

This Copy For _____

NEWS CONFERENCE

#48

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 12:25 P.M. EDT

OCTOBER 11, 1974

FRIDAY

MR. NESSEN: I am sorry. There was a Cabinet meeting this morning and I wanted to sit in on it and it threw everything behind schedule, so I apologize.

The President came to the Oval Office just before 8:00 this morning and held the meetings which we have posted. The Congressmen in the meetings -- you have seen those names -- and he had a Cabinet meeting.

In addition, this morning he has seen Bill Timmons, Bob Hartmann, Don Rumsfeld, Jack Marsh, Roy Ash, Phil Buchen, and myself.

The Cabinet meeting -- the President began by giving Cabinet members a brief preview of the speech he plans to make next Tuesday night in Kansas City to the Future Farmers of America. He told them he would amplify and give more specific details of the voluntary program that he is asking Americans to participate in to fight inflation.

This speech is available for television coverage, if anybody cares to do it.

He talked a little bit about his economic speech and said it was a good program, despite what the critics say. Some say it is too tough and some say it is not tough enough, but no one is giving any plan that is any better. That is fairly close to a direct quote.

Secretary Simon gave a report on his testimony before the House Ways and Means Committee. Roy Ash reported that it looks like the departments and agencies are abiding by the President's order to reduce their number of employees. He said there have been very few appeals from that, and so he assumes that the new figures will be met.

MORE

#48

The President thanked the Cabinet members for their cooperation in reducing their number of employees. He said it does save money. He said there is some fat.

Mr. Ash reported that the Council on Wage and Price Stability will meet this afternoon to make plans for what the President mentioned in his speech, which is that Government policies and agency policies and procedures will be reviewed to make sure there are no policies and procedures which themselves cause inflation. And Mr. Ash reminded the Cabinet members that the President now wants them to draw up an Inflation Impact Statement for any legislative proposals or procedures that they plan to put into effect.

Attorney General Saxbe gave a brief report on the situation in Boston. The Attorney General reported the Governor is calling up more police and that if there could be several days of relative quiet, that the situation might resolve itself.

Q Will you take a question on that point, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: I could, or would you rather I finished?

Q I was curious. Why would Attorney General Saxbe give the Cabinet a report on the Boston situation when the President has disavowed any Federal role or responsibility, except, of course, in a court of last resort, I suppose? Are you trying to have this thing both ways -- you are in it and you are out of it?

MR. NESSEN: No, Jim. There are five community relations employees or officials of the Justice Department in Boston following the case and giving the kind of help they always give in situations like this.

They are working with the judge and with the police.

Q Officials of what?

MR. NESSEN: Justice Department Community Relations Organization.

Q In the press conference he did not want to send any Federal officials to Boston and hoped it would not be necessary.

MR. NESSEN: Wasn't he talking about law enforcement type officials?

Q He said Federal officials. Of course it was in the context of marshals, I suppose.

MR. NESSEN: I believe it was.

Q Well, I was just curious.

MR. NESSEN: That is the situation. The President asked the Attorney General to keep him posted.

Q In the meeting today he asked him to keep him posted?

MR. NESSEN: Right.

There was at the end of the meeting a discussion by several Cabinet members of legislation and the status affecting their departments.

The President is meeting now with the Senate Republican Steering Committee. The chairman of that is Senator Curtis of Nebraska. I think you have seen a list of the participants -- or have you seen a list of the participants?

Q No.

MR. NESSEN: Do you want to post afterwards? All those people might not be there. We will post afterwards.

The Senators requested this meeting to discuss a number of legislative matters with the President.

This afternoon at 2:00, the President will meet with the President's Committee on Mental Retardation. The committee is in town today, and yesterday, for its quarterly meeting. The President will meet with them and there will be a chance to take photographs of that.

The President is meeting this afternoon at 3:00 with the President of Somalia, Mohamed Siad Barre, also Chairman of the Organization of African Unity. I mentioned yesterday that they will take this opportunity to discuss ways of strengthening American ties with Africa as well as general African issues and American-Somalia relations.

Secretary Kissinger is in Damascus today where he is meeting with Syrian President Assad. The President has been following closely Dr. Kissinger's cabled reports on his two meetings with Egypt's President Sadat and his meeting with Foreign Minister Fahmy.

Following his meeting with President Assad today, Secretary Kissinger will go to Amman, Jordan.

