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NEWS CONFERENCE

#175

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 12:40 P.M. EDT

MARCH 28, 1975

FRIDAY

MR. NESSEN: Good afternoon.

As you know, the President attended Good Friday services at St. John's this morning at 7:25. He returned here at 7:50 and began to work in his office.

At 9:15, the President met with Vice President Rockefeller and Secretary Kissinger to hear a report from the Vice President on his trip to Saudi Arabia.

As you know, the Vice President extended U.S. condolences to the new King and to the Saudi people on the death of King Faisal. He also assured the new government of Saudi Arabia that the United States would continue its cooperation in the search for peace in the Middle East.

The Vice President, while he was there, met with President Sadat of Egypt, and reviewed with him the situation in the Middle East, as well as American-Egyptian bilateral relations. This was the first meeting between Vice President Rockefeller and President Sadat.

The Vice President delivered a verbal message from the President to Sadat, assuring the President of Egypt of the continued American commitment to peace in the Middle East.

At 11:00, the President began a meeting with his economic advisers and energy advisers. The tax cut bill was not discussed at the meeting. Those attending included the Vice President, Secretary Simon, Secretary Dunlop, Director Lynn, Bill Seidman, Alan Greenspan, Frank Zark, Don Rumsfeld, Bob Hartmann, and myself.

I left before the end of the meeting. I think there is very little there of interest to you. The initial part of the meeting was a discussion of the budget outlook. Director Lynn reported that based on where Congress seems to be heading on spending, the deficit would be about \$100 billion, if those measures were approved. He said that he has been told about a meeting of Senate committee chairmen this week, at which the chairmen expressed what he called "real concern about where the total spending is leading!"

MORE

#175

He also pointed out that the Senate Budget Committee had set a target ceiling for spending. Director Lynn said that he was hopeful that Congress would be looking at a total spending figure and where these spending proposals would lead as far as the total figure goes instead of merely passing bills piecemeal in individual committees without keeping their eye on the rising total.

The President said that the kind of steps, or concerns, expressed by the committee chairmen and the target ceiling set by the Budget Committee could lead to Congress putting what he called a "checkrein on total spending."

There was a discussion of what the effects of a deficit of that size would be. It was pointed out that with certain borrowing that is not reflected in the budget, there would be the need for the government to go into the economy to borrow perhaps \$125 billion.

The President said, "It would be impossible to borrow that kind of money."

The second item on the agenda was a general discussion of the possibility of people exhausting their unemployment benefits. There was no decision reached on that. The last item on the agenda -- at which point I left -- was the possible future projects for the Economic Policy Board. Jerry Warren is in there and will bring out whatever notes might be of interest.

At 12:30, the President will meet with Ambassador Eugene B. McAuliffe. This is in the nature of a farewell call. He is departing for his post as Ambassador to Hungary.

At 12:45, the President is receiving a gold pass so he can get in free to all the major major league baseball games. Commissioner Bowie Kuhn is presenting this. Others there will be Joe Cronin, Chairman of the Board of the American League, and John McHale, Vice President of the National League. This has been a tradition. We will have pictures of the presentation.

At 2:00, the President is meeting with Secretary Schlesinger. This is one of his periodic meetings that he has from time to time with the Defense Secretary.

At 2:30, the President will have a meeting with Jim Cannon, the Executive Director of the Domestic Council. As you have noticed, he has been having these meetings about once a week. Director Lynn will attend this one, also.

At 3:00, there is a National Security Council meeting with the President. Traditionally, we do not discuss the topics taken up at NSC meetings.

We have a personnel announcement today. The President is announcing his intention to nominate Charles S. Whitehouse, of Marshall, Virginia, to be the Ambassador to Thailand. He succeeds William R. Kintner, who is resigning. Ambassador Whitehouse has been the Ambassador to Laos since 1973. I believe we have distributed copies of his biography.

Q Why is Ambassador Kintner resigning?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know. You will have to check with the State Department.

The Prime Minister of Australia, E. Gough Whitlam, will visit the President at the White House on May 7. Prime Minister Whitlam will be passing through Washington following the Commonwealth Heads of Government Conference in Kingston, Jamaica. The President looks forward to this opportunity to invite Prime Minister Whitlam to the White House.

