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NEWS CONFERENCE

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AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 11:23 P.M. BONN TIME

JULY 26, 1975

SATURDAY
(Bonn, Germany)

MR. NESSEN: I don't have very much to tell you. You have, I think, a posted list of nine items that were put out at the White House in Washington. You don't have to worry very much about it here, I guess.

Just for your own interest, the number one item on there, the veto message of the health services bill, was taken up later today by the Senate and was overridden by a vote of 67 to 15.

Q Is there any White House reaction to the override?

MR. NESSEN: No, I think the President made his views clear in his veto message, which he signed last night, and it was issued by the White House this morning.

I guess the only other thing to tell you is the pool dropped off at the point where the President went into his residence for the evening. He was shown around the ground floor rooms by the Chief of Protocol of West Germany, Mr. Schoeller, and the American Ambassador to Germany, Ambassador Hillenbrand.

There is a large entrance hall with paneled walls and stuffed heads of stags...and Democrats, (Laughter) and paintings on the wall, portraits as well as landscapes. He was shown through there, and then the next room is a dining room, which was blue and white paneled walls and the dining table with a mirror on top.

The dining table was set for dinner, but the President and Mrs. Ford decided to have just a very light supper in their own quarters.

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There are several other rooms on the ground floor, which they were shown through. There is also a terrace in the back. As the pool probably told you, the castle has a moat and the President was taken out on the terrace and shown the drawbridge, which was down.

He then went upstairs to his own quarters, which has a sitting room, also paneled walls with tapestry panels and a dining table covered with sort of a heavy tapestry tablecloth.

He sat and talked to Mrs. Ford and some members of his staff, and then retired, as I say, for a light supper and no other activities tonight.

He will spend some time in the morning working on matters that may come from Washington overnight before beginning the published schedule, which you have.

We will have a text for you of the remarks he will make at the picnic with the troops. I probably will not have advanced texts of the luncheon toasts or his remarks following his meeting in the morning.

Q Any idea of the rough time that we will have that text? Just roughly?

MR. NESSEN: I brought it with me, and it is being typed now, and it is not terribly long, so I would guess maybe in the area of a half hour or so.

Q How about the welcoming. Does he not have a welcoming statement?

MR. NESSEN: No, there is no welcoming statement. There are remarks after his meeting in the morning.

John?

Q Why did the President omit from his delivered remarks at Andrews some of the lines in his prepared remarks for Andrews, and does he stand by the original remarks?

MR. NESSEN: I didn't see any great difference between the two. Primarily, he took a look at the draft that had been prepared and, as he often does, put it in his own words. I would not be surprised if he departed from the text that we put out tomorrow and all along the trip, but he really just said the same things in his own words.

Q Ron, that is not true. That is just not true. He omitted a significant concession that they had persuaded the Warsaw bloc nations to talk about peaceful adjustments to the frontier. He omitted the fact that the United States had never recognized Soviet incorporation of the Baltic States.

Those were the main things. Also, he omitted the fact that the U.S. is backing with West Germany to preserve interests in Berlin and Germany.

Does he stand behind that?

MR. NESSEN: It is a White House text, Aldo. Certainly you know the procedure with White House texts. He simply said the same things in his own words. Some of that was repetitious of what he had said yesterday to the representatives of the Baltic States, and other East European nationalities, and I don't see any great problem about it.

Q Did you ask him about it?

MR. NESSEN: In what sense? Ask him about it?

Q Why he had omitted part of the text.

MR. NESSEN: I knew why he had changed the text. He wanted to put it into his own words.

Q But did you talk to him about it?

MR. NESSEN: I did, Ann.

Q Did Dr. Kissinger suggest that he omit the omitted text?

MR. NESSEN: My understanding is that the President was up quite early this morning and went over the text, got up about 5:15, went over the text and I know he called the Press Office at 6:04 -- nobody was there -- trying to find somebody to retype the changes he had made earlier this morning.

Q Ron, does he stand by the first version?

MR. NESSEN: As I told Aldo, it is the standard procedure on White House texts that those are White House texts, and the heading over the years has been written "Prepared for Delivery," for just such occasions when the President decides to put things in slightly different wording.

