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NEWS CONFERENCE

#322

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH BILL GREENER

AT 11:30 A.M. EDT

SEPTEMBER 17, 1975

WEDNESDAY

MR. GREENER: Let me, first of all, welcome a visitor we have from Nepal at the briefing today, Mr. Vista. He is Chairman and General Manager of RSS, Nepal's national news agency. It is nice to have you here with us.

The President today has appointed four persons as members of the National Advisory Council on Extension and Continuing Education. They are for terms expiring June 30, 1978. I think you have a release on these already.

As you know, the President is having a Cabinet meeting now, and Jack is in the Cabinet meeting. Hopefully, he will give us some sort of readout when he finishes.

Q What is the agenda for that, Bill?

MR. GREENER: They are discussing a briefing on the New York financial situation, a discussion by Secretary Butz and Secretary Dunlop on the sale of U.S. grain, a report on the Domestic Council public forums by Jim Cannon and the Vice President, an economic update by Alan Greenspan, and an energy update by Frank Zarb.

Q Bill, may I ask a question about the sale of the grain? Are the results of the fact-finders who went to Moscow being placed before the President at this meeting?

MR. GREENER: I don't know if Robinson has completed all the report, but a general outline of it is certainly being given to him.

Q Is Robinson at the meeting?

MR. GREENER: No, he is not.

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Q When do these Domestic Council forums start, and is the President going to attend any of them?

MR. GREENER: I don't know whether the President will attend any of them on the schedule, as yet. They start, I believe, on October 21. Denver is the first one.

Q You don't have any other cities yet?

MR. GREENER: No, I don't.

Q Is the President going out there? Is there a tentative schedule showing him in Denver?

MR. GREENER: No.

Q Are those things going to be a format like the Bill Baroody traveling circus?

MR. GREENER: It will be a different format. They haven't worked that all out. As soon as they do, we will have a full briefing on it.

Q Will you check into that SST inquiry that we had, several of us had, this morning? Is there any substance to it?

MR. GREENER: I have nothing on it at all.

Q What was that interesting thing?

MR. GREENER: I believe Walt pointed out on the wires that ran this morning that the French Minister of Transportation -- Is that correct, Walt?

Q There was a report out of France to the effect that an agreement had been reached with the United States that the U.S. would permit two Concord flights per week to land at Dulles, and subsequently the French Transportation Minister backed away and said there was no substance to it.

I wanted you to check and see if there was anything to it.

MR. GREENER: No, I have nothing on it.

Q Have you finished the announcements?

MR. GREENER: Yes.

Q Has the President turned over the material subpoenaed by the House committee?

MR. GREENER: They are up there meeting right now with the Pike committee, starting at ten o'clock this morning.

Q Who is?

MR. GREENER: Rod Hills and Phil Buchen.

Q How could he be in the Cabinet meeting if he is on the Hill?

MR. GREENER: Who?

Q Phil Buchen.

MR. GREENER: I am not sure he is listed as being in the Cabinet meeting.

Q He is listed here.

MR. GREENER: He may have been listed as scheduled there at that point. I will be glad to check on that, if you like. I know Rod Hills is up meeting with the Pike Committee.

Q Did Mr. Hills take with him the material covered by the subpoena?

MR. GREENER: Yes, and they are willing to turn over to the committee the material the committee has requested on the condition the material remains classified and cannot be published until some satisfactory, overall arrangements are made concerning all classified information not held by the committee or furnished later.

Q Were you reading a statement there? Could you give me that again?

MR. GREENER: Sure. He said we are willing to turn over to the committee the material the committee has requested on the condition that the material remains classified and cannot be published until satisfactory, overall arrangements are made concerning all classified information now held by the committee, or furnished later.

Q So, in effect, the President is saying you can have it now just so you guarantee us you won't do anything with it until we all decide how classified material should be treated?

MR. GREENER: Correct.

Q Is this the President's statement or yours?

MR. GREENER: Just mine.

Q A pledge from them will be sufficient to get the material?

MR. GREENER: As opposed to what, a written, signed agreement of some sort?

Q Or a written description of classified protection? The President said he wasn't going to hand it over until he was satisfied with the guidelines that the Committee was going to use in handling it. Is all it takes is a verbal assurances from Pike that the material will stay classified and protected?

MR. GREENER: They are discussing it now and I will have to defer until they finish those discussions.

Q The President sounded yesterday like he would require more than just a promise of we won't do it again. Your statement sounds like that would be all you want.

Q Bill, the way you put this, you sound as though you expect it to be published.

MR. GREENER: That we expect it to be published?

Q You said it can't be published until such and such is done.

MR. GREENER: Any of the material is what I meant by that.

Q I am not sure you answered the question.

MR. GREENER: Which question am I not answering?

Q The question about a verbal pledge.

MR. GREENER: That is what they are discussing now, Rudy, and I won't have the answer to it until they finish those discussions. I didn't mean to imply any decision had been made.

Q Your statement really puts more restrictions on this material than the President himself said were necessary. You are saying the President will only turn over material, that everything he turns over now remains classified, including stuff that is not even classified.

MR. GREENER: No.

Q That is what your statement says.

MR. GREENER: Are made concerning all classified information now held by the Committee or furnished later. I didn't say unclassified about anything.

Q You said at the start you are willing to turn over to the Committee the subpoenaed material on condition the material remains classified.

MR. GREENER: Well, the classified material remains classified. Would that help any?

