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NEWS CONFERENCE

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AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 12:10 A.M. EDT

SEPTEMBER 24, 1974

TUESDAY

MR. NESSEN: This is my first briefing, and since I hope I am among friends, we have taken down the bullet-proof podium and put up something simpler.

Before we start, let me tell you there is a photo session in the Oval Office at 12:30 with the Patrolman of the Year and ten runner-up patrolmen, and we probably are not going to be through here, although I hoped we would be, but probably won't. Somebody will take the pool in. The pool has been posted and they will go out the side door and into the Oval Office.

There is a lot of stuff today, so I want to go through some of it before we get to the questions.

We are not going to have any radical changes here for the time being, but we have started one new thing this morning which you have probably noticed, and that is that we gave you a packet of routine announcements, nominations, appointments and so forth. We plan to do this on a regular basis as close to 11:00 as we can every morning.

These materials will be for immediate release, so when you get them you can go and file your stories. Obviously you may have some questions on them, which we will answer in the main briefing. This will give you a chance to get started on the routine stuff while you are waiting for me.

I am sorry about this morning, but I do feel that you would probably rather wait a little while for me and make sure I know the answers to your questions than to have me come out here on a timetable and not know the answers. So that is going to be the policy we are going to follow.

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Q Can I ask a question about these routine announcements?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q On these things we have here that the President accepted --

MR. NESSEN: Wait a minute, Les. I thought you mean the procedure of the routine announcements. Let me get through all the stuff and then we will go to questions. There is a lot of stuff to do.

Q Ron, will you still be trying for a briefing at 11:00?

MR. NESSEN: We may want to officially move the briefing to 11:30, but we haven't decided yet. We will have the packet of routine announcements at 11:00.

Now let me go to the announcements of today.

We made an announcement yesterday late in the afternoon when we got back from Detroit, and I want to call your attention to it in case some of you were not around to see it.

We released the text of the President's letters to the Chief of State of Honduras, and a review of the assistance that the United States has made available to the victims of the hurricane there. I am not going to take time to read that letter, but it is available and there is also some background material available.

Quickly through the President's schedule for today which is posted, he was in the office at 8:00. He met with the staff members. Then he went over to speak at the Washington Hilton, as most of you know, to the International Chiefs of Police.

The staff members who met with him today included General Haig, General Scowcroft, and myself.

At 12:30 the President will greet the Patrolman of the Year and the runners-up. This year's Patrolman of the Year is Paul Skillings of St. Paul Minnesota.

Have we got a list of the others posted? We will have if we haven't already done it.

At 3:30 this afternoon, the President will meet with the Advisory Committee on Federal Pay. Now this is a meeting at which the Advisory Committee will present to the President the recommendations on the amount of the Federal employees' pay increase to go into effect October 1. This is provided for by law.

This evening at 5:30 the President will host a reception in the Residence for about 150 aides to the Republican Members of the House and Senate. The President wanted to host this reception to recognize the important work that these Congressional aides do in the Government process.

Of course he worked on the Hill for 25 years, so he knows the value of these aides.

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Q Is that open coverage?

MR. NESSEN: We don't have that yet.

At 5:30 this afternoon, the President will meet with the British Foreign Minister, James Callaghan. He is here in the United States, as you know, to attend the U.N. General Assembly session. This will give the President and the Foreign Minister an opportunity to exchange views on American and European relations and other international interests of common concern. Secretary Kissinger had breakfast with the Foreign Minister this morning.

Q Excuse me, Ron, that is so fast we can't take it down.

MR. NESSEN: I am sorry. I thought you had this.

Mr. Callaghan is in the United States for the U.N. General Assembly. It will give them an opportunity for an exchange of views on American and European relations and other international interests of common concern.

Q What was the time on that?

MR. NESSEN: I am used to trying to get all the news in in 30 seconds, that is why I read so fast. (Laughter)

Q What was the time on that meeting?

MR. NESSEN: 5:30.

Q Doesn't that conflict with the reception?

MR. NESSEN: I am sorry, 4:30. I misread my own schedule. It is 4:30.

Q Which one?

MR. NESSEN: The Callaghan one. I have a couple of personnel announcements this morning.

Q On Haig and Rumsfeld?

MR. NESSEN: One of the better kept secrets in Washington, I think, only after my own appointment.

