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NEWS CONFERENCE

#22

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH JERRY TER HORST

AT 12:00 NOON EDT

SEPTEMBER 3, 1974

TUESDAY

MR. TER HORST: There are two changes in today's posted schedule which you already know about, I believe. The 3:30 appointment with the Imperial Potentate of the Shrine of North America has been postponed until later this week and Bill Timmons will meet with the President at 4:00 to talk about priority items which Congress should consider before adjourning.

The President met this morning with General Haig, and myself and Bob Hartmann. At 10:00 he met with Mary Louise Smith, Co-Chairman of the Republican Party to discuss national affairs and election, and George Bush and Dean Burch also sat in on the meeting.

At 10:15, Richard Obenshain, Republican State Chairman from Virginia, met with the President to summarize briefly the meeting held in Washington last week of the Southern States Republican Chairmen.

At 11:00 the President met with Counsellor Kenneth Rush, L. William Seidman, who is Executive Director for the conference on inflation, as you know, and Alan Greenspan, the Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers, to discuss a wide range of economic issues, including the current situation and to discuss with the President his meeting coming up Thursday with the academic, business and labor economists. That meeting will take place in the East Room.

We will have more information on that tomorrow as to precise schedules and coverage and so on.

As you know, this is the first meeting of the conference on inflation, and the President expects to actively involve himself in this meeting as he will in the other meetings leading up to the major meeting at the summit on the conference.

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Q That is going to be an all-day affair?

MR. TER HORST: That meeting will be essentially an all-day affair. The President may not spend all day there, but the meeting itself will go on all day.

I have a list of those who will attend -- we have already posted, as you know, or put out rather, a list of economists who will be attending. That has appeared in the local papers and I have for your information now a list of the Congressional representatives who will be attending the meeting here on the 5th.

They include from the House of Representatives Patman, Rhodes, Conable, and McFall. And from the Senate, Senators Tower, Benson, Proxmire and Dominick.

At 3:00 today, the President will meet briefly with Paul Ribner, the National Commander of the Jewish War Veterans, and at 3:15 he will meet with James Wagoner, the National Commander of the America Legion.

I should point out that these meetings are not for the purpose of consultation on the President's plans regarding any form of conditional amnesty that he will be announcing later on, but that these were essentially courtesy calls. Both these national commanders are newly elected and these meetings give them both a chance to meet with the President for the first time.

As you can note from the schedule, the time of their meetings with the President is essentially too brief to engage in any kind of discussion. Both organizations, however, are supportive of the President's position on conditional amnesty, and they have indicated that to their membership, and I understand in some cases publicly.

Looking ahead for the rest of the week on the schedule, first I need to correct some information I gave you on BACKGROUND yesterday. For the record, the President is planning to go to Philadelphia Friday evening, not Thursday, to participate in the 200th anniversary of the convening of the Continental Congress. He will be addressing the Third Session of the Congress.

Tomorrow night the President and Mrs. Ford will make their first trip to the Kennedy Center to attend a reception in honor of the new directors of the Council of the Arts.

Q That is Saturday?

MR. TER HORST: Tomorrow night. The Fords will also attend the light comedy play "Mac and Mabel."

I will have an announcement of some names on the National Council of Arts in a moment for you.

Q We have it.

MR. TER HORST: You have that already; all right, fine.

Helen Smith also asked me to announce that Mrs. Ford will have her press conference at 3:00 tomorrow in the State Dining Room. Reporters and photographers wishing to cover ought to assemble here in this briefing room at 2:30 to be taken over to the Residence. Photographers should be here promptly at that time so that they can get a chance to get over a little early and set up.

Q Where will the President be?

MR. TER HORST: The President, I presume, will be here working in the Oval Office. And, as a matter of fact, I am told the President will not seek a postponement of this meeting between the First Lady and the press.

Q He is tired of making his dinner. (Laughter)

Q Will he come back Friday night from Philadelphia?

MR. TER HORST: Yes.

Q And what about the week-end. Can you tell us what that looks like?

