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NEWS CONFERENCE

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AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 10:35 A.M. EDT

JUNE 11, 1976

FRIDAY

MR. NESSEN: You have seen the announcement of Prime Minister Trudeau's visit. Also I want to tell you I think you have seen the story from the Hill that says that Senator Tower has asked -- because he was not chosen as a delegate to the Republican Convention -- that he wishes to withdraw as the President's Floor Manager at Kansas City. So the President has asked Senator Griffin of Michigan to be his Floor Manager at the convention and Congressman Robert Michel of Illinois to be the Deputy Floor Manager at Kansas City.

Q Did President Ford ask Senator Tower to relinquish that?

MR. NESSEN: No, he sent that letter in here. Senator Tower released a letter asking that he be taken off.

Q That was not with any prompting from the Ford campaign?

MR. NESSEN: Not as far as I know.

The other thing, at 11:45 the President is going to announce an additional action to help the people who have suffered because of the Teton Dam disaster, and that will be a short Oval Office ceremony open for coverage, film and whatever else you care -- a short statement by the President. Then I think there will still be time -- if that starts at 11:45 -- to write that and still make the airport.

Q What is he going to do?

MR. NESSEN: He is going to ask for supplemental appropriation to compensate --

Q How far as his budget now gone over its projected ceiling?

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MR. NESSEN: I will have to get that from OMB.

Q Compensate for what?

MR. NESSEN: You will have a fact sheet explaining exactly what the request will do.

Q For the victims of the dam?

MR. CARLSON: The dam disaster.

Q But this would be overall, above the normal disaster assistance -- would be direct payments?

MR. NESSEN: I have not seen the exact form of the legislation.

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Q Can you give us any more on the Missouri trip? Has the President been making any phone calls in advance? What are the series of meetings going to be like? Three or four at a time, or what?

MR. NESSEN: I have not looked at the briefing paper, but the PFC is probably the better place to go for information on that.

Q What is the President's mood?

MR. NESSEN: It is fine. Why shouldn't it be?

Q Ron, let me ask a question about Senator Tower. Will Senator Tower be going to the Republican Convention, do we know?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know that, Russ.

Q And he will have no official function that you know of other than a member of the Texas delegation?

MR. NESSEN: He will not now serve as the Floor Manager as the President had intended.

Q But the President has no other job for him? He won't be part of the President's party or anything like that?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know that.

Q When you say they have been asked, have they accepted?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Was it a phone call?

MR. NESSEN: As far as I know, it was a phone call, yes.

Q Last night?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what the timing was.

Q Did the President make any phone calls, before going to Missouri? Has he contacted delegates out there?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know.

Q What is the political activity in order to get the needed delegates? Is he doing anything extra beyond this trip?

MR. NESSEN: He indicated that at some point he was probably going to call some of the uncommitted delegates, but I don't know whether he started.

Q How about inviting some of them to the White House? Is that a possibility?

MR. NESSEN: I have not heard of that.

Q Can you say anything about visits to other State conventions?

MR. NESSEN: Nothing beyond what I said the other day, which is that there could be one or two.

Q Do you know anything about Iowa?

MR. NESSEN: It is a possibility.

Q Colorado?

MR. NESSEN: Not that I know of.

Q Minnesota?

MR. NESSEN: Not that I know of.

Q Ron, Ed Rudman apparently has announced in New Hampshire at a news conference that he is withdrawing his name from consideration. Does the White House have any reaction?

MR. NESSEN: The President is very, very disappointed in that, and he nominated Mr. Rudman because he was extremely well qualified for the job, based on his experience in New Hampshire, and the President just regrets very much that Mr. Rudman has felt it necessary to have his name withdrawn.

Q Does he have any comment on Hays?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Has he had any contacts with him or sent any message or flowers?

MR. NESSEN: To Rudman?

Q To Wayne Hays in the hospital?

MR. NESSEN: Not that I know of.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Ron.