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NEWS CONFERENCE

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AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 7:50 A.M. EDT

APRIL 29, 1975

TUESDAY

MR. NESSEN: I just want to really sort of catch up on a little color and give you some guidance for the rest of the morning.

The President went to bed about 1:30, after a final phone call from Dr. Kissinger, to bring him up to date on where it stood at that moment.

The President slept until 5:27, when he telephoned the White House switchboard to find out whether there had been any calls for him during the night. There had not been.

He went through his normal morning routine, which I think you know about, and had a phone call from Dr. Kissinger at 6:30, which brought him up to date as to developments at that time.

The President came into the office about 15 minutes ago, and I went in and talked to him at that time.

He feels that the operation is going smoothly.

After I left, Brent Scowcroft came in for his regular morning intelligence briefing. As you know, as part of his morning routine, he does normally get up at 5:30, and he has his prepared intelligence reports at the Residence, so he had read those already before he came over here, as well as some newspapers, and he did watch some television while he was eating breakfast.

The plan is to go ahead with his regular morning schedule so far. What I would like to do is to say that we have a lid until 10:00. Obviously, we are not going to make our statement until the evacuation is complete, and it looks like 10:00 would be the minimum time, but I don't want to say that I am going to have a statement at 10:00 -- that would be the very earliest.

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It could be 11:00, 12:00 or 1:00. We are talking in that framework of time. But if you would like to go home and change and freshen up and have some breakfast, you will be safe until 10:00.

Q Ron, why does it keep dropping like this? I mean, is this good news and we are able to get out more Vietnamese than we thought we might at one time or is it bad news we are getting delayed, that people are getting shot off the streets?

MR. NESSEN: No, no. I think Schlesinger, when he talked this morning, said it is going smoothly but slowly.

Q Is that his quote or yours?

MR. NESSEN: No, I am just sort of paraphrasing what he said.

Q Is Ambassador Martin still in Saigon?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Martin is still in Saigon?

Q He is?

MR. NESSEN: As far as I know, he has not come out yet. He is at the Embassy.

Q How many Americans are left there now, according to the latest reports?

MR. NESSEN: Well, you really ought to check with Laitin at the Pentagon. He is keeping the numbers.

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Q You know, you got to go on and you got to present a mood.

MR. NESSEN: I say the President -- one of the first things he said to me this morning was, it's going smoothly and it is going slowly.

Q Why is it going slowly? Is it because we are getting more out than we thought we would?

MR. NESSEN: It is getting to be night-time over there, or it is night-time over there. You have big helicopters trying to land in a small place. But for the military details, you ought to talk to Laitin. I am trying to tell you this to guide you in the right direction. It is going smoothly.

Q You say the President's schedule will remain as it is as far as you know now?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Does this include the 10:30 meeting with King Hussein? That is still on the schedule?

MR. NESSEN: Yes. There have been no changes in the President's schedule.

Q Ron, have you any additional information on any problems over there?

MR. NESSEN: No. You should check with Laitin, but I know of no problem.

Q What about reports like the shooting at the bus?

MR. NESSEN: That was very early on, Steve, before this ever started and I have not had time to track that down, but Laitin is the place to track it down.

Q Can you tell us how many Vietnamese we hope to get out?

MR. NESSEN: Laitin is putting out the number, Steve.

Q Ron, when you said "smoothly," and attributed that to the President, you said, smoothly but slowly.

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Is that the President again?

MR. NESSEN: I am paraphrasing the President's general feeling this morning.

Q This is his statement; is that right?

MR. NESSEN: It is not a direct quote, but that is the summation of what we talked about.

END

(AT 7:57 A.M. EDT)