The President asked me to announce today that he will appoint Donald Rumsfeld as Assistant to the President to coordinate White House operations. Ambassador Rumsfeld will have Cabinet rank, and he will assume his duties here on Friday. The President is very pleased that an individual of Donald Rumsfeld's stature and wide-ranging experience has agreed to take on this important assignment in the White House.

Prior to becoming the U.S. permanent representative on the Council of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in February of 1973, he served from 1969 to 1973 as Director of the Office of Economic Opportunity, as Counsellor to the President, and as Director of the Cost of Living Council.

From 1962 to 1969 he was a Member of Congress from the 13th district of Illinois, and we will have a more complete biography of Don Rumsfeld for you.

Q Ron, are you avoiding purposely calling him Chief of Staff?

MR. NESSEN: Let me finish the formal announcements and we will get into it if you have questions about the appointment. I can't imagine that you would.

For the time being, Donald Rumsfeld will continue to serve as NATO Ambassador. The President plans to nominate a successor at NATO very soon, but I don't have a name for you today.

As Assistant to the President, Mr. Rumsfeld will succeed General Alexander Haig, who will be departing this week for a short vacation, and then he takes over command of American and NATO forces in Europe.

I have one announcement in connection with the Press Office staff. I want to tell you that I have only been here a few days, and I am just learning the operation, or trying to learn the operation. I don't have a full grasp of it yet, but all the people in the Press Office have been asked to stay in place.

I am announcing the President's appointment of Tom DeCair as Assistant Press Secretary to the President, and I couldn't agree with it more.

Q What was he before?

MR. NESSEN: Actually, this appointment of Tom was made about three weeks ago, and we have had some other problems here, and didn't get around to announcing it until today.

Q Ron, when you say all the people on the press staff, we were told by Jerry terHorst that that includes a certain clergyman.

MR. NESSEN: Could we get to that later, Les? I will talk to you on that later, but let me finish the formal announcements.

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Q Could you do it before the pool leaves?
I would like to be here for the answer.

MR. NESSEN: Tom is going to work as kind of a personal assistant to me. He is going to deal with special projects and long-range planning and, for the time being, since I am trying to get a hold of the office and the paperwork involved, and he has been around a while, he is helping out to administer the paperwork and administer the office.

Q He is a Diane Sawyer?

MR. NESSEN: Well, he doesn't look like Diane, and that's the problem. (Laughter)

One other announcement. The President is accepting with sincere regret the resignation of Jerry W. Friedheim as Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs. In accepting the resignation, the President expressed his thanks to Jerry for his valued counsel to three Secretaries of Defense during his five years as Deputy Assistant Secretary, and then Assistant Secretary of Defense.

I think you probably all know Jerry, and he is joining AMTRAK in their public affairs department. I do not have a successor to announce at this time.

Are there any questions?

Yes, Helen?

Q When exactly does General Haig leave?
And the President is high in his praise of Ambassador Rumsfeld. Does he have anything to say about the service of General Haig?

MR. NESSEN: General Haig is still here, and is only going on his short vacation before he goes over to the new duties, and I am sure you will hear something from the President about General Haig before he leaves.

Q Will there be a farewell ceremony?

MR. NESSEN: We don't have any plans yet to announce.

Q Ron, are you deliberately avoiding Chief of Staff? Will Don Rumsfeld be the Chief of Staff without portfolio?

MR. NESSEN: Don is going to have the responsibility for the administration and the coordination functions that General Haig has performed for the President.

Q Will he be a funnel like General Haig has been?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what you mean by a funnel.

Q Will everyone have to go through him before they get to the President?

MR. NESSEN: I think you probably know that this President wants to have access to a lot of people and does have access to a lot of people. He gets advice from a number of his senior counsellors and advisers and he gets advice from outsiders, too.

But there does need to be a coordination of the activities of the senior advisers and all the senior advisers are equals. Also, the coordinator has to make sure that best use is made of the President's time.

Q Ron, I am not sure what you mean when you say he will continue to serve as NATO Ambassador, even after he comes here Friday. Is he going to commute between Brussels and Washington?

MR. NESSEN: No, I think he will have to go back to Brussels at some point because, as you know, Ambassadors have to have some time to sort of say farewell in an orderly way, and he will also have to make sure his successor understands the job, and to brief his successor. The successor should be named shortly.