You may recall that they had a meeting previously here in October. Australia is a nation with which the United States has extremely close and friendly ties.

MORE

Q Is it a state visit?

MR. NESSEN: This is not a state visit. It is not an official visit.

Q You say following the Jamaica meeting?

MR. NESSEN: I said he is passing through following the Commonwealth meeting.

Australia is a nation with which the United States has extremely close and friendly ties. This will be his third visit to the United States since becoming head of the Australian government in late 1972.

We have a Press Office announcement. We are installing a device in the Press Office to provide recorded messages over the telephone. This aim is to provide faster and more convenient information, especially during the morning period when the phone calls are extremely heavy and many of you have been unable to get through.

This will go into operation tomorrow. We will put on the machine the President's appointments for the day and the briefing schedule. After briefings -- for those who can't get here -- we will sort of summarize the highlights of the briefing.

In the event of a trip, or a day or so before the trip, we will put into it the show-up times, baggage turn-in times and so forth, and we will change the information on the machine as frequently as required.

You may want to jot down the phone number. This machine is capable of handling two calls at a time, which I think will still be all right. The number is 456-2233.

As I say, it will go into operation tomorrow, and we hope this will help us to respond to your inquiries for information, especially in the morning. Of course, this in no way interferes with our providing whatever additional information you need beyond what is on the recording device.

Q Can we record a message back on this machine? (Laughter)

MR. NESSEN: We have made the recording head inoperable, Jim.

I want to tell you that the President will be communicating with the Speaker of the House and the President Pro Tem of the Senate about the President's desire to make a foreign policy speech to a joint session of Congress on either the evening of April 9 or April 10. The President has begun working on this speech.

As you may recall, in his State of the Union Speech he stated that due to the fact that the State of the Union speech was focused on the economy and energy, he would take a later opportunity to make a separate speech on foreign policy, and this is the speech he promised at that time.

There is one other small schedule item; that is, if he does go to Palm Springs -- and I have nothing to announce on whether he will make the trip or not -- he would meet Dr. Kissinger and General Weyand there.

As I say, I don't have any plans to announce on a Palm Springs trip, nor has he made a decision on whether to veto or sign the tax cut bill.

Q When would that be?

MR. NESSEN: When would what be?

Q The Weyand-Kissinger meeting?

MR. NESSEN: Sometime toward the middle or end of the week.

I think that exhausts my announcements, as well as me.

Q Ron, if he goes, when will he go?

MR. NESSEN: I just don't have anything to announce on the trip.

Q For guidance, can you tell us whether we should prepare for a departure for tomorrow morning?

MR. NESSEN: Jim, I wish I could. I would like the same guidance for my own packing, but I simply don't have anything.

Q Do you know when you might know, as far as tomorrow is concerned?

MR. NESSEN: I would check around here in the late afternoon.

Q Are you ruling out an announcement later today or tonight on the tax cut bill?

MR. NESSEN: He has not made a decision yet.

Q Do you expect him to make one today?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have any way of knowing that, Carroll.

Q Is it still going to be several days?

MR. NESSEN: It has already been several days.

Q Yesterday you said it would take several days, which would seem to wipe out the weekend. Are you saying this will not come tomorrow?

MR. NESSEN: Nothing has changed since what I told you yesterday.

Q Ron, why didn't they discuss the tax bill in that economic meeting?

MR. NESSEN: As I mentioned to you yesterday, the economic meeting of yesterday afternoon was devoted to the tax cut bill, and at that time he asked the economic advisers to send him their recommendations on whether to sign or veto. He has not yet received all those recommendations, and this was just a meeting on the whole other range of subjects.

Q Will he discuss the bill with Jim Cannon this afternoon?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think that is one of the matters to be discussed.

Q Does he want these recommendations written, or will he take them verbally?

MR. NESSEN: In writing.

Q Has he received any recommendations yet?

MR. NESSEN: I haven't checked. I assume he has.

Q Are they all expected today?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know that there was any time limit.

Q Is it possible, Ron, he could go to Palm Springs without having acted on the tax bill one way or the other?

MR. NESSEN: I just don't have anything on Palm Springs.