Q Do you think all this will be resolved today one way or another?

MR. GREENER: We certainly hope so, Bob.

Q What is the President's reaction to the vote in New Hampshire?

MR. GREENER: The President from the outset said that he wanted the election returned to the people of New Hampshire. It was and he is, of course, disappointed that Louis Wyman did not win the election.

Q Does the President think he was very effective in going up and campaigning for Wyman?

MR. GREENER: He gave no comment one way or the other on it.

Q Is he disappointed that perhaps he wasn't able to contribute enough to the Wyman campaign that Wyman won? Does he feel any kind of personal setback to himself?

MR. GREENER: No, he doesn't. But I would like to point out for those who would like to check, Mr. Wyman received more votes this time than he received last time.

Q Bill, before we leave that, Mr. Durkin received a lot more votes than he received last time and he campaigned -- his main issues were on energy and the economy, unemployment, primarily campaigning against the President's position on raising fuel prices and on vetoing --

MR. GREENER: You are not leaving out part of his campaign, are you?

Q If so, you can put it in there, please. My question is: will the White House read from the election results in the New Hampshire election and tailor the President's policies in any way as a result of what the voters said?

MR. GREENER: The answer to your question is of course the White House will read and has read the results of the campaign and, second, the President feels his policies are correct and will continue to pursue them.

Q Bill, there was a radio call from the Sequoia last night to the Washington Post to get the results. Don't you folks know any Republicans up there in New Hampshire?

MR. GREENER: Neither I nor the President was on the Sequoia. I can't tell you who made the call. (Laughter)

Q Bill, the President said about 42 times in New Hampshire last Thursday that "Louis Wyman and I think alike on most of the key issues." Does he feel this is in any way a repudiation of what he thinks on these issues?

MR. GREENER: No.

Q Is that all you have to say?

MR. GREENER: Doesn't that answer the question?

Q Bill, isn't the President at all worried that this is some sort of a portent for 1976? He went up there and said that Wyman believed as he did. The voters rejected that. Are you saying they were only rejecting Louis Wyman and the President's reputation is not at all involved up there, or not at all affected by this vote result?

MR. GREENER: I am not a political analyst and I am simply reporting to you, as you asked me to, what the President's reaction was.

Q Did you discuss this with the President?

MR. GREENER: I did.

Q In the course of this discussion, did he mention that Ronald Reagan had also campaigned in New Hampshire?

MR. GREENER: No.

Q Bill, what does the White House think about the election which was so close a year ago and is so lopsided this time? What accounts for it in the White House's view?

MR. GREENER: Bonnie, as I said, I am not a political analyst and there are a number of people we can get to answer that question for you from the political arena. The President made no comment on it whatsoever.

Q Could you bring someone today?

MR. GREENER: No, but I can get someone on the phone for you, Ted.

Q Can you find any political analyst in the White House this morning?

MR. GREENER: Yes, we can, Jim.

Q Did the President or did anyone you know in the White House take note of the fact that in Manchester Durkin won a far more substantial victory than he did in the places where the President went? I mean in Manchester where Reagan went, Durkin won more. Does the President feel relieved at this? (Laughter)

MR. GREENER: Again, Les, the President did not refer to former Governor Reagan's visit in my discussions with him.

Q Is Wyman going to be appointed head of the GSA? (Laughter)

MR. GREENER: I have no announcements to make.

Q Bill, your offer to furnish a political analyst from the White House leads me to ask the question, who are the President's primary political advisers?

MR. GREENER: I didn't say I would furnish a political analyst from the White House. I said I would find a political analyst to talk to Ted Knap.

Q You didn't mean from the White House?

MR. GREENER: No, I didn't.

Q It's still a good question, Bill. Who are the President's advisers?

MR. GREENER: Bob Hartmann is assigned as that.

Q Has he had any comment on it you could pass on to us this morning?

MR. GREENER: No, I have nothing on it, Bob.

Q Couldn't Bob come out and chat with us on this lovely day? He is a very affable fellow.

MR. GREENER: He is present in the Cabinet meeting. In answer to your question, so is Phil Buchen, you asked earlier. Rod Hills did go up.

Q Who is Hills meeting with?

MR. GREENER: The Pike Committee.

Q The whole Committee?

MR. GREENER: Whoever is there, I don't have the attendance.

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Q There was a big increase in the surplus balance of payments announced today, \$4 billion plus. I assume that is attributable to some extent to the grain sales? Did that come up in the Cabinet meeting today? Was that on the agenda?

MR. GREENER: It is part of the economic report Alan Greenspan will discuss.

Q We keep hearing so much about arms for Turkey, Bill. We don't seem to hear any more about this Administration working hard to keep Turkey from sending in her, legally or illegally, opium. Why don't we hear more about that? Why don't they bargain with Turkey with that in mind?

MR. GREENER: It is my understanding they have been working on that for some time, Sarah.

Q We never hear a word out of the White House about that. In all of this we haven't heard anything from the White House about it since all this started. This is the second or third time I have asked this question and I haven't heard a word.

MR. GREENER: It is the first I was aware of it. I will follow up.

Q Bill, have the Soviets agreed to nearly double the rate paid for the use of American bottoms to ship grain?

MR. GREENER: I haven't gotten the final results of that on the negotiations.

Q Bill, the House International Affairs Committee approved the Senate version of Turkish aid this morning. Was the President aware of that when you talked to him, and did he have any comment on that?