Don Rumsfeld is leaving this evening to return to Brussels. I think I mentioned when he first came here at some point he was going to have to go back and make his farewell calls on the King and on the NATO councils and any other Ambassadorial chores.

He is coming back here Wednesday afternoon.

The President will meet tomorrow at 2:00 in the Cabinet Room with the Citizen's Action Committee to Fight Inflation. This will be a working session. The group is the one which was named earlier, and their names were contained in the fact sheet distributed with the President's speech on Tuesday.

Q Who is the chairman, Ron? You did not give a chairman in those 17 names.

MR. NESSEN: I thought we did have a chairman, didn't we? I am not sure if Sylvia Porter is the chairman or not. I will peak in this afternoon and see who is sitting at the head of the table, and then we will know.

Q This is tomorrow?

MR. NESSEN: Tomorrow.

Q Will that be open for coverage?

MR. NESSEN: I think there would be some pictures that could be taken at the beginning.

Q Is there going to be a briefing afterwards?

MR. NESSEN: There could be a briefing afterwards, I guess.

Speaking of answering questions, I think we are going to try something new; that is, the questions that are left over from the morning briefing that we cannot answer for one reason or another, I think we will start posting them during the afternoon as we get them, if that would help any.

This afternoon at 3:30, the President will sign the Energy Reorganization Act of 1974. It creates the Energy Research and Development Administration, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and the Energy Resource Council, and it abolishes the Atomic Energy Commission.

We are going to have a fact sheet on this for you, Bob, shortly, and it will go into some detail about how this works.

The signing ceremony is going to be in the Cabinet Room at 3:30, and I believe the President will have some things to say at that time.

Now right after that signing ceremony, which is available for people to take film and pictures of --

Q Will there be a pool?

MR. NESSEN: -- and I guess there will be a pool, of course, and it will be piped out here.

Then right after that we are going to try to bring some people out here from the AEC and the Interior Department to explain the bill in more detail for those who are interested. We have not quite figured out who is going to do the briefing, but you can also cover that on sound film if you would like.

About 3:45 this afternoon the President plans to go to Bethesda Naval Hospital to bring Mrs. Ford home to the White House. The President will go out in a helicopter, and they will come back together in the helicopter, and they should be here about 4:30.

Q Will she be ambulatory? Will she be able to walk under her own steam? Will you give us some guidance on that?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know the answer to that.

Q Will we be allowed to see the arrival?

MR. NESSEN: If any of you would like to go out to witness her return, we will take you out just after the President departs.

Q South Lawn?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, South Lawn.

Q What about at the hospital. Any chance of getting --

MR. NESSEN: I assume that she will come out that side door, and if you want to see her out there, you could do that.

Q Did you say we would have to go out there shortly after he departs?

MR. NESSEN: It does not take long to get out there and back. It is a four-minute flight to the hospital.

Q You said he is not coming back here until about 4:30, is that right?

MR. NESSEN: Well, he is leaving at about 3:45.

Q In other words, you are going to have a briefing in here at that point, too, is that right?

MR. NESSEN: You can work out the details.

Q The President was very cooperative and helpful and kind to us out at the hospital. He would always come out and say how she was. Would you anticipate he and Mrs. Ford would be inclined to say something, either there or here, and could you give us guidance as to where the statement will be?

MR. NESSEN: I would say if anything is going to be said -- and I don't know if this has been determined yet -- I would say it would be here.

Q On the South Lawn?

MR. NESSEN: Yes, sir.

Q Will you have a platform for the cameras?

MR. NESSEN: We will work out the details; Bill will, or Bob.

Q Do you plan to invite staff to help to welcome her?

MR. NESSEN: I think I heard some people in the building saying they were going to go out and see her back. Nobody is being herded out there, but if anybody wants to go, they can go and watch.

I don't have a schedule for the weekend, but the President does plan to work here at the White House on Saturday and Sunday, and also we did tell you about that one meeting tomorrow at 2 o'clock.

Next Tuesday, the President is going to address the Future Farmers of America in Kansas City, as he announced himself. The speech can be carried on TV, if you want to. He will stay overnight in Kansas City, and Wednesday he will make appearances in Sioux Falls, South Dakota; Lincoln, Nebraska and Indianapolis, Indiana.

Q What is his Monday schedule, Ron. Is he going to be doing anything here?

MR. NESSEN: I have not seen the Monday schedule in detail.

Q Kansas City, is he going to make a campaign appearance on behalf of Tom Curtis?

