

The original documents are located in Box 17, folder “Nixon, Richard - Trip to China (2)” 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 Ron Nessen donated to the United States of America his copyrights in all of his unpublished writings in National Archives collections.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 _____

NEWS CONFERENCE

#463

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 11:35 A.M. EST

MARCH 22, 1976

MONDAY

MR. NESSEN: The President has a ceremony coming up at 12:15 in the Rose Garden in which he will receive a medallion from the Grand Lodge of the Masons in Washington. This medallion contains a likeness of Presidents Washington and Ford.

Originally the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia had asked the President to make a speech there in the spring. The President was not able to and this is a ceremony to receive this medallion.

The President did receive his initial Masonic degrees in this District of Columbia Lodge, although his home lodge is in Michigan.

Q Is he a 33rd degree Mason?

MR. NESSEN: I am going to have to check that, Les.

Then, as you know, at 12:30 the President is going to sign the Science and Technology Message to Congress. He will have some remarks at that time. It will be done in the Cabinet Room.

On a subject that may be of some interest to you -- if you remember the series of questions we have had about the report that former President Nixon was going to send in to the State Department, I think when we last left that story the former President had called and indicated to a functionary that his preference was to put the report in writing and to have it picked up and brought here for reading.

The functionary's name is William Gulley, whose title is Special Assistant to the Military Assistant to the President. He is a GS ranked civilian employee.

His first name is Warren, not William, Warren J. Gulley. His nickname is Bill. His title is Special Assistant to the Military Assistant to the President.

MORE

463



Q How does he feel about being called a
functionary?

MR. NESSEN: He is a civilian with a GS rank.
That is where we last left the story --

Q I think you just said that when the former
President called -- are you now saying in fact it was
Mr. Nixon who called?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, it was.

Q He talked to Gulley?

MR. NESSEN: He talked to Bill.

Then Nixon called again and indicated that the
report was ready to be picked up.

Q When was that?

MR. NESSEN: That was the week before last.
So then Gulley --

Q He called Gulley again?

MR. NESSEN: He called Gulley again. Let me just
mention this: Bill Gulley, among his duties here at the
White House, is the liaison with the wives, widows,
children of former Presidents as well as former Presidents.
He deals with Mrs. Truman and Mrs. Johnson as well as the
Nixons and other relatives of former Presidents. That's
part of his duties here so that is why he is involved in
this.

Q Ron, do you know, has he always taken
Mr. Nixon's calls to the White House?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know. You mean as opposed to
what? As opposed to somebody else?

Q Yes, since Mr. Nixon left the White House
he has called here a couple of times and I would like to know
if Mr. Gulley has taken those calls.

MR. NESSEN: Well, he has taken a lot of them.
Sometimes, I think, the former President has asked specifically
for Brent Scowcroft, let's say, or Secretary Kissinger.

Q Isn't it true that Jack Marsh's office is supposed to have the jurisdiction of --

MR. NESSEN: That was early on but that has been changed for quite some time now.

Q Why have you decided to identify Mr. Gulley? We tried to get him identified for ages.

MR. NESSEN: I know. I just think all that mystery business did not help any.

Q That is going to be your attitude from now on?

MR. NESSEN: That is it. No more mysteries.

Bill flew out there going by military space available aircraft from Andrews Air Force Base to Tinker Air Force Base in Oklahoma City where he was not able to find another military ride so he then flew commercial from Oklahoma City to LA.

Q When did he do this?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what the exact date was, Dave.

Q Was it last week or the week before?

MR. NESSEN: I think it was the week before.

Q The dates are really important.

MR. NESSEN: I think I have got most of the dates. I don't have the exact date when he flew out there. Gulley picked up two copies of a report by Nixon which ran approximately 60 pages and they were in an envelope addressed to Kissinger.

Q Where did he pick it up?

MR. NESSEN: San Clemente.

Q So he went there and got it by hand? It was not left in a box?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Phone booth? (Laughter)

Q Did it contain two copies of the same report?

Q Did he pick them up at the San Clemente estate?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q One report, two copies of it, right?

MR. NESSEN: Right, in one envelope.

Then Gulley flew back to Washington on a military space available aircraft to Andrews Air Force Base from California.

Now, that was the weekend before last that Gulley returned from California.

Q Can we have that date when he returned?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know whether it was Sunday or Saturday night or what, but it was then. And Gulley gave it to Brent Scowcroft. Brent gave one copy to Kissinger on Monday and the other copy to the President on Tuesday.

Q Why didn't he give them both on Monday?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know.

Q The President gave his copy back to Brent on Thursday and Kissinger gave his copy back to Brent on Friday?

MORE

Q We are up to last Thursday and Friday now?

MR. NESSEN: That is right.

Q Why did they give them back?

MR. NESSEN: The former President requested that the two copies be returned to him.

Q After they were Xeroxed, or before?

Q Would you repeat that again? He gave it to the President when?

MR. NESSEN: You mean in terms of what Brent did?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: Brent gave a copy to the President on Tuesday, and the President gave it back, after having read it, gave it back on Thursday. Brent gave a copy to Kissinger on Monday and Kissinger gave it back, having read it, on Friday.

As I say, the former President asked that the two copies be returned to him.

Q How, Ron? How is it going to get back to him?

MR. NESSEN: Just a minute. I have every intimate detail.

Q Did they Xerox a copy?

MR. NESSEN: The President said he made no copies and Brent said he made no copies. (Laughter)

There is a fourth party, too, incidentally. I have not talked to Henry. George Bush has read it on Friday in Brent's office. So, the people who read it were the President, Kissinger, George Bush and Brent Scowcroft, four people.

Q You don't know how many people Kissinger might have showed it to, though?

MR. NESSEN: I do not.

Q You said Bush read it Friday in the President's office?

MR. NESSEN: In Brent's office.

Q So, you are only accounting for two possibilities of the not Xeroxing? You can't speak for Kissinger?

MR. NESSEN: I cannot.

Q Or Bush?

MR. NESSEN: I can't speak for George because I have not talked to him.

Q Bush read it in Scowcroft's office?

MR. NESSEN: That is right. He read it right there and gave it back to Brent.

Q It is classified?

MR. NESSEN: It is not classified because it is a document written by a civilian with no authority to classify.

Q By a private citizen.

MR. NESSEN: Private citizen, if you will.

Now we are up to Friday, and the four people have read it. Let me go back a few days and tell you this. Last week Nixon called Brent on Wednesday to make sure it had arrived safely.

Q Did he talk to Mr. Gulley?

MR. NESSEN: He did not. He talked to Brent. He may have talked to Gulley. I don't know one way or the other whether he talked to Gulley, but he talked to Brent, just to make sure it arrived safely and just to ask if Brent found it useful. Brent said yes.

Q Did he elaborate on that, in what way he found it useful?

MR. NESSEN: No, he didn't.

Q Right at that point had Brent read it before he gave it to the President on Tuesday and Kissinger on Monday?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know when Brent read it, actually.

Q Specifically, had he read it? Had it been read by him by Wednesday, by the time Mr. Nixon called on Wednesday?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, by the time Nixon called he had read it.

Q If this is by a private citizen and it is not classified, why is it we can't read it under Freedom of Information?

MR. NESSEN: You can, but it is not here anymore. It is out at San Clemente.

Q That is called Catch 22.

MR. NESSEN: I haven't finished the rest of the story yet. The rest of the story is Brent gave it back to Gulley on Saturday. Gulley called Brennan and said, "Okay, we are ready to send the report back to you. How about putting it in the mail," and Brennan said "that is fine with us," and it was mailed on Saturday. Gulley talked to Brennan this morning, and it has arrived out there. It is back at San Clemente.

Q It was just sent through regular mail?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q And it arrived today?

MR. NESSEN: That is what Brennan told Gulley.

Q Was the President's copy sent back in the same envelope?

MR. NESSEN: Both copies were sent back in the same envelope, yes.

I guess the only other element is what does the President think of it. The President says "very interesting and useful."

Q That is all he said?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Was it constructive? (Laughter)

Q How long did you say it was, about 60 pages?

Q Single spaced?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know. I didn't see it.

Q Does the President consider it an important report?

MR. NESSEN: I think those are the only words he used to describe it.

Q Ron, when did you first find out about this?

MR. NESSEN: I would just prefer not to go down that track now.

Q Well, your credibility is at stake here.

MR. NESSEN: How is that?

Q I asked you on Friday whether you had asked, and you said you did not know anything about that.

MR. NESSEN: I checked all the transcripts for last week, Howard, and I could not find that you asked on Friday. It was asked about on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday.

Q How about the week before?

MR. NESSEN: Okay. The NSC knew that you and I were interested in being notified when the thing arrived, and they failed to notify me when it arrived.

Q Have you complained about that?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Why did they do that?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know, but I will find out and it won't happen again.

Q Why does Kissinger get a report from the former President before the President gets it?

MR. NESSEN: As you remember, that was the arrangement worked out over the telephone, that it would be mailed in or that it would be sent here for Kissinger and if he thought it was interesting, he would show it to the President. As it turned out, Nixon sent two copies, one for Kissinger and one for the President, so Brent gave me copy to the President.

Q You mean the President would let Kissinger make a decision on whether something was interesting or not?

MR. NESSEN: We said that a long time ago, Helen.

Q Ron, would you deny this has the appearance of a conspiracy in the White House to cover up Mr. Nixon's report?

MR. NESSEN: I would, Tom.

Q Why would the NSC keep you from having information about the report being here, knowing about our interest?

