were guests at Ford's first state dinner, with Mrs. Nessen and Ford drawing applause when they did a fast dance to the pop tune "Bad, Bad Leroy Brown."

On Aug. 25, Ford was a guest at a poolside party the Nessens gave for newsmen and Ford aides who were veterans of his vice presidential tenure.

Nessen joined NBC in 1962, covering Lyndon Johnson's administration before transferring to Vietnam in 1965. There he suffered chest wounds from a grenade fragment while covering the Vietnam battlefield.

Subsequently, Nessen reported for NBC from Europe, Latin America, Asia and Africa before returning to the United States for the 1968 political campaigns.

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# Ford sees Gromyko on trade concessions

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Ford held back-to-back meetings Friday with Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko and Sen. Henry M. Jackson (D-Wash.), and Jackson reported that final agreement on a plan to permit trade concessions to the Soviet Union has yet to be reached.

Jackson has insisted on lowering of curbs against Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union in return for trade concessions.

Jackson, who said negotiations on the trade-emigration problem will continue during the weekend preliminary to a second Ford-Gromyko conference next Tuesday, told reporters:

**"WE HAVE NOT** reached final agreement. We're still hung up on one issue, mainly how to handle it legislatively."

The senator said he insists that Congress retain "some real muscle" to insure the Soviets live up to an emigration agreement "and not just rely on good faith and the judgment

## Having fun with detente

From Our Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — Sen. Henry M. Jackson, an archvillain to the Kremlin, had a "confrontation" Friday with Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko — but it was all in the best interests of detente.

Coming out of the Oval Office after meeting with President Ford, Jackson saw Gromyko waiting nearby.

Jackson told Gromyko he had been to see the President to express his support of the "military-industrial complex and the ruling circles of Wall Street."

Gromyko laughed.

of the executive branch."

Sec. of State Henry A. Kissinger participated in both of the President's meetings.

Gromyko was accompanied to the White House by Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobr-

ynin. Also present was Walter J. Stoessel, U.S. ambassador to Moscow.

Gromyko is in the United States to attend the annual session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York.

IT WAS understood another item on Friday's agenda at the Ford-Gromyko meeting was the strategic arms limitation negotiations which resumed this week in Geneva.

On the trade-emigration issue, Jackson said Ford convinced him at an earlier meeting that he wants to achieve the same results as the senator. Jackson said former President Nixon dismissed his campaign for freer emigration as interference in Soviet affairs.

Jackson took the position that "perseverance and hard bargaining is paying off" and that "the Russians have come 180 degrees" because of the pressures he and some other members of Congress have applied.



Ron Nessen, NBC-TV's White House correspondent, reads the morning paper to his son, Edward, 1, at their home in Bethesda, Md., Friday morning. (AP)

## Nessen appointed Ford's press chief

Daily News Wire Services

WASHINGTON — President Ford Friday named NBC-TV's White House correspondent Ronald Nessen as his new press secretary.

Nessen, 40, became the second presidential press spokesman of Ford's brief administration, succeeding Jerry TerHorst, who resigned Sept. 8 after Ford pardoned former President Nixon.

Nessen is the first network television news correspondent to be named the permanent presidential press secretary.

A native of Washington, D.C., Nessen gained wide reporting experience covering various government departments and the civil rights movement for United Press In-

ternational from 1956 to 1962.

He joined NBC in 1962 and was assigned to various Washington beats, including the White House during the Presidency of the late Lyndon B. Johnson.

Nessen also covered the Vietnam War for NBC and reported on 1968 election campaigns as a Washington correspondent after his return.

## Senate votes cutoff in aid to Turkey

WASHINGTON (UPI) — The Senate voted 64 to 27 Thursday to end U.S. military aid to Turkey.

The lawmakers approved the aid cutoff after Sen. Thomas F. Eagleton (D-Mo.), sponsor of the measure, argued that Turkey had violated the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 by illegally using American weapons to invade Cyprus.

Supporters of the amendment said it would probably be killed by House-Senate conferees.

Continued from Page 5

single personality—the personality of the man on top. That sounded good to Anderson, so he gave it a try.

He realized almost immediately that he couldn't do it alone, so he called veteran Chicago editor Bill Wright out of New York to come back to the town he despises. But even with Wright's help, Jon failed at "his thing" and got out.

The transfer of power in April was much like what occurred Thursday. It was full of bitterness and a sense of betrayal. He had signed his staffers on with a "come-hell-or-high-water-guarantee" of two years work. Then he turned his people over to Pattis.

Dissent and unrest in the office was open. Many staffers left or were fired. They had never really recovered from Christiansen's firing.

RAY NORDSTRAND, PUBLISHER of the Chicago Guide, said Thursday that he would "certainly take on some" of the Chicagoan staffers, "but we don't know who or how many."

The two magazines are to be merged into one new one, called Chicago magazine, sometime in early 1975. The Guide has been alive since 1952, when it began as radio station WFMT's program guide, and now has a 150,000 circulation.

The Guide bought, for an undisclosed amount, the Chicagoan's subscriptions list, the name Chicago and some previously contracted stories. It is Nordstrand's ballgame now.

It had been called the "Battle of Michigan Avenue" the

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# INTERESTING TABLES FOR INTERESTING PEOPLE



# Nessen vows not to lie as Ford's spokesman

WASHINGTON (AP) — Ron Nessen, a White House reporter for NBC, became President Ford's new press secretary yesterday. With Ford standing beside him, Nessen said he would never knowingly mislead or lie to the White House press corps.

After being introduced in the White House briefing room by the President, Nessen, 40, declared he saw his duty as being to "get as much news as possible... to the American people."

Nessen had been with the National Broadcasting Co. since 1962. He came to the White House as an NBC correspondent when Ford became President in August. He had traveled more than 100,000 miles covering Ford as vice president.

He replaces J. F. TerHorst, who resigned after Ford's pardon of former President Nixon, saying it was a matter of conscience because he disagreed with the decision. TerHorst also said he felt important information on presidential decisions had been withheld from him.

Nessen, after Ford introduced him, told newsmen he hoped he would be able to earn as much respect from the press as TerHorst had during his brief time as press secretary.

"I think it's probably too late to go back to a honeymoon," Nessen said, "but maybe we could have a trial reconciliation."

Ford said he had the opportunity to get to know Nessen very well during 57 vice presidential trips, admired his skill and objectivity and "enjoyed his company." Ford said Nessen has a "superb reputation" and has had experience in both broadcasting and the writing press. Nessen worked with the United Press International before joining NBC.

Nessen said: "I hope the White House press corps is ready for another Ron," a reference to Nixon press secretary Ronald L. Ziegler. "I am a Ron, but not a Ziegler. I can tell you that."

Nessen added: "I will

never knowingly lie to the White House press corps. I will never knowingly mislead the White House press corps and I think if I ever do you would be justified in questioning my continued usefulness in the job."

He said he does not think that a press secretary always has to agree with a President's decision. He said he felt it was his role to report actions of the President, how and why they were made.

His salary will be \$42,500 yearly. Nessen, a native of Washington, D.C., and his wife Cindy, the former Young Hi Song of South Korea, have two children, Edward, 1½, and Caren, 18. They live in Bethesda, Md.

## People Ford's son missed deadline for draft

From Wire Reports

Like many other young Americans, Steven Ford, son of the President, has technically violated the law by failing to register with his draft board on time.

Steven did not register until Aug. 30, 1974, three weeks after his father became President. Steven should have registered not later than June 19, 1974, 30 days after his 18th birthday.

General Selective Service policy is not to prosecute for this offense although some men have been prosecuted. Steven, now working on a Utah ranch, was not available for comment but a press aide for the family said, "It really slipped his mind. It's nothing more than that. There were a lot of things going on with his father at that time."

Jacqueline Onassis is reported negotiating to buy a small country estate in Somerset County, N.J. She now rents a house in that area and she and her children spend frequent weekends horseback riding there... Charles W. Colson, the former Nixon aide sentenced to prison after pleading guilty to obstructing justice in the Daniel Ellsberg trial, has been quietly transferred from Ft. Holabird, Md., to a federal prison at Maxwell Air Force Base near Montgomery, Ala. He had been held at Holabird waiting to testify at forthcoming Watergate trials; no reason was given for the transfer.

And now ragtime comes to the White House. Gunther Schuller and his New England Conservatory Ragtime Ensemble (which recorded "Scott Joplin: The Red



Associated Press

A kiss for Kissinger. The secretary of state was congratulating Shirley Temple Black, the former child movie star, after she was sworn in as ambassador to Ghana.

Back Book") have been invited to entertain at next week's state dinner for Italy's President Giovanni Leone. Schuller essentially is a classical composer, conductor and teacher.

President Nixon's reported physical illness may be caused by mental strain and he might need psychiatric help, said Roy M. Menninger, president of the Menninger Foundation of Topeka, Kan. In an interview published by the San Diego Union, the psychiatrist said, "Why should someone who has come through such a cataclysm not have a right to a certain amount of emotional disturbance for which treatment is appropriate?" He said serious illness often is preceded by a period of loss or by feelings of helplessness and hopelessness.



Associated Press  
Ron Nessen, the new presidential press secretary, with his son Edward, 1½, at their home before the announcement of Nessen's appointment.

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SIZZL'N SEPTEMBER

# Producers Plan Sharp Pork Drop

By Don Muhm

(The Register's Farm Editor)

Pork producers in Iowa and the other major hog-raising states, already with fewer hogs than a year ago, plan to cut back on baby pig farrowings this fall, the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) said Friday.

Iowa farms contained 14,130,000 head of hogs on Sept. 1, down 4 per cent from a year earlier, the USDA said. There were 50,175,000 hogs in the 14 major states, which is also a 4 per cent decline from Sept. 1, 1973.

The quarterly pig crop released Friday hints there may be higher prices for market hog sellers ahead. It also hints of a reduced pork supply for the nation's consumers and possibly higher prices at the meat counter as a result.

Summer farrowings of baby pigs were off 5 per cent in Iowa and down 4 per cent in the 14-state region involved in the USDA report.



WIREFOTO (AP)

## The New Press Secretary

President Ford introduces his new press secretary, Ron Nessen, to newsmen at the White House Friday. Nessen, 40, has been a correspondent for NBC.

# Rockefeller Assets Set at \$182 Million

From Press Dispatches

Washington, D. C. — Nelson Rockefeller puts the immediate personal fortune of himself and his wife at \$62.5 million, but the head of a committee probing his vice presidential nomination is more concerned with what the holdings are than with their total.

Rockefeller issued a statement Thursday listing his personal fortune and saying he also received income from two trusts with assets of \$120 million — for a total worth of \$182.5 million.

Sen. Howard Cannon (D-Nev.), chairman of the Senate Rules Committee, said: "The significance of his financial holdings is what the holdings are in and whether there is a likelihood of a conflict of interest."

Figure Leaked Earlier

Cannon said his committee would question the former

New York governor closely about some holdings.

Rockefeller issued a summary Thursday of what he termed "the final and complete data" on his finances.

As aides had promised, the total was substantially higher than the \$33 million personal worth figure that had leaked from the House and Senate committees preparing for confirmation hearings.

The \$62.5 million figure includes the \$33 million listed earlier, some \$20.5 million in art and real estate to be given away at his death, and some \$9 million representing updated appraisals of art and real estate that were unavailable when the first report was filed.

Rockefeller, a member of one of the nation's wealthiest families, hadn't planned to announce any figures on his holdings until his appearance next Monday before the Rules Committee. More details are expected then.

But Rockefeller said the leak of the \$33 million figure had created an "incomplete and therefore misleading impression" about his financial position and he had decided to release total figures right now "to keep the record straight." The \$33 million figure was first published in The Washington Post, which said the figure was only preliminary and would be revised upward.

Status Unclear

Rockefeller's statement Thursday didn't make clear whether the principal of the \$120 million in trusts — believed to have been left him by his father, John D. Rockefeller Jr. — was available to him personally, or whether his interest in the trusts consisted solely of the right to receive income from them, with the principal passing on to someone else later on.

The preliminary \$33 million figure reportedly included about \$400,000 in cash, \$1 million in furnishings, \$2 million in boats, cars and planes, \$50,000 in jewelry, \$13 million in stocks (many listed at acquisition rather than present market value), \$12.5 million in art, porcelain and silver (with some holdings listed at acquisition value), and about \$8 million in real estate. This adds up to \$37 million, but Rockefeller was said to have \$4 million in liabilities.

Hearings before the House Judiciary Committee, which apparently is planning an exhaustive look at the Rockefeller fortune, may be put off until after the November elections, despite Republican protests.

## Peace Force Debts May End Supplies

Saigon, Vietnam — UPI — The four nation force supposed to keep the peace in South Vietnam Thursday had nine days to pay its debts or face having its food and other supplies cut off by American contractors.

An official of the International Commission of Control and Supervision (ICCS) said a Sept. 28 deadline to pay bills of \$6 million run up in the last 20 months placed the force in a very serious situation.

Appeals have been made to the four signatories to the ceasefire pact of Jan. 27, 1973 — the United States, South Vietnam, North Vietnam and the Vietcong — but no response has been received, the official said.

The 1,000-peace monitoring troops from Iran, Indonesia, Hungary and Poland owe the \$6 million to Pacific Architects & Engineers and Air America, both US firms.

## Laos POWs Exchanged

Phon Savan, Laos — AP — Laos' onetime warring sides exchanged their prisoners on the Plain of Jars Thursday, but no one could go home until Pathet Lao tanks made a friendly appearance.

What was to have been a brief ceremony turned into a day-long affair when a crowd



LISTENING TO KISSINGER — Members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee listened to testimony by Secretary of State

Henry Kissinger in Washington Thursday. From left are Senators John Sparkman (D-Ala.), Frank Church (D-Idaho), Stuart Sy-

mington (D-Mo.), Hubert Humphrey, (D-Minn.), and Edmund Muskie (D-Maine). Kissinger spoke on Soviet-US relations.

—AP Wirephoto

## Kissinger Speaks Up for Detente

(c) New York Times Service

Washington, D.C. — Secretary of State Henry Kissinger said Thursday that reduced tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union had opened the way for much broader East-West collaboration on such crucial global issues as food, energy and protection of the environment.

Testifying on Soviet-American relations at the close of a month long inquiry by the Sen-

## Relaxed Debate

Washington, D. C. — AP —

The tension and excitement of the Senate's month long "great national debate" on US-Soviet relations was symbolized Thursday by Sen. Jacob Javits (R. N. Y.). He came late to the Foreign Relations Committee hearing, and fell asleep.

Only 10 of the 17 committee members came at all, and not all at the same time.

It was worse in an earlier session, though, when a press-galley of one witnessed a single senator question a sole witness before a solitary yawning police guard.

ate Foreign Relations Committee, Kissinger strongly defended the policy of the Nixon and Ford administrations in pursuing better relations with Moscow.

In a largely philosophical 10,000 word statement, Kissinger coupled his hopes that Russia and America would pay more attention in the future to "humane concerns" with allies would continue to be protected and American defenses would not be cut unilaterally.

Sen. Clifford Case (R-N.J.) was the most dubious on the value of detente. He said it was his impression that "the gains in detente have accrued to the Soviet side." He said the Soviet Union had been largely responsible for last fall's Middle East war and had spurred the Arabs to launch the oil embargo against the US and he said "we're almost too grateful for relatively small concessions."

Kissinger disagreed saying: "I believe that on balance, if anything the gains of detente have been more in our favor than in the opposite direction." He said the Russians had helped the US extricate itself from Vietnam and had shown restraint in many areas, including central Europe. He predicted new action on Jewish emigration within a week.

## Ford Turns to NBC for Press Secretary

Washington, D. C. — AP — Ron Nessen, White House correspondent for NBC, has agreed to become President Ford's press secretary, sources close to the president report.

Announcement of Nessen's appointment is expected soon, formally climaxing Ford's intensive search for a successor to Jerald F. terHorst, who resigned Sept. 8 in protest when Ford pardoned Richard Nixon.

TerHorst is now a columnist for the Detroit News. He was chief of the paper's Washington bureau when appointed press secretary.

Reliable sources said Nessen had agreed to join Ford's staff after receiving high level assurances that he would have full and ready access to the president and would be kept posted on policy decisions as they developed.

Nessen, 40, was assigned to NBC's White House staff when Ford succeeded Nixon as president Aug. 9. He had traveled 118,000 miles with Ford while covering his eight months as vice president, developing a rapport with Ford and his top aides.

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years before joining NBC in 1962. He covered Lyndon Johnson's administration before transferring to Vietnam in 1965. There, he suffered chest wounds from a grenade fragment while covering the Vietnam battlefield and won a major press award.

Subsequently, Nessen reported for NBC from Europe, Latin America, Asia and Africa before returning to the US for the 1968 political campaigns.

A history graduate of American University in Washington, he was the network's urban af-



Ron Nessen

fairs correspondent before his coverage of the investigation and resignation of Vice President Spiro Agnew, an assignment that was followed by his coverage of Ford.

No network television news correspondent ever has been named the permanent presidential press secretary.

