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NEWS CONFERENCE

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AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 11:36 A.M. EST

JANUARY 28, 1976

WEDNESDAY

MR. NESSEN: Anybody that wants to take a picture of Prime Minister Rabin when he leaves should meet Thym Smith outside the door here of the Press Room at 11:50.

As you know, the President had a meeting today with Republican Congressional leaders, and this was a meeting requested by the leaders to give them an opportunity to review and discuss with the President the outlook for the Congressional election campaign.

Congressman Vander Jagt gave a report on the outlook as far as House races went and Senator Stevens gave an outlook as far as Senate races went.

Q What did they say, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: Well, I don't think it is probably my business to announce that.

Q How many were there of them?

MR. NESSEN: How many of them of what?

Q Republican leaders that met with the President.

MR. NESSEN: It has been posted, I think.

Q Why did they run and avoid us, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: I didn't know they had. The fact of the matter is they did tell the President that the outlook was good for Congressional races, both on the Senate and House side, and in fact spoke of the possibility that this could be a duplication of the 1966 Congressional election when the Republicans picked up quite a lot of seats.

Q When you said "good," does that mean the Republicans will hold their own and not lose any or does it rather mean that they will take seats previously held by Democrats.

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Q Would you know, did they compare the outlook with a Presidential year in their optimism?

Q Question, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: I don't understand the question.

Q The question is in 1966 it was a non-Presidential year and I am wondering whether they compared 1976 with another Presidential year?

MR. NESSEN: No, their assessment was that the Republican gains in the Senate and House could be considerable and rival the 1966 gains.

Q Why do they think that?

MR. NESSEN: Well, you will have to ask them, Ann.

Q Who is this? Are you quoting somebody specifically, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: I said there were two reports given to the President, one by Guy Vander Jagt on the House outlook and one on the Senate outlook by Ted Stevens.

Q So we can say those two said it is encouraging?

MR. NESSEN: The outlook is encouraging, right.

Q Why did they want to see the President about this? Did they want to ask him about something?

MR. NESSEN: No, they just wanted to give him a report.

Q Have you heard any numbers tossed around as to possible House and Senate gains?

MR. NESSEN: No, there were no numbers tossed around.

Q Did they do it State-by-State and district-by-district?

MR. NESSEN: On the Senate side, they did do it State-by-State, and on the House side they touched on several key races.

Q Did they have a Presidential outlook?

MR. NESSEN: They did not talk about that, the House Members.

Q Ron, did they talk about Presidential campaigning on behalf of GOP candidates around the country?

MR. NESSEN: It really didn't come up.

Q Ron, to your knowledge, not all of the people in that room support the President, do they -- his election -- or do you know?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know.

Q Ron, does the President have any plans for campaigning for Members of Congress?

MR. NESSEN: Let me back off here to the extent on Russ' question -- there was a discussion of the help the President had given to the Republican Party last year when he was going out and making speeches and appearances on behalf of the Party and there was sort of some gratitude expressed and some views expressed as to how that had helped the Congressional party get itself in a position to have an encouraging year this year. There was that discussion of the President in the context of campaigning, but it was not beyond that.

Q Ron, yesterday there was a report that Governor Reagan collided with a microphone. I was wondering if the White House had taken note of this and -- (Laughter)

MR. NESSEN: The read-out on the Rabin meeting we expect to have at about 2:30 this afternoon, so what I think we will do is put on a lunch lid after this briefing.

Q Will that be a Joint Communique or a White House statement?

MR. NESSEN: This will be a White House report on the meeting.

Q Then put out a joint statement?

MR. NESSEN: At this time that is not decided yet.

Q Does the President plan to campaign for Republican Members of Congress this year?

MR. NESSEN: Well, it was not discussed this morning and I, myself, don't know what his plans are beyond the trips we have announced so far.

I think you know the Japanese Ambassador is coming in. It is a farewell call. The Ambassador will be returning to Tokyo for another assignment next month.

Q Ron, let me just interrupt for a second on Rabin. Is there any plan to hold further face-to-face talks between the two men after today's meeting?