Q Ron, can I rephrase the question? I think the transition plan indicated that the new Alexander Haig, if you will, should not have the centralization of power in his desk that Haig and Haldeman had before him. Now, will Rumsfeld have the power that his two predecessors did?

MR. NESSEN: I think Don is going to organize that job, obviously, in his own way. It is a Ford White House now; it is not a Nixon White House. Don and the President will work out how they want the job organized.

Q If I could ask these questions I referred to before. First of all, you have different degrees -- the President today accepted with regret and grateful appreciation -- and here's one with deep regrets for dedicated service. Here's one, a special sense of regret, with regret, and then with regret and appreciation.

Is there any significance or is this just the writing techniques of variety?

MR. NESSEN: There is no significance.

Q There is no significance. The second question, then, is all of the people on the press staff -- Jerry terHorst -- we have had two Press Secretaries that say that Father McLaughlin is going. Is he still here as of this morning?

MR. NESSEN: Wait. You have to add a third Press Secretary who says Father McLaughlin is going.

Q Could you give us a date because we have been told this 11 times. You know, I would really like to ask the last Father McLaughlin question. When is he going?

MR. NESSEN: I heard you say that to terHorst a couple of weeks ago.

Q I know, but McLaughlin is here and terHorst is gone. (Laughter)

McLaughlin's secretary said this morning there are no plans for him to leave. Now this leaves something of a credibility gap.

Ron, if you could give us a date, I would be so grateful.

MR. NESSEN: I would like to make you grateful, Les, but I can't give you a date. He will be leaving soon.

Q Well, Ron, levity aside, what is the problem?

MR. NESSEN: He will be leaving soon, Jim.

Q That is the problem? Can you elaborate on this for us at all, as to why there should be this difficulty or confusion, or whatever it is?

MR. NESSEN: For guidance, obviously I have just come aboard here and I am trying to get ahold of the administration of the Press Office, which is quite large.

This is for guidance. What transpired before in terms of the tenure of McLaughlin and the others, I am now trying to find out, and as soon as I do find out, we can make some progress.

Q Ron, could you give us any idea of the frequency with which President Ford communicates with former President Nixon?

MR. NESSEN: There was a phone call last Tuesday, a week ago today, in the evening, from the former President to the President. It primarily dealt -- not in any deep or substantive way -- with foreign policy. The former President asked how were the SALT talks going, for instance, expressed his support for Henry Kissinger's continuation as Secretary of State, which President Ford said he agreed with.

It was a brief conversation, ten minutes or less, and as far as I can determine, that is the only time that the former President has called the President.

The President called Mr. Nixon about two days after he took office and that was a courtesy call. He received a message of congratulations from the former President after his initial speech to Congress and he returned the call to thank him for the message of congratulations.

Q Was there any discussion Tuesday night about pardon in that conversation, or was it strictly dealing with foreign affairs?

MR. NESSEN: At the beginning of the conversation -- I don't want to get lost here now, because we have sort of stopped this process in the middle. Let me come back to that if I may.

We have talked of two phone conversations so far, right? Now, the third phone conversation -- and these three were all initiated by the President -- was a few minutes before he announced that Nelson Rockefeller was his choice for Vice President, and he called to inform the former President of that. Those are the three phone conversations initiated from this end.

Q No, I think there were only two. The first one was from Nixon.

MR. NESSEN: I said a couple of days after he took office responding to the message of congratulations from the former President and telling him about Rockefeller. That was three from this end and one from the other end.

Q Was the message from Nixon telegraphed or telephoned? How did it arrive?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know.

Q What was the conversation about a couple of days after he took office?

MR. NESSEN: That was just a courtesy call.

Let me answer this. You don't care anymore for the answer to your question, right?

Q I would like to hear the answer to that.

MR. NESSEN: Well, let me answer that question. It is a fair question.

At the beginning of the conversation of last Tuesday, the former President made a brief passing reference to a reaction to the pardon.

Q Can you characterize what kind of reference was made by the former President?

MR. NESSEN: I really think that I shouldn't paraphrase or quote the former President's remarks.

Q Ron, did he thank him for the pardon?

MR. NESSEN: I am not going to quote the former President's remarks.

Q Now, Ron, from these conversations, particularly this last conversation which the President had with Mr. Nixon, was the President able to make any kind of judgment on the former President, the state of his health?