Q Yesterday the wires reported an interview with the President and the Hearst newspapers, and they quoted the President as saying that he wished Israel had been a bit more flexible.

MR. NESSEN: Les, do you have the whole quote? Could you read me the whole quote?

Q Yes, but I don't have it here. I just wondered if he had specified in any way how much more flexible did he want Israel to be? Has he stated that at all?

MR. NESSEN: Let me make two points. One, I urge in dealing with that passage of the interview that you read the entire passage, each word of it, and not simplify in the way you have. Secondly, the President said precisely what he meant on that point, and I see no need to elaborate on it.

Q To go back to your statement on this morning's meeting, on your report on it, you said at one point that it was reported the United States would need to borrow up to \$125 billion next year if all of these spending proposals went through the Congress. But, you said that they would total about \$100 billion.

MR. NESSEN: The other \$25 billion comes from the so-called off budget items; that is, the various agencies that borrow money, but it does not show as an official budget deficit. It is indeed government borrowing.

Q From government-backed banks and things like that?

MR. NESSEN: The various agencies -- the farmers, the Home Loan Bank Board, and that kind of thing.

Q Outside of Treasury borrowing?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q If there is a trip to Palm Springs, will there be a stop at Elk Hills?

MR. NESSEN: I just don't have anything on the Palm Springs trip.

Q On this question of the \$100 billion deficit and possible borrowing of \$125 billion, does that take into account -- what I am getting at is whether this is a net figure after deducting for the increased revenues from economic revival. In other words, does it take into account the stimulus to the economy that a deficit of that size would be and the added revenues that would come back if the economy revives?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q It does take that into account?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q And it still comes up with \$100 billion shortfall?

MR. NESSEN: Correct.

Q Do you know how much stimulus, how much revival is factored into that?

MR. NESSEN: The Treasury and the OMB have drafted these figures, the OMB particularly, and I think you need to contact them for that kind of detail.

Q Can you be more specific?

MR. NESSEN: No, but I think it does factor in the revenue side of it.

Q In which sense?

MR. NESSEN: In an offsetting sense, which is the way it was phrased.

Q Before recovery, in the "V" of the recession, or after some recovery, or what?

MR. NESSEN: No, based on what the anticipated recovery would be.

Q Can you be more specific about the off-budget items? You say other agencies. Who are you thinking of?

MR. NESSEN: We will get the list of agencies who borrow off-budget.

MORE

Q Ron, to follow up on that same area, I believe you quoted the President and said it would be impossible to borrow that kind of money. Why would it be impossible? As a percentage of the Gross National Product, we could borrow a lot more than that, I think.

MR. NESSEN: What he meant was with the government draining out that kind of money from the economy, the government always dips first into the till and whatever is left goes for the rest. I think, to sort of complete his sentence, he meant it would be impossible to borrow that kind of money and what was left unsaid was, without seriously affecting interest rates for home buyers and the ability of business to borrow money for its expansion, and so forth.

Q The key to that is what the Federal Reserve does with the monetary policy. Did Dr. Burns have anything to say about that?

MR. NESSEN: Dr. Burns arrived somewhat late for the meeting because of other business, and did not participate in that part of the conversation.

Q Does the President still think there is an urgent need for a quick tax cut?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Does he plan to work on the tax question this afternoon?

MR. NESSEN: I believe he will be considering his decision this afternoon.

Q Ron, has the OMB completed its calculation of what it thinks the tax cut bill amounts to?

MR. NESSEN: I have not seen it if they have. I have not seen any paper on that since yesterday afternoon's meeting.

Q Ron, one of the President's aides was quoted last night, I think, on all three of the networks -- it didn't say which one -- but this anonymous aide supposedly told the President he could not be re-elected if he vetoed the tax cut bill. Are you aware that thought was communicated to the President, and if so, what was his reaction?

MR. NESSEN: It has never been communicated in my hearing.

Q Ron, will the President's speech to the joint session of Congress, when it comes about, reflect the reassessment of the American Middle East policy?

MR. NESSEN: As I said, the President is working on the speech now. I just don't think it is possible at this early date to say what the speech will contain other than being a major statement on foreign policy.

Q Ron, will the speech cover the whole range of the U.S. foreign policy or would it zero in, let's say, on the Mid East and Indochina?