MR. NESSEN: On the original schedule, Kansas City was down for a nonpolitical stop. I just don't know if there have been any changes.

Q Do you know if Mr. Curtis will be there to sit on the platform with him or otherwise take part in the --

MR. NESSEN: I don't have that much detail on the Kansas City stop, Jim.

Q When will we leave for Kansas City?

MR. NESSEN: It looks like the speech will be about 9:30 Kansas City time. That is just the way it looks at the moment. It is not locked up.

Q You are talking about in the evening?

MR. NESSEN: P.M.

Q Will we return here Wednesday night from Indianapolis?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

I mentioned to you, I think, just in passing this Council on Wage and Price Stability holding its first formal meeting under Mr. Simon at 2 o'clock today in the White House. This council was signed into law by the President on August 24, and Dr. Albert Rees was named as the Director of the council.

The members are Simon, Seidman, Secretary Dent, Secretary Butz, Secretary Brennan, Counsellor Armstrong, Roy Ash, and Mrs. Virginia Knauer. Since it is new, it is obvious that they are going to have to spend this first formal meeting organizing their plans and, as I said earlier, at the Cabinet meeting the President indicated one of the first things he wanted the council to organize was a survey of how the policies by the Government departments and agencies themselves might cause inflation.

The President is today accepting the resignation of Patrick J. Buchanan as Special Consultant to the President, effective November 15, 1974.

Q Would you give us his title again, please?

MR. NESSEN: Special Consultant to the President. In accepting Mr. Buchanan's resignation, the President expressed his personal thanks to Pat for his assistance to the President and the White House staff during the transition period. The President thanked Pat for his great dedication to the Nation.

Q What will he be doing during the 35 days between now and the time he leaves?

MR. NESSEN: Well, some of the same things that he has been doing up through the transition period, which is to help the new people here with their jobs. He has also been doing some work on material for the news conferences, and he has been helping out with the news summaries. Those sorts of things.

Q You told us the President did not want any of the Nixon people to just be put out on the street. Can we assume Mr. Buchanan has a new job and will you tell us what it is?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know precisely what the new job is. I can assure you -- you ought to ask him about that -- he is not being put out on the street.

Q Is he going to a Government job?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what the job is. You should ask Pat.

Q He is not going to the St. Louis Globe Democrat, is he?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what he is going to do, Jim.

That looks like it might be it for announcements.

Q Ron, why would the President discuss legislation with the steering committee rather than with the leadership?

MR. NESSEN: It is not a question of either-or. He talks to the leadership, and this particular group of Members of Congress also wanted to talk about legislation. One does not exclude the other.

Q May I ask a couple of more questions about Pat Buchanan before we get too far away from him? Do you know what his salary was, and is, or has been for his time in the White House?

MR. NESSEN: His salary has been \$42,500.

Q Is there an exchange of letters, and if there is, will you make them public?

MR. NESSEN: There is an exchange of letters. Have we not made those letters public?

Q Not to my knowledge.

Q Is this your first announcement of this resignation?

MR. NESSEN: As far as I know. It was not in the packet, was it?

Q We did not get a packet.

MR. NESSEN: We are more disorganized than usual around here today. I read you some highlights of the letter. The President's letter was a "Dear Pat," letter and expressed his personal thanks "for your assistance to me in the White House during these past weeks of transition. Beyond this, I want to thank you for your great dedication to our Nation, dedication that I know will continue to serve our country well for years to come."

Q Does Buchanan's letter give any reason for leaving or say anything about his hopes for the Ford Presidency or give any hint of his own future plans?

MR. NESSEN: I think you are going to get those letters right now, and you can read them yourselves.

Q Ron, Senator Griffin says the President is not planning to resubmit the name of Peter Flanigan for Ambassador. Is that true?

MR. NESSEN: I certainly have not heard it. The last word I heard was that Flanigan was the President's choice for Ambassador, and remains the President's choice for Ambassador.

MORE

Q Will they resubmit it, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: I guess that is what that means, if he is still his choice for Ambassador.

Q Ron, does the President think Nelson Rockefeller's nomination will be jeopardized in any fashion by the disclosure of gifts and now the underwriting by the Rockefeller family of a book that was highly critical of former Justice Goldberg?

MR. NESSEN: Tom, I have never heard him indicate in any way he felt it was jeopardized. I think I have heard him say a number of times that he believes in the integrity of Governor Rockefeller.

Q Ron, has there been any "Dear Ken Clawson" letter or "Dear Jerry Warren" letter, or anyone else?