Before, all he has said with regard to Mr. Nixon's health, all he has known, I guess he has gotten secondhand from the papers and so forth.

He has had a firsthand conversation now. Has he been able to make any kind of assessment on the former President's health?

MR. NESSEN: I didn't ask.

Q Do I understand you correctly to say that there was no discussion between the two of them about the pardon itself, but only a reference to the reaction to the pardon?

MR. NESSEN: That is my understanding.

Q A general reaction or his personal reaction?

MR. NESSEN: You know I do want to stay away from even paraphrasing the former President's remarks and I think I will leave it the way we have left it.

Yes, Bill.

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Q Ron, there seems to be a certain inconsistency here. You were perfectly willing to say that he asked about SALT specifically and foreign policy, but you are not willing to talk about it.

MR. NESSEN: Bill, I told you the subjects of the conversations. They were SALT, Kissinger, and a passing reference to the reaction to the pardon. I am not going to quote the former President's conversation. I am not going to quote the President's conversation either.

Q Does Mr. Nixon consider himself an adviser to the President on SALT and Kissinger?

MR. NESSEN: I think you will have to ask the former President, Helen.

Q Well do you think he took his advice, or do you know whether he took his advice?

MR. NESSEN: What advice?

Q Ford, did he take Nixon's advice to keep Kissinger or something?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think it was advice. I said he expressed support for Kissinger continuing.

Q When?

MR. NESSEN: You will have to ask the former President.

Q The timing was very interesting because the next day the President made a dramatic announcement before the U.N. that he was going to stay on.

Q Should we conclude from what you said about reaction that they were talking about general reaction?

MR. NESSEN: Bill, you know I am not a spokesman for the former President. We had some queries about this yesterday, and we made an effort to find out as much as we could, and I don't think we ought to get any deeper into quoting the former President.

Q Ron, to follow up Helen's question, you answered and said you will have to ask the former President. We are paying \$42,500 for a Press Secretary out there in San Clemente, and our colleagues have been left out in the 120° outside Annenberg's place. They have to jump on butlers and so forth.

Why, if we are paying \$42,500 a year for a Press Secretary named Ziegler are we not getting our money's worth? That is under President Ford's direction, Ron. Can you give us any clarification on that? Why isn't Ziegler doing the job of a Press Secretary, for which he is being paid, or somebody out there?

MR. NESSEN: You will have to ask Mr. Ziegler.

Q We can't get to Mr. Ziegler.

Q Ron, do you know if the former President in any of his conversations with President Ford complained, as some members of his staff have, about the treatment he is getting as a former President?

MR. NESSEN: I lost you there in the question.

Q Do you know whether former President Nixon complained in any of his conversations with President Ford about the treatment that he is getting as a former President? Some members of his staff have complained rather bitterly about it. Ziegler had something to say about it yesterday on television.

MR. NESSEN: Again, I don't want to be in the position of quoting the former President, but let me say that I don't know of any.

Q Ron, one of the leading candidates, or possible candidates, to run against Mr. Ford withdrew yesterday, and we tried all day yesterday to get Mr. Ford to address the subject of how he felt about Senator Kennedy's withdrawal. Have you been able to get anything out of him on that?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Ron, is the courier plane continuing to go to San Clemente with briefing material for the former President?

MR. NESSEN: I think so.

Q What was the question?

MR. NESSEN: Is the courier plane still taking the briefing material out to San Clemente, and the answer is I believe it is.

Q Ron, the first question is, did you ask the President for reaction or comment on the Ted Kennedy announcement, and my second question is, can you ask the question, during these four conversations did the President ask the ex-President on health and if the President recalls what the response was?

MR. NESSEN: I will ask. And in response to your first question, I talked to him about the Kennedy withdrawal and he had no comment. I say no comment not in quotation marks, but he just didn't have any reaction to it.

Q Ron, if the President goes to California, is he likely to visit the former President in the hospital?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know that.

Q Since Ken Clawson is on your staff, what was he doing in San Clemente last week?

MR. NESSEN: He is helping with the transition.

Q In what area?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know, but I will try to find out.

Q Is he still on the White House payroll, and do you know how long he will remain?

MR. NESSEN: The answer to that is yes.

Q And do you know how long he will remain?