MR. NESSEN: The entire range.

Q In connection with that, then, I believe you have said -- and certainly Dr. Kissinger has said -- that there would be no point in blaming either side; at least that thought was conveyed. But, on the other hand, there are plenty of messages being sent out, including one by Dr. Kissinger, that the Israelis were stubborn and recalcitrant and that if there was to be any assessment of blame, more should go to them.

MR. NESSEN: I have not heard those remarks by Dr. Kissinger.

Q No, you hadn't, but these are the things that are coming out of backgrounders and these are the things coming out of off-the-record and deep background type of things. These are the things that are appearing in the papers as well-informed sources and that kind of thing and those kinds of references.

My question, Ron, is: Are there two different reports to the American people, the formal one, in which you maintain a factual, diplomatic front, and then the "real one," in which the real story is told. If so, what do you say?

MR. NESSEN: It seemed to me that virtually the same question was asked of the President by the Hearst interviewers. I think I just prefer to let the President stand on his own words.

MORE

Q I appreciate that, and indeed we would go to the President's own words. That isn't my question. My question is, whether or not we have two different versions of the same thing -- one for public broadcast, discourse and the other, the so-called inside story, which are diametrically opposite. Is that our policy?

MR. NESSEN: The President's words were public, I believe. They were published in a lot of Hearst newspapers.

Q CBS carried this morning several broadcast reports quoting Defense Department analysts as saying the South Vietnamese are not suffering a shortage of ammunition and were, in fact, destroying some \$80 million worth of it in their retreat. That would seem to be contrary to what we have heard from the White House stating there was a critical shortage of ammunition and fuel in South Vietnam. Would you clear that up?

MR. NESSEN: I would like to clear that up, Walt. I don't recall saying from here that there is a critical shortage of ammunition in South Vietnam. What I do recall is saying that the South Vietnamese concern for future supplies of ammunition has caused them to conserve on fuel and ammunition and that this need to conserve, because of the uncertainty of any future shipments, was cited by President Thieu as one of the reasons for his decision to pull back into an area that he considered more defensible.

Q Ron, does the President feel now that it is too late, even if he got the money now, that it would be too late to have any significant effect on developments in South Vietnam?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Ron, what has the President been told about the status of the U.S. consulate in Danang and can you give us his reaction?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have any reaction to give you. My understanding is that some members of the consulate have left Danang.

Q Has the President been informed of what is going on in Danang?

MR. NESSEN: As you know, he gets a daily briefing in the morning on international developments.

Q It is your understanding the consulate has been closed?

MR. NESSEN: My understanding is that some members of the consulate are still in Danang.

Q Ron, what does the President know about the alleged coup attempt in Saigon?

MR. NESSEN: Nothing more than I told you yesterday, which was that -- you didn't file, did you, Les?

Q I filed the baseball report, that he got a baseball pass.

Q That is a violation of the briefing rules, to file anything, even though it is a minor matter, a minor story. It is a violation of the briefing rules while the briefing is going on for anyone to file.

Q I apologize.

MR. NESSEN: Shall we go on or stop? I do think we need to live up to our own ground rules here even with respect to minor matters.

Q I stand corrected, and it will not happen again.

MR. NESSEN: As far as reports of an attempted coup, as far as I know there are no further details other than what I said yesterday, which is that there is no clear idea of who was involved, what the motive was, or what the intensity of involvement was. I just can't give you any more from here.

Q That does seem to imply confirmation of the basic report.

MR. NESSEN: I said what their motive was, and what the intentions were.

Q Ron, there has been speculation that the appointment of Rogers Morton as Commerce Secretary will allow him to eventually become active in the Presidential election campaign in 1976, and perhaps he might be a fund-raiser for the President, or something like that, like the last one. (Laughter)

Does he intend to act merely as the Secretary of Commerce through the election, or are there any plans to have him take an active role in the campaign?

MR. NESSEN: I would like to give you a firm answer on that. He plans to be the Commerce Secretary and does not plan to be involved in the campaign.

Q Ron, on Hathaway, is he being considered as Secretary of the Interior?

MR. NESSEN: I just am not able to tell you anything about the new Interior Secretary until we are ready to announce it.