MR. NESSEN: There are no plans but I would not be surprised if they talked about the possibility at today's meeting.

Q You mean something like what we did with Sadat, that while Mr. Rabin is touring the country, the President may meet Mr. Rabin somewhere in the country as he met Sadat in Florida?

MR. NESSEN: No, I don't. You know, it is something that could possibly be discussed if more time is needed.

Q Yes, by meeting here in Washington?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Are they having dinner tomorrow night?

MR. NESSEN: Isn't tomorrow night the reception that the Israelis are giving for the President?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: This afternoon at 2:15 the President will have a meeting with Dr. Ikle, who is the Director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. This will concern arms control issues and SALT. Some of you have asked this morning and also yesterday evening whether General Haig would be in to see the President. He will be at 3 o'clock this afternoon. He and Brent Scowcroft will meet together with the President at 3:00 to discuss NATO and American-European relations in the broader sense.

Q Ron, will that Ikle meeting be just head-to-head or is anyone else in on that meeting?

MR. NESSEN: Brent will also attend.

Q Did the President ask Haig to come back?

MR. NESSEN: My understanding is that he is here for a series of meetings.

A while back when we announced some changes in the speechwriting shop, somebody raised the question of, are there contemplated or have there been any changes in the Domestic Council. I think you have a list of a couple of the changes that have been made in the domestic area. Jim Cavanaugh is being promoted. He will be Deputy Assistant to the President for Domestic Affairs. He continues to serve on the Domestic Council also as Deputy Director.

Arthur Fletcher is coming aboard as a Deputy Assistant to the President for Urban Affairs. That is a new position.

Q Can you tell us more about Fletcher, please, because he left the White House under another President very unhappy. Can you tell us what motivated this?

MR. NESSEN: Well, it is a very important job that the President wants to create and fill with a very qualified person, and he found Arthur Fletcher and was pleased that Arthur Fletcher agreed to come here for this job.

Q What will his job consist of?

MR. NESSEN: He will do a number of things. First of all, he will do a comprehensive review on a continuing basis of the impact of Federal programs on urban areas. He will report to the President specifically on the effectiveness of each Federal program in urban areas and will suggest ways that the effectiveness of these programs can be improved.

Q How much money is he going to make and how much do the others get?

MR. NESSEN: I asked for it just before I came in.

Q Did the President know him personally? I am wondering how he got pulled back into Government.

MR. NESSEN: I will have to check. I believe they do know each other from Arthur Fletcher's previous Government service.

Q He will be working in what may be called -- it is a bad phrase -- but what may be called "black affairs," won't he?

MR. NESSEN: No, urban affairs.

Q I know, but I am asking you whether it is a synonym.

MR. NESSEN: It is not, no.

Let me give you the salaries when I get through all the other things.

Then Arthur Quern is being promoted to Deputy Director of the Domestic Council for Policy and Planning. This is the replacement for Dick Dunham after Dick went to the Federal Power Commission, and Steve McConahey is being promoted to Special Assistant to the President for Intergovernmental Affairs. This is essentially the same area that Jim Falk worked in, but the job is being upgraded and it is being upgraded in keeping with, first of all, a request to the President from Governors and mayors and county officials and the President has promised them in the past at meetings that he would upgrade this job and he has done so.

The salaries--I will give you the ranges. Cavanaugh's will be a salary of in the range of \$38,000 to \$42,000; Arthur Fletcher's salary will be the \$36,000 to \$40,000 range; and Steve McConahey, \$34,000 to \$38,000.

Arthur Quern?

Q What did you say the last one was?

MR. NESSEN: Steve McConahey's salary is in the \$34,000 to \$38,000 range.

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Q Can you give us an overall view as to why there has been this considerable shake-up, if you will, in the Domestic Council?

MR. NESSEN: Well, I can't really, Walt, because it is not that. Each one of these changes was done for a specific reason -- in one case to keep a promise to the Governors and mayors and in another case to promote Jim Cavanaugh for his good service over the years and to give Jim Cannon the deputy which he has not had before; Arthur Fletcher, to create a new position which the President wanted.

