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NEWS CONFERENCE

#29

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH JACK HUSHEN

AT 12:05 P.M. EDT

SEPTEMBER 17, 1974

TUESDAY

MR. HUSHEN: I have several announcements.

We have posted the President's schedule for today, which is a busy one, as you can see. He met for 30 minutes this morning with representatives of the House Republican Steering Committee to discuss legislative matters of mutual concern.

The President then met with several members of his staff, including General Haig, Secretary Kissinger, General Scowcroft, Bob Hartmann, and myself, before he went into the Cabinet meeting which is currently underway.

There is no set agenda for the Cabinet meeting, although the President said that he expected to discuss the issue of inflation and the economy with the members of his Cabinet.

Q Is it still going on?

MR. HUSHEN: I believe it is.

Q I mean, why can't we find out exactly what they did discuss?

MR. HUSHEN: The meeting is still going on. I will try to get you a fill when it is over.

At the conclusion of that meeting, the President is scheduled to go into a meeting with Secretaries Kissinger and Butz, and Ken Rush, Roy Ash, Alan Greenspan, and Ken Cole to discuss the overall domestic crop situation, the Public Law 480 program, and the upcoming World Food Conference in Rome in November.

Q Are we going to get a briefing on that, or a fill on that?

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MR. HUSHEN: I will see what we can do.

At 2:00 this afternoon, the President will meet with his economic advisers, which will include Roy Ash, Arthur Burns, Alan Greenspan, Ken Rush, John Sawhill, Bill Seidman, and William Simon. This is his regular weekly meeting with his economic advisers.

At 3:25 the President will meet briefly with the Deputy Defense Secretary, William Clements, who is Chairman of the Combined Federal Campaign in the Washington area, and also with the Vice Chairman, Senator Edward Brooke and Speaker, Carl Albert. As you probably know, the Combined Federal Campaign is now getting underway and I am sure the President will want to urge all Federal employees to give their fair share.

Q Does President Ford contribute to that?

MR. HUSHEN: I will have to check. I just don't know the answer.

The President will meet at 3:30 P.M. with Secretaries Brinegar and Simon, Ken Rush, Arthur Burns, Alan Greenspan, Bill Eberle, and Ken Cole, and a representative from the State Department on the question of the International Air Carriers' financial condition.

Q For example, Pan American?

MR. HUSHEN: Yes, that will be part of their discussion.

Q Subsidy request?

MR. HUSHEN: The Pan American situation will be discussed, and I would imagine that the question of a subsidy will also be discussed.

Q Merger?

MR. HUSHEN: I can't go beyond that. I don't have any more guidance on that.

Q Did you say anyone from the CAB was going to be there?

MR. HUSHEN: No. A representative from the State Department.

At 5:00 the President will meet with former Interior Secretary Walter Hickel. When the President talked to the former Secretary recently, he asked him to stop by the next time he was in town, and he is in town.

Q Was that recent talk after Hickel lost the primary election?

MR. HUSHEN: That is about the approximate time.

Q Approximate, if it was after -- is he considering him for a job at all?

MR. HUSHEN: As far as I know, it is more in the nature of a social visit, but I believe the call did follow his defeat in the primary.

Q Well, you are not ruling out a possible appointment, are you? Chief of Staff, Press Secretary?

MR. HUSHEN: Nor am I ruling it in. No, I can't give you any further guidance on it. It is my understanding it is a social visit.

At 5:30 the President will meet with Senator John Stennis. I don't have a subject matter for that.

Tonight at 7:30, the President will host a bipartisan working dinner in the White House for the purpose of discussing with several key Senators the best approach to reducing the fiscal 1975 budget to the \$300 billion level, or lower, which, as you know, the President has set as one of his goals. This session was arranged by Roy Ash and Bill Timmons and emphasizes the bipartisan nature of it.

The discussion should emphasize the partnership approach.

Q Who is going to be there?

MR. HUSHEN: We will have a list later. I think the acceptance level is about 20 now, I think, or more.

Q Coverage?

MR. HUSHEN: Well, the meeting is closed. Are you talking about --

Q Pictures before, or whatever.

MR. HUSHEN: We will have to check that.

Q Does this represent the budget committees, essentially, the new budget committees on the Hill?

MR. HUSHEN: I believe it is. We will post a list, but there are other Senators besides those on the budget committees, and this will be followed by a similar meeting with the House bipartisan leaders in the near future.

We have a number of personnel and other announcements this morning. You have a paper on these, but let me quickly run through them.

The President will nominate Peter M. Flanigan, former Assistant to the President and Director of the Council on International Economic Policy, to be Ambassador to Spain, succeeding Admiral Horacio Rivero.

The President will nominate Edward Little, a career Foreign Service officer, to be the Ambassador of the Republic of Chad. He will succeed Edward W. Mulcahy who is now Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs.

The President will nominate Harold L. Brownman of Rockville, Maryland, to be Assistant Secretary of the Army for Installations and Logistics, succeeding Eugene Berg.

