

**The original documents are located in Box 5, folder “Correspondence with Members of the Press Corps (1)” of the Ron Nessen Papers at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

### **Copyright Notice**

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Ron Nessen donated to the United States of America his copyrights in all of his unpublished writings in National Archives collections. Works prepared by U.S. Government employees as part of their official duties are in the public domain. The copyrights to materials written by other individuals or organizations are presumed to remain with them. If you think any of the information displayed in the PDF is subject to a valid copyright claim, please contact the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

**October 11, 1974**

**Dear Phil:**

**Thanks for your note -- it was thoughtful of you to send it.**

**While my scripture-reading career at the press room podium is just a hallowed memory, there's another one from Ephesians I think applies:**

**"Therefore, putting away falsehood, let everyone speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another."**

**Do you agree?**

**Sincerely,**

**Ron Nessen  
Press Secretary  
to the President**

**Mr. Phil Shabecoff  
The New York Times  
1920 L Street, N. W.  
Washington, D. C. 20036**

**RN/cg**



# The New York Times

WASHINGTON BUREAU  
1920 L STREET, N.W.  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20036  
(202) 293-3100

Sept. 5

Dear Ron:

I want to tell you that I am all admiration for your plunge into Ephesians this morning. It not only shut up Les Kinsolving--no small miracle by itself--but also was a step toward restoring literacy to the Executive Branch. Keep it up.

Cheers,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Phil Shaveroff". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the typed word "Cheers,".

# PARADE

LLOYD SHEARER  
*Editor-at-Large*

*Parade Publications, Inc. ♦ 213-653-2073  
140 N. Hamilton Drive  
Beverly Hills, Calif. 90211*

November 5 1974

Dear Ron,

A fast note to thank you for your kindness and time at the Century Plaza last week.

It was generous of you to take time out to address the Ladies Auxiliary on the subject, "Should Lesbians Be Allowed To Play Professional Football?" The response, as you'll recall, was magnificent.

Pursuant to our agreement, no mention will be made of your affairs with Marilyn Monroe, Betty Grable, Rita Hayworth, Nora Clappworthy, and the late Marie Dressler.

In all seriousness, thank you.

Much love to Connie and the gang, and all the best to you.

*Lloyd Shearer*

**PARADE**

140 North Hamilton Drive  
Beverly Hills, California 90211

Mr. Ron Nessen  
THE WHITE HOUSE  
Washington D.C.



**Air Mail**



# THE NEW REPUBLIC

CONFIDENTIAL

John Osborne  
Associate Editor

Personal:  
November 27, 1974

Dear Ron,

Here, in the briefest form I can manage, are some views on the subjects that were discussed <sup>in</sup> your office last evening.

1) I don't understand why you and your staff are as upset as you seem to be about the Far East trip. Apart from what seemed to me to be an unnecessarily complex pool procedure and troublesome delay in announcing the pools, it seemed to me to go about as well as such a tightly scheduled <sup>trip</sup> could go and has gone in the past.

2) All the talk from us at your meeting about having the President schedule his trips for the media's convenience is crap, in my opinion. It's our business to adjust to his needs, not his to adjust to ours. Vide what happened during and after Mr. Nixon's China trip. I among others ridiculed him and his staff for making the trip a gigantic TV show -- which he did.

3) You are right to be worried about the press-room attitude toward you. The concensus is unfavorable. I think you are capable of working it out and hope you will. I have ~~some~~ suggestions. Quit apologizing. Get from the President, if you don't already have it, assurance that he understands your difficulties and is not about to sacrifice you. Only that, I should imagine, can restore the confidence you started out with and that remains essential. Quit blaming Ziegler; forget him and the "poison" he bequeathed. It was the period, not Ziegler, that fundamentally poisoned the press-room atmosphere. He didn't help, of course. But from the start of his tenure he did have one great virtue, one that I mentioned as a requirement for any successful press secretary last night. He reflected his President. His lies were Nixon's lies -- a point that was widely omitted <sup>in a printed remark</sup> of mine to the effect that Ziegler was believed to be a committed liar. When <sup>you</sup> was angry, irritated, pleased at the podium, one could be reasonably <sup>sure</sup> that <sup>he</sup> Nixon was (or Haldeman was -- same thing, in those circumstances).

Example of the latter point: never do things like reflecting upon Nixon as a negotiator unless the President wishes you to. I have a right to assume, for instance, that you didn't do that in this case without sensing or knowing that it was the President's view, too. I make ~~such~~ a point of it in my trip story; a story that won't do you any good, I fear, but in my view is completely justified and is straight reporting.

4) Drop your line about "partnership", "friends with friends," etc, both from your remarks and from your mind. I've always thought the line that presidential press secretaries serve two masters, the President and the media, is bunk. Press Secretaries serve and have one master, their President.



# THE NEW REPUBLIC

2

John Osborne  
Associate Editor

You serve him by informing us, true. But there is and should be a built-in conflict of interest -- conflict between us and you is inevitable. You are right in expecting and asking for courtesy in our communication with and demands upon you. The Watergate aftermath aside, a few boors in our company help to make -- do make -- this press room the meanest, nastiest, and from your side the most difficult one in my memory. On the other hand, it's our right and duty to be demanding, insistently to the point of insult at times. It's bound to happen. Don't blame yourself for that, assuming of course that you have handled your end with reasonable competence and grace.

5) Stand by Jack Hushen. I repeat what I said in your office last night, though of saying and now wish I had said at the lunch with the President: you have in Jack and Larry Speakes the very best bread-and-butter, nuts-and-bolts information team that I have observed at the White House since 1969. I'm sorry you are breaking it up. Based more on my experience with Jack Hushen at Justice than at the White House, but also at the White House, of course, I rate Jack a first-rate information man ~~man~~ who is miscast as a briefer. The latter duty should not be ~~required~~ required of him. In my opinion, that does not impair his value as your deputy.

Well, dammit, I've gone too long with what I'd sworn ~~not~~ not to do. Finish!

Ever,

John Osborne

Mr. Ron Nessen  
Press Secretary to the President  
The White House

HF Hand



# NBC NEWS

A DIVISION OF NATIONAL BROADCASTING COMPANY, INC.

NEW MERCURY HOUSE, HONG KONG - TEL. 5-271226, 5-274687

Pix to  
"Andrea"

Dear Ron:

December 5, 1974

Everything is back to normal here which means pretty quiet which is in marked contrast to your situation. Just read on the wires yesterday your remarks about Congressmen taking too much time off in response to Goldwater's criticisms of the President. I must say you have a tough job but a fascinatin one.

I enjoyed our brief visit together and getting caught up a bit on what you were doing and what you think about it. I am sorry we didn't get a chance to talk longer but schedules were pretty full those days--particularly yours. I am glad the Vladavostok sessions went well. That must have been quite exciting for all of you. I share Kissinger's surprise that there is as much skepticism about the agreement as has appeared in the country but trace it to two facts. First, that SALT and disarmament are immensely complicated issues with the public neither understand nor really cares to understand. It is the kind of thing they want to believe their Government is handling correctly and not know much about. This is unfortunate since it is so important to mankind's survival. But balanced against this, I suspect, is an inherent distrust of the Russians and a suspicion that they do not keep deals they make. This is because of limited experience between the two countries and unfortunhate precedents like the grain deal an so fourth.

I just had lunch with Dennis Fill, who dutifully presented a note of introduction you had written several months ago before your re-incarnation. I agree, he is indeed a charming man. We had a pleasant session comparing notes about mutual friends and ~~and~~ discussing the sorry state of the world. He is planning to go back to Los Angeles in January and may go into some sort of partnership with Fred Rheinstein. Meanwhile, he is just relaxing in Hong Kong, writing some and keeping track of what is going on. He was very interested to hear what I knew about your new work and said that your last scheduled get-together had been cancelled by the resignation and Ford's not going to California.