MR. TER HORST: The week-end looks like he will be in the area here. I can't give you any guidance on the record on that, but for BACKGROUND purposes, the President will be in the Washington area over the week-end.

Q What time is that event Friday night, Jerry?

MR. TER HORST: Let me see if I can give you a time on that. Well, this is for BACKGROUND use. The President expects to leave here about 5:00 in the afternoon for the trip to Philadelphia and, as I understand it, the Continental Congress group will have a reception at 6:30 and a dinner at 7:30 which the President will attend and speak at.

Q Will he go by helicopter, Jerry?

MR. TER HORST: I am not sure just what means they will use, either helicopter or plane.

Q Is that the final session?

MR. TER HORST: Let me get through the rest of these announcements to make sure I don't slip up on anything.

For your information also, the President will address the opening session of the Ninth World Energy Conference at Cobo Hall in Detroit on Monday, September 23. The purpose of the conference is to exchange ideas and address problems relating to the energy resources of 69 member nations of the Conference. This is only the second time the Conference has met in the United States. The previous session in the United States was held here in Washington in 1936. World Energy Conference officials are expecting between 3,500 and 4,000 Government and industry energy experts from the 69 member nations and also ten non-member nations.

Q May we have those numbers again?

MR. TER HORST: Yes, 3,500 and 4,000, and we will obviously have more information for you on that trip and the Conference as we get a little closer to the date. It is September 23, on Monday.

Q Do you have any idea what time that speech is, what time of day?

MR. TER HORST: In Detroit? I do not. We will have that for you as we get a little closer to it.

The President has also signed the supplemental appropriations request for the Atomic Energy Commission providing for additional underground nuclear material safeguards. The supplemental request for fiscal year 1975 amounts to \$55 million for nuclear weapons testing and \$18 million for the improvement of nuclear material safeguards. We will post on that.

And I have one other announcement also.

The President today is promoting Brigadier General Richard Lawson, who has served as Military Assistant to the President since August of 1973, to the rank of Major General in the Air Force. General Lawson is 44. He is a former bomber Wing Commander who has logged more than 6,000 hours in the air, including 73 combat missions in Vietnam. He is a native of Fairfield, Iowa and he and his wife, Joan, have four children. As a Military Assistant to the President, General Lawson has operational control of Department of Defense resources provided in support of the President.

I think that takes care of the announcements. I will be happy to try your questions.

Les.

Q Jerry, last week, a week ago I believe it was, you told us that Father McLaughlin would be leaving the White House shortly. The following day I read the following, a very brief quote from the story, "But McLaughlin was said to be dismayed by the announcement made to reporters regarding him. Shortly after the announcement, he told newsmen that he was staying on indefinitely."

Then there are references here to Jerry terHorst's role as that of an executioner and that McLaughlin is sending memos.

The problem is here, Jerry, who do we believe? Do we believe Mr. terHorst or do we believe Father McLaughlin?

MR. TER HORST: In this room I would advise you to believe me.

Q Wait a minute. You announce he is going to leave shortly. He announces he is going to stay on indefinitely.

MR. TER HORST: I stand on what I said.

Q When will he leave then?

MR. TER HORST: I stand on what I said.

Father McLaughlin, as has been indicated, plans to finish his tour of duty with the White House in which I am told he performed well in his duties previously. He is on, as I discovered belatedly, my payroll. (Laughter)

As Press Secretary to the President, I have no slot in my lineup in the Press Secretary's office for that position which he now holds and he is aware of that and so he is preparing to make whatever plans are necessary to vacate that post.

Q When would you expect that would come about?

MR. TER HORST: I can't give you a firm time on that. It is not my policy to do that, but it is something the Father and I will work out between us.

Q Will it maybe be by the end of the month, with pay stopping at a certain time?

MR. TER HORST: I can't tell you that precisely, but it is safe to say that Father McLaughlin, as I said, who worked well when he was here before, I understand, in his assignments for the previous Administration, but in the way we have restructured the press office, there just doesn't happen to be a spot in my lineup for Father McLaughlin, or anyone for that particular job. As a matter of fact, that job is going to be abolished as far as I am concerned.