## Returning Evaders Must Waive Rights

From Press Dispatches

Washington, D. C. — The Justice Department says draft evaders seeking amnesty under President Ford's earned re-entry plan will have to sign away some of their constitutional rights.

A department official said Thursday that resisters will have to waive protection on draft law violations under the statute of limitations and agree to face possible court action for their original violation if they fail to meet the requirement of up to 24 months of alternative public service.

ment waiving the statute of limitations and rights to an indictment, a speedy trial and protection from double jeopardy, the spokesman said. In return, the government will defer prosecution while the evader earns amnesty.

The maximum penalty for conviction of draft evasion is five years in prison and a \$10,000 fine.

"Once an individual enters the United States, he is subject to prosecution unless he signs up for alternate service," a spokesman said.

## Ford to Campaign More, Visit Korea

From Press Dispatches

Washington, D. C. — President Ford will carry the Republican campaign banner to at least 10 states before his Nov. 19 visit to Japan, the White House reports.

Ford also will visit South Korea for an overnight stay Nov. 22-23 after his three day trip to Japan, the White House announced Friday.

The latest schedule calls for October appearances — most of them to campaign for the GOP — in Michigan, South Dakota, North and South Carolina, Kentucky, Utah, California, Vermont, Pennsylvania and Indiana.

Ford made his first presidential appearance at a fund raising banquet Thursday night, driving to suburban Alexandria, Va., to plug for the reelection of Republican Rep. Stanford E. Parris.

The schedule being developed for the last two weeks of October tentatively includes some days when Ford will make from three to five stops in as many states.

Ford goes to Detroit Monday to address a world energy conference. On Oct. 2, he will appear at Brigham Young University in Utah and at the United Press International editors convention in San Francisco.

Ford also has appearances scheduled for Barre, Vt., Oct. 7; Philadelphia, Oct. 9; a Michigan fund raiser, Oct. 10; Indi-

anapolis and South Dakota, Oct. 16, and South Carolina, North Carolina and Kentucky on Oct. 19.

Ford's hectic schedule has prompted criticism that he does not use his time to best advantage. Unlike his predecessor, however, Ford maintains a heavy daily schedule of meetings interspersed with one day trips out of the city in an attempt to see and be seen by many people.

Chief interest Friday focused on a meeting with Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko, who stops at the White House almost every September while in the US for meetings of the United Nations General Assembly.

Everyone from the maids to the chief of staff turned out for a White House staff picnic that the president and Mrs. Ford gave Thursday on the White House south lawn.

In the warm, sunny weather, the Fords joined in throwing Frisbees and a lot of handshaking. Ford said he couldn't remember who thought it up, but that the staff picnic was an excellent idea and he thought perhaps it would start a new tradition.

"Too bad we can't do this every day," Mrs. Ford told some of the 1,200 enthusiastic guests who were treated to hot dogs, baked beans, potato salad, coleslaw, ice cream, soft drinks and coffee.

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The preliminary \$33 million figure reportedly included about \$400,000 in cash, \$1 million in furnishings, \$2 million in boats, cars and planes, \$50,000 in jewelry, \$13 million in stocks (many listed at acquisition rather than present market value), \$12.5 million in art, porcelain and silver (with some holdings listed at acquisition value), and about \$8 million in real estate. This adds up to \$37 million, but Rockefeller was said to have \$4 million in liabilities.

Hearings before the House Judiciary Committee, which apparently is planning an exhaustive look at the Rockefeller fortune, may be put off until after the November elections, despite Republican protests.

In addition to the studies by the two committee staffs, some relatively junior Democrats on the House panel hope to use staff data as a springboard for a study of the influence of Rockefeller wealth on public policy.



LISTENING TO KISSINGER — Members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee listened to testimony by Secretary of State

Henry Kissinger in Washington Thursday. From left are Senators John Sparkman (D-Ala.), Frank Church (D-Idaho), Stuart Sy-

mington (D-Mo.), Hubert Humphrey, (D-Minn.), and Edmund Muskie (D-Maine). Kissinger spoke on Soviet-US relations.

—AP Wirephoto

## Ford Turns to NBC for Press Secretary

Washington, D. C. — AP — Ron Nessen, White House correspondent for NBC, has agreed to become President Ford's press secretary, sources close to the president report.

Announcement of Nessen's appointment is expected soon, formally climaxing Ford's intensive search for a successor to Jerald F. terHorst, who resigned Sept. 8 in protest when Ford pardoned Richard Nixon.

TerHorst is now a columnist for the Detroit News. He was chief of the paper's Washington bureau when appointed press secretary.

Reliable sources said Nessen had agreed to join Ford's staff after receiving high level assurances that he would have full and ready access to the president and would be kept posted on policy decisions as they developed.

Nessen, 40, was assigned to NBC's White House staff when Ford succeeded Nixon as president Aug. 9. He had traveled 118,000 miles with Ford while covering his eight months as vice president, developing a rapport with Ford and his top aides.

That friendship has been displayed on social occasions since Ford became president. (Nessen and his wife, Cindy, were guests at Ford's first state dinner, with Mrs. Nessen and Ford drawing applause when they did a fast dance to the pop tune "Bad, Bad Leroy Brown.")

On Aug. 25, Ford was a guest at a poolside party the Nessens gave for reporters and Ford aides who were veterans of his vice presidential tenure.

Nessen worked for United Press International for five

years before joining NBC in 1962. He covered Lyndon Johnson's administration before transferring to Vietnam in 1965. There, he suffered chest wounds from a grenade fragment while covering the Vietnam battlefield and won a major press award.

Subsequently, Nessen reported for NBC from Europe, Latin America, Asia and Africa before returning to the US for the 1968 political campaigns.

A history graduate of American University in Washington, he was the network's urban af-

fairs correspondent before his coverage of the investigation and resignation of Vice President Spiro Agnew, an assignment that was followed by his coverage of Ford.

No network television news correspondent ever has been named the permanent presidential press secretary.



Ron Nessen

## Returning Evaders Must Waive Rights

From Press Dispatches

Washington, D. C. — The Justice Department says draft evaders seeking amnesty under President Ford's earned re-entry plan will have to sign away some of their constitutional rights.

A department official said Thursday that resisters will have to waive protection on draft law violations under the statute of limitations and agree to face possible court action for their original violation if they fail to meet the requirement of up to 24 months of alternative public service.

A spokesman said an evader seeking amnesty might be arrested on the spot if he was not ready to meet all the requirements when he presented himself to federal authorities.

Returning draft evaders must sign a prepared state-

ment waiving the statute of limitations and rights to an indictment, a speedy trial and protection from double jeopardy, the spokesman said. In return, the government will defer prosecution while the evader earns amnesty.

The maximum penalty for conviction of draft evasion is five years in prison and a \$10,000 fine.

"Once an individual enters the United States, he is subject to prosecution unless he signs up for alternate service," a spokesman said.

## Ford to Campaign More, Visit Korea

From Press Dispatches

Washington, D. C. — President Ford will carry the Republican campaign banner to at least 10 states before his Nov. 19 visit to Japan, the White House reports.

Ford also will visit South Korea for an overnight stay Nov. 22-23 after his three day trip to Japan, the White House announced Friday.

The latest schedule calls for October appearances — most of them to campaign for the GOP — in Michigan, South Dakota, North and South Carolina, Kentucky, Utah, California, Vermont, Pennsylvania and Indiana.

Ford made his first presidential appearance at a fund raising banquet Thursday night, driving to suburban Alexandria, Va., to plug for the reelection of Republican Rep. Stanford E. Parris.

The schedule being developed for the last two weeks of October tentatively includes some days when Ford will make from three to five stops in as many states.

Ford goes to Detroit Monday to address a world energy conference. On Oct. 2, he will appear at Brigham Young University in Utah and at the United Press International editors' convention in San Francisco.

Ford also has appearances scheduled for Barre, Vt., Oct. 7; Philadelphia, Oct. 9; a Michigan fund raiser, Oct. 10; Indi-

anapolis and South Dakota, Oct. 16, and South Carolina, North Carolina and Kentucky on Oct. 19.

Ford's hectic schedule has prompted criticism that he does not use his time to best advantage. Unlike his predecessor, however, Ford maintains a heavy daily schedule of meetings interspersed with one day trips out of the city in an attempt to see and be seen by many people.

Chief interest Friday focused on a meeting with Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko, who stops at the White House almost every September while in the US for meetings of the United Nations General Assembly.

Everyone from the maids to the chief of staff turned out for a White House staff picnic for the president and Mrs. Ford gave Thursday on the White House south lawn.

In the warm, sunny weather, the Fords joined in throwing Frisbees and a lot of handshaking. Ford said he couldn't remember who thought it up, but that the staff picnic was an excellent idea and he thought perhaps it would start a new tradition.

"Too bad we can't do this every day," Mrs. Ford told some of the 1,200 enthusiastic guests who were treated to hot dogs, baked beans, potato salad, coleslaw, ice cream, soft drinks and coffee.

## Speaks Up for Detente

(c) New York Times Service

Washington, D.C. — Secretary of State Henry Kissinger said Thursday that reduced tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union had opened the way for much broader East-West collaboration on such crucial global issues as food, energy and protection of the environment.

Testifying on Soviet-American relations at the close of a month long inquiry by the Sen-

## Relaxed Debate

Washington, D. C. — AP — The tension and excitement of the Senate's month long "great national debate" on US-Soviet relations was symbolized Thursday by Sen. Jacob Javits (R. N. Y.). He came late to the Foreign Relations Committee hearing and fell asleep.

Only 10 of the 17 committee members came at all, and not all at the same time.

It was worse in an earlier session, though, when a press gallery of one witnessed a single senator question a sole witness before a solitary yawning police guard.

ate Foreign Relations Committee, Kissinger strongly defended the policy of the Nixon and Ford administrations in pursuing better relations with Moscow.

In a largely philosophical 10,000 word statement, Kissinger coupled his hopes that Russia and America would pay more attention in the future to "humane concerns" with a allies would continue to be protected and American defenses would not be cut unilaterally.

Sen. Clifford Case (R-N. J.) was the most dubious on the value of detente. He said it was his impression that "the gains in detente have accrued to the Soviet side." He said the Soviet Union had been largely responsible for last fall's Middle East war and had spurred the Arabs to launch the oil embargo against the US and he said "we're almost too grateful for relatively small concessions."

Kissinger disagreed saying: "I believe that on balance, if anything the gains of detente have been more in our favor than in the opposite direction." He said the Russians had helped the US extricate itself from Vietnam and had shown restraint in many areas, including central Europe. He predicted new action on Jewish emigration within a week.

more-for-the-

# Ron Nessen—new press secretary for the president

By Richard L. Madden  
New York Times Service

**Washington, D.C.**  
Back in early 1970, the name of Ron Nessen, an NBC correspondent covering urban affairs in Washington, was submitted to the White House for appointment as public affairs director of the Food and Drug Administration.

The Nixon White House, without explanation to the agency, refused to approve the appointment.

On Friday, President Ford walked into the briefing room at the White House and announced that Ronald Harold Nessen had been appointed press secretary to the president.

And to emphasize the difference between himself and former President Richard M. Nixon's press secretary, the 40-year-old Nessen, with Mr. Ford at his side, told reporters, "I am a Ron, but not a Zie-

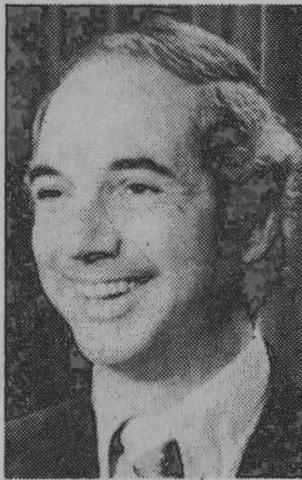
gler."

The trim, dark-haired Nessen is the first television reporter to become a White House press secretary. He steps into the \$42,500-a-year job that J. F. terHorst left on Sept. 8 in protest against Mr. Ford's pardon of Nixon.

"I will never knowingly lie to you, never knowingly mislead the White House press corps," Nessen said. "If I do," he went on, "you'd be justified in questioning my usefulness in this job."

He said his concept of the highly visible job of press secretary was that he did not always have to agree with the president or be a salesman for the president, but that he would try to get as much news as possible to the American people.

"I've been assured I will," he added.



Ronald Nessen

Nessen described himself as apolitical and said he last voted for president in 1960 — for John F. Kennedy. He said he would try to emulate the "knowledge and information" dispensed by William D. Moyers, who was President Johnson's press secretary, the good humor of Pierre Salinger, who was Kennedy's press secretary, and terHorst, for the re-

spect he won from reporters as Mr. Ford's first press secretary.

"I know it's too late for a honeymoon, but I hope we can at least have a trial reconciliation," he said in paraphrasing Mr. Ford's remarks to Congress on Aug. 12.

Nessen began covering Mr. Ford as vice president late last year and accompanied him on most of the 118,000 miles that Mr. Ford traveled. Mr. Ford said he had admired Nessen's skill and objectivity and had "enjoyed his company."

They developed a close rapport on the long trips, although Nessen peppered Mr. Ford with difficult questions, particularly on Watergate, at news conferences across the country, and displayed some irreverence.

Once Mr. Ford arrived at his airplane in mid-sum-

mer, dripping wet with perspiration, and explained that the air-conditioning in his limousine had broken and the Secret Service agents had refused to let him open the windows.

"What are you complaining about, Jerry?," Nessen called out. "It's still bullet-proof, isn't it."

Nessen said he had been contacted 10 days ago by a White House recruiter who asked if he was interested in the press secretary's job. He said he later talked with a White

House adviser, whom he did not identify, and was offered the job Thursday by Mr. Ford.

Nessen was born in Washington on May 25, 1934, and majored in History at American University. He worked for United Press International in Washington from 1956 until 1962, when he joined NBC.

He covered the White House during Johnson's tenure until 1965, when he went to Vietnam.

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## The case of the terrific trenchcoat: Ziplined "Cody" by Harbor Master

The problem: How to look bold and adventuresome while staying comfortably dry and warm. The solution: Have John Weitz design the "Cody" for you. The facts: Black Dacron/cotton "sailcloth" with white stitching everywhere. Epaulets, coachman collar, full belt, big pockets, cape back. Inside story: Warm, bright red





AP Wirephoto

Ron Nessen, who has been serving as White House correspondent for NBC television news, was named President Ford's press secretary today. Nessen is shown in his Bethesda, Md., home reading the morning paper with his year-old son, Edward.

## NBC's Ron Nessen Named Press Secretary By Ford

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Ford personally introduced former NBC correspondent Ron Nessen as his press secretary today. Nessen promised never to knowingly mislead or lie to White House reporters.

Nessen, 40, told newsmen as Ford stood beside him that in his view "a press secretary doesn't always have to agree with the President."

THIS WAS AN indirect reference to the resignation Sept. 8 of Ford's first press secretary J.F. ~~to~~ ~~Horst~~, who quit in protest against the pardon for former President Richard Nixon.

Nessen said, "I don't expect to be a salesman for the President" but rather work to get out as much White House news as possible to the people.

Describing himself as apo-

litical, he said he last voted for President John F. Kennedy in 1960.

Nessen was assigned to NBC's White House staff when Ford succeeded Nixon on Aug. 9.

HE HAD traveled 118,000 miles with Ford while covering his eight months as vice president, developing a rapport with Ford and his top aides.

That friendship has been displayed on social occasions since Ford became President.

For example, Nessen and his wife, Cindy, were guests at Ford's first state dinner, with Mrs. Nessen and Ford drawing applause when they did a fast dance to the pop tune "Bad, Bad Leroy Brown."

On Aug. 25, Ford was a

guest at a poolside party the Nessens gave for newsmen and Ford aides who were veterans of his vice presidential tenure.

NESSEN JOINED NBC in 1962, covering Lyndon Johnson's administration before transferring to Vietnam in 1965. There he suffered chest wounds from a grenade fragment while covering the Vietnam battlefield.

Subsequently, Nessen reported for NBC from Europe, Latin America, Asia and Africa before returning to the United States for the 1968 political campaigns.

He was the network's urban affairs correspondent before his coverage of the investigation and resignation of Vice President Spiro T. Agnew, an assignment that was followed by his coverage of Ford as vice president.



NBC Newsmen

# WHITE HOUSE JOB GOES TO NESSEN?

WASHINGTON (AP) — Ron Nessen, White House correspondent for NBC television news, has agreed to become President Ford's press secretary, sources report.

Announcement of Nessen's appointment was scheduled for today, formally climaxing Ford's intensive search for a successor to Jerald F. TerHorst, who resigned Sept. 8 to protest the pardon of Richard M. Nixon.

Contacted Thursday night at his home, Nessen declined to confirm he had accepted the post. "I've talked to them about the job," he said. "Any announcement will have to come from the White House."

But two reliable sources said Nessen had agreed to join Ford's staff after receiving high-level assurances he would have full and ready access to the President and would be kept posted on policy decisions as they develop.

Nessen, 40, was assigned to NBC's White House staff when Ford succeeded Nixon as President on Aug. 9.

He had traveled 118,000 miles with Ford while covering his eight months as vice president, developing a rapport with Ford and his top aides.