It must be very difficult for you trying to deal with your old colleagues in this post-Watergate period. I could detect just from my few days hanging around the press corps that the stuff I had read about everything going under a magnifying glass was definitely true. Obviously, you are in the first line of attack for this kind of thing which makes what you are doing all the more difficult. Combined with the fact that your President is only getting fair marks, it must really be a challenge. For what it is worth to you, and I pass it along as a friend, some of the guys said that you were becoming too closely associated to ~~and~~ everything the President wanted and that where you used to say things like "the President says" you now say, "we believe" or whatever. I suspect it is very hard to avoid having this kind of thing happen and I am sure the press would find some reason to complain regardless of what you were doing.





# NBC NEWS

A DIVISION OF NATIONAL BROADCASTING COMPANY, INC.

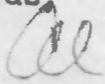
NEW MERCURY HOUSE, HONG KONG - TEL. 5-271226, 5-274687

Out here, we are again looking at Bangladesh and India for a possible trip. The subcontinent continues to be the one story we are able to generate interest in, which is in marked contrast to previous years when it was at the bottom of the heap. The other thing which should be happening in the near future is a decision on what kind of presence we are going to maintain in Vietnam. I, for one, am opposed to closing down the bureau completely. I argue that we will get more stories from there in coming months than from other Asian locations, just as has been the case through 1974 and that we should at least maintain the office and communications with someone to administer them.

Increasingly, I find myself involved in bureaucratic or at least management responsibilities. Part of the reason for that undoubtedly is because of the various changes and reorganizations I have made out here. But another part I suspect is the diminished newsload which just leaves more time for sorting papers and honing edges and what have you.

Right now, I am about to take a crack at the three network poker game so I'll close. My best to Cindy. Hope you will continue to have time to drop a note from time to time.

Best regards,



If it is not too much to ask and if the President is ever doing autographs, my daughter Andrea would love to have one. We have made an effort in recent months to keep her aware of the fact that she is an American and that we will be moving back to the United States one of these days. And President Ford has become symbol of the United States for her. She glances through papers and magazines and spots pictures of him and says who he is and what his job is. She also has a picture of Nixon but has caught on to the fact that it should not be displayed as prominently. Obviously, if this is something that is not convenient to do, it doesn't matter, but she'd get a big kick out of it.



January 4, 1975

Dear Al:

Thank you for your long letter. I am sorry to have taken so long to reply but there are just no quiet times here in the White House. We are now in the throes of preparing the economic and energy programs, the budget, the annual economic report, lots of new legislative proposals, signing bills and investigating the CIA.

I am sorry we had such a brief time in Tokyo. I really wanted to talk to you but, as you see, this job doesn't allow much time to visit with old friends. In fact, it doesn't allow much time for anything except work. Since I have had this job I haven't read a book or seen a movie or even had any time for a quiet evening of drinking and talking with friends.

I think the Far East trip went reasonably well, although we had some foul ups in the press operation mostly because of inexperience with foreign trips, and, of course, I stuck my foot in my mouth in Vladivostok with my remark about Ford doing in three months what Nixon couldn't do in three years. (I just say that the President agreed with that remark, even though it wasn't a very diplomatic thing to say.) I was aware of some of the criticisms of my operation by my former colleagues in the press, which you overheard on the trip. After I got back I called in about 15 of the good White House correspondents and sort of confessed my sins of omission and commission during the trip and before, and based on that I think there is a new and better understanding between me and the White House press corps. Obviously, the Press Secretary is never going to win or do everything right in the eyes of the press, but I think there is a happier feeling on both sides.



I guess you must be busier now with the step up in fighting in Vietnam. How are you staffing the war now? I expect we will see you again some time in '75 since the President has promised to go to China and India and probably will make a few other stops in your area. Hopefully we will have more time to talk on this trip.

I have started the process to get Andrea an autographed picture of the President. It sometimes takes a while so tell her not to be impatient if it doesn't come right away.

Cindy joins me in sending best wishes for the New Year to you and Alice and the baby.

Sincerely,

Ron Nessen  
Press Secretary  
to the President

Mr. Al Chambers  
NBC News  
New Mercury House  
Hong Kong



January 4, 1975

Dear Lis:

I am really sorry we missed each other in New York. I would have called ahead except with this job you never know when you are going to have a few spare minutes. In fact, with this job there are very few spare minutes.

I am having dinner with Mel Elfin and Newsweek editors in Washington on January 21. Will you be coming down? I hope so. I really would like to see you again. I expect we will be coming to New York from time to time and I will call you (or your tape machine) when we get there. I will try to give you some advance notice the next time I come up so you can make some room in your crowded social schedule.

Incidentally, I received a letter from Michael Novak about a new project he is working on involving ethnic Americans. Do you remember him from the Shriver campaign?

I have decided that if I ever get out of this job alive, I am going to take off a couple of years and do nothing but sit around and drink and talk with old friends. That means you.

This was a recorded announcement.

Love,

Ms. Elisabeth Peer  
General Editor  
Newsweek  
444 Madison Avenue  
New York, New York 10022

RN:jg



# Newsweek

444 MADISON AVENUE • NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022

Elizabeth Peer  
General Editor  
(212) 350-2000

Wednesday 12/11

Ron sweets -

Was idiotic. I was only  
out at a party from which I  
would so happily have returned  
early in order to have the  
pleasure of a nightcap with  
you. Even more idiotic, I'd just  
returned from Washington when  
I didn't call because I always  
assume you are permanently  
busy. You sounded tired and  
a little down on one tape recording.  
Let's try again soon. I worry  
about you. xxx Lij

(don't spit your teeth - I worry  
about me, too.)

444 MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022



Peer  
**Newsweek**

Mr. Ron Messer  
Press Secretary  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, DC,

personal

March 3, 1975

Dear Russ:

When I took this job I made a promise to myself never to write a letter or make a phone call complaining about a story, but I did not make a rule against writing letters to praise a story. So I am writing a fan letter for your piece in the Sunday Times Magazine on the end of the world. It was marvelous and, as always, your humor enhanced your point.

I guess you get the idea I enjoyed it, and I did.

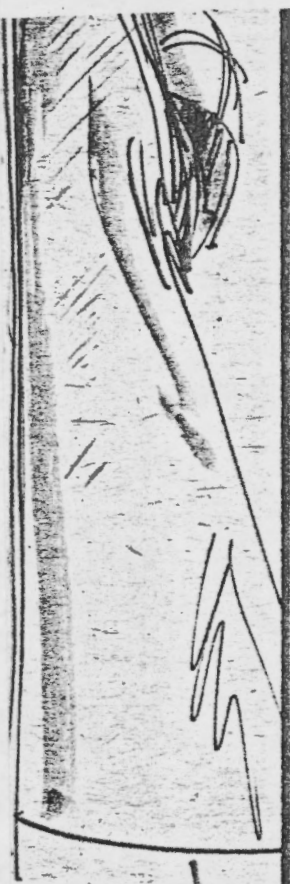
Sincerely,

Ron Nessen  
Press Secretary  
to the President

Mr. Russell Baker  
The New York Times  
229 West 43rd Street  
New York, New York 10036

RN:jg





# erbee oat.

end of polyester and  
towers... washable,  
to 18. About \$80.

stores:  
All Field & Co., Chicago;  
Bros., Cleveland;  
Frances Brewster, Florida;  
Newark; Jos. Home Co.,  
McCurdy's, Rochester;  
Reim's, Scranton;  
do's, All Stores.

# erbee®

N.Y., N.Y. 10018

Barbara Nesslin 2/75



Barbara Nesslin

We are gathered at home to watch the end of the world on television.

It is a special. We are watching it on our old black-and-white set. A touch of sentimentality here.

A neighbor with color invited us over, but we felt the tug of loyalty. "At the end," we said, "we'd rather be with our faithful old black-and-white set that brought the family all the great assassinations."

Nobody can believe the world is really ending. "What will the newspapers have to write about after it's all over?" asks Grandfather.