MR. NESSEN: As I said, I will find that out. I intend to find it out. I have told a lot of people of my displeasure, and it will not happen again.

Q Have you told the President?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Why didn't he tell you about it?

MR. NESSEN: I never bothered to ask him because I knew the NSC knew of my interest and your interest and I counted on them to let me know.

Q Ron, does the President know our interest in this?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know whether he does or not, Phil.

Q Hartmann said the President reads the transcript almost every day of these briefings.

MR. NESSEN: I don't know that that is true.

Q Do you communicate with him and tell him there is interest in the press room?

MR. NESSEN: In this case, since it was going to come to the State Department first -- I thought it was going to come to the State Department first -- and then it would have come through the NSC, I thought, as I said, that I would have been told by the NSC.

Q Ron, did any of these people tell you anything about the contents, the substance of this report.

Q Yes. Do you know anything about the substance of this report?

MR. NESSEN: No, only the President's reaction to it.

Q Why did the former President want this report back? Isn't it a contribution to the Government, really?

MR. NESSEN: Helen, I don't know why he wanted it back, and I don't know any way I could answer that question.

Q Ron, if the President thought the report was useful, why would he not have explored the possibility of having a copy retained or a copy made for the records here?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know the answer to that, Dave.

Q Ron, since this is not a classified report, are we going to get any sort of briefing on what it contains?

MR. NESSEN: The document is not here now, Howard, and I don't know how.

Q It has been read by at least four people, and they are not sworn to secrecy, obviously.

MR. NESSEN: Let me say this. It is not classified because Nixon does not have the authority to classify anything. But, that is not to say the document does not contain sensitive material.

Q Ron, could we assume somebody at least made some notes?

MR. NESSEN: I am told Brent made about a half-page of notes.

Q Are those classified?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know. I will have to ask him.

Q I am a bit at a loss to understand the treatment of this report in view of that fact that the point was made repeatedly when the former President went to China that he was the first well-known American, and certainly the first American of experience in Government, to meet with the new Premier of China or the Acting Premier of China since the death of Chou En-lai, and Kissinger himself said in Latin America although he might have chosen a different avenue, he was very interested in knowing anything Nixon had to say about the new leadership in China.

A report arrives, as far as you know no copies of it are made, a half page of notes are taken, a half page sounding rather sketchy to describe a 60-page report. Why sort of what appears to be at least casual or superficial treatment of a report that has been characterized by Kissinger as potentially quite important?

MR. NESSEN: I have not seen Henry's characterization of the report.

Q That is a matter of fact, Ron. Kissinger said at a press conference in Latin America, during the Latin America trip, that he would be very interested in seeing what the former President had to say and we were interested in any kind of contact like that. He might have chosen another way, but as long as this was the way it turned out he would be very interested.

Yet as far as we can tell, nothing has been done to preserve this report, to preserve any record of it, copy of it or anything else. Why not, in view of that kind of importance that was attached?

MR. NESSEN: It was read by four of the foremost senior foreign policy and intelligence officials in the Government and notes were made by one.

Q Is there some reason why they didn't want a copy of this report made that could circulate to somewhat lower eschelons but still very important people that might have the responsibility for foreign policy on a day-to-day basis? Is there some reason they didn't want a bunch of copies floating around?

MR. NESSEN: I can't answer that question, Jim.

Q How about the Vice President of the United States? Did he get to read it?

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

Q Was this a personal request on the part of Nixon, a personal request that it be returned?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, it was.

Q Did he give any reason?

MR. NESSEN: Not to my knowledge.

Q Was Mr. Gates shown a copy?

MR. NESSEN: To my knowledge he was not.

Q Ron, were there any restrictions put on by Mr. Nixon as to the distribution of the report?

MR. NESSEN: It was a copy addressed to Kissinger and a copy addressed to the President.

Q What is the reason why Mr. Gates didn't see it? Wouldn't that be something useful to him if it is useful to the President?

MR. NESSEN: Gates has been nominated and not confirmed. That is the only reason I can think of as to why he was not shown a copy.

Q Ron, would it be possible for you or Margy to get a summary of what it says from Brent and let us know?

MR. NESSEN: I can check that out.

Q Would you also find out if Nixon stated a reason for wanting the report back?

MR. NESSEN: Okay.

Q Did he make that request in writing or verbally?

MR. NESSEN: Verbally.

Q Would it be fair to say that in view of the fact that the President has only four words to say about it, and that only half a page --

MR. NESSEN: Counting "and."

Q And that Scowcroft made only a half a page of notes that we could say that the report did not contain any major new information that was not known before?

MR. NESSEN: Since I have not read the report, it is hard for me to characterize it.

Q Have you read General Scowcroft's notes?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Have you had a description given to you by Scowcroft or anyone else that could lead you to answer Dick's question?

MR. NESSEN: I just would rather not characterize it, having not read it myself. I have heard others talk about it, but since I have not read it I would rather not talk about it.

Q Ron, it appears clearly that you have not been treated fairly, Ron, as the Press Secretary. Really, seriously. They knew the interest that everybody had and they did not tell you. Now wouldn't it be fair of them to have Scowcroft come out here because you have been treated shabbily, in my opinion, Ron. I really mean that sincerely.

MR. NESSEN: For one of the few times in our life we agree, Les. I will ask Brent about that.

Q This is a pattern with the whole NSC really.

Q This is more of a statement than a question, but we have had cases where ter Horst -- one of the reasons he stepped out of this White House was because top aides were not telling him what was going on. This is now the second example and it really puts in question the credibility of the Ford White House.

MR. NESSEN: No, I don't think it does, Phil. I think that is too sweeping a statement.

Q We have two concrete examples. Where Mr. ter Horst was not getting information and he said so. We have a case where you, as Press Secretary, walk out and say you were not given information. So we do have two documented examples.

MR. NESSEN: Yes, but I think your conclusion is too sweeping from those two documented examples.

Q Even the President has chosen not to keep you fully informed.

MR. NESSEN: I disagree with that. He has always kept me fully informed, not only directly but by fully insisting that I attend the meetings at which policy is discussed.

Q How can you say he keeps you fully informed when you did not know about this and the President read the report and did not bother to tell you? Obviously you are not.

MR. NESSEN: This was something that happened in the NSC.

Q And in the Oval Office.

MR. NESSEN: Not in the Oval Office.

Q Wherever the President of the United States read this it happened, you have direct contact with him, and he did not bother to tell you.

Now how are we to believe that you are fully informed?

MR. NESSEN: I think the problem is with the NSC and not in the Oval Office.

Q But the President was aware of our interest and he does read the transcripts.

MR. NESSEN: He does not always. Whether he did last week, I don't know.

Q You pointed out this was brought up at least three times last week. Is it conceivable he missed all three of those transcripts?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know, Jim, whether he did or not.

MR. NESSEN: I don't know, Jim, whether he did or not.

Q Ron, what was his reaction when you brought it up to him, that you had been cut out of information that you should have had?

MR. NESSEN: I think that is something we will be working on here.

Q Ron, did Scowcroft deliver the copy to the President personally or did he send it through Cheney's office?

MR. NESSEN: Delivered it personally.

Q Did the President indicate he would personally get involved in trying to determine why you were not informed by the NSC?

MR. NESSEN: I think I can work that out myself, Phil.

Q So he is not going to get involved?

MR. NESSEN: He is aware of the problem.

Q Ron, you said twice this is not going to happen again. Have you been given assurances by the NSC?

MR. NESSEN: It is going to get worked out and it will not happen again.

Q Ron, did you have a standing request to the NSC and anybody else concerned that you wanted to be informed if a report arrived and about what happened to it after that, or did people just sort of have to assume you wanted to know that?

MR. NESSEN: No. I think the NSC was fully aware of my interest and your interest.

Q Does the President still regard this report as a private communication from a private citizen, private tourist, to the Secretary of State?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, with the proviso that, obviously, it is a private citizen who has had a unique experience and who has a unique background.

Q Ron, are you saying the NSC deliberately withheld this information from you?

MR. NESSEN: Well, rather than make any kind of judgment, the fact is that they knew of my interest and did not let me know when the report came.

Q In the chronology I missed when you found out. Did you find out in Time Magazine last night or this morning?

MR. NESSEN: I don't want to go into when I found out.

Q Is this the way you found out?

MR. NESSEN: I don't want to go into when I found out.

Q I would like to go a little deeper, if I might, into your relations as Press Secretary with the NSC because, as Phil pointed out, there have been two documented examples. However, earlier in your tenure as Press Secretary in Palm Springs, based on information you said you had received from the NSC, you made a statement about negotiations with the North Vietnamese that you later had to completely change and revise. At that time you indicated both publicly and privately that you were quite unhappy with the NSC, NSC staff. So this is a third instance.

In this particular instance you were not kept informed, you were misinformed, or so you said at the time. What are your relations with the NSC? Why are these things happening now to you as Press Secretary and what are you trying to do about it? Do you have some kind of difficulty or poison or problem in your relations with the NSC or what?

MR. NESSEN: Jim, I think I would like to work out my relationship with the NSC myself and not make it a matter of public discussion here today.

Q Let me ask you the question this way. Based on the incident in Palm Springs and now this incident, do you acknowledge you are having difficulties with the NSC?

MR. NESSEN: I think I am not going to go into that today at this briefing.

Q I have a non-NSC question. I asked twice last week about this. The first time you indicated that you had not checked with the State Department. The second time -- which I still believe was on Friday -- I asked you if specifically had you asked the State Department if it had arrived and your answer was yes.