Q Jerry, you mean you don't need spiritual counseling, is that what you mean? (Laughter)

MR. TER HORST: Peter, as a Presbyterian elder I have had a lot of it and need more. I will take it from wherever I can get it.

Q Jerry, that is very interesting because we have also been told that he was on the speech writing staff. When did you discover that he was on your staff, and how long has he been on the press staff per se?

MR. TER HORST: I can't tell you that. I do know that in going through my side of the TO that position was on my payroll.

Q Does he have a title?

MR. TER HORST: I believe it was Special Assistant to the President, but don't hold me to that.

Q Attached to the press?

Q Jerry, in connection with the inflation conference, the economic conference --

MR. TER HORST: I am sorry, it was Deputy Special Assistant.

Q Jerry, in connection with the economic conference, Mr. Seidman referred this morning in a meeting with reporters to a questionnaire that had been sent out. It has been known, I think for some time that questionnaire was being sent out. He gave only partial details of the questionnaire, but when a Treasury official was contacted about it, he had no compunction about giving out all the questions on this questionnaire. In other words, the total text of it and he said it had been his understanding that there was going to be a release by the Press Office yesterday or today. Do you have that for us, that questionnaire?

MR. TER HORST: No, I don't, and I wasn't aware that there was any discussion of it being released here. I have detailed Bob Kelly, who works for the Press Office in the EOB, to be a special public affairs man with a special assignment on this whole conference on the inflation and so I suggest maybe he could help you or Mr. Seidman directly. I am pretty much leaving that sort of thing up to them because that is their responsibility.

Q Jerry, some people were saying it would be released at 11:30 over here today. That is obviously not so.

MR. TER HORST: I have not been advised of that, nor have I heard anything about it.

Q There it is.

MR. TER HORST: Is it here now? All right.

Well, I can read these questions to you if you want them read to you.

Q Why don't we get them Xeroxed.

MR. TER HORST: Perhaps we can do that, but let's check with Mr. Kelly and with Mr. Seidman to make sure that this is the full list, but I am not aware of that area of questioning at all, Jim.

Q Do you know who the questionnaire is going to? Is it going to all of those who have been invited to attend either the three or main economic conferences, is that it? Or has it got any broader distribution than that? In other words, some idea of what economists, corporation leaders, the kind of people who are getting this questionnaire and how many of them.

MR. TER HORST: We can check that out for you. As I said, I have really given Mr. Kelly the prime assignment to handle that for me and I have given him a great deal of leeway.

Q Maybe he doesn't have a mimeograph machine.

MR. TER HORST: We can find one.

Q Can you give us any more details, Jerry, on this September 5th meeting of the President with Members of Congress?

MR. TER HORST: Yes. That is part of the meeting the President will be attending. That is the first meeting of the so-called mini-summit session on the way to the overall conference on inflation. That is a meeting essentially with economists. And, as you know, this whole program is being closely coordinated with Members of Congress.

The steering committee itself consists of Members of the Hill and members of the Administration and these are Members of Congress which the Hill steering committee recommended attend the meeting.

Q Jerry, will Mr. Greenspan merely be helping the President chair or will he make any statements of his own or put forward any positions of his own as the Administration spokesman on economic policy?

MR. TER HORST: The general view, consideration for organizing the meeting has gone, is that the President wants input from a wide variety of economic theory. He is not just holding to what you might call the stated view of those of you who have been serving as the President's economic advisers.

And I think if you look over the list of those who plan to attend that meeting, you will see the range of economic thought that will be represented. Mr. Greenspan obviously will play a key role because that is his function. But the purpose is to obviously try to find, if possible, a consensus, at least on the nature of the problem and hopefully some areas of how it should be attacked.

But the conference, this first one particularly, is intended to give the President an opportunity to hear from economists of whatever school of thought they are from.

And, as you know, getting two economists to agree is as difficult as getting two politicians to agree sometimes.

Q Roy Ash said today, Jerry, that we would have high inflation with us for two years. Does the President concur? Is that his view?