Q I would like to go back to the \$100 billion deficit one more time, with your indulgence, and try to pin down one other aspect of it; that is, whether or not this estimate from Lynn includes or factors in the President's ability to veto some of the spending programs that are coming from the Hill?

In other words, is this an assessment that is based on the President vetoing all these bills and all of them being overridden, or does it leave out the question of veto and just assume that all are going to become law? How do you handle that in the assessment?

MR. NESSEN: The possibility of a veto or the sustaining of a veto is not factored into that, Jim.

Q Is there any estimate if he vetoed each and every one of them and each and every veto was sustained, what the amount would then drop to?

MR. NESSEN: No, because that has not been factored in.

Q Then there is no way for us to tell, since all of the --

MR. NESSEN: The President's desire, of course, would be, as he said, that there be no new spending programs because of the dangers of rekindling inflation and of undermining the recovery and driving up interest rates.

Q Could you give us what some of these things are that make up this \$125 billion?

MR. NESSEN: I thought John had given this after the briefing yesterday.

Let me start and say that among the items that Jim Lynn refers to as off-budget contributions to the need for government borrowing are the Federal Financing Bank, the Rural Electrification Administration, the Export-Import Bank, the Postal Service and the U.S. Railway Association, and a number of others.

I thought John had gone through some of the items counted as being on track in Congress: The public service employment bill recommended by the Joint Economic Committee; the increases on unemployment compensation recommended by the Joint Economic Committee; the accelerated Social Security and SSI payments recommended by the Senate Budget Committee; health insurance for the unemployed, the Senate bill; the child nutrition amendment in the House bill; various housing proposals under consideration by the Senate Budget Committee staff; the farm price support bill, which has been passed on both sides; emergency employment appropriation additions by the House; a big factor is the failure of Congress to act on rescissions and deferrals recommended by the President; the higher cuts in taxes in the Congressional bill, and so forth.

Q Do you have a money figure? You rattled off a batch of these things.

MR. NESSEN: I thought I said \$105 billion, plus the off-budget items which, will make \$125 billion.

Q You say \$105 billion. Are you taking that on top of a \$75 billion or an \$80 billion deficit?

MR. NESSEN: We are talking about a \$105 billion budget deficit plus the other off-budget borrowing.

MORE

Q I assume you were talking about fiscal 1976?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q You started with \$53 billion or \$54 billion. Now you are up to \$105 billion. If the President vetoed all these things and all vetoes were upheld, you would be back down closer to \$54 billion plus the tax bill, if he signs it, right? So, you really are talking about \$20 billion or so, \$54 billion plus the tax bill?

MR. NESSEN: You are going on the assumption Congress will follow his suggestion and not --

Q Assuming he vetoes all you just rattled off and all vetoes are upheld.

Q Before you get into that, obviously, some of these things won't pass Congress. You are talking about the child nutrition bill. The House had a riot the other day because some of the amendments were defeated on the thing. The guts of the bill have already been voted down. You are throwing in everything Congress is considering and assuming all will be passed, and assuming all vetoes will be overridden.

MR. NESSEN: These are estimates that Jim Lynn has given to the President, and as I told you yesterday, some anyhow, it was based on what Jim Lynn said were things that were steaming along the track.

Q Would it be fair to term this the worst possible case?

MR. NESSEN: Is there a worse case than this, or is this the worst case? (Laughter)

MR. CARLSON: It can't get too much worse.

MR. NESSEN: I suppose that would be a fair estimation.

Q Can you give us a hypothetical idea of how we will be informed if the President decides to sign or veto the tax bill later today?

Organizationally, how do you propose to let all of us know? Do you propose to call all of us in? Will it be broadcast? Will there be a handout?

MR. NESSEN: I have a feeling it is something that you will know about. There was one proposal that he go out on the South Lawn about 3 o'clock this morning and yell it out, but he decided not to do it that way.

Q I am serious about this.

MR. NESSEN: I am very serious, too, Walt. I am sure you know this is something on which there will be ample notice.

Q What information does the President need either from his advisers or from Congress before he can make a decision on whether or not to veto this bill?