The President will nominate two persons to be Assistant Secretaries of the Navy. They are H. Tyler Marcy, who will be Assistant Secretary for Research and Development, and Gary Dean Penisten, who will be Assistant Secretary for Financial Management.

The President will also nominate James Leonard Pate of Akron, Ohio, to be Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Affairs, succeeding Sidney Jones, who is now Deputy Assistant to the President, working for Kenneth Rush.

The President will nominate Kay McMurray for reappointment to the National Mediation Board for a term expiring July 1, 1977.

The President has asked me to announce that he has asked Dr. Paul McCracken, former Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisors to serve as Special Consultant to the President, to assist in the conference on inflation. Dr. McCracken will assemble and review suggested programs for use in Administration economic policy.

Q Is he going to be like on full-time, or is he going to leave the U.N. again?

MR. HUSHEN: His tour of duty is expected to be about three weeks. He will start this week, and we will provide you with biographical information.

Q I thought Mr. Seidman was doing that job?

MR. HUSHEN: Well, I think Mr. Seidman is the Executive Director. I think Mr. McCracken has been brought aboard to assist. He has quite a bit of expertise in the economic area.

Q You mean within about a week to a week and a half after the summit there will be some new programs that will be announced?

MR. HUSHEN: Well, I am just not in a position to give you that kind of information now.

Q Jack, let's see if we can approach it in a different way. Mr. Seidman has said that in his judgment there probably would not be any major programs, with the possible exception of housing, until the first of the year, until the President's legislative messages go up, the State of the Union and so forth.

Does this timetable as set forth by Mr. Seidman still hold?

MR. HUSHEN: Well, I am not in a position to give you any further guidance on what Mr. Seidman said.

Q No, no, I am not asking for any guidance on what Mr. Seidman said --

MR. HUSHEN: You said the timetable as a whole.

Q -- I am asking you as the White House spokesman whether or not the timetable he outlined is still the timetable.

MR. HUSHEN: As far as I know.

Q When will Mr. McCracken come aboard?

MR. HUSHEN: This week. He is here to work through the September 27-28 conference, or shortly thereafter.

Q Is this the sort of activity that ordinarily would be done by the Council of Economic Advisers and Chairman Greenspan?

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

Let me continue here.

The President has signed a Proclamation designating the week of October 6, 1974, as National Employ the Handicapped Week. The Proclamation is based on a joint resolution of Congress.

On our trip to the U.N. tomorrow, the President and Mrs. Ford will depart the White House at 9:15 for Andrews Air Force Base, where they will board Air Force One and fly to John F. Kennedy Airport. At Kennedy they will transfer to a helicopter, and we will put the pool in another helicopter and fly to the area of the U.N. building.

We expect the arrival of the President and the First Lady at the U.N. building at about 11 a.m., and the President is expected to address the General Assembly about 12 noon, or shortly thereafter. We do not have a firm time on that yet. We hope to have it for you when we post the schedule later today.

Following the President's remarks, he will attend a luncheon at the U.N. in his honor, and he expects to return to the White House with Mrs. Ford at about 4:45 p.m.

Q You are talking about his departure from New York or his arrival back here.

MR. HUSHEN: Back here, he expects to be back here at that time.

Q What time?

MR. HUSHEN: At 4:45 p.m.

The press check-in at Andrews will be at 7:45 a.m. tomorrow morning. Because of the logistical considerations, those on the press plane will be taken immediately into the U.N. and will not wait for the President to arrive.

Q Is the press plane going to JFK also?

MR. HUSHEN: Correct; so the networks should alert their people in New York to cover the President's arrival. Also, they should plan on local coverage of the arrival at the U.N. building, where they will be greeted by officials of the U.N. We don't have the names yet.

Q What time does the President arrive at the airport, JFK, and what part of the airport is it?

MR. HUSHEN: Approximately 10:30, but we will have that. We will get that information for you.

Q Did you say where, Jack?

MR. HUSHEN: At JFK.

Q Is it a special terminal?

MR. HUSHEN: I am not sure. We will have all that when we post the schedule, though.

Q You are not using the Wall Street helipad?

MR. HUSHEN: I am not sure.

Q Jack, if somebody wanted to go up by other methods, would you have any difficulty getting in with a White House press pass? Is there some way, are the names on a list?

MR. HUSHEN: I wouldn't think you would have any problem. You mean, joining up with the --

Q Joining up at the U.N.

MR. HUSHEN: I wouldn't think you would have any problem with that. White House credentials are okay.

Q Now, Jack, a couple of questions. Are you through with that subject? I would like to ask a couple of questions.

Q I would like to ask about the availability of the text.

Q Is there any chance of getting that text here or on the plane going up?

MR. HUSHEN: We certainly expect to have it on the plane going up. I would like to have it out tonight if possible. I am just not sure whether I can make that kind of commitment, but we will certainly have it on the plane.

