

The original documents are located in Box 15, folder “New York City - Nessen Briefings” of the Ron Nessen Papers at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

Copyright Notice

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Ron Nessen donated to the United States of America his copyrights in all of his unpublished writings in National Archives collections. Works prepared by U.S. Government employees as part of their official duties are in the public domain. The copyrights to materials written by other individuals or organizations are presumed to remain with them. If you think any of the information displayed in the PDF is subject to a valid copyright claim, please contact the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

This Copy For _____

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

#371

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 11:55 A.M. EST

NOVEMBER 13, 1975

THURSDAY

MR. NESSEN: We have a busy day, with lots of stuff.

First of all, let me give you an announcement embargoed for noon, which I am sure will come as a great surprise to everyone.

Q It is already out from Peking, so can we eliminate your embargo?

MR. NESSEN: No, I am going to stick to my embargo because I haven't seen any stories from Peking.

It has been agreed that President Gerald R. Ford of the United States of America will visit the People's Republic of China from December 1 through December 5, 1975.

I will tell you what we will do. We will pass these out and while they are being passed out, I will give you one or two other items, and then we will break to file.

The President expects to leave Washington on November 29, which is a Saturday, stop in Alaska, and probably overnight in Alaska. There will probably be one or two events in Alaska, other events in Alaska, which I don't have the details of at the moment. There will be a brief refueling stop in Tokyo.

Q Is this an overnight in Alaska?

MR. NESSEN: Probably.

Q What city?

MR. NESSEN: Anchorage.

There will be a brief refueling stop in Tokyo before going on to Peking. As for any possible airport meeting in Japan, I don't have anything on that at the moment.

MORE

#371



On the way home from the three stops on the trip, the President will stop in Hawaii on December 7, which is a Sunday also. He will also have some activities there. I do not have the details of those. He will arrive back in Washington on the 8th of December, Monday, early on the 8th.

Q Can we assume the December 7 activities have something to do with the Pearl Harbor celebration?

MR. NESSEN: One of them may.

Q No other stops on the return?

MR. NESSEN: Other than Hawaii?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: That is correct.

Q Can we also assume there will be no fund-raising event in Tokyo? (Laughter)

MR. NESSEN: Not so fast, Peter.

Q Can we file?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, file. We will meet back in five minutes.

(AT 12:03 P.M. EST)

* * * * *

12:08 P.M. EST

MR. NESSEN: I have a lot of information on all the various trips we will be making, and we will have to work our way through this very slowly.

In connection with the trip to the People's Republic, each news organization must supply in writing by three o'clock Saturday -- that is this coming Saturday, the day after tomorrow -- the name of each individual who will accompany the President on that trip. Each name should be followed by the individual's passport number.

I think you have this in the form of a release, incidentally, so maybe I will skip over it, except to call your attention to it.

MORE

#371

Since many of you will be out of town anyhow tomorrow and then on Saturday and through the weekend for the Paris trip, it is important that you get these names in absolutely by the deadline of three o'clock on Saturday for the people from your news organizations who want to go on the trip to the People's Republic.

I don't need to remind you it is 16 days away before we go to the People's Republic, so we have to move on with this.

Judy O'Neil is the one assigned to collect the names of the people from your organizations who do want to go. The people who are not here in this room who may want to go, we will get in touch with ourselves.

Q Ron, there are obviously no limits then?

MR. NESSEN: We haven't gotten a limit yet. We are hoping to take as many as we can.

Q Is Peking the only place we will visit in China?

MR. NESSEN: Peking is the only place in the People's Republic we will make.

Do you have a summary schedule of the trip tomorrow? Everybody should have that. It is in the bins.

Just to run over it with you, since it is somewhat complicated --

Q Has this been going on long?

MR. NESSEN: No, I have just called attention, Frank, to the two releases put out, one having to do with the names of people from your organization who want to go to China by 3 p.m. Saturday, and the other is the summary schedule of the trip to Atlanta and Raleigh.

Those of you who are going to go on the Raleigh-Atlanta leg of the trip should be at the airport at Andrews to check in at eight o'clock tomorrow morning, and the press plane will leave at 8:30. Those of you who are also going on to Paris should bring your luggage at that time.

You also may put your luggage today in Room 87 of the EOB, and it will be accepted up until eight o'clock tomorrow morning. That is for the Paris trip.

MORE

#371

Q The Paris luggage, that doesn't go on the Atlanta plane, does it? They just hold it out there?

MR. NESSEN: That is correct.

For those of you who are going to Paris, not going to Atlanta or Raleigh, you can leave your bags in Room 87 of the EOB up until three o'clock tomorrow afternoon. If you are going to Paris only and not to Atlanta and Raleigh, you should check in with your baggage at Andrews at 6:30 tomorrow night. If you have already turned in your luggage, check-in is at 6:45.

The press plane will take off at 7:20 tomorrow evening for Dobbins Air Force Base in Atlanta. Let me see if I can explain this. The press plane will leave Andrews at 7:20 tomorrow night, will go to Dobbins Air Force Base in Atlanta, arriving at 8:50 p.m. tomorrow night.

Those of you who have made the Atlanta-Raleigh trip and are going on to Paris will get on a bus at the Marriott in Atlanta at 9:10 tomorrow night. It will take you to Dobbins. You will get on the press plane, which has come from Washington, and you will leave for Paris at 9:50 tomorrow night.

Do you want me to run over that quickly again?

Those not going to Atlanta and Raleigh should check in with baggage at Andrews at 6:30, and without baggage at 6:45. The press plane leaves Andrews at 7:20 and stops at Dobbins Air Force Base at 8:50.

People who have gone on the trip earlier tomorrow, but are also going to Paris tomorrow, will leave the Marriott by bus at 9:10, go out to Dobbins, get on the press plane and leave for Paris at 9:50.

Those of you who are going to Atlanta and Raleigh and not going to Paris, there will be another press plane to bring you back to Andrews, the same one you went on.

Q What time does Air Force One leave Andrews for Paris?

MR. NESSEN: You would have to ask that, Phil.

On your summary schedule you will see that the President departs Dobbins Air Force Base at 10:05 tomorrow night, arrives at Andrews at 11:25, takes off in the other plane at 11:40 for Paris.

Q So the pool should be there when?

MR. NESSEN: The pool going on Air Force One to Paris should be at Andrews I would guess at 11 o'clock.

Here are some arrival times.

The press plane arrives at Orly at noon Saturday, Paris time, which is 6 a.m. Eastern time. At the airport we have ten long-distance phones exclusively for the White House press, plus 11 more long-distance phones inside the press room, but you will be competing with some other reporters for those 11 phones.

I don't have a Presidential arrival time in Paris, do I?

Q Will there be an arrival statement, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: At 1 p.m. Paris time, 7 a.m. Eastern time, the President arrives at Orly, and I don't have any word on whether there will be an arrival statement.

The President will then go by helicopter to Rambouillet and the press corps will go to the George Cinq Hotel in Paris. It is the White House hotel and press center. There is another press center located in Rambouillet in a restaurant called, believe it or not, the Drink Store. (Laughter) How appropriate.

This will be the press center and gathering place for pools. (Laughter) It will be the gathering place for pools who will be covering the activities of Rambouillet, the place of the summit talks. The travel pool will accompany the President when he flies by helicopter from Orly to Rambouillet.

This afternoon, at three o'clock, we will hand out the traditional press notes for this trip, which will contain information about filing facilities at both press centers, telephone numbers you will need to know during the trip, addresses of various places you want to know during the trip, information about what kinds of clothes to take and so forth.

We will also hand out press notes on the flight for people who don't want to be here at three or are not here today.

The pool on Air Force One will also get press notes.

During the flight, you will receive your credentials for the trip and also a French credential for covering the events.

As for a detailed Presidential schedule of the first day, I hope to have that later this afternoon. Three o'clock would be a good time to check here for a detailed schedule of the trip.

Q Ron, before you leave the trip, could you give us some idea of what kind of briefing arrangements are going to be made for the three days in Paris?

MR. NESSEN: Bob, we discussed that this morning, and it seems unlikely that there is going to be anything on Saturday that really is worth calling everybody together for. The meetings don't start until very late in the afternoon, and by the time they are over and there is really anything -- that is really only a dinner on Saturday, I believe.

MR. GREENER: It is dinner and a meeting, but not over until about 10:30.

MR. NESSEN: I think we will pass on a briefing on Saturday.

Q There is still six hours difference, so there is plenty of time to make the American papers even if we get a briefing at nine or ten.

MR. NESSEN: The problem is it will not be over until 10:30 or 11, and then it is a helicopter flight from Rambouillet and a car ride to the hotel, and given the fact they are Sunday morning papers, and it will only be their first meeting and dinner, I just thought that it probably wasn't worthwhile. Sunday we will schedule briefings, although I don't have the precise time yet.

Q Assume you can get back there by one o'clock in the morning. That is seven o'clock on the East Coast. In fact, the Sunday papers, it seems to me --

Q Four o'clock on the West Coast.

MR. NESSEN: I take it there is a burning desire for a briefing on Saturday. If we can, we will. I think it is a good suggestion.

Q Ron, you said sometime ago the President plans to make no other stops and confer with no other leaders beyond the Rambouillet conference. Does that still stand?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Will you be able to supply texts of transcripts back here in Washington pretty quickly after they are delivered?

MR. NESSEN: We always do, yes.

MORE

Q May I ask two questions on the China trip? Why has it been decided that the President will go to Peking only? I know he has visited the Great Wall and other places on previous trips.

Secondly, has he had advance guarantee that he will see Chairman Mao?

MR. NESSEN: Let me answer the last part first. On the subject of Chairman Mao, we take this visit seriously and we believe that the Chinese do also. We have every reason to believe that the President will be received with courtesy and with all appropriate protocol. Naturally, we assume that this would include the President meeting at the highest levels.

On the subject of the meeting being limited to Peking, I think one thing to say about that is that the President has been to China before in his role as Republican Leader of the House in 1972. He has been to a number of places outside of the Chinese capital.

The United States and China agreed that this would be largely a working visit and so there was the feeling that there was no need for either a longer stay or travels outside of Peking; that the four days concentrated in Peking are ample time for substantive exchanges.

Q Ron, could I ask a question about the President's travel tomorrow? Why is he coming back to Andrews Air Force Base?

MR. NESSEN: It is technical problems involving the refueling and the preparation of the plane and so forth.

Q Isn't it for the statement, a departure statement? Isn't that it, basically?

MR. NESSEN: I am not aware there is a departure statement, Aldo. I haven't heard of one.

Q Wouldn't he have to come back here and pick up some people who would normally be traveling with the President to Paris that wouldn't go on the other trip?

MR. NESSEN: The plan is that people like Bill Seidman and Alan Greenspan, Dr. Kissinger and so forth would get on the plane here and then the President would join them.

Q When former President Nixon went to China, there was a considerable amount of -- pardon the expression -- "hoopla", a lot of public ceremonies and that sort of thing. Would you expect this to be a lower key trip with more emphasis on discussions and less emphasis on trappings?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know if I want to accept all your descriptions of previous visits and so on, but, as I said to Ralph, both the Chinese and the United States have agreed this is largely a working visit and the time there will be spent primarily in serious exchanges.

Q Ron, should I take it from your answer that you assume he will be meeting with people at the highest levels but you have not been assured he will see Chairman Mao?

MR. NESSEN: We assume he will be meeting with people at the highest level, Bob. I just don't think it is a normal diplomatic endeavor to demand that your hosts sign some kind of promise in advance.

Q You wouldn't put out a schedule saying 8:00 to 8:30 here, and 9:30 to 10:00 meet with Chairman Mao?

MR. NESSEN: I think the people who have made the China trip before know that if you get the schedule by 5 a.m. of the day, you are lucky.