MR. NESSEN: I checked the transcripts for last week and it did not come up on Friday at all, Howard. It came up on Thursday at which time I said I can speak for the White House but I could not speak for the State Department.

Q I asked you if you had asked the State Department press people and you said yes.

MR. NESSEN: I don't think I did. The transcript doesn't show that.

Q Ron, when you talk about the NSC you use these initials but who is at the NSC? Is it Brent Scowcroft who purposely kept it from you?

MR. NESSEN: Annie, I am going to work out my relationship with the NSC myself.

Q But the NSC is people -- who is at the NSC?

MR. NESSEN: I think that is an internal matter within the White House which we are working out.

Q Ron, the liaison with the NSC -- was Margy aware of this?

MR. NESSEN: Phil, as I say, I am not going to answer any questions on my relationship with the NSC because it is in the process of being resolved.

Q Ron, had the report already been returned by the time you found out that they had been here?

MR. NESSEN: I am not going to go into that, Ted.

Q Was it Mr. Nixon's idea that the report be given such limited circulation or was it the Secretary's or the President's?

MR. NESSEN: Mary, he only sent two copies and one was addressed to Henry and one was addressed to the President.

Q Ron, was this a deliberate attempt by the NSC to keep the report secret? Would you say it was not or would you deny that or how would you describe that?

MR. NESSEN: On the one hand, I don't know why they would want to keep it secret.

Q But, it does look as if they didn't do it?

MR. NESSEN: I am not going to make any judgment.

Q Did the former President give you a time limit on this, when he wanted it back?

MR. NESSEN: No, he did not, as far as I know.

Q Did this report contain information the President was not aware of before?

MR. NESSEN: There again, Jim was asking me to characterize the thing. I think it would be fair to say the report did not contain any startling new information.

Q Did Mr. Nixon request that the contents of the report be made public?

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

Q The statement about no startling information must come from the President since you did not see the report and the President was the only one who saw it, or Scowcroft. Is that right?

MR. NESSEN: Right.

Q So who said it, Ford?

MR. NESSEN: Both.

Q Ron, as you know, there was a Time report that indicated that Nixon said the reason he was invited was because the Chinese wanted to indicate their interest in having the United States continue to play a role in Asia. I know you have not read the report, but based on your conversations of this morning, would you say that is a correct statement?

MR. NESSEN: I don't want to characterize it any further, John. Since I have not read it, it wouldn't be fair to characterize it.

Q But have you heard anyone make that statement?

MR. NESSEN: I told you just about everything I know about the report.

Q May I ask one other question. Apparently the Nixon report has not been the subject at the morning staff meetings, is that correct?

MR. NESSEN: That is correct.

Q Or you would have heard about it?

MR. NESSEN: You mean last week?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: That is true. It did not come up last week. Do you mean at the senior staff meeting?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: That is right, it did not come up at the senior staff meeting, and it did not come up at my meetings with the President because I was relying on the NSC to let me know when it arrived.

Q Does Scowcroft attend those meetings every day, or almost every day?

MR. NESSEN: Which ones?

Q The senior staff meetings, and you have given us a chronology as to when this report was received, when it was given to the President, when it was given to Ford, and the fact that Scowcroft had it to begin with. Are you saying to us throughout the morning senior staff meetings all last week Scowcroft never mentioned in those meetings that this report had come in from Nixon? Is that correct?

MR. NESSEN: That is correct.

Q Then how in the world can you see anything here but an effort by the NSC to keep this report quiet, to keep it secret? What other reason would he have had?

MR. NESSEN: I am not going to make any judgments on the NSC's motives.

Q Nevertheless, for fully a week Scowcroft kept the existence of this report secret from the rest of the senior staff of the White House, is that correct?

MR. NESSEN: He did not bring it up at the senior staff meeting.

Q Do you know whether he told any other senior staff informally that it had come in?

MR. NESSEN: The only four people I know who have read the report are the ones I mentioned.

Q I don't mean read it, but did Scowcroft tell senior staff members, okay, we have the report in from Nixon?

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

Q Does the President still have full confidence in General Scowcroft?

MR. NESSEN: Why do you ask that question?

Q Because of all the previous questions.

MR. NESSEN: I don't understand how your question arises.

Q He apparently withheld some information from you, for one thing.

MR. NESSEN: I think I have said fairly clearly that is going to be resolved and not happen again.

Q Does the President still have full confidence in him?

MR. NESSEN: Since I feel the question grows out of nothing I am not going to -- the answer is obviously yes -- but I don't know why the President needs to reaffirm his confidence in Brent this morning.

Q Ron, I am somewhat puzzled here because the President has not personally gotten involved in making sure this does not happen again. It is his Administration and this comes off as not looking like the Administration wanted to be totally honest and totally candid on this.

MR. NESSEN: I don't agree with that, Phil.

Q Isn't he concerned about the image of this whole thing; the fact that you were not told about it?

MR. NESSEN: Again, those kinds of internal workings are being resolved, but I don't know what you mean about making the Administration look bad. As I have said before, this particular issue seems to be of much more concern with you than it is here, but on the question of my knowledge, which I think is quite high, with some holes, that is going to be resolved.

Q Do you know whether Cheney and Buchen were aware the report was in the house?

MR. NESSEN: They were.

Q At what point?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know at what point.

Q Did you get the impression, Ron, this was just a communication screw-up? There is nothing Machiavellian going on?

MR. NESSEN: There is nothing Machiavellian going on, I know that.

Q It is just lousy staff work? Is that basically what you are saying, you don't see anything Machiavellian going on?

MR. NESSEN: That is a wonderful choice, between a Machiavellian plot or a staff screw-up. Let's see now which one. Are those the only two choices?

Q That is all you get. That is it.

MR. NESSEN: I don't know those are the only two choices.

Q The President apparently has confidence in Scowcroft, according to you, Ron. Does Scowcroft have confidence in you and, if he does have confidence in you, why would he withhold this rather important, newsworthy item from you?

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

Q Ron, on the whole Nixon matter, from the

MR. NESSEN: It was not handled with the most style and grace that I have seen around here.

Q Ron, let me carry this further. Were Hartmann and Marsh aware the report was in the house?

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

Q Ron, a few minutes ago you said there seemed to be more importance attached to this out here. I believe that is the second or third time you characterized it that way. I recall on the night of the New Hampshire election the President's now acting campaign manager referred to that as a possibility of losing -- if the President lost the Nixon trip would be the cause. Is it possible that Brent Scowcroft, because of the political sensitivity of this thing, kept it only to himself for all this time?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know that it has any political sensitivity. I think most of you know the post-New Hampshire polling indicated it had zero effect in New Hampshire.

Q It had that effect, but his campaign manager-- at that time deputy--thought it might have a lot of effect.

MR. NESSEN: It turned out to be not true.

Q Ron, while the report itself was not discussed at a senior staff meeting -- you said that, right?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Was there a discussion at the senior staff meeting about how to handle the report, about what to do about it when it comes in?

MR. NESSEN: NO, there was not.

Q Ron, could you tell us who recommended that Director Bush read it? Was it the President or General Scowcroft who suggested that Bush have a look at it before it got back?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know. I know George has been interested in reading it.

Q But somebody had to say, okay, you can see it. What I am interested in knowing is, was it the President or General Scowcroft?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know.

Q But he saw it in this building?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Ron, has Nixon given you any assurances that he won't be available to talk about it and that he is not going to talk about it while everybody here is being very delicate about it and do you wonder about being pre-empted by him?

MR. NESSEN: I myself haven't talked to Nixon. I don't know what his plans are. I don't know what you mean by delicate about it here. I thought we sort of laid it out pretty bluntly here.

Q I can't understand his claim on this. He makes a report for the President, to the President. Suddenly he gets it back.

MR. NESSEN: As I say, it does have sensitive material in it. It is not classified because he is a civilian and a private citizen has no classification authority.

Q Why was it necessary to send an airplane to get it?

MR. NESSEN: There was not any airplane sent to get it.

Q Why did you have to send a functionary out to get this when you did not take it back to him this way?

MR. NESSEN: The former President requested that it be picked up.

Q Would it be accurate then to say as far as you know, only four people have read the report?

MR. NESSEN: As well as the former President, who wrote it.

Q Are you seriously suggesting no copies have been made of this report?

MR. NESSEN: Muriel, I talked to two of the four people who have read the report, and the President said he made no Xerox or any other kind of copy, and Brent Scowcroft said he did not make a copy. I have not

Q Do you know if Gulley read it?

MR. NESSEN: I do not know that.

Q It helps pass the time on a long night.
(Laughter)

Q What is the President doing for the rest of the week?

MR. NESSEN: Friday, as you know, we are going to California, and Saturday to California, and stop in Wisconsin on the way back.

Q You say a second day in California or part of the second day?

MR. NESSEN: Part of the second day in California.

Q And stop in Wisconsin on the way back?

MR. NESSEN: Right.

Q Where is the stop in Wisconsin?

MR. NESSEN: We don't have that all worked out yet.

Q Return when, Saturday night, Sunday morning? Two nights out or one night out?

MR. NESSEN: One night out. He may have one or two other messages to Congress this week, in addition to the Space and Technology Message.

Q You know what on?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, but I would rather not say it for the moment.

Q Does he have anything more to say on the FEC new authority? Is it going to go down the drain or is there any possibility of saving it?