It is 1 o'clock in the morning. For months the networks have tried to persuade the world to end in prime time. "In prime time," they said, "it could top the ratings of the Super Bowl." No dice. The end of the world is not like a Republican National Convention. It is the last thing left that can say no to television.

President Ford will address the nation in a few minutes. According to NBC, which broke the release date on his speech, he will say that the end of the world is a historic event for all Americans.

The children are restless. They would rather watch "Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein" on Channel 8.

Foolish, foolish childhood. Someday, everybody will remember exactly what he was doing the night the world ended. How sad the children would be if they had to say, "I was watching 'Abbott and Costello Meet Frankstein.'"

Someday, they will thank us for this deprivation.

John Chancellor is showing film clips of the events leading to this night's event. Pictures of the last oil well going dry. Of the earth's vitally essential ozone layer breaking down under aerosol-can gases. Of well-dressed men carrying briefcases paying \$5 admissions to pornographic movies. Of the rapidly mounting birth rate.

"I always told you that credit cards and automobiles would be the end of you," says Grandfather.

Mother wants to switch to CBS. She feels that so long as Walter Cronkite is handling the end of the world everything will turn out all right.

Marvin Kalb is entering an airplane with Henry Kissinger. Kissinger is smiling. Why? Kalb says Kissinger believes the end of the world may make the Arabs and Israelis more receptive to peace negotiations.

There is an Exxon commercial. Exxon is working to build a better life for everyone after the end of the world.

The cats are bored. We see film of San Clemente. Richard Nixon is watching the end of the world in seclusion with a few old friends.

An interruption for a live shot from Zurich. We see the dollar collapse. Grandmother says the end of the world is very dull. She has expected a big bang.

"This is not a rocket launching from Cape Cana-

veral," I tell her. "It is the end of the world."

The children are fractious. If there is nothing more to the end of the world than collapsing dollars, mounting birth rates, dry oil wells and well-dressed men carrying briefcases going to dirty movies, they would prefer to watch "Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein."

I want to tell them to shut up, the end of the world is important, but I cannot, because I am a niceguy. You get to be a niceguy by growing up in a world you know can never come to an end. My entire life has been spent mastering niceguyism.

"Is this the way the world ends?" asks Mother.

"Not with a bang, but a whimper," says Cronkite, showing film of the last car in the world running out of gas.

"Just think" says Mother. "When we all get up tomorrow morning the world will have ended."

"Just like yesterday morning," says Grandmother.

The cats are asleep. We turn off the TV. It is so quiet I can hear the police steaming open my mail at the post office to make sure I still believe in the future of America.

Fragments of the last of the vitally essential ozone layer fall on the roof with the sound of small icicles breaking. The children plead to see the end of Abbott and Costello. Why not? They ought to have some way to remember the night the world ended, or else how will they ever believe it? ■





DOONESBURY

Dear Ron —

Many thanks for your recent note — your kind words were much appreciated.

Next month I'm having a show at the Jane Haslem Gallery, off DuPont Circle. The opening is on June 10, 6-8 pm, and I hope you'll stop by for it —

every best wish,  
Gary Trudeau

May 17



NEW HAVEN, CT 065  
PM  
18 MAY  
1978



Mr. Roy Neenan  
Press Secretary  
The White House  
Washington, D.C.

GERALD R. FORD LIBRARY

DOONESBURY

by G.B. Trudeau.

8  
FPA

May 9, 1975

Dear Gary:

Congratulations on winning<sup>ny</sup> the Pulitzer Prize for Editorial Cartooning.

Your cartoons -- and that really is not an adequate word for what you do -- have given a whole new meaning to this historic form of political comment.

One of my proudest possessions in my office is three original Trudeau cartoons about my White House press briefings given to me at Christmas by my staff.

The President joins me in sending you congratulations and best wishes.

Sincerely,

Ron Nessen  
Press Secretary  
to the President

Mr. Gary Trudeau  
DOONESBURY  
85 Olive Street  
New Haven, Connecticut 06511

RN/pp

10

RECEIVED  
MAY 12 1975  
CENTRAL FILES

EXECUTIVE

MA2-49

NESSEN, RONALD H. /M\*

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 9, 1975

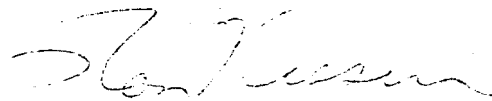
Dear Mr. Mullen:

Congratulations on winning the Pulitzer Prize for International Reporting.

Your series of articles on famine in Africa and India was in the highest journalistic tradition of reminding Americans of problems elsewhere in the world with which we should be deeply concerned.

The President joins me in sending you congratulations and best wishes.

Sincerely,



Ron Nessen  
Press Secretary  
to the President

Mr. William Mullen  
THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE  
435 N. Michigan Avenue  
Chicago, Illinois 60611



MAY 15 1975

CENTRAL FILED

10

MA 2-49  
NESSEN, RONALD H. *pc*

May 9, 1975

Dear Mr. Carter:

Congratulations on winning the Pulitzer Prize for International Reporting.

Your photographs of famine in Africa and India were in the highest journalistic tradition of reminding Americans of problems elsewhere in the world with which we should be deeply concerned.

The President joins me in sending you congratulations and best wishes.

Sincerely,

Ron Nessen  
Press Secretary  
to the President

*\**  
Mr. Ovia Carter  
THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE  
435 N. Michigan Avenue  
Chicago, Illinois 60611

RN/pp

RECEIVED  
MAY 15 1975  
CENTRAL FILES



EXECUTIVE

MAY 49

NESSEN, RONALD H. /S

May 9, 1975

Dear Mr. Steele:

Congratulations on receiving the Pulitzer Prize for National Reporting.

This was certainly a well deserved honor for your series of the Internal Revenue Service, which was done in the highest tradition of responsible journalism.

The President joins me in sending you congratulations and best wishes.

Sincerely,

Ron Nessen  
Press Secretary  
to the President

Mr. James B. Steele  
PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER  
400 N. Broad Street  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19101

5

RN/pp

RECEIVED  
MAY 14 1975  
CENTRAL FILES

EXECUTIVE 10

MA2-79

NESSEN, RONALD H. 10

May 12, 1975

Dear Mr. Connor:

Congratulations on winning the Pulitzer Prize for Special Investigative Local Reporting.

Your series on local police corruption and law enforcement was in the highest tradition of responsible investigative reporting.

The President joins me in sending congratulations and best wishes to you and the members of your reporting team.

Sincerely,

Ron Nessen  
Press Secretary  
to the President

Mr. Lawrence S. Connor  
City Editor  
THE INDIANAPOLIS STAR  
307 North Pennsylvania Avenue  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46206

RN/pp

10

RECEIVED  
MAY 15 1975  
GENERAL FILES





EXECUTIVE

MA2-49

NESSEN, RONALD H. /m

May 12, 1975

Dear Mr. Maurice:

Congratulations on winning the Pulitzer Prize on Editorial Writing.

Your editorials on the textbook controversy were in the great tradition of using the editorial page to calm emotional community concerns.

The President joins me in sending you congratulations and best wishes.

Sincerely,

Ron Nessen  
Press Secretary  
to the President

Mr. John Daniell <sup>\*</sup>Maurice  
Editor  
\* CHARLESTON DAILY MAIL  
1001 Virginia Street, East  
Charleston, West Virginia 25330

RN/pp

10



RECEIVED  
MAY 15 1975  
CENTRAL FILES

1114291  
NESSEN, RONALD H. *10*

May 12, 1975

Dear Mr. Gay:

Congratulations on winning the Pulitzer Prize for Spot News Photography.

With David Kennerly at the White House and your winning the Pulitzer, it seems that the Pacific Northwest has a monopoly on great photographers!

The President joins me in sending you congratulations and best wishes.