MR. NESSEN: He does want some time to think about it, Phil, to get in all the recommendations, which are not all in yet, and to have more time to look at the specifics.

The bill did arrive here yesterday in the afternoon, as you all know. He is, and has been, analyzing it, and he wants time to study it.

Q Will he ask for radio and TV time to announce it?

MR. NESSEN: It has not been decided how to announce it.

Q What assessment is he getting now on whether the Senate will sustain a veto?

MR. NESSEN: That wasn't discussed around here today, so far as I know.

Q Has he put a deadline on the tax bill?

MR. NESSEN: I can just say no decision has been made, Carroll.

Q Has he put a deadline on that the recommendations should be in at such and such a time?

MR. NESSEN: I think he wants all the recommendations in relatively soon.

Q Did you rule out a possibility of today?

Q What does that mean, today, a couple of hours?

MR. NESSEN: As I said yesterday, he wants them to take their time and study this and send their recommendations in when they are ready.

As for ruling out a decision today, I can't rule in or out because he simply has not made the decision now. I cannot predict when he will make it.

Q Does that mean we are not going to get a lid today?

MR. NESSEN: I think we could certainly give a lunch lid until 3 o'clock. Don't take that to mean we will have an announcement at 3 o'clock, but you are safe for one hour and 45 minutes.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END

(AT 1:15 P.M. EDT)
#175

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 5:55 P.M. EDT

MARCH 28, 1975

FRIDAY

MR. NESSEN: The President is going to be making an address on television tomorrow night at 7:30 Eastern Time, for which we are requesting time to make a statement on economic policy and announce his decision on the tax bill.

I suspect the speech will run ten to 15 minutes. It will be from the Oval Office.

Q Do you know what the decision is?

MR. NESSEN: He is requesting TV time.

The President will then leave at about 8:30 or maybe a shade earlier for Palm Springs.

Q Is he stopping at Elk Hills out there?

MR. NESSEN: No, but on Monday the President will go to Elk Hills. He will fly from Palm Springs to the Bakersfield Airport and then will chopper from the Bakersfield Airport to Elk Hills.

The other events of the Palm Springs trip are a fairly full day Thursday in San Diego -- what do you want to do about Steve and his program?

Q Have you got any more hard news? If not, we will see you again in ten minutes.

(AT 5:56 P.M. EDT)

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6:17 P.M. EDT

MR. NESSEN: I was starting to give you some general outlook for the week, which is Monday to Bakersfield and then on to Elk Hills; Thursday a fairly full day in San Diego, which includes a speech to the White House Conference --

MORE

#176

Q Will he meet with the Governors there?

MR. NESSEN: No, he will not. -- and a breakfast with news executives from the West Coast area. Friday he is going to go to San Francisco for a speech -- I am sorry I don't have the group -- and a meeting with the Governors and possibly one other event that is not firmed up yet.

Q Who is the speech to?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have the group, I am afraid.

Q It is an evening speech?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q That is the nighttime speech?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Is there something planned for Bakersfield Monday, a rally or something?

MR. NESSEN: It is an airport arrival. It is an open arrival, so whoever wants to come will be free to come.

Q Is a time set for the press conference on Thursday, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: This is an early schedule. It looks like a midday news conference.

Q Can you please tell us if it will be possible for us to cover the President's speech tomorrow night?

MR. NESSEN: What I am going to do is quickly run through the general outline of the week and then come back and talk about tomorrow.

We are up to Friday, which is a speech in San Francisco in the evening. The name of the group he is speaking to is the San Francisco Bay Area Council.

Q What is that?

MR. NESSEN: It is a citizens group.

Q Could you give us a time on that, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: That is a dinner.

Q Is the Governors meeting a dinner?

MR. NESSEN: The Governors meeting is not a dinner because he couldn't go to two dinners.

Q What is the Governors meeting?

MR. NESSEN: It will be sometime during the day. We don't have all of that.

Q The Bay Area Council is in what place?

MR. NESSEN: The St. Francis Hotel.

Q Where will he stay in Palm Springs?

MR. NESSEN: Let me just finish, Fran.

On the way home, Monday, he will stop and deliver a midday speech to the National Association of Broadcasters in Las Vegas.

As for tomorrow, we are hoping to have a text as early as possible, but I would look for late afternoon.