Q Jack, do you have the traveling pool yet?

MR. HUSHEN: Tom DeCair is working on that. We should announce that shortly.

Q The next question on it, what aides or other Government officials are going to go up to the U.N. with the President. For instance, is Secretary Kissinger going with him or what White House people, State Department people? Do you have anything on that?

MR. HUSHEN: I have nothing I can give you on that now.

Q Will you get that?

MR. HUSHEN: That should be on the travel schedule when we post it.

Q Jack, is the speech going to deal with the world food conference? Is there going to be any proposal?

MR. HUSHEN: There will be some discussions along those lines.

Q Now, the President said last night, if my memory serves me correctly, that he expects some announcements on the food situation and he may have specifically referred to the so-called bank. Would you expect those in this speech, those major announcements he was talking about?

MR. HUSHEN: He said there were some major decisions to be made, that he expected to make those in the next day or so and would be announcing them shortly. I think for your guidance that there may be something like that in the speech.

Q Will there be private meetings between the President and any leaders of Government at the U.N.?

MR. HUSHEN: Other than the lunch, I don't have anything else I can tell you on that.

Q What is the coverage on the lunch?

MR. HUSHEN: We are working through the U.N. on it. I thought I had something on that.

Q Will the speech be televised live, Jack?

MR. HUSHEN: Will it be televised live? I understand there is some interest in doing that.

Q Who is giving the luncheon, Waldheim, or who?

MR. HUSHEN: Jim, I am not sure who is.

I have also been asked to advise you that coverage of everything but the address will be by an extremely limited pool, which at this point is being determined by the people at the U.N.

We are doing our best to open up some of the coverage, but at this point we are not very optimistic, according to our friends in New York, but we will have more information on that later.

Helen, the President and Mrs. Ford will arrive at John F. Kennedy at 10:25 a.m., and the plane, Air Force One, will stop at the TWA maintenance hangar. There will be arrival ceremony.

They will then take the chopper to the Wall Street helicopter pad, so that would be the next place for coverage.

Q And then a motorcade?

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MR. HUSHEN: Well, do we get a motorcade?

Then a motorcade to the U.N.

Q The reception will be inside the U.N.?

MR. HUSHEN: Yes.

Q Are you ready for general questions, Jack?

MR. HUSHEN: I am looking to see if I have any more announcements.

Q You look hopeful.

MR. HUSHEN: I have just run out of paper. All right.

Q There is a story in the New York Times today quoting unnamed sources close to the former President saying that General Haig recommended to President Ford that he grant a pardon to former President Nixon.

Mr. Buchen, I think, told us that General Haig was neutral on this question. Do you know which is correct?

MR. HUSHEN: Well, I checked the story with every source at my command, which includes the President, Mr. Haig, and Mr. Jaworski, and I cannot find any truth in that story at all. And among other things, Mr. Jaworski's office will say for the record there were no meetings or no phone calls between Mr. Haig and Mr. Jaworski.

Mr. Haig tells me that since the former President has left the White House, he has not talked with either Mr. Rebozo or Mr. Abplanalp in at least -- he has not talked to them, period, since he left the White House.

He recalls the last time that he talked to either one of those gentlemen was at least four months ago, that he has not talked to Julie or Tricia or their husbands, and never discussed health, the former President's health, or the pardon with any member of the Nixon family.

Mr. Buchen holds to the --

Q Jack, you are going a little too fast.

Q I didn't quite follow what you said when you were talking about Julie. You said he had what? Not talked to Julie at all?

MR. HUSHEN: He told me this morning that since the former President has left the White House that he has not talked to Julie, or Tricia, or to Mr. Rebozo, or to Mr. Abplanalp.

Q And you said or with their husbands?

MR. HUSHEN: Or with their husbands.

Q You also said he hasn't talked about the pardon with any member of the Nixon family, leaving open the fact he could have talked to a member of the Nixon family. Is that what you mean to imply?

MR. HUSHEN: No.

Q Say that again.

MR. HUSHEN: And he also told me that he never discussed the former President's health or the question of the pardon with any member of the Nixon family.

Q How about with Nixon?

Q What about Ziegler?

Q Is Mr. Ziegler a member of the Nixon family?

MR. HUSHEN: Of the Nixon family?

Q Would you interpret it that way?

Q Do you rule out Ziegler?

Q Let's ask that about the former President?

MR. HUSHEN: He has had conversations with the former President.

Q Haig has?

MR. HUSHEN: Correct.

Q Is this Haig or the President we are talking about now?

MR. HUSHEN: Haig has had conversations with the former President.

Q How many, do you know?

MR. HUSHEN: I do know. The only thing he did say is that it is not on a daily basis as somebody has written.

Finally, let me get down to what the President --

Q Did he discuss pardon with the former President? You said they had talks. What did they talk about? Did they talk about the pardon? Did they talk about health?

MR. HUSHEN: Well, you better address that question to Mr. Haig.

Q That is sort of crucial.