MR. TER HORST: I don't think the President has thought about it in terms of a time span, but the President certainly is hopeful that, if he can come up with a program to attack it, that it won't take two years to do it.

Q Jerry, you spoke of putting out previously a list of the economists who will be at the mini-summit Thursday. Two questions about that. One, for those of us who were not here, can we get a copy of that and secondly, you have got a group of economists and you have got a group of eight Members of Congress. Are there any other types, other people coming to that one Thursday?

MR. TER HORST: Essentially you see we are doing it by areas of concern. We are having the economists in first, we are going to have the representatives of labor in a separate meeting, industry will have a similar meeting and consumer groups will have still another meeting.

These things, as you know from the schedule that Mr. Seidman put out and briefed on here last week, are a rather wide ranging method of drawing input from all parts of the country.

Q Will these same eight Members of Congress, Patman and the others, attend each of these meetings, the economists, the labor leaders, the businessmen?

MR. TER HORST: I don't know, but they expressed a desire to be at the first meeting, so they will be there.

Q Jerry, at the morning meeting involving George Bush and the others, was the President asked to take an active part in the political campaign in the fall? Do you have any detail on what his plans are?

MR. TER HORST: No, it was a general discussion of the whole area of campaigning this year and party matters and party affairs. There was nothing specifically said. As I mentioned last week, I believe, the President does plan to do some campaigning. I think we announced four dates and there will be more later in which he hopes to participate.

Q No details?

MR. TER HORST: No details, just a general discussion of party matters.

Q Jerry, will the President sign or veto the D.C. Police Department pay raise?

MR. TER HORST: I can't give you an answer at this moment. As you know, he has until midnight tonight to decide. He obviously will decide and if it comes after the briefing, as it possibly will, we will post the results this afternoon.

Q Was there any discussion about the possibility of finding a new Republican National Chairman or Co-Chairman? Either George Bush, or what's her name, Mary Louise Smith? Did they ask the President to encourage the appointment or election of new faces to the Republican Committee?

MR. TER HORST: Well, all I can say really is they discussed party affairs in a general and broad way and I am not specifically aware that that question came up. I was not at that meeting, George.

Q Jerry, was the President given any assessment by his party people on the impact at the polls of Watergate as cushioned by his advent to the Presidency? Was he given any readings of what his arrival on the scene has done to party prospects in November?

MR. TER HORST: As I say, I was not in the meeting so I really don't know if that subject came up at all.

Q Jerry, how much swimming did the President get in over the weekend, do you know?

MR. TER HORST: Well, he came back looking very relaxed and as a man who had thoroughly enjoyed himself. I don't know how many laps he got in in the pool, but he did go back to his routine that he had in Alexandria of swimming both in the morning and the evening.

Q Was this the first time that he had been able to go swimming since the party at --

MR. TER HORST: Yes, that is my understanding.

Q Are you swamped by offers to build a pool?

MR. TER HORST: Well, there are many points in the country, we hear, which have received or are anxious to participate in the project of helping provide the White House with a pool for not only President Ford, but any future occupant and the matter of a pool is under serious consideration both as to feasibility on location and security matters, obviously. I hope within a week or two to be able to have something definitive to say about the project. But right now, I can't give you any more than what I have just done.

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Q Jerry, can you tell us anything more about the meeting with the Republicans, specifically about what Mr. Obenshain had to say? Did he give the President a report on how he stands now in the South?

MR. TER HORST: As I said, he gave the President a report on the meeting that was held last week with the southern Republican State Chairmen. That was essentially why he came. It was a very brief meeting, I believe about 15 minutes.

Q Jerry, when you talked about his weekend plans, you said he would be in the Washington area. Does your Washington area stretch to include Camp David or is it simply --

MR. TER HORST: Well, it does include Camp David, but I have no guidance to give you on that at all. The President will have a busy schedule Friday and Saturday, so I expect him to be pretty much around the White House.

Q Jerry, when can we expect any word on limited amnesty?

MR. TER HORST: The President has decided to meet again with representatives of the Pentagon and the Attorney General's office on this matter of amnesty. And while I had said we probably could look for a decision certainly this week, it just may not occur until Monday or Tuesday next week, because of the additional meetings the President still wants to hold with the Defense Department and the Attorney General.