In other words, each one has a separate reason behind it and there is not any overall philosophy that brought this about.

Q Does it represent an upgrading of the Domestic Council and its role?

MR. NESSEN: It represents an upgrading of certain offices dealing with some aspects of domestic affairs.

Q Who was appointed as the promise to the Governors?

MR. NESSEN: As the what?

Q You said one of the reasons --

MR. NESSEN: Steve McConahey.

Q Why has the President promised the Governors that he would name Steve McConahey to whatever --

MR. NESSEN: No, the President promised that he would create a job in the White House organization to deal with intergovernmental relations; that is, relations between the Federal Government and the States and localities.

Q Ron, are all these appointees outside the Hatch Act?

MR. NESSEN: Let's see. Well, McConahey would be and Cavanaugh and Fletcher.

Q Ron, before you go on to another subject, who besides Falk has left? I don't see Mike Duval's name on here, for instance.

MR. NESSEN: Which one are you talking about?

Q Well, on this list of responsibilities chart. Are a number of people leaving the Domestic Council staff as others are coming?

MR. NESSEN: I am not aware of any other mass departure -- any other departures. (Laughter)

Q Duval is the one I am talking about.

MR. NESSEN: Duval, for some considerable time at least -- oh, I would say back half a year at least -- has not worked on the Domestic Council but rather has worked on intelligence matters.

Q He is still here.

MR. NESSEN: But he is at the White House and working, yes.

Just to catch you up to date on the -- I don't know whether anybody cares any more about the State of the Union reaction and budget reaction, do you?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: I thought you would. All right, by popular demand.

The State of the Union, culmination of mail, telegrams and phone calls as of this morning, in favor of the President's approach, 1,102; opposed, 226; assorted comments, 247.

On the budget, the mail so far and the telegrams and so forth have been quite light, really negligible. In favor of the budget, 18 (Laughter); opposed, 48 --

Q Were those form letters?

MR. NESSEN: Assorted comments, 7. So you see it is not very much.

Q Ron, is that all of your announcements?

MR. NESSEN: Not quite.

On the override of the HEW labor bill, the President is disappointed by the fact that Congress talks a good game about fiscal responsibility but when it comes down to actually voting --

Q Let's go a little slower, please.

MR. NESSEN: I have not said all that much yet.

Q Talks a good what?

MR. NESSEN: Talks a good game.

Q You are right about that.

MR. NESSEN: Oh, I asked for that.

The President is disappointed that Congress seems to talk a good game about fiscal responsibility but when it comes to actually voting to save the taxpayers money they vote the same old way.

I think you know without my going into any great detail that the bill would provide about a billion dollars more than the President asked, adding to the deficit. That is the overall figure, but when you look at the details of the bill you will see that the individual increases are unjustified, unnecessary and unwise.

Q When you say "individual increases" could you be more specific?

MR. NESSEN: I will have to get an analysis of the bill, but when you get down to the specific provisions of the bill.

Among other things, the bill adds \$382 million to this fiscal year deficit and adds \$372 million to the 1977 deficit. Those figures are increases above what the President recommended. This would simply carry on the process of raising expectations for higher and higher spending in future years. Also, the bill will add 8,000 people to the Federal payroll.

So, as I say, the President's feeling is that the Democratic Congress talks about practicing fiscal responsibility but when it comes to voting they don't follow their own claims.

Q Ron, does the President read anything into this as far as the outlook for his spending proposals being concurred with by the Congress? Does it make him less optimistic than he was before?

MR. NESSEN: No, because he believes that he is right and that the public is behind him on this and will communicate that to Congress.

Q Ron, in light of what you said, how does the President account for the fact that 49 Republicans voted with the Democrats in overriding?

MR. NESSEN: Well, this is the President's view of the veto override.

Q Did this subject come up this morning with the Congressional leaders?

MR. NESSEN: It did not, no.

Q Ron, on this whole subject, since the matter seems to be moot now, I am wondering if you are trying to prepare the President in not spending some of this money as Mr. Nixon used to do?

MR. NESSEN: I have not heard any discussion of that, Bob.