I think it makes sense to me that the press will stay behind and file after the speech and then go on out to Palm Springs after the President has departed because there will be no event in Palm Springs tomorrow night.

You shouldn't really care what time you get there, I suppose, and there will be a pool, of course, on Air Force One.

Let me run through the day tomorrow. Baggage in the Transportation Office, with a deadline of 6 o'clock tomorrow night. For those of you who care to go directly to Andrews -- and I can't imagine there will be any -- you can take your own baggage there by 8 p.m. deadline. If you don't have any baggage and want to go straight to Andrews, you can get there at 8:30.

It seems to us that perhaps 9 p.m. might be a good time to aim for a press plane departure.

Q Will you have a bus out here for us?

MR. HUSHEN: If there are enough requests for it.

MR. NESSEN: We will work that out.

Q Ron, if you are doing it this way, I can't get to Andrews for a 9 o'clock departure.

MR. NESSEN: I said we are aiming for that. The press plane will stay for the people filing the speech. He is speaking at 7:30.

You will fly directly to Palm Springs, with no stops, at JFK, and there will be a bus awaiting you at planeside to take you to a place called the International Hotel, which is located at 1800 East Palm Canyon Drive and the phone number is 714-323-1711. If we leave generally in the 9 o'clock area, you would get to Palm Springs at 11 o'clock their time, which is not all that bad.

As I said, we are aiming for a speech in the late afternoon. The President will speak from the Oval Office. There will be a pool in there to watch him. Still photographs will be brought in at the end of the remarks to take their pictures.

I am told by Bob Mead that the three television networks will broadcast the speech at 7:30. After the speech, the President and Mrs. Ford will board a helicopter on the South Lawn at approximately 8:15 and fly to Andrews.

Air Force One should be leaving at about 8:45 and get into Palm Springs shortly before 11 p.m. local time. So, you won't be all that far behind.

The President in Palm Springs will be staying at the home of a gentleman named Fred Wilson. He has known the President for about ten years. He is a businessman who founded, in 1952, a company called the Trans-World Insurance Program, which he runs still.

He met the President about ten years ago, as I say. He and the President have been in Palm Springs at the same time several times in the past, and Mr. Wilson entertained the President at his home and so the President this time will be renting his home from him at a price of \$100 a day.

MORE

#176

Q That is the same as our rooms, I suppose? (Laughter)

MR. NESSEN: I frankly don't have any description or any idea of what the house will look like.

Q Will there be any church on Easter Sunday?

MR. NESSEN: There will be church on Easter Sunday.

Q There or somewhere else?

MR. NESSEN: In Palm Springs.

The staff members who are going are Don Rumsfeld, Bob Hartmann and myself, Dick Cheney, Terry O'Donnell and Red Cavaney.

We had planned to have open coverage of golf one day. The day has not been decided yet.

We will have a protective pool with the President wherever he goes. I would expect there would be a certain number of social evenings, visiting other people's houses, as it was in Vail.

What more can I tell you?

Q There was a question I had which I don't think you answered, earlier. If you did, please forgive me. Did you say whether the President has decided yet on what he is going to do with the tax bill? Has he decided for himself?

MR. NESSEN: I said he is deciding.

Q He is deciding?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Will he be meeting with his economic advisers tomorrow?

MR. NESSEN: We have been so busy working out this, as you know, so I haven't had a chance to look at what his schedule is for tomorrow.

Q Has he received all the recommendations for which he asked?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Ron, can we firmly say he has not made a decision?

MR. NESSEN: He is deciding and will announce his decision tomorrow.

Q And it is firm that he has not? The answer to my question is yes?

MR. NESSEN: Why don't you let me put it in my own words, John. He is deciding.

Q That is the present tense, so that means he is deciding. I want to get the correct interpretation.

MR. NESSEN: I would like to use my own words, which I have done.

Q What does that mean, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: The President is deciding and will announce it tomorrow evening.

MORE

Q Ron, for the purpose of filing such things as overnights, you say he is deciding. This is going to be dated tomorrow morning. Are you saying he wants to sleep on it? Is he leaning in one direction or the other? Is there anything else you can give us on that?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Can you say whether the recommendations were all in written form or did any of the advisers give them orally?