MR. NESSEN: I think the President has said all there is to say from his behalf, Helen, that he really believes that this is something that should be in place for the rest of the election and thinks the American people look toward it as a guarantee of clean elections. He simply urges Congress to pass a reconstitution of the commission and an extension of the law until this election can be conducted and then after the election look at the record of how the law worked and if Congress decides at

Q What is the outlook, do you know?

MR. NESSEN: I am not sure this is the place to get the outlook from, but I think you know the outlook.

Q Ron, in checking with the Pentagon's helopad about the helicopter ride for which Senator Percy tried to pay, but some unknown in the White House turned him down, I learned that the helicopter was waiting to pick up Senator Laxalt of Nevada.

I wonder, why does the White House provide this helicopter for Governor Reagan's campaign chairman?

MR. NESSEN: Larry is the helicopter transportation expert. He will look into it for you. I don't know the answer, Les.

Q For the record, what is Mr. Gulley's primary job in the White House? You characterized him as a functionary, one who takes telephone calls in liaison with former Presidents. What is his principal job?

MR. NESSEN: I don't mean to demean the liaison job. It is not simply taking phone calls. He is liaison with the widows and children of former Presidents, as well as the former President.

Q Isn't he currently in charge of the military operation of the White House scheduling helicopters, planes and other military aircraft all over the world, including scheduling of all the Presidential aircraft?

MR. NESSEN: I know that he is the ongoing civil servant in the Office of the Military Aide.

Q Is that not considered one of the most important jobs in the White House?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know his full breakdown of his job description, but I know that is what he does.

Q He handles helicopters, doesn't he, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know that.

Q You are still standing by with your original description of a functionary, though?

Q You used that term to try to mislead us, to try to throw us off the scent, off the track, isn't that right?

MR. NESSEN: That is not right, Jim. I used that term because there was a feeling it would be better not to have Bill's name connected with that.

Q Why did you change that?

MR. NESSEN: As I said this morning, I just thought the unnecessary mystery created was not worth the effort.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Ron.

END (AT 12:20 P.M. EST)

March 10, 1976



INTERVIEW WITH THE PRESIDENT
BY
THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE

THE OVAL OFFICE

2:05 P.M. EST

QUESTION: Mr. President, this morning a senior official in your Administration who was speaking on background at the time --

THE PRESIDENT: That is always very helpful. (Laught

QUESTION: Well, he has a very heavy German accent but I guess I cannot identify him -- he was at the budget breakfast -- talked about his telephone call to President Nixon. He said that the White House had a plan for the former President to report to the Administration on his China trip, that the former President said that he had his own plan, that he wanted to do it in writing and that when this unnamed senior official telephoned General Scowcroft to tell him that he would have to negotiate this difference, the former President by the time the Scowcroft call got there President Nixon had already called the White House and informed the White House that he was in fact going to issue his report in writing.

Can you give us any more detail on that? Can you tell us what the White House would have preferred that the President is inclined to reject?

THE PRESIDENT: There were several tentative plans. No communication had been held with him because he was in China, but it was a very informal plan of being involved either with Dr. Kissinger or myself but it was aborted when the former President indicated how he wanted to handle it, which was perfectly satisfactory with us.

QUESTION: You would not like to give us any more detail on it?

THE PRESIDENT: Did Henry give it to you?

QUESTION: No, he did not. (Laughter)

If I could ask just one more question while we are on Dr. Kissinger, last weekend, Mr. President, in Illinois, you announced the creation of a new agricultural policy headed by Secretary Butz, which replaces two other committees, as I recall, one chaired by Dr. Kissinger and the other co-chaired by Dr. Kissinger. That, coupled with the stripping of his job at the White House, it seems as though he perhaps is losing a little influence in your Administration. Do you expect Secretary Kissinger to be Secretary of State in November of 1976?



This Copy For _____

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

#458

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 11:31 A.M. EST

MARCH 16, 1976

TUESDAY

Q Ron, do you have any response today to what the Congressional Budget Office said yesterday about the President?

MR. NESSEN: Well, this is a long report that they issued and we haven't really had time to go through all of it. Obviously, we are pleased that they found the economic recovery to be in progress and strong and that they agree with the President on that.

We disagree with -- at least after a preliminary look at it -- the Budget Office's evaluation of the impact of various policies on the economy. Other than that, it will take a little more reading before we get anything more definite.

Q Will the President be sending Congress a letter today asking for approval of the sale of C-130s to Egypt?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know. I will have to check, Frank, and see.

Q We will be told, won't we, if he sends that letter?

MR. NESSEN: I am sure you will be, yes.

Q Has the White House been notified if the State Department has a report from former President Nixon on his visit to China?

MR. NESSEN: As far as I know, it hasn't come yet.

Q You may have been asked this yesterday, but who has to clear Bo Callaway before he can return? Does he have to wait until the Senate hearings are over, or does he just have to wait until after the Justice Department investigation and others that may take place are completed?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have a specific answer to that, Fred, but I think what we said Saturday was when the matter was resolved.

Q My question is, is it resolved after those investigations or do you have to wait for the Senate hearings to be completed?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know. I will check.

Q Administration sources are being quoted as saying -- unidentified -- that he won't be back under

This Copy For _____

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

#457

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 12:42 P.M. EST

MARCH 15, 1976

MONDAY



Q I wonder if the President shares that view?

MR. NESSEN: I will check for you, Russ.

Q On another foreign policy, or at least an international matter, is it your understanding that the Rambouillet agreement prevents or prohibits any intervention by the United States to support the British pound, the Italian lira or the French franc, or is it your understanding that the Rambouillet conference -- also, the Jamaica agreement -- would permit such support by the United States?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know enough about that subject, Jim, to take on th t question.

Q Has there been, as reported, some intervention by the Fed to support at least the lira?

MR. NESSEN: I just don't know enough about that subject, Jim.

Q On yet another international matter, has the White House yet seen any of the written report from former President Nixon on his trip to China?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q I would like to ask a Nixon question, also. It stems from the Nixon responses to the Church interrogatories in which at one point the former President says that the sovereign power of the President permits actions which, if taken by other persons, might be construed or considered as illegal.

Does President Ford agree with that definition of the sovereign power of the Presidency?

MR. NESSEN: He answered that question on Saturday, and I will get you the transcript of what he said, Jim. Essentially, the answer was no, the people are sovereign and not the President.

Q I wasn't on that trip. Was that at the last Q and A session?

MR. NESSEN: I think it was at the school.

Q It was NINA.

MR. NESSEN: Was that Wheaton College?



Dear Ron:

R B

NIXON 3-4

I hope you have stopped telling people I taught you everything you know.

DAY LD

BY RICHARD E. LERNER

Grant

WASHINGTON (UPI) -- SECRETARY OF STATE HENRY KISSINGER CALLED RICHARD M. NIXON TO ASK FOR A REPORT ON HIS CHINA TRIP. THE WHITE HOUSE SAYS PRESIDENT FORD DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT IT UNTIL TWO DAYS LATER BUT THEN "DIDN'T GIVE IT MUCH THOUGHT."

THE "SCENARIO OF EVENTS" WAS REPORTED WEDNESDAY BY PRESS SECRETARY RON NESSEN AFTER SEVERAL HOURS OF CONFUSION AND HIS ACCOUNT SUGGESTS ANEW THAT FORD, FOR DOMESTIC POLITICAL REASONS, WANTS NO PUBLIC ASSOCIATION WITH NIXON'S JOURNEY TO PEKING LAST WEEK.

AMONG OTHER THINGS, NESSEN SAID:

-- KISSINGER TALKED TO NIXON MONDAY AND FORD WAS NOT TOLD UNTIL WEDNESDAY EVEN THOUGH THE SECRETARY CALLED THE WHITE HOUSE TUESDAY TO INFORM BRENT SCOWCROFT, THE PRESIDENT'S CHIEF NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISER. SCOWCROFT "DIDN'T PASS IT ON TO ANYBODY" BECAUSE "IT JUST DIDN'T SEEM VERY IMPORTANT TO HIM."

-- FORD PLAYED NO ROLE IN KISSINGER'S DECISION TO PHONE NIXON, AND ACTUALLY GAVE HIS SECRETARY OF STATE "NO ORDERS, ONE WAY OR THE OTHER" ON THE ENTIRE MATTER. FORD SAID MONDAY HE WOULD NOT "DEBRIEF" NIXON AND THAT KISSINGER WOULDN'T EITHER.

KISSINGER WAS VISITING HIS WIFE IN PALM SPRINGS, CALIF., WHEN HE CALLED NIXON AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAD SAID HE DID NOT INTEND TO CONTACT NIXON DURING THE TRIP.

-- KISSINGER AND NIXON CHATTED ON THE TELEPHONE FOR 15 MINUTES, PRESUMABLY TIME FOR NIXON TO SAY IF HE GOT ANY IMPORTANT INFORMATION IN LONG TALKS WITH COMMUNIST PARTY CHAIRMAN MAO TSE-TUNG AND OTHER CHINESE LEADERS.

BUT AFTER KISSINGER TOLD FORD WEDNESDAY THAT HE HAD SPOKEN TO NIXON, THE TWO MEN MOVED QUICKLY TO "OTHER BUSINESS" AND FORD SAID "I DIDN'T GIVE IT MUCH THOUGHT." A STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN SAID EARLIER NIXON GAVE KISSINGER "A VERY SURFACE IMPRESSION OF HIS CHINA VISIT."