MR. NESSEN: The only other person I can talk about today is J. Fred Buzhardt. I hope I can talk about him. He left the White House on October 5.

Q Any letter?

MR. NESSEN: I don't believe Mr. Buzhardt was a Presidential appointee. He was a Presidential appointee? I don't have that exchange -- we better wait and see if I do have that exchange of letters.

Q Ron, why did it take six days to find out he was gone?

MR. NESSEN: It did not take six days. Nobody asked me about it.

Q Why didn't you just divulge it when he left?

Q How about Larry Higby, then? Do we have to go down name after name?

MR. NESSEN: I said I don't have anything else to say on any of the other names.

Q Do we have to ask every day for every name?

Q Ron, is he off the payroll? Is that what you are telling us?

MR. NESSEN: J. Fred Buzhardt; yes, he is.

Q Do you know what he is going to be doing, and I ask that because of course he was in a Government job in another department before coming here.

Is he going back to the Defense Department or any other Government job?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what his future is. He did not indicate he was going back to Defense.

Q Ron, if a White House employee is going back into a Government job and is still a part of the Administration, wouldn't you have some idea about it, and don't you think it is your responsibility to know that kind of thing -- if he is going to be general counsel of the Defense Department or Ambassador to South Africa or something like that?

MR. NESSEN: I think we did give you the only person going back into Government. As I recall, it was whoever it was that went to the Commerce Department -- Parker.

Q Does that mean that the absence of your knowledge is to be taken by us as a statement they are not going to work for Government?

MR. NESSEN: It is a statement of my knowledge and that is what it is. I don't know where all these people are going, and when I do, I will tell you. I am not trying to hide the fact they are going to other Government offices.

Q Ron, have you announced before that Buzhardt was off the payroll on October 5?

MR. NESSEN: No.

Q Ron, I think what we are trying to get at --

Q Ron, why didn't you tell us about that?

MR. NESSEN: About Buzhardt?

Q Has he been fired? Did he --

MR. NESSEN: No, he has not been fired. I can tell you that when President Ford came into office, Mr. Buzhardt indicated that he would like to leave, and the President asked him to stay on for a while to help the new staff of lawyers get acquainted with some of the pending legal matters, and he has now completed that work and he left when he had completed that work.

Q Wouldn't it save a lot of time if you would volunteer those?

MR. NESSEN: When I have other ones to announce we do plan to announce them.

Q You don't know whether Mr. Buzhardt went back to the Pentagon?

MR. NESSEN: I am told he gave no indication he was going back to the Pentagon.

Q Ron, I am still confused by oil. Secretary Simon is quoted today as saying the President does favor deregulation of domestic oil, but not now and not in the near future.

MR. NESSEN: Well, what is the problem there?

Q The problem there is he also favors the trade of deregulation of prices for the oil depletion allowance, but then he does not favor taking the oil depletion allowance off in the near future. Is that right?

MR. NESSEN: I think we are talking about a hypothetical situation which is what I think Simon meant, that we have not gotten -- that bill is still in the Ways and Means Committee and some of the sort of formula that we talked about yesterday of how and when oil might be decontrolled, some of the other pieces have not fallen into place yet.

I may not have emphasized as strongly as I should have yesterday that another piece of the formula was the windfall profits tax on oil which he also favors.

Q But according to Simon, he is not talking about the near future -- tomorrow or the next day or even a year or two. How far down the road are you looking hypothetically?

MR. NESSEN: I am not looking down the road hypothetically. You were looking down the road hypothetically. I think a lot of it depends on economic conditions and a lot of it depends on these other pieces falling into place, and they are nowhere near falling into place yet.

Q Ron, the President's authority to control petroleum prices expires next February.

MR. NESSEN: Yes, sir.

Q Is the President willing to let that legislation expire or will he ask for an extension?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know what he plans to do with the authority he has. That is fairly far away to make that decision.

Q Ron, may I ask a question? Do you remember last winter Americans were asked to keep their thermostats down to 68 degrees and there was this great program about voluntarism to save energy, and so on --

MR. NESSEN: Right.

Q And you remember shortly after Americans made a significant effort in doing that, they got socked with much greater utility bills, increased electricity rates, and so on. It was a similar situation with the gas conservation program.

In view of what happened last winter, I would like to ask you if the President is going to take this into consideration when he uses the moral powers of his office in that speech next week, asking for more voluntarism this winter?

