

The original documents are located in Box 117, folder “Brown, General George S.” of the Ron Nessen Papers at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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10/18/76

The following is our response to questions regarding General Brown's remarks in an interview:

We understand a transcript has been made of the interview and it is being checked against a tape recording of the interview. Until we have had an opportunity to see what General Brown said in full, we will not have any comment.

per Mr. Nessen

mcb

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

November 13, 1974

NOTE FOR RON

FROM: JOY

Re. General Brown Briefing Questions

1. Helen Thomas: What precisely does the President mean by "matter poorly handled"? — *Scourraft.*
2. Fran Lewine: What is the President's position on the fact that General Brown has a greatly increased staff which has come under considerable attack recently. *D & D*
3. Why didn't the President speak directly to Schlesinger in conveying his feelings on this subject if he (the President) felt so strongly about it?
4. ~~Deakin: Requested a special Press Conference by the President to address this -- and other -- topic(s).~~
5. John Osborne: If the President learned of the General's remarks "several days" before the story came out in the papers, was there any delay in relaying this information to the President.
Did not know substance.
Who in the WH was aware of this information? —
6. Deakin: why weren't the ~~President's~~ feelings conveyed sooner to the President... sooner than the reported today's message to Schlesinger?
7. Schram, Polokoff and many others: Is General Brown to remain in this position? When will he be fired?
Prepare paper on answers.
8. Bill Theis, Cliff Evans: Have any of the President's (Jewish) friends expressed their reaction to this? *Certain phone calls to Stahlb. Agree with the Pres.*
9. Deakin: When did the President know? The Timing of the President's expressing his thoughts? Why was a reprimand/admonishment not delivered sooner to General Brown?

General Brown (cont.)

10. Don Irwin: How did the information get to the White House? Who had the information?
11. Walt Rogers: Is anyone going to take the blame for this one -- as Rumsfeld did for the Gibson slip-up? *Rebuke belated Arch*
12. Now on two important issues, the President seems to have had information kept from him. How does the President get his information? Who decides what information the President will receive? There seems to be a serious communications breakdown within the WH. *Term*

*As soon as Pres knew what
Brown said, issued rebuke.*



MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

November 14, 1974

TO BE DEXED TO RON NESSEN IN ~~LOS VEGAS~~ *Phoenix*
FROM: LEN GARMENT
RE: SUGGESTED STATEMENT FOR THE PRESIDENT WHICH YOU REQUESTED

The other day it was said on my behalf that General Brown's statement was "ill-advised and poorly handled." Speaking for myself, let me say it was that and more. The statement was wrong in its facts, wrong in its implications and completely unrepresentative of any thinking on the part of any member of my staff or anyone else in my official family.

My own feeling could not be clearer. America is a collection of minority groups. Rather than question in any way those who feel deep emotional ties to other countries--whether it be Israel or Ireland or Italy or Africa--we should salute this as a manifestation of the genius of our Nation. This is part of what we call Americanism. The beauty of Joseph's coat was that it was of many colors. Every group speaks out for its special concerns. That is the very heart of the democratic process. Bigotry jeopardizes that process because the kind of consensus we need in dangerous times cannot survive the angers and anxieties generated by statements which are offensive to religious, racial or ethnic minorities. The American Jewish community makes its views known on matters affecting Israel because of its deep concern for Israel's survival--a concern we share as a matter of national policy--but it does not control America's foreign policy any more than it

controls America's banks or media. That is a primitive and dangerous myth. General Brown's statement was wrong and hurtful. It bears no relationship to any decisions my Administration will make in connection with Mid-East policy. I made my views on this matter clear to General Brown this morning. This is all I will say on this subject at this time except for this: Whatever action I take to deal with General Brown's statement or its consequences will be action I decide to take, not action produced by pressures from any person or groups. I will do what I believe right for everyone.

cc: Gen. Scowcroft

N.B. This draft assumes--perhaps wrongly--that the President does not want to say anything definitive (sorry about that) as to General Brown's status. He could add: "I have no present intention to replace General Brown."

LG