Q Can we back up there a minute. I got off the track a little bit. Are we talking about Haig all the way through? Haig has not talked to Rebozo or Abplanalp?

MR. HUSHEN: That is right.

Q But he has talked to the former President?

MR. HUSHEN: That is correct.

Q You do not know what they discussed, whether they did discuss the pardon or whether they discussed the former President's health?

MR. HUSHEN: I do not.

Q Has Haig talked to the former President about the pardon?

MR. HUSHEN: The President said that Al Haig -- and you can quote this from the President -- "never discussed with me the mental or physical condition of former President Nixon prior to my decision to grant the pardon."

Q Now, did you rule out or include Mr. Ziegler in that list? You did not mention Mr. Ziegler.

MR. HUSHEN: I would presume that Al Haig has spoken to Ron Ziegler. There is a certain amount of liaison that continues to go on.

Q About these matters?

MR. HUSHEN: That I don't know. That didn't come up specifically.

Q Jack, I wonder if I could ask, what is the President's reaction to two things, first Mr. Sampson writing now that the \$850,000 should be over a million as compared to the House, the expectation in the House they are going to chop that thing in half. That is the first part of the question. What was the President's reaction to Sampson as well as the House on this San Clemente welfare -- no, no, the proposal for San Clemente? Did he have any reaction at all?

MR. HUSHEN: Not that I am specifically aware of to that specific question.

Q No reaction, he had no reaction to Sampson's statement or the House?

MR. HUSHEN: Let me put it this way, the request for funds to assist the former President was transmitted to Congress by the President upon the recommendation of the General Services Administration. Now they are up there testifying about that, and that is the purpose of the testimony, to clear up any questions that people may have, and at the conclusion of that, Congress will act.

Q Did the President have any reaction to Professor Kurland's urging Jaworski to challenge the Nixon pardon in the Supreme Court?

MR. HUSHEN: No, not that I am aware of, anyway.

Q Jack, on the previous matter, the President said that Haig never discussed with me the mental or physical condition of the former President's health. Did he discuss any other aspects of the pardon or any other effects that pardoning or not pardoning Nixon might have on the country, or on President Nixon? Did he urge President Ford to pardon President Nixon?

MR. HUSHEN: No. Al Haig's role, as I said before, as described to me by Mr. Buchen and others, was that of basically neutral. As you probably could surmise, he certainly was in favor of the pardon, but he did not lobby for it.

Q Mr. Buchen says that stand was what he knew in his presence.

MR. HUSHEN: That is correct.

Q Did the President say he was neutral?

MR. HUSHEN: I can only answer that question by saying he certainly didn't object to me saying it.

Q Jack, on a related matter, last week Governor Dunn of Tennessee and several Republican gubernatorial candidates reported that the President and Dean Burch told them that there were as yet reasons undisclosed why the President acted on the Nixon pardon.

Last night, the President said there were no secret reasons and that he acted only because of the reasons already stated.

Now, unless Governor Dunn and the candidates got together and fabricated a story, it would seem that the President told them one thing and in his press conference the other.

I wonder if you can clear up that discrepancy.

MR. HUSHEN: I am not sure. All I can go by is what the President said last night. I know of no secret matters, although there may be some information that has not yet come to light because, for instance, the letter from Mr. Jaworski that Mr. Buchen cited, parts of it on the day that he briefed, I have not seen that letter, but there may be some additional information in that letter which I am not privy to, but I know of no secrets that have not yet come to light in that record.

Q Jack, did Al Haig urge the President not to inform Members of Congress prior to announcing the pardon, and did he urge the President not to inform Mr. terHorst?

MR. HUSHEN: He emphatically denies both.

Q Who?

MR. HUSHEN: Al Haig emphatically denies both these allegations. We cannot figure out how the story could be so far off base with so many people claiming or stating the opposite.

Q Jack, have you tried to straighten out this discrepancy that was raised about what the President told the Republican Governors and what he told the country last night?

MR. HUSHEN: I have not. There are other matters that were discussed and the time ran out before I had a chance to take up all the questions that I had.

Q I will try to get some clarification on that.

Q Because at another point in his press conference last night he also mentioned something about a report that Mr. Jaworski might make somewhere further down the line -- I mean, almost seems to lace in the same implication that more would come out with that report.

MR. HUSHEN: Well, I don't want to try to interpret what the President said last night. There has been more information which has come to his attention, as I think it has come to a lot of people's attention, concerning the health of the former President. But all of that has transpired since the pardon.

Q On that subject of health, the President also said last night that he was not at liberty to disclose what he had been told about the former President's health. Can you elaborate on that? Why he is not at liberty? Who gave him this information, and whoever it is, did they impose some conditions that he feels bound to honor, or why --

MR. HUSHEN: Let me answer the question this way. I said up here, I think last week, that he had asked Dr. Lukash to keep him generally informed about the former President's condition. And I want to say that Dr. Lukash is keeping him generally informed, but it doesn't behoove the President to make public the former President's medical reports. Dr. Tkach can do that.