In other words, how is he going to assure the American people that voluntary efforts won't end up getting them socked with greater utility rates, higher gasoline bills, and so on?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know. As the speech moves along toward preparation though, I will see that that factor is thought about by the speech writers.

Q Ron, in the pending business yesterday you were going to find out for us about the agreement between the Japanese and the American Governments on taking nuclear weapons into Japan, and I would like to have your answer on that. And secondly, I would like to know if the American Ambassador to Japan has indicated to the President that the trip may not be able to take place?

MR. NESSEN: In answer to the last part, I have not heard anything about the Japanese Ambassador indicating that.

Q I said the American Ambassador.

MR. NESSEN: I have not heard anything from the American Ambassador, either.

As for the weapons, I don't really have anything to add to what I said yesterday. The American policy is not to confirm or deny the location of nuclear weapons abroad. And to emphasize what I said yesterday, we are living up to our agreement with the Japanese on this matter.

If you have any other questions, I think the State Department could help you more than I can.

Q Ron, does that mean that we are not taking nuclear weapons on board those ships in --

MR. NESSEN: It means what I said. We are living up to our agreement. We never disclosed the location of nuclear weapons.

Q What is that agreement?

MR. NESSEN: You can get the language of the agreement from the State Department.

Q Does the President think it is appropriate for the Justice Department to continue to represent former President Nixon in civil actions?

MR. NESSEN: Well, on that matter Tom -- I have to get a new book or new answers. We have been giving the same old answers ever since I have been up here.

The letter from Peterson that I guess you are talking about, reflects a policy of the Justice Department, and I think for more details on this policy, I am told that the Justice Department is ready to explain the policy to you.

Q The question was, does the President think it is appropriate for the Justice Department to have that kind of policy?

MR. NESSEN: The Counsel's Office at the White House has discussed in general terms the range of problems of representing former Government officials who are sued in civil courts for actions or alleged actions while they were in office; but the Justice Department's policy in this regard was not formulated by the White House, and was not cleared in advance by the White House.

Q On reflection, what does the White House believe on that?

MR. NESSEN: It is a Justice Department policy, and I think we do not have anything further to say about it, except it was not formulated by the White House or cleared in advance by the White House.

Q The President had no personal knowledge prior to Mr. Peterson's letter?

MR. NESSEN: That is true.

Q Was this discussed this morning, Ron, at the Cabinet meeting?

MR. NESSEN: It was not.

Q Do you know if the President discussed it privately with Mr. Saxbe?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know that he has had an opportunity to see Mr. Saxbe privately. I don't know of any private meeting they have had.

Q Are you telling us the Peterson letter went to Congress without the knowledge, for instance, of Mr. Marsh, and people on the White House staff?

MR. NESSEN: That letter did not go to Congress, did it?

Q Whoever it went to.

MR. NESSEN: I thought it went to the former President's lawyer.

Q I am sorry, that is right, to Miller. The letter to Miller went to Miller without the knowledge of Mr. Marsh or anyone on the staff?

MR. NESSEN: I said it was not cleared in advance by the White House.

Q When did this discussion of the --

Q Clearance involving an okay, Ron, saying "fine, go ahead," but I am just talking about informal contacts in which they would have let Marsh or someone know they were going to send the letter. Are you telling us there was none of that, even?

MR. NESSEN: Not that I know of, Jim.

Q Can we, Ron, be a little more specific about the range of discussions by the White House Counsel's Office on the matter of the Government representing a former Government official? When did that occur?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know when it occurred, and I cannot be more precise about it.

Tom?

Q Ron, you mean you cannot tell us whether Mr. Buchen has been in contact with Mr. Peterson, for instance, about this specific letter?

MR. NESSEN: I cannot.

Q Ron, is that policy of the Justice Department going to be allowed to stand now that the President is aware of it?

MR. NESSEN: I will inquire further. I do not know.

Q When Mr. Saxbe talked about the few days of relative quiet in Boston, was he talking about the weekend or was he talking about a longer period?

MR. NESSEN: Also, I think Monday is a holiday, isn't it?

Q Yes.

MR. NESSEN: I think he thinks -- I really don't want to speak for Mr. Saxbe, but the thrust of his remarks seem to be the weekend and a holiday on Monday might quiet things down sufficiently.

MORE

Q Ron, to get back to Flanigan, you said a minute ago that he was still the President's choice for Ambassador. That seems to contradict everything that people on the Hill have been saying and things that have been said informally here.