MR. NESSEN: I don't.

Q Ron, could you get some information for us on the procedures for briefing the former President, and how often this courier flight goes out, and why it is necessary to send a courier flight?

MR. NESSEN: I think Jack said last week they go out every week or ten days, is that right?

Q Is it a week or ten days?

MR. NESSEN: Whenever there are papers accumulated to send to him.

Q What kind of papers are these? Are these NSC, foreign policy documents, or what sort of papers are they?

MR. NESSEN: I thought all these questions had been answered last week. I may be wrong.

Q When Mr. Rumsfeld arrives --

Q I am sorry, but let him answer this, would you?

MR. NESSEN: The fact is that I don't know the answer.

Q Could you find out?

Q I think that is where we left it last week, that somebody was going to find out.

MR. NESSEN: How often do they go and what are they?

Q Yes, if they are just simply sending papers out, why couldn't they send them in the mail.

Q Ron, as long as you are making inquiries on that kind of thing, would you endeavor to find out how long this particular procedure is likely to continue? My memory is--although this kind of thing may have been done with former President Johnson--if a courier plane was used, it wasn't used very long, and after that, these things were done either by telephone calls or else at very rare intervals a staff member might go down to Texas.

The question is: How long do you plan to continue to use a plane to take out this material.

Q Ron, when is the President going to activate the Council on Wage and Price Stability? There was a report that he is going to name the administrator this week. Is that true?

MR. NESSEN: If you will give me a moment to leaf through my notes, I will see if I have an answer for you. We are going to try to get answers to things.

I think we will be ready to announce an Executive Director of the Council on Wage and Price Stability in the next few days, but I can't give you anything more on that at this time.

Q Might that come during the economic summit Friday and Saturday, for instance in the opening remarks of the President to the assembled group, or anything like that?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know that, Jim. In the next few days, we hope.

Q Can we expect when Mr. Rumsfeld arrives that more former Nixon men will go out of the White House pretty fast? In other words, can we expect a faster house cleaning?

MR. NESSEN: They are each going to be handled on an individual basis.

Q Ron, going back to what you said on the day you were named, which is that you would never intentionally lie or never intentionally or knowingly deceive, what sort of understanding do you have with the President on that? What sort of guidelines or assurances or whatever you want to call them, can you tell us, that he has given you, and therefore us, on that?

MR. NESSEN: Well, all of the things I said to you on that day I had said to him in my conversation with him on the day before. And since he offered me the job after hearing all those things, I assumed that he understood why I was taking the job.

I must say, on a personal basis that in my four or five days here, I have not encountered any problem along that line and in fact I would say the access to the President and the other senior advisers is greater than I had anticipated. And they are, as far as I can tell, keeping me informed of all the major things going on here and, if I have questions, I am able to reach them without any problem and get my questions answered.

Q Ron, if this question has already been asked -- I wasn't here yesterday -- forgive me.

MR. NESSEN: I wasn't here yesterday, either. Nobody was here yesterday. We were all in Detroit.

Q Fine. Then I can ask it. Based on the words of Secretary Kissinger yesterday and the President yesterday, certain Arab newspapers and other sources are reading between the lines and extracting what they call war talk. I wonder if you would address that.

MR. NESSEN: Would you say the last part of your question beginning with the war talk again?

Q Yes, certain Arab newspapers are reading between the lines of the Secretary's and the President's speeches yesterday and interpreting between the lines to discover what they claim to be war threat or war talk by the leaders of this country, and I wonder if you would comment on that.

MR. NESSEN: Well, I think the President's speech and also Kissinger's speech speak for themselves. I would say that the President's speech and the Secretary's speech were candid and very practical speeches which address the realities facing the world.

In connection with the reports you talk about, I do want to call your attention to the paragraphs in the President's speech in which he said that the theme of this Administration's foreign policy is international cooperation and that in the nuclear age there is no rational alternative to international cooperation.

Q As long as we are on that subject, Ron, Secretary Kissinger in his speech in New York said again, as he had before, that the world faced the possibility of a depression and he specifically used that word "depression" as he has at least once before, and he used it several times.

But the President told us at his last press conference that there would be no depression. Can you reconcile those?

MR. NESSEN: I don't recall what the context of the Secretary's reference to depression was.