Q I just wanted to ask, don't we need a clarification on the question asked over here, that is what Haig actually said to the President about the pardon?

I mean, others have said something about neutral and you have indicated that there was an indirect comment on neutrality, but the President has given us a statement on what Haig said or didn't say about the health of Mr. Nixon.

Don't we need something more, very specifically to this question, and that is, what did Haig say to the President about pardon?

MR. HUSHEN: Well, there has been some general speculation.

Q Can you give us a direct answer from the President on this? Can't you get a direct answer from him on what he did or didn't say on pardon? This goes right to the heart.

MR. HUSHEN: Well --

Q Did he urge him? You have indicated he didn't lobby.

MR. HUSHEN: And also that he didn't urge him. I think Mr. Haig is aware of the sensitive nature that he would have in this regard and I think he was trying to observe that role.

Q But, Jack, you said that Haig was in favor of the pardon. Did he tell President Ford that he was in favor of the pardon and then did he advance reasons for why he was in favor of the pardon?

MR. HUSHEN: You are tuning it so fine. Since I was not privy to the discussions, I am only able to tell you how other people characterize these things.

Q Jack, do you have anything from the President today on the situation regarding the CIA and Chile, any amplification or further explanation or anything at all from him? Any reaction from him?

MR. HUSHEN: Well, the President, as you know, said last night that he would answer questions on Chile in a general way, and I just have to stand right there. I can't go any further than the President did and I just can't add anything to it.

Q Well, Jack, was there any reaction, have you received any reaction from other Governments to this statement of policy?

MR. HUSHEN: I will have to seek some guidance on that. I have no information to give you on it.

Q Is the President going to disband the NSC, according to the L.A. Times?

MR. HUSHEN: Not that I am aware of. But let me just say this about that. That story came to our attention just shortly before I came out here, and the people who are in a position to respond to it are in a Cabinet meeting. I just have no information I can give you on it.

Q Can you try to get it?

MR. HUSHEN: I would expect there may be other questions on that. I will try to get some guidance.

Q The President said lastnight that the Allende government was trying to suppress some opposition in the newspapers and television, I think he said. Could you give us any information on which publications were in danger of being suppressed?

MR. HUSHEN; I have no details to provide on that matter. My only suggestion would be to refer you to the State Department for maybe some recounting of the history of that period.

Dick Barnes has a question.

Q Following up, is the CIA currently engaged in any activities to bolster newspapers, television stations or political bodies, which were opposed to the present government in Chile?

MR. HUSHEN: I have nothing I can give you on that.

Q Jack, how many Nixon holdovers are still on the White House payroll, including one --

MR. HUSHEN: How many Nixon holdovers?

Q Yes.

MR. HUSHEN: Do you mean how many people on the White House payroll --

Q People who were employed and are part of the Administration that the President said last night disgraced Mr. Nixon, how many of them are still on the White House payroll, in addition to one -- I won't mention his name, but his office again today has none of your assurances that he is leaving, but how many Nixon holdovers are still on the White House payroll. I understand it is about 550 or 600. Could you tell us?

MR. HUSHEN: Without checking the statistics, I cannot tell you.

Q Would you elaborate on that today, the check of the statistics?

MR. HUSHEN: If you will give the question, phrased the way you want it answered, we will try to get you some information.

Q Jack, on this reorganization of the NSC, which is a fairly important story, when you do your checking, how will you let us know what your answer is? Will you post that, or call us back in, or what?

MR. HUSHEN: Well, I really can't say until I find out what the answer is going to be. If it is an answer that can be handled in a posting, that is the way we will handle it. If it is more complicated, we may have to do something else. Until I get some guidance, there is nothing I can tell you on that.

Bonnie.

Q There is one word I would like to question in the President's statement about General Haig. He says, "Prior to my decision to grant the pardon..." From what we understand, the President really came into the White House having decided that he would at some point grant the pardon.

Is he talking about prior to his public announcement of, or the Saturday finalization of that decision or an earlier point, much earlier point at which he had already decided that he would grant pardon?

MR. HUSHEN: I am not sure how I can answer that because I am not sure in my own mind when the President came to the final determination to grant the pardon.

Now, the only meetings, the few meetings that took place during the period of time from August 30, when the President told several of his key staff people, including Mr. Haig, what he planned to do, if he could, until the actual day of the pardon, the meetings that Mr. Haig was in where that was discussed, he was described as being neutral.

Q I was really going to a period before that because from Mr. Buchen and others we were told that the President had intended to grant pardon all along, it was just a matter of when.

MR. HUSHEN: Well, the President said that he and Haig didn't discuss the President's health, physical or mental health, certainly not prior to August 30, and I think not prior to the announcement.

Q In other words, you are saying that at no time had they discussed that?

MR. HUSHEN: Well, I think that is the answer, but I don't want to say flatly that they never discussed it between the time that Mr. Haig first was aware of what the President intended to do, but I am fairly certain that that is correct, they did not.

