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Bob Hartmann

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FEBRUARY 17, 1970

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OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

THE WHITE HOUSE

PRESS CONFERENCE

OF

SENATOR HUGH SCOTT

AND

CONGRESSMAN GERALD R. FORD

THE ROOSEVELT ROOM

AT 11:07 A.M. EST.

SENATOR SCOTT: Ladies and Gentlemen:

The Leadership meeting today heard a discussion by the President and Dr. Kissinger of the President's forthcoming message on the state of the world, which will be designated as A New Strategy for Peace, and which, you know, will go up tomorrow at noon.

There will be a Bipartisan Leadership meeting for a briefing at 4:30 this afternoon. The President will discuss the various regions of the world and the American posture in those regions. He will point out how the new foreign policy for the United States differs or varies from earlier foreign policy attitudes of post-World War II.

He will outline some very definite American positions with regard to the Pacific, the Western Hemisphere, Europe and other areas. The details of the message, of course, are not available until tomorrow.

Q Will the President do these things in the message or in the Leadership meeting?

SENATOR SCOTT: There will be a briefing to the Bipartisan Leadership at 4:30 today, and the message will come up for release at noon, tomorrow and will be accompanied by a breakdown or analysis.

Q Is the briefing here in the White House with the President?

SENATOR SCOTT: It is on the Hill. The briefing will be conducted by White House officials. It will include Dr. Kissinger.



Q Senator, did the President express any concern to you or did you express concern to him about the economy? Was there any discussion about the economy at all?

SENATOR SCOTT: Not directly, no. This was a discussion generally on foreign policy.

Q Will this be the foreign policy group on the Hill, Armed Services, Foreign Affairs and so on, or will it be larger?

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SENATOR SCOTT: I think it will be the Leadership, plus Chairmen and ranking Members of the Foreign Policy and, I assume, Armed Services.

Q Did you talk about pending legislation?

SENATOR SCOTT: There was discussion of the new HEW-Labor bill, yes.

Q What was said or what is the outlook?

SENATOR SCOTT: I think Mr. Ford can comment on that first.

CONGRESSMAN FORD: The matter of the Labor-HEW appropriations bill was discussed. The Administration does support the main thrust of this appropriations bill. Secretary Finch is appearing before the House Committee on Rules this afternoon, I understand, at 2:00. There will be an attempt made to get a rule waiving all points of order so that the bill can come up tomorrow, with the language additions that were made in the Committee as a whole.

Q What was the President's position on the Whitten Amendment?

CONGRESSMAN FORD: As I said, the President does support the main thrust of the bill. He does feel that the provisions that were included basically coincide with the points he has made in the last week; one, that you should not bus for the purpose of racial balance. He does believe firmly in the neighborhood school concept, and the language in the bill does seem to be helpful in that regard.

The bill also seeks to equally apply the decisions that have been made by the Supreme Court on a nation-wide basis. So, basically, the Administration is supporting the bill as it has been reported by the full Committee, although I think I should say we are taking a careful look at the language to see whether there should be any minor modifications or any additions to it.

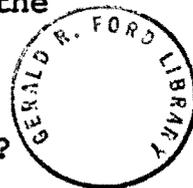
Q Jerry, are you saying the Administration now does support the Whitten Amendment contrary to what happened in the Senate last year?

CONGRESSMAN FORD: No. What I am saying is that the Administration does support the basic thrust of the bill as it has been reported.

Q But does that include the Whitten Amendment?

CONGRESSMAN FORD: We do feel that the provisions in the bill coincide with the President's statements of the last week. I add, as I did a minute ago, we are carefully studying the language and I would not rule out entirely the possibility of an addition or some minor modifications.

Q Where, Mr. Ford, are the differences between the Whitten Amendment and what the President believes?



CONGRESSMAN FORD: Quite frankly, we are in the process right now of analyzing the bill which was just reported yesterday. The Secretary of HEW, Members of the Rules Committee, Members of the Committee on Appropriations, have been working since the bill was reported yesterday, and I cannot give you a categorical answer.

SENATOR SCOTT: A little later today I will be able to give you some further information on some amendments that I presently plan to offer in the Senate with reference to the two Stennis Amendments, the bussing amendment and the general application of the laws amendment. I can say that on the bussing, what I propose will be in line with the President's clearly stated views, views that I believe to be the views of a majority in both Houses of Congress, and that is that no local education agency shall be forced or required to bus purely to achieve racial balance or to overcome racial imbalance.