On the Defense Department appropriation and its Angola amendment, you know the statement we put out last night. The President will study the bill when it arrives here and will study a variety of the provisions, not just the Angola provision, before deciding whether to sign it or veto it.

Q If the Angola money is cut out of it as has happened on the Hill, what advantage is there to vetoing it other than spite?

MR. NESSEN: There are a number of other provisions in there that, as I say, the President is not happy with. For one thing, the money total is below what he requested.

Q What did he request, Ron? Do you remember?

MR. NESSEN: Well, it represents a \$7 billion cut not counting the Vietnam money.

Q Isn't that fiscal responsibility? (Laughter)

MR. NESSEN: Well, as the President said in his State of the Union, we have to order our priorities and divide the money up according to needs and he believes that the Defense Department needed additional money.

Q Ron, will the President make a formal request for restoration of the Angola funds and other legislation pending?

MR. NESSEN: It is possible but not decided that the President may send a separate request for Angola money but it is not decided yet whether he will or not. It is a possibility.

Q Can you comment any further on that possible separate request from what you did last night? Do you know any more specifics?

MR. NESSEN: It has not moved any further since what I said last night.

Q Why does he think he could do it in a separate request when it was voted on so overwhelmingly?

MR. NESSEN: Somebody asked me here yesterday about how does he think he can get this through Congress when the public is so completely against him, and I see NBC said last night the public was evenly divided on the matter according to its poll. So by presenting the arguments clearly and forcefully as the President did in his letter yesterday to the Speaker, he hopes to be able to persuade Congress that the course he is pursuing is the necessary one.

Q Ron, would he possibly make some effort towards compromise, though, such as being willing to spend the money openly instead of covertly?

MR. NESSEN: Well, whether to make a separate request and, if so, in what form, has not been decided yet.

On the Pat Moynihan story, I think Secretary Kissinger talked to some of you in front of Blair House, I guess it was. The President, as I have said all along, completely approves of and supports the way Ambassador Moynihan is conducting his office at the UN. Pat was in here yesterday and the President told him personally and directly that he does think he is doing a good job at the UN.

Q Did they talk about that -- the cable?

MR. NESSEN: They didn't talk about the so-called cable because it had not been printed yet, but the President did tell him yesterday that he approved of the job he was doing.

Q The President didn't know about the cable? I mean, the Ambassador did not volunteer that he had written such a thing?

MR. NESSEN: It was not a lengthy part of the conversation.

Q Does the President think that the State Department is undercutting Ambassador Moynihan and, if he does think so, has he done anything about it, to tell Kissinger and others to let the man --

MR. NESSEN: Well, Moynihan has not said that the State Department is undercutting him and certainly the Secretary gave him a strong endorsement this morning, if you listened to that tape.

Q He said basically that he does feel he is being undermined.

MR. NESSEN: No, he didn't, Helen, and I suggest you listen to Secretary Kissinger and what he said about the support Pat has from him and others at the State Department and also what is a fairly routine exercise in a Washington bureaucracy which is that everybody does not always agree with everything and every way that a person conducts his business.

Q Well, he is complaining, isn't he?

MR. NESSEN: Dr. Kissinger?

Q No, no, no, no. We are talking about Moynihan. Kissinger has nothing to do with this.

MR. NESSEN: Well, Pat is supported by the President, by the Secretary of State and by the top officials of the State Department.

Q Did the President deplore the leaking of this cable, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: He didn't say one way or the other.

Q Did the matter come up when Moynihan was here?

MR. NESSEN: It did not.

Q The President was not aware that he had sent it out or he didn't know?

MR. NESSEN: As far as I know he was not; that was not the purpose of the meeting.

Q He just read about it in the paper?

MR. NESSEN: This morning?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: Yes, he did.

Q What was his reaction?

Q If, in fact, the cable was sent out on the 23rd of January and Moynihan was in here yesterday talking to the President, presumably one of the things they would talk about would be the UN.

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Why would Moynihan's massive complaint be sent to every embassy around the world and not be raised with the President of the United States?

MR. NESSEN: I don't accept that it was a massive complaint, Ted.