-- NIXON'S REPORT WILL BE SENT DIRECTLY TO KISSINGER, NOT JUST TO SOME STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS, AS NESSEN SAID TUESDAY, BUT THE DATE REMAINS UNCERTAIN.

-- FIRST WORD OF NIXON'S PLAN TO SUBMIT A WRITTEN REPORT REACHED THE WHITE HOUSE MONDAY IN A TELEPHONE CALL FROM NIXON'S ESTATE IN SAN CLEMENTE, CALIF. NESSEN AGAIN REFUSED TO SAY WHO PLACED THE CALL OR WHO TOOK IT AT THE WHITE HOUSE, BUT TOLD REPORTERS IT CAME AFTER KISSINGER HAD SPOKEN TO NIXON AND THAT NO MENTION OF THEIR CONVERSATION WAS MADE THEN.

-- NESSEN WAS UNAWARE OF KISSINGER'S CALL TO NIXON WHEN HE SAID TUESDAY THAT THE FORMER PRESIDENT HAD NOT SPOKEN TO FORD "OR ANY OTHER SENIOR OFFICIAL IN THE WHITE HOUSE OR THE STATE DEPARTMENT" SINCE RETURNING HOME SUNDAY.

NESSEN SAID HE STILL DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT IT WEDNESDAY WHEN THE STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN, ROBERT FUNSETH, CONFIRMED A REPORT BY COLUMNIST JACK ANDERSON AND PROVIDED SOME DETAILS.

AT THAT TIME, FUNSETH ALSO SAID THE WHITE HOUSE KNEW ABOUT KISSINGER'S CALL BEFOREHAND AND THAT HE HIMSELF KNEW TUESDAY BUT SAID NOTHING BECAUSE REPORTERS DID NOT ASK.

UPI 03-04 03:10 AES



MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Barbara Walters had a TODAY show exclusive on Nixon's trip:

Said that the former President and Mrs. Nixon had been invited by the People's Republic~~x~~ to visit there later this month. They had accepted. The date would be either Feb. 19 or Feb. 21.

The representative of the Peoples R~~ep~~ublic liasion office visited the White House yesterday to inform the President.

The Chinese will send a Chin~~ese~~ aircraft to Southern California ~~and return~~ to pick up Nixon and return him to Southern California.

Ron -
It hasn't moved on ^{U.P.I.} ~~the wire~~ yet but Allen
was standing in Larry's office when it came
over NBC

c.g

UP-376

Scow, NY, LL

(RICHARD NIXON)

WASHINGTON (UPI) -- RICHARD NIXON, WHO RETURNED FROM A NINE-DAY VISIT TO CHINA MONDAY, HAS BEEN INVITED TO VISIT IRAN LATER THIS YEAR, WOMEN'S WEAR DAILY REPORTED TODAY.

THE NEWSPAPER QUOTED SOURCES AS SAYING IRANIAN AMBASSADOR ARDESHIR ZAHEDI EXTENDED "A SPECIAL VIP INVITATION" TO NIXON DURING A RECENT TRIP HE MADE TO CALIFORNIA.

BARBARA MACGREGOR, WIFE OF FORMER REP. CLARK MACGREGOR, R-MINN., TOLD THE NEWSPAPER ZAHEDI TOLD HER AT A PARTY HE WAS PLANNING TO VISIT NIXON IN CALIFORNIA LAST MONTH.

ZAHEDI'S SOCIAL SECRETARY AT THE IRANIAN EMBASSY TOLD THE NEWSPAPER THAT "AT THE MOMENT THERE IS NO INVITATION."

UPI 33-03 31:41 PES



Q. 1. Did the Bush mtg. this
am have anything to do
with the Nixon trip?

2. ~~Did the~~ Given the Harris
poll yesterday, with the
President's relations with
China shown to be his
greatest strength, how does
this affect his campaign?



Since Nixon trip

10000 total

private U.S. aits
and delegations

official delegations
probably less than
20% of that total

of facilitated

Passport to Liaison
office



MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON



NIXON/CHINA

1. Did the People's Republic liasion office representative come to the White House yesterday? What time? Did he see the President? Who else did he see? What was contained in message about Nixon's trip? *Why wasn't press told?*

2. Did the President and Nixon talk personally about the trip? If so, by what means did they communicate. Have they talked by telephone over the past few months? If so, how many times?

3. Does Nixon still get the intelligence reports? By what means?

A. yes they are sent telegraphically through government wires.
Q 4. Will Nixon receive any State Department briefings before the trip? Will any U. S. officials accompany him?

5. ~~Will Nixon take any messages? Will he bring any back?~~

Q 6. Does the President plan to confer with Nixon prior to the trip?

Q 7. Will any government money -- ~~in any way~~ *on aircraft* be used in the Nixon trip? *other than the phone call 2/5, not that we know of, no plans for additional contact.*

8. Does Nixon plan any other stops enroute?

You will have to ask him

Q 9. Did Nixon receive a special report -- other than the intelligence briefing he regularly gets -- on the Ford China trip? Any secret information that was not given to the public?

10. Have Nixon and Kissinger talked recently?

They met in San Cle when HAK was in

Q 11. Give me a ~~break~~ break-down on Nixon's pension.

Calif. Monday

Questions - RN China



1. When & how was GRT notified?
2. What is GRT's reaction?
3. Why is RN going?
4. Who will pay for trip? ✓
5. Any secret service or other Fed govt officials involved? ✓
6. When was visa ^{requested &} issued? ✓
7. Will RN report to GRT upon his return
8. Has there been any reaction by GRT to reports that RN might want ~~consider~~ to be Acting Ambassador? If so what?
9. Any details on his itinerary while in China? ✓
10. Did GRT, White House, or anyone in Fed govt try to dissuade

NIXON QUESTIONS

FROM: JIM SHUMAN

~~When did the President first hear of the proposed trip? (Full details of process)~~
~~What was his reaction (full details of what he said, who he called, etc.)~~
~~Have the President and the former President talked?~~
~~Was there any previous indication in any conversation they may have held that RN would be going to China?~~
~~Will the CIA, State Department or any other government agency or official brief RN before he goes? De-brief when he returns?~~
~~Who, in addition to Mrs. Nixon, will accompany him?~~
~~Who will pay his expenses? The expenses of those accompanying him?~~
~~Will the Chinese plane be granted permission to land at Camp Pendleton?~~
~~Will RN make any other stops enroute?~~
~~Where will he stay in Peking? (U.S. Consulate or any other U.S. facility)~~
~~What involvement do U.S. officials have in the trip? (Planning, visas, etc)~~

secret

✓ What will be the political effect of the trip, coming as it does just before the New Hampshire primary?
no Is this an overture to appointing Nixon Ambassador, or any other diplomatic post in China either before or after the general election?
Does the President approve of the trip? *yes*
Is this part of a high level conspiracy to wrest the Republican nomination from President Ford? *no*
How come Nixon can go to China when he can't come to Washington for court appearances?



2-6-76

OTHER QUESTIONS ON NIXON TRIP

- 1) ~~Is~~ the President concerned about the political effects of the Nixon trip---particularly in New Hampshire's primary? Won't this ~~undercut~~ ^{undercut} the President's authority as a world leader?
- 2) Why didn't the President make some attempt to stop the Nixon trip?
we don't know why should he
- 3) Is this some sort of a deal work out to help rehabilitate Nixon? To make him look better? ~~Did~~ Did the President and the Chinese leaders talk about the Nixon trip during President Ford's visit? If not, why not? *no the Chinese didn't raise it*
- Q 4) After the China trip, will Nixon be asked to campaign for the President? Wouldn't Nixon be an asset in the campaign?
- 5)



2/5/75.
TIME OF RELEASE: 8 a.m., Friday

February 6, 1976 (Washington Time)

ANNOUNCEMENT

The historic visit to China made by President Richard Nixon of the United States of America and Mrs. Nixon and the issuance of the Joint Communiqué by China and the United States in 1972 have played a significant role in improving Sino-U.S. relations. The Chinese side and former President Nixon both consider that a revisit to China by him will be appropriate. The Government of the People's Republic of China has extended an invitation to him and Mrs. Nixon to revisit China on February 21, 1976, the fourth anniversary of their first visit. They have accepted the invitation with pleasure.



Q AND A ON NIXON TRIP TO CHINA

Background

Former President and Mrs. Nixon have been invited to visit the PRC on February 21, the fourth anniversary of Nixon's first trip to China. This will be announced at 8 a.m. (Washington time) Friday, February 6 from Peking and San Clemente. There will be no announcement from the White House.

Ambassador Han Hsu from the Liaison Office delivered the attached announcement to General Scowcroft, at 3 p.m. Thursday, February 5. We had no notice prior to that from either the Chinese or San Clemente. Former President Nixon phoned President Ford Thursday afternoon to inform him of the invitation.

We will want to indicate that as with other private visits of prominent Americans, it was arranged between the PRC and the former President.

* * * *

Q: Were President Ford or Dr. Kissinger informed about this beforehand? How, and when was the President informed?

A: Yes, President Ford was informed about the PRC's invitation to former President Nixon on Thursday afternoon. Representatives of the PRC Liaison Office notified the White House and Mr. Nixon also called the President.

Q: Was the trip discussed during Ford's trip to China? Did the US Government work on any of the details?

A: This is a completely private visit arranged entirely between the PRC and former President Nixon. It was not discussed during President Ford's trip to Peking.

Q: What will the Chinese and Nixon discuss? Will he carry a message from President Ford to the Chinese?