MR. NESSEN: They were all in written form.

Q I don't want to get too semantic but, when you use that tense of the verb, we can conclude he has not reached a final decision?

MR. NESSEN: I think you just need to listen to what I said because I am not going to change it.

Q Would we be wrong in concluding that?

MR. NESSEN: I don't see why you can't use what I am saying.

Q Because it is not clear to us.

MR. NESSEN: The church plans for Sunday are that the President will attend Saint Margaret's Episcopal Cathedral.

Q At what time?

MR. NESSEN: The President will leave his residence at about 10:45 Sunday and go to church. The services begin at 11 o'clock and the church would not like any camera or sound equipment in the church.

Q One of the reporters who went to church with him in Palm Springs before said something about it being an open church with open columns. Is this the same church?

MR. NESSEN: I have no idea what this church looks like.

Q Will any of the family besides Mrs. Ford be in Palm Springs with the President?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q There are a lot of little communities around there, of which Palm Springs is one. Is this home in Palm Springs itself?

MR. NESSEN: Is it in Palm Desert?

MR. HUSHEN: It would be a guess. I don't know.

MR. NESSEN: Let me talk a moment about something I skipped over here.

The people who want to file on the speech tomorrow night need, of course, to stay here at the White House as long as they want to. We will have to take a pool on Air Force One and those people will have to go on to Andrews themselves and, obviously, will not be able to cover the speech unless you do it from the advance text. They should be at Andrews at 8:15 P.M.

We have not picked that pool, yet, is that correct?

MR. HUSHEN: Other than the wires.

MR. NESSEN: Because of the turn of events, we have to be careful of deadlines. Obviously the wires, and we will telephone those who are in the pool for the flight to Palm Springs.

Q The press room will be at the International Hotel?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Is it a hotel or a motel, Ron? I have heard both.

MR. NESSEN: If it is the place where the President stayed last year when he was Vice President, it is a two-story motel.

Q What is the name, hotel or inn? I have heard both now.

MR. NESSEN: The International Hotel.

Q Ron, I have two questions.

MR. NESSEN: We are going to have a problem finding writers to go in the pool, so whichever of you do not need to file past 8:15 tomorrow, would you let Joy know? It would help us to get a pool together that doesn't hurt people on their deadlines.

Q Do you plan to brief tomorrow?

MR. NESSEN: No, but I will be here all day tomorrow.

Q What airport does he plan to land at in Palm Springs?

MR. NESSEN: He will land at the International Airport.

Q Will we have a schedule just for tomorrow?

MR. NESSEN: Do you mean do I have it now?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: Do you mean a Presidential schedule?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: We will have it shortly.

Q Did you figure out where he is landing?

MR. NESSEN: The commercial airport, so far as I know.

The house is in Palm Springs, Bob.

Q When he stays, he is going to stay at the St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco?

MR. NESSEN: That is not an overnight.

Q But while he is there, that will be the headquarters?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Where will he stay in San Diego during the day?

MR. NESSEN: The events are in two different places in San Diego. One is the Westgate Plaza Hotel. That is the headquarters place. That is where the Press Center will be.

Q What is he going to do at Elk Hills, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: He is going to give a briefing and so forth on the potential for supplying oil.

Q Do you have an approximate time on that?

MR. NESSEN: No, that really hasn't been set. That is one of the items that has not been arranged because it was moved, you know.

Q In your initial statement on the President's plans, you said to make a statement on the economic policy and announce his decision.

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Does that mean he is going to deal with other things beyond the tax bill and, if so, can you give us any guidance on that?

MR. NESSEN: No, more than to just say it will deal with broader economic matters than just the tax cut.

Q Ron, while the President is out there, will he call Mr. Nixon?

MR. NESSEN: There are no plans to.

Q How about the Weyand-Kissinger meeting?

MR. NESSEN: That, as I said this morning, will take place out there late in the week.

Q At Palm Springs?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Here are a few things. It is called the Palm Springs Municipal Airport where he will land. There are no official appointments tomorrow, only staff meetings. As I say, I will be here all day.

Q Staff could include economic advisers?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think so.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END (AT 6:35 P.M. EDT)