

APRIL 2, 1976

POOL REPORT NO. 1 - ANDREWS A. F. BASE TO MILWAUKEE

Wheels up at 8:23 a. m. Aboard were Congressman William Steiger (6th District - Fon du Lac, Oshkosh), Bill Baroody, Bob Crben, Mitchell Kobelinski (the new head of the Small Business Administration), Peter Kaye, Ron Nessen, etc. Yesterday was Dick Cheney Day in his home town of Casper, Wyoming, and Cheney hobbled out there for the festivities.

Nessen said that Jack Marsh talked to W. J. Usery about 8:45 a. m. this morning and reported that the Teamsters negotiations are continuing in Arlington Heights. He would not characterize how the negotiations are going. It is safe to assume, according to a White House official, that "any Presidential action (i. e. Taft-Hartley) is unlikely as long as Usery remains in Arlington Heights and the negotiations are continuing." Usery was planning to call the President during the flight and give him a report, Nessen said.

Nessen also said that "obviously the Sonnenfeldt matter" is on the minds of the ethnic leaders the President will have lunch with today and he expects it "to be discussed at length." He was asked about the piece in today's Post reporting that a 1,000-word summary of Sonnenfeldt's remarks will (was) be published in "Foreign Report," a newsletter published by the Economist. Nessen did not deny that this version -- which your pool concluded is the same 5 or 6 page summary that Nessen has mentioned at briefings -- is an accurate account of Sonnenfeldt's remarks.

On dinner last night with John Connally, Nessen said the President did not ask for or receive Connally's endorsement in the Texas primary. He called the dinner table talk "a wide ranging discussion" of Republican politics generally, and said Connally again told the President he expects him to win in Texas. Nessen insisted that the Texas primary itself was not a major topic of discussion.

On Wisconsin -- there are 45 delegates at stake, 36 elected in districts and nine at large. Contrary to the line that Reagan's people are putting out, Nessen said, Reagan is actually campaigning very hard in Wisconsin, but he is doing it on television. "One of the things that was missed in North Carolina was that Reagan was campaigning hard there on television," Nessen said. "We still think we will win in Wisconsin, but it is a mistake to accept the idea that the Reagan people are encouraging that he has walked away from Wisconsin and is not campaigning so that any kind of a vote there will come as a great surprise.

Congressman Steiger said he expects the President to win. He said Reagan will be on every television station in Wisconsin before Tuesday with the same 30-minute program he used in North Carolina and Florida. He said he expected this to be "very effective" in Wisconsin. Steiger also said he expects little crossover vote in either the Democratic or Republican primaries. Neither he nor anyone else aboard is willing to predict the margin of a Ford victory.

On issues, Steiger said, "If you wanted to find an issue that brought together the Reaganites, it would be Kissinger and the whole issue of detente." He added the President is most vulnerable in Wisconsin on that issue.

Ed Walsh
Dean Fischer
John Cochran
Dick Lerner
Howard Benedict

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