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RON NESSEN  
Ends Ford Search

and Ford drawing applause when they did a fast dance to the pop tune "Bad, Bad Leroy Brown."

On Aug. 25, Ford was a guest at a poolside party the Nesses gave for newsmen and Ford aides who were veterans of his vice presidential tenure.

Nessen joined NBC in 1962, covering Lyndon Johnson's administration before transferring to Vietnam in 1965. There he suffered chest wounds from a grenade fragment while covering the Vietnam battle front.

Subsequently, Nessen reported for NBC from Europe, Latin America, Asia and Africa before returning to the United States for the 1968 political campaigns.

# Can Ron Nessen make it as press secretary?

9.30.74

By Godfrey Sperling Jr.

Christian Science Monitor



**Washington**  
In talking to a number of newsmen on the prospects of Ron Nessen, two dominant strains emerge in their views on the new presidential press secretary:

1. They think Mr. Nessen has a much better chance of surviving on the job simply because Jerry terHorst delivered such a severe blow to the President when he resigned within a relatively few days after taking on the assignment.

Comments columnist Roscoe Drummond in this vein: "Ron Nessen is going into it [the job] under more favorable circumstances than anyone in recent memory."

Hearst bureau chief William Theis (who was offered the press-secretary job and turned it down) makes this observation: "The President probably has learned something by his failure to tell Jerry terHorst about the pardon decision. Further, Ron comes in forewarned. He knows all the hazards. This should help him a great deal."

Columnist Joseph Kraft puts it this way: "I think it is going to be tougher for people in the White House to lie now. It will be easier for Ron Nessen to insist on the truth — because of Jerry terHorst's leaving."

2. There also seems to be a widely shared view among Washington correspondents that right from the outset Mr. Nessen should meet with the White House press corps and explain

how he is going to deal with questions on subjects where he has knowledge — but where the President has told him he can provide no information.

Robert Boyd, Knight Newspapers bureau chief, says on this subject:

"The press secretary should sit down with the press, right at the beginning, and say, 'There will be moments when I simply cannot say anything. At such times in answer to your questions I will say, 'I cannot confirm or deny,' or 'I cannot say anything at this time,' or, perhaps, 'no comment.' But you must not take such utterances as confirmation. If you do, sometimes your stories will be wrong."

"Now if Ron sets such a rule and carefully abides by it, it will work. We will soon see that we can trust him. If he is truthful and consistent — he can overcome this technicality."

The newsmen interviewed stressed the "toughness" of the press-secretary's job.

Peter Lisagor, Chicago Daily News bureau chief, sees the press-secretary position as being "essentially that of propagandist for the President." "He works for the President, not the press," Mr. Lisagor says. "He's never going to be able to satisfy both. Therefore, he must be exceedingly tough to survive. I suspect Ron is tougher than many of us suspect. I think he has steel in him."

Mr. Kraft sees the assignment as an "extremely difficult" one. He views

the daily press briefing, where the press secretary answers questions, as somewhat of an ideological skirmish. He says the White House news corps had come to represent the "value setters" in this country and that "for several years now" this kind of representation has resulted in warfare between the presidency and the press at these briefings. "And unless there would be some detente," Mr. Kraft adds, "no press secretary could get along very well."

But these key Washington newsmen all agree that while the job of presidential press secretary is an "impossible" one in many ways, the right person still could perform satisfactorily in that role. "The job is impossible," says Mr. Boyd, "because serving two masters is essentially incompatible. How do you please the one without displeasing the other? Yet it can be done."

Mel Elfin, Newsweek's Washington bureau chief, thinks Mr. Nessen may now face a less combative press. "We [the press]," he says, "turned the press briefings into a bear pit in order to deal with Nixon and the dishonesty we were facing. We didn't like to do it — but it was necessary. Now, under Nessen, we very well may turn the briefing back into what it normally is — a forum for soliciting information and for offering information."

Mr. Theis cautions against grading Mr. Nessen's effectiveness too quickly. "Basically," he says, "I feel

that you must let anyone be on that job for a while before you make a judgment. Ron is young and he is an experienced newsman. He may very well make it." Mr. Theis adds:

"It is one of the toughest jobs in government — no question about that. Whether Ron succeeds or not all depends on his relationship with the man: whether he has a good relationship with the President."

*Mr. Sperling is chief of the Washington bureau of The Christian Science Monitor*

## Readers write

### 'U.S. dilemma in Korea'

To The Christian Science Monitor:

Your editorial entitled "U.S. dilemma in Korea" following the tragic death of Korea's First Lady is, in my view, inhumane. Every comment fumes imprecation and yet not a tinge of condolence over the death of the First Lady of one of the closest allies of the United States.

Potomac, Md. Harry K. Oh

Letters expressing readers' views are welcome. Each receives editorial consideration though only a selection can be published and none individually acknowledged. All are subject to condensation.



The Watergate Burglars  
Tell Their Story



In Sunday's  
Viewpoint Section



**Lookin' Good**

Sunny and warm with a chance of showers. Details, Page 2A.)

FRIDAY'S TEMPERATURES

7 a.m. 81	1 p.m. 89	7 p.m. 85
9 a.m. 83	3 p.m. 89	9 p.m. 84
11 a.m. 87	5 p.m. 87	11 p.m. 82

**The Miami Herald**

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**5,500 Hondurans  
Are Feared Dead  
In Wake of Fifi**

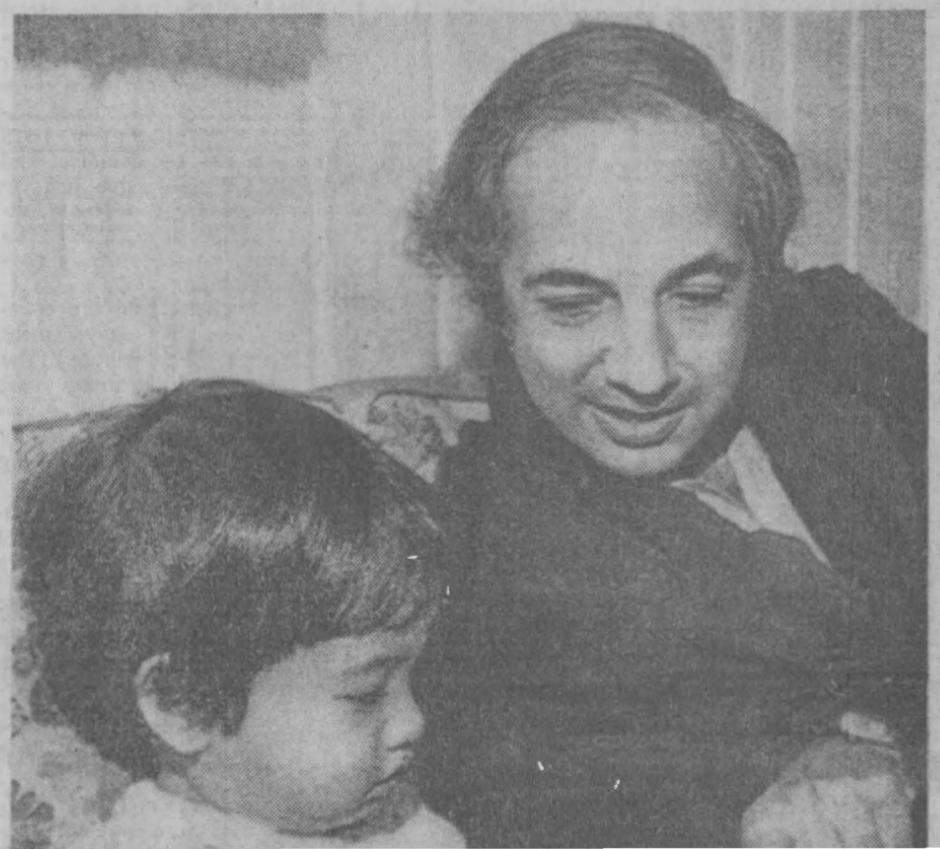
**National  
Emergency  
Is Declared**

By DON BOHNING  
Herald Latin America Editor

The death toll has begun to climb sharply as flood waters recede in hurricane-devastated Honduras, and the final count could run into the thousands, the Honduras National Emergency Committee said Friday night.

United Press International, reporting from the coastal city of Tegucigalpa, quoted a committee spokesman as saying that 5,500 persons were known dead.

POLICE in the northern town of Choloma estimate that as many as 4,000 vil-



# 5,500 Hondurans Are Feared Dead In Wake of Fifi

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POLICE IN the northern town of Choloma estimate that as many as 4,000 villagers died there when Hurricane Fifi smashed across the Honduran coast this week; the Associated Press reported from Guatemala City in neighboring Guatemala.

In an earlier report, AP had quoted the committee's Maj. Rioverdo Regalado as saying that the town of Sanjillo, population about 1,000, had been "destroyed by flood waters."

He said most of the peo-



—Associated Press

This Story Is About Daddy, Ron Nessen Tells Son Edward, 1 1/2 ... it predicted he would be named press secretary, and he was

## Press Aides: I'll Never Mislead

WASHINGTON — (AP) — Ron Nessen, a White House reporter for NBC, became President Ford's new press secretary Friday. With Ford standing beside him, Nessen said he would never knowingly mislead or lie to the White House press corps.

After being introduced in the White House briefing room by the President, Nessen, 40, declared his belief that the first duty of a presidential press secretary is to "get as much news as possible . . . to the American people."

Nessen had been on the staff of the National Broadcasting Co. since 1962. He came to the White House as an NBC correspondent when Ford became President in August. He had

# I'll Never Lie or Mislead, New Ford Press Aide Vows

From Page 1

traveled more than 100,000 miles covering Ford as vice president for the radio-television network.

**HE REPLACES** Jerald terHorst, a veteran Detroit newspaperman, who resigned after Ford's pardon of former President Nixon, saying it was a matter of conscience because he disagreed with the decision. TerHorst also said he felt important information on presidential decisions had been withheld from him.

Taking the press room podium after Ford introduced him, Nessen said he hoped he would be able to earn as much respect from the press as terHorst had during his brief time as press secretary.

"I think it's probably too

late to go back to a honeymoon," Nessen told the reporters, "but maybe we could have a trial reconciliation."

Ford said he had the opportunity to get to know Nessen very well during 57 vice presidential trips that Nessen covered. He said he admired his skill and objectivity and "enjoyed his company." Ford also described his new press secretary as having a "superb reputation" and pointed out that Nessen had experience in electronic media as well as the press. Nessen worked for six years with United Press International Washington before joining NBC.

**RICHARD C. Wald**, president of NBC News, said: "NBC is delighted that Ron Nessen has been chosen as the new White House press secretary. In the 12 years

he has been with NBC News Ron had proved himself one of our finest journalists . . ."

Nessen, in his first pronouncements, said: "I hope the White House press corps is ready for another Ron," a reference to Nixon press secretary Ronald Ziegler. "I am a Ron, but not a Ziegler, I can tell you that."

Nessen added: "I will never knowingly lie to the White House press corps. I will never knowingly mislead the White House press corps, and I think if I ever do you would be justified in questioning my continued usefulness in the job."

He said he does not think that a press secretary always has to agree with a president's decision. He said he felt it was his role to report actions of the President, how and why they were made.

**AND HE** said he thought the press and the presidential spokesman "both have the same aim, which is to get as much news as possible on what goes on in this place to the American people."

He said, "I've been assured that I will know what is going on" and will be in daily contact with the President.

Nessen described himself as "apolitical," saying he had been covering most of the political campaigns of the last 15 years and had no affiliation with any political party.

Nessen cited two former press secretaries as models that he will try to emulate: Pierre Salinger and Bill Moyers.



Associated Press

*Tries to strive for knowledge, humor and respect*  
(Mr. Nessen being presented by President Ford yesterday)

## New Press Secretary

### Ronald Harold Nessen

By RICHARD L. MADDEN  
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Sept. 20—In early 1970, the name of Ron Nessen, a National Broadcasting Company correspondent covering urban affairs in Washington, was submitted to the White House for appointment as a public affairs director for the Food and Drug Administration. The Nixon White House refused to approve the appointment, without an explanation to the F.D.A.

Man  
in the  
News

Today, President Ford walked into the briefing room at the White House and announced that Ronald Harold Nessen had been appointed press secretary to the President.

And to emphasize the shift from the White House with Richard M. Nixon as President and Ronald L. Ziegler as press secretary, the 40-year-old Mr. Nessen, with Mr. Ford at his side, told reporters, "I am a Ron, but not a Ziegler."

The trim, dark-haired Mr. Nessen is the first television newsman to become a White House press secretary. He steps into the \$42,500-a-year job that J. F. terHorst left on Sept. 8 in protest against Mr. Ford's pardon of Mr. Nixon.

"I will never knowingly lie to you, never knowingly mislead the White House press corps," Mr. Nessen said. "If I do," he added, "you'd be justified in questioning my usefulness in this job."

#### His Job Concept

He said his concept of the highly visible job of press secretary was that he did not always have to agree with the President or be a salesman for the President, but that he would try to get as much news as possible to the American people.

"I've been assured I will," he added.

Mr. Nessen described himself as apolitical and said he last voted for President in 1960—for John F. Kennedy. He said he would try to emulate the "knowledge and information" dispensed by William D. Moyers, who was President Johnson's press secretary; the good humor of Pierre Salinger, who was President Kennedy's press secretary; and Mr. terHorst for the respect in which he was held by reporters as Mr. Ford's first press secretary.

"I know it's too late for a honeymoon, but I hope we can at least have a trial reconciliation," he said in paraphrasing Mr. Ford's remarks to Congress on Aug. 12.

Mr. Nessen began covering Mr. Ford as Vice President late last year, and accompanied him on most of the 118,000 miles that Mr. Ford traveled. Mr. Ford said he had admired Mr. Nessen's skill and objectivity and had "enjoyed his company."

They developed a close rapport on the long trips, although Mr. Nessen peppered Mr. Ford with difficult questions, particularly on Watergate at news conferences across the country, and displayed some irreverence.

Mr. Nessen and his wife were guests at Mr. Ford's first state dinner and the President and Mrs. Nessen drew applause when they danced to the pop tune, "Bad, Bad Leroy Brown." Last month, Mr. Ford attended a

poolside party at Mr. Nessen's home in suburban Bethesda with reporters and aides who had traveled together when Mr. Ford was Vice President.

Mr. Nessen said he was called a week ago by a White House recruiter who asked if he was interested in the press secretary's job. He said he later talked with a White House adviser, whom he did not identify, and was offered the job yesterday.

Mr. Nessen was born in Washington on May 25, 1934. He majored in history at American University and worked for United Press International in Washington from 1956 until 1962, when he joined NBC.

#### Wounded in Vietnam

He covered the White House under President Johnson until 1965, when he went to Vietnam. He was wounded by a grenade fragment in 1966, returned to Washington and then went to New York, where he did a five-minute daily report on Vietnam for the "Today" show. He did a series of foreign assignments for NBC in 1967, and returned to Washington for the 1968 Presidential campaign.

He is married to the former Young Hi Song of Seoul, South Korea, whom he met in Vietnam. They have a son, Edward, who is 18 months old. He also has an 18-year-old daughter, Caren, by a previous marriage.

Colleagues who have worked with Mr. Nessen at NBC describe him as a solid, professional newsman.

He also has a quick temper, according to a friend. One friend recalled an incident in an Austin, Tex., hotel when Mr. Nessen, while covering President Johnson, threw a glass against a plate glass mirror in a moment of anger.

"He has managed to lengthen that short fuse over the years," a former associate said today.





By Frank Johnston—The Washington Post

Ron Nessen: "I've had an itch for years now to be a participant in events, rather than an observer."

## A Ron, but Not a Ziegler, In the Maws Of the Machine

By Joel Dreyfuss

When Ron Nessen was a Sunday night disc jockey on American University's radio station he had his parents and sister drive around the city with their car radio turned on to determine how far from the campus he could be heard.

"He had a built-in audience with us," said his mother, Ida Nessen, sitting in the living room of her Silver Spring apartment with mementoes and photographs of her famous son scattered about her.

"I'm a Jewish mother and I'm really proud," she confided. "I was fortunate Ron always knew which direction he wanted to go."

Mrs. Nessen's famous son may have known from an early age where he wanted to go, but it's doubtful he had any inkling way back then that one day he would be the presidential press secretary, stepping into the slightly worn but suddenly vacated shoes of Jerald F. terHorst, who quit over President Ford's decision to pardon Richard Nixon.

After 12 years at NBC, the inevitable question to Nessen boils down simply to "Why?" Why does an

established correspondent leave a comfortable position and accept a post that often makes him appear like raw meat being thrown at the hungry wolves?

"I've had an itch for years now," he said in an interview, "maybe because of my age (40), to be a participant in events rather than an observer. Second, more out of curiosity than anything else. I knew, no matter how much I dug, that I didn't get to see how the machine works."

To an observer unaccustomed to White House briefings, Nessen seemed to have stepped quickly into the maws of the machine. When he was appointed by President Ford he announced that he was "a Ron but not a Ziegler," and that he would never "knowingly mislead" the press.

But after his first briefing, the reaction of White House reporters to his performance seemed mixed and the press corps seemed to be falling into various camps in its assessment of him.