Q Does this indicate, Jerry, either any dissatisfaction on the part of the President with the recommendations he received from Mr. Saxbe and from Defense, or does it indicate that there is a conflict between them that he has not yet been able to resolve?

MR. TER HORST: No, it indicates neither dissatisfaction or conflict. It indicates really the fact that, if you look at the President's schedule for this week, with Labor Day, this really ends up being a four day work week. He has a very busy week. He wants to hold some additional meetings with them to refine his thinking on points they presented to him last Saturday. He has some ideas of his own he wants them to consider and it is beginning to look, to me at least, that we may not possibly be able to do it this week. I am not ruling out this week, but I am just suggesting to you that it may have to go over until the first of the week.

Q Jerry, can you discuss in any way the ideas he has of his own?

MR. TER HORST: I cannot. He hasn't discussed them with me.

Q Jerry, what time are these meetings going to be held?

MR. TER HORST: No time has been set yet for them, Norm. But it will probably fall within a day or two.

Q Are you talking about meetings with the Secretary of Defense and the Attorney General again? You said the Defense Department. Were you talking about Schlesinger particularly?

MR. TER HORST: Well, what I am thinking of also is the counsel of the Defense Department, Mr. Hoffman, and the Deputy Attorney General, Mr. Silberman, play key roles, as they did Saturday. I know he does want to meet with them, too.

Q What is Hoffman's first name?

MR. TER HORST: Martin.

Q Jerry, has a time been set for the meeting with the President of Mexico?

MR. TER HORST: No; no time has been set. That is something the President hopes to do at a convenient time and at an early time, but no time has been set.

Q Jerry, I heard all week-end it is going to be shortly. Were those reports accurate?

MR. TER HORST: No; those reports were accurate at the time, but when the President got into it over the week-end at Camp David, and looked at his schedule this week, he could see that it was not going to be possible, given the fact that he had some additional questions that he wanted answered.

Q I mean the meeting with the President of Mexico.

MR. TER HORST: I am sorry. I thought you were talking about the amnesty matter.

Q No, I heard several reports over the radio that it would be shortly.

MR. TER HORST: Well, shortly; that is a handy word. (Laughter)

Q Do you mean this month?

MR. TER HORST: I cannot give you a time on it. It will be at a mutually satisfactory time.

Q Is the President finding out that this issue of earned reentry is more legally complex or technical than what he thought? Is that what it is, Jerry, or are these basic policy problems?

MR. TER HORST: No, the President just has, as he mentioned, he took quite a large portfolio of papers dealing with this whole thing to Camp David with him this week-end. His time schedule for this week and the questions which have occurred to him that he wants further answers on indicate that he should have another meeting with the Defense Department people before making his announcement.

That meeting, obviously then, has to be considered for whatever its results are. And so all I am saying is don't hold me to my prediction it would be done this week quite as flatly as I had indicated to you before.

Q Jerry, a two-part question relating to amnesty. First of all, I hope that this can be -- the first part of the question -- I hope this can be the last inquiry I ever make about Father McLaughlin.

But Father McLaughlin is a clever man and he must have known where his station was in the White House. When you announce he is going to resign shortly and he announces that he is not, what if he does that today when right after this press briefing I phone and ask and he says that that executioner doesn't know what he is talking about? Then what, Jerry? What do we do then?

MR. TER HORST: I suggest you follow my guidance to you here today.

Q Okay; then the second part. Has the President given any thought to the idea that conditional reentry and conditional amnesty should also apply to Mr. Nixon in case he is called upon to consider pardoning him, or does that only apply to young Americans rather than resigned Presidents?

MR. TER HORST: Well, the President addressed the question of his role as President in connection with former President Nixon's position at his news conference and he outlined, I thought rather fully and specifically, what his options and his situation is, and I am just going to have to leave it right there.