Q Jack, in view of the intense interest in the Haig role in this matter, do you suppose it would be possible for you to prevail on him to come out and answer these questions?

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MR. HUSHEN: Well, I will be happy to transmit your request.

Q Jack, has the President decided to hold the Nixon tapes in the White House until the Special Prosecutor no longer needs them, or what is this arrangement?

MR. HUSHEN: We are trying to work out this between the President's legal counsel and the Special Prosecutor, whatever details are holding up the agreement that was reached between the White House, General Service Administration, and the former President.

No tapes have left the custody of the White House except for those that have been turned over to Judge Sirica. And we are waiting now, I think, to hear back from the Special Prosecutor.

Q Are you waiting to hear back whether you should keep them here longer or what is it?

MR. HUSHEN: Well, they had some -- the Special Prosecutor's office raised some questions about the agreement. We are presently trying to work out those, resolve all their questions. Now what all things they object to, or what they want, I can't answer.

Q Jack, is the agreement amendable? Do you know the answer to that question, or is it frozen in concrete, the agreement on the tapes and documents?

Q And under what legal authority was it made?

MR. HUSHEN: I can't say -- I mean I can't say whether or not it can be amended. I would think it could be but I can't say. I just don't have the information. It would be something between the lawyers, between Mr. Miller representing the former President, and the General Services Administration, and I presume ourselves as the custodians of the tapes.

Q Jack, just speaking for the White House and leaving these other parties out, how is the White House approaching these discussions with Mr. Jaworski? With what in mind are you approaching these discussions -- with the idea that these tapes by virtue of the agreement must be turned over to the former President in the relatively near future, or are you approaching these discussions with the idea these tapes will be held in the White House as long as Mr. Jaworski has a demonstrable need for them? What benchmarks are you operating under?

MR. HUSHEN: I think all parties concerned seem to be agreed that -- well, let me strike that.

The Department of Justice and the White House are agreed that the tapes eventually -- and the documents -- are the property of the former President. It is a question of when they would be turned over to him and under what safeguards.

Q Is one of the things you are trying to work out with Jaworski a time frame, that these tapes will remain here for a certain specific period of time, leaving aside what the time might be? Is that one of the things you are talking about?

MR. HUSHEN: I think that probably would enter into the discussions but I am not privy to them.

Q Does the Special Prosecutor dispute the ownership of those tapes and documents, since you singled out the Justice Department and the White House and left out the Special Prosecutor?

MR. HUSHEN: Well, we asked the Attorney General for a ruling, which he gave us. The Special Prosecutor is part of the Justice Department and you would have to check there to find out whether or not the Special Prosecutor was aware of the ruling the Attorney General was going to give us, whether or not he had any input into it.

Q If you have not settled the issue of where the tapes are going to be, how can the President ask for \$850,000, \$110,000 of which we are told is going to build a vault twelve miles from San Clemente with guards?

MR. HUSHEN: Next question.

Q No comment, or what?

Q If the Special Prosecutor came back tomorrow and said, "I need two more tapes," who decides whether to give them to him or not?

MR. HUSHEN: Well, I think that would be a question that would go to Mr. Buchen. Let's leave it right there.

Q Jack, how long before they struck the agreement on the custody of the tapes did they have the opinion of the Attorney General? That opinion that you released is dated September 6, and as I put things together, that was about the time the President's representative, -- that is President Ford's representative -- was striking the deal in San Clemente.

MR. HUSHEN: Now, what is your basic question?

Q The question is: Did they have Saxbe's opinion on ownership of the tapes prior to striking the deal in San Clemente and, if they did, how long before they struck the deal did they have that opinion? How long did they have to consider that opinion?

MR. HUSHEN: I believe they did have the opinion before the agreement was negotiated because part of the reason for the agreement was based on the Attorney General's opinion. What we asked the Attorney General was, number one, who owns the tapes; and, number two, what is the role of the custodian of the tapes.

The role of the custodian of the tapes is to have to supply them on demand of a subpoena. That is what we were trying to get out of the White House and put into a separate neutral area.

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Q Jack, that agreement seems to say that if the former President died tomorrow, all those tapes would be destroyed. Is this a point of concern for the Special Prosecutor?

MR. HUSHEN: I can't answer the question, first of all, and I don't necessarily associate myself with your description of it. I am not sure if that is correct, either.

Q Has any Watergate defendant asked for a pardon?

MR. HUSHEN: Not that I am aware of.

Q Jack, to follow up Margaret's question, if I might, please, if the Special Prosecutor -- what I would like you to do is to state a White House position on this question -- if the Special Prosecutor were to request one or more tapes in this immediate period, I am talking about in the next week or so, is it the White House position that those tapes would be given to him purely on his request or would he have to subpoena them?

MR. HUSHEN: I can't answer that question without checking.

Q Jack, was Alexander Haig's name submitted to the Senate for approval, and does the President expect there will be hearings?