"It was a kind of smart-assed effort," said one reporter. Others were kinder, assigning Nessen's behavior

See NESSEN, M3 Col. 1





By Frank Johnston—The Washington Post

Ron Nessen: "I've had an itch for years now to be a participant in events, rather than an observer."

# A Ron, but Not a Ziegler, In the Maws Of the Machine

By Joel Dreyfuss

When Ron Nessen was a Sunday night disc jockey on American University's radio station he had his parents and sister drive around the city with their car radio turned on to determine how far from the campus he could be heard.

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See NESSEN, M3 Col. 1



Nessen, with a new podium, conducts his first press briefing on Sept. 24, and talks with President Ford.

# A Ron--Not a Ziegler--in the Maws of the Machine

NESSEN From M1

to the problems of the job itself. "The biggest problem for any press secretary is Gerald Ford," said another newsman. "He doesn't tell his press secretary anything."

Another colleague put it this way: "I wrote him a note saying it was a good briefing and that, unfortunately, it will be downhill from here."

After a week of close involvement with the machine, Nessen was ready to admit that he had learned a few things he hadn't expected. "I didn't know how much work there was," he said.

If Ida Nessen is any expert on her son that will be the least of his worries. "He loves to work under pressure," she said.

Nessen is in the middle of the 11 o'clock briefing, the daily White House press lounge ritual. It is actually already well past noon.

This is only his second briefing and there are some signs that he is nervous. He wears a blue suit with a red and black checked tie.

Reporters are asking some hard questions about funds and services provided to former President Nixon. The questions are harsh and pointed and punctuated by occasional mumbling from the crowd when the newspeople deem the answers unsatisfactory.

Nessen looks down at first, with his hands in his pockets, and sways back and forth on his feet. As the briefing develops he crosses his arms on his chest. At several points he becomes annoyed at the cross talk and stops to ask pointedly: "What was that? What was that?"

Despite his promises of candor, he has already fallen into the traditional answers of the job. "I think we'll have an answer for you this afternoon." "I can neither confirm nor deny that." "We don't have anything to announce in that area today."

The assessment of Nessen by his colleagues is that he is, by far, more cooperative than Ron Ziegler was, that he does come back with answers when they are promised.

Some are not flattering in their professional assessments of his work as a newsman. "He never seemed that pugnacious a reporter," said one who traveled with Nessen when they were assigned to cover Ford as Vice President. He repeats the rumor that Nessen was not the first choice as a replacement for terHorst.

But Tom Brokaw, NBC's White House correspondent, and Nessen's associate, speaks highly of his abilities. "I think he's strong-willed. He has coupled that with quite a sense of humor that is self-deprecating," said Brokaw. "In our brief joint tenure I found him very easy to get along with at a time when people were looking for friction between us."

On the appointment of Nessen as press secretary: "I think it's a unique



By Frank Johnston—The Washington Post

"I don't feel the press secretary has to agree with every decision the President makes."

form of flattery that someone has confidence in you personally and professionally to handle that."

Nessen's liking for Ford was well known, Brokaw says, but it did not affect Nessen's reporting, in his view Nessen "was very pointed in his questioning and very tough in his reporting."

On his first day, Nessen had the massive podium that Ziegler had used replaced by a lighter type with a single thin tubular base, a symbol of his hoped-for detente with the press.

"I didn't detect any special antagonism toward me," he said after the first week of briefings.

"In the past five years there has grown up a certain skepticism," he said. "It's probably a healthy thing for the press. Seven days ago I was out there doing the same thing."

"My plan is to do what I said I was going to do. Over time I hope people will begin to understand what I'm trying to do here."

Nessen says one of the most pleasant surprises of the job at this point is the amount of advice that is being sought from him. He meets with White House senior advisers every morning and sees the President before each press briefing.

"The disadvantage of taking the job could be that you become closely identified as a defender and salesman of a political philosophy."

"I don't feel the press secretary has to agree with every decision the President makes," he said, a significant difference from terHorst's position. "He (the President) said to me, 'If I can't sell 'em. You can't sell 'em.'"

terHorst's resignation hangs not only over Nessen, but over the White House. There are indications that Ford will be more careful about putting Nessen in a position where he could find himself compromised.

"I have talked to the people here,"

Nessen has said, "and they understand what was the problem with Jerry terHorst and I don't think it will happen again."

Whatever Nessen's intentions, there are indications that the post will not be held easily. Only last Monday he encountered what he called "his roughest briefing." The subject was a Time magazine column by Hugh Sidey charging that Nixon had offered to "return" the pardon.

"As the President described it to me it was just a passing reference and it wasn't taken seriously," he said, recounting the event. But the press corps didn't seem to accept Nessen's explanation and questioned his judgment of the event as a newsman.

Former Johnson administration press secretary Bill Moyers, recently wrote of Nessen's position:

"The reporter in him will tug one way while the President's interest tugs another, and he will feel the acute symptoms of being caught between a President and a press corps both trying to do their duty while his duty is to serve them both."

Ron Nessen is one of those rare native Washingtonians at the White House. He was born here in the city in 1934. His parents lived in Shepherd Park in a house at 14th and Juniper Streets NW.

Around the corner lived Steve Early, who was Franklin D. Roosevelt's press secretary, and his children played with Nessen, his mother recalls.

"At first we thought he was interested in theater because he participated in all the community plays," she said.

Nessen's interest in journalism and broadcast showed up early. "He always read the papers," said Mrs. Nessen. "He bought his own microphone and set it up in the library and read part of the newspaper into it."

"When I was a kid," Nessen re-

called, "I was an avid fan of radio news. I remember listening to Lowell Thomas saying, 'This is Lowell Thomas reporting from the roof of the world in Lhasa, Tibet,' and I said that's what I want to do."

"All parents in that era, the Depression, wanted their children to be doctors, lawyers, etc.," said Ida Nessen. "A couple of friends of ours, who didn't have any boys, tried to get Ron to go to law school. They said they'd make him a partner after he got out."

Apparently, one of Nessen's early characteristics was an unusual confidence about what he was going to do and the offers didn't seem to sway him. "He would always listen to you politely," said his mother, "and then go ahead and do what he wanted."

His father, Fred, who died two years ago, was from Boston. He was a rugged, athletic man. His mother recalled an unusually heavy snowstorm, which prompted his father to reminisce about skiing in New England. Ron chimed up that he had seen three pairs of skis for sale in the want ads.

"They piled into the station wagon and went looking for the man. I don't know how they got through that snow but they bought the skis and spent their time skiing on the hill at Colesville Road."

During Nessen's first year at American University, he apparently didn't find school much of a challenge and he took off for his first job at a 250-watt radio station in Martinsburg, W.Va. After a year there he came back to Washington, tried unsuccessfully to break into New York and came back home. He eventually returned to American University and received a B.A. in American History.

His mother has a newspaper clipping of him working at WARL in Virginia, where he did a program of what was then called "hillbilly" music. Nessen was known as "Old Hickory" Ron Nessen.

One of Nessen's jobs when he came back was a stint at the Montgomery County Sentinel.

His first break there came when he went to a meeting of parents opposed to school integration and reported that one of the rabble-rousers had waved a gun at the meeting.

A UPI editor called Nessen and asked him if he wanted to work for the wire service. Nessen went over, but his editors probably didn't know he was doing a number of other things.

"I think he had about four jobs at the time," said his mother. One of them was for a collection agency, which he gave up, she recalled, "after a dog took a hunk out of his chest."

Nessen worked in UPI's Washington bureau until 1962 when he joined NBC, covered the White House and went on to assignments in Vietnam, where he was wounded by grenade fragments; Mexico; Bangladesh and Nicaragua.

"I was sort of their fireman at



By Linda Wheeler—The Washington Post

Young Hi Song "Cindy" Nessen and 18-month-old Edward.

NBC," said Nessen. "I always seemed to get the wars and the earthquakes."

Nessen had married the former Sandra Lee Frey in 1955, when he went to work for the Sentinel. They were divorced in 1964. They had one daughter, Caren, now 18. Nessen is reluctant to talk about that first marriage and indicates that some bitter feelings remain.

He was on assignment in Vietnam when he met his present wife, Young Hi Song, a native of Pusan, South Korea. He calls her "Cindy."

"I met him in Saigon in 1965," said Mrs. Nessen in an interview at their Bethesda home. "He was covering the war and I was touring East Asia as a singer."

A Korean cameraman who had seen Young Hi Song on television introduced her to Nessen. "I thought he was very handsome when I saw him," she said. "I knew he was a very sweet person. He'd go off to cover the war for a week and when he wasn't back on the day he was supposed to be back I'd have a terrible feeling and worry."

They were both supposed to leave Vietnam and head in different directions, but as the romance developed each of them postponed their departures until they eventually got married.

"Ron is trying so hard to find time to spend with Edward," the Nessens

18-month-old son," she said. "With the pressures of the new job, that hasn't been easy."

Since their marriage, Mrs. Nessen has given up her singing, except for an occasional performance at a private party.

She admits that she feels certain pressures because of her background. "Just because I'm foreign and this is such a special job, I'm more self-conscious about doing the right thing. If I were American, it wouldn't matter."

The new position has had its effects on Nessen and on his lifestyle. Now he is picked up and dropped off in the evenings by limousine. He used to make do with one car and a motorcycle.

"Cindy wanted the car and I told her 'OK, get me a motorcycle.' I was going through my second childhood at the time," he laughed. He rode the tiny Honda 70 to NBC's studios on Nebraska Avenue NW and later to the White House. "One of the best investments we ever made," he confided.

Nessen's admirers and detractors generally believe he has the proper mental constitution for the job. Said his mother: "He called me yesterday and told me not to forget to tell you how nasty he is. He likes to think of himself as a tough guy. Actually, he's just stubborn."

## Says Nessen: 'We've Got to Be Able to Laugh at Ourselves'

By Lynn Rosellini  
Washington Star Staff Writer

Maybe it doesn't bother him at all. He is sitting, tanned and smiling in gray Raleigh's slacks, with his feet propped on a lacquered White House coffee table.

"Maybe it's just wishful thinking," Ron Nessen says casually of the controversy.

"The whole idea of taking the press secretary's temperature every day is a very inside Washington story," Nessen says of the attacks on his credibility.

A lot of people who have worked closely to Nessen feel he is in big trouble these days: that he is considered a liability to the President, that he will be out of a job if Ford wins, that nobody in the White House tells him anything anymore.

But if any of this bothers Nessen, there is no way of telling now, as he sips coffee from a styrofoam cup in his office and continues smoothly and coolly. "If you get five miles out of town," he says, "nobody gives a damn . . ."

Just a week earlier, Nessen had been awash with worry. He had refused to be interviewed at all, and had told several reporters that the request for an interview was part of a plot to seek "revenge" against him. "Do you know what my pet peeve is?" he had said. "It's these guys who talk about me off the record. Who run me down but are too gutless and chicken to do it to my face or have their names used."

But now Nessen has changed his mind, and he is sitting and talking good-naturedly about his second anniversary as White House press secretary, which he celebrated Monday.

Ron Nessen, Nice Guy: a compassionate, unpretentious, low-key, warm-hearted man, thoroughly professional, selfless and well-prepared in his job.

Or . . .

Ron Nessen, Bad Guy: an arrogant, petty, deceitful, classless individual who is one of the most inept presidential press secretaries in recent history.

It all depends on who's talking. Here are a few glimpses.

### The Reporter

It was summer, 1966, and a battalion of the First Air Cavalry moved slowly along a Vietnamese highway toward operations at Mangyang Pass. One hundred-plus degree heat shimmered off the road, and occasional fire from Vietcong snipers sent men scurrying for cover. But Ron Nessen, a war correspondent for NBC, had only one thought on his mind.

"How soon before we get there?" Nessen excitedly asked anyone who would listen. "Let's get up to where it's happening."

"He charged about as hard as anybody I knew out there," said Jack Fern, Nessen's producer in Vietnam. "He was a hell of a brave man."

See NESSEN, B-4



on the  
file

# NESSEN

Continued from B-1

Nessen was wounded by grenade fragments in 1966 and later returned to Washington, where his assignments in the next eight years included covering Vice President Gerald Ford. But Nessen's performance in the White House press corps never matched his reputation as a war correspondent. He was considered a mediocre reporter, a perpetual second-stringer. "None of us ever got scooped by him," a reporter recalls.

One former White House press office staffer remembers Nessen like this: "Ron was obnoxious as a reporter. He seemingly harassed for the sake of harassing. He was always being persistent in insignificant things and haggling over little technical things."

## The Early Days

On his third day as press secretary, Nessen recalls returning numbly to his office after a particularly acrimonious briefing.

"Was I like that when I was a reporter?" he had asked in awe of Connie Gerard, a veteran press office staffer.

"Yes," replied Gerard. "You were."

But Nessen adjusted quickly. Two former White House press staffers, Tom deCair and Robert Mead, recalled Nessen characterizing his former colleagues as "a bunch of dummies" in the 7:30 a.m. staff meetings in the days shortly after he became press secretary.

"He used to sit there in the morning meetings and tell us how dumb they were," said Mead, who resigned his White House post as television adviser last month after a dispute with Nessen. DeCair added: "Ron really did a quick flip-flop, and he liked it. There were certain TV people that he would constantly run down at any opportunity, in a humorous way. But he ran down a variety of people, not just TV people."

If Nessen considered reporters "dummies," the feelings were mutual. And in the hostile atmosphere of the post-Watergate press room, reporters questioned Nessen relentlessly.

"He used to come home at night and talk about quitting all the time," recalls his wife, Cindy. Mrs. Nessen says that her husband was "very thin-skinned" at first and deeply troubled over criticism in the press. But she says he decided not to quit because "he didn't want to look like a loser."

## The Showman

Cindy Nessen had warned him against it. "You're nuts to do it, the way they've been making fun of the President and all," she recalls telling her husband. "That would make you a part of it."

But Nessen had replied: "We've got to be able to laugh at ourselves."

So Nessen went ahead and hosted NBC-TV's Saturday Night Live show last April. And later, he was reportedly severely dressed down by White House officials for his appearance on the show, which habitually makes fun of President Ford.

It was not the first time that Nessen's wisecracking penchant for showmanship got him in trouble. But the White House press office can apparently be a stage that is difficult to resist . . .

When Nessen was at NBC, he recalled, he didn't even have a secretary. His telephone calls to government officials often went unreturned. But when he went to the White House, something happened. "I started realizing that if you push a button and the secretary picks up and you say, 'I want so and so,' then you get . . ."

a job where you can get anybody you want."

He started realizing other things, too. The national news media reported his every public word and action, the gossip columns chronicled his social life, and the party invitations — from the British Embassy, the Iranian Embassy, the Pan American Union — piled up on his secretary's desk. And of course, the celebrities were everywhere: Robert Redford, Vicki Carr, Liz Taylor, Candy Bergen . . .

And Ron Nessen loved it all. He says he doubts now whether he'd ever return to daily journalism, though perhaps "some form of journalism." "He says that now he's been on the inside, he knows that all the information he was getting as a reporter was very superficial," says Mrs. Nessen. "He says that he could never go back to that, knowing all the things that go on that reporters aren't told about."

Mrs. Nessen says that her husband has been talking lately about going out to Los Angeles to work in the entertainment field. "He's always had this thing about show business . . ."

## The Flack

It is impossible here to catalogue the reporters' complaints. The Vladivostok trip . . . the China trip . . . the hidden Nixon China report . . . the Kansas City debacle . . . the interviews promised but undelivered . . .

Almost nobody in the White House press corps thinks Nessen is doing his job. He is inept, misleading and poorly versed in issues, they say (although they add that the White House is markedly more open than in the Nixon days).

"He's low on credibility and effectiveness," said Tom Jarriel of ABC-TV.

"Most reporters around there don't consider Nessen a heavyweight," said James Deakin of the St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

"People don't want to ask questions of him because they're not terribly confident of the answers," said James Naughton of the New York Times.

"When you isolate yourself back there and take on the senior adviser role, then you're not doing your job," said Bob Schieffer of CBS-TV.

But Nessen's problems are not all self-made: almost nobody in the White House apparently tells him anything anymore. Sources close to Nessen during the past two years describe the situation like this:

Close presidential advisers like Melvin Laird considered Nessen a liability to Ford as early as last year and felt that he should be fired — an idea that was eventually abandoned. After all, Jerald F. terHorst had resigned the job and a firing would surely be bad for the White House image. But former chief of staff Donald Rumsfeld, as well as Henry Kissinger, began limiting Nessen's access to important policy decisions, and now Nessen is expected to be out of a job if Ford wins in November.

Nessen just smiles when this is repeated. "That's up to the President," he says. "He hasn't said anything to me about it . . ." One senior White



Ron Nessen

. . . Typical pose.

House official agreed with Nessen that no problem exists, and Nessen himself listed his accomplishments:

1. Follow-up questions at news conferences.
2. More personal interviews by President.
3. Personal reportage by Nessen on presidential meetings.
4. Televised news conferences with foreign press.
5. Inclusion of local reporters in regional news conferences.
6. Increased access for TV in pools.

"I am very damn proud of that list of things I gave you . . ." he said. "You have to get out of the briefing room and away from Phil Jones and take a look at the real accomplishments of this administration."