MR. GREENER: It hadn't been done when I spoke to him. He was aware it was being taken up, and I am sure he will be quite pleased.

Q Does the Administration feel it has picked up enough votes to change the last vote if it goes before the House?

MR. GREENER: Yes, we are quite hopeful.

Q Hopeful doesn't mean anything. (Laughter)

Q Bill, do you think the vote is going to change? Do you think you will win this time?

MR. GREENER: We feel it will be very close, but we feel we will win.

Q Bill, will the President meet with Andrei Gromyko this week to talk about SALT?

MR. GREENER: He is meeting with Mr. Gromyko tomorrow. I don't have the time on that.

Q Bill, is the Secret Service taking any extra precautions for the President's return trip to California this weekend?

MR. GREENER: Not that I am aware of.

Gromyko is meeting with the President tomorrow at 4:30.

Q Bill, do you have any more specifics on the busing cases the President was speaking about yesterday?

MR. GREENER: No, except that, as you know, the President was talking of the entire generalized philosophy that he had on that subject, and I don't believe I will or the President would want to list or outline any specific cases.

Q Bill, when will the concurrent resolution on American civilian technicians in the Sinai desert go to the Hill?

MR. GREENER: We don't have an answer on that, Ted.

Q Bill, are you all going to prepare any kind of a legislative program or any kind of proposals to provide further alternatives to busing, or is the President just going to stand on "he is against" it and he thinks the courts ought to pay more attention to other parts of the law? In other words, are you going to do anything? Do you have any remedies or will you propose any remedies?

MR. GREENER: I know of none at this time, Bob, other than his desire that they follow the alternatives outlined in the Esch amendments.

Q Did you ever find out how he stands on a Constitutional amendment --

MR. GREENER: Yes, he said no to that in the interview with the Sun Times.

Q He does not favor that?

MR. GREENER: That is correct.

Q Bill, it has been pointed out the court orders in Louisville and Boston were issued before that law was signed by the President. Was the President aware of this?

MR. GREENER: Yes, he was aware of it.

Q Bill, what are the areas he was talking about here where the courts have been ignoring the law?

MR. GREENER: As I said, I don't want to start down any line of specific cases. I would point out that following the court case in Boston, I know -- I don't know about the others -- that there were additional judicial proceedings in going into phase two.

Q Bill, as a practical matter on that law, didn't the Mansfield-Scott law in the Senate pretty much, in effect, negate the Esch amendment the President read yesterday?

MR. GREENER: John, knowing that much about the law, I would assume you also know you are right in the middle of one of the biggest legal arguments in the Nation, and I am not a lawyer, and I am not going to decide that.

Q The President is in the middle of it. He read the provisions.

MR. GREENER: The President read the provisions, and read the amendment and signed the bill. However, the amendment, as I understand it, simply said that nothing in the above amendments should be construed by the courts as anything that would negate their following the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments.

Q Bill, another question on this same subject. If the Boston and Louisville orders were issued before the Esch amendment became law, and you will not name, the White House will not name any other court decisions that the President had in mind, then doesn't the President's statement become a hit and run charge?

MR. GREENER: I don't think so, Jim.

Q Why not?

MR. GREENER: Because the President was stating simply the fact that he would hope that the courts would, in the process, take into consideration meaningfully the other alternatives exactly as the law states.

Q That is not what he said. He was not expressing a hope for the future alone. He was saying that some already had ignored the provisions of the Esch amendment, and then he didn't name them and you don't name them. So, why isn't this a hit and run charge?

MR. GREENER: Because I believe that the answers are available more appropriately from Justice as to the number of court cases, and I don't happen to have those, Jim.

Q Do you mean Justice will furnish a list of the cases the President had in mind if we call?

MR. GREENER: I would think they could list those cases which would be applicable, Jim.

Q Would you or the White House like to clarify this so as to avoid the question that the President had made a charge and then doesn't substantiate it, rather than having this done by underlings and lesser lights in the Justice Department?

Q Justice said yesterday they couldn't give any specific cases to which it would be applicable.

MR. GREENER: Couldn't or wouldn't?

Q The person I spoke to said couldn't.

MR. GREENER: I will be glad to follow up on it.

Q Is the White House certain there are other cases that would fit the President's description of the situation?

MR. GREENER: I have been told there are. I will be glad to follow up.

Q Is it the President's view that the Boston and Louisville cases should somehow have been affected after the fact by the Esch amendment; in other words, the judges should have looked at the new Congressional law and then reversed their decisions, or some such thing? Is that what he had in mind?

MR. GREENER: No, it wasn't. As I say, he was referring to the fact that overall he feels there are better solutions than that. The fact is that there have been several studies made, as you all know, that point out it is not accomplishing the exact desires of the busing.

Q Just so I understand it, you are going to follow up, are you, and find out whether Justice releases it, or you do, that the Administration will list the number of places in which the courts did not take cognizance of the Esch amendment in ordering busing? Is that correct?

MR. GREENER: I said that I will follow up and see if I can find them, yes.

Q How are you going to give that to us? By what forums? An afternoon briefing?

MR. GREENER: I don't plan to, Walt.

Q Is the President familiar enough with the specifics of the cases he was referring to to know in his own mind the courts did not take acceptable alternatives to busing?

MR. GREENER: That would be beyond my knowledge. The President still feels exactly how I said; that is, that there are better alternatives than forced busing.