Q Do you suppose the reason he did that was he felt maybe that was coming off a little bit strong, a little stronger than maybe he wanted it?

MR. NESSEN: Bob, I say he worked on this early this morning and decided to put it in his own words. I don't think there is anything beyond that.

Q Ron, was the original statement written by the White House writers or by the State Department?

MR. NESSEN: I frankly don't know who prepared the draft.

Q Did you ask the gentleman over there?

MR. NESSEN: Did I what?

Q Did you ask the gentleman over there?

MR. NESSEN: Which gentleman over there?

Q The State Department official who is traveling with us.

Q Is there any reaction to the suggested criticism in the German press that Mr. Ford is not going to West Berlin but he is going to Auschwitz?

MR. NESSEN: I have not seen that criticism, Ralph.

Q Ron, do you know where and when the Secretary of State will be seeing Eilts in the morning?

MR. NESSEN: No, but I will check for you, or John Trattner will.

Q Ron, do you know how many Congressmen the President talked to from Air Force One?

MR. NESSEN: I don't believe he talked to any Congressmen from Air Force One. He talked to Jack Marsh about the legislative situation on restoration of arms sales to Turkey.

Q How does that look?

Q Does it look like we will be able to reverse that with Demirel?

MR. NESSEN: There is nothing at the moment to report.

The situation on Demirel hasn't changed since the senior American official talked to you on the plane.

Q Ron, I don't think you answered the question on Kissinger. What input do you have on the changes in the speech?

MR. NESSEN: I thought I had answered the question by saying the President got up early this morning and revised it and put it in his own words.

Q But Kissinger didn't have any input?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think he gets up that early. (Laughter)

Q The Presidential text was made available for broadcast at 6 a.m. this morning, and the second version was pronounced at 8:18. That makes two hours and 18 minutes with the wrong version.

Q Question?

MR. NESSEN: The question is, the gentleman refers to the White House text put out in advance as a wrong version.

I don't know what you mean by wrong version. It is a White House text.

Q I mean, it is quite different from the one that was used.

MR. NESSEN: I think we probably explained this about as well as we can.

I do want to introduce you, those of you who don't know him, to John Trattner, who we borrowed from the State Department for this trip, who has served in Europe and is an expert in Europe, and will be in the press room most of the time and will help you with your substantive questions on various areas of policy that will come up during this trip.

As for a briefing schedule tomorrow, I don't at the moment have a precise time for you, but it is a fairly jam packed day. I think maybe we could try to pull some things together if there is anything during that break between the return from the picnic and the starting out on the river cruise.

Q There is not much time.

MR. NESSEN: Let's think then maybe because of the time difference we could probably -- whatever we have accumulated during the day in the way of material -- meet here tomorrow evening after the boat cruise. How does that sound?

Q That is too late.

MR. NESSEN: How about on the boat?

Q Fine.

Q That is too exclusive.

Q Ron, are you invited to the lunch?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Do it right after lunch.

MR. NESSEN: Let's play it a little bit by ear tomorrow, okay?

Phil?

Q What is the theme of his remarks tomorrow at the picnic?

MR. NESSEN: As you know, he is speaking to both American and German troops, and he will comment on some recent -- well, you will have the text here in 25 minutes.

Q Is there an embargo on that text?

MR. NESSEN: The embargo on the text will be for delivery.

Remember, tomorrow is Sunday, so there is not a lot that can be done.

Radio broadcasts all the time.

Q Ron, you are quoted in the pool report as saying that the President had talked to these people to explore legislative steps that might be taken to reverse the vote. Do you mean by that there is a possibility of another vote in the House before the House adjourns?

MR. NESSEN: Yes. At the moment, there is nothing to report in the way of any kind of scenario for accomplishing that.

Q You say the President has not been in touch with any Congressmen today?

MR. NESSEN: Not that I am aware of. The only conversation that I am aware of is the talk with Jack Marsh.

Q Is Secretary Kissinger having some remarks tonight?

MR. NESSEN: I have to get John to check that. I don't know of any.

Q Is he staying at the castle?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

See you tomorrow.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Ron.

END (AT 11:35 P.M. BONN TIME)