MR. HUSHEN: The answer to both your questions is no.

Q Does he not have to face hearings in order to come off of the retired list?

MR. HUSHEN: No.

Q How did he come off the retired list?

MR. HUSHEN: It can either be done by the order of the Secretary of the Army or the Secretary of Defense.

Q Has that been done?

MR. HUSHEN: I am just not sure.

Q Jack, do you have a count or indication of numbers of how many men have come in under the conditional amnesty program in this first 24 hours?

MR. HUSHEN: I do not, although David Kennerly said that he was watching television last night and saw a man on the West Coast who had been underground for about six years who --

Q He was one of those Japanese. (Laughter)

MR. HUSHEN: -- who said that he wanted to have something to believe in, and he believed in this program and he was turning himself in.

Q Jack, last night the President said the acceptance of a pardon, I think, can be construed by many, if not all, as an admission of guilt. There is something implicit in that statement, but it is not explicit. Does the President feel that the acceptance of a pardon by Mr. Nixon was an admission of guilt?

MR. HUSHEN: I am going to stand right where it is.

Q Jack, you said that Haig did not urge the President to grant the pardon. Did any of the President's advisers urge him to grant the pardon and, if so, can you tell us who they were?

MR. HUSHEN: I am not going to go beyond the speculation, which I think you have all read about, that there was some who opposed it. I don't think it serves the President to be standing out here telling what his advisers are recommending or not.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Jack.

END (AT 12:55 P.M. EDT)

This Copy For _____

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

#30

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH JACK HUSHEN

AT 4:05 P.M. EDT

SEPTEMBER 17, 1974

TUESDAY

MR. HUSHEN: Let me just give you a brief fill, and it will be brief, on the Cabinet meeting.

The President met with the Cabinet for about an hour and 20 minutes this morning. The Cabinet members heard reports from Secretary Schlesinger and Attorney General Saxbe on the amnesty program, similar to the briefing they gave at the bipartisan Congressional meeting yesterday.

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Secretary Kissinger discussed foreign policy and Roy Ash, Director of the Office of Management and Budget, discussed fiscal policy, and the Administration's efforts to reduce expenditures.

Now we had some questions. There was quite a bit of interest this morning on the story in the Los Angeles Times about a recommendation supposedly pending for the President to restore the power and the independence of the National Security Council.

I checked, as best I can, with as many sources as I can, including the President, and the President said that the transition team was told specifically not to go into this area of the White House makeup.

Q By Kissinger?

MR. HUSHEN: No, the President told the transition team.

Q Into the area of the what?

MR. HUSHEN: Of the White House makeup.

There is nothing in the final report given to the President by the transition team which touches on the National Security Council, and there is no recommendation awaiting any Presidential action.

Furthermore, it is my understanding that one of President Ford's first acts upon becoming President was to reaffirm his desire to keep the National Security Council as his principal forum for foreign policy decision making and to keep Dr. Kissinger as an Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs.

Q In essence, you are saying the Los Angeles Times story is absolutely false?

MR. HUSHEN: I will let you draw your own conclusions.

Q Jack, why did the President rule this area off limits for his transition team?

MR. HUSHEN: I can't go into that. All I can say is that he did not want the transition team to spend its time reviewing this area for making any recommendations.

Q You say they didn't make any recommendations in the final report. How about any interim or off-to-the-side recommendations.

MR. HUSHEN: Well, I have only been able to talk to two members of the transition team -- I am sorry, Mr. Buchen was not a member of the transition team, although I did talk to him.

I also talked to Jack Marsh. Neither one of them have ever heard of it. We are trying to talk to Don Rumsfeld now.

Q Did you say Marsh and Rumsfeld?

MR. HUSHEN: No, Marsh and Buchen. Buchen was not a member of the transition team, but he was obviously actively involved in it.

Q Jack, is there some misunderstanding here because the stories should have said they recommended some reorganization and recasting of the NSC staff rather than abolishing the staff or abolishing the Kissinger role?

MORE

MR. HUSHEN: Well, all I can say is that the transition team was not supposed to get into that area on orders from the President. And if a staff member was doing something, he may have been going off on his own.

What I am saying is there is no recommendation pending before the President. Nobody spoke to the President about it, the best I could tell from the nature of our conversation.

Q Did the transition recommendation touch in any way on the amnesty?

MR. HUSHEN: Not at all.

Q Do you have any idea where all these bum stories are coming from? (Laughter)

Q Are you saying, then, that the President --

Q No, I am serious, really. You know we have two stories that you have just really denied flatly today. Both were quite detailed and I wonder if there is someone doing this to be mean.

MR. HUSHEN: Well, I guess it just goes to show your sources really have to be checked closely.

Q Jack, I don't understand what you mean by this terminology, President Ford wants to keep the NSC as his principal forum for foreign policy decision making.

MR. HUSHEN: That is the area where foreign policy decision is going to be discussed.