Q It takes a full page in the New York Times.
(Laughter)

MR. NESSEN: That does not make it a massive complaint.

Q You don't think so?

MR. NESSEN: I am telling you what the President said to Pat yesterday apparently in passing. My understanding is the cable didn't come up yesterday and both Secretary Kissinger and the President are on record today supporting Pat. I don't know what further we can do.

Q Ron, how does the President feel about picking up the paper and finding that? He is not annoyed by that?

MR. NESSEN: Finding what, Bob?

Q Well, what I would call some directions to the President on how he ought to run the State Department.

MR. NESSEN: I don't read it that way and I don't think it is accurate.

Q How do you read it? How do you see this cable?

MR. NESSEN: I listened to the tape of what Secretary Kissinger said today and I thought it was --

Q We are not talking about Kissinger. We are talking about Moynihan's complaint.

MR. NESSEN: I am in no position to judge Moynihan's complaint. I am only telling you how the President and Secretary Kissinger and the top officials of the State Department feel about Pat. I am in no position to judge the cable. I have not read that whole cable, as a matter of fact.

Q He does not feel that he is getting support.

MR. NESSEN: Well, you have the President of the United States and the Secretary of State of the United States behind him.

Q This is the second time around and he is still complaining. (Laughter)

MR. NESSEN: Moving right along.

Q Does the President have any question about whether Kissinger and Moynihan can operate in foreign affairs together, whether it is compatible to have both Moynihan and Kissinger in high public areas?

Q Whether the world is big enough for the two of them? (Laughter)

MR. NESSEN: I think your question is, does he think, as Rudy said, the world is big enough for both of them.

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: Certainly so, yes. I mean, he appointed Pat and he keeps Henry.

Q Did Moynihan mention that he might resign soon and maybe go into politics?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q He didn't apply formally for his job?

MR. NESSEN: As far as I know he did not. (Laughter)

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Q Did you know of the cable before it appeared in the Times?

MR. NESSEN: No, I did not.

Q Ron, one more question on Angola. Could I go back for a moment?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Is it conceivable he would veto the bill --

MR. NESSEN: Just to go back, if I may, because I have sensed that I have not persuaded all of you. You read Secretary Kissinger's own remarks and the President's own remarks and you see that there is certainly no policy difference on this issue.

Q Obviously the person that is not convinced is Moynihan, though, Ron; it is not us.

Q Have you read the cablegram?

MR. NESSEN: Not the entire cablegram.

But as Henry said, that any bureaucracy in Washington -- and I assume that means newspaper bureaucracies as well as Government bureaucracies -- there are always some folks down along the line who don't agree with every activity and every action. That is the way Henry put it and I think that is an accurate summation of the situation.

Q Ron, does the President then favor a policy of letting other Nations know that if they don't support us diplomatically and go along with us that we feel free to take some form of action which might be against their interests?

MR. NESSEN: I didn't go into any detail, but what I was referring to when I said that the President and Henry have both spoken out and reiterated the same policy that Pat is pursuing--they have both said that, first of all, aid programs are geared to our own national interests, and, secondly, they have said that our attitude toward other countries are based on their actions toward us. I mean, this is basic American policy that the President and Kissinger have both enunciated in the past.

Q Ron, would it be fair to say that both the President and Secretary Kissinger might not disapprove totally of the flamboyance with which Mr. Moynihan is pursuing his policy?

MR. NESSEN: Ted, I have said before that the President approves of the way that Pat is performing his duties, and I think that includes both content and manner.

Q Ron, on Angola, if I can put my question, is it conceivable that he might veto the bill because of Angola quite apart from the other provisions you say he is considering?

MR. NESSEN: Well, there is no decision one way or the other because it has to be reviewed for a number of matters that are in his mind and need some study before he makes his decision. He has not decided one way or the other.

Q Do you have any timetable on sending proposed legislation or messages to Congress yet?

MR. NESSEN: There is a rough timetable which, I think, is going to be firmed up with some shifts and there will not be any legislation going this week. I would say tentatively it is scheduled to begin to go next week.