Q We are trying to find out not whether there are better alternatives than busing. We are trying to find out whether the President really feels today what he apparently felt yesterday; in other words, whether he has some facts to back up his charge. We are not, as I understand it, debating whether the President feels there are better alternatives. We are talking about the specific charge he made and would like to know whether he has some specific court cases to substantiate what he said.

MR. GREENER: I understand what you said.

Q Bill, the President expects forced busing to accomplish what?

MR. GREENER: Exactly what the President said -- quality education.

Q What does he mean by that?

MR. GREENER: I am sure that the President means by quality education the best possible education for all students in America.

Q Does that mean that that includes desegregation?

MR. GREENER: Desegregation is a Constitutional matter and has been decided.

Q But he has not been talking about the question of desegregation. He does not speak of equality in education. He speaks of quality education.

MR. GREENER: I understand that.

Q And busing is designed to do both, supposedly. Now, when he talks only about quality education, does he take into account desegregation of schools?

MR. GREENER: I am sure, as I said, that the President takes into account the Constitution of the United States, and that is a Constitutional provision as decided by the courts already. It is not a moot question.

Q Does the President believe that schools which are primarily one race or another should be desegregated?

MR. GREENER: The President feels just what I said, that the Constitution should be followed and that we should provide the best quality of education for the children of the Nation.

Q Does he believe in the desegregation, the integration of public schools. That is the question he asked. Could you answer that?

MR. GREENER: The President feels the Constitution should be followed. Isn't that part of the Constitution?

Q The answer is yes.

Q Bill, let's put it this way. Senator Ervin, as you know, is quite an authority on the Constitution, and he has suggested that the assigning of pupils to certain schools based on their skin pigment is precisely what Brown versus the Board of Education was trying to forbid.

Does the President share Senator Ervin's views on that?

MR. GREENER: I don't know, Les. I will have to check with the President on Senator Ervin's views.

Q Could we find out tomorrow on that one?

Q Bill, can't you please simply tell us whether the President favors school desegregation?

MR. GREENER: Doesn't the Constitution and the law provide for it, Don?

Q I am not asking that.

MR. GREENER: Doesn't it provide for it? If he, therefore, is upholding the Constitution and the law, doesn't that answer the question?

Q He is bound to do that whether he likes it or not, Bill. The question is, does he like it, does he favor it, not whether he obeys the law.

MR. GREENER: His personal view on it I do not have.

Q What did the President mean when he said in Dallas the other day he thought there should be a return to or an increasing reliance on "the neighborhood school concept"?

MR. GREENER: I don't know, Jim. I will ask him.

Q Doesn't it mean the President favors open housing? I didn't hear him mention open housing as an alternative to school busing, or desegregation of schools as provided for in the Constitution and Brown versus --

MR. GREENER: It is provided for in the Constitution?

Q Desegregation is provided for in the Constitution.

Q Bill, maybe we can get at it this way. The President, in his discussion of the Esch amendment, yesterday left me and most other people with the clear impression that, given the alternative, separate but equal schooling was preferable to enforced busing. I think what we need to clarify is if he didn't mean to convey that idea?

MR. GREENER: The President did not mean to disavow the decision of the 1954 court decision, which outlawed separate but equal schools.

Q Bill, as long as we are pushing you on what the President meant, what does he mean when he keeps assailing what he calls "mass education"? He used that phrase several times in this campaign swing, and I don't understand what he means.

MR. GREENER: By mass education, the President was referring to --

Q Parochial schools? (Laughter)

MR. GREENER: -- among other things, the idea that of all students being computerized or being forced into the same mold, or progressing all at the same rate.

Q Does that happen somewhere?

MR. GREENER: It happens to my children.

Q Bill, why can't you simply answer the question?

Q Where do your kids go to school? (Laughter)

Q Why can't you answer the question Don Fulsom asked, and the question this gentleman asked as to desegregation of schools?

MR. GREENER: I answered the question Bob had back there, and I said the President favors the Constitution.

Q The Constitution doesn't say anything at all about school desegregation. It talks about equal rights, and the courts are the ones who have interpreted that.

MR. GREENER: Aren't the courts also interpreting the law?

Q But the court also talked about busing as a legitimate tool to enforce it. Why can't you just say, "Yes, the President favors school desegregation"?

MR. GREENER: The answer, Walt, was that Bob said a minute ago no one was interested in whether or not--in this particular discussion of upholding the Constitution and the law, the question was, does he personally like it, and I said I will check and find out.

Q Bill, Senator Brooks yesterday termed the President's remarks, in the news conference, on busing as unfortunate. Those familiar with Judge Garrity's decision in Boston point out that already the Judge there has adopted at least four of the seven recommendations of the Esch Amendment. The question is, does the President feel it is fair to take pot shots at a busing decision in Boston when he is apparently not familiar with what the local court has already taken into account and implemented in its ruling?

MR. GREENER: I was not aware that he listed by name the Boston decision.

Q He did not by name but with Boston and Louisville the only thing going, that is the implication we all drew.

Q I believe that is an implication you drew but not necessarily one he meant.

Q Can you say explicitly the President was not referring to Boston and Judge Garrity?

MR. GREENER: I cannot.

Q Is the President making busing a political issue for 1976?

MR. GREENER: No.