Q I am not talking about the press schedule. I am talking about the President's agenda.

MR. NESSEN: I am talking about the President's schedule, too. If he gets the schedule by the early morning hours of the next day --

Q There is no specific agenda or specific schedule of what he will be doing each day?

MR. NESSEN: Not yet. As you know, the advance team hasn't gone yet.

Q Then there has been no direct communique from Mao to the effect he is looking forward to meeting with the President during his trip?

MR. NESSEN: We have obviously had communications back and forth with the Chinese and, as I said, we obviously assume he will be meeting at the highest levels.

Q A direct communique from Mao was the question.

MR. NESSEN: I don't think it is normal to spell out who signs the communiques, Russ.

Q But there is no specific agenda thus far on who he will be meeting with?

MR. NESSEN: There is no specific schedule for any of the days in China because the advance team hasn't gone yet.

Q How about Mrs. Ford? Is she going to be touring?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have a full list of who is going yet, Frank.

Q Have you said whether or not she is going?

MR. NESSEN: I haven't said because I don't know.

Q Ron, will Ambassador Bush come back here to fly over with the President?

MR. NESSEN: That is one detail I don't know.

Q Somebody involved in the planning said there will be people disappointed because there will be a reduced press entourage on this trip. Can you give us any idea if there will be reduced press?

MR. NESSEN: We haven't really gotten into the question of numbers yet. I think there is some indication that the Chinese generally prefer to have the trip handled as it was in 1972 by the former President. I think some of the considerations have changed.

As I understand it, the TV networks, for instance, no longer use film and would not need to have film processors and film editors. I think probably the interest by people who asked to go on that trip who have never before or never since gone on a Presidential trip will be somewhat lessened. I don't anticipate a major problem when it comes to the number of reporters that want to go.

Q Ron, I was a bit late coming back to your resumed briefing. If you have answered this question, I apologize.

What about the question of third country newsmen?

MR. NESSEN: We have not really dealt with that yet.

Q No decision at all?

MR. NESSEN: No.

The President's day today -- I think you have seen his schedule -- he does have time set aside to prepare for the Paris meetings. He also has an hour-long meeting this afternoon on the 1977 fiscal budget.

As you know, some time ago I announced a very long list of meetings the President would be holding on the budget, state of the Union and legislative proposals. This is one in that series which he will be holding virtually every day between now and the end of January.

Other than that, I have no further announcements.

Q Ron, can you tell us about the New York situation, the President's reaction to Governor Carey's plan and if there are any further plans to reconcile aid?

MR. NESSEN: Secretary Simon has -- let me back up a minute before I tell you some of the specifics, and say that obviously there has been finally, at long last, some serious action by New York City and New York State to solve their own financial problems. This is something the President has been talking about, urging, I guess, for six months now. Finally, New York City and New York State have done it, or have begun to do it anyhow, or said they would do it.

The President feels that this action or apparent action by the City and State largely is the result of his own firm position against a Federal bail-out for New York City.

Now in the specifics, the Treasury Secretary has asked Governor Carey to send him the full details of this plan to help New York City solve its own financial problems.

Secretary Simon also has asked that the participants in the plan indicate in writing their commitment to carry out their part of the plan. As much action as has been taken so far and the indications of further action in response to the President's own firm stand is encouraging to the President and the Administration will monitor what is done.

Q Governor Carey said yesterday that Secretary Simon had assured him that if such a plan were implemented, that the President would reconsider short-term aid to New York.

MR. NESSEN: Marty, you know that I said that the Administration will monitor what is done and just as an aside, that is obviously in contrast to what is said and what is promised. The Administration will monitor what is done.

Now for one thing, the detailed plan really has not arrived here in writing. It is clear from what has been printed in the papers and some tentative information which has been sent here that there is a provision for kind of short-term money that is needed for seasonal reasons; that there are times of the year when revenue collections are below the expenditure needs, and that there would be the need for some kind of money to tide over that seasonal period.

It is not clear to the White House that this money necessarily has to come from the Federal Government. It could easily come from private sources.

Q Easily, did you say easily come from private sources?

MR. NESSEN: You know if the plan goes through it should be possible for the City and State to get that money from private sources.

Q Was Governor Carey correct in saying that the Secretary had assured him that the White House would consider short-term aid?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what the exact conversation was because obviously I didn't listen in. I know what the Secretary intended to say to Governor Carey but I don't know precisely what he said to him.

Q Will the Secretary accompany the President to Paris?

MR. NESSEN: He will go to Paris. My understanding is he will fly on another airplane.

Q Can we assume the monitoring will not begin in earnest, or the consideration, until the Presidential party returns from Paris?

MR. NESSEN: I wouldn't say begin, Sol. The monitoring has been going on for quite some time.

Q But you don't have the plan?

MR. NESSEN: Simon has asked to see the plan in writing and to have these commitments made by the people who are supposed to participate.

Q Does this mean that the President may be changing his position?

MR. NESSEN: He certainly is not changing the stand which he has taken repeatedly, which is that he is against and will not approve a Federal bail-out of New York City.

Q What will he approve? My question is, yesterday you said the President's position was unchanged and today you said the President is encouraged. You say he won't approve a Federal bail-out. What will he approve? Could you help us in that regard and word it as carefully as you would like to?

MR. NESSEN: I think I have. You know, we haven't seen the plan yet in detail or in writing.

Q Would you be a bit more precise?

MR. NESSEN: We have not seen the plan in writing or in detail. There is, according to the tentative things we have seen and the newspaper reports, a need for this money to tide over the seasonal period but it is not clear whether that needs to be, or whether the Governor is thinking of Federal money.

Q Is the White House considering Federal money?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think there is anything to consider at the moment since the plan isn't here.

Q But you are not ruling it out at the moment either, are you?

MR. NESSEN: I am saying, just to go back to the beginning, that New York City and State have taken some encouraging action, thanks to the firm stand taken by the President. The President is still firmly opposed and will not approve anything that is a Federal bail-out of New York City.

Q The word "bail-out" is used by a great many people. I wonder if you could be a bit more precise as to precisely what the White House means by a "bail-out"?

MR. NESSEN: What do you mean by a bail-out?

Q A bail-out is used by a great many people. Loan guarantees have been called bail-outs, direct grants, direct loans from the Federal Government, certificates of indebtedness, which may or may not be guaranteed by the Federal Government. I am curious as to what the White House position is on exactly what constitutes a bail-out?

MR. NESSEN: I never really asked anybody here for the definition of a bail-out.

MORE

Q Ron, when the President asks for a written commitment by officials of the city, it seems to me that he is implying that he is going to do something if they give him a commitment. What is he going to do in exchange for this commitment?

MR. NESSEN: How can I answer that question when it is --

Q Does he propose to do something in exchange for the commitment?

MR. NESSEN: The President is not proposing or volunteering to do anything. The city and the State have taken some encouraging action, and the President feels his firmness has led to this.

Q Why should they make a commitment when nothing has been promised in return?

MR. NESSEN: Nothing has been asked.

Q Ron, are you making a distinction between "bail-out" and "short-term" assistance?

MR. NESSEN: I think we are just getting ahead of the game at this stage.

Q It is explicit in your words, Ron, that is why I raise it.

MR. NESSEN: I think this is where we stand today, and I don't know that I can elaborate on it anymore.

Q Ron, you said that the President thinks that there might be a need for seasonal --

MR. NESSEN: Wait a minute, Adam. I didn't say the President thinks anything. I said our understanding from tentative plans we have seen and from newspaper reports is that there is a need for seasonal financing.

Q And it is not clear to the White House this money has to come from the Federal Government but it could easily come from private sources. Does that suggest if the money were to come from private sources and everything that he requested happens, that the President might be prepared to consider the Federal Government guaranteeing the money from private sources in the form of a loan guarantee?

MR. NESSEN: Adam, I tell you, I just think at this point, given the fact we have not seen it in writing, we have not seen the commitments, it is not clear where the money needs to come from, that I can't go beyond what I said in terms of expectation.

Q Ron, would it be fair to say at this point that the President is keeping an open mind about the New York City plan until he has a chance to see what it is in writing?

MR. NESSEN: An open mind about what?

Q Whatever is proposed in the New York City plan, until he has a chance to study it? An open mind as to the proposal for such things as a Federal role in the plan?

MR. NESSEN: Phil, I think I have gone about as far as I will go today.

Q Yesterday you said the President's position was unchanged and that position was the President would do nothing to prevent a default. Are you now saying he is reconsidering that and if it becomes clear to him, after studying this plan, that the only place to get this money is from the Federal Government, he might be willing to go along?

MR. NESSEN: His position is unchanged, one, in that he will not approve anything that is a Federal bail-out of New York City, as he said in the Press Club speech -- and I wish I had brought the exact words out with me -- but he would not hesitate to veto any legislation which provided a Federal bail-out to prevent default. That position is unchanged.

Q Do you have any idea when they will get this information from New York, a written commitment and the Carey plan? What is the timetable on that?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know, but I would think in a relatively short period, the next couple of days.

Q Excuse me. Could you go back to that? What was the question you were responding to?

MR. NESSEN: Bill's question was when do we expect to see the plan in writing, and the commitments from the participants. The answer is in a relatively short period of a few days.

Q Ron, in the past your statement has been that the President would take no action to prevent a default by New York City. Without getting into terms like bail-out, do you still stand by that statement today?

MR. NESSEN: I think you have to figure out what default really means. Default, I guess by most people's definition, is when you fail to make the interest or principal payments on your debt on time. Whether this plan, as we have seen it, amounts to that or not, it is hard to tell. It is a legal question at the moment.

Q So, you can't categorically say you will stand by that, then, right?

MR. NESSEN: As I say, you would have to have a legal definition of default, and it is beyond my legal expertise.

Q When Government officials start defining terms, that means they are changing their position. We have found that for years. Today you are wanting a definition of bail-out. Today you are wanting a definition of default. Today you are wanting definitions, so in other words we can say the President no longer is categorically against preventing a default, right?

MR. NESSEN: Bob, I would like to say things my own way, if I may.

Q You have always been very dogmatic about that in the past. You obviously have changed your position.

MR. NESSEN: I would like to say firm.

Q Whatever you say -- do you want me to define dogmatic? (Laughter) -- the position is changing. It is not the same today as it was yesterday.

MR. NESSEN: I would say that due to the President's forcefulness and firmness on this issue, Bob, the situation that we are talking about has changed. For instance, the legislation which is pending on the Hill, none of which to the President would be acceptable, as we have said in the past, now becomes, I think, probably somewhat irrelevant because none of it applies to the changed situation in New York City and State, brought about by the plan they are working on, which in turn was brought about by the President's firmness.

Q Why does it no longer apply?

Q Rockefeller was right, then, wasn't he?

MR. NESSEN: As I say, I like to say things my own way.

Q Why does it no longer apply?

MR. NESSEN: It no longer applies, Marty, because if I understand, and what I said before, we are talking about some kind of seasonal period, some mechanism or financing to tide New York City -- and of course all of this is predicated on this plan being carried out as the mayor and Governor say it will be and the other participants.

But, in any case, the things up on the Hill apply to one situation. The situation they are talking about now has to do with short-term seasonal financing of some kind.

Q Ron, your categorical statement in the past is no longer operative, is that right?

MR. NESSEN: I don't consider that a serious question, John.

Q It is, Ron.

MR. NESSEN: As I told Bob, I like to say things in my own way. If you prefer to use that, it is your story.

Q Is there some reason why we are playing games out here? This is a fairly serious thing.

MR. NESSEN: I think it is serious, and I think it should be obvious to you I have spent a great deal of time working on it this morning, and I am saying it precisely as I want to say it and as the President wants to say it.

Q Why are you leaving open the possibility that the President will agree to some short-term assistance if he likes the plan put on his desk hopefully in the next few days?