A: As this is a private visit, all arrangements will be made between the Chinese and the former President.

Q: What does this mean for US-Chinese relations. Is this some kind of signal to the US? What does the USG think of this?

A: ~~Former President Nixon was responsible for the reopening of our relationship with the Peoples Republic. One aspect of our developing relationship is the opportunity for both sides to benefit by increased exchanges and contacts which foster a better understanding between our respective countries. As you are aware, the Chinese have invited many private and official delegations of Americans to visit the PRC and we have hosted many Chinese groups in this country. This visit, by the Nixons, is a reflection of this increased contact and communication.~~



NIXON CHINA TRIP

Q: What effect, if any, will this demonstration by China have on detente and our relationships with Russia?

A: ~~Our relations with Soviet Union are separate and are based on our perceptions of our national interest and the interest of easing tensions in the world.~~

We do not consider that the former President's visit will affect detente.

NIXON CHINA TRIP

Q. Does Nixon still get the intelligence reports? By what means?

A. Yes, they are sent telegraphically through government wires.

Q. How often does the former President receive the intelligence briefings?

A. Mr. Nixon receives routine intelligence briefings from the White House. ^They are authorized by President Ford and are extended as a courtesy to Mr. Nixon as a former President.

NIXON CHINA TRIP

Q. Does Nixon plan any other stops enroute?

A. You will have to ask him.

NIXON CHINA TRIP

Q. Does the President plan to confer with Nixon prior to the trip?

A. Other than the phone call 2/5, we know of no plans
Call BS, & returned, R. N. Bush, Bush
for additional contact. *talked 5:25 - 5:41 p.m.*



NIXON CHINA TRIP

Q: Does the fact that China is openly demonstrating its official admiration for Richard Nixon and his past policies have any impact on Gerald R. Ford -- either personally or officially.

A: We wouldn't speculate on that, but we fail to see why the former President's visit would have the impact you mention.

NIXON CHINA TRIP

Q: Did Julie and David help lay the groundwork for this visit when they were in China?

A: You'll have to ask them, but you will recall that the Chinese extended an invitation to the former President to visit China at the time of the Eisenhower visit.

[Eisenhower-Mao readout attached.]

The narration accompanying the film is as follows: "On the evening of 31 December 1975, Chairman Mao Tsetung met with Julie Nixon Eisenhower, daughter of former U.S. President Richard Nixon, and her husband David Eisenhower. Julie first conveyed to Chairman Mao her father's regards. She said: 'It is an honor that I have the opportunity to convey to Chairman Mao personally my father's regards. My parents are deeply impressed by their visit to China in 1972.' David also gave Chairman Mao the regards of his family. Chairman Mao conversed with them in a cordial and friendly atmosphere. Also present at the meeting were Foreign Minister Chiao Kuan-hua, chief liaison officer Huang Chen, Vice Foreign Minister Wang Hai-jung and others. After the conversation, Chairman Mao asked them to give his regards to Richard Nixon and said that he would welcome another visit to China by Mr. Nixon."

SOVIET UNION

NCNA COMMENTS ON SOVIET ARMS BUILDUP SINCE 1963

Peking NCNA in English 1705 GMT 3 Jan 76 OW

[Commentary by NCNA correspondent: "After Signing the Tripartite Treaty...."]

[Text] Peking, January 3, 1976 (HSINHUA)--The Soviet Union and the United States, drawing Britain in, signed a tripartite "partial nuclear test-ban treaty" in August 1963. This was what Khrushchev described as a "masterstroke." To Khrushchev and his like, this treaty marked "a turning point in history" and "had blazed a path for mankind towards the complete prevention of atomic and hydrogen calamities." That is to say, with this treaty, Khrushchev and his followers are able to fly to a "jewelled palace in elfland's hills"--a world without weapons, without armed forces and without wars.

Between the 50's and the 60's, the national liberation movements in Asia, Africa and Latin America were surging vigorously forward, and in particular, the flames of armed struggles were raging furiously. It was true indeed that gunfire licked the heavens and shells pitted the earth. Khrushchev then began to suffer from the "morbid fear of fire." An epigram of his read: "...any small 'local war' might spark off the conflagration of a world war." Meanwhile, the development of nuclear-missile weapons made him hauntingly dread nuclear arms. He muttered that any modern war "will destroy (referring to mankind) Noah's Ark--the globe." Like a coward sparrow, Khrushchev was apparently scared out of his wits by revolution and war. Hence his conclusion: "What is the use of principles if one's head is chopped off?" He, therefore, cast to the winds all the revolutionary principles of Marxism-Leninism and was bent on seeking his jewelled palace in elfland's hills--a world without weapons, without armed forces and without wars, to devour his goulash.

Nevertheless, history is merciless. Khrushchev vanished without catching a glimpse of such a world. Twelve years have passed since the signing of the tripartite treaty, yet a world without weapons, without armed forces and without wars has become utterly visionary. Instead, the superpowers' arms and armies have been expanded and the danger of a new world war looms large. The national liberation war, however, has never ceased.

The narration accompanying the film is as follows: "On the evening of 31 December 1975, Chairman Mao Tsetung met with Julie Nixon Eisenhower, daughter of former U.S. President Richard Nixon, and her husband David Eisenhower. Julie first conveyed to Chairman Mao her father's regards. She said: 'It is an honor that I have the opportunity to convey to Chairman Mao personally my father's regards. My parents are deeply impressed by their visit to China in 1972.' David also gave Chairman Mao the regards of his family. Chairman Mao conversed with them in a cordial and friendly atmosphere. Also present at the meeting were Foreign Minister Chiao Kuan-hua, chief liaison officer Huang Chen, Vice Foreign Minister Wang Hai-jung and others. After the conversation, Chairman Mao asked them to give his regards to Richard Nixon and said that he would welcome another visit to China by Mr. Nixon."

SOVIET UNION

NCNA COMMENTS ON SOVIET ARMS BUILDUP SINCE 1963

Peking NCNA in English 1705 GMT 3 Jan 76 OW

[Commentary by NCNA correspondent: "After Signing the Tripartite Treaty...."]

[Text] Peking, January 3, 1976 (HSINHUA)--The Soviet Union and the United States, drawing Britain in, signed a tripartite "partial nuclear test-ban treaty" in August 1963. This was what Khrushchev described as a "masterstroke." To Khrushchev and his like, this treaty marked "a turning point in history" and "had blazed a path for mankind towards the complete prevention of atomic and hydrogen calamities." That is to say, with this treaty, Khrushchev and his followers are able to fly to a "jewelled palace in elfland's hills"--a world without weapons, without armed forces and without wars.

Between the 50's and the 60's, the national liberation movements in Asia, Africa and Latin America were surging vigorously forward, and in particular, the flames of armed struggles were raging furiously. It was true indeed that gunfire licked the heavens and shells pitted the earth. Khrushchev then began to suffer from the "morbid fear of fire." An epigram of his read: "...any small 'local war' might spark off the conflagration of a world war." Meanwhile, the development of nuclear-missile weapons made him hauntingly dread nuclear arms. He muttered that any modern war "will destroy (referring to mankind) Noah's Ark--the globe." Like a coward sparrow, Khrushchev was apparently scared out of his wits by revolution and war. Hence his conclusion: "What is the use of principles if one's head is chopped off?" He, therefore, cast to the winds all the revolutionary principles of Marxism-Leninism and was bent on seeking his jewelled palace in elfland's hills--a world without weapons, without armed forces and without wars, to devour his goulash.

Nevertheless, history is merciless. Khrushchev vanished without catching a glimpse of such a world. Twelve years have passed since the signing of the tripartite treaty, yet a world without weapons, without armed forces and without wars has become utterly visionary. Instead, the superpowers' arms and armies have been expanded and the danger of a new world war looms large. The national liberation war, however, has never ceased.

NIXON CHINA TRIP

Q. Have Nixon and Kissinger talked recently?

A. (They met in San Clemente when HAK was in California,
on Monday.)?

NIXON CHINA TRIP

Q: How many Americans have visited China since 1971?

A: Although it is impossible to pin down, we estimate that a total of ten thousand Americans, both private and delegations have visited the PRC since 1971. Of those, official delegations probably constitute less than 20 percent of that total.

Since 1971 there have been a total of 34 official facilitated delegations to the People's Republic constituting roughly 500 people.

NIXON CHINA TRIP

Q. Did the Bush meeting this morning have anything to do with the Nixon trip?

A. The Bush meeting was planned before we knew about the Nixon trip.

Q. Well, was the visit discussed at the meeting this morning?

A. *No. Not discussed, Routine, regular meeting (was Fri)*



NIXON CHINA TRIP

Q. Will Nixon receive any State Department briefings before the trip? Will any U.S officials accompany him?

A. *Not currently planned.*

NIXON CHINA TRIP

Q. Will any government money or aircraft be used in the Nixon trip?

A. No. SS will accompany, as required by Congress

NIXON CHINA TRIP

Q. Did the President and Nixon talk personally about the trip?
If so, by what means did they communicate. Have they talked
by telephone over the past few months? If so, how many times?

A. *Phone call 5:25-5:41 pm. Thurs*



NIXON CHINA TRIP

Q. Did Nixon receive a special report -- other than the intelligence briefing he regularly gets -- on the Ford China trip? Any secret information that was not given to the public?