Q On another subject, if I might, I don't think you have been asked, or Mr. Nessen has been asked, whether the President has any comment or whether he agrees with or disagrees with Vice President Rockefeller's statement to the National Federation of Republican Women in Dallas to the effect that one of the problems we have in this country is the Judeo-Christian ethic of helping people. Does the President agree or disagree with that statement?

Q Question?

Q I was asking him for the President's view on Vice President's Rockefeller's statement in Dallas to the National Federation of Republican Women in which Rockefeller said that one of the problems we have in this country is the so-called Judeo-Christian ethic of helping people. I asked whether or not the President agreed or disagreed with that statement. (Laughter)

MR. GREENER: I have heard no comment from the President on it. I will be glad to ask him, Jim.

Q Does Rockefeller pray to the same God as the President? (Laughter)

Q No, he is Baptist. (Laughter)

Q Could I get back to the question, you were asked if the President was making busing a political issue in 1976. Your answer was a flat no. Is your answer based on what he told you? Is it based on a discussion with him?

MR. GREENER: Yes, it is and also by his already stated public position.

Q I understand that, but you talked this over with him when, today, yesterday, this week?

MR. GREENER: I talked it over with him yesterday and today.

Q He said flatly -- tell us what it is he said on this question, if you can.

MR. GREENER: I discussed the situation with him and asked the specific question of whether or not this was a change in his position to make busing a political issue on the assumption it was something you would be interested in having an answer to. His answer to me was no.

Q Bill, if I may follow up on that, when he talks about it before a partisan group like that, you know, and gets a big cheer, it seems like he is making a political issue of it. Is he going to stop talking about it during the campaign, is he going to declare a moratorium on talk on busing, or what?

Is he going to continue talking about busing and just saying he is not making it a political issue, or what?

MR. GREENER: I have no way of knowing what he will be doing in every speech from here forward, John.

Q I would like you to get the gist of my question.

MR. GREENER: I do get the gist of your question.

Q What I am talking about, will it become a political issue whether he calls it a political issue or not? Did you get any guidance from him as to whether or not he plans to tone down his remarks at all?

MR. GREENER: I did not.

Q I think your answer to my question is different from what your answer was to the previous question. You were asked if he is going to make busing a political issue in 1976 and you said no. You based that on your asking him if he had changed his position --

MR. GREENER: And would now be making busing a political issue.

Q He said no. Is his no to the question of changing his position? That really has not been asked here, or is it whether his position has changed or not, putting that aside. I don't think it has.

MR. GREENER: The answer is the same to both questions.

Q Bill, since you apparently are going to be coming in tomorrow with a great wealth of answers that you don't have today on this, I just wondered if you could inquiry on an adjacent subject, that is, where does the President stand on what is called affirmative action?

MR. GREENER: All right.

Q That celebrated case of the young man who tried to get into law school in Washington that was mooted by the Supreme Court, that is the one I have specifically in mind. How does he stand?

Q Is there any change in the coverage arrangements for this weekend, or are the pools still going to cover in Monterey and the rest of the trip?

MR. GREENER: The pool will still cover the activities in Monterey. The problem is rooms in Monterey, nobody can get rooms in Monterey.

Q Are we definitely going to get a briefing when the Cabinet meeting breaks up?

MR. GREENER: No, it is possible to get a read-out. I don't know what is going on up there. As soon as I can get to Jack, I will find out.

Q What is the President's position on Sargeant Matlovich's intention? (Laughter)

MR. GREENER: The President feels the Defense Department is acting within their --

Q In other words, he supports the Air Force's position?

MR. GREENER: I believe it is under appeal and it would be inappropriate for the President to take a position.

Q They haven't appealed yet, as I understand it. They indicated they are going to.

Q Has the President spoken out against the football strike, being a former football player?

MR. GREENER: He has not. (Laughter)

Q I am a little incredulous as to your answer that the President is not going to make busing a political issue. It seems to me that when he made those remarks in Dallas to the National Federation of Republican Women's Convention, and that was a very political speech and that is the thing that got a standing ovation. That is making it a political issue, isn't it?

MR. GREENER: Not in my opinion, no.

Q W-y is Gromyko coming tomorrow?

MR. GREENER: To meet with the President.

I don't have the subject they will be discussing.

Q Who asked for the meeting?

MR. GREENER: It was mutually arranged.

Q Did the President receive frequent reports last night on the results in New Hampshire?

MR. GREENER: Yes.

Q How did he receive them?

MR. GREENER: From both Terry and myself.

Q Terry O'Donnell?

MR. GREENER: Terry O'Donnell and myself.

Q How often did you give him reports?

MR. GREENER: I have no way of knowing. I gave him several of the wire stories prior to our departure for the Air Force Association Convention and upon return I rechecked the wires and handed them to him at that time.

Q By the time you gave him the last one, it was clear the Durkin had won?

MR. GREENER: According to the stories, it was clear Durkin had won, yes.

Q Bill, how and when will we get your answers on the specific cases that are applicable to what the President is speaking about, busing?

MR. GREENER: Either I will try to find them myself by calling Justice and others and getting them for you and/or I will see if they have them and will release them. I don't know yet.

Q Are you saying now you will tell us which cases he was referring to?

MR. GREENER: No, I didn't say what he was referring to. The question was what are some of the applicable cases.

Q What, if anything, did the President say when you gave him those wire stories on the New Hampshire election?