MR. NESSEN: Ralph, I don't think we are up to that stage yet.

Q Are we now stalling until Friday afternoon when all the markets are closed for the weekend?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Can you give another answer to Bob Schieffer's question? He asked you very simply has the President's position changed or is it changing and you responded --

MR. NESSEN: I don't think a one-word answer is adequate.

Q You responded by saying the situation has changed.

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q That certainly leaves the impression that, therefore, his position is changing. If that is not the impression you mean to convey, would you say that?

MR. NESSEN: Dick, I have told you his position is opposed to a Federal bail-out. I have answered John's question about does this amount to a default or not -- it is hard to say, not being a lawyer. I have told you what Simon is doing, what the President intends to do with what the Governor sends here and so forth.

As you say yourself, it is a serious question that requires more than a sentence or word that will fit into a headline.

Q May I ask, you said we haven't reached that stage yet. Are we correct in assuming we are at least moving in that direction; that is, the President --

MR. NESSEN: I would not look beyond where we are now, Walt, because it is not possible to.

Q Ron, what will the President do with the information and the commitments that are put in front of him? You said he would receive them, but what --

MR. NESSEN: He is going to read them and find out what they are all about and what it is that the Governor feels he wants to have brought to the President's attention, and he will determine what is the Presidential role.

Q What is the timetable?

MR. NESSEN: I said the timetable is that I would expect the written plan and commitment to arrive shortly, within the next few days.

Q What is the timetable for selecting a new Supreme Court Justice?

MR. NESSEN: Let's finish the New York question.

Q Does the President share Chairman Burns' opinion over what he describes as being deeply concerned on the impact of a default on the money markets of the country?

MR. NESSEN: I think the President has stated his own view that a default would not have -- I forget what the precise adjective he used was -- but it would not have a --

Q I think he called such things fear tactics.

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

MORE

Q Ron, the President also said he based that view on advice he received from his economic advisers.

MR. NESSEN: Arthur Burns is one person he talks to and there are others he talks to.

Q What I fail to understand is that why at the Press Club couldn't the President have been just as tough as he was and said something along these lines instead of being so unequivocal? It seems he has put himself in a box and might be endangering his credibility by his past actions.

MR. NESSEN: Why would you get that idea?

Q Ron, would it be wrong to say the President is unalterably opposed to short-term loan guarantees to New York City to prevent a default?

MR. NESSEN: I think it would be wrong to say anything you haven't heard me say here today.

Q Ron, we can't expect any decision on this until after his return from Paris, can we?

MR. NESSEN: You say decision, you know, as if you anticipate one.

Q Then what good is monitoring the developments in New York if not for some decision?

MR. NESSEN: Will he not begin monitoring --

Q No, for what purpose is he monitoring developments in New York?

MR. NESSEN: As I said to Sol, to find out what is in the plan, whether the participants have committed themselves to carry out the plan, to find out what it is Carey thinks is needed in the way of this seasonal financing, and from whom.

Q For what, if he is still opposed to any aid pre-default of systems?

MR. NESSEN: I think if you want to get my transcript and read back all I have said this morning --

Q Ron, the New York State Legislature is being convened in special session largely because the Governor believes that there may be some movement on the President's part based on what Simon told him. Now what you said today might perhaps cause the New York State Legislature to decide why should we be here in special session because there is no movement. Would you please define for the Legislature what it is that they are there for?

MR. NESSEN: I would think you better ask Governor Carey that and, in addition, I would disagree with your assumption that the New York State Legislature has been convened because of some indication on their part that the President is backing away. I would argue and tell you that the President's feeling is that New York City and State, the Legislature, the Governor, the Mayor, the other participants have reached this point not because of some signal that the President is reversing himself but quite the opposite, because after trying by every way they could to scare or persuade the Government into a bail-out, the President's firm position has finally gotten through to them to the point where they realize that they must put into effect and carry out their own plan for saving the City of New York.

Q Are you saying they should come up with a plan that does not call on the Federal Government at all; is that what you are telling us?

MR. NESSEN: They have put a plan together and we have asked to see it and that is where it stands.

Q Is there a substantial difference of opinion among the economic advisers on how to handle the New York situation?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think it has reached a point yet where anybody has been able to review the plan and convince themselves that these commitments have been given or to find out what, if anything, it is that the Governor wants the Federal Government to do, so there can't be a disagreement since it hasn't come to a full discussion yet.

Q Will President Ford submit his choice for the Supreme Court to the American Bar Association's Committee on the Judiciary which in the past has screened Presidential appointments?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have a specific answer on that, Peter, because I failed to ask the President this morning. I can tell you that the President will be discussing with the Justice Department and others his nominee for this job. It is obviously one of the most important decisions that any President is called upon to make. He will do it with great deliberation. At the same time, there is a certain urgency to have a full court so the President will act as quickly as possible on this, but it will be a deliberate choice because he has in mind the extreme importance of that nomination.

Q Did he indicate any time line, a couple of weeks, in that area?

MR. NESSEN: There is no time schedule that I can give you.

Q Ron, could you find out whether he will use that process of the ABA's Judiciary Committee?

MR. NESSEN: I will.

Q Do you have some standards the President has set down to you that he is looking for in a Justice?

MR. NESSEN: I talked to him about that. He indicated that this had happened only yesterday afternoon. Justice Douglas' letter arrived at 1:15, as some of you know, and he spent some time writing an answer. It came with suddenness and I don't think he has had the time to develop any lengthy list of qualifications that he will be looking for.

He did say that he would be looking for the person he felt was the best qualified person for the Court that he is able to find. That will be his first qualification, that he is the best qualified person.

Q Ron, do you have any little details on how that letter got down here yesterday? Did the Justice call Mr. Buchen and tell him what he planned to do or just say there was a letter on the way?

MR. NESSEN: Either Douglas himself or an aide at the court called Buchen and said that the letter was on the way and it arrived and Phil asked for the first opportunity to see the President, which was at 1:15.

Q Did Mr. Douglas say what was in the letter, do you know?

MR. NESSEN: The phone call did not go into any detail other than the fact the letter was on its way.

Q Did he say, "I am resigning, and I am sending a letter to that effect?"

MR. NESSEN: I think either he or the aide from the Court indicated the Justice was sending a letter which was an announcement of his retirement.

Q Did the President have any conversation with maybe the Chief Justice or anyone else up there about this?

MR. NESSEN: He did not. I think it would be fair to say the President was aware of the kinds of stories and so forth that everybody else was aware of, but the President had no advance notice.

Q Has he talked to the Chief Justice since?

MR. NESSEN: The President?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: No, not that I am aware of.

Q Has he talked to Mr. Justice Douglas?

MR. NESSEN: Not that I am aware of, but I will check it.

Q Has he talked to Mrs. Ford about the job?
(Laughter)

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

Q He said yesterday that he would probably hear about it tonight, referring to Mrs. Ford's championing for a woman.

Q Ron, Prime Minister Thorn said in his news conference today the President told him the United States would not take any retaliatory financial actions in the UN as a result of the Zionism resolution. Can you tell us exactly how he does feel about that?

MR. NESSEN: Taking retaliatory action against the UN?

Q Well, cut down our commitments.

MR. NESSEN: I don't think that has changed since yesterday, Frank. I said that the President had asked for the amount of money for the American contribution to the UN that he thought was appropriate and still has that feeling.

Q Congressman Pike has said that the Ford Administration has forbidden the intelligence agencies -- CIA, NSA and so on -- from saying the Soviets have failed to comply with the SALT agreement. Apparently, former Defense Secretary Schlesinger wrote a letter citing specific Soviet violations and the White House says that letter has been lost or destroyed.

My question is, did the Ford Administration forbid the intelligence agencies to say that the Soviets failed to comply with the SALT agreement?

MR. NESSEN: I am not familiar with that, Walt. This is the first time I have ever heard it.

Q There is a story on the AP wire out there.

MR. NESSEN: I have not heard of it before.

Q Is the new energy bill, except for pricing, acceptable to the President?

MR. NESSEN: The energy bill conference report was just finished up, I guess late last night. There is nothing in writing, I understand. Frank Zarb has got his own notes of what the bill, as drafted by the conferees, contains and it is complex, as you know, and the President wants to read it and study it before reaching a conclusion.

Q Ron, Zarb is quoted as saying he will recommend to the President that he accept this conference bill. Has he done that yet?

MR. NESSEN: He was in to talk to the President this morning and kind of outlined for the President what is in the bill since there is nothing in writing. The President wants to think about that before reaching a decision.

Q Did he include in the outline a recommendation?

MR. NESSEN: I think it is probably not proper to relay the recommendations of Presidential advisers.

Q When will the President return from Paris?

MR. NESSEN: The President will return Monday -- I forget what the return time is. It is late afternoon or early evening.

Q Ron, there was a presentation yesterday by the United States in the United Nations calling for the release of all political prisoners which is being interpreted by some people as a counter by the United States to the anti-Zionist resolution. Does the President share that view?

MR. NESSEN: It hasn't been introduced yet, has it? The State Department can probably give you full details on that. I just don't have them.

Q Does the President share the Secretary of State's feeling that the anti-Zionist resolution is only an emotion of today, as he said yesterday in Pittsburgh?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, I think it is fair to say the Secretary shares the President's view or the President shares the Secretary's view.

Q The President is going to one of the first five primary States tomorrow -- North Carolina. Is he confident he will win that primary?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think the President has spent all that much time running down a check list of States, John. He expects to win the nomination and the election, but I don't know that he has gone State-by-State.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Ron.

END (AT 12:50 P.M. EST)

#371

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 12:30 P.M. EST

NOVEMBER 18, 1975

TUESDAY

MR. NESSEN: Well, welcome home.

I don't have anything to announce today other than what we have put out already.

Q Thank you.

Q Is the President going to sign the energy bill and give aid to New York and has he --

MR. NESSEN: Get it all out of the way in one question.

Q What does he think of Nixon's --

MR. NESSEN: Number one, he has not decided whether to sign or veto the energy bill?

Q When will he?

MR. NESSEN: After he sees the bill.

Q When do you expect that?

MR. NESSEN: Thursday or Friday.

Q Is that what he is talking to Zarb about?

MR. NESSEN: That is what he did talk to Zarb about.

Number two, there is no change in his position on New York City from last week.

Number three, I have nothing to announce on the Supreme Court Justice.

Q Well, on New York, though, isn't he moving into talking about it today with his advisers?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, there will be a meeting at 3 o'clock of the Economic Policy Board to discuss New York City.

MORE

#374

Q Do you expect any announcement?

Q Has he met with John Rhodes and Congressman Stanton?

MR. NESSEN: He is now.

Q About New York?

MR. NESSEN: And other things, yes.

Q Excuse me. You seem to be putting out some information in the course of a --

MR. NESSEN: In answer to Helen's very incisive question.

Q Thank you. (Laughter)

MR. NESSEN: But I would expect nothing less of a best selling authoress.

Q What is the name of the book?

Q Available at all book stores. (Laughter)

Q Can you back up just a little bit, then? You said there is no change in his position from last week?

MR. NESSEN: November 13.

Q Last week we had some difficulty ascertaining clearly one way or the other whether there had been any change in this position at that point. Can you elaborate at all in your response?

MR. NESSEN: There is just no change since November 13 and you can read the transcript and see what he said then and that is exactly his position.

Q Why is he calling Rhodes and who else?

MR. NESSEN: He didn't call Rhodes. Rhodes and Stanton asked for an opportunity to come in and talk about New York City and other matters.

Q And they are meeting right now?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Why weren't we told about that?

Q Is the November 13 briefing, the one in which the President said something to the effect, well, New York has made substantial progress and so on and so on so the situation is changing? Is that the briefing you are talking about?

MR. NESSEN: Well, I would not want to say you have got accurate quotes.

Q I understand.

