

At about 11 p.m. EDT, the President came back to the press compartment, and stood at the center table, with Ron Nessen.

Nessen said all ~~was~~ said would be embargoed for 6:30 p.m. Sunday. The President was in shirtsleeves, holding a drink. He shook hands with the newsmen present and at the suggestion of one of the photographers placed the drink down on the table while he talked and was photographed.

He said he might sleep in in the morning and skip church, that he still has a little cold and would probably play golf in the afternoon with Lee Elder, Les Arends and someone else. (This graph not embargoed).

He said he enjoyed this kind of day but wouldn't want to do it everyday.

On Mexican trip, said they would discuss drugs, immigration, oil, seven or eight other matters.

Asked about political prospects at places visited today. Said in S.C. ~~the chances of winning the governorship~~ "we have a chance of winning the governorship," and he cited the troubles between Ravenel and Dorn on the Democratic side as a factor favoring the Republican's chances. He called Marshall Parker a favorite and said Len Phillips had a 50-50 chance. Said Ritchie in Greensboro probably behind. Said hoped could pick up "one, maybe two" in S.C., one in N.C., would help offset "other places where we might not do as well." Said he thought Snyder and Carter would win in Ky. Cook has been behind and Cook told him he thinks he's gaining but admittedly will be a tough contest.

Asked about risking his presidential prestige on such trips, he said "if I ~~didn't do anything~~ and don't do anything and we lose, Republicans in the House would say, he didn't even try." "At least I tried, and if the results are better than the polls ~~indicate~~ say...." "I think I spend enough time in the Oval office to get the work done." "I have enough time to decide what's right and what's wrong."

On net gains and losses this fall: "I'll tell you better in a week." Said got feel from trip to Midwest "things are not as pessimistic as some of the polls would lead you to believe." People he talked to were ~~not~~ pretty realistic.

On Boston desegregation: "What ~~was~~ was done by the Governor apparently eased the situation. I don't think us sending in the 82nd Airborne Division would have done any good." "We followed the right decision. It seemed to work." Said some thought federal intervention was needed. National Guard did a good job, despite some criticism, Guard ~~is~~ seemed to have a "high degree of capability. It was well trained and well equipped to meet any emergency, which made it easier for me." Asked about the long-range solution on a situation like Boston, he said "That's for the judge to decide. He's made the order. He has to do

what he thinks is right under the decisions of the Supreme Court."

Asked if any conservative Republicans had asked him to withdraw the Rockefeller nomination, "I wouldn't say anybody seriously." "I'm still convinced he would ~~xxxx~~ make a good Vice President." Asked whether Rockefeller's difficulties stemmed from the post-Watergate morality, he said he saw no connection. "Watergate was a coverup. Everything that's come out about Nelson Rockefeller has been ~~x~~ open." "It's a pretty stringent standard. I ought to know.... One can't help but wonder how many people on either side of the aisle can undergo this kind of scrutiny. It's pretty rugged." "I know how he feels. I had the same delay."

Asked about whether any special briefings for the Speaker, said hasn't talked to Speaker, special briefings available though. Air Force Two has been made available to him and Pres. said he understands he's going to use it in the campaign, and Democrats would pay for campaign use.

Asked if lack of VP would affect trip to Japan, "I wouldn't think so." Said he expected Rockefeller would be confirmed by then.

Asked if disappointed by reaction of crowds to his economic pitch, said "~~xxxxxxx~~" "I've really been encouraged. Reaction has been good." "Certainly the attendance... ~~they~~ when you look at the numbers they weren't staying away. I was encouraged. I loved those crowds."

On his testimony on the pardon, would Congress be satisfied? "I don't know, but Congress had its opportunity and I really believe I answered any questions...I certainly answered anything they asked." Would it satisfy them? "I would hope it has. I don't know what more they would want to know."

Asked about Rep. Holtzman's aggressive questioning. Said he wished would have had an opportunity ~~xxx~~ to answer more, ~~than~~ "She didn't ask ~~xxx~~ them, just recited the. I would have been delighted to answer any of the others if I had time." He said he had to answer one question ~~x~~ even if he had to interrupt her (presumably on no deal) but didn't want to be rude and interrupt her on the others. Asked one of Holtzman's questions, whether he would be willing to make available to public the tapes of conversations between Nixon and himself, ~~xxxxxxx~~ assuming only there would be no problem with the special prosecutor, he said "I would be delighted to." Asked about Jaworski successor, said it was primary responsibility of AG, "I've received no recommendation or name."

Asked about cabinet changes: "I haven't told anybody on my staff about cabinet changes." Said doesn't know who is spreading reports, but "either somebody outside who alleges they're influential" or lower echelon staffer." Of some of the reports: "They're so way out they don't make any sense. With all respect to the source on some of these stories, they must be way down in the bowels of the White House or self-appointed...."

Asked about Rumsfeld in cabinet, said Rumsfeld doing an excellent job where he is. Said he hasn't told any of his senior staff ~~of~~ on cabinet changes. He kept saying that he hadn't told them, leaving the impression with us that he was considering changes. We asked whether he would bypass the senior staff and tell us, and he laughed.

Then a small white princess phone with a red light at the window ~~xi~~ side of the table rang, and the red light went on. A reporter picked it up and handed it across to the President. He said, "Hello? Mr. Nessen." And handed the phone to the purple-shirted press secy. And walked back front to his compartment.

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