MR. GREENER: Thank you.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END

(AT 12:08 P.M. EDT)

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH JACK HUSHEN

AT 1:25 P.M. EDT

SEPTEMBER 17, 1975

WEDNESDAY

MR. HUSHEN: The Cabinet meeting lasted just short of two hours, and it was basically a general review in several areas, and I think Bill gave you most of the agenda items.

Frank Zarb, for instance, gave a report on the energy situation, and he also presented each one of the Cabinet officers with a book that his office has pulled together, which summarized the energy situation faced by the Nation.

Q Can we get copies?

MR. HUSHEN: I think you ought to see him on that.

And a review of the President's overall energy program, a status report on the various legislation pending in the Congress and then he said that "we are starting to see what appears to be a lessening of consumption in many areas.

Q Is that a quote from Zarb?

MR. HUSHEN: Yes.

Q Would you repeat that?

MR. HUSHEN: This is a quote from Zarb.

Q That we are starting to see?

MR. HUSHEN: Yes.

Q What comes next?

MR. HUSHEN: "What appears to be a lessening of consumption in all areas."

Q In all areas?

MR. HUSHEN: Correct.

"Individual sectors of the marketplace are showing some savings," he said.

Q Were there any figures?

MR. HUSHEN: He had no figures and he said, "This is very preliminary," and he spoke about the fact that some of this was obviously due to the President's program and the dialogue which has been going on about energy. It also, in some part, is due to the added cost. But he did say this was a preliminary report and he didn't, as I said, have any statistics to back it up.

Q Did he indicate how much was due to the added cost?

MR. HUSHEN: No.

Q Was there any ERFCO discussion in the Cabinet meeting?

MR. HUSHEN: There was not.

Q To what part of the President's program did he attribute the savings?

MR. HUSHEN: The public's awareness of the critical shortages of energy this country faces.

Q The PR campaign?

MR. HUSHEN: PR stands for public relations. This has been a public information campaign.

Q Did he suggest this lessening of consumption will modify the list of ten or 12 States that could be in real trouble regarding natural gas?

MR. HUSHEN: No, and I don't think that we are seeing that kind of a lessening of consumption yet.

Q Did he give any indication of exactly what this is, one percent or ten percent?

MR. HUSHEN: He didn't have any percentage at all.

Q Did the President respond in any way to this report?

MR. HUSHEN: No, my notes don't show any specific response.

Another thing Zarb did point out was the improvements the auto industry is making in their line of cars in '76, '77 and '78, as contrasted with the previous three years, in gas mileage.

Q Jack, did he mention at all, Zarb, that this cut-down in consumption might be attributable to the recession and the fact that people can't afford to use fuel the way they used to?

MR. HUSHEN: He mentioned that to me afterwards in the sense that we have not had a chance, really, to shake it out and find out how much is due to that, how much is due to the added cost, how much is due to the public awareness, but that all three appear to be resulting in this lessening of consumption.

Q Did he say anything about -- you mentioned the lowering of gas consumption, but it seems that these new cars seem to be having a need for more repairs, according to the reports that I have read.

MR. HUSHEN: He didn't get into that.

The President also called on Attorney General Levi to give the Cabinet a report on the school situation and he did do that. He spoke briefly about Boston and Louisville and said attendance is increasing.

Q Did Levi cite any cases where the judges had ignored the Esch Amendment?

MR. HUSHEN: No.

Q What was his overall reading, are things good, bad?

MR. HUSHEN: Yes, as I said, the situation is improving, busing is going ahead and attendance is going up.

Q Did you have any remarks by the President about busing? Did the President say busing is a terrible thing or did he say anything at all?

MR. HUSHEN: No, just basically a report from Levi.

Q Did he specifically state the fact busing is going ahead?

MR. HUSHEN: No, it was just really a status report on the situation in Boston and Louisville.

Q Was there any negative elements to the Levi report? Just everything is going better?

MR. HUSHEN: No, Mathews did, Secretary Mathews of HEW did mention the amount of what he called ESA money, which I think is Emergency School Aid money, is going into Boston and Louisville, 1.2 million to Louisville and 3.9 million to Boston.

Q Did the President express satisfaction that they were having relatively little trouble with busing? Did he say anything at all about the Attorney General's report?

MR. HUSHEN: No, basically.

Q Did he say anything at all?

MR. HUSHEN: He called on the Attorney General to give a report to the Cabinet on the situation in Boston and Louisville. He gave that report and then went on and called on somebody else to give a report on his area.

Q What is the Emergency School Aid supposed to finance, is that for buses, the National Guard or what?

Q Could you elaborate on that?

MR. HUSHEN: I don't know, Howard.

Q Could you elaborate on that, please?

MR. HUSHEN: No.

Q Where would we get more information on that, please?

MR. HUSHEN: At HEW.

Alan Greenspan gave a report on the New York situation. Our position is well-known, I think, to all of you and there is no change there.

Q What did Greenspan say?

MR. HUSHEN: I think I better check with Alan before I read these quotes to you just to make sure he has no objection to my reading them to you.

Q Why, are they really dynamite?

MR. HUSHEN: No.

Q Are they pretty spicy or something?

Q How are you going to get back to us?

MR. HUSHEN: I will just call him up if you will sit tight. Let me finish this report.

Q Can you tell us the nature of his report without actually quoting him?

MR. HUSHEN: Well, he spoke about what had been done by the State to meet the City's financial crisis.

Q Was it the same thing that has been in the newspapers, or was there more?