MR. NESSEN: You don't, but I think that is the day.
(Laughter)

Q Hey, you are in an elfin mood today.

Q Ron, do you expect to have anything to say this afternoon -- you or anybody on the President's behalf -- after this meeting with Rhodes and Stanton.

MR. NESSEN: I would not expect to.

Q When did it start?

MR. NESSEN: Five, ten minutes ago.

Q How long will it go?

Q Is it just Rhodes and Stanton?

MR. NESSEN: And I think Simon is in there.

Q Is Henry Reuss down there?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Did they ask to see the President?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, they did.

Q Why?

MR. NESSEN: To discuss New York City.

Q How long are they going to meet?

MR. NESSEN: We will check.

Q Could you tell us whoever else is in there?
You seem kind of vague.

MR. NESSEN: Simon is in there. Let's check the participants. Cheney is in there.

Why don't you get the participants list from Terry?

Q Ron, would you expect the President to have anything to say about how he might treat this legislation on New York City before the legislation is voted on?

MR. NESSEN: Which legislation?

Q The House bill.

MR. NESSEN: The Reuss-Rhodes Bill?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: No. Again, there I would say that what we said last week is unchanged.

Q What did you say?

Q You didn't speak to that question last week.

Q Was it the Reuss-Rhodes Bill?

MR. NESSEN: Well, I was asked about legislation last week.

Q When you say unchanged, do you mean the President is adamantly against aid to New York?

MR. NESSEN: Read what we said last week.

Q Ron, last week you said that none of the legislation on the Hill at that time was acceptable. Are you saying that the Reuss-Rhodes compromise is not acceptable today?

MR. NESSEN: Well, I think what we said last week was that the legislation up there had been prepared to meet circumstances which had changed and I think the Reuss-Rhodes Bill would fall into that category since it had been introduced prior to Governor Carey's letter to Secretary Simon.

Q It was altered yesterday so would you tell us as of today whether it is acceptable or not?

MR. NESSEN: I think the alteration had to do with the change in the dollar figure rather than in the basic concept of the bill.

Q The basic concept is, therefore, unacceptable?

MR. NESSEN: Well, you know, it is exactly where it was last week.

Q Ron, in this regard are you specifically denying the lead story in this morning's Times?

MR. NESSEN: I am just telling you our position.

Q I don't know what the position was.

MR. NESSEN: The position today is what it was on November 13.

Q Why don't you outline that?

MR. NESSEN: Why don't we get a bunch of transcripts and pass it out, it is all in there.

Q It was interpreted as a softening of the President's attitude on November 13, that there was a little give there, is that true?

MR. NESSEN: The position has not changed since November 13 until today.

Q Could you not give us a little synopsis of it?

MR. NESSEN: You remember that world famous briefing, don't you?

Q Why don't you re-read a couple paragraphs of it?

Q It is all a blur, Ron.

MR. NESSEN: What?

Q I said it is all a blur--November 13.

MR. NESSEN: Yes, that was a busy day, wasn't it.

At the meeting which began at 12:20 today and is scheduled to last for 30 minutes are Congressmen Rhodes and Stanton, Secretary Simon, Alan Greenspan, Dick Cheney, Jack Marsh and Max Friedersdorf.

Well, among the other things said on the 13th of November was -- you know, that was the briefing in which we talked about, at long last, New York City and State are solving their own financial problems, trying to, or saying they are going to. "This is what the President has been urging and the President feels that the action, or promised action, is a result of his own firm position against the Federal bail out. Simon has asked Carey to send him the full details of the plan and asked the participants to indicate their commitment and"--

Q Has Simon gotten that yet?

MR. NESSEN: He has gotten the plan. I am not sure he has gotten the written commitment yet.

Q Do you know whether the Governor or the mayor would be in here to see the President for a verbal commitment?

MR. NESSEN: There is no plan that I know of to do that.

Q Do you know whether the President has spoken to either one of them?

MR. NESSEN: Not that I know of.

Q Is the President going to tip his hand today to Rhodes as to whether he would support the legislation?

MR. NESSEN: What, the Rhodes-Reuss legislation? I don't know, since I am not in the meeting.

Q Does the President plan to make a statement within the next 48 hours on his current feelings about New York City?

MR. NESSEN: I am giving you his feelings as of about 30 minutes ago, which is, there is no change.

Q Does he plan to personally make any statement on television?

MR. NESSEN: Not that I know of. He didn't talk to me about it.

Q Ron, there is a meeting going on now with major people from the Hill. There will be a review later this afternoon. Does it look like we are moving towards something?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what you mean by "moving towards something." After all, what is happening now is that New York City and New York State are promising or saying they are going to take some action to solve their own problem. That is what the President has been urging for six months. It is not something that really requires or needs a White House decision or statement or announcement at this time. They say they are going to do something, to solve their own problems.

Q And they are saying that they will do something with the expectation that there will be some form of Federal assistance once they do it?

MR. NESSEN: Again, it is as it was on November 13.

Q Why is he meeting, if he is still unconcerned?

MR. NESSEN: Because to keep track of what is happening in New York City and New York State's own efforts to --

Q He is meeting with Hill people. He is not meeting with people --

MR. NESSEN: They asked for the meeting.

Q Why?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know. You need to ask them.

Q Do you mean to give the impression, Ron, that the President has arrived at a position on this that is more or less set and that he is not concerned at all with all of this agitation in recent days and the concern of Rhodes? You are giving the impression that he is locked in and he does not have --

MR. NESSEN: No, the impression I mean to give is that his position today is exactly the way it was on November 13, but that obviously he is keeping up with the situation and seeing if New York City and State actually take the action that they have talked about taking.

Q Are you likely to have anything after the 3 p.m. meeting this afternoon?

MR. NESSEN: I doubt it. Again, because the action is not here, the action should be in New York City and State.

Q There is a lot of action here if the only two major meetings he is having today are on New York.

MR. NESSEN: You know there is never any action at these meetings, Helen.

That is a joke.

Q If he is so interested in keeping abreast of what is going on, then why isn't he meeting with the Governor or the mayor? I think the Governor is in town today.

MR. NESSEN: There has not been any request for one that I know of.

Q Why isn't he requesting it? He is interested in keeping track of this.

MR. NESSEN: He has these monitors that have been monitoring the situation and we are monitoring the situation.

Q Do you know whether the monitors have plans to see Governor Carey or Mayor Beame?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know that.

Q What is the meeting at 3:00?

MR. NESSEN: The Economic Policy Board.

Q Would it be possible to have Rhodes and Stanton come out here after the meeting?

MR. NESSEN: I can ask them.

Q Ron, what was the President's reaction to the cover stories in both Time and Newsweek, the subject being A Man From a Western State? What was his reaction? Has he seen them?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know that he has seen them yet.

Q He has not seen either Time or Newsweek?

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

Q Ron, is Zarb urging the President to sign the energy bill?

MR. NESSEN: No, what Frank did this morning was to simply run through with the President how much of the bill has been written down on paper so far and discussed that, and the fact that the process will continue and the President telling Frank to continue to participate and watch the drafting process so that as it comes out on paper, it is in line with what was verbally agreed to by the conferees.

Q That indicates that he would sign it, does it not, if in fact --

MR. NESSEN: It does not indicate it to me.

Q It doesn't?

MR. NESSEN: No, it certainly doesn't.

Q If he is so concerned, why so interested in the line by line, word for word?

MR. NESSEN: In getting a bill that accurately represents what the conferees agreed to verbally and then read it and decide whether to sign it or veto it.

Q Is that a function of the Administration if the Administration has not given some sort of tacit approval to what the conferees did?

MR. NESSEN: I can tell you for sure, having just emerged a few minutes ago from that meeting, that the President has not made up his mind, is not tilting in any direction. He has simply not made up his mind one way or the other.

Q Ron, is it unusual for the President to have one of his men monitor a Congressional bill that comes out of a conference?

MR. NESSEN: Oh, no. I think Frank took part in the negotiations and in the agreements, as you all know, and he will continue to take part in it.

Q So he knows what the agreement was, the President knows?

MR. NESSEN: He knows what the verbal agreement was, and the President's decision will depend on the actual legal language of the bill.

Q Ron, did Zarb get clearance from the President for the verbal agreement that he made, that FEA made with the conferees?

MR. NESSEN: Frank was operating as the Administrator of the FEA, but the President has not committed to either sign or veto the bill until he has had a chance to read it.

Q Ron, if the written agreement tallies with the verbal agreement, would the President then sign the bill?

MR. NESSEN: He has not decided, Bill.

Q When is this supposed to happen? When does the President expect to have this before him and make the decision?

MR. NESSEN: He expects to have the written bill before him on Thursday or Friday. Now, whether he will make the decision at that time, because after all that will only be the agreed upon conference report. That still needs to be approved by the Senate and House before coming here in the form of a bill for signature or veto, and I believe Congress goes off on a vacation -- what is it, Friday?

Q Thursday.

MR. NESSEN: Thursday.

Q If the President signs this bill, won't this represent a significant about face for him on the issue of decontrol?

MR. NESSEN: Since he has not decided whether to sign or veto, I just think it is premature.

Q Let me phrase it this way. Is he considering a serious about face on decontrol because if he signs, it is 180 degrees from what he has been preaching all over the country.

MR. NESSEN: You were in Paris, and you know how he analyzed the bill there based on his understanding of it at that point, saying it had good points and bad points. It is a close call. I mean, let's face it, this is one of the closest calls on any piece of legislation that he has had, and it would be incorrect -- and I am telling you this on the basis of the very freshest information right out of the Oval Office, he has not made a choice, and it is a close one.

Q Ron, was Frank Zarb in effect winging it up there on his own and not necessarily trying to get the approval of the President as he was negotiating this with the lawmakers?

MR. NESSEN: Certainly, he was negotiating in an effort to get the best energy bill he could, but you know he was not coming back here for instructions every day on the language of the bill. It was always going to be finally up to the President to decide whether what did emerge was good enough to be signed.

Q Ron, Zarb said Friday night that he thinks this is the best energy bill that it is possible for the Administration to get out of Congress. Does that not indicate that the President would therefore sign it?

MR. NESSEN: Look, I came out of the Oval Office 15 or 20 minutes ago after a discussion of this subject. I talked about it with the President over the weekend. I can tell you on the basis of the most up-to-the-minute information I can get he has not decided. I know that for a fact.

Q You are waffling again. (Laughter)

Q What is bothering him, and why is it taking him so long to make up his mind?

Q I would like to know the answer.

MR. NESSEN: He would like to see the bill before he decides whether to sign it or not. That is simple enough. That is true of any bill.

Q Well, he knows the key elements in it.

MR. NESSEN: This is not a bill where you know the key elements of it.

Q Is he worried that the Congressmen, when they actually put it all down on paper, might change something that was agreed to verbally in the committee?

MR. NESSEN: As I said the other night, I don't know if you were here after the meeting with the conferees, that the conferees have varying memories of the precise language that they agreed upon.

Q Did Zarb express any opinion that this agreement is going to come unglued in the writing down of it? I mean, was he concerned that the people had enough different impressions of what was agreed to that the actual final version you get written down is going to not seem like what was agreed to?

MR. NESSEN: No, he didn't say that.

Q Ron, can we go back to New York for just a minute? You said a moment ago I think that you didn't think that the situation required a statement from the White House at this point, New York is taking its action.

But there are numerous reports that Members of Congress and people in New York and Albany are all kind of waiting to see what the President's position is. Now you were asked if he was going to make any statement or a speech on this. Are you also saying that as far as you know that the President is not going to convey his position on these bills privately to these people?

MR. NESSEN: His position is what it was last November 13.

Q Well, obviously, there is some confusion on just what that position is.

MR. NESSEN: Well, get the transcript and read it.