A. *No.*

2/5/75.
TIME OF RELEASE: 8 a.m., Friday

February 6, 1976 (Washington Time)

ANNOUNCEMENT

The historic visit to China made by President Richard Nixon of the United States of America and Mrs. Nixon and the issuance of the Joint Communiqué by China and the United States in 1972 have played a significant role in improving Sino-U.S. relations. The Chinese side and former President Nixon both consider that a revisit to China by him will be appropriate. The Government of the People's Republic of China has extended an invitation to him and Mrs. Nixon to revisit China on February 21, 1976, the fourth anniversary of their first visit. They have accepted the invitation with pleasure.



Q AND A ON NIXON TRIP TO CHINA

Background

Former President and Mrs. Nixon have been invited to visit the PRC on February 21, the fourth anniversary of Nixon's first trip to China. This will be announced at 8 a.m. (Washington time) Friday, February 6 from Peking and San Clemente. There will be no announcement from the White House.

Ambassador Han Hsu from the Liaison Office delivered the attached announcement to General Scowcroft, at 3 p.m. Thursday, February 5. We had no notice prior to that from either the Chinese or San Clemente. Former President Nixon phoned President Ford Thursday afternoon to inform him of the invitation.

We will want to indicate that as with other private visits of prominent Americans, it was arranged between the PRC and the former President.

* * * *

Q: Were President Ford or Dr. Kissinger informed about this beforehand? How, and when was the President informed?

A: Yes, President Ford was informed about the PRC's invitation to former President Nixon on Thursday afternoon. Representatives of the PRC Liaison Office notified the White House and Mr. Nixon also called the President.

Q: Was the trip discussed during Ford's trip to China? Did the US Government work on any of the details?

A: This is a completely private visit arranged entirely between the PRC and former President Nixon. It was not discussed during President Ford's trip to Peking.

Q: What will the Chinese and Nixon discuss? Will he carry a message from President Ford to the Chinese?

A: As this is a private visit, all arrangements will be made between the Chinese and the former President.

Q: What does this mean for US-Chinese relations. Is this some kind of signal to the US? What does the USG think of this?

A: Former President Nixon was responsible for the reopening of our relationship with the Peoples Republic. One aspect of our developing relationship is the opportunity for both sides to benefit by increased exchanges and contacts which foster a better understanding between our respective countries. As you are aware, the Chinese have invited many private and official delegations of Americans to visit the PRC and we have hosted many Chinese groups in this country. This visit, by the Nixons, is a reflection of this increased contact and communication.

NIXON CHINA TRIP

Q: What effect, if any, will this demonstration by China have on detente and our relationships with Russia?

A: Our relations with Soviet Union are separate and are based on our perceptions of our national interest and the interest of easing tensions in the world. We do not consider that the former President's visit will affect detente.



NIXON CHINA TRIP

- Q. Does Nixon still get the intelligence reports? By what means?
- A. Yes, they are sent telegraphically through government wires.
- Q. How often does the former President receive the intelligence briefings?
- A. Mr. Nixon receives routine intelligence briefings from the White House. ^They are authorized by President Ford and are extended as a courtesy to Mr. Nixon as a former President.

NIXON CHINA TRIP

Q. Does Nixon plan any other stops enroute?

A. You will have to ask him.

NIXON CHINA TRIP

- Q. Does the President plan to confer with Nixon prior to the trip?
- A. Other than the phone call 2/5, we know of no plans for additional contact.

NIXON CHINA TRIP

Q: Does the fact that China is openly demonstrating its official admiration for Richard Nixon and his past policies have any impact on Gerald R. Ford -- either personally or officially.

A: We wouldn't speculate on that, but we fail to see why the former President's visit would have the impact you mention.

NIXON CHINA TRIP

Q: Did Julie and David help lay the groundwork for this visit when they were in China?

A: You'll have to ask them, but you will recall that the Chinese extended an invitation to the former President to visit China at the time of the Eisenhower visit.

[Eisenhower-Mao readout attached.]

The narration accompanying the film is as follows: "On the evening of 31 December 1975, Chairman Mao Tsetung met with Julie Nixon Eisenhower, daughter of former U.S. President Richard Nixon, and her husband David Eisenhower. Julie first conveyed to Chairman Mao her father's regards. She said: 'It is an honor that I have the opportunity to convey to Chairman Mao personally my father's regards. My parents are deeply impressed by their visit to China in 1972.' David also gave Chairman Mao the regards of his family. Chairman Mao conversed with them in a cordial and friendly atmosphere. Also present at the meeting were Foreign Minister Chiao Kuan-hua, chief liaison officer Huang Chen, Vice Foreign Minister Wang Hai-jung and others. After the conversation, Chairman Mao asked them to give his regards to Richard Nixon and said that he would welcome another visit to China by Mr. Nixon."

SOVIET UNION

NCNA COMMENTS ON SOVIET ARMS BUILDUP SINCE 1963

Peking NCNA in English 1705 GMT 3 Jan 76 OW

[Commentary by NCNA correspondent: "After Signing the Tripartite Treaty...."]

[Text] Peking, January 3, 1976 (HSINHUA)--The Soviet Union and the United States, drawing Britain in, signed a tripartite "partial nuclear test-ban treaty" in August 1963. This was what Khrushchev described as a "masterstroke." To Khrushchev and his like, this treaty marked "a turning point in history" and "had blazed a path for mankind towards the complete prevention of atomic and hydrogen calamities." That is to say, with this treaty, Khrushchev and his followers are able to fly to a "jewelled palace in elfland's hills"--a world without weapons, without armed forces and without wars.

Between the 50's and the 60's, the national liberation movements in Asia, Africa and Latin America were surging vigorously forward, and in particular, the flames of armed struggles were raging furiously. It was true indeed that gunfire licked the heavens and shells pitted the earth. Khrushchev then began to suffer from the "morbid fear of fire." An epigram of his read: "...any small 'local war' might spark off the conflagration of a world war." Meanwhile, the development of nuclear-missile weapons made him hauntingly dread nuclear arms. He muttered that any modern war "will destroy (referring to mankind) Noah's Ark--the globe." Like a coward sparrow, Khrushchev was apparently scared out of his wits by revolution and war. Hence his conclusion: "What is the use of principles if one's head is chopped off?" He, therefore, cast to the winds all the revolutionary principles of Marxism-Leninism and was bent on seeking his jewelled palace in elfland's hills--a world without weapons, without armed forces and without wars, to devour his goulash.

Nevertheless, history is merciless. Khrushchev vanished without catching a glimpse of such a world. Twelve years have passed since the signing of the tripartite treaty, yet a world without weapons, without armed forces and without wars has become utterly visionary. Instead, the superpowers' arms and armies have been expanded and the danger of a new world war looms large. The national liberation war, however, has never ceased.

NIXON CHINA TRIP

Q. Have Nixon and Kissinger talked recently?

A. They met in San Clemente when HAK was in California,
on Monday.

NIXON CHINA TRIP

Q: How many Americans have visited China since 1971?

A: Although it is impossible to pin down, we estimate that a total of ten thousand Americans, both private and delegations have visited the PRC since 1971. Of those, official delegations probably constitute less than 20 percent of that total.

Since 1971 there have been a total of 34 official facilitated delegations to the People's Republic constituting roughly 500 people.

NIXON CHINA TRIP

Q. Did the Bush meeting this morning have anything to do with the Nixon trip?

A. The Bush meeting was planned before we knew about the Nixon trip.

Q. Well, was the visit discussed at the meeting this morning?

A. *No. It was a weekly meeting, regularly scheduled.*



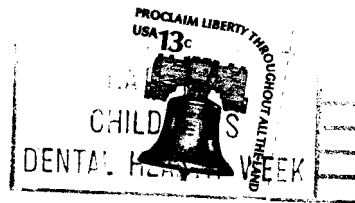
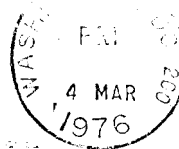
NIXON CHINA TRIP

Q. Will Nixon receive any State Department briefings before the trip? Will any U.S officials accompany him?

A.

Dillman
United Press International

315 NATIONAL PRESS BLDG., WASHINGTON, D. C. 20045



Mr. Ronald H. Nessen
Press Secretary to the President
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Personal

NIXON CHINA TRIP

Q. Will any government money or aircraft be used in the Nixon trip?

A.

NIXON CHINA TRIP

Q. Did the President and Nixon talk personally about the trip?
If so, by what means did they communicate. Have they talked
by telephone over the past few months? If so, how many times?

A.

NIXON CHINA TRIP

Q. Did Nixon receive a special report -- other than the intelligence briefing he regularly gets -- on the Ford China trip? Any secret information that was not given to the public?

A.

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 12:35 P.M. EST

MARCH 1, 1976

MONDAY

MR. NESSEN: For the weekend, the President will campaign in downstate Illinois. I don't have all the details for you except that I believe Springfield will be the first stop on Friday. We will leave here some time Friday morning and go to Springfield. There will be other stops on Friday and Saturday all in the southern part of Illinois, or so-called downstate Illinois, and although many of the arrangements have not been made yet, I think we will probably stay Friday night in Peoria.

Q Why do you smile when you say that?

MR. NESSEN: Because it is a beautiful city.

Q Where else, pray tell, will he go?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have any other details except it will be downstate Illinois.

Q Is he going to Chicago at all?

MR. NESSEN: I don't expect him to on this trip.

Q Do you rule out any return to Florida?

MR. NESSEN: I don't rule it out. It is a possibility, but it will depend on the judgment of what is the best use of the resources of the campaign.