Q It was that if the situation confronting us on oil prices and inflation resulting from oil prices was not solved, the world faced the possibility of a depression, or words to that effect.

MR. NESSEN: I think we will have to let the Secretary's speech stand by itself, Jim.

Q By itself, without reference to the President's press conference?

MR. NESSEN: In those references that you made, I think the Secretary obviously said what he wanted to say. The President believes there won't be a depression. As I recall the question to the President -- I don't recall exactly the question, and I am not sure I see the conflict between the two.

Q Some people were talking about depression and the President said there would be no depression in the United States. My question is: Based on the fact that even though they may have been talking from different viewpoints, the image goes out of the Administration speaking with two voices on this quite important matter, and I am wondering if there is a way in which you choose to try to reconcile the Administration's two voices?

MR. NESSEN: I don't accept your premise that it is speaking with two voices, but if we can say anything that will help you reconcile what you see as a difference, I will try to find it for you.

Q What participation does the President have in the energy meeting at Camp David this weekend, and will that be open for coverage and so forth?

MR. NESSEN: Well, the President is not going to the meeting at Camp David, and this is a meeting that Secretary Kissinger is having, and I am going to have to ask you to contact the State Department for the arrangements on the meeting.

Q All I wanted to know was, is he going to attend?

Q Will the President be sitting in for the entire economic summit all day, both days?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q All day, both days?

MR. NESSEN: As you know, Saturday is a half day, as you probably know, winding up at approximately 12:30 or 1 o'clock.

Q When will the agenda for the economic summit be given to us?

MR. NESSEN: It will be out in a day or so.

Q Will the same people handle this that handled the pre-summits?

Q Ron, during the Arab oil embargo, very strong words were used by both Secretary Kissinger and then President Nixon, and Secretary of Defense Schlesinger about the consequences to the world economy, and even possible military consequences. Why does this President now think that strong words about depression and about war will work on the Arabs now when strong words did not work before on the embargo?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know the answer to that, Mark.

Q Ron, the Times reports this morning rather flatly that President Ford has chosen a gent named Albert Reese, a Princeton University economist, to be the Executive Director of the Council on Wage and Price Stability, is that correct?

MR. NESSEN: I wouldn't deny or confirm that name, Pete. We will have an announcement in the near future, possibly this week.

Q Ron, a week or two ago the President asked Dr. Lukash to keep him posted on the condition of Mr. Nixon's health. Can you tell us whether there has been an updated report for the President from Dr. Lukash, and can you say anything about it?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know, Russ, whether there has been.

Q Back on the oil subject, does the President have in mind some kind of retaliation that the oil producing countries failed to cooperate in the way he would like?

MR. NESSEN: I think we will just stick with the words of the President's speech.

Q Ron, specifically, is he considering the possibility of asking the other industrialized nations to raise the prices of their armaments and their, what you might call heavy exports, heavy industrial exports to the Arab nations; steel, construction steel, that kind of thing?

Is he considering asking the other industrialized nations to join him in a concerted program of raising these prices if oil prices don't come down?

Q What was the question, roughly?

MR. NESSEN: Roughly, the question was about various kinds of retaliation that might be considered if the oil prices --

Q I didn't use retaliation, I merely asked --

MR. NESSEN: I thought you did. I certainly don't want to use it. I thought you had used it.

Q I think it was the previous question. I merely wanted to ask whether the President is considering asking the other industrialized nations to join in our effort to raise prices of armaments and heavy industrial exports to the Arab nations if oil prices are not brought down.

MR. NESSEN: I think again I will have to call your attention, Jim, to the portion of the President's speech and the Secretary's speech in which they both called for cooperation rather than confrontation.

Q Ron, are you trying to get away from the implications of the possibility of a confrontation which was loud and clear in both speeches and has aroused a lot of world concern, I would say, in terms of what are their intentions? Are you ruling out war?

Q Rule out war on your first day, will you?
(Laughter)

MR. NESSEN: That is a great start.

Q It is very, very strong language. The President said he was using doomsday language.

MR. NESSEN: Helen, I think we have to stick with the language that the President used and that the Secretary used and the additional comments that I have made here today that it was a candid and practical speech addressing the realities of the world. At the same time, the President and the Secretary both emphasized the need for cooperation because there is no alternative to it.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Ron.

END (AT 12:48 P.M. EDT)