Q If you cannot elaborate on that --

MR. NESSEN: There is nothing to elaborate on. I mean, there simply has been no change.

Q But yet when we asked you on November 13 if there had been any change, you said the situation had changed and strongly left the impression, at least, that the President's position had changed to fit the new circumstances.

MR. NESSEN: Well, from November 13 until today there has been no change.

Q Well, can you then answer my second question which was are you equally saying that not only is the President not going to make a public statement, but that he is not privately communicating to the people involved what his position is regarding this legislation?

MR. NESSEN: As far as I know, there are no plans to, and I don't know what legislation it is you mean.

Q Well, for example, I believe Senator Javits is reported to have said this morning at a news conference that he had been told that the plan for Federally guaranteed loans on the order of, I think, \$2-1/2 billion was acceptable to the White House and that he had been advised that the President would make his position known within 48 hours. Perhaps that is what Tom Brokaw was referring to, but, in any case, are you denying that?

MR. NESSEN: Look, all I am saying is that his position is exactly what it was on the 13th. I don't know of any plans to ~~change~~ ~~any change~~ ~~or anything different~~ ~~to anybody~~ involved in this, I am not sure what legislation it is you are talking about. Right now it is New York City and New York State which have said they are going to do something and they presumably are going to go about doing it.

Q Ron, will you see us after the 3 o'clock meeting with the Economic Policy Board?

MR. NESSEN: I can if you would like.

Q Ron, have the President's economic advisers, his New York City monitors, encouraged him to accept the \$2-1/2 billion proposal that they are said to agree among themselves on?

MR. NESSEN: Again, that is unchanged from last week, too, Jim, in that there is no -- at this point there is no Federal role that I know of.

Q Well, forgive me but I didn't know that that \$2-1/2 billion proposal existed last week.

MR. NESSEN: Well, we talked in general terms of this so-called seasonal need.

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: And there was a question of would the money come from the Federal Government and so forth, and I told you his views about it didn't have to come from the Federal Government and so forth. All of that has not changed.

Q You determined, Ron, didn't you, whether indeed it had to come or whether it could come from other sources? Has he made such a determination?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think he said he had to determine that, no.

Q Well, yes, you did. You said the President would have to decide whether it could be brought in from elsewhere or whether the Federal Government indeed was the only place it could come from. Do you know if his people have helped him make such a determination?

MR. NESSEN: No. It is not up for a decision.

Q Ron, did the President meet with the Attorney General this morning?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Was that about the subpoenas or the Supreme Court nominee or both?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what the subject was actually.

Q Why wasn't it on the schedule?

MR. NESSEN: It was another sort of last minute drop-in.

Q Last minute drop-in? Then why weren't we told exactly when it happened?

MR. NESSEN: I am telling you now.

Q How long did he spend with him?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think it was very long. I will have to check.

Q And you don't know what the subject was?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what the subject was.

Q Is it because you don't want us to try to see him?

MR. NESSEN: No, I don't have any problem with your seeing him. You know that.

Q Can you find out what the topic was?

MR. NESSEN: I can ask.

Q Ron, on a day like this when you come out and say you have no announcements, does that mean we have to ask you about everybody we hear has gone into the Oval Office before you will tell us about last minute additions to his schedule?

MR. NESSEN: No. I very often tell you about that.

Q Who else has been in?

MR. NESSEN: Various staff people.

Q Has the President narrowed his list of candidates for a replacement for Justice Douglas?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know how many were on the original list, or, if there was a list, who was on it.

Q Can you be helpful in this regard? Are we any closer to getting a nominee? Can you give us any sort of time frame, please, as to when the President will make this decision?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Ron, to get back to the New York City situation, what you are saying is the President's position will remain unchanged until New York takes action itself and then there will be a review?

MR. NESSEN: Again, Tom, it is what we said last week. The President will watch what the city and State do, and that is precisely what he is doing -- he is watching what the city and State do -- and that is why I say there is no change.

Q With an eye towards ultimately what?

MR. NESSEN: With an eye toward ultimately finding out what they do.

Q Let's take it one step further, please. If New York City and the State make progress which the President considers sufficient toward putting the city's fiscal house back in order, will the President then be included to accept legislation similar to Reuss-Rhodes? Is he leaning favorably at this time toward some sort of loan guarantee?

MR. NESSEN: He is not leaning anywhere. He is exactly where he was last week, watching to see what they do.

Q Specifically, his position will remain unchanged as long as we are in the state of flux?

MR. NESSEN: He is watching what New York City and State do, and I guess as long as they keep doing something, he will keep watching them do it.

Q Why is he so concerned about what they are doing when he is not really concerned about giving them Federal aid? I mean, I don't understand constant monitoring for something he does not have any hand in. He thinks it is their problem, and he said that many times.

So, the question is, why is he so deeply concerned as to going to two major meetings today?

MR. NESSEN: I think, Helen, you know he has been keeping up with the New York City situation for six months.

Q We gather that he is going to make an announcement today or tomorrow.

MR. NESSEN: I don't know where you gather that from.

Q Ron, has he talked with anyone this morning other than Zarb on the energy bill?

MR. NESSEN: There were a number of other people in the Zarb meeting.

Q Who were they?

MR. NESSEN: Cheney was there, Marsh, Friedersdorf, Nessen and Hartmann.

Q Did he talk to anyone outside of the Administration?

MR. NESSEN: Not that I know of. Did you have some indication that he did?

Q No.

Q Yes, I had some indication he was going to talk to some people from the oil industry.

MR. NESSEN: I hadn't heard that.

Q You know he has not?

MR. NESSEN: As far as I know, he has not.

Q He has no plans?

MR. NESSEN: As far as I know.

Q Would it be inaccurate to conclude that the New York City situation within the White House is coming to a head and that a decision will be forthcoming within the next 48 hours? (Laughter)

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q That is inaccurate?

MR. NESSEN: Right, but it was a good try.

Q When was the Economic Policy Board meeting set up, and will it deal with subjects other than New York City?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think so. It was set up after Cheney's meeting with the President, which would have been about 11:15, I guess.

Q Is the President going to stay in the country and in the city until the China trip?

MR. NESSEN: As far as I know.

Q Does the President plan to hold a press conference or make a TV address on the result of the economic conference in Paris?

MR. NESSEN: No, I think his views on that were made known at the end of the meeting in the City Hall at Rambouillet.

I don't know of any plans for a press conference.

Q On the energy bill, is it fair to say that the President is waiting to see the version as adopted by the conferees or passed by the Congress?

MR. NESSEN: The first thing he wants to see is the bill as it comes out of conference, and then at that point there is no Presidential decision required because there is nothing to sign or veto at that point.

Q Is that what you are talking about on Thursday or Friday?

MR. NESSEN: Thursday or Friday he will get the Conference Committee report in writing. Now, what their legislative scheduling is and how it fits in with the vacation, I don't know whether they will put it off until after their holiday or try to pass it before going home.

Q Before we quit, can I just go back to New York for one more minute. When you were talking about the Reuss bill and the Reuss-Rhodes compromise and saying that -- I think you said that this bill would fall into the category.

MR. NESSEN: I think all the bills that are up there, as we said last week, I described --

Q You said at that point they were irrelevant.

MR. NESSEN: No, I quoted myself from last week as saying that the bills up there that the President has said were irrelevant because they were drafted at one time and the circumstances are different at this time.

Q So, you are saying that this bill falls into that category of being --

MR. NESSEN: It was up there beforehand, or at least the basic bill with different numbers in it was up there and the concept.

Q Secondly, I think on the 13th, when we asked you about the President's opposition to Federal guaranteed loans, I think you said that it was premature at that point to respond and that you really had not discussed that at any length with anybody.

Can you respond to that today?

MR. NESSEN: No. Whatever I said then, it is exactly the same. I don't know whether that is what I said then, but whatever I said then is the same.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END (AT 12:55 P.M. EST)



NEWS CONFERENCE

This Copy For

#374

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 12:30 P.M. EST

NOVEMBER 18, 1975

TUESDAY

MR. NESSEN: Well, welcome home.

I don't have anything to announce today other than what we have put out already.

Q Thank you.

Q Is the President going to sign the energy bill and give aid to New York and has he

~~any~~ a time.

Q What does he think of Nixon's --

~~MR. NESSEN~~: Number one, he has not decided whether to sign or veto the energy bill?

MR. NESSEN: After he sees the bill.

Q When do you expect that?

MR. NESSEN: Thursday or Friday.

Q Is that what he is talking to Zarb about?

MR. NESSEN: That is what he did talk to Zarb about.

Number two, ~~there is~~ no change in his position on New York City from last week.

Number three, I have nothing to announce on the Supreme Court Justice.

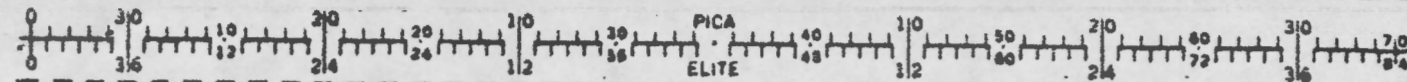
Q Well, on New York, though, isn't he moving into talking about it today with his ~~advisor~~?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, there will be a meeting ~~at~~ clock of the Economic Policy Board to discuss New York City.

MORE

#374





1.				1
2.				2
3.				3
4.				4
5.				5
6.				6
7.	Q	Do you expect any announcement?		7
8.				8
9.	Q	Has he met with John Rhodes and Congressman		9
10.	Stanton?			10
11.				11
12.	MR. NESSEN:	He is now.		12
13.				13
14.	Q	About New York?		14
15.				15
16.	MR. NESSEN:	And other things, yes.		16
17.				17
18.				18
19.	Q	Excuse me. You seem to be putting out some		19
20.	information in the course of a			20
21.				21
22.	MR. NESSEN:	In answer to Helen's very incisive		22
23.	question.			23
24.				24
25.	Q	Thank you. (Laughter)		25
26.				26
27.				27
28.	MR. NESSEN:	But I would expect nothing less of a		28
29.	best selling authoress.			29
30.				30
31.	Q	What is the name of the book?		31
32.				32
33.	Q	Available at all book stores. (Laughter)		33
34.				34
35.				35
36.	Q	Can you back up just a little bit, then?		36
37.	You said there	is no change in his position from last week?		37
38.				38
39.	MR. NESSEN:	November 13.		39
40.				40
41.				41
42.	Q	Last week we had some difficulty ascertaining		42
43.	clearly one way or the other whether there had been any change			43
44.	in this position at that point. Can you elaborate at all in			44
45.	your response?			45
46.				46
47.	MR. NESSEN:	There is just no change since November 13		47
48.	and you can read the transcript and see what he said then and			48
49.	that is exactly his position.			49
50.				50
51.				51
52.	Q	Why is he calling Rhodes and who else?		52
53.				53
54.	MR. NESSEN:	He didn't call Rhodes. Rhodes and		54
55.	Stanton asked for an opportunity to come in and talk about			55
56.	New York City and other matters.			56
57.				57
58.				58
59.	Q	And the are are meeting right now?		59
60.				60
61.	MR. NESSEN:	Yes.		61
62.				62
63.	Q	Why weren't we told about that?		63
64.				64
65.				65
66.				66
67.				67
68.				68
69.				69
70.				70
71.				71
72.				72
73.				73
74.				74
75.				75
76.				76
77.				77
78.				78
79.				79

Q Is the November 13 briefing, the one in which the President said something to the effect, well, New York has made substantial progress and so on and so on so the situation is changing? Is that the briefing you are talking about?

MR. NESSEN: Well, I would not want to say you have got accurate quotes.

Q I understand.

MR. NESSEN: You don't, but I think that is the day.
(Laughter)

Q Hey, you are in an elfin mood today.

Q Ron, do you expect to have anything to say this afternoon -- you or anybody on the President's behalf -- after this meeting with Rhodes and Stanton.