(The name of CBS newsmen Phil Jones, a Nessen antagonist, had not been mentioned to Nessen.)

## The Interview

Sept. 9, 1976: Nessen declines a request for an interview

Sept. 10: Nessen approaches his would-be interviewer, who is speaking with newsmen in the White House press briefing room.

"I'll bet all these guys you're talking to who are running me down are talking off the record, right?" he says. "That really gets me . . . And you're just going to quote the ones who are off the record, aren't you?"

Sept. 14-15: Nessen tells three reporters that the attempts to interview him are part of a plot by the editor of The Star to seek "revenge" against himself and President Ford because the newspaper hasn't received as many presidential interviews as the Washington Post. Nessen charges that the editor deliberately chose a reporter with Democratic family ties to write a biased story, and claims



the reporter told a White House staffer that she "only wanted to know bad things" about Ron Nessen. He repeats the story to other White House staffers.

Sept. 15: Nessen's wife, Cindy, lunches with two reporters.

Sept. 18: Nessen agrees to an interview. Afterward, he repeats his earlier accusations and concludes that the newspaper is trying to "do something outrageous to build circulation" by writing about him.

Sept. 21: Nessen uses the White House switchboard to reach a reporter at home after 11 p.m. His voice on the telephone is near-shouting and shaking with anger. "It's the sleaziest kind of journalism I've ever heard of," says Nessen, who has apparently just learned of his wife's luncheon meeting with reporters.

For several minutes, Nessen bitterly denounces the reporter. He concludes: "I gave you the benefit of the doubt and now I see I was wrong." Then the phone clicks dead.

Nessen also telephones the newspaper's White House correspondent with the same shouted message, threatening to bar The Star from interviewing anyone in the White House.

### The Nice Guy

He is a friendly figure in jeans and sandals, strolling through his Bethesda neighborhood with his 3-year-old son, Edward, on his shoulders, or zooming through the streets with the boy on the back of his Honda 70.

That is how friends and neighbors see Ron Nessen: warm and likable. "He's better than a nice man, he's a concerned man," says Ford's speech coach, Don Penny. Neighbor Betty Martin says: "He is just a delightful person." Nick Kotz, a friend, calls Nessen "very low-key, very unpretentious, with a good sense of humor." And Kotz' wife, Mary Lynn, says: "He has an almost open-eyed enthusiasm for whatever he's doing."

Nessen, they recall, brought his wife's mother and three brothers to the U.S. from Korea. He went out of his way to make newcomer Penny feel at home in the White House. He sleeps on the couch in his office overnight out of dedication to his job. And just last week, he said with concern to his secretary, Janice Barbieri, at the start of a grueling day:

"It's going to be a long day. Do you have a date tonight?"

"I have tickets to La Scala."

"Well, we'd better get you out of here for that."

The attacks on Nessen bother his friends, who say that his show biz, wisecracking enthusiasm hurts him with a press corps that tends to take itself too seriously. "It doesn't offend me at all," said one friend, "but I can see how a reporter could get irritated at that."

Barbieri, who works with Nessen

six days a week, put it this way: "The thing I admire most about him is that he keeps a sense of humor. He doesn't bear grudges . . ."

### A Briefing

It usually begins at 11:30 a.m., when Nessen takes his place behind the walnut lectern in the briefing room, arranges his abundant notes, sips from a glass of ice water, and announces the President's schedule.

Then, for roughly 40 minutes, 50 or more members of the White House press corps argue and press and haggle Nessen in a manner that would sting and shake the toughest of men. Nessen in turn stonewalls and sidesteps. "It's a ritual we all go through," Nessen says. James Naughton, of the New York Times, explains the sometimes bitter questioning this way: "It's hard to resist taking cheap shots when you're frustrated by the lack of information."

A sample from the Sept. 3 briefing: Mr. Nessen: The next campaign trip will be to Ann Arbor the week of Sept. 13, probably to the University of Michigan, and when more details are ready to be announced we will have them for you."

Q: Why is this still so vague?

A: It's not vague. Look, we've had his plans arranged and organized for quite some time. It's our conscious decision, it's the plan that we believe is best designed to win this election, to get across the central theme of this election which is that the President ought to be elected . . .

Q: What's the strategy? What is the strategy? All I'm saying is you're vague about the day, you're vague about the place — "probably" University of Michigan, perhaps during the week of —

A: No, I didn't say "perhaps." I said "the week of."

Q: Ron, what do you mean the central theme of the campaign is that the President ought to be elected? That's the objective, isn't it?

A: I didn't say the central theme. I said —

Q: Yes, you did.

A: What did I say?

Q: The central theme was —

A: I didn't mean the theme. I meant the objective. The objective of the campaign is to have the President elected . . .

### The Villain

Nothing illustrates Ron Nessen's character more clearly than the Bob Mead incident, say Nessen's critics. Mead, President Ford's former television adviser, never got along well with Nessen, and two months ago, he quietly submitted his resignation to White House chief of staff Richard B. Cheney.

Nessen, instead of offering the usual "we'll-miss-him" gratuity, bit-

terly attacked Mead when reporters telephoned him for reaction. "It is no secret that Mead has been under fire in the White House for the past six months," Nessen told two reporters. "I had saved him several times but I decided now just to keep hands off."

Yet two days later, Nessen refused in public to own up to the angry remarks he had made in private by telephone the day before — even though the morning papers had carried a full account. "He took the high road, said he didn't want to talk," observed one veteran correspondent. "Class is not a word anybody would ever use to describe Ron Nessen."

Nessen's detractors describe him as arrogant, superficial and egotistical — a far different picture than that offered by his friends and neighbors. "He's kind of abrasive," said Jack Fern, his ex-producer, who likes Nessen. "His current status has made him a little pompous. He's not the most lovable man in the world."

Bob Mead makes no secret of his disdain for Nessen. "He used to lie to the press," he said. "He'd want to punish certain members of the press corps for stories they'd written."

Mead says that Nessen used to take the briefing papers Mead had prepared for the President and have them retyped, replacing Mead's name with his own. Aldo Beckman of the Chicago Tribune recalls that Nessen once removed a tape cartridge from his recorder and then instructed a colleague to tell Beckman he had lost it.

And almost everybody remembers the time Nessen publicly lashed out at Phil Jones of CBS, after Jones had smiled at Nessen's attempt to answer a tough question. "How would you answer that question if you were press secretary," Nessen had asked, "— a job you would dearly love to have?"

A reporter who has known Nessen for many years summed up the feelings of many Nessen acquaintances: "Ron's gotten to a point where personal vindictiveness is more important than the President's well-being."

### Amen

One news source familiar with White House press operations said he had nothing but sympathy for Ron Nessen. "Ron is dealing with a difficult and tough job . . ." said the voice on the wire from New York. "The problems of a press secretary are ongoing."

"A press secretary is always going to have some difficulty. You're never going to please everyone, it's just the nature of the job . . ."

And then Ron Zeigler declined further comment.



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P. Wheeler, president. Principal in buyer is Robert E. Davis who owns and manages KWIK(AM) Pocatello, Idaho. KLO operates full time on 1430 khz with 5 kw.

▪ **KBYG(AM) Big Spring, Tex.:** Sold by Howard County Broadcasting Inc. to Tentex Broadcasting Inc. for \$221,000. Principals in seller are John H. and Madelyn O. Hicks (46.6% each) who own KLVI(AM) and KBPO(FM) Beaumont, Tex., and have interests in KLUF(AM) Lufkin, KRRV(AM) Sherman and KJAR(AM) Laredo, all Texas. Principals in buyer, which owns KTFS(AM) Texarkana, Tex., are Hugh D. Frizzell, president (33.3%), and Robert Williams Jr., treasurer (33.3%). KBYG is on 1400 khz with 1 kw day and 250 w night.

▪ **WWFL(AM) Clermont, Fla.:** Sold by J. Olin Tice Sr. and Jr., to Leisure Time Communications Inc. for \$165,000. Sellers also own WCAY(AM) Cayce, S.C. Principals in buyer are Joseph F. McInerney, Henry A. Berliner Jr., and Richard M. Messina (one-third each), who also own WDMV(AM) Pocomoke City, Md., and WIVI-FM St. Croix, Virgin Islands, and have contracted to buy KGLR-FM Reno (see below). WWFL is on 1340 khz with 1 kw day and 250 w night during specialized hours.

▪ **KGLR-FM Reno:** 80% interest sold by Pendor Communications to Leisure Time Communications Inc. for \$128,000. Principals in seller are Philip D. and Penny Doersam. Mr. Doersam will continue as station's general manager and Mrs. Doersam as sales manager and together will retain 20%. Principals in buyer are Joseph F. McInerney, Henry A. Berliner Jr., and Richard M. Messina (see above). KGLR-FM is on 105.7 mhz with 31 kw and antenna 390 feet below average terrain. Broker: Blackburn & Co.

### Approved

The following transfers of station ownership were approved last week by the FCC (for other FCC activities, see page 71):

▪ **KAUZ-TV Wichita Falls, Tex.:** Sold by Bass Brothers Telecasters Inc. to Wichita Falls Telecasters for \$4,250,000. Parent of seller, Bass Brothers Enterprises Inc., owns KDNT-AM-FM Denton, Tex., WSLC(AM)-WSLQ(FM) Roanoke, Va., and has 48.42% interest in KFDW-TV Clovis, N.M., KFDO-TV Sayre, Okla., and KFDA-TV Amarillo, Tex. Buyer is partnership of Wichita Falls Television Inc. (80%) and White Fuel Corp. (20%). Wichita Falls TV is new company headed by William Hobbs, president, who is general manager of KAUZ-TV. Principal in White Fuel is W. Erle White, president (49%), who also owns KGAF-AM-FM Gainesville, and KORC(AM) Mineral Wells, both Texas. KAUZ-TV is CBS affiliate on ch. 6 with 100 kw visual and 20 kw aural and antenna 1,020 feet above average terrain.

▪ Other sales approved last week include: KNLT(FM) Truckee, Calif.; KFTM-AM-FM Fort Morgan, Colo.; KCHI-AM-FM Chilli-cothe, Mo.; WCTM-FM Eaton, Ohio; WEZL(FM) Charleston, S.C., and WBRY(AM) Woodbury, Tenn. See page 71 for details.

## Man in the News



*A little over two weeks ago, President Gerald Ford reached again into the ranks of Washington journalists to find a news secretary—and came up with a broadcast newsman. For 40-year-old Ron Nessen, it meant a fast and hard lesson in what it means to function between the rock of the Presidency and the hard place of the profession he left behind.*

Back in January 1965, when Vietnam was the big story, the NBC press-relations department put out a picture of one of its correspondents, 32-year-old Ron Nessen, in action over there. Dressed in fatigues and lying in a water-filled hole scratched out of the dirt and reeds, he was talking into portable tape recorder, apparently describing action at which he seemed to be peering. A Hollywood view of the television war correspondent at work, it seemed. About 18 months later, reality intruded into the picture. Grenade fragments entered his chest and punctured a lung as Mr. Nessen covered a battle between the 101st Airborne and North Vietnamese troops in the Central Highlands.

Two weeks ago, President Ford had just announced Mr. Nessen's appointment as White House news secretary, and Mr. Nessen, now 40, was describing his vision of the job in a statement in the White House briefing room. His role was to get the news out, and he would never lie or mislead his former colleagues. A veteran newsmen's view of a news secretary's job, it seemed. Eleven days later, some of his former colleagues were questioning his integrity; reality had intruded again.

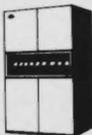
The question of Mr. Nessen's integrity had arisen over his reporting of a telephone conversation between former President Nixon and President Ford. Mr. Nessen had said that the former President made "a passing reference" to the public reaction to the presidential pardon he had received. But it was not until Hugh Sidey's column appeared in *Time*



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last week that the world learned that the former President had offered to return the pardon.

Why hadn't Mr. Nessen volunteered that information, the reporters wanted to know, at the news briefing on Monday? Didn't he, as a former reporter, realize the newsworthiness of the offer? "You said," one reported recalled, "you wouldn't mislead us."

Mr. Nessen, who despite a reputation for being short-tempered has thus far at least demonstrated considerable coolness in his new job, did not spend much time brooding on the challenge to his integrity. Back in his office in the west wing of the White House, near the President's, a few hours after the confrontation, he seemed more concerned with getting on top of new responsibilities, which were greater than he expected.

Asked how he felt, he said: "Almost whipped. I leave the house at 7 a.m., read the papers in the car coming down, eat breakfast in the office—at that table over there—lunch, too, and get home at 8:30 or 9 p.m. And I have one or one and a half hours of work to do at night. Yesterday [Sunday] I had the first half day off since I took the job. The President was visiting his wife at the hospital, so I asked if I could take some time off if he didn't need me."

Mr. Nessen, who lives in suburban Bethesda, Md., took his wife, the former Young Hi Song, a native of Korea, and their 18-month-old son, to the park. (An 18-year-old daughter by an earlier marriage is at the University of Iowa.) However, it was not long before the beeper paging unit he wears began sounding off; his office said he was in demand. The Sidey piece was circulating, and correspondents wanted clarification and comment.

Mr. Nessen sees his job, like Gaul, divided into three parts. The most visible part of it is the daily 11 a.m. (or later) news briefing, for which he spends about four hours preparing, some of that time in conference with the President. He is also a presidential adviser, consulting on such matters as how various actions or decisions should be announced. And, finally, there is the part that would terrify most men who had never had to worry about administering the work output of a larger group than that consisting of himself, a cameraman and a soundman—administration. He found he was the boss of a 45-member staff. There is also the usual harvest of daily problems and the time spent talking to reporters.

"But there are compensations," he says of the heavy load. "It's very interesting, very exciting to be on the inside, to see how the White House works."

As for the sharp and hostile questioning that morning, he said he did not expect favored treatment. "I wouldn't let up if I were in their position," he said. "It's the legacy of five years. I wouldn't give anyone the benefit of the doubt. I would hope they'll do their job, and I hope that after seeing me for a while, they'll believe what I said about not lying."

Mr. Nessen's defense of his handling of the Nixon-Ford telephone conversa-

tion was that the offer was not considered to be a serious one. But probably more important was the policy reason he gave: "I didn't feel I should paraphrase or quote observations between the President and the former President."

Thus, he was demonstrating the accuracy of an observation that Bill Moyers, one of the former presidential news secretaries on whom Mr. Nessen has said he would try to model himself in his new role (Pierre Salinger and Jerald F. terHorst, his immediate predecessor, were the others) made in a column in *Newsweek*: "The reporter in him [Mr. Nessen], will tug one way while the President's interest will tug another, and he will feel the acute symptoms of being caught between a President and press corps both trying to do their duty while his duty is to serve them both."

White House reporters generally say it is too early to pass judgment on the kind of job Mr. Nessen is doing as news secretary. What concerns some of them, however, is Mr. Nessen's degree of access to the President and other sources of information. Mr. Nessen has said he has been assured he will be kept fully informed. But ABC's Tom Jarriel says he won't be comfortable until Mr. Nessen's name stops showing up every day on the President's list of appointments. "I would like to know Nessen does not need an appointment to see the President." As of now, he does not have that kind of access to the Oval Office.

Another correspondent, who otherwise speaks well of Mr. Nessen, says: "The question to be answered is how much depth does Nessen have; he lacks terHorst's background and experience. Of course," the correspondent added, "we don't know how much depth you need to be a press secretary to Jerry Ford."

The feelings among White House reporters concerning Mr. Nessen personally appear to be mixed. Some network correspondents who have known him over the years are generous in their comments. They say he was a "good" reporter, "solid," "easy to get along with." Then there are those who, as one veteran correspondent put it, feel that "public-relationswise, the Nessen appointment was a mistake," that Mr. Nessen has been something of an "opportunist." In part, at least, some correspondents suggest, that feeling stems from jealousy and resentment, for the White House press corps is not without its prima donnas. And Mr. Nessen, despite almost 20 years in journalism, was not an established member of the White House press corps.

But the publicity Mr. Nessen received in connection with the party at his home that President and Mrs. Ford attended (BROADCASTING, Sept. 2) did nothing to improve Mr. Nessen's popularity with his colleagues. For while the party was conceived as one to be given by and for all the reporters who had covered then-Vice President Ford in his travels aboard Air Force Two, some of them felt it emerged in the public mind as the Ron Nessen party. Nor did Mr. Nessen's former traveling companions appreciate the presence at the party of Mr. Nessen's NBC colleagues—John Chancellor, an-

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chorman for the *Nightly News*; Lester M. Crystal, executive producer of that program, and White House correspondent Tom Brokaw.

There seems little resentment over the fact that Mr. Ford picked a broadcast journalist for his news secretary. Times have changed since President Truman tried it with Cox Broadcasting's J. Leonard Reinsch. (That appointment—which was neither sought nor made known to Mr. Reinsch before the President announced it—lasted about as long as it took the newspaper reporters to clear their throats and emit howls of protest.) Indeed, UPI's Helen Thomas even feels Mr. Nessen is entitled to a "honeymoon period."