The language is still in preparation. I have only a rough draft, but I will have an amendment to that Stennis Amendment, and an amendment to the other Stennis Amendment, if the parliamentary situation permits.

Q What is the difference between that and Senator Stennis' amendment on bussing?

SENATOR SCOTT: Well, I am not yet fully prepared to discuss all of the differences, because we have had only some preliminary thought given to it, but the basic difference is to make it clear that the Congress does not favor required bussing to overcome racial imbalance. To a degree it is a restatement of the 1964 Act.

Q To how much of a degree?

SENATOR SCOTT: It is largely a restatement. The wording will be different.

Q Did the President comment to you on Secretary Laird's report to him?

SENATOR SCOTT: He did not.

Q Was the Carswell nomination and its scheduling discussed at all?

SENATOR SCOTT: It was not.

Q What is the President's position, as you understand it, about the other equal application amendment? Is he for it or against it?

SENATOR SCOTT: I am certainly not in a position to speak for the President in that regard. Speaking for myself, I will have an amendment to offer at the proper time.

Q Could you give us some idea of what the amendment is going to say?

SENATOR SCOTT: In an hour or two I will be able to give you some idea on that. It will be a very simple change in phraseology. I can't tell you yet.



Q Senator, where do you stand on the reported Voting Rights Bill proposal that you are supposed to have worked up. Does the President approve that?

SENATOR SCOTT: I have not asked the President whether he approves or disapproves some compromises which are being prodded about but have not yet been brought formally before the Judiciary Committee. There will be some suggestions made, and I will go into those suggestions, with regard to a possible solution of the problems since the Senate and the House might well disagree on the wording, and I hope through some wording of my own to avoid that, by advocating an extension of the Voting Rights Act with certain features which the Administration would certainly like to see included.

Q Are you working with the White House on the wording of these two amendments which you propose to put up?

SENATOR SCOTT: No, I am not working with the White House on the wording of the amendments, but whatever I do, I hope they will not be regarded as contentious or argumentative. It is an effort to achieve a compromise.

Were you referring to the Voting Rights Amendment?

Q Yes.

SENATOR SCOTT: My answer was to the Voting Rights Amendment. On the School Aid Bill, I have had some discussions with officials of the Department of HEW.

Q Senator, do you favor the thrust of the Whitten and Jonas Amendments on the HEW bill?

SENATOR SCOTT: I would be inclined to have somewhat a differing view, but it may not be necessary by the time it comes to the Senate. I don't know of the form in which the bill will leave the House. You heard Mr. Ford say that broadly the President supports the thrust of the bill.

MORE



Q Could either one of you explain how it is that last year the Administration very vigorously opposed the Whitten Admendment, worked against it, finally got it defeated and this year you say that the President is in general agreement with the thrust of it now? How do we come to this turn-around?

SENATOR SCOTT: I think Mr. Ford's answer to that was that the President is in general agreement with the thrust of the bill. I do not regard it as a turn-around. My views in the Senate remain as before and we will have to see whether these can be worked out.

CONGRESSMAN FORD: If I might add a comment to that, I think in the interim we have had several Court decisions that are very narrow in scope, but at least in my opinion -- and I emphasize, in my opinion -- have been very impractical as to application.

I think it is fundamentally wrong for a court to decide that a child or many children should be taken out of one school during a term or a semester and arbitrarily transferred to another school.

Now, in my judgment, this impractical kind of court decision requires the Congress -- and I emphasize, the Congress -- to take a fresh look at what the Federal role should be in the overall problem.

Q Senator, could you tell us what difference you see, if you do see a difference, between bussing to achieve racial balance, or to obviate racial imbalance, and bussing to achieve an integrated school?

SENATOR SCOTT: Well, I think you have stated a question that is more philosophical than factual. The Vice President will head a Commission for the purpose of determining whether any injustices or maladjustments have been brought about by virtue of court decisions, State court decisions in most cases.

The Supreme Court has not yet ruled on de facto segregation and therefore, the whole question of bussing is somewhat up in the air since it has been pointed out by a number of people that the very word is confusing semantically. Almost all children are taken to school by buses nowadays, but required bussing to achieve racial imbalance is philosophically undesirable and I think the President has firmly taken a position on that.