Now also is the first time that anybody has said specifically one way or the other. Is that a studied decision now, to resubmit the name of Flanigan in spite of indications from people on the Hill that it might be a very rough confirmation hearing?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know why you say it is the first time because I have said this every day up here this week that I have been asked about it.

Q Does that mean he is going to resubmit the name?

Q Perhaps I missed it but I had not heard you say he was going to resubmit the name before.

MR. NESSEN: Well, I did not say that today, either, did I?

Q I asked the question, Ron, and you implied --

MR. NESSEN: All I am saying at the moment is that he is still the President's choice for Ambassador.

Q Will the name be resubmitted, because if it won't, he is not going to be the Ambassador.

MR. NESSEN: Obviously. If he is still his choice --

Q Is the President considering whether to resubmit it or has he made a decision?

MR. NESSEN: I have not seen any evidence that he is reconsidering Mr. Flanagan as his choice for Ambassador.

Q Can't you ask or inquire?

MR. NESSEN: I have asked every day.

Q How about just answering the question yes or no. Will he resubmit the nomination?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know the answer to that. All I know is that it was phrased in a different way, that he is still his choice for Ambassador.

Q We can assume he is going to resubmit it?

MR. NESSEN: You can assume whatever you want. I am telling you he is still the President's choice for Ambassador.

Q Has the President, since his news conference, ascertained that Rockefeller's gift to Ronan for \$550,000 was perfectly proper?

MR. NESSEN: I think the President said at the news conference that he was going to -- I forget the exact words -- but make himself aware of more than he knew about the Rockefeller gifts.

Q Ron, was he aware at the time he nominated Rockefeller to be Vice President of Rockefeller's involvement in the Goldberg project.

MR. NESSEN: Let me finish this. I think Mr. Buchen is pulling the information together on gifts for Rockefeller, not on any crash basis, but just gathering up the information.

I did not catch that question.

Q Was he aware at the time he nominated Governor Rockefeller to be Vice President of Rockefeller's involvement in the Goldberg book project?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know.

Q Ron, on another matter, is he going to sign the campaign reform bill?

MR. NESSEN: We talked about that this morning.

Q Can I expand on that --

MR. NESSEN: Maybe we will get an answer to that if we just wait a second.

Q I think we were told he said he was going to sign it this afternoon.

MR. NESSEN: What is the answer? We are still studying it?

It has not come yet. He is expected to sign the bill.

Q Ron, a question on the Justice Department matter again. You said that Department of Justice policy was not formulated by the White House and not cleared in advance by the White House.

As I look at that, it would appear that the President is not really aware of what his own people are doing on a matter that is politically very sensitive.

Is that the implication you mean to leave?

MR. NESSEN: I am not trying to leave any implication. I am telling you what the facts are and that is what the facts are.

Q Could you explain something about the President's busing philosophy and policy? He said he is against forced busing to achieve racial balance. Is he also against it as a correction for acts of segregation, of racial discrimination by school districts? Is he ever in favor of busing?

MR. NESSEN: Yes. He has spoken on that subject so often and at such great length over such a long period of time.

Q I don't mean to go back to a long period of time. Since he has been President.

MR. NESSEN: Beyond what he said at his news conference--that was not a full enough explanation at his news conference?

Q No. It does not cover busing that is not designed to achieve racial balance.

MR. NESSEN: You mean like if kids live far out in the country and the nearest school is five miles --

Q Busing to end segregation.

Q To dismantle a dual system, to create a unified system to desegregate.

Q Like in the South.

MR. NESSEN: I get the picture. If you would like a further elaboration on his views on busing, I would rather get it from him and not make it up here myself.

Q Will you do that? Will you post that?

MR. NESSEN: I will get it and post it.

Q Ron, could we have a news conference to clarify the last news conference?

MR. NESSEN: You don't need it now because the Wall Street Journal clarified the last news conference this morning.

Q Ron, at this Kansas City speech next week, is the President going to give the farmers any assurances, especially dairy and cattlemen, that they are going to get fair prices for their products?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know precisely what is going to be in the speech because only the general subject matter is in the speech.

Q Aren't they discussing it at the Cabinet meeting today?

MR. NESSEN: Fair prices for food?

Q What is going to be in the speech?

MR. NESSEN: I said he gave them a preview in general terms that it was going to be about voluntary participation in the inflation fight.

Q But he did not say anything about the price situation for dairy and cattlemen?