MR. HUSHEN: No, basically the same as has been in the newspapers. I prefaced all my remarks by saying that this meeting was basically an informative meeting where the Cabinet officer with a specific responsibility was giving a report to the other Cabinet officers who didn't have the information.

Q Did he say anything more about the likelihood of default and its impact on the Nation?

MR. HUSHEN: That is the one thing I do want to check and see if he has any objection to my talking about it.

Finally, the President called on the Vice President to talk about the public forums on domestic policy. The President had directed the Domestic Council to conduct a review of domestic programs for the purpose of developing recommendations for the State of the Union Message in 1976.

In conjunction with this review, he has asked the Vice President and members of the Domestic Council to conduct a series of public forums around the country to obtain the views and opinions of a broad cross-section of the public on how we can improve Federal programs.

The objectives of these public hearings will be to outline what the Nation is facing with regard to domestic programs, obtain public input in the development of Presidential options and assist the President in formulating his legislative recommendations and initiatives to the Congress in the 1976 State of the Union Message.

Q How are these forums going to differ from the Regional White House Conferences on Economic and Domestic Policy, Jack, other than the Vice President will be at them rather than the President?

MR. HUSHEN: Well, the White House Conferences are a chance to take the White House out into the country and to let the people there talk to the people who run these programs. As I understand, these public forums are more with the objective, as I said, to get the public's input into the President's programs.

Q Will they be like hearings that are held by the Congress, where people come up and say I want to talk about thus and so?

MR. HUSHEN: Let me read you what they have for the proposed format. Each forum will be a one-day meeting consisting of the following elements, a morning session of approximately three hours chaired by the Vice President with Cabinet members and other Federal officials participating.

The Vice President will open with introductions and brief remarks. The balance of the morning will be divided into time for a discussion of four major domestic policy areas. Two or three witnesses will be selected to present five-minute testimony on issues in each of the four areas. Following the presentation of testimony for each segment, the witnesses can be questioned by the Vice President and other Federal officials. A portion of the time will also be made available for public participation.

Q What are the four areas?

MR. HUSHEN: The four areas are economic recovery, resource development, social policy and community building.

Q Who is going to pick the witnesses?

MR. HUSHEN: I can't tell from this.

Q Were any cities besides Denver mentioned as locations?

MR. HUSHEN: The only other one mentioned was the Tampa-St. Petersburg area.

Q Did he say when they will start?

MR. HUSHEN: October 21, I believe that is the target date, that is the one in Denver and I think October 29 in Tampa-St. Pete.

Q How many of these will there be?

MR. HUSHEN: I think they said six or more.

Q Whatever happened to the discussion about selling grain to Russia?

MR. HUSHEN: That came up.

Back to this forum program for just one second, Jim Cannon really has the lead action on this thing. I think anybody who wants to explore this in greater detail, he would be the man to talk to. I think we are talking about the possibility of having a briefing with Jim at some point before this starts.

Q Is the Domestic Council going to fund this, Jack?

MR. HUSHEN: I would expect so.

Just for another breakdown on those four issues, on economic recovery, that covers jobs, capital formation and regulation. Under resource development, it is food, energy and the environment. Under social policy, it is income security, health and services, government services. And under community building, it is education, housing, transportation and community development.

Q In each of these areas there is going to be five-minute testimony by how many people in each area?

Q Are these members of the public or officials?

Q Are these selected witnesses?

Q How will they be selected?

MR. HUSHEN: In answer to your question, participants will be selected from recommendations received from State and local officials, local Federal officials, and Cabinet recommendations.

Q How many of them will testify?

Q Who else, Justice? What was the last word you said?

MR. HUSHEN: Recommendations from Cabinet officials.

Two or three witnesses will be selected to present five-minute testimony on issues in each of the four areas. So, you would have eight to 12 witnesses total.

Q Then when does the public come in? Is that in the afternoon?

MR. HUSHEN: Following the morning session, four separate, simultaneous meetings will be held to continue the discussions in the four major policy areas. Then it goes into detail about who.

Q Is that when the public gets to testify? I thought you said there was public participation. Do they just sit in the audience?

MR. HUSHEN: Those are the witnesses in the morning.

Q That is the public participation?

MR. HUSHEN: Yes.

Q Will there be any method of input into this process other than the hearings?

MR. HUSHEN: I am not sure I understand what you mean or what you are asking me.

Q Can people submit papers, for example, that would be read by the Domestic Council or somebody?

MR. HUSHEN: I am sure they could.

Q If they are not selected to testify?

MR. HUSHEN: The public would be both in the morning and afternoon session. The afternoon sessions are --

Q -- for more testimony?

MR. HUSHEN: Right.

Q Can we get back to grain?

MR. HUSHEN: All right, we will turn to grain for a second.

The President asked Secretary Dunlop for a report, and the Secretary generally reviewed what had transpired, including his meetings with George Meany, and what our goal was, and that was to get the interim solution while we resolved the greater issue of an agreement with the USSR, a better crop forecast, and resolved the freight rates and the complying with the one-third quota for US bottoms.

Secretary Butz spoke briefly about the current crop. General Scowcroft mentioned that Charles Robinson returned late last night. We are optimistic on a grain agreement, as I am sure you all know.

Q Who said that?

MR. HUSHEN: Scowcroft said that.

Q Was the figure of \$16 a ton on a freight rate mentioned?

MR. HUSHEN: It came up as the figure that we are targeting on, but we have no firm agreement on that.

Q Didn't Secretary Morton say anything about this?