Sincerely,

Ron Nessen  
Press Secretary  
to the President

Mr. Gerald H. <sup>\*</sup>Gay  
The Seattle Times  
P. O. Box 70  
Seattle, Washington 98111 <sup>8/</sup>

RN/pp

10



RECEIVED  
MAY 15 1975  
CENTRAL FILES

# Washington Star-News

225 VIRGINIA AVE., S.E., WASHINGTON, D. C. 20003

May 18, 1975



Dear Ron -

The party did go on a while,

but I didn't forget your call.

How many have from the Whse ever  
called me. Besides I never forget  
a kindness - or a good voice, such as  
yours in the Shriver Choir. Best always,  
Mary M.

# Washington Star-News

225 VIRGINIA AVE., S.E., WASHINGTON, D. C. 20003

Special Reports  
Get Reports for Less...  
202-4380



Mr. Ron Nessen  
Press Secretary to the  
President  
The White House  
Washington, D.C.

29

May 12, 1975

Dear Mary:

I have the feeling that the party at the STAR had been going on too long for you to remember my phone call the other day so let me repeat it in writing.

My congratulations for winning the Pulitzer Prize for Commentary. Even though I don't always agree with your conclusions, I don't know of anyone who writes as movingly and with as much conviction as you.

The President joins me in sending you congratulations and best wishes.

Sincerely,

Ron Nessen  
Press Secretary  
to the President

\*  
X

Miss Mary ~~McGrory~~  
THE WASHINGTON STAR  
225 Virginia Avenue, SE  
Washington, D.C. 20061

RN/pp



RECEIVED  
MAY 14 1975  
CENTRAL FILES

# NBC NEWS

A DIVISION OF NATIONAL BROADCASTING COMPANY, INC.

Piazza del Collegio Romano, 1/a - Rome, Italy

Tel. 686.741

DAVID E. TEITELBAUM  
Director operations  
Mediterranean area

June 5, 1975

Mr. Ron Nessen,  
Press Secretary,  
The White House,  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Ron:

As expected, I was tied up at RAI during the President's brief visit here and could not get free for the glass of vino you mentioned.

My wife and two of my three sons were at the Oratorio of St. Peter but you were too far away for them to deliver a note of apology that I had written.

But, hopefully, we will be coming home in a year and then, in Washington or New York perhaps, we can make amends.

From the President's standpoint, the trip seems to have been a huge success.

And it appears that our spot on the visit to Rome was the best because we had two camera crews at the helicopter pad, CBS one and ABC none. And that was the one place that we got away from the ceremonies and saw the real Gerald Ford.

Regards,

  
David E. Teitelbaum

Teitelbaum

NBC NEWS

Piazza del Collegio Romano 1/a

Roma - Italia



Mr. Ron Nessen  
Press Secretary  
The White House  
Washington, D.C.

STATI UNITI



June 11, 1975

Dear Al:

I am embarrassed to tell you that even in this efficient, well-run White House, your January letter was put in a file folder which I only just rediscovered today. I'm glad that Andrea liked the President's autographed photo. You can tell her that her thank you card was a wonderful idea.

A lot has happened in your area since your last letter, hasn't it? We went through some rough times here at the White House during the last days of Saigon and Phnom Penh. I guess it ended as well as could be expected from the administration point of view. I think with Indochina behind us the mood and attitude toward the President are changing for the better.

What will the Hong Kong Bureau be doing now that the war is over? I'll bet you have some fascinating stories about the last days, and I would love to hear them.

Edward is growing so fast I can hardly believe it. He is like a little tape recorder. Everything you say to him he says back to you. I love him so much, and the bad part of this job is I don't get to see him as much as I would like.

Cindy asks to be remembered. Please send our love to Alice and Andrea. The next time you are in the States, we'll count on seeing you.

Sincerely,

Ron Nessen  
Press Secretary to the President

Mr. Al Chambers  
NBC News  
New Mercury House  
Hong Kong



RN/cg



# NBC NEWS

A DIVISION OF NATIONAL BROADCASTING COMPANY, INC.

NEW MERCURY HOUSE, HONG KONG - TEL. 5-271226, 5-274687

January 31, 1975

Dear Ron,

Well, there is one very happy little 4½ year old in Hong Kong. It took Andrea a little bit of time to understand exactly what the exciting gift from the White House was about, but once she got it, she was very pleased. The autographed picture is now at the framers and soon will be hanging, we are told by Andrea, near her bed where she can see it easily. She is a little upset that she cannot touch it all the time, but now agrees it is better for it to be in a frame. Her first reaction when we told her it was probably better to put it in a frame was one of those priceless four-year-oldisms - "I guess it isn't as useful as a toy." The whole experience has made Alice and ~~me~~ very glad that we are making an effort to keep Andrea aware of the United States and she certainly couldn't have a better symbol than President Ford. I think she is a lucky girl and I thank you for your efforts on our behalf. Under separate cover, you will be receiving Andrea's thank you which is an idea that she and Alice worked out together.

Out here, we are indeed very busy again. It is lots of fun and really quite challenging, though somehow, it is a bit disappointing that it should have taken Vietnam and Cambodia to again get us back in business. During January, NBC News Asia has had about forty stories on the air including I believe it is eight satellites. Some of the material has been really quite good, other stories pretty pedestrian. Don O'iver had a real good tour in Phnompenh for about eight days turning out several first-rate efforts. The most successful probably was a kind of profile of the city. The genius of the piece was that there were no soldiers and no fighting and no bombing and no convoys. Just people and their problems and it ran for four minutes twenty-one on a weekday Nightly News.

I saw where you and NBC News got together on the interview with the President. I remember your telling me the early chapters on this when you were in Japan. I haven't heard much about how it went but hope it was good for all concerned. NBC News seems to have a certain momentum and new confidence. The ratings on the Chancellor show are improving all the time, and at least judging by the past few videocassettes I have seen, I think the show is as well. The management seems more stable and confident than before, and for the first time in many years, I think everyone is beginning to believe we can and are doing the best job. It is all rather refreshing and I hope not short lived.

As for my opinion about your far more important organization - I certainly can see why the press has been saying that the President has emerged recently as a more forceful and dynamic leader. You now are coming out with definitive programs, which whether people like



# NBC NEWS

A DIVISION OF NATIONAL BROADCASTING COMPANY, INC.

NEW MERCURY HOUSE, HONG KONG - TEL. 5-271226. 5-274687

-2-

them or not, are clearly efforts to stem the tide. Although the stock market is not always right, it does seem to be saying that the programs are on the right track. Again, confidence seems a key word and it appears that President Ford is again getting some. Obviously though, the votes in Congress are going to be tough and with those Democratic majorities and elections next year and some philosophical differences, I can see where some of it is going to be rough sledding. I cannot imagine how you manage to get yourself well-briefed on such a large variety of subjects. After all, even if the President is equally well-briefed on all these things, it is you that are fielding the questions everyday, and to shift from energy to unemployment to Vietnam and back within a couple of minutes must be really challenging. I was delighted to hear that you had talked with the press corps guys and it sounded like you handled it very well. I, of course, haven't heard anything more, but wouldn't have expected to.

For what it is worth to you, let me pass along that there is one big problem in my view in the position concerning the \$300 million supplemental for Vietnam. It is an old story--when will it stop and all that sort of thing, but our sources indicate that the need is not quite as desperate as Thieu and the US Administration have been indicating. For example, we read that the ARVN are using the stuff up at a much quicker rate than expected and are almost out. But other sources tell us they have enough to go for three to six months of intensive battle without receiving anything else. Now, add that in addition to the \$300 million supplemental, the 1976 fiscal aid request is going to run between \$500 million and a billion for Vietnam, and it all begins to sound like a recurrent theme. One sign of Thieu's obvious concern is that after many months of no dealing with the press whatsoever, he has suddenly come out of the woodwork and is meeting with correspondents. Requests for filming permits at locations which were previously impossible are starting to come very quickly. For example, we are filming today at an arsenal where recently arrived supplies are kept. Last week, the same request was turned down. I regret to tell you that the American Embassy continues to be a major stumbling block for us. The Ambassador is uncooperative and the information provided by the press spokesman is usually wrong. But, then, none of this is really anything new for you.