Q Regarding the pardoning, yes, Jerry, but he didn't say anything about whether Nixon should be required to -- whether amnesty should be conditional. I don't think he mentioned that at all. Should conditional amnesty apply to young men as well as older retired Presidents?

MR. TER HORST: The President said he was preserving all his options and he would address them when the time came, and I think that would fall in that category.

Q Jerry, have you received any information from Greece about the American bases there, and has the President replied to Mr. Caramanlis' letter?

MR. TER HORST: On both of those questions, I have nothing to add to what I have already said. I think you will have to take that up with State.

Q Jerry, on the amnesty question, does the Pentagon-Justice plan, as revealed over the week-end, necessitate legislation? Can you have people being required to pledge allegiance and go into alternative service, since that is not in the law as it is written, or can that be set up on an administrative judgment by the Executive Branch?

MR. TER HORST: Since I mentioned Saturday that you should take recommendations from agencies with a grain of caution, primarily since they are recommendations to the President and they are not the President's decisions, I can't quite accept everything you outline in your question.

However, I can say, as I said then, that the President is proceeding on the basis that whatever he does, it will not be necessary to go to Congress for additional legislation.

Q Jerry, do you have any further timetable on any suggested recisions or deferrals on the budget that Mr. Rush has talked about the President rescinding?

MR. TER HORST: I do not right now, John; I am sorry, but I do not.

Q Jerry, on the amnesty thing, would it be fair to suppose when he is studying these recommendations from the agencies, and now he wants to go back and ask some questions, that he favors a more lenient approach than the recommendations he has received? Would that be a fair assumption to make?

MR. TER HORST: Well, I can't characterize it for you because the President has not indicated to me that that is one of his concerns. He just has both practical and operational, mechanical questions as well as policy questions to take up with them again. And that is the reason he would like to have another meeting.

Q Jerry, has the President indicated to you for passage onto us any reaction to the decision of the OPEC countries to keep oil prices pegged at their current high level?

MR. TER HORST: No, I can't say that he has, but the President is very much concerned and is following that through his advisers.

Q Jerry, this calls for your own judgment. As the President has sort of settled into the job now and I get the impression strictly from the outside that he seems quite able to manage his time and handle the situation without being so uptight, what is your reaction to the way he is settling in? And I know you referred to his schedule picking up. Are the pressures of the job beginning to hit him or do you feel that he will continue about the way he paces himself now?

MR. TER HORST: Well, those of you who know President Ford, even back in the Hill days, know that he was never one to follow a relaxed or easy schedule. His days were usually filled with appointments from early morning to late in the evening. He did the same as Vice President and he is setting all of us a rather merry pace here in the White House. He started out that way the first day he became President and he continues to follow a very active schedule and it is my hope that we can keep up.

Q Well, he appears to give himself time to make deliberate decisions in spite of this. In this style do you see --

MR. TER HORST: That is traditional Ford style of operating.

Q Jerry, on amnesty, is the President having second thoughts on amnesty?

MR. TER HORST: You mean in terms of whether he should go ahead with it?

Q Yes.

MR. TER HORST: No, absolutely not.

Q Jerry, the Gallup Poll over the weekend said that 56 percent of the people believe that former President Nixon should be tried and the President said he believes the country does not want Nixon tried. Can you tell me where the President gets his information and does he believe in polls?

MR. TER HORST: I am not sure the President said he believed the majority of the people did not want the former President tried. I think the word the President used was that he believed the majority of the American people did not want to see the country -- as he did not intend to do -- engage in a policy of vengeful action. "Revenge" I guess is the word he used in the news conference. But I am not sure precisely what the President referred to.

The previous polls, as you know, did indicate that many people in the country felt that, as the President said, former President Nixon should be allowed an opportunity to find peace with himself and for himself. And as the President also said, this whole matter is in the hands of the Special Prosecutor's office.

Q But the thing is, is he going to be responsive to public opinion on this subject, or does that play a part?

MR. TER HORST: I think the President's policies thus far in almost everything he has done indicate that he is not one to read the polls and then move. He will move on his own as he feels in his mind is in the best interest of the country.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Jerry.

END (AT 12:37 P.M. EDT)