Q Ron, has the President decided not to make any statement on abortion at all?

MR. NESSEN: No, he has not, Les.

Q What is his position?

MR. NESSEN: His position is that it is a very complicated issue which he wants to give some thought to before he makes a public statement on it.

Q Can you give me some ideas as to what areas will be covered in the first messages?

MR. NESSEN: I didn't bring my timetable out here with me and I would rather wait until the schedule is firm before I tell you.

Q To follow up on abortion, he has never taken a position on abortion in the past?

MR. NESSEN: I have not searched the record that clearly, Helen.

Q Just to get this in perspective, I wondered whether he was revising --

MR. NESSEN: I have not searched the record that closely.

Q Ron, didn't he take one the first month when Jerry terHorst was the Press Secretary. Didn't he take one then?

MR. NESSEN: I just don't know one way or the other.

Q Ron, do you have any timing on the State of the World Message yet?

MR. NESSEN: No timing on it, no. There will be one.

Q Is President Ford going to get clobbered in the Florida primaries?

MR. NESSEN: Well, on the subject of the Florida primary, I have not seen or talked to Johnny Apple for about six months. The last time I saw him was at the Palm Restaurant and we didn't talk politics.

Q Did the story say you had seen him?

MR. NESSEN: The story quoted me as telling Apple those things. I have not seen Apple.

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Q That is not quite so. The story quoted you.

MR. NESSEN: Let me finish what I am saying, Walt, and maybe you will learn something.

I have not talked to Johnny Apple so obviously the quotes did not come from me to Johnny Apple. I have talked with some reporters informally about Florida. The fact of the matter is that I am not a political expert or a primary State expert so I don't know of my own knowledge what the situation is in Florida.

I do know that the latest report to the President on Florida was given this morning at the meeting with the Congressional leaders and it was given by Bo Callaway and by Stu Spencer and by Lou Frey himself, who was there.

Q Was Callaway there, too, because we didn't see his name on there?

MR. NESSEN: Who?

Q Callaway.

MR. NESSEN: Callaway and Stu Spencer and Lou Frey were all there, yes.

What they told the President -- and these are the people who know because they are working on the thing and I am not -- is that real progress is being made in Florida; that there have been some difficulties there but they are being overcome. All three told the President that he can win in Florida and that they are encouraged by the outlook in Florida.

Q Could he have mentioned your analysis? I mean, your alleged analysis?

MR. NESSEN: No, my name didn't come up because I am not one of your noted political seers.

Q Did the Johnny Apple quotes accurately reflect something you have said about the Florida primary?

MR. NESSEN: As I say, I said I have talked to reporters informally about Florida, Walt, but I don't know anything about the outlook in Florida.

Q Can you tell us anything about when he is going down there to campaign and how often?

MR. NESSEN: No. Lou Frey this morning said that the people down there were looking forward to it and he would like to be able to announce the date, and he was told that the date had not been fixed yet, and it has not been fixed yet.

Q Is it only going to be one trip, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: Well, one trip is being planned at this point, right.

Q Can you tell us just informally what you told those other reporters informally? (Laughter)

MR. NESSEN: As I said, I don't know anything about Florida.

Q I mean, is that what you told them? (Laughter)

MR. NESSEN: But then again, that has never stopped me from talking before.

Q What was that, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: The experts who know what the outlook in Florida is told it directly to the President this morning and I have relayed that to you.

Q Ron, you are not denying the quote in the New York Times?

MR. NESSEN: I am saying that I don't know anything about the outlook in Florida because I have no way of knowing what the outlook in Florida is.

Q Informally, have you ever told anyone that the President would get clobbered in Florida?

MR. NESSEN: The President was given the official report of those who are running the campaign.

Q That is not what I asked.

Q Ron, that was a very legitimate question. Couldn't you answer Annie's question? That was a very important question, Ron; a very strategic question. (Laughter) Annie has been so polite, Ron. Couldn't you give her an answer?

MR. NESSEN: Aren't you pleased to have your question endorsed by Les?

Q I would be more pleased to have an answer.