I hope you will get a chance to get some time off one of these days and take a proper kind of vacation. Any chance of that? Do you really think the India trip will come off, and if so, would it be part of China or a separate go. I can see some difficulties in trying to make both stops on one trip. Many people out here doubt that the President will in fact visit India.

Guess that is about it for the moment. Again, our thanks for the autographed picture. It is terrific. Best to Cindy and Edward.  
Best regards,  
Al



*RN Personal file*

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

June 11, 1975

Dear Bob:

I was thinking of those old days covering the civil rights marches in the South and sitting around bars drinking and listening to the juke box half the night. On occasion I wish I were still doing that. It was a simpler world than I live in now.

When the President wants a liaison man with the South he doesn't often call on me! I was glad to hear from you and let's keep in touch. In fact, let's have a drink some time in a bar with shit-kicker music on the juke box.

Sincerely,

Ron Nessen  
Press Secretary  
to the President

Mr. Robert Lissit  
ABC  
1124 Connecticut Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20036



June 6, 1975

Ronald Nessen  
White House Press Secretary  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave.  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Ron,

When I see your picture in newspapers and magazines, and on television, it never fails to bring to mind a scene I feel takes place on muggy, fly-buzzing evenings in the little town of Cordele, Georgia.

There's a good ol' country boy, sitting around sipping a beer, looking at the picture and saying, "Ah swear ah know that fella, ain't he the one ah wanted to take out back and punch out one night coupla years back when we were all sittin' around the topless juke box at the Holiday Inn?"

And a few miles up the road, at Unadilla, there's a young black boy who sees the same picture and remembers bringing a chair out of the family shack to let the Man from the East sit out in the dusty road rather than just shuffling around in the heat while waiting for mama to get home.

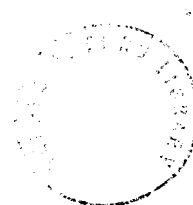
My question, sir, is this: Do you think you have somehow managed to bring government closer to those folks in Georgia by allowing them to feel they have been close to someone way up there?

Anyway, that's what I think of, and I think it's a fun kind of speculation.

Keep up the good work.



Robert Lissit





Ronald Nessen  
Press Secretary  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave.  
Washington, D.C.

**American Broadcasting Company** 1124 Connecticut Avenue NW Washington, D.C. 20036

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 11, 1975

Dear Ben:

When I took this job, I made a rule never to write a letter complaining about interpretation or opinion expressed in a story or editorial. However, I feel it is fair for me to raise a question about factual errors.

Last Saturday afternoon I received a call from the Los Angeles Times Washington Bureau for reaction to a George MacArthur story quoting sources as saying there had been heavy bombing raids in South Vietnam on the day of the final American evacuation.

I checked this out thoroughly and convinced myself it was not true and gave a very categorical denial to the caller from the Los Angeles Times. I also made the point that I felt it would be unfortunate if George MacArthur's story ran with the denial merely inserted in the story, thus leaving it to the reader to choose what to believe. I suggested to the caller that the story be checked out again, in light of the flat White House denial to make sure George MacArthur's source was credible.

Nevertheless, both the L.A. Times and the Washington Post, and perhaps other papers, ran the story with the White House denial inserted. The reader was therefore given a choice of whom to believe -- George MacArthur's source, or the White House.

My view is that an editor should take on some or all of that responsibility himself to make the choice. It bothers me that at least two very responsible newspapers did not attempt to evaluate the credibility of George MacArthur's source following the White House denial, and perhaps decide not to run the story at all.

I have checked out the incident further since publication of your story. I find that at the time of the Saigon evacuation the White House told both the press and Congress that one tactical fighter plane strike (2 planes) was made against one anti-aircraft position which endangered the helicopter evacuation. I am convinced after talking directly to the President and other high White House officials that that is the only air strike made in Vietnam that day.



It seems to me that your readers are left with the impression that your newspaper believes there were heavy secret air raids throughout Vietnam that day despite the White House denial.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ron Nessen", written over a horizontal line.

Ron Nessen  
Press Secretary  
to the President

Mr. Benjamin C. Bradlee  
Executive Editor  
Washington Post  
1150 15th Street, N.W.  
Washington, D. C. 20005





June 11, 1975

Dear Mr. Thomas:

When I took this job, I made a rule never to write a letter complaining about interpretation or opinion expressed in a story or editorial. However, I feel it is fair for me to raise a question about factual errors.

Last Saturday afternoon I received a call from the Los Angeles Times Washington Bureau for reaction to a George MacArthur story quoting sources as saying there had been heavy bombing raids in South Vietnam on the day of the final American evacuation.

I checked this out thoroughly and convinced myself it was not true and gave a very categorical denial to the caller from the Los Angeles Times. I also made the point that I felt it would be unfortunate if George MacArthur's story ran with the denial merely inserted in the story, thus leaving it to the reader to choose what to believe. I suggested to the caller that the story be checked out again, in light of the flat White House denial to make sure George MacArthur's source was credible.

Nevertheless, both the L. A. Times and the Washington Post, and perhaps other papers, ran the story with the White House denial inserted. The reader was therefore given a choice of whom to believe -- George MacArthur's source, or the White House.

My view is that an editor should take on some or all of that responsibility himself to make the choice. It bothers me that at least two very responsible newspapers did not attempt to evaluate the credibility of George MacArthur's source following the White House denial, and perhaps decide not to run the story at all.

I have checked out the incident further since publication of your story. I find that at the time of the Saigon evacuation the White House told both the press and Congress that one tactical fighter plane strike (2 planes) was made against one anti-aircraft position which endangered the helicopter evacuation. I am convinced after talking directly to the President and other high White House officials that that is the only air strike made in Vietnam that day.



It seems to me that your readers are left with the impression that your newspaper believes there were heavy secret air raids throughout Vietnam that day despite the White House denial.

Sincerely,

Ron Nessen  
Press Secretary  
to the President

Mr. William F. Thomas  
Editor  
Los Angeles Times  
Times Mirror Square  
Los Angeles, California 90053

RN/cg/pac



# The Washington Post

1150 15<sup>TH</sup> STREET, N. W.

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20071

(202) 223-6000

June 26, 1975

Dear Sir:

I warmly appreciate your kind message of congratulation, which has given me a great deal of pleasure.

Sincerely yours,

*Matthew Lewis*

Matthew Lewis

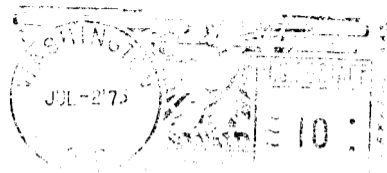
The Honorable  
Ron Nessen  
The White House  
Washington, D.C.



# The Washington Post

1150 15TH STREET, N.W.

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20071



The Honorable  
Ron Nessen  
The White House  
Washington, D.C.

May 9, 1975

Dear Matt:

Congratulations on winning the Pulitzer Prize for feature photography.

Those of us who live in Washington are fortunate to be able to view your regular photos in POTOMAC.

The President joins me in sending you congratulations and best wishes.