MR. NESSEN: I would not expect to.

Q When did it start?

MR. NESSEN: Five, ten minutes ago.

Q How long will it go?

Q Is it just Rhodes and Stanton?

MR. NESSEN: And I think Simon is in there.

Q Is Henry Reuss down there?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Did they ask to see the President?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, they did.

Q Why?

MR. NESSEN: To discuss New York City.

Q How long are they going to meet?

MR. NESSEN: We will check.

Q Could you tell us whoever else is in there?
You seem kind of vague.

MR. NESSEN: Simon is in there. Let's check the participants. Cheney is in there.

Why don't you get the participants list from Terry?

MORE

#374

Q Ron, would you expect the President to have anything to say about how he might treat this legislation on New York City before the legislation is voted on?

MR. NESSEN: Which legislation?

0 The House bill.

MR. NESSEN: The Reuss-Rhodes Bill?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: No. Again, there I would say that what we said last week is unchanged.

Q What did you say?

Q You didn't speak to that question last week.

Q Was it the Reuss-Rhodes Bill?

MR. NESSEN: Well, I was asked about legislation last week.

Q When you say unchanged, do you mean the President is adamantly against aid to New York?

MR. NESSEN: Read what we said last week.

Q Ron, last week you said that none of the legislation on the Hill at that time was acceptable. Are you saying that the Reuss-Rhodes compromise is not acceptable today?

MR. NESSEN: Well, I think what we said last week was that the legislation up there had been prepared to meet circumstances which had changed and I think the Reuss-Rhodes Bill would fall into that category since it had been introduced prior to Governor Carey's letter to Secretary Simon.

Q It was altered yesterday so would you tell us as of today whether it is acceptable or not?

MR. NESSEN: I think the alteration had to do with the change in the dollar figure rather than in the basic concept of the bill.

Q The basic concept is, therefore, unacceptable?

- MR. NESSEN: Well, you know, it is exactly where it was last week.



- 5 -

#374-11/18

Q Rpn, in this regard are you specifically denying the lead story in this morning's Times?

MR. NESSEN: I am just telling you our position.

Q I don't know what the position was.

MR. NESSEN: The position today is what it was on November 13.

Q Why don't you outline that?

MR. NESSEN: Why don't we get a bunch of transcripts and pass it out, it is all in there.

Q It was interpreted as softening of the President's attitude on November 13, that there was a little give there, is that true?

MR. NESSEN: The position has not changed since November 13 until today.

Q Could you not give us a little synopsis of it?

MR. NESSEN: You remember that world famous briefing, don't you?

Q Why don't you re-read a couple paragraphs of it?

Q It is all a blur, Ron.

MR. NESSEN: What?

Q I said it is all a blur - November 13.

MR. NESSEN: Yes, that was a busy day, wasn't it.

At the meeting which began at 12:20 today and is scheduled to last for 30 minutes are Congressman Phodes and Stanton, Secretary Simon, Alan Greenspan, Dick Cheney, Jack Marsh and Max Friedersdorf.

Well, among the other things said on the 13th of November was -- you know, that was the briefing in which we talked about, at long last, New York City and State are solving their own financial problems, trying to, or saying they are going to. "This is what the President has been urging and the President feels that the action, or promised action, is a result of his own firm position against the Federal bail out. Simon has asked Carey to send him the full details of the plan and asked the participants to indicate their commitment and"

Q Has Simon gotten that yet?

MR. NESSEN: He has gotten the plan. I am not sure he has gotten the written commitment yet.

#374



() Do you know whether the Governor or the mayor would be in here to see the President for a verbal commitment?

MR. NESSEN: There is no plan that I know of to do that.

Q Do you know whether the President has spoken to either one of them?

MR. NESSEN: Not that I know of.

Q , Is the President going to tip his hand today to Rhodes as to whether he would support the legislation?

MR. NESSEN: What, the Rhodes-Reuss legislation?
I don't know, ~~sure~~ I am not in the meeting.

Q Does the President plan to make a statement within the next 48 hours on his current feelings about New York City?

MR. NESSEN: I am giving you his feelings as of about 30 minutes ago, which is, there is no change.

Q Does he plan to personally make any statement on television?

MR. NESSEN: Not that I know of. He didn't talk to me about it.

O Ron, there is a meeting going on now with ~~major people~~ from the Hill. There will be a review later this afternoon. Does it look like we are moving towards something?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what you mean by "moving towards something." After all, what is happening now is that New York City and New York State are promising or saying they are going to take some action to solve their own problem. That's what the President has been urging for six months. It is not something that really requires or needs a White House decision, or statement or announcement at this time. They say they are going to do something, to solve their own problems.

Q And they are saying that they will do something with the expectation that there will be some form of Federal assistance once they do it?

MR. NESSEN: Again, it is as it was on November 13.

MORE

#374

1/18

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
77
78
79

#374

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78.

- 8 - #374-11/18

MR. NESSEN: He has these monitors that have been monitoring the situation and we are monitoring the situation.

Q Do you know whether the monitors have plans to see Governor Carey or Mayor Beame?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know that.

Q What is the meeting at 3:00?

MR. NESSEN: The Economic Policy Board.

Q Would it be possible to have Rhodes and Stanton come out here after the meeting?

MR. NESSEN: I can ask them.

Q Ron, what was the President's reaction to the cover stories in both Time and Newsweek, the subject being A Man From a Western State? What was his reaction? Has he seen them?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know that he has seen them yet.

Q He has not seen either Time or Newsweek?

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

Q Ron, is Zarb urging the President to sign the energy bill?

MR. NESSEN: No, what Frank did this morning was to simply run through with the President how much of the bill has been written down on paper so far and discussed that, and the fact that the process will continue and the President telling Frank to continue to participate and watch the drafting process so that as it comes out on paper, it is in line with what was verbally agreed to by the conferees.

Q That indicates that he would sign it, does it not, if in fact --

MR. NESSEN: It does not indicate it to me.

Q It doesn't?

MR. NESSEN: No, it certainly doesn't.

Q If he is so concerned, why so interested in the line by line, word for word?

MORE #374

#374-11/18

MR. NESSEN: In getting a bill that accurately represents what the conferees agreed to verbally and then read it and decide whether to sign it or veto it.

Q Is that a function of the Administration if the Administration has not given some sort of tacit approval to what the conferees did?

MR. NESSEN: I can tell you for sure, having just emerged a few minutes ago from that meeting, that the President has not made up his mind, is not tilting in any direction. He has simply not made up his mind one way or the other.

Q Ron, is it unusual for the President to have one of his men monitor a Congressional bill that comes out of a conference?

MR. NESSEN: Oh, no. I think Frank took part in the negotiations and in the agreements, as you all know, and he will continue to take part in it.

Q So he knows what the agreement was, the President knows?

MR. NESSEN: He knows what the verbal agreement was, and the President's decision will depend on the actual legal language of the bill.

Q Ron, did Zarb get clearance from the President for the verbal agreement that he made, that FEA made with the conferees?

MR. NESSEN: Frank was operating as the Administrator of the FEA, but the President has not committed to either sign or veto the bill until he has had a chance to read it.

Q Ron, if the written agreement tallies with the verbal agreement, would the President then sign the bill?

MR. NESSEN: He has not decided, Bill.

Q When is this supposed to happen? When does the President expect to have this before him and make the decision?

MR. NESSEN: He expects to have the written bill before him on Thursday or Friday. Now, whether he will make the decision at that time, because after all that will only be the agreed upon conference report. That still needs to be approved by the Senate and House before coming here in the form of a bill for signature or veto, and I believe Congress goes off on a vacation -- what is it, Friday?

MORE

#374

Q What's bothering him, and why is it taking him so long to make up his mind?

Q I would like to know the answer.

MR. NESSEN: He would like to see the bill before he decides whether to sign it or not. That is simple enough. That is true of any bill.

Q Well, he knows the key elements in it.

MR. NESSEN: This is not a bill where you know the key elements of it.

Q Is he worried that the Congressmen, when they actually put it all down on paper, might change something that was agreed to verbally in the committee?

MR. NESSEN: As I said the other night, I don't know if you were here after the meeting with the conferees, that the conferees have varying memories of the precise language that they agreed upon.

Q Did Zarb express any opinion that this agreement is going to come unglued in the writing down of it? I mean, was he concerned that the people had enough different impressions of what was agreed to that the actual final version you get written down is going to not seem like what was agreed to?

MR. NESSEN: No, he didn't say that.

Q Ron, can we go back to New York for just a minute? You said a moment ago I think that you didn't think that the situation required a statement from the White House at this point, New York is taking its action.

But there are numerous reports that Members of Congress and people in New York and Albany are all kind of waiting to see what the President's position is. Now you were asked if he was going to make any statement or a speech on this. Are you also saying that as far as you know that the President is not going to convey his position on these bills privately to these people?

MR. NESSEN: His position is what it was last November 13.

Q Well, obviously, there is some confusion on just what that position is.

- MR. NESSEN: Well, get the transcript and read it. -

Q If you cannot elaborate on that --

MORE

#374

| TOP EDGE PAPER GUIDE | | READ INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY BEFORE TYPING | | | | | | | | | | TOP EDGE PAPER GUIDE | |
|----------------------|--|---|----|----|----|----|-------|----|----|----|----|----------------------|-----|
| | | 0 | 30 | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | |
| | | 0 | 36 | 12 | 24 | 36 | 48 | 60 | 72 | 84 | 96 | | |
| | | | | | | | PICA | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | ELITE | | | | | | |
| 1. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .1 |
| 2. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .2 |
| 3. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .3 |
| 4. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .4 |
| 5. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .5 |
| 6. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .6 |
| 7. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .7 |
| 8. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .8 |
| 9. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .9 |
| 10. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .10 |
| 11. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .11 |
| 12. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .12 |
| 13. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .13 |
| 14. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .14 |
| 15. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .15 |
| 16. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .16 |
| 17. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .17 |
| 18. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .18 |
| 19. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .19 |
| 20. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .20 |
| 21. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .21 |
| 22. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .22 |
| 23. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .23 |
| 24. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .24 |
| 25. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .25 |
| 26. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .26 |
| 27. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .27 |
| 28. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .28 |
| 29. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .29 |
| 30. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .30 |
| 31. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .31 |
| 32. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .32 |
| 33. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .33 |
| 34. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .34 |
| 35. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .35 |
| 36. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .36 |
| 37. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .37 |
| 38. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .38 |
| 39. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .39 |
| 40. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .40 |
| 41. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .41 |
| 42. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .42 |
| 43. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .43 |
| 44. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .44 |
| 45. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .45 |
| 46. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .46 |
| 47. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .47 |
| 48. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .48 |
| 49. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .49 |
| 50. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .50 |
| 51. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .51 |
| 52. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .52 |
| 53. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .53 |
| 54. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .54 |
| 55. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .55 |
| 56. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .56 |
| 57. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .57 |
| 58. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .58 |
| 59. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .59 |
| 60. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .60 |
| 61. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .61 |
| 62. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .62 |
| 63. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .63 |
| 64. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .64 |
| 65. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .65 |
| 66. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .66 |
| 67. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .67 |
| 68. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .68 |
| 69. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .69 |
| 70. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .70 |
| 71. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .71 |
| 72. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .72 |
| 73. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .73 |
| 74. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .74 |
| 75. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .75 |
| 76. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .76 |
| 77. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .77 |
| 78. | | | | | | | | | | | | | .78 |

MR. NESSEN: There is nothing to elaborate on. I mean, there simply has been no change.

Q But yet when we asked you on November 13 if there had been any change, you said the situation had changed and strongly left the impression, at least, that the President's position had changed to fit the new circumstances.

MR. NESSEN: Well, from November 13 until today there has been no change.