But changing times aside, Mr. Nessen's experience as a journalist is rich and varied. As a native of Washington, D.C., his first media jobs were in small-town radio and newspaper work in the region—WEPM(AM) Martinsburg, W. Va., WAVA(AM) (then WARL) Arlington, Va., and the *Montgomery County Sentinel*, a weekly, in Rockville, Md. Then he was a Washington correspondent for UPI for five years before hooking on with NBC News in 1962.

If he did not become one of the network's superstars, Mr. Nessen drew the kind of assignments journalism students fantasize about. There were wars in Vietnam (five tours there), Bangla Desh, Biafra, and the Congo; the anti-american riots in Panama, the track of Che Guevara in Bolivia, a tribal uprising in Borneo. In addition, he covered the White House in the early Johnson years and, over the next decade, the presidential campaigns of President Johnson, Richard Nixon and George Wallace, the vice presidential campaign of Sargent Shriver. He was a member of the NBC News teams that reported from the Democratic and Republican conventions of 1964, 1968 and 1972. And he anchored NBC's coverage of the shooting of Governor Wallace in Laurel, Md., in 1972, and helped cover the investigation and resignation of Vice President Spiro T. Agnew.

It was Mr. Agnew's fall that contributed to Mr. Nessen's rise. For when Representative Gerald Ford of Michigan emerged as Mr. Agnew's successor, Mr. Nessen was assigned to cover him. He was there for the nomination, for the confirmation hearings and for the inauguration of the new Vice President. And when Mr. Ford became President, Mr. Nessen went back on the White House beat.

President Ford has said that in the many hours he spent aboard Air Force Two with Mr. Nessen, he came to respect him for his "skill and objectivity" as a reporter, and to "enjoy his company." So when Mr. terHorst quit as Mr. Ford's first news secretary over the Nixon pardon and went back to the *Detroit News*, Mr. Nessen's name was among those that came to the presidential mind as a possible successor.

One of the questions that Mr. Nessen was asked when he appeared with the President in the White House briefing room for the announcement of his new job was why he was leaving journalism

to become news secretary. "I'm interested in being a participant in events as well as an observer," he said. Last week, the fire he took in briefing his former colleagues indicated he had indeed become a participant in events.

**FOI compromises may  
not satisfy Ford**

**Conferees alter bill in attempt  
to meet President's objections**

A compromise on legislation to strengthen the Freedom of Information Act has been reached in a House-Senate conference, but faces a veto threat from President Ford. The legislation, intended to make it easier and less costly to gain access to government documents and files under the 1966 act, repassed the Senate last Tuesday and was expected to pass the House late last week or this week.

There is a division of opinion within the executive branch over whether the President should veto the package, according to a Senate aide who participated in its drafting. Earlier, in an exchange of letters with the conferees, the President said he objected to a provision placing the burden of proof on the government to satisfy a court that a document has been properly classified because it concerns military or intelligence secrets.

Said Mr. Ford: "My great respect for the courts does not prevent me from observing that they do not ordinarily have the background and expertise to gauge the ramifications that a release of a document may have upon our national security."

The conferees attempted to soften the impact of the section with an explanation in the conference report, but it is uncertain whether this satisfied Mr. Ford.

Investigatory files for law enforcement purposes, exempt from mandatory disclosure under the present act, would be required to be disclosed under the new legislation with a few exceptions. One of those was added in response to another objection from President Ford, permitting the withholding of information given by a confidential source in a criminal investigation.

In response to another objection from the President, the conferees agreed to soften a Senate provision which would have permitted courts to suspend or otherwise penalize federal employees found to have withheld documents without reasonable basis in law. Instead, the compromise provides that the Civil Service Commission shall discipline such employees.

**Shield protects Farr**

A California state judge ruled last week that reporter William Farr could not be held in contempt of court for refusing to answer questions in the perjury trial of a lawyer who had been the prosecutor in the 1970 Manson murder trial. The judge ruled that Mr. Farr was protected

UP-078

(NESSEN)

WASHINGTON (UPI) -- PRESIDENT FORD TODAY PERSONALLY ANNOUNCED THE APPOINTMENT OF VETERAN NBC-TV CORRESPONDENT RON NESSEN AS WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY.

FORD DESCRIBED IT AS A "VERY, VERY PLEASING ANNOUNCEMENT" AND SAID NESSEN WOULD HAVE HIS FULL SUPPORT.

"I WILL NEVER KNOWINGLY LIE TO THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS CORP," NESSEN SAID AS FORD STOOD BY HIS SIDE. "I WILL NEVER KNOWINGLY MISLEAD THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS CORP."

NESSEN, 40, SUCCEEDS J.F. TERHORST, WHO RESIGNED SEPT. 8 AFTER FORD PARDONED FORMER PRESIDENT NIXON. NESSEN ALSO BECAME THE FIRST NETWORK TELEVISION NEWS CORRESPONDENT EVER TO BE NAMED AS THE PERMANENT PRESIDENTIAL PRESS SECRETARY.

UPI 09-20 02:24 PED

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FORD-PRESS SECRETARY (TOPS 6)

BY GAYLORD SHAW

WASHINGTON (AP) -- PRESIDENT FORD PERSONALLY INTRODUCED FORMER NBC CORRESPONDENT RON NESSEN AS HIS PRESS SECRETARY TODAY. NESSEN PROMISED NEVER TO KNOWINGLY MISLEAD OR LIE TO WHITE HOUSE REPORTERS.

NESSEN, 40, TOLD NEWSMEN AS FORD STOOD BESIDE HIM THAT IN HIS VIEW "A PRESS SECRETARY DOESN'T ALWAYS HAVE TO AGREE WITH THE PRESIDENT."

THIS WAS AN INDIRECT REFERENCE TO THE RESIGNATION SEPT. 8 OF FORD'S FIRST PRESS SECRETARY, J.F. TERHORST, WHO QUIT IN PROTEST AGAINST THE PARDON FOR FORMER PRESIDENT RICHARD NIXON.

NESSEN SAID, "I DON'T EXPECT TO BE A SALESMAN FOR THE PRESIDENT" BUT RATHER WORK TO GET OUT AS MUCH WHITE HOUSE NEWS AS POSSIBLE TO THE PEOPLE.

DESCRIBING HIMSELF AS APOLITICAL, HE SAID HE LAST VOTED FOR PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY IN 1960.

NESSEN WAS ASSIGNED TO NBC'S WHITE HOUSE STAFF WHEN FORD SUCCEEDED NIXON ON AUG. 9.

09-20-74 14:14EDT



## Closed Circuit

**Hired popguns.** Some influential members and executives of National Association of Broadcasters are wondering whether NAB got its money's worth when it hired two celebrity-type economists, Eliot Janeway and Robert Nathan, to testify against pay cable siphoning at FCC hearings last week (see page 19). Consensus was that both fumbled questions, were inadequately prepared. There's no official word on size of fees NAB paid, but one report put Mr. Janeway's price at \$4,000 to \$5,000.

**Intramurals.** FCC could find itself in another U.S. vs. FCC court appeal if it does not get tough in current rule-making aimed at breaking up concentrations of media control in individual markets. Department of Justice's anti-trust division has urged commission to adopt rule requiring across-board breakup of commonly owned newspapers and television stations. And Bruce Wilson, deputy assistant attorney general for antitrust, says that court appeal is option available to division if commission adopts rule division considers inadequate. He has also been telling broadcaster groups that department is serious about concentration-of-control issue, as number of petitions to deny it has filed against newspaper-owned broadcast stations attest.

However, FCC is expected to adopt rule far short of one Justice has proposed; it would ban creation of future newspaper-television combinations and move to break up only eight or nine existing combinations that appear to represent particularly serious concentrations of control (*Broadcasting*, Sept. 23). Last time Justice took commission to court was in 1967, when it appealed commission's approval of ITT takeover of ABC. That merger died while court was still considering case (*Broadcasting*, Jan. 8, 1968).

**Foster plan.** Barring unforeseen, David Foster will continue in presidency of National Cable Television Association at least until mid-1977. It's confidently forecast that NCTA board will give Mr. Foster vote of confidence by extending his contract, which would have expired next June, for two years. Base pay, now \$75,000, goes to \$80,000 for first year and to \$85,000 for second. Mr. Foster had notified NCTA's 27-member board of his desire for longer term (*Broadcasting*, Sept. 23).

**Build-up.** Radio Advertising Bureau has developed five-part "Radio Growth Plan '75" that it hopes will help turn coming year into good one for radio, and is going to let RAB members know about it on installment plan. First mailing, going out this week, describes expansion into selling regional advertisers. Among plans: creation of some nine or 10 regional sales councils of broadcasters to help RAB identify best regional sales targets, assignment of RAB regional field managers to sell them.

Other phases of "Growth Plan," to be mailed at approximately weekly intervals, deal with co-op advertising, national advertising, sales research and local sales-development techniques. Despite slumpy economic outlook, RAB officials expect 1975 to be growth year for radio, point out that some of radio's best features — low cost, wide reach,

flexibility in use — take on new attraction when times are tight. They also say they'll make copies of "Growth Plan" available to RAB nonmembers as well as members.

**More talk than action.** All three networks have rejected theatrical movie, "Carnal Knowledge" (1971), which has been box-office hit (\$13 million gross in U.S. and Canada alone) though object of obscenity prosecutions in some locations. Top official of Avco Embassy Pictures (which distributed film) says: "The TV censors are 10 years behind the American public." Embassy offered to rewrite and redub some of rougher dialogue, but networks said no because, in words of one official, "the whole thrust of the picture is sex." Avco Embassy official asserts that nothing in "Carnal Knowledge" is as graphic as gang-rape scene in made-for-TV movie, "Born Innocent" on NBC last month.

**Phantom writer.** National Association of Broadcasters officials are alleging "somebody" on pay cable's side used questionable tactics in lining up pro-pay comment. Letter, ostensibly signed by Dorothy Height, president of National Council of Negro Women, criticizing NAB's antisiphoning position was sent to FCC Oct. 4. Letter was fake. Ms. Height testified last week in support of NAB's position, which she has favored along.

**Natural.** Ron Nessen, 32-year-old former NBC newsman who took over as President Ford's news secretary last month, may still be on trial before working reporters on White House beat, but he's made hit with staff he inherited. One highly placed staffer (among 45) reports that Mr. Nessen is "take-charge guy" and standout administrator.

Though story of how Mr. Nessen was selected to succeed J.F. terHorst as news secretary has been told (*Broadcasting*, Oct. 7), new aspect that has just emerged is that while Vice President, Mr. Ford was impressed with incisive questioning by Mr. Nessen, then correspondent assigned to cover Vice Presidency, and especially with follow-up questions Mr. Nessen asked. President Ford, since Mr. Nessen's appointment, has allowed follow-ups, which predecessors had avoided.

**Write now.** Direct marketing on television, fast-growing segment of industry, is reported to have gained another adherent — Mattel Toy Co., Hawthorne, Calif., which invests more than \$15 million a year in medium. Mattel, through Telespond, Chicago, is said to be preparing its first direct-response TV campaign to break shortly, in time for Christmas buying.

**Anderson tapes.** Jack Anderson, nationally syndicated Washington columnist, and his staff will appear in weekly half-hour syndicated talk show featuring show business and political guests plus taped segments from around U.S. *The Jack Anderson Show*, produced by The Chicago Group, three-member team of independent producers, tapes first of 26 programs next month and is expected to be on air by mid-January. Show will originate in Washington with roughly \$15,000 weekly budget, producers say. Hopes are to place it on 50 stations by end of 13 weeks.



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Wirephoto 1

By FRANCIS LEWINE

Associated Press Writer

*Deby Post*



WASHINGTON AP - President Ford's new press secretary Ron Nessen, a veteran television correspondent, has taken over the job with promises to get as much news as possible from the White House to the American people.

He has promised not to knowingly mislead or lie to the White House press corps and says he sees no reason why a press secretary and the press should be antagonists.

The 40-year-old Nessen, who has been with the National Broadcasting Co. since 1962 and has covered presidential campaigns for 15 years, stepped into the \$42,500 a year job left vacant by the resignation 12 days ago of veteran Detroit newspaperman Jerald F. TerHorst.

TerHorst quit as a matter of conscience because he said he did not agree with the pardon of former President Richard M. Nixon and because he felt he had not been fully informed of actions Ford was planning to take.

Personally introducing Nessen to the press in the White House briefing room on Friday, Ford promised him "my full backing and support."

Nessen said he has been promised that he will be kept informed of what is going on in the White House.

He gave these views of his new job:

-He will not be a salesman for the President. "I am not going to try to sell his programs to you."

-His job is to report the actions of the President, why they were taken and how they were arrived at. "A press secretary does not always have to agree with the decisions of the President."

-He is "apolitical," and the last time he voted was in 1960 for John F. Kennedy. "Other than that, I have no affiliation with any political party."

Nessen, who covered Ford when Ford was vice president, made some 57 trips, covering more than 100,000 miles, with Ford. When Ford became president, Nessen was assigned as the network's White House correspondent.

In taking over his new job, he started out by saying:

"I hope the White House press corps is ready for another Ron. I am a Ron, but not a Ziegler, I can tell you that," he said, referring to Nixon's press secretary, Ronald L. Ziegler, who lost his credibility with the press over the Watergate affair.

Nessen pledged: "I will never knowingly lie to the White House press corps. I will never knowingly mislead the White House press corps. And, I think, if I ever do you would be justified in questioning my continued usefulness in this job."

CC26aED 09-21



#

RNR 314

NESSEN

WASHINGTON, SEPT 20, REUTER - PRESIDENT FORD TODAY PERSONALLY ANNOUNCED TO THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS CORPS THE APPOINTMENT OF NBC CORRESPONDENT RON NESSEN TO BE HIS PRESS SECRETARY, REPLACING JERALD TERHORST, WHO RESIGNED AFTER A MONTH ON THE JOB.

MR. FORD TOLD REPORTERS THAT HE HAD GOTTEN TO KNOW MR. NESSEN WHEN THE NBC CORRESPONDENT WAS ASSIGNED TO COVER HIM AS VICE PRESIDENT AND THE TWO TRAVELED SOME 118,000 MILES THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES ON SPEAKING TRIPS.

HE ADDED THAT HE ADMIRED MR. NESSEN'S SKILL AND OBJECTIVITY AS A REPORTER AND WAS IMPRESSED BY HIS OVERALL APPROACH TO PRESIDENTIAL PROBLEMS.

MORE 1414



#

RNR 315

NESSEN 2 WASHINGTON

MR. TERHORST, WHO HAD BEEN THE WASHINGTON BUREAU CHIEF FOR THE DETROIT NEWS AND MR. FORD'S FIRST APPOINTMENT AS PRESIDENT, RESIGNED AS PRESS SECRETARY WHEN THE PRESIDENT ANNOUNCED THAT HE HAD GRANTED A FULL PARDON TO FORMER PRESIDENT NIXON.

MR. TERHORST SAID HE DISAGREED ON PRINCIPLE WITH THE PARDON AND ALSO HAD BEEN MISLED BY PRESIDENTIAL AIDES INTO BELIEVING THAT A PARDON WAS NOT BEING CONSIDERED, AND SUBSEQUENTLY HAD MISLED REPORTERS WHO EARLIER HAD ASKED ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF A PARDON.

MR. NESSSEN, 40, TOLD THE REPORTERS IN THE PRESS ROOM, "I WILL NEVER KNOWINGLY LIE OR MISLEAD AND IF I EVER DO, YOU WOULD BE JUSTIFIED IN QUESTIONING MY USEFULNESS IN THE JOB."

HE SAID THAT HE HAD SPOKEN TO PRESIDENTIAL AIDES AND TO THE PRESIDENT HIMSELF AND HAD BEEN ASSURED THAT HE WOULD BE KEPT FULLY INFORMED OF ALL WHITE HOUSE ACTIVITIES. HE SAID THIS ASSURANCE WAS NEEDED IF HE WAS TO BE ABLE TO FULFILL HIS JOB PROPERLY.

MORE 1417



RNR 319

NESSEN 3 WASHINGTON (RNR 314...JOB PROPERLY)

MR. NESSEN SAID THAT IN HIS JOB HE WOULD ATTEMPT TO EMULATE THE GOOD HUMOR OF PIERRE SALINGER, WHO WAS PRESIDENT JOHN KENNEDY'S PRESS SECRETARY, AND THE KNOWLEDGE AND MODESTY OF BILL MOYERS, WHO WAS PRESS SECRETARY TO PRESIDENT LYNDON JOHNSON AND WHO EARNED THE RESPECT GIVEN BY REPORTERS TO MR. TERHORST.

IN AN ALLUSION TO FORMER PRESIDENT NIXON'S PRESS SECRETARY, RONALD ZIEGLER, MR. NESSEN SAID, "I AM A RON, BUT NOT A ZIEGLER."

MR. ZIEGLER WAS SCORED BY MANY REPORTERS WHO FELT HE HAD LIED TO THEM.

MR. NESSEN HAD WORKED FOR UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL NEWS AGENCY IN WASHINGTON FROM 1956 TO 1962, WHEN HE JOINED NBC, FIRST AS WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENT AND THEN LATER IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, WHERE HE WAS WOUNDED BY A GRENADE FRAGMENT.