Sincerely,

Ron Nessen  
Press Secretary  
to the President

Mr. Matthew Lewis  
WASHINGTON POST  
1150 15th Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20071

10

RECEIVED  
MAY 12 1975  
CENTRAL FILES

July 4th

dearest ron-- i was so touched by your little note about my evacuation story. thank you for taking the time to write. it meant a lot to me, as does our friendship-- dormant (in the absence of letters) as it may be. i am able to keep tabs on you in a way, vis a vis the stories that crop up from time to time on "the president's press secretary" capital P. it is a rough job, obviously. you don't have the temperament for the job, but you certainly can cultivate it. when things get tense, you will just have to swallow a minute, and suck in all your composure. or maybe chant hare krishna. i don't know. the columbia journalism review piece on you was good-- and i think <sup>it</sup> raised some very valid issues about the lack of questions that are asked. i was appalled that no one asked about the schanberg piece on the continued aid for cambodia. i remember reading it in the herald tribune in paris shortly before i went back to asia. maybe what is needed is two briefings. one by you in the mornings, as usual. and then a second on more general issues. maybe only three times a week or so. maybe you could call it "currents in the news." i don't know. this is all very much off the top of my pretty little head, but there has to be a solution somewhere to this. just try to keep calm...keep plugging away, and doing the best you can. as long as you do your best, whatever happens, you won't feel too badly. i do know how hard you are working.

and cindy? and your new heir to the throne? i guess the baby is not so much a baby anymore, but until ~~i~~ see him, he will always be six months old in my mind.

i am between jobs--- having split from the protective shrouds of the peacock to return to saigon. i was working for time magazine and rolling stone. it was a totally intense month, as you can imagine. i always find in vietnam, that even though the experience takes everything out of you, it gives a lot back. i was totally involved, and felt totally involved. you know how it is-- intense, and you go through every emotion everyday. and slosh is all over late ~~at~~ <sup>in</sup> the night with ~~the-night~~ booze. a great, exciting, and yet trying moment in my life. so since sigh-gone, i have been in manila, hong kong, vientiane, paris, prague, paris, and now anchorage. i am between jobs. not sure what i will do next, but confident i can figure something out. but just taking the time to visit the people i love most on this planet before taking on other commitments. after alaska, i will go down to san francisco and talk to rolling stone. i have had a "feeler" from harpers. a dim chance of a job with wrc in washington-- local side, reporting. but i am questioning if broadcasting is really what i want. i know i can do it. writing is infinitely harder, but also more rewarding. i am willing to live in the states for awhile, if i can find an interesting job. if not, think i might pack my bags for beirut. i know i could string there--- and though i might not be learning so much professionally, i would come to learn and undersatnad about the middle-east. we shall see. i do expect to be in washington. probably later in the summer, and i will of course call.

alaska is fascinating. i am visiting a friend from the ap here. tad  
bartimus. she was with me in vietnam. we had dinner this week with  
the us senator-- ted stevens. a nice guy. i think i boggled his mind  
a bit, in all innocence, he asked me what i thought of alaska. i told  
him, <sup>in all seriousness</sup> i think it is our next vietnam. it is all here. the millions, the  
billions, the disruption of the local population, the thinking that  
of course the pipeline will work-- for all the rational reasons--- just  
like in vietnam when for every rational reason we should have won the  
war. there are some things in life that should just be left alone.  
unfortunately, we still are not doing a very good job at discriminating.  
maybe it is not our next vietnam, but our next cambodia. afterall, in  
vietnam, the war was already there. the american involvement in that  
war can be argued to doomsday--- but--- cambodia was different. it  
was there that we intervened. it was there that we "destroyed a culture."  
it is not fini vietnam. much will be preserved there. there will still  
be TET and flower markets on nguyen hue and all that. but it is, sadly,  
so sadly, fini cambodia. that was the pathetic, stupid little war.  
well, i am rambling and digressing. i think of you, and would really  
like to sit down and talk with you soon. outside the white house and  
all it involves. take care of yourself in the meantime. you are in  
rough waters, but you are a good, ~~capa-~~ capable man, and i know you  
can finesse the mess.  
funny to think that we met six summers ago. i was a "copyperson" at  
nbc, you a correspondent....who would have thought you would have ended  
up in the white house, and me back in vietnam. the love affairs i have  
had with imen have been much easier to cope with than the love affair  
with saigon.

take care of yourself. we'll get together soon, and thanks for  
writing.

fondly,

*Laura*

Palmer

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

P. O. Box 2175

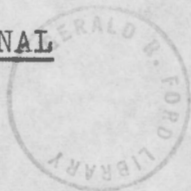
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99501



VIA AIR MAIL

Ron Nessen  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, D.C.

PERSONAL





May 21, 1975

Dear Laura:

You've come a long way, baby!

I've just read your Rolling Stone article on the last days of Saigon and the evacuation. I was moved. I was also very impressed by your skills as a reporter and your insights into the situation.

What will you do now? If you come to Washington I would like for you to come in for a visit here at enemy headquarters.

Love,

Ms. Laura Palmer  
% Rolling Stone  
625 Third Street  
San Francisco, California 94107

RN/cg



Dear Ron,

RR has  
seen  
2/20

It's great to have  
such attentive cub  
Scouts. You were a  
dear to call, to visit  
and to bring "Jewel".



I'm home now and feel  
great. Walter and another  
friend, Peter Birmingham,  
brought me home and  
the homecoming was  
complete with a

roaring fire in the  
fireplace and a waiting  
Bleedy Mary.

Thanks again.

Love,

Feb. 16, 1974 Maggie

Hunter

3517 R

Washington

2000



Mr. Ron Nessen  
The White House  
Washington D.C.

NB

Christie Basham

[ca. 8/14/75]

Just to keep things  
in perspective —

MRS,  
Rosa

(Cleaning out the old  
desk during the Dog days  
of August.)



# INTERDEPARTMENT CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Mark Landsman

Jan. 15, 1974.

TO

DATE

FROM

Jack Smith

SUBJECT

Once again we have asked for Washington staff coverage of a major news story and failed to get it. This is the second such instance within a week. In each case, the reporter involved was Nessen. !!!

I have not yet had an explanation of the failure last week on the 10th anniversary of the surgeon general's report on cigaret smoking. I asked for a film story during the morning conference call. Van Kardisch transmitted the order to Chrissy Basham. Basham's reply was something like, "we'll try." She noted that the piece had been "scheduled" for NN the next day. When asked who had done the scheduling, she could not reply. Washington had begun shooting the story several days earlier. Yet, that night, the Washington desk told us that all that was available was a talking head. About 200 feet of the talking head was shipped, without cutaways. The telexed film rundown from Washington that night said 800 feet was available. When questioned about this, the Washington desk insisted that only 200 feet was in fact there. Yet, the next day, NN carried 3:30-- and a film story. We had specifically asked for a Nessen narration.

Yesterday, Bernie Brown asked for coverage of the Agnew story. There was very little film, for understandable reasons. But, as you know, there are enough angles here for a book, and it would be amazing if more than one book were not already in the works. Yet, on this major news event, we again drew a total blank.

When your inquiries are completed, we would appreciate knowing what happened in each instance.

cc Messrs Schulberg Farinet Sinsel Brown

RECEIVED

JAN 15 1974

MARK LANDSMAN



# INTERDEPARTMENT CORRESPONDENCE

TO Jack Smith

DATE January 15, 1974

FROM Mark Landsman

SUBJECT

I have in hand one of your many letters of complaint about the News Gathering System. I do not share your lust for typing notes, so in the future I would hope you'll direct your criticisms to me and I will direct my answers to you face to face.

Before I respond to your most recent note (January 15th) I want to point out to you, and I think it's necessary, that our news operation has provided the Today Show more stories and more offerings than had been the case six months ago. We not only service news side, which is your area of concern, but show side as well. I have yet to receive a note from you crediting us with doing something right and surely we do some things right. As a matter of fact, you are much more critical than others associated with Today and while we are open to suggestions and deserve criticism on occasion it would be welcome to have a day or two pass without a Jack Smith memo copied to Messrs. Schulberg, Farinet, Sinsel, and Brown. Perhaps, you operate under the assumption that the more notes your bosses see you write, the more valuable member you become to them and the unit. I hope you're right, I think you're wrong.