Q Well, can you then answer my second question which was are you equally saying that not only is the President not going to make a public statement, but that he is not privately communicating to the people involved what his position is regarding this legislation?

MR. NESSEN: As far as I know, there are no plans to, and I don't know what legislation it is you mean.

Q Well, for example, I believe Senator Javits is reported to have said this morning at a news conference that he had been told that the plan for Federally guaranteed loans on the order of, I think, \$2-1/2 billion was acceptable to the White House and that he had been advised that the President would make his position known within 48 hours. Perhaps that is what Tom Brokaw was referring to, but, in any case, are you denying that?

MR. NESSEN: Look, all I am saying is that his position is exactly what it was on the 13th. I don't know of any plans to convey any change or anything different to anybody involved in this, I am not sure what legislation it is you are talking about. Right now it is New York City and New York State which have said they are going to do something and they presumably are going to go about doing it.

Q Ron, will you see us after the 3 o'clock meeting with the Economic Policy Board?

MR. NESSEN: I can if you would like.

Q Ron, have the President's economic advisers, his New York City monitors, encouraged him to accept the \$2-1/2 billion proposal that they are said to agree among themselves on?

MR. NESSEN: Again, that is unchanged from last week, too, Jim, in that there is no at this point there is no Federal role that I know of.

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77.

- 12 -

#374-11/18

MR. NESSEN: There is nothing to elaborate on. I mean, there simply has been no change.

Q But yet when we asked you on November 13 if there had been any change, you said the situation had changed and strongly left the impression, at least, that the President's position had changed to fit the new circumstances.

MR. NESSEN: Well, from November 13 until today there has been no change.

Q Well, can you then answer my second question which was are you equally saying that not only is the President not going to make a public statement, but that he is not privately communicating to the people involved what his position is regarding this legislation?

MR. NESSEN: As far as I know, there are no plans to, and I don't know what legislation it is you mean.

Q Well, for example, I believe Senator Javits is reported to have said this morning at a news conference that he had been told that the plan for Federally guaranteed loans on the order of, I think, \$2-1/2 billion was acceptable to the White House and that he had been advised that the President would make his position known within 48 hours. Perhaps that is what Tom Brokaw was referring to, but, in any case, are you denying that?

MR. NESSEN: Look, all I am saying is that his position is exactly what it was, on the 13th. I don't know of any plans to convey any change or anything different to anybody involved in this, I am not sure what legislation it is you are talking about. Right now it is New York City and New York State which have said they are going to do something and they presumably are going to go about doing it.

Q Ron, will you see us after the 3 o'clock meeting with the Economic Policy Board?

MR. NESSEN: I can if you would like.

Q Ron, have the President's economic advisers, his New York City monitors, encouraged him to accept the \$2-1/2 billion proposal that they are said to agree among themselves on?

MR. NESSEN: Again, that is unchanged from last week, too, Jim, in that there is no at this point there is no Federal role that I know of.

MORE

#374

Q Well, forgive me but I didn't know that that \$2-1/2 billion proposal existed last week.

MR. NESSEN: Well, we talked in general terms of this so-called seasonal need.

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: And there was a question of would the money come from the Federal Government and so forth, and I told you his views about ~~the~~ didn't have to come from the Federal Government and so forth. All of that has not changed.

Q You determined, Ron, didn't you, whether indeed it had to come or whether it could come from other sources? Has he made such a determination?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think he said he had to determine that, no.

Q Well, yes, you did. You said the President would have to decide whether it could be brought in from elsewhere or whether the Federal Government indeed was the only place it could come from. Do you know if his people have helped him make such a determination?

MR. NESSEN: No. It is not up for a decision.

Q Ron, did the President meet with the Attorney General this morning?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Was that about the subpoenas or the Supreme Court nominee or both?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what the subject was actually.

Q Why wasn't it on the schedule?

MR. NESSEN: It was another sort of last minute drop-in.

Q Last minute drop-in? Then why weren't we told exactly when it happened?

MR. NESSEN: I am telling you now.

Q How long did he spend with him?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think it was very long. I will have to check.

MORE

#374

F49

- 16 -

#374-11/18

Q Ron, has he talked with anyone this morning other than Zarb on the energy bill?

MR. NESSEN: There were a number of other people in the Zarb meeting.

Q Who were they?

MR. NESSEN: Cheney was there, Marsh, Friedersdorf, Nessen and Hartmann.

Q Did he talk to anyone outside of the Administration?

MR. NESSEN: Not that I know of. Did you have some indication that he did?

Q No.

Q Yes, I had some indication he was going to talk to some people from the oil industry.

MR. NESSEN: I hadn't heard that.

Q You know he has not?

MR. NESSEN: As far as I know, he has not.

Q He has no plans?

MR. NESSEN: As far as I know.

Q Would it be inaccurate to conclude that the New York City situation within the White House is coming to a head and that a decision will be forthcoming within the next 48 hours? (Laughter)

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q That is inaccurate.

MR. NESSEN: Right, but it was a good try.

Q When was the Economic Policy Board meeting set up, and will it deal with subjects other than New York City?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think so. It was set up after Cheney's meeting with the President, which would have been about 11:15, I guess.

MORE

#374



AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 11:30 A.M. EST

NOVEMBER 19, 1975

WEDNESDAY

MR. NESSEN: I think you have the President's schedule for today.

I just point out that this afternoon at 2 o'clock, he is meeting with Jim Lynn and others to continue the process of going through the 1977 fiscal year budget. Today's meeting centers on the proposed budget for the Agriculture Department and a couple of other small agencies.

Q Other small agencies?

MR. NESSEN: I mean "and small agencies." (Laughter)

In addition, he has a meeting at 3:30, again part of the series that we are going through now, and this one has to do with preparing legislative proposals for 1976.

As you know, the pace of these meetings on the budget, the legislative proposals and the State of the Union is increasing, and each one of those meetings lasts an hour.

Q Excuse me. What do you mean by "legislative proposals"?

MR. NESSEN: I mean the proposals for legislation that he will send to Congress next year.

Q Is that apart from the State of the Union?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, these are specific proposals.

The swearing-in of Don Rumsfeld to be Defense Secretary is tomorrow at 11 o'clock at the Pentagon. The President will participate, will have remarks, and my feeling is that we probably will not have a briefing due to the conflicting time.

On the trip to China, we are going to do a posting on it, which will consist of the following information: On Monday, November 24, which is next Monday, Dr. Lukash will have some of his people here in the Press Office to give small pox and cholera shots. They are the only two that are required.

If you wish to have other shots which are recommended, but not required -- namely, typhoid, tetanus, diphtheria, the polio series and gamma globulin -- you should get those from your own doctor.

This Monday, 2 p.m. appointment is the only time when the White House will provide the shots for the trip.

You should turn in to Judy O'Neil as quickly as possible, those of you going on the trip -- and I assume that the wires will run this information as a wire note once Judy posts it -- eight passport-size photos. It does not matter whether they are black and white or color.

Everybody on the trip should get from Judy tomorrow visa applications for Japan, where there will be a brief stop on the way over, Indonesia and the Philippines. As I say, that will be posted, but I thought I would go through it with you, and I assume that it would be a good thing to put on the wires for the folks who are not here today.

Q When will those be available?

MR. NESSEN: The visa applications will be available tomorrow morning.

Q Passport-size in addition to the ones already turned in?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Is there a deadline for the photos? When does she need them?

MR. NESSEN: As soon as possible.

Let me hand to you a statement by the President.

Q Ron, will you take questions on this?

MR. NESSEN: Let everybody get a copy first.

The networks now have the film they want of the thing being distributed. Why don't we turn the lights out now, and we will redo this after the briefing.

I frankly don't have very many answers beyond the statement. I think the statement is complete and speaks for itself and says precisely what the President wants to say today.

Q Ron, comment on the further concrete actions the President is calling for.

Q I would like to ask you a few questions.

MR. NESSEN: I think we had the first request here.

Q This really is not nitpicking, and I must ask it, and if you can respond, there is no reference in here to the city, unless I miss it. There is reference always to New York and I am not sure all the way through whether we are talking about New York State at all times or whether at all times we are talking about New York City.

I would also like to ask you in the last paragraph where you talk about New York leaders, whether you are referring to the Mayor of New York City, or the Governor of New York State, or are you referring only to New York City? Is it more than one leader in New York City other than the mayor? Can you clarify that?

MR. NESSEN: Cliff is requesting some clarification for reference in New York in some places, and New York City in other places, and in the last paragraph there are a fair number of references to New York City.

I think you know the situation, that the State Control Board has taken over management of the city's financial affairs. It is actually a State body with some city participation, so really New York, when it is used, is the precise term to use.

The New York City leaders implementing their intentions, of course, refers to the city leaders, the State leaders, the bankers, the labor union leaders and all the others who are participating in the efforts there to solve their own problem.

Q Thank you.

Q What bail-out --

MR. NESSEN: The bail-out bill. Frank asks which one does it refer to. It refers to the one currently before the House of Representatives, known as the Reuss-Rhodes bill.

Q In other words, the Federal guarantees?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Of \$3 billion, the one that was amended by the committee --

MR. NESSEN: The dollar amount is not the important part as it is, the concept is.

Q Ron, when the President refers in the fourth paragraph to any legislation that might be appropriate in a review next week, what kind of legislation has he got in mind?

MR. NESSEN: He does not have any in mind. That is the very point. You know, reviewing the past couple of weeks it seems to me that -- well, I am not going to give you a long lecture on my views. The point is that the effort to do this is clearly, always has been and is now, New York City York State's responsibility. We keep getting asked what is the Federal Government going to do, what is the Federal Government going to do? You know, the question is really improperly addressed because that is not the place where the question should be asked, it is a city and State matter and that is what I think this statement makes clear.

Q Why did he make this statement?

MR. NESSEN: Because there was a good deal of public comment from various people and various places who purported to reflect what he was going to do and so forth and there seemed to be the need for a good, clear statement of his position at this minute.

Q Ron, at one point on, I believe, the fateful date of November 13 you said that if Albany acted in the manner the President wanted them to --

MR. NESSEN: No, no, no. Wait a minute. You see, that is where this has always gotten confused. The President doesn't have any manner in which he wants Albany to act.

Q If Albany acts then to improve the situation --

MR. NESSEN: In whatever way it chooses.

Q -- and if the President were given written assurances that all parts to the bargaining would hold up their end of the bargain, he then would do something. What in effect would he do? Would he decide whether they need a bridge --

MR. NESSEN: He would review the situation to see if any legislation is appropriate at the Federal level.

Q Decide which legislation is needed and advance them the money --

MR. NESSEN: There is no legislation. It is exactly as it was then. There is nothing before the President, and as I said then and I can say now, it is just premature to talk about these kinds of things.

Q You indicated that there was some question about whether the money could come from private sources or whether indeed it would have to be the Federal level.

MR. NESSEN: Again, the questions are all being directed to the wrong place. It is New York City and New York State that have this job to do.

Q Ron, what are the President's views on the consequences of a default now and how serious they could be? Could you please re-state those today?

MR. NESSEN: I think you can look them up in many recent public appearances, Walt, and they have not changed at all.

Q He said he believes the consequences would be essentially controllable, and not catastrophic, as Vice President Rockefeller has said.

MR. NESSEN: I think that would be a very fair summation.

Q Why does the President believe that the bill now before the Congress is irrelevant?

MR. NESSEN: Well, it was drafted at another time when the sponsors of it felt that a certain course of action was needed. It was before New York City and New York State, as the President said, accepted the responsibility for solving their own problems and just written at another time when circumstances were different.

The dollar figure was changed on Monday and the length of the period from 7 to 5 years. The concept has been in the works for a long time.

Q Ron, what further concrete actions does the President have in mind for the State and City?