Q It is the architect?

MR. HUSHEN: And the architect.

Q Where does that leave the State Department?

MR. HUSHEN: What is the address?

Q Jack, does the President at this time plan to retain Dr. Kissinger in the dual role? You said he made that one of his first acts, but has he reconsidered that, or is it still his plan to keep Dr. Kissinger --

MR. HUSHEN: I have nothing to indicate to the contrary.

Q Is Governor Scranton still around, and was he not a member of the transition team?

Q Who?

MR. HUSHEN: Bill Scranton, yes, he was a member of the transition team. We are trying to contact him but I understand he is traveling somewhere.

Q Jack, did the transition team recommend a change in the role of the Domestic Council?

MR. HUSHEN: I can't answer that. I don't know.

Q Did Dr. Kissinger express any concern or make any expression to the President or any of the President's chief aides today about this particular story?

MR. HUSHEN: You can address that to Dr. Kissinger. I have no information on that.

Q I think State says he already has discussed it with the President.

MR. HUSHEN: He may have.

Q And was assured by the President?

MR. HUSHEN: Jack, is there any White House concern over this rash of stories that you are flatly denying, and any attempt to find out what in fact is behind them?

MR. HUSHEN: Well, we are not going to start an investigation. (Laughter)

Q Is there any concern in the White House?

MR. HUSHEN: There is always concern when misinformation goes before the public because it is often difficult to catch up with the story.

Q Does the President share the view of some people in the White House that there is a reasonably concerted campaign underway to get at people who are carry-overs from the old Administration?

MR. HUSHEN: I can't really respond to that. I have often noticed when there are changes from one Administration to the next, that you tend to get some speculative stories by people who think they know more than they actually do know.

Q Has Dr. Lukash told the President that the former President intends to be hospitalized for treatment of phlebitis?

MR. HUSHEN: I don't know.

Q Jack, do you have any information on the meeting that is, I guess, just breaking up on the Pan Am --

MR. HUSHEN: No.

Q Will you have anything?

MR. HUSHEN: I don't know. I will talk to the people there and see if there is anything we can tell you.

Q Were you able to track down the apparent contradiction between the Governors' report and the President's statement?

MR. HUSHEN: No, I'm sorry, I haven't yet. I have been trying to track down this NSC matter.

Q On the NSC matter, then, you are saying that everything is status quo, the same as when the President took over, and he plans no changes? Is that right?

MR. HUSHEN: As far as I know. I am saying that there was no recommendation for change contained in the report. The transition team was specifically told not to get into that area.

Q Yes, but is anybody else making any study?

MR. HUSHEN: Not that I am aware of.

Q Are we to assume, then, that the President is perfectly satisfied with the way the NSC organization is set up?

MR. HUSHEN: That is a conclusion you will have to draw. I didn't ask him are you satisfied with the way the NSC is running. I was trying to figure out whether or not there was any truth to this report.

Q Aside from the report, is the President satisfied with the foreign policy operation?

MR. HUSHEN: I will just take that question. I didn't come up here to launch into --

Q There is no plan, then, to reorganize this NSC?

MR. HUSHEN: Not that I am aware of.

Q Well, you are denying there is a plan?

MR. HUSHEN: Yes. You know, you can interpret my words, if that is what you want to do.

Q I would rather be clear on your words.

Q Jack, you said there was no recommendation.

MR. HUSHEN: Right.

Q Is that the same as saying there is no plan to reorganize?

MR. HUSHEN: You are asking me to read the President's mind, and I am not in a position to do that. I am just telling you, you have a story here that says one thing and I am out here saying, according to the best checks I can do, that is not true.

Q Granted in the Ford Administration the daily schedule is much more detailed than it was previously, and one of the things I have noted, for instance, is that Scowcroft is listed as sitting in on these morning sessions between the President and Dr. Kissinger. Scowcroft went over with the astronauts and the President.

Is it a fact, or is it not, that Mr. Scowcroft is much more closely involved with this President than he was with Mr. Nixon? Maybe Les Janka could help us.

MR. HUSHEN: I am really not in a position to address that because I don't know what his role was previously.

Q Is he just being added to the schedule now and nothing is really changed as to his access to the President, or is he closer to the President?

MR. HUSHEN: Why don't you ask me that question tomorrow. Maybe I can do a better job of answering.

Q Did Secretary Butz make any presentation at all? Did he object to the proposal on the food point?

MR. HUSHEN: I don't know.

Q Jack, can you tell us any more about these presentations that were made, especially by Ash, on fiscal policy?

MR. HUSHEN: I cannot.

Q Was a decision made on world food shortages?

MR. HUSHEN: I don't think so, not at the Cabinet meeting.

Q Are we going to get a text of the speech before --

MR. HUSHEN: We are still working on that.

Q What are the leaders at the dinner tonight going to talk about?

MR. HUSHEN: We are trying to get it down below \$300 billion.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

END

(AT 4:17 P.M. EDT)