Now, to the issues at hand. On our afternoon conference call last Thursday, which Bernie Brown attended, I asked for a Nessen smoking spot for Friday's Today Show. Since the anniversary of the government report was Friday I considered it a spot news item though, as I recall, the idea originated with Nightly News. Bernie Brown discussed the matter in later phone calls to Washington but I was gone by then and so cannot give you a verbatim of those conversations. I am sure Brown pursued the matter with vigor and through a misunderstanding, probably on Washington's part, only some sound film was shipped to New York.

cont'd.../





Actually, last Thursday, Nessen was busy all day working another story which appeared on Nightly News but earlier in the week had begun to pull some film for the smoking report. So by Thursday it was partially edited, some shots had been pulled but not spliced. Washington should have told that to Bernie and suggested a spot be prepared and fed from there Friday morning. They were wrong for failing to give that advice. I think a mistake was made at this end for not asking all the right questions, again I think I'm not sure. In any event that, to the best of my knowledge is why you wound up with sound bites Friday.

Again yesterday on our afternoon conference call, which Bernie Brown attended, I asked for a new Nessen standupper on Agnew. After that confusion sets in but I understand Washington mistakenly shipped the short Agnew tape of him leaving his office instead of keeping it there and marrying it to a Nessen in studio report. After a number of conversations Bernie apparently frustrated accepted the proposition that the story couldn't be advance beyond the NN report from Monday night. He was wrong for settling, the Washington desk was wrong for not suggesting the alternatives.

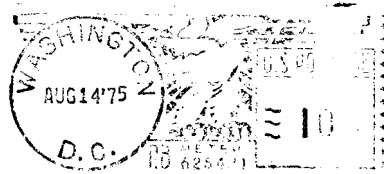
I had Bernie come into my office today and in his presence I discussed both matters with Christie Basham. She in turn tried to reconstruct what happened and called me back. Christie has asked her desk editors to consider more alternatives in late afternoon and evening dealings with Today.

Consider the possibility that we all make mistakes. Consider also the fact that Washington, as well as the rest of our news operation has given you maximum support. Consider all that before your next letter and feel free to discuss our failings with me any morning. I'm in as you know by 8:30.

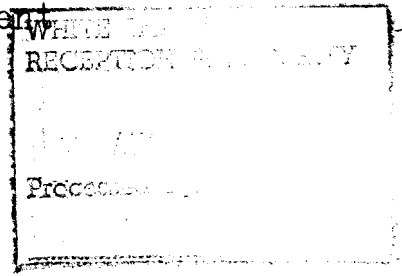
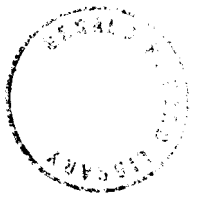
Mark L. Lank



Basham  
NBC NEWS



Mr. Ron Nessen  
Press Secretary to the President  
The White House  
Washington,  
D.C.





4001 NEBRASKA AVENUE, N.W., WASHINGTON, D. C. 20016

friend

REMIND RON TO CALL

all copies filed -  
he did  
//  
//



September 3, 1975

Dear John;

You certainly must like Kansas City!

I don't have all the details of our forthcoming trip to Kansas City but I would very much like to see you and Lucy when I am there. I'll give you a call when I get more details and I hope we can arrange to have dinner or at least a drink together.

Cindy and Edward are fine although I don't get to see very much of them these days. Edward is growing very fast and his vocabulary is growing even faster.

Please give our love to Lucy and Carrie (I can't picture Lucy being fat!)

Sincerely,

Ron Hessen  
Press Secretary  
to the President

Mr. John S. Masternan  
Public Affairs Director  
Kansas City Public Television  
2100 Stark  
Kansas City, Missouri 64126

RH/pp





**KCPT**

Kansas City Public Television  
2100 Stark  
Kansas City, Missouri 64126  
816/461-8100

August 11, 1975

Mr. Ron Nessen  
Press Secretary to  
The President  
The White House  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Ron:

The basic problem with Anderson's interview as I saw it on Buckley's FIRING LINE was that it, in a word, stunk. No self-respecting network would have wanted it. The best answer to Anderson would have been, "Come back when you've learned how to ask questions."

I am gainfully employed, or approximately so. Having become addicted to the longer forms of non-fiction TV, and wanting to do more, I went on the staff here at Channel 19 as of July 1. The title is public affairs director. We've got several things going; we did a dandy half-hour on the Kansas City Chiefs training camp, using our makeshift mobile unit housed in an old Army truck. Works great! It seems to me sometimes that I'm having more fun here than I ever had in bigger-league television.

Will you be coming out with the President when he meets the Jackson County G.O.P. on September 12th?

Will we be able to see you? We live about five minutes away from the Alameda Plaza Hotel, which I understand will be the site of the dinner.

September 12 is close to your own anniversary in office. Duty compels me to ask if you'd sit still for a half-hour conversation on the work of Press Secretary. We could make it easy by taking our mobile unit to some convenient point in town. The station is a good distance out, almost to Independence, and I wouldn't suggest the drive to anyone as busy as I know you'd be.

Lucy and Carrie are fat and happy. The boys were up for about a month of steady baseball watching, and constant eating. Our love to Cindy and Edward.

Best,

John S. Masterman  
Public Affairs Director

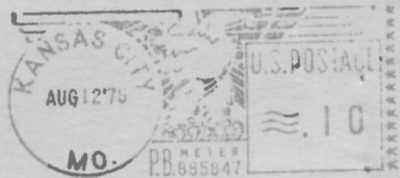


JSM:knh



**KCPT**

Kansas City Public Television  
2100 Stark  
Kansas City, Missouri 64126



Mr. Ron Nessen  
Press Secretary to  
The President  
The White House  
Washington, D.C.

**Newsweek**

From  
THOMAS DeFRANK



Rn has  
seen

September 9, 1975

Ron--

Quite seriously, your help on very short notice on last week's cover story on the President's near-miss was truly yeoman, and I want to thank you again for all your trouble.

As for the choice giblets of color and detail which didn't make the magazine--now maybe you'll occasionally believe some of those stories I tell you about what happens to copy once it reaches New York.

At any rate, I wouldn't want you to think you can rest on your laurels of last week. Just remember, the reputation of a White House press secretary is only as good as his last leak.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature that appears to be "Tom".

P.S. Feel free to steal the last paragraph above worth of wit for your book.

Handwritten initials "DF".



1750 PENNSYLVANIA AVE., N.W. • WASHINGTON, D.C. 20006

PERSONAL

**Newsweek**



MR. RON NESSEN  
PRESS SECRETARY TO  
THE PRESIDENT  
THE WHITE HOUSE

MR. AL  
chambers  
41a stubbs road  
flat c 1-15  
Hong Kong BCC

Friend

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

11 September 1975

Dear Al,

I can't believe I've let almost three months go by without answering your letter from India. It is so busy, so steadily, here that the months just fly by. I can't believe the summer is gone. The schedule for the Fall is also crowded. The China trip looks like it will take place in late November or early December. Then, I'm planning a Christmas vacation. And then the campaign will start.

See how fast the time passes when you're having fun! Actually, I am having fun, despite the long hours, pressures and aggravations. I seem to be over my difficulties with the press. I think we've gotten used to each other. I don't want to jinx anything, but things really are going quite smoothly here.

Viet Nam and Cambodia have quickly evaporated from the public mind in America. It's amazing how an issue which was so important for so long just dropped out of sight. Every now and then something brings it to mind, though. The President visited a refugee camp in Arkansas recently. It was heartbreaking to see the thousands of Vietnamese ripped out of their homeland and dropped down in the middle of a hot Army camp in America. They looked so bewildered. But the Vietnamese are adaptable and I'm sure they'll adjust and ~~fit in~~ fit in, at least most of them.

One CBS cameraman from Vietnam is in Washington now. I don't know his name but he's done some filming here at the White House. I don't know what's happened to Vo Huynh or Vo Suu. I heard they were coming to the U.S. and I asked NBC to have them call me but I haven't heard. I did get a call from Nghia. He got out five months BEFORE the war was over and has opened a Vietnamese restaurant on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. I keep hoping to get down there to see him but so far I haven't had the time. I sense that NBC is not doing as much for its Vietnamese refugees as the other networks.

You're right - - I don't think the President will visit India this year. Many Americans are quietly pleased by Mrs. Gandhi's troubles. They think it's a fit punishment for India's self-righteous tone over the years.