MR. NESSEN: The President has no concrete actions in mind whatever, no specific concrete actions in mind. It is their responsibility to choose how they want to save themselves, it is not for the President to tell them how to save themselves.

Q Ron, Mr. Rhodes, the President's Minority Leader in the House, after he met the President, indicated up in the gallery that the President appeared to him to be favorably disposed now toward some new thing that he would bring up apparently in this Reuss-Rhodes Bill as amended. Was he reading the President wrong?

MR. NESSEN: Well, John Rhodes has been following this very closely and I don't know precisely what he did say up there but you have the President's statement approved about 15 minutes ago so this is the President's view.

Q Ron, does that legislative review or the review of the situation next week include any plan to meet with Congressman Rhodes or other legislative leaders? Would that be part of it?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think it has moved along that far, Lou.

Q Ron, are you saying he made this decision just before you came out? You said 15 minutes ago it was made.

MR. NESSEN: He approved this statement 15 minutes ago.

Q When did he make his decision? This morning, last night?

MR. NESSEN: What decision?

Q Not to change his position.

MR. NESSEN: I don't know that you have to make a decision not to change your position, do you?

Q Well, he had a whole lot of people come in yesterday and telling that they --

Q When did he decide to issue the statement?

MR. NESSEN: Well, he decided to issue the statement during the meeting with the New York Republican Members of the State delegation and then the precise working of the statement has been worked on since then.

Q Ron, Governor Carey said yesterday that New York City would be unable to meet its payroll on December 4 with or without a default unless there were some sign of some Federal help. What happens if December 4 comes and the City can't meet its payroll? Will the Federal Government indeed step in and help?

MR. NESSEN: I heard on the radio this morning where he said it was December 15 and I guess he has had dates steadily progressing over the past six or nine months. You know, this is the position and you can go back to the Press Club document and read that and November 13 and the President's position has not changed.

Q The President says if they continue to make progress. Could you define what progress is in this statement?

MR. NESSEN: Well, the progress is up to them. They know what they have to do to, as the first paragraph says, find a long-term solution in accordance with the State Constitution and laws.

Q By saying "if they continue to make progress," you think they have made progress?

MR. NESSEN: Uh huh. Wait a minute. Did I answer a question I didn't mean to answer: What was that?

Q I said by saying "if they continue to make progress," the President believes they have made progress?

MR. NESSEN: Where is that, Dick?

Q The fourth paragraph.

MR. NESSEN: "If they continue to make progress, I will review..."

Well, the Secretary of the Treasury has the letter from Governor Carey, he has these pledges from the various parties involved to do what they think best to live up to their Constitution and laws and find a long-term solution, so in a sense that is progress.

In the first paragraph he says they appear to finally have accepted primary responsibility.

Q Ron, what is new then? So what else is new, as we say in New York? What is the reason for it?

MR. NESSEN: I think he said earlier that there has been a good deal of speculation and rumor and authoritative sources and so forth all telling what the President thinks at the moment, and the President thought he would let you know what he thinks at the moment.

Q Ron, will you clarify a telegram that Senator Brooke sent to Mayor Beame yesterday and in the beginning, and I am reading verbatim, at the beginning of the telegram he says, "I have studied the major elements of the recent plan to help New York City's financial crisis, a summary of which was sent to me by the White House over the weekend."

Now, can you clarify that part?

MR. NESSEN: I can't. I have never heard of that before.

Q Has the White House sent out summaries of the New York plan to Members of Congress?

MR. NESSEN: Not that I know of.

Q Would you check that?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, I will.

Q Ron, did the President tell New York Republican --

MR. NESSEN: Wait a minute, Maybe we can get an answer here.

All right. John tells me now that a summary of the Carey plan was prepared and sent to key Members on the Hill, along with a copy of Governor Carey's letter to the Secretary for comment.

Q Why was this done?

MR. NESSEN: Just to keep them posted.

Q When was this done?

MR. NESSEN: This is the first I have heard of it so we will have to check.

Q Ron, where does this reported \$2-1/2 billion two-year short-term plan fit into the scenario? Is that what the President is talking about when he talks about the satisfactory resolution or is that dealing only with long-term resolutions?

MR. NESSEN: Phil, again, questions about how New York City proposes to save itself and the State ought to be directed to New York City and State. We get questions here every day, what is the Federal Government going to do? That is not the question. The question is what are the --

Q What is he talking about?

MR. NESSEN: As I told Jim, he is not talking about anything because there is nothing here to talk about.

Q Ron, did the President tell the New York delegation yesterday that he would be sympathetic to short-term aid to the City if these concrete steps that he refers to are taken?

MR. NESSEN: What happened was that at the end of the meeting Senator Javits said, "Well, I am going out there and tell them that my impression was that" -- whatever the quotation was that Javits gave. So he said he was going to do it and he did it on his own, but no other Members seemed to go out there and say the same thing.

Q Was there any response?

Q What did the President say?

MR. NESSEN: It was at the end of the meeting when people were walking away and so forth.

Q The President didn't try to stop him from doing that, right?

MR. NESSEN: Well, by saying that I don't want you to get the impression that the President approved of what he was saying, either.

MORE

Q Did he respond to him at all, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: The meeting was breaking up, and everybody was talking at the same time.

Q Ron, you mean the President heard the Senator from New York say this and didn't say a word and just let him go out there without any dissent or anything?

MR. NESSEN: The meeting was breaking up, and everybody was talking at one time.

Q What did Governor Carey tell the Secretary of the Treasury?

MR. NESSEN: I have one set of the Carey letter to the Governor, and attached to it the so-called commitments given by the various parties involved. I think the simplest way to do it would be to have this one set available in the Press Office afterward and you can come and look at it, if you wish.

Q Ron, on the bottom of your release, the only thing the President will buy, then, or will accept or sign, if you will, is the amendments to the Federal bankruptcy law; everything else out.

MR. NESSEN: I don't want to do a textual analysis of this statement. It was prepared carefully, and it very precisely reflects the President's views right now, and you ought to read it carefully. That is why I say I don't know why all that many questions --

Q Ron, yesterday Philadelphia was unable to raise \$25 million and blamed it on the New York situation. Does the White House have any reaction to that?

MR. NESSEN: I never heard of this, Dick, until you just mentioned it. I think what has proven to be the case over the past few months is that the New York City situation has focused more attention on the underlying fiscal management practices of the cities and States floating bonds, and investors are now looking more carefully at where they are putting their money and the ability of the municipalities to repay, and those which have good fiscal management are getting much lower interest rates, as was the case with Maryland, Fairfax County, and the State of California.

Somebody mentioned last night at the meeting that whatever jurisdiction he lives in, I forget what it was, had just gotten the lowest interest rate in five years, so the well-run cities and States are getting lower interest rates.

Q Who prepared this statement, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: It is the President's statement, and the entire range of economic advisers worked on it.

Q Ron, does this statement reflect the unanimous views of the Economic Policy Board that the President mentioned yesterday when he discussed this problem?

MR. NESSEN: They all participated in the drafting of it.

Q They all participated.

Q Ron, did you give us any idea of what kinds of discussions went into this, what kind of input there was from advisers, et cetera, to this? Some of the economic people have seemed to indicate more strongly lately that they would favor a more active Federal role.

MR. NESSEN: I don't think it is normal practice to give you the summary of what each adviser recommended to the President, but everybody participated in this this morning, and everybody agreed to it, and it certainly represents the President's thinking. It is the President's view, after sorting out all the views presented by everybody else.

Q There was some difference in points of view reflected to the President?

MR. NESSEN: There was a good deal of discussion.

Q Did that include Arthur Burns?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q When he says the present bill is irrelevant, does that mean that no matter what efforts might be made on the floor to amend it, it would remain unacceptable to him? In other words, the bill is unsalvageable?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what might or might not be done to the bill, the the way it is drafted, having been based on circumstances that are no longer existing, it is irrelevant.

Q It could not be amended to make it acceptable, is that what you are saying?

MR. NESSEN: This gives you the President's views.

Q But it is not clear on that point.

Q Ron, the bottom line of Carey's position is that, assuming that they do all the drastic things that are necessary, they still need Federal loan guarantee. I wonder whether that paragraph, that short sentence, "If they continue to make progress, I will review the situation early next week to see if any legislation is appropriate," does it mean legislation involving loan guarantees?

MR. NESSEN: It means exactly what it says.

Q Ron, does the President have any comment on the demonstrations in New York City yesterday against cuts in welfare payments?

MR. NESSEN: I didn't hear him make any.

Q Ron, the statement does say, if I read it correctly, that the President has accepted in principle the proposition that the Federal Government does have very well may have some responsibility.

MR. NESSEN: I don't see that anywhere.

Q I see it in paragraph one with the word "Primary." It says if there is primary responsibility at the State level, there must be secondary responsibility somewhere else. In paragraph four he talks about appropriate legislation. So, I would suggest that the statement says that he has accepted in principle the fact that there may be Federal responsibility. Would you disagree with that?

MR. NESSEN: I would only say that the statement is very carefully worded to precisely reflect the President's views, and I am not going to interpret it.

Q Ron, what legislation in the fourth paragraph?

MR. NESSEN: I have been asked that three times.

Q I am just wondering if you might be able to hypothesize?

MR. NESSEN: You can be sure that the thing I never do in public is to hypothesize.

Q What legislation might possibly be appropriate, any indication at all, if they continue to make progress? Any legislation is appropriate may be -- is there any indication?

MR. NESSEN: Again, I say read very carefully what it says.

Q Ron, at the Press Club the President said he was not going to take any action to prevent a default. Here he is talking about the possibility of looking at whether some legislation is appropriate. He has already suggested post default legislation. How do all of these things fit together? If he is not going to take any action to prevent default and he already has a post default plan of action, why is he looking at any Federal legislation?

MR. NESSEN: I am not going to go beyond the statement and speculate.

Q Has this information been transmitted to Governor Carey and Mayor Beame?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, read to them over the telephone about 30 minutes ago, let's say.

Q The statement is on whether the President still feels that default is necessary for cleansing or whatever measure. Is there any indication of whether or not his prior position on that might have changed?

MR. NESSEN: Ken, I am not aware that there was a prior position that required some sort of baptism by default.

Q He seemed to favor aid only after default.

Q Maybe that is what he was saying at the Press Club.

MR. NESSEN: I just suggest that you read his words carefully and not paraphrase them.

Q He favored that? Did I get it correct?

MR. NESSEN: No, I don't think you did get it correct, Ken. I am not ever aware of the President saying that New York must go through bankruptcy to cleanse itself. The President said from the very beginning that New York does not need to go through default, that it can save itself along with the State, and that again is what he is saying and finally what they are doing.

Q Ron, does the President dispute the contention among several of his economic advisers that New York City, even if it does all these things that are pledged, will still need short-term Federal loan guarantees to tide it over?

MR. NESSEN: Does he agree with any such recommendation from his advisers?

Q Does he agree with that analysis?

MR. NESSEN: I just don't think I am going to go beyond the statement, Jim.

Q Ron, let me ask another question. The President, having taken this position, and should default occur, is he ready to accept the consequences of default should they be, as the Vice President has said, catastrophic?

MR. NESSEN: You know you have about 14 "if's" in there, Walt.

Q Ron, you said that there are some communities or cities, I forget the word you used, which are paying lower interest rates.

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Can you cite several as illustration?

MR. NESSEN: Maryland, Fairfax County, the State of California. I forget what the one mentioned to me last night was. I can bring the Daily Bond Buyer out tomorrow, though, and look it up.

Q If you want to do that.

MR. NESSEN: I will.

Q Ron, is the President aware of advice from the private community with Dean Burch and some of his other political advisers that he drop the heavy degree of campaigning that he has been doing and stay in the White House and be President more?

MR. NESSEN: I read that story, but I don't know of any, I am not aware of any such.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Ron.

END (AT 12 NOON EST)