IN 1966 HE WAS REASSIGNED TO NEW YORK, AND THE FOLLOWING YEAR HAD FOREIGN ASSIGNMENTS IN LATIN AMERICA, ASIA, AFRICA AND EUROPE, RETURNING TO THE UNITED STATES TO COVER THE 1968 PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN.

HE DESCRIBED HIMSELF AS A POLITICAL INDEPENDENT AND SAID THAT HE WAS ASHAMED TO ADMIT IT BUT, THE LAST TIME HE VOTED WAS IN 1960, WHEN HE SUPPORTED PRESIDENT KENNEDY.

REUTER 1428



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NESSEN 9-20

URGENT

1ST DAY LD 031A

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WASHINGTON (UPI) -- PRESIDENT FORD TODAY PERSONALLY ANNOUNCED THE APPOINTMENT OF VETERAN NBC-TV CORRESPONDENT RON NESSEN AS WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY.

FORD DESCRIBED IT AS A "VERY, VERY PLEASING ANNOUNCEMENT" AND SAID NESSEN WOULD HAVE HIS FULL SUPPORT.

"I WILL NEVER KNOWINGLY LIE TO THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS CORP," NESSEN SAID AS FORD STOOD BY HIS SIDE. "I WILL NEVER KNOWINGLY MISLEAD THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS CORP."

NESSEN, 40, SUCCEEDS J.F. TERHORST, WHO RESIGNED SEPT. 8 AFTER FORD PARDONED FORMER PRESIDENT NIXON. NESSEN ALSO BECAME THE FIRST NETWORK TELEVISION NEWS CORRESPONDENT EVER TO BE NAMED AS THE PERMANENT PRESIDENTIAL PRESS SECRETARY.

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URGENT

Ford-Press Secretary Lead 190

BY GAYLORD SHAW

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON AP - President Ford personally introduced former NBC correspondent Ron Nessen as his press secretary today. Nessen promised never to knowingly mislead or lie to White House reporters.

Nessen, 40, told newsmen as Ford stood beside him that in his view "a press secretary doesn't always have to agree with the President."

This was an indirect reference to the resignation Sept. 8 of Ford's first press secretary, J.F. terHorst, who quit in protest against the pardon for former President Richard Nixon.

Nessen said, "I don't expect to be a salesman for the President" but rather work to get out as much White House news as possible to the people.

Describing himself as apolitical, he said he last voted for President John F. Kennedy in 1960.

Nessen was assigned to NBC's White House staff when Ford succeeded Nixon on Aug. 9.

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*Post*



NESSEN 9-20

Dist

NIGHT LD

WASHINGTON (UPI) -- PROMISING NEVER TO "KNOWINGLY LIE," VETERAN NBC-TV CORRESPONDENT RON NESSEN FRIDAY WAS APPOINTED WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY -- THE SECOND NEWSMAN TO HOLD THAT JOB IN PRESIDENT FORD'S BRIEF TENURE.

FORD PERSONALLY DELIEVED WHAT HE DESCRIBED AS THE "VERY, VERY PLEASING ANNOUNCEMENT" OF NESSEN'S APPOINTMENT. "HE HAS MY FULL BACKING AND SUPPORT," THE PRESIDENT SAID.

NESSEN, 40, A ONE-TIME DISC JOCKEY WHO JOINED NBC IN 1962 AFTER WORKING FOR UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL FOR SIX YEARS, FILLS THE \$42,500 A YEAR JOB WHICH WAS VACATED SEPT. 8 WHEN J.F. TERHORST RESIGNED IN A FLAP OVER THE PARDON OF FORMER PRESIDENT RICHARD M. NIXON. TERHORST HAS RETURNED TO A JOB WITH THE DETROIT NEWS.

"I WILL NEVER KNOWINGLY LIE TO THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS CORPS," NESSEN SAID, RECALLING COMPLAINTS AMONG THE PRESS CORPS ABOUT MISLEADING INFORMATION IT RECEIVED DURING NIXON'S ADMINISTRATION. "I WILL NEVER KNOWINGLY MISLEAD THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS CORPS. I DON'T THINK WE ARE NATURAL ATAGONISTS."

NESSEN, A NATIVE OF WASHINGTON, D.C., WHO STUDIED JOURNALISM AT AMERICAN UNIVERSITY, SERVED AS NBC WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENT DURING THE JOHNSON ADMINISTRATION UNTIL HE WAS SENT TO VIETNAM IN 1965.

HE AND FORD BECAME FRIENDS WHEN HE WAS ASSIGNED EARLIER THIS YEAR TO COVER NIXON'S NEW VICE PRESIDENT. "IF I MISLEAD OR LIE TO YOU THEN YOU ARE JUSTIFIED TO QUESTION MY CONTINUED USEFULLNESS IN THE JOB," NESSEN SAID. HE ADDED HE HAD BEEN ASSURED THAT HE WOULD HAVE ACCESS TO "WHAT'S GOING ON" -- AN APPARENT REFERENCE TO TERHORST'S COMPALINT THAT WAS MISLED BY PRESIDENTIAL AIDES ABOUT THE NIXON PARDON.

HE SAID HE WOULD HAVE ACCESS TO ALL WHITE HOUSE MEETINGS EXCEPT THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL.

NESSEN SAID HE BELIEVED HE WOULD HAVE THE "SAME AIM" AS REPORTERS, TO INFORM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. "A PRESS SECRETARY DOES NOT ALWAYS HAVE TO AGREE WITH THE PRESIDENT," HE SAID.

UPI 09-20 04:06 PED



NEWMAN 9-20

MADISON, WIS. (UPI) -- NBC-TV NEWSMAN EDWIN NEWMAN SAID FRIDAY THAT NOW THAT RON NESSEN HAS LEFT HIS POST AT NBC TO BECOME PRESIDENT FORD'S PRESS SECRETARY, "IT OUGHT TO BE UNDERSTOOD BY EVERYONE THAT HE'S 'ON THE OTHER SIDE.'"

NEWMAN CALLED NESSEN "A VERY GOOD MAN" AND A "FRIEND," BUT HE SAID, "WHEN YOU GO TO WORK FOR THE GOVERNMENT, YOU'RE WORKING FOR THE GOVERNMENT. YOU'RE NOT WORKING FOR THE MEDIA ANYMORE."

NEWMAN WAS HERE TO DEDICATE THE NEW COMMUNICATIONS BUILDING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN.

UPI 09-20 10:45 PED

319B



*Dist*

## RADIO T-V AND GENERAL

(BOZEMAN, MONTANA) -- FORMER TELEVISION NEWSMAN CHET HUNTLEY HAS LEFT AN ESTATE VALUED AT NEARLY TWO (M) MILLION DOLLARS. THAT WAS REVEALED TODAY IN DOCUMENTS FILED IN THE MONTANA STATE DISTRICT COURT.

THE INVENTORY, FILED BY HIS WIDOW, TIPTON, SAID THE BULK OF THE ESTATE CONSISTS OF LIFE INSURANCE AND DEFERRED SALARY PAYMENTS FROM N-B-C.

THE ACCOUNTING LISTS HIS LIFE INSURANCE POLICIES, INCLUDING THE N-B-C INSURANCE BENEFITS, AT 995-THOUSAND DOLLARS. OTHER MAJOR ITEMS INCLUDE STOCKS AND BONDS VALUED AT 53-THOUSAND DOLLARS, MISCELLANEOUS ASSETS OF 758-THOUSAND DOLLARS, AND 128-THOUSAND DOLLARS IN PROPERTY JOINTLY OWNED BY MRS. HUNTLEY.

09-20-74 23:24EDT



Frank Starr

# The trouble with being the new Ron



WASHINGTON—From the very first, President Ford's newest press secretary, Ron Nessen, seemed determined to demonstrate his independence and establish his own style.

If there was approval in the press corps, there was shuddering in some White House staff offices. Nessen may be in for a surprise.

There is, of course, a special sensitivity these days to the press secretary's office, since [1] it is the main channel of public contact, [2] under President Nixon it became badly discredited, and [3] President Ford's first choice, Jerry terHorst, has already resigned on principle.

Nessen, a sleek and facile product of NBC television news, seemed subconsciously aware of the slight resemblance he bears to Nixon's press secretary when he introduced himself thusly: "I'm a Ron, but I'll never be a Ziegler."

Promising never to lie or mislead knowingly, Nessen until recently did little outside cosmetic replacement of what he called a bulletproof Ziegler podium to change the working habits of the White House press office.

Then came the first major White House function for which he was responsible, and Nessen reacted like a working newsmen. He went on his own to White House economic advisers, sampled their thoughts on inflation and depression, and volunteered these to the reporters.

It seemed the natural thing to do: It produced background information that in no way could be considered harmful to the administration. It gave the report-

ers what they needed. It probably even made more reliable the otherwise inevitable speculation.

But in private offices around the executive branch the next morning, eyebrows went up, thoughts went back to terHorst, who, one ranking Ford adviser had privately said, would have had to be taught to volunteer less inside information.

These officials looked at Nessen's action, as setting a potentially dangerous precedent. The action meant that, on his own, a press secretary could generate a news story, conceivably one detrimental to the interests of a given school of thought within the White House.

Accordingly, it would give the press secretary a new dimension of personal power. It could tend to open a window on intramural debate in advance of policy making.

Further, if Ron Nessen, reporter, interviews economic officials and briefs his colleagues on their opinions, that's background information, but if Ron Nessen, White House press secretary, does the same thing, that's suddenly an official pronouncement.

In short, to some on the White House staff, it seemed a precedent to be nipped in the bud. If the President himself were foolish enough to let it go on, said one, his staff certainly would not be.

And the staff, upon whose cooperation any press secretary relies for much of his information, is obviously in a position to clip the wings of a press secretary who has gone too far and to do it most discreetly and effectively.

In this instance, part of the information came from an inside briefing which Alan Greenspan, chairman of the council of economic advisers, was giving other staff members. Greenspan specifically denies having any reservations himself about Nessen's action, and those who do so prefer not to be identified.

Nessen shared with terHorst the concept of the press secretary's job as one which required getting as much information as possible to the American people. Conversely, nothing would damage his own credibility more than the growing impression among reporters that he either sought to withhold information or that he was ill-informed.

Upon his inaugural, Nessen told reporters of his commitment to get complete information, adding, "I've been assured I will."

The resignation of terHorst, according to close friends, was prompted partly by his own feeling that he had been misled by White House staffers and, in turn, had unintentionally misled reporters.

The President, terHorst believed, assumed his press secretary was getting full information while some of Ford's staff believed that "what terHorst doesn't know won't hurt him."

But it did. And it will hurt Nessen if it happens to him. And it will hurt the public credibility of a new President if his press office is weakened or becomes the scene of another resignation.

One would like to believe that it is within the power of a President and his press secretary to carry out a commitment to keep the people informed.

Whether it is remains to be seen.



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URGENT

Ford-Press Secretary 14C

WASHINGTON AP - Network correspondent Ron Nessen will be named White House press secretary on Friday, sources reported Thursday night.

Nessen now covers the White House for NBC after logging more than 100,000 miles in coverage of President Ford's vice presidential days.

The sources said Nessen accepted the post after receiving high level assurances that he would have full access to Ford and would be kept informed on key administration policy moves and decisions.

The announcement of his selection to succeed Jerald F. terHorst, who resigned to protest Ford's pardon of former President Richard M. Nixon, was scheduled for the regular White House briefing on Friday.

Acting Press Secretary John W. Hushen refused to confirm whether Nessen was in line for the job. "When we have an announcement to make, we'll make it in the proper place at the proper time," said Hushen. He apparently is not being considered for the job.

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Ford-Press Secretary Add 250

WASHINGTON Ford-Press Secretary Add: job

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Contacted Thursday night at his home, Nessen would not confirm that he had accepted the \$42,500-a-year post.

“I’ve talked to them about it, so I assume I’m under consideration,” said the 40-year-old Nessen. Any announcement will have to come from the White House.”

Nessen came to Washington in 1956 as a newsman for United Press International. In 1962, he joined NBC and covered Lyndon Johnson’s presidency.

He transferred to Vietnam in 1965, returning home about a year later after being wounded in the chest by a grenade fragment.

Upon his recovery from the wound, he was anchorman in New York for periodic NBC news reports on Vietnam, later serving overseas as a network correspondent in Latin America, Asia and Africa.

Following his coverage of the 1968 Presidential campaign, Nessen was named urban affairs correspondent for NBC. A subsequent assignment on the investigation of since-resigned Vice President Spiro T. Agnew was followed by an assignment to cover Ford as Vice President.

Traveling 118,000 miles with Ford in eight months brought a close relationship between newsmen and the Vice President.

When Ford held his first state dinner, Nessen and his wife, Cindy, were there as guests. When the band struck up the pop tune “Bad, Bad Leroy Brown,” the President and Mrs. Nessen drew cheers with a fast-paced dance.

Later, on Aug. 25, Ford dropped by the Nesses’ home for a poolside party for reporters and Ford staff members.



NESSEN 919

WASHINGTON. (UPI)--PRESIDENT FORD WILL NAME RONALD NESSEN, NBC-TV WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENT, AS HIS PRESS SECRETARY, IT WAS LEARNED THURSDAY.

THE APPOINTMENT MAY BE ANNOUNCED FRIDAY.

NESSEN, 40, WOULD SUCCEED J.F. TERHORST, FORD'S FIRST PRESIDENTIAL PRESS SECRETARY WHO RESIGNED SEPT. 8 IN PROTEST WHEN FORD GRANTED FORMER PRESIDENT NIXON AN UNCONDITIONAL PARDON.

WHITE HOUSE OFFICIALS SAID NESSEN HAD BEEN OFFERED THE POSITION AND NESSEN HIMSELF ACKNOWLEDGED HE HAD TALKED TO THE WHITE HOUSE ABOUT IT, ALTHOUGH HE SAID ANY ANNOUNCEMENT WOULD HAVE TO COME FROM THEM.

NESSEN WOULD BE THE FIRST TELEVISION CORRESPONDENT TO TAKE THE PERMANENT POSITION OF PRESIDENTIAL SPOKESMAN. HE HAS WIDE EXPERIENCE IN THE REPORTING FIELD, INCLUDING EMPLOYMENT WITH UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL FROM 1956 TO 1962. HE JOINED NBC IN 1962 AND COVERED WASHINGTON BEATS, INCLUDING THE WHITE HOUSE, DURING THE LYNDON B. JOHNSON ERA.

MORE

UPI 09-19 07:35 PED



NESSEN 9-19

*Post*

1ST ADD NESSEN WASHINGTON 291A XXX ERA.

NESSEN ALSO REPORTED ON THE VIETNAM WAR FOR HIS NETWORK AND RETURNED TO COVER THE 1968 POLITICAL CCAMPAIGN AS A WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT. HE COVERED FORD THROUGHOUT HIS VICE PRESIDENCY AND TRAVELED EXTENSIVELY WITH HIM.

FORD ATTENDED A SUNDAY AFTERNOON PARTY AT NESSEN'S BETHESDA, MD., HOME SHORTLY AFTER HE BECAME PRESIDENT IN A REUNION OF REPORTERS WHO HAD BEEN ASSIGNED TO FORD DURING HIS EIGHT MONTHS AS VICE PRESIDENT.

NESSEN ALSO HAS EXPERIENCE COVERING MOST OF THE MAJOR DEPARTMENTS IN WASHINGTON AND WAS INVOLVED IN REPORTING ON THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT AT ITS HEIGHT.

HE IS A NATIVE WASHINGTONIAN AND ATTENDED AMERICAN UNIVERSITY WHERE HE MAJORED IN HISTORY.

HIS WIFE CINDY IS OF SOUTH KOREAN ANCESTRY AND THEY HAVE A YOUNG SON EDWARD. NESSEN ALSO HAS A DAUGHTER CAREN, WHO IS ATTENDING THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA, FROM A PREVIOUS MARRIAGE.

FORD HAS PUBLICLY EXPRESSED HIS AFFECTION FOR THE PRESS AND REITERATED AT HIS MONDAY NIGHT NEWS CONFERENCE THAT HIS ADMINISTRATION IS COMMITTED TO OPENNESS AND CANDOR.

HE ATTENDED AN INAUGURAL PARTY AT THE WASHINGTON PRESS CLUB AND SAID OF THE NEWS MEDIA: "I LOVE THEM."

"I ENJOY THEIR COMPANY," SAID FORD. "I LOVE THE COMPETITION."

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TERHORST 9-19

WITH NESSEN

WASHINGTON (UPI) -- FORMER PRESIDENTIAL PRESS SECRETARY J. F. TERHORST WAS WELCOMED BACK TO THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB BY HUNDREDS OF HIS COLLEAGUES THURSDAY NIGHT AND GIVEN A "FULL, FREE AND ABSOLUTE PARDON" FOR HIDING OUT IN THE WHITE HOUSE FOR A MONTH.

TERHORST, PIPE AS ALWAYS CLENCHED IN HIS MOUTH, PLEADED "NO CONTEST" TO THE "HIGH CRIME AND MISDEMEANOR" OF ABSENTING HIMSELF FROM THE PRESS CLUB BAR FOR 30 DAYS AND NIGHTS.