What little personal time I have I try to spend with Cindy and Edward. It's incredible how fast Edward is growing. He's at a stage now where he chatters constantly. I love to hear him talk. Of course, he picks up every expression from television and from conversations he overhears. He started to nursery school twice a week. Like all parents I naturally think he's extremely smart.

Cindy has finally gotten into tennis. She took some lessons when we were in Vail, Colo., with the President for an August vacation. Now she plays almost every day with a next-door neighbour, the daughter of a Peruvian diplomat. They are coming down to the White House this afternoon to play here. (In case you're wondering how I have time to answer personal letters and play tennis: the President is in New Hampshire today campaigning for Louis Wyman for Senator and I volunteered my deputy to go on the trip while I stay home.)

Ever since the assassination attempt in Sacramento, however, I have been nervous about the President being out in public and about not accompanying him everywhere. What a close call it was in Sacramento. I clearly saw the gun. (I was about 10 feet from the President, slightly behind and to the right of him, when it happened.) I couldn't believe what I was seeing. I felt so completely helpless and powerless. Thank goodness there was no bullet in the chamber. The episode reinforced my belief that there are an awful lot of nuts walking around in America, especially in California. Give our love to Alice and the baby and

100 PR16  
October 2, 1975

Dear Scotty:

When I took this job I made a rule never to write letters of complaint about news stories and columns but to write letters of praise for those news stories and columns that struck me as being especially worthwhile.

I'm writing to praise your column today on the various Congressional investigations of the intelligence community.

The trait I have admired most about your writing over the years is its independence. You have never run with the herd and today's column was a prime example of this independence.

As far as I know you are the first journalist to suggest in print that some of the aspects and repercussions of the intelligence investigations are reminiscent of the Joseph McCarthy era. I, and some others in the White House, do not think that overstates the case.

I certainly hope that other journalists will use your column as a guidelight, as they have so often in the past, and begin to examine some of the broader issues raised by the intelligence investigations instead of concentrating on each day's so-called revelation.

With warm regard,

Sincerely,

Ron

Ron Neseen  
Press Secretary  
to the President

✓  
Mr. James Reston, Vice President  
NEW YORK TIMES  
1920 L Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20036

RN/pp



RECEIVED

OCT 6 1975

CENTRAL FILES

# The New York Times

WASHINGTON BUREAU  
1920 L STREET, N. W.  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20036  
(202) 293-3100

JAMES RESTON

October 14, 1975

Dear Ron:

Thanks for your note.

I'm sure that it is a very kindly policy that you've adopted-- ignoring the bad and praising the good. But I wonder whether it's really helpful to be so one-sided. Occasionally, a kick in the pants would do us no harm. The only problem being that you'd have a broken foot before too long.

Kindest regards,



James Reston.

Mr. Ron Nessen  
Press Secretary  
to the President  
The White House  
Washington, D.C.



# The Washington Post

1150 15TH STREET, N. W.

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20071

(202) 223-6000

October 6

Dear Ron:

Thanks for your note. I am glad that piece made sense to you and am grateful to you for your generous comments. See you soon.

Best,



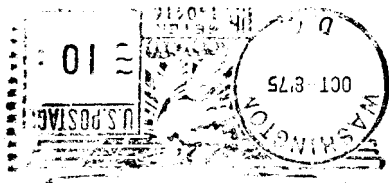
Dave Broder



Broder  
**The Washington Post**

1150 15TH STREET, N.W.  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20005

Mr. Ron Nessen,  
The White House,  
Washington, D.C.



GENERAL

TR

PR16

September 30, 1975

Dear Dave:

I am writing with praise and admiration for your Sunday column on Presidential travels. And I hope I have enough credibility left that you will believe me when I say I would have admired your views even if they did not agree with what many here at the White House think.

You consistently demonstrate a quality that is exceedingly rare in the Washington press corps, namely the ability to reach independent judgements unaffected by the great herd judgements.

You demonstrated that independence again Sunday and my admiration grows.

Sincerely,

Ron Nessen  
Press Secretary to the President

Mr. David Broder  
The Washington Post  
1150 15th Street, N. W.  
Washington, D. C. 20037

RN/cg

RECEIVED

OCT 1 1975

CENTRAL FILES

David S. Broder

# Can Ford Stay Home?

SAN FRANCISCO—There comes a point when any reporter begins to feel like a Jonah. Having been in Dallas in November 1963; in Los Angeles in June 1968; and in San Francisco in September 1975, the temptation is strong to stay away from Presidents and presidential candidates.

That is, of course, irrational. But no more so than some of the other suggestions that have been made since Sara Jane Moore aimed her pistol at Gerald Ford here last Monday.

Because the actions of such an obscure individual has had—or narrowly missed having—such calamitous consequences for the nation, sweeping changes are being pressed to increase the security of the President.

Strong gun control legislation is being advocated as it was after the shootings of the Kennedys, of Gov. Wallace and of Martin Luther King Jr.

So far as this reporter is concerned, no gun law could be too strong. Congress should legislate a complete ban on the manufacture, sale and possession of weapons. It could totally eliminate private arms, letting sportsmen and hunters "borrow" the guns they need for those entertainments from government warehouses on submission of convincing proof of personal stability.

Such laws would be welcome personally, but they have no chance of passage. And one must be skeptical about the effectiveness of lesser measures as a guarantee of presidential safety.

A second impractical approach is the "roundup" method. Moore was practically begging to be deterred from her attack on the President and was twice in the hands of the authorities in the hours just before she took aim, a fact that needs some explaining.

There is no way to give authorities broad enough powers of preventive detention to pull all potential assassins off the street without at the same time giving them virtually unlimited power to harass individuals and disrupt movements they classify as dangerous or subversive.

Rather than infringe to that extent on the civil liberties of all citizens, a good many people now are calling for a sharp curtailment in the freedom of travel of one person—Gerald R. Ford. The "Jerry, stay home" brigade has been very vocal.

But that would also be wrong. The need to get out of the White House, out of Washington and out among the people is not synthetic or phony on Mr. Ford's part. He is a naturally gregarious politician, who for years has combined a heavy schedule of travel and speeches with his official duties in Washington.

Furthermore, he is, through no contrivance of his own, attempting at the moment to lead the country without being its elected President. So it would be doubly wrong to cut him off from direct contact with the people at this juncture.

He is accused of risking his life and keeping the country on edge about his safety for essentially selfish reasons. Of course, these trips are political. But they are not purely selfish. Having the President of the United States mingling at the Oklahoma State Fair, talking with Stanford law students, attending a life insurance award banquet or a building trades convention is an effective way of bridging the gulf of distrust between citizens and government.

As the wise Harvard sociologist David Riesman told the New York Times, "The American President is supposed to be a democratic person; he's supposed to mingle . . . If the President is not this way, he would increase the feeling of distance, the feeling of resentment . . . the feeling of paranoia and the feeling of powerlessness (on the part of the citizens) . . . which, in the end, would only make things worse."

That applies to the seemingly empty gesture of touching hands with people in the crowds. Those who demand to know what the President or the people can "learn" from such a quick brush have a very limited concept of communication. A touch, a smile, a phrase can do much to build trust and reduce suspicion—as anyone who can walk behind the President in such crowds can see.

But as a practical matter, this particular form of communication must be weighed against the serious risks it entails. A suitable proxy for the handshaking on the streets might be arranged, as many have suggested, by admitting a portion of the public through screening devices for a brief visit with the President.

In San Francisco last Monday, no Moore incident would have occurred if the President had been picked up at an inside driveway of the St. Francis Hotel, instead of at the curb.

What are needed, in short, are not sweeping changes, but relatively minor adjustments in the arrangements for Mr. Ford's future trips.

This reporter devoutly wishes never to cover another shooting. But I think Mr. Ford is right to resist the more severe efforts to curb his travels, and the country would be wise to reject calls for massive preventive detention of potential assassins.