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

#191

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 3:17 P.M. EDT

APRIL 18, 1975

FRIDAY

(Concord, New Hampshire)

MR. NESSEN: We have just a couple of routine announcements from Washington.

The President today nominated Laurence Silberman of Bethesda, Maryland, to be Ambassador to the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. He succeeds Ambassador Malcolm Toon, who has been reassigned.

Just to refresh your memory a little bit, Larry was the Deputy Attorney General from March 1974 until April 1.

Since April 1 he has been a consultant at the State Department. He came to the Government in 1967 as an attorney with the National Labor Relations Board

Q Have you got any paper on this?

MR. NESSEN: No, we won't have the opportunity to.

In 1969 he was the Solicitor at the Labor Department, and Under Secretary of Labor until 1973. That is the first one.

Some of you probably have heard from your Washington offices that it was announced in Brussels today that the North Atlantic Council has decided that its spring meeting, which will be held May 29 and 30, will involve the participation of heads of State, or heads of Government.

President Ford, as he indicated in his foreign policy speech to Congress, does intend to go to the meeting. He looks forward to the meeting as an opportunity to further consultations among the leaders of the Atlantic Alliance, and to reaffirm once again the cohesion and common destiny of members of the Alliance.

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This just was announced in Brussels, and I don't have any further details beyond what I have told you.

Q Will he go anywhere else while he is over there?

MR. NESSEN: I say the trip has just been announced, Gene, and I don't have any other details.

Q You are talking about the NATO summit?

MR. NESSEN: I know of no plans to go anywhere else.

Q Was this done at the request of the American Government? Did NATO decide --

MR. NESSEN: I really don't have any details on this, and I think State can probably give you the full background on the arrangements for the meeting.

Q Do you know whether the French head of government or head of state is going to attend?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have any reason to believe he won't, but I don't know. I think you ought to have somebody check with State in Washington.

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Q Does the United States wish Portugal to attend?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know.

Q Ron, has the President accepted a number of invitations in principle without reference to time?

MR. NESSEN: Peter, at this moment, I don't know of any plans to go anywhere other than Brussels.

Now, one other item to announce today is that the President is appointing Ambassador Dean Brown to be his Special Representative and Director of a special interagency task force to coordinate all United States Government activities concerning evacuation, humanitarian and refugee problems relating to Vietnam.

He will work under the direction of the President and of Dr. Kissinger in his capacity as Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs.

As I say, he will be a kind of coordinator for all the various departments and agencies that are dealing with the problems of refugees, evacuation and humanitarian matters in Vietnam.

Q Is he an Ambassador?

MR. NESSEN: I am going to give you a little background in just a second.

He is being called back to Government service for this job that the President considers to be an important one.

Until now, he has been the President of the Middle East Institute and he is taking a leave of absence from that post.

Just to recall briefly Ambassador Brown's background, in 1974 and until recently, he was the Deputy Under Secretary of State for Management. From 1967 up through 1970, he served as Ambassador to Senegal and Gambia. In 1970-73, he was the Ambassador to Jordan.

You may recall that last summer, after the death of the American Ambassador Davies on Cyprus, Ambassador Brown was sent there as a special representative.

Q Is he a career man?

MR. NESSEN: Johnnie says he is.

Q Do you know how old he is?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Where does he live?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have those details. You can get them in Washington.

Q Has this been announced at the State Department?

MR. NESSEN: This has not. The new things announced here for the first time are Larry Silberman and Dean Brown. The summit meeting was announced in Brussels.

Q Will Brown's office be in the State Department or in the White House?

MR. NESSEN: In the White House as far as I know.

Now, there is the possibility of one other announcement in a few minutes, so I will let you know one way or the other shortly.

Q Can we file now?

MR. NESSEN: Go right ahead and file.

Q Ron, what can you tell us about the President's meeting with Governor Thomson?

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MR. NESSEN: Just to make sure, some people are filing. Is that all right? I guess it is.

The President, after his speech, went into the Senate chamber to shake hands with some of the State officials, State Senators and other State officials, and then he went to the Governor's office, where he met for 18 minutes with Governor Thomson.

They met alone, just the two of them, and at that point two other Governors -- Governor Longley of Maine and Governor Salmon of Vermont -- joined the meeting, and the four met together for another ten minutes or so.

It was a private meeting, attended by no one other than those four, and I don't have any details of it for you.

Q Ron, do you have anything on the latest evacuation; that is, how many Americans are still there and how many Vietnamese are we talking about evacuating? Has Ambassador Martin determined what he is going to do?

MR. NESSEN: The number of Americans in Vietnam is somewhat below 4,000, and the number of nonessential people and dependents is being reduced.

As I said yesterday, Bob, I think we are not going to make it a practice to give a daily count.

Q What was that 4,000 figure?

MR. NESSEN: Somewhat below 4,000 is the number of Americans in Vietnam.

Q Now there?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q What was the figure?

MR. NESSEN: Somewhat below 4,000.

Q By that, it could be anywhere down to zero. Does that mean between 3,500 or around 4,000, would you say?

MR. NESSEN: I don't have a more precise figure, Bob.

Q What about the second part of the question? How many Vietnamese will he have to evacuate?

MR. NESSEN: I just don't have anything on the plans for evacuation.

We will not have any further announcements today, but you might want to tell your Washington offices that they might check with the Justice Department in several hours for some additional details of some new categories of parolees; that is, categories of Vietnamese who are being admitted to the United States for whom red tape is being cut, and that announcement and the details of it will come out of the Justice Department.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Ron.

END (AT 3:30 P.M. EDT)