TERHORST QUIT AS PRESIDENT FORD'S PRESS SECRETARY SEPT. 8 BECAUSE HE DISAGREED WITH THE PARDONING OF FORMER PRESIDENT NIXON. HE HAS RETURNED TO THE DETROIT NEWS AS A SYNDICATED COLUMNIST.

IT WAS ANTICIPATED FORD MIGHT DROP BY THE PRESS CLUB RECEPTION FOR TERHORST BUT HE DID NOT. COINCIDENTALLY IT WAS LEARNED THURSDAY EVENING THAT FORD WILL NAME NBC-TV WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENT RONALD NESSEN AS TERHORST'S SUCCESSOR.

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terHorst 110

WASHINGTON AP - Former presidential press secretary Jerald F. terHorst says he is still satisfied with his decision to leave the White House.

TerHorst, who was honored Thursday night at a National Press Club reception, said he has only one regret - that he didn't stay long enough to restructure the White House press office.

TerHorst quit because he said he couldn't stay on in good conscience after President Ford pardoned Richard M. Nixon.

TerHorst returned to the Detroit News as a syndicated columnist. Some 575 persons attended the press club function. TerHorst was presented with a new pipe and stand engraved with the dates he served as Ford's chief spokesman.

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Dist.

PAPER 9-19

COLORADO SPRINGS, COLO. (UPI) -- M. W. ARMISTEAD III, THE NEW PRESIDENT OF THE SOUTHERN NEWSPAPER PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION, IS WORRIED ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE WHO RELY SOLELY ON RADIO AND TELEVISION FOR THEIR NEWS.

"I'M NOT KNOCKING THE BROADCA

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MEDIA," ARMISTEAD SAID. "THEY HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY. BUT NEWSPAPERS ARE STILL THE BASIC SOURCE OF INFORMATION ABOUT WHAT IS GOING ON IN THE WORLD."

ARMISTEAD IS PRESIDENT OF LANDMARK COMMUNICATIONS INC. OF NORFOLK, VA. THE COMPANY OWNS SEVEN DAILY NEWSPAPERS AND CABLEVISION STATIONS.

"THERE IS AN ALARMING TREND AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE TODAY TO RELY SOLELY ON NEWS FROM THE BROADCAST MEDIA," SAID ARMISTEAD WEDNESDAY AFTER HE WAS INSTALLED AS THE ASSOCIATION'S PRESIDENT AT THE GROUP'S ANNUAL MEETING.

THE ASSOCIATION HAS 411 MEMBERS REPRESENTING 335 DAILY NEWSPAPERS AND 76 ASSOCIATE MEMBERS IN NEWSPAPER-RELATED INDUSTRIES.

ARMISTEAD, A FORMER REPORTER, SAID HE WAS CONCERNED THAT MANY OF TODAY'S "INTELLIGENT YOUNG PEOPLE" AREN'T TAKING THE TIME TO ACQUIRE MORE KNOWLEDGE ON CURRENT EVENTS "BY SITTING DOWN AND READING A NEWSPAPER."



ARMISTEAD ALSO DISCUSSED THE NEWS MEDIA'S ROLE IN HANDLING THE WATERGATE SCANDAL AND SAID HE BELIEVED THE 'MEDIA HAD GIVEN "FAIR AND IMPARTIAL OVER-ALL COVERAGE" TO THE SITUATION.

"THE ROLE OF A REPORTER IS TO SEEK THE TRUTH AND PRESENT AN IMPARTIAL VIEW TO A NEWS STORY," ARMISTEAD SAID.

HE ADMITTED, HOWEVER, "THERE ARE SOME REPORTERS WHO PRESENT A BIASED AND PARTISAN VIEW IN THEIR STORIES."

ARMISTEAD SAID HE AGREED WITH A SUGGESTION MADE TO THE ASSOCIATION ON MONDAY BY THE REV. BILLY GRAHAM THAT NEWSPAPER PUBLISHERS NEED TO LEAD AMERICANS "TO A MORAL AND SPIRITUAL REVOLUTION THAT WE MUST HAVE IF WE ARE TO SURVIVE IN THIS CENTURY AS A FREE NATION."

"WE'VE ALWAYS ACCEPTED THAT AS BEING OUR RESPONSIBILITY, BUT THINGS WENT DOWNHILL PRETTY FAST DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS," HE SAID.

IN ACCEPTING HIS NEW POSITION AS PRESIDENT OF THE ASSOCIATION, ARMISTEAD TOLD FELLOW PUBLISHERS: "I'LL TRY NOT TO COMMIT ANY IMPEACHABLE OFFENSES."

HE SUCCEEDED TAMS BIXBY III, PUBLISHER OF THE MUSKOGEE TIMES DEMOCRAT, AS PRESIDENT OF THE ASSOCIATION.

UPI 09-19 08:17 PED

END LINE 11

RECEIVED FROM THE BUREAU OF THE FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
BY THE DIRECTOR OF THE FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

SEPTEMBER 19, 1974 (1974) -- U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

SEP 19 1974

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FIRST LINE REPORT  
With Bob Schieffer  
October 2, 1974

BOB SCHIEFFER: In just a moment it may sound as if we are returning to what they used to call those thrilling days of yesteryear on the radio, but we won't be, we will just be adding some new and very off-beat details to the old Watergate story.

In the process, though, we will also tell you how one Washington newsman is finally getting a chance to satisfy an old curiosity about the difference in being a participant in Government and an observer. We also have a little mystery story and who knows what else.

So, as they say on the radio, don't touch the dial. We will have all the details right after this message.

(Announcement)

BOB SCHIEFFER: Remember those old sports profiles that Bill Stern used to broadcast on the radio? The format went something like this: An unlikely hero, usually some innocent waif, would overcome tremendous odds in a most unlikely way. Stern would not reveal the hero's identity until the very end of the story, then he would come on with one of those wonderful closing lines, something like, "And today that little boy who beat up the bully with the baseball bat is none other than the Pope."

But here is a story that may sound like one of those old Bill Stern yarns, but it's true and it could have happened only in Watergate, Washington. Several years ago the hero of our story, a Washington reporter, was offered a position in one of the Federal agencies. Now our hero loved reporting, but he had always been curious about one thing: What is it like to be a participant in Government rather than an observer?

Well, the more he thought about it, the more the idea appealed to him, and he told the Federal agency people that, yes, he might be interested. The agency people were delighted, but those were strange days in Washington, and the delight was not shared by the White House Palace Guard.

Those were the days when H. R. Haldeman and Ehrlichman ruled the roost, and they had no interest in finding our reporter a place on the Administration perch, even if it was just a distant limb out in one of the Federal agencies. So, the White House vetoed the idea.

Some time later, the reporter learned that he was apparently under consideration for another Government post, and this time the feeler had come from one of the top recruiters at the White House. "How can this be," our reporter friend said to the recruiter. "After all, I have already been vetoed by the White House once." The recruiter said he didn't know about that, but he mentioned that the Administration had also considered CBS correspondent Daniel Schorr for the same job that he was now being considered for.

FBI agents have been asking Schorr's friends a lot of questions. It looked like out and out harrassment, but the Administration had said it was just a routine investigation, because, Administration officials said, Schorr was under consideration for a Government job.

Well, our reporter friend wondered at the time if that offer was a serious one, but he never heard from that recruiter again. Several years later, officials admitted to Congressional investigators that the entire episode was a hoax, another of those bizarre chapters in the Watergate story. The story that Schorr was being considered for an Administration post was just a cover story to explain the harrassment.

Former White House operative Charles Colson recently added some new details. He said the Administration decided to tell several newsmen they were being considered for the so-called Schorr post, the idea being that would make the cover story more realistic.

So, that is how it came about that our reporter friend was first offered a job in the Administration, later vetoed by the White House, then told he was under consideration for another post that later proved to be nonexistent. Who is the reporter? Well, as Bill Stern used to say, today that newsman is none other than Ron Nessen, the

reporter that President Ford chose last week to be his new White House Press Secretary.

He has not come by the most direct route, but Ron Nessen is well on the way to satisfying his old curiosity about what it is like to be a participant in Government rather than an observer.

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## Broadcast Journalism

## Man in the News



A little over two weeks ago, President Gerald Ford reached again into the ranks of Washington journalists to find a news secretary—and came up with a broadcast newsman. For 40-year-old Ron Nessen, it meant a fast and hard lesson in what it means to function between the rock of the Presidency and the hard place of the profession he left behind.

Back in January 1965, when Vietnam was the big story, the NBC press-relations department put out a picture of one of its correspondents, 32-year-old Ron Nessen, in action over there. Dressed in fatigues and lying in a water-filled hole scratched out of the dirt and reeds, he was talking into portable tape recorder, apparently describing action at which he seemed to be peering. A Hollywood view of the television war correspondent at work, it seemed. About 18 months later, reality intruded into the picture. Grenade fragments entered his chest and punctured a lung as Mr. Nessen covered a battle between the 101st Airborne and North Vietnamese troops in the Central Highlands.

Two weeks ago, President Ford had just announced Mr. Nessen's appointment as White House news secretary, and Mr. Nessen, now 40, was describing his vision of the job in a statement in the White House briefing room. His role was to get the news out, and he would never lie or mislead his former colleagues. A veteran newsman's view of a news secretary's job, it seemed. Eleven days later, some of his former colleagues were questioning his integrity; reality had intruded again.

The question of Mr. Nessen's integrity had arisen over his reporting of a telephone conversation between former President Nixon and President Ford. Mr. Nessen had said that the former President made "a passing reference" to the public reaction to the presidential pardon he had received. But it was not until Hugh Sidey's column appeared in *Time*

last week that the world learned that the former President had offered to return the pardon.

Why hadn't Mr. Nessen volunteered that information, the reporters wanted to know, at the news briefing on Monday? Didn't he, as a former reporter, realize the newsworthiness of the offer? "You said," one reported recalled, "you wouldn't mislead us."

Mr. Nessen, who despite a reputation for being short-tempered has thus far at least demonstrated considerable coolness in his new job, did not spend much time brooding on the challenge to his integrity. Back in his office in the west wing of the White House, near the President's, a few hours after the confrontation, he seemed more concerned with getting on top of new responsibilities, which were greater than he expected.

Asked how he felt, he said: "Almost whipped. I leave the house at 7 a.m., read the papers in the car coming down, eat breakfast in the office—at that table over there—lunch, too, and get home at 8:30 or 9 p.m. And I have one or one and a half hours of work to do at night. Yesterday [Sunday] I had the first half day off since I took the job. The President was visiting his wife at the hospital, so I asked if I could take some time off if he didn't need me."

Mr. Nessen, who lives in suburban Bethesda, Md., took his wife, the former Young Hi Song, a native of Korea, and their 18-month-old son, to the park. (An 18-year-old daughter by an earlier marriage is at the University of Iowa.) However, it was not long before the beeper paging unit he wears began sounding off; his office said he was in demand. The Sidey piece was circulating, and correspondents wanted clarification and comment.

Mr. Nessen sees his job, like Gaul, divided into three parts. The most visible part of it is the daily 11 a.m. (or later) news briefing, for which he spends about four hours preparing, some of that time in conference with the President. He is also a presidential adviser, consulting on such matters as how various actions or decisions should be announced. And, finally, there is the part that would terrify most men who had never had to worry about administering the work output of a larger group than that consisting of himself, a cameraman and a soundman—administration. He found he was the boss of a 45-member staff. There is also the usual harvest of daily problems and the time spent talking to reporters.

"But there are compensations," he says of the heavy load. "It's very interesting, very exciting to be on the inside, to see how the White House works."

As for the sharp and hostile questioning that morning, he said he did not expect favored treatment. "I wouldn't let up if I were in their position," he said. "It's the legacy of five years. I wouldn't give anyone the benefit of the doubt. I would hope they'll do their job, and I hope that after seeing me for a while, they'll believe what I said about not lying."

Mr. Nessen's defense of his handling of the Nixon-Ford telephone conversa-

tion was that the offer was not considered to be a serious one. But probably more important was the policy reason he gave: "I didn't feel I should paraphrase or quote observations between the President and the former President."

Thus, he was demonstrating the accuracy of an observation that Bill Moyers, one of the former presidential news secretaries on whom Mr. Nessen has said he would try to model himself in his new role (Pierre Salinger and Gerald F. terHorst, his immediate predecessor, were the others) made in a column in *Newsweek*: "The reporter in him [Mr. Nessen], will tug one way while the President's interest will tug another, and he will feel the acute symptoms of being caught between a President and press corps both trying to do their duty while his duty is to serve them both."

White House reporters generally say it is too early to pass judgment on the kind of job Mr. Nessen is doing as news secretary. What concerns some of them, however, is Mr. Nessen's degree of access to the President and other sources of information. Mr. Nessen has said he has been assured he will be kept fully informed. But ABC's Tom Jarriel says he won't be comfortable until Mr. Nessen's name stops showing up every day on the President's list of appointments. "I would like to know Nessen does not need an appointment to see the President." As of now, he does not have that kind of access to the Oval Office.

Another correspondent, who otherwise speaks well of Mr. Nessen, says: "The question to be answered is how much depth does Nessen have; he lacks terHorst's background and experience. Of course," the correspondent added, "we don't know how much depth you need to be a press secretary to Jerry Ford."

The feelings among White House reporters concerning Mr. Nessen personally appear to be mixed. Some network correspondents who have known him over the years are generous in their comments. They say he was a "good" reporter, "solid," "easy to get along with." Then there are those who, as one veteran correspondent put it, feel that "public-relationswise, the Nessen appointment was a mistake," that Mr. Nessen has been something of an "opportunist." In part, at least, some correspondents suggest, that feeling stems from jealousy and resentment, for the White House press corps is not without its prima donnas. And Mr. Nessen, despite almost 20 years in journalism, was not an established member of the White House press corps.

But the publicity Mr. Nessen received in connection with the party at his home that President and Mrs. Ford attended (*BROADCASTING*, Sept. 2) did nothing to improve Mr. Nessen's popularity with his colleagues. For while the party was conceived as one to be given by and for all the reporters who had covered then-Vice President Ford in his travels aboard Air Force Two, some of them felt it emerged in the public mind as the Ron Nessen party. Nor did Mr. Nessen's former traveling companions appreciate the presence at the party of Mr. Nessen's NBC colleagues—John Chancellor, an-



chorman for the *Nightly News*; Lester M. Crystal, executive producer of that program, and White House correspondent Tom Brokaw.

There seems little resentment over the fact that Mr. Ford picked a broadcast journalist for his news secretary. Times have changed since President Truman tried it with Cox Broadcasting's J. Leonard Reinsch. (That appointment—which was neither sought nor made known to Mr. Reinsch before the President announced it—lasted about as long as it took the newspaper reporters to clear their throats and emit howls of protest.) Indeed, UPI's Helen Thomas even feels Mr. Nessen is entitled to a "honeymoon period."

But changing times aside, Mr. Nessen's experience as a journalist is rich and varied. As a native of Washington, D.C., his first media jobs were in small-town radio and newspaper work in the region—WEPM (AM) Martinsburg, W. Va., WAVA (AM) (then WARL) Arlington, Va., and the *Montgomery County Sentinel*, a weekly, in Rockville, Md. Then he was a Washington correspondent for UPI for five years before hooking on with NBC News in 1962.

If he did not become one of the network's superstars, Mr. Nessen drew the kind of assignments journalism students fantasize about. There were wars in Vietnam (five tours there), Bangla Desh, Biafra, and the Congo; the anti-american riots in Panama, the track of Che Guevara in Bolivia, a tribal uprising in Borneo. In addition, he covered the White House in the early Johnson years and, over the next decade, the presidential campaigns of President Johnson, Richard Nixon and George Wallace, the vice presidential campaign of Sargent Shriver. He was a member of the NBC News teams that reported from the Democratic and Republican conventions of 1964, 1968 and 1972. And he anchored NBC's coverage of the shooting of Governor Wallace in Laurel, Md., in 1972, and helped cover the investigation and resignation of Vice President Spiro T. Agnew.

It was Mr. Agnew's fall that contributed to Mr. Nessen's rise. For when Representative Gerald Ford of Michigan emerged as Mr. Agnew's successor, Mr. Nessen was assigned to cover him. He was there for the nomination, for the confirmation hearings and for the inauguration of the new Vice President. And when Mr. Ford became President, Mr. Nessen went back on the White House beat.

President Ford has said that in the many hours he spent aboard Air Force Two with Mr. Nessen, he came to respect him for his "skill and objectivity" as a reporter, and to "enjoy his company." So when Mr. terHorst quit as Mr. Ford's first news secretary over the Nixon pardon and went back to the *Detroit News*, Mr. Nessen's name was among those that came to the presidential mind as a possible successor.

One of the questions that Mr. Nessen was asked when he appeared with the President in the White House briefing room for the announcement of his new job was why he was leaving journalism

to become news secretary. "I'm interested in being a participant in events as well as an observer," he said. Last week, the fire he took in briefing his former colleagues indicated he had indeed become a participant in events.