In other words, both in terms of the money it would cost and in terms of pulling the workers off their duties to take part in another Presidential visit as well as the best use of the President's time, and that decision won't be made until later this week.

Q Ron, you said you don't expect him to, on this trip, go to Chicago?

MR. NESSEN: Right.

MORE

#449



Q That leaves an inference he will go to Chicago on another trip.

MR. NESSEN: I think there is a possibility of another trip to Illinois.

Q When might that come about?

MR. NESSEN: There is not all that much time, Bob, left to go before the primary. There is only one other weekend after this weekend.

Q In view of the fact there is not that much time, that is why I asked.

MR. NESSEN: I would think if he goes back to Illinois it would almost certainly be the following weekend.

Q Do you anticipate the Friday and Saturday trip to be the kind of motorcade activity that he had in Florida on Saturday and Sunday?

MR. NESSEN: No, I don't.

Q What about overnight on Saturday? Will he come to Washington?

MR. NESSEN: He will be home Saturday night.

Q Is this definite?

MR. NESSEN: At this moment it is, yes.

Q If he goes to Florida, will he go on Sunday or Monday?

MR. NESSEN: It has not been decided to go yet and, if so, when.

Q Ron, is the Bradley Union Q and A session firm for Friday night?

MR. NESSEN: That is one of the events being discussed.

Q Where is Bradley?

Q In Illinois.

Q Is that the extent of your announcements?

MR. NESSEN: That is the extent of my announcement.

Q Does the White House have any reaction to Pat Moynihan's endorsement of Henry Jackson one day after he left the Administration?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q No reaction whatsoever?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q None whatsoever?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Ron, has the President done anything more about forming a possible Cabinet level committee to deal with the foreign policy situation?

MR. NESSEN: Let me check on that. I have forgotten to check on that.

Ed Schmultz, who is in the Legal Counsel's Office, has presented to the President a series of options of how to pursue his interest in looking into the question of payments to foreign officials.

So, the President has a paper of options to choose from. As far as I know, he has not made choices yet.

Q Doyou know what those options are?

MR. NESSEN: I did not see that paper.

Q Do all those options assume that is not a direct violation of the present law?

MR. NESSEN: You mean American law?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: John, I don't know. I have not seen the options.

Q Ron, you said the President's trip to Southern Illinois would not be like the motorcade thing in Florida?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q What would it be like? Would it be air stops at different places?

MR. NESSEN: It just has not been put together yet, and I cannot give you any more details than the ones I have given you.

Q How come you don't have any reaction to the Moynihan endorsement?

MR. NESSEN: As I understand it, it has to do with Democratic primary politics and I don't think the White House would normally get into that.

Q Did the President have any conversation with Richard Nixon yesterday?

MR. NESSEN: He did not.

Q Does he plan to have any?

MR. NESSEN: He does not.

Q Have any members of the SALT negotiating team or the periphery of advisers threatened to resign if the U.S. does not take a tough position?


MR. NESSEN: No, the current American negotiating position was agreed to unanimously by all the participants which includes State, the various elements -- civilian and military -- of the Pentagon, and the intelligence service. That is the unanimous position that the United States has advanced, unanimously agreed upon position.

Q Where does that stand now, SALT?

MR. NESSEN: It is in negotiation. Henry is going back to Moscow at some point.

Q When?

MR. NESSEN: We have not set the date yet.

 Q Has former President Nixon called the White House switchboard today?

MR. NESSEN: Not to my knowledge.

Q Do you know whether he has called the State Department, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: I have no way of knowing, but I have not heard that he did.

Q Has the President called him?

MR. NESSEN: He has not.

Q Has anybody been detailed to go to San Clemente to talk to him?

MR. NESSEN: Not to my knowledge.

Q What was the purpose of Mr. Rumsfeld's visit to the White House today?

MR. NESSEN: It is one of his regular two-or-three-times-a-week meetings with the President.

Q Has he discussed any primary politics in Illinois?

MR. NESSEN: No, the purpose of that meeting is to deal with Don's area, which is national defense. I think Brent sat in on the meeting with him.

Q Mr. Nixon has not called the President, the President has not called Mr. Nixon, and there is no plan to go to San Clemente, but Secretary Kissinger said, "Of course, we will talk with Mr. Nixon because he was carrying on important conversations." Who was going to talk with him?

MR. NESSEN: As we have said -- I think you are quoting Henry on something he said in Latin America a while back.

Q Right.

MR. NESSEN: The situation is if the former President believes he has something significant to report, I am sure he can get in touch with somebody from the State Department to hear it or somebody from the State Department would hear his report.

Q Don't you think nine hours with a new leader of China, acting leader, would be something interesting?

MR. NESSEN: We have day-to-day diplomatic contacts with the Chinese through the Liaison Office here and ours in Peking.

Q Are you getting that kind of information? Do you know about the new leadership in China and so forth?

MR. NESSEN: I am not going into details of our daily report from our Liaison Office.

Q George Bush was in Peking for a year, and he never met Chou En-lai.

Q Ron, do the daily reports that come back indicate the acting head of the Liaison Office in Peking has ever met the new acting --

MR. NESSEN: I am not going into details of diplomatic reports from our mission there to the State Department, to the President.

Q I would assume by your response, we have this day-to-day liaison and Mr. Ford does not want to talk to Mr. Nixon about the trip?

MR. NESSEN: He does not plan to.

Q I said does not want to-- does not think it is necessary.

MR. NESSEN: As we have said, Phil, if the former President feels he learned something of significance there, I would expect him to convey it to somebody from the State Department.

Q Would Mr. Nixon have to initiate any communication?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what the procedure is. You could ask the State Department.

Q Couldn't he use a friendly mediary, such as Gerald Warren, to communicate from Mr. Nixon to the White House or back and forth?

MR. NESSEN: There are no plans for that that I know of.

Q Don't you think it looks a little childish to back off and refuse to have anything to do with information?

MR. NESSEN: I said that if he has anything significant to report, Howard, I am sure somebody from the State Department will hear it. Lots of private citizens come back from trips overseas with things they feel are significant, and there are ways for them to be heard.

Q What you are saying now, that would not send him forward with information, running to the White House.

MR. NESSEN: The whole point is there is nothing new being said here today at all. This is the position the President has had and the White House has had since the beginning of the Nixon trip. Nothing has changed, in other words, today.

Q You don't know of any message from Mao?

MR. NESSEN: I don't.

Q When President Ford went to China last December, Secretary Kissinger said it was important to keep up the momentum of growing relations between the two. Is it in the interest of growing relations for the current United States Government to have some kind of official contact with the current officiating people in Peking?

MR. NESSEN: Our official relations are carried on through our Liaison Offices in Peking and Washington.

Q When will you have a new head of that office?

MR. NESSEN: Relatively soon.

Q Is the President considering any foreign trips this year?

MR. NESSEN: None that I know of.

Q What is the reason for this particular position that you said, "The President has had this position and the White House has made this position clear since the beginning of the Nixon trip to China"? What is the reason for this position?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what you mean, what is the reason for this position. Nixon is a private citizen going there at the invitation of their Government as a private citizen, no diplomatic mission or messages. That is the reason for the position.

Q In view of that position, Ron, was President Ford surprised to hear that the acting leader of China gave Mr. Nixon nine hours of his time for talks?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know if he kept track of it. We can go around and around with that, and there is nothing to say on Nixon today, so I think we should move on to something else.

Q Ron, Deakin asked about whether there was any communication between former President Nixon and President Ford and, if so, did you make any conscious effort this morning to find out whether Mr. Nixon had called the switchboard or are you assuming he did not?

MR. NESSEN: I made a conscious effort because I anticipated the questions and the answer is no.

Q Ron, does the White House have any indication that Mr. Nixon is planning any further foreign travel as a private citizen?

MR. NESSEN: I have no way of knowing.

Q One would assume you also made a conscious effort to determine whether there had been any contact between the State Department and Mr. Nixon since his return. What was the result of that inquiry?

MR. NESSEN: I know Dr. Kissinger does not plan to see the former President when he is in California, but I have not taken it beyond that.

Q Has he been told not to see him?

MR. NESSEN: Not that I know of.

Q He is just acting on his own?

MR. NESSEN: As far as I know.

Q You have not answered my question. Has there been contact between the State Department and Mr. Nixon?

MR. NESSEN: Not that I know of.

Q Ron, to get back to this option paper you mentioned at the outset, will we be told what are those options before the President decides?

MR. NESSEN: I think you will be told what the President decides.

Q Is there any timetable for him to decide?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what it is. I will have to check on it.

Q Ron, has the President made a final determination yet as to whether the Nixon trip hurt him in New Hampshire?

MR. NESSEN: He has not made any more determination from what he said publicly last week.

Q Ron, is the President aware of Senate Minority Leader Scott's general endorsement of the legislation that would cause divestiture in the oil industry? Does he have any comment on Scott's endorsement of the divestiture bill, that bill itself?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what Senator Scott's position is. I have to look it up, but I don't have any comment from the President today.

Q Where did the President get ten examiners to shoot down to Miami, and was that a political move?

MR. NESSEN: Ten immigration examiners?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: He got them from the Immigration Service. There is a fair backlog of people waiting to have their cases moved along. I think the Justice Department can tell you the details of that. I don't have them.

Q Ron, I am sorry, I fail to understand if anybody in the world had spent nine hours with the acting Premier of the People's Republic of China, any merchant or any scholar, I would think that this Government would want somebody in a high official capacity to talk to this person, whether it be former President Nixon or anybody, nine hours.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Ron.

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