MR. HUSHEN: Yes. I didn't say who said it, but it was Secretary Morton.

Q Can you tell us what he said?

Q Was there a handshake on it? Was there a tentative agreement, if it was not on paper?

MR. HUSHEN: I don't have a quote like that, but he said there were other details that had to be worked out.

Q Are you aware of the stories that came out of that Cabinet meeting about the \$16 figure and that it was agreed on in Moscow?

MR. HUSHEN: No.

Q It has been reported that Mr. Morton said in the Cabinet meeting, or before the Cabinet meeting got started, "We got an agreement on the \$16 a ton, and we got a handshake on it." That doesn't quite jibe with what you are saying.

MR. HUSHEN: No, the conversation was during the discussion on grain, when he was commenting there were other details to be worked out.

Q Did he say the \$16 had been agreed on?

MR. HUSHEN: I don't have that quote in my notes, but he said that was the figure they were looking at.

Q Who was looking at? We or they or both?

Q Is that what we have agreed to ask for, \$16, or is that something they have agreed to give us?

MR. HUSHEN: I don't know. I think you should address your questions to Secretary Morton, since he was the one doing the talking on it.

Q He has already gotten wide distribution that, in fact, there is an agreement.

MR. HUSHEN: I asked him after the meeting if there was a firm agreement, and he said there were still some things to be worked out.

Q Did you ask him if they had a tentative agreement?

MR. HUSHEN: No.

Q This thing about firm agreement, these agreements get worked out and then they are not firm until they are signed a month later.

Q Did they get a handshake?

MR. HUSHEN: I don't know.

Q Did Morton say this was better than they expected to get?

MR. HUSHEN: No, not that I recall.

Q Did he indicate that \$16 was the figure that both sides were working with?

MR. HUSHEN: That was the target figure. I am not that clear on what that means.

Q In other words, what we are trying to find out, since there has been that story that had a lot of circulation, is whether \$16 is the figure both sides are working out, but there are other details, or whether \$16 is what we are hoping for, but there has not been any response. There would be a lot of difference between the two.

MR. HUSHEN: It is my understanding the \$16 is the target figure, and there are other details to be worked out.

Q Have the Soviets given us a target figure of their own?

MR. HUSHEN: I am not sure. As I say, I didn't go into it in that great a detail because I didn't know what the story was on the wire until after the meeting.

Q Did Mr. Butz bring up any figures? Assistant Secretary Bell has talked about eight million metric tons last week, as being an annual amount of grain? Was there any discussion of a figure?

MR. HUSHEN: Do you mean for sale to Russia?

Q Yes.

MR. HUSHEN: No.

Q Did Butz give anything further on the crop report other than what we already know?

MR. HUSHEN: No. There will be another crop forecast, I think he said, on the 10th of October. He quickly ticked off the size of the crop and the percentage of increase over last year.

Q But those are the figures that are already out, right?

MR. HUSHEN: Correct.

Q Did anybody talk about how long-term, how many years an agreement would encompass?

MR. HUSHEN: I don't know.

Q What was your understanding of what Robinson accomplished in Moscow?

Q Would you check that?

MR. HUSHEN: Wait a minute, we have a question pending.

There really wasn't much of a discussion of that.

Q When is Mr. Robinson going back?

MR. HUSHEN: There was no target date, as far as I am aware. There was just a general discussion or mention of the fact that we will have to go over what this preliminary agreement is that he is working on, find out what is acceptable to us and what is --

Q Was there an implication that the \$16 freight rate was part of this preliminary agreement?

MR. HUSHEN: I don't know if they are tied together. I don't want to be talking about something that is in such a preliminary stage.

Q Isn't the rate what they went to Moscow to negotiate? If there is a tentative agreement, wouldn't it involve the rate?

MR. HUSHEN: That was one of the points. I don't know if that is the reason they went to Moscow, though.

Q Was anything brought up about the Canadian wheat sale in relationship to the competition?

MR. HUSHEN: No.

Q Nothing said about Canada?

MR. HUSHEN: The only thing said --

Q There was some discussion about exchange of wheat for oil. Was that brought up?

MR. HUSHEN: Not in a substantive way.

Q Did they mention it at all? Did Robinson bring it up?

MR. HUSHEN: Robinson was not at the Cabinet meeting. As I said, the report was that he got back late last night and nobody has had a chance to talk to him.

The only mention of oil was Secretary Butz saying that we hope that we could work that out.

Q Was there any discussion that you can relate to us about what would be in a tentative agreement, what Mr. Robinson had achieved?

MR. HUSHEN: No.

Q You started to say something about--

MR. HUSHEN: The only place that Canada was even mentioned was in Secretary Dunlop's review. He said that George Meany had mentioned as a possibility the Canadian Wheat Board program, but not that he had taken any position on that. He had just mentioned it as a way that Canada handles her problems, but it didn't come up at all in the meeting.

Q Are you going to check on whether you can give us Greenspan's comments?

MR. HUSHEN: Yes, let me make a quick call.

The answer to that question is going to be that Mr. Greenspan reiterated points that are contained in a letter from Treasury Secretary Simon to Senator Humphrey regarding the New York City matter, and I am going to right now try to go up and see if I can get that letter from Secretary Simon.

Q All that has been in the papers.

MR. HUSHEN: Was it in the papers? That letter, I understand, was only written yesterday.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Jack.

END (AT 2:00 P.M. EDT)