I have, too. If we can get a vote on that issue alone as distinguished from Freedom of Choice and other issues as raised by the Stennis Amendment, I think there would be less difficulty in getting Senate approval of that single issue. I think that often each school district will have to be treated as a separate entity and I believe that is what the Vice President's commission will address itself to, school district by school district, particularly where they have been affected by a court decision and particularly in view of the fact that the Supreme Court has not yet ruled on the issue of de facto segregation.

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Q Does that mean, Senator, that in certain districts bussing would be proper for integrating schools?

SENATOR SCOTT: In certain districts voluntary bussing is used now and in certain districts an agreement might be worked out for voluntary bussing. But to require bussing is, in my judgment, something the Congress has already acted on in the 1964 Act and will probably reassert, perhaps more broadly this time.

Q And that is the President's view as you understand it?

SENATOR SCOTT: As I understand it, that is the President's view.

Q Senator, why is it necessary to restate it? If it is already the law, why is it necessary to restate it?

SENATOR SCOTT: Because there are attempts to unstate it by adding to that established principle other features in a single amendment. I think we had better get back to the single restatement of that issue rather than amendments which combine bussing with Freedom of Choice or bussing with other objectives, some of which might be contrary to the court's decision.

Q Senator, this Administration has taken the position in several appeals in the Supreme Court that the 1964 Amendment does not apply to the dis-establishment of a dual system where that was established by law or policy.

Would your amendment overturn that?

SENATOR SCOTT: You are asking me to sit as a court and I am entirely unable to perform the judicial function. I am a member of the legislature and I would not be able to answer that.

Q How do you distinguish between voluntary bussing and forced bussing?

SENATOR SCOTT: One is required and one is not. I used to understand in school the difference between what was voluntary and what was required. I learned the hard way.

Q I am getting to this point: If the local school board determines that bussing is at least part of the answer for an integration program and that feature of the plan would be ratified by a court, is that voluntary or required?

CONGRESSMAN FORD: I think you have to differentiate -- if I may interject here -- if the local school authorities, with local funds, with the concurrence of the local people, decide that they want to bus for any purpose, that is their prerogative.



What we at the Federal level, and particularly in the Congress, are saying is that you cannot, with Federal funds, require bussing to eliminate racial imbalance. What the local people want to do with their own approval is one thing. But we are saying at the Federal level you cannot require this bussing to eliminate racial imbalance.

SENATOR SCOTT: Moreover, as I understand the President's viewpoint now, and undertaking to speak for him, he is in favor of the concept of neighborhood schools, and even at the lower level, if there were a system of bussing entered into which was disruptive of the neighborhood school system, that also might come under the review of the Vice President's committee.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END

(AT 11:25 A.M.)



Helen / Last meeting
was so pre-occupied
with foreign policy
I didn't believe there



HOUSE ACTION, FEBRUARY 3 THROUGH FEBRUARY 16, 1970

Monday, February 9, 1970

POTATOES

RULE

By a voice vote, the House adopted H.Res.817, providing for one hour of debate.

PASSAGE

The House passed S.2214 by a voice vote, to exempt potatoes for processing from marketing orders.

Tuesday, February 10, 1970

LAND ACQUISITION

RULE

By a voice vote, the House adopted H.Res.818, providing for one hour of debate.

PASSAGE

The House passed H.R.3786 by a voice vote, to authorize acquisition of land at the Point Reyes National Seashore, California.

Monday, February 16, 1970

CONSENT CALENDAR

SUSPENSIONS (FIVE BILLS)

By a record vote of 300 yeas to 19 nays, the House passed H.R.1049, to amend the Anadromous Fish Conservation Act.

The House passed the following bills by voice votes:

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| H.R.14300 | To facilitate the disposal of Government Records and to abolish the Joint Committee on the Disposition of Executive Papers |
| H.R.14116 | To increase criminal penalties under the Sherman Antitrust Act |



SUSPENSIONS Continued

- H.R.13582 To authorize the waiver of claims of the United States
 arising out of certain erroneous payments
- H.R.13008 Job Evaluation Policy Act of 1970

Program Ahead

Tuesday, February 17, 1970

- H.R.14810 To authorize production research under marketing agreement
 and order programs (open Rule - one hour of debate)
- H.R.15165 To establish a Commission on Population Growth and the
 American Future (open Rule - one hour of debate)

Wednesday, February 18, 1970 and Balance of Week

- H.R. _____ Department of Labor - Department of Health, Education and
 Welfare Appropriation Bill, FY 1970