MR. NESSEN: The Good Housekeeping seal of approval. Les says it is a good question.

Q Ron, you haven't answered my question.

Did you, at any time this week, use the phrase about President Ford getting clobbered?

MR. NESSEN: I didn't talk to anybody about Florida this week.

Q How about last week, Ron? (Laughter)

MR. NESSEN: Let's leave it where it is.

Q But you are informally denying --

MR. NESSEN: I have never --

Q When did you decide you are not an expert? Can we take from here on in?

MR. NESSEN: You can certainly take it from here on in that I am not an expert on any primary outlook and I have never pretended to be.

Q What about skiing conditions? (Laughter)

MR. NESSEN: That is another area in which I am not an expert.

Q Or plumbing in West Virginia?

MR. NESSEN: That is another area.

Q And Louisiana, there is another one, isn't it?

Q Let me bring up something about Moynihan again.

MR. NESSEN: All right.

Q Moynihan's speech after the vote the other night was said to be very moderate by most diplomatic observers. Did the President have anything to do with that? Did he pass the word along that he wanted a moderate response to that vote?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know that I would accept your particular adjective, John. Yes, that did reflect the President's views following the UN vote.

There were two statements issued. There was Pat Moynihan's statement during the debate and the statement that the State Department put out after the debate. They both reflected the President's view that however that particular vote came out the President strongly believes that the momentum toward a settlement or another step toward a settlement must be kept up and that stalemate has always resulted in growing tensions in the past and he does not want that to happen now and so he wants to leave that particular vote behind and move on with the peace process. So both of those statements reflected his views.

Q Ron, is it true that the President called Mr. Crawford over at HUD yesterday and demanded his resignation and that the Justice Department is now investigating a possible conflict of interest?

MR. NESSEN: I think HUD has put out a press release on Mr. Crawford's resignation. I am not aware that the President called him, but there is a press release from HUD that will give you the status of Mr. Crawford's resignation.

Q It does not say anything about the Justice Department?

MR. NESSEN: The press release does say something about the Justice Department, right.

The HUD press release says that the matter was referred to the Justice Department.

Q Ron, is the White House closing its office here that had to do with minority affairs, especially to Spanish speaking?

MR. NESSEN: No. Fernando DeBaca is still here and Stan Scott has been replaced by J. C. Calhoun.

Q DeBaca is still here?

MR. NESSEN: Fernando DeBaca?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: Absolutely.

Q Has he already accepted a position in New Mexico and has it already been announced? He has been away from his office for some time. Has he gone already?

MR. NESSEN: I am told that I ought to check on that. I am not aware of anything specific but I will check on it.

Q Ron, on Crawford again, there is no question but what the President desired his resignation, whether he called him directly or not, is there?

MR. NESSEN: His resignation was requested, that is correct.

Q By whom? Do you know?

MR. NESSEN: I really don't, to be honest with you. Whether it was Carla or -- Buchen was aware of the matter and discussed it with Crawford and suggested it would be proper for him to resign.

Q The President had nothing to do with this?

MR. NESSEN: I am not aware that he was directly involved, no.

Q Ron, has the Counsel's Office looked into the question of whether any law might have been violated by those people who sent checks along with their letters on the common situs bill?

MR. NESSEN: That is such an old item I don't know if I still have all my stuff or not. I think I gave up this morning and thought it would never come up again.

Q Question, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: I guess I did take that out of this thing today.

Phil was asking about that old matter of people who sent in checks. I am told that all the checks that came to the White House came in after the veto and made no direct reference to the fact that they were in any way related to the veto and they were all sent back.

Q The question, though, was whether there might have been a violation of any law by people sending money related to a specific issue.

MR. NESSEN: Well, apparently they were not related to a specific issue. The letters didn't say "Here is your reward for vetoing the common situs bill." That is a paraphrase, Phil.

Q Ron, do you have anything for us on the letter from Mr. Buchen to the FEC?

MR. NESSEN: It is still in the drafting stage and has not gone yet.

Q You have been drafting it for two weeks.

MR. NESSEN: I know. We want to be very careful.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END (AT 12:15 P.M. EST)