MR. NESSEN: He did not mention that at the Cabinet meeting.

Q Ron, is the President endorsing Mrs. Petty in her race against Chairman Mills?

MR. NESSEN: I will check that.

Q Ron, will you tell us officially why Mrs. Ford changed her Press Secretary and Social Secretary?

MR. NESSEN: Well, because she wanted to have her own staff working for her.

Q Despite the fact she had endorsed them before?

MR. NESSEN: I think she said she wanted them to stay on and they did stay on until she had an opportunity to select her own people.

Q Ron, to clear up the status of individuals, as far as yourself, have you --

MR. NESSEN: I have no resignation to announce today. (Laughter)

Q -- have you resigned from NBC or are you still on leave of absence?

MR. NESSEN: NBC, I found out, does not give leave of absences, so I am out here all alone.

Q Have you spit out the bullet yet?

MR. NESSEN: I signed a paper which nullifies the remaining term of my contract. I had some vacation pay coming, which I took in the form of pay, and I think certain benefits extend for 30 days after my departure, and when that is over, I am out here all alone.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Ron.

END (AT 1:04 P.M. EDT)

This Copy For _____

NEWS CONFERENCE

#49

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH RON NESSEN

AT 4:18 P.M. EDT

OCTOBER 11, 1974

FRIDAY

MR. NESSEN: This is not a full briefing. Some people asked me if I would provide some material on Mrs. Ford on the helicopter and so forth, which I will.

Before that, I wanted to say that the President met for 40 minutes this afternoon with the President of Somalia, Mohamed Siad Barre, who is also the Chairman of the Organization of African Unity. The President took this opportunity to underline the importance he attaches to strengthening and expanding American ties with black Africa, and his desires for improved relations with Somalia.

They reviewed a range of international issues, including the Middle East and general African issues. The President reaffirmed America's desire for mutually beneficial relations with Africa and steady and peaceful progress toward self-determination in Africa.

You saw the President leave and the helicopter landed on the helicopter pad at the hospital. He went by car, through the side entrance and up on the elevator to the little hallway outside the suite, and in the hallway the nurses and corpsmen who had cared for Mrs. Ford were lined up on both sides and he went around and shook hands with each of them and thanked them and had a few words with each one for caring for Mrs. Ford.

When he walked in, he said, "How is the patient?" Then he shook hands and then when that little ceremony was over, he said, "I hope she has behaved herself. I cannot express adequately our gratitude. You made her feel a great deal better," and then he said, as a joke, "This is a nice place, but I don't think she wants to hurry back."

MORE

#49

And then he went into her room for about 15 minutes or so and then they walked out together. You saw how she was dressed and so forth when she arrived. There was no wheelchair or anything. She walked to the elevator, down the elevator and down those little steps on the side.

She stopped at the microphones and said a few words. You have to get that from your colleagues. I did not have a chance to write down everything she said, but basically it was how happy she was and how well she felt. But you can get your quotes from the others who could hear better.

Then they got in the car and drove to the helicopter and got on the helicopter and he sat in his usual seat and she sat across from him. There was a little joking about this was an occasion that called for champagne.

Q On the helicopter?

MR. NESSEN: There was no champagne.

Q The talking was on the helicopter?

MR. NESSEN: Everything I say now is on the helicopter. Then, as the helicopter took off, they both waved out of the window. There were about 75 people who had come to the helicopter to wave goodbye.

Then, as they lifted off, they kept waving after they were in the air for a while, and then she said, "It is a beautiful day." Dr. Lukash leaned over and said, "She looks super," and then they passed over the Mormon Tabernacle, the Mormon Temple, and commented on how beautiful that was, and at one point they flew over a high school where there was football practice going on, and she said, "There is a football game down there," and the President said, "They are just practicing."

Then the President -- he looked out -- pretty much the whole flight was taken up with identifying the landmarks and Nancy Howe, if I did not mention it, was on the helicopter -- Lukash, Kennerly, myself, Colonel Blake -- one of the Air Force aides, and the Secret Service agents.

When we were just about here, the conversation turned around to this dress she was wearing, which was a new dress, and she said something about, "I guess he did not notice my new dress," and the President said, "I will notice it when the bill comes."

Q Was she speaking of the President or --

MR. NESSEN: It was sort of general conversation. I do not have the precise quotes, but that was the general idea.

Q Do you perhaps know the fabric of that dress? Was it suede or --

MR. NESSEN: Why don't you call over to Nancy Howe or somebody on the other side. I am not a great one for dress fabrics.

She had her hair done yesterday, and then once she got off the helicopter I think you saw everything that went on here, didn't you?

Q Can I ask about her recovery? When she went in the hospital, they told her she would be up there ten days, two weeks, something like that, and she would have a limited convalescence. Can you give us any idea --

MR. NESSEN: As to what her plans are?

Q How will she be physically restricted during the next several weeks?

MR. NESSEN: I did not check with the doctors precisely on that. We will get Bill Roberts to check that out for you.

Q What kind of treatment will she get now?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know that they have decided that she needs any treatment. The idea of these tests were to determine whether she needed any treatment. I don't know what decision has been made yet.

Q Ron, are you going to have a briefing tomorrow?

MR. NESSEN: Saturday? Why would we?

Q You have that meeting, the citizens' group meeting.

MR. NESSEN: What time is that?

Q Two o'clock.

MR. NESSEN: Do you want a briefing on that?

Q It is the only story going.

MR. NESSEN: Somebody will be here to try to help you out with that.

Q How about getting some of the people out here?

Q You don't want to work tomorrow?

MR. NESSEN: I am going to work tomorrow.

Q Does the President have a golf meeting scheduled tomorrow?

MR. NESSEN: My understanding is he is going to spend the whole weekend here. He wants to spend some time with her.

Does anybody have any strong feelings about a briefing on Monday? Do we need a briefing on Monday?

Q No.

MR. NESSEN: I don't think so.

Q What kind of holiday is Monday?

MR. NESSEN: Columbus day.

Q Ron, have you been able to find out what is going to happen with that continuing resolution? Will it be vetoed right away? I noticed during that signing ceremony one of the members said something about, we will be back Tuesday. Is there some kind of agreement he will veto the bill before that and they will come back and work on the veto?

MR. NESSEN: I have no timing on the veto. There is certainly no question that he will veto it, but as for the timing, I think he wants to study it a little more before he decides on the timing of it.

Q They are coming back on Tuesday?

MR. NESSEN: That is what I heard.

No briefing Monday, is that right?

Q There will be some kind.

MR. NESSEN: Some readout tomorrow on the Citizens' meeting.

Q Have you asked the President yet whether he endorses Mrs. Petty's candidacy?

MR. NESSEN: I did not ask him that. Did we post some answers back there?

Q No.

Q Is the campaign reform bill in the House yet? It was not this noon. Has it come in?

MR. NESSEN: I will have to check. I have been away myself this afternoon. I will find out.

Q Is there any chance he will sign it over the weekend?

MR. NESSEN: The campaign reform bill?

Q Over the weekend.

MR. NESSEN: I am not sure. I think it might be possible.

Q Would you tell us now what you are going to post?

MR. NESSEN: I have to see how many answers they have dug up so far. They had some answers. I thought they posted them already. The other one, does he endorse Mrs. Petty, and the other was --

Q Campaign reforms?

MR. NESSEN: When is he going to sign campaign reform.

Q And any gift from Rockefeller.

MR. NESSEN: Did he get any gift from Rockefeller?

Q When he is going to veto?

MR. NESSEN: I am not going to be able to get you that answer today because he is not going to make that decision today.

Q I would like to ask one thing more about Betty. What kind of schedule is she going to be following now? Do you have any guidance on that?

MR. NESSEN: No, I do not have any guidance on that.

Q Is she going to be spending a lot of time in bed?

MR. NESSEN: We will have to check with the doctor and see what he has gotten up for her. I don't know.

Q Do you have any idea when she will resume traveling with the President again; in other words, might she take the Japanese trip or is that too soon?

MR. NESSEN: Didn't we announce she was going on the Japanese trip?

Q Before she had the operation.

Q The guidance was she probably would not go --

MR. NESSEN: Where did you get that guidance from?

Q I got it from the wires. I don't know where anybody else got it.

MR. NESSEN: My understanding is there is no change in her plan to go on the Japanese trip.

Q The East Wing says there is no official schedule until --

Q Ron, on this continuing resolution --

MR. NESSEN: The campaign reform bill has not gotten here yet.

Q On the continuing resolution, the question is when it will be vetoed, not whether it will be vetoed. Is that correct?

MR. NESSEN: That is correct.

The campaign bill has not arrived here yet, and as far as I know, she is still scheduled to go to Japan.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END (AT 4:28 P.M. EDT)