

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SEPTEMBER 19, 1972

OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

THE WHITE HOUSE

PRESS CONFERENCE

OF

SENATOR HUGH SCOTT, SENATOR ROBERT P. GRIFFIN,

CONGRESSMAN GERALD R. FORD

AND

CONGRESSMAN LESLIE ARENDS

THE BRIEFING ROOM

AT 10:15 A.M. EDT

MR. ZIEGLER: The Leadership Meeting this morning was a breakfast meeting which was held over in the Dining Room on the first floor, the Dining Room just off the State Dining Room.

The President met this morning with the leaders who are here with me and also attending the meeting was Dr. Kissinger and John Ehrlichman and Cap Weinberger. During the meeting the President and the leaders reviewed the legislative proposals that are still before the Congress and where that stands and had a thorough discussion of that and also Dr. Kissinger discussed with them much of what he talked to members of the press about the other day, but in a little more detail regarding his recent visit to the Soviet Union and to Germany, France and Great Britain.

So, with that, I think the leaders can take your questions.

Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Before questions, there is something that was not discussed, but I read in the paper that Sargent Shriver said his net worth is only around \$100,000. I can't believe it. I think his net worth is considerably less than that, unless, of course, you are talking about dollars. (Laughter) I imagine she must have cut his allowance. (Laughter)

CONGRESSMAN FORD: I think in light of what Ron said, it is best that we just go to questions. It was a thorough discussion of the legislative program and the report by Dr. Kissinger.

Q Did Dr. Kissinger say anything about Vietnam, Congressman, discussions on Vietnam with the Soviet Union?

CONGRESSMAN FORD: He has had discussions with them, but we didn't get any details of the discussions in that regard.

Q Do you people agree with Senator Dole that the Watergate case is going to turn out to be a plus for the Republicans?

MORE

CONGRESSMAN FORD: I would answer it this way. The indictments are on the record now and it certainly clears the White House and any of the responsible people in the Committee to Re-elect. I think the American people have faith in the judicial system and in my canvassing last Saturday in Michigan, I think no one we canvassed out of 25 homes raised that issue at all. The American people are more concerned about the affirmative things that involve peace and prosperity, and they don't believe that this is an issue because they know the White House is not at all connected with it.

SENATOR SCOTT: We canvassed over 100 people in Minneapolis and St. Paul. Two of the four precincts were strongly Democratic. I never got a single question about it. It is what I call perhaps a Washington issue.

The people of this country are satisfied that the judicial system is operating. They have confidence in it. Evidently Senator McGovern feels that he will gain some rallying by attacking the judicial system, attacking the Grand Jury method of procedure. He is not going to get anywhere.

Q Senator Scott, I would like to go back to an issue that you raised last week and it has become somewhat confused since then and that is whether or not the President is under any circumstances going to ask for a tax increase.

I believe that you qualified your statement and said that it depended to some extent on what the Congress did. Mr. Ziegler and Mr. Ehrlichman removed your qualifications and said there were no circumstances under which a tax increase would be requested. Yesterday Treasury Secretary Shultz put back your qualification.

I wonder if you could explain to us just what the tax situation is?

SENATOR SCOTT: There is no confusion about it. If the Congress will adopt a spending ceiling, if the Congress is responsible, that is it. The President believes that if his advice is followed there is no reason why he should have a tax increase. Certainly he doesn't intend to do anything that would bring about the necessity for such a tax increase.

CONGRESSMAN FORD: Let me reiterate somewhat differently, but I think with the same result. The President reiterated this morning there would not be a tax increase and urged us to fight for the spending ceiling and indicated that any of the various authorizations or appropriations that would undermine the spending ceiling or produce fiscal irresponsibility would be vetoed.

Q Does that mean even if Congress does not stay below the spending ceiling there will still not be a tax increase or is it a conditional thing?

MORE

CONGRESSMAN FORD: I think that is too speculative to really give a fair answer to. We have to talk about the realities of trying to get a spending ceiling which the President is fighting for and we hope to pass in the House and to try and convince the Congress to hold down appropriations and authorizations which we hope to do with those of us in the minority.

So, I don't think we can go beyond that. The President did say again this morning he was opposed to a tax increase.

Q Senator Scott, do you share Senator Stennis' concern about the Lavelle thing, that the higher-up's perhaps had any knowledge of it?

SENATOR SCOTT: As you know, I never adopt anybody else's views and then go on from there. I have views of my own. I am not on the Committee. I will wait for the Committee's recommendation and I think it will exercise the kind of judgment that the Committee is known for and when the Armed Services recommendation comes in, we will guide ourselves accordingly.

I am not going to say what Senator Stennis says. He and I were schoolmates together and I have known him ever since those days as a man who can speak for himself.

Q Sir, newspapers have reported that the Soviets are sending arms to the fedayeen and thus to the Black September group. In view of the fact that one of the murdered members of the Israeli team was American-born, what are your views, the views of the leadership, on this?

SENATOR SCOTT: This is not a matter where we are confronted with any evidence. I think it is not a matter for legislative consideration at this time. I would rather know what the facts are and I think this is an executive matter and one which again the Executive would probably want to know whether there are any facts here and whether they call for any reaction.

I myself can't go by what the papers report on, absent some obligation of mine to comment.

I would like to say on the question of Senator McGovern's proposal that we surrender the fight against inflation by abandoning the controls, it is pretty well known that the McGovern jawboning proposal was tried in several Administrations, that jawboning does not work and even George McGovern's jawboning doesn't work and a proposal that we surrender is, of course, an errant refuge from responsibility.

Senator McGovern failed to vote on the Economic Stabilization Act December 1 last, which passed 86 to four. He wasn't even there. He did, I believe, comment other than on the Senate Floor that it was two or three years late. Now he wants to take it off altogether, and above everything else, he didn't even show up to vote for it or against it.

MORE

Q Secretary Shultz indicated yesterday that the Administration is losing some of its interest or enthusiasm for value added tax as a substitute for the property tax. Did the President say anything about that?

CONGRESSMAN FORD: We didn't discuss that particular aspect of tax matters this morning, but I noted that the Vice President, who is a member of the Intergovernmental Commission, indicated that he was turning against the value added tax.

The President is waiting for a recommendation from that group and with the President taking that point of view, and I suspect a number of others who I have personally talked with, I would doubt they would recommend it and that certainly would have a significant impact.

Q Congressman Ford, did you discuss with the President this morning the Watergate case?

CONGRESSMAN FORD: We did not. It did not come up. We talked about the legislative program.

Q Could you give us more detail on what you discussed with the President?

CONGRESSMAN FORD: We went down the list of legislative items that are either in the House or Senate or in conference in relationship to when we thought the Congress would adjourn. The White House is going to be working with the Congress trying to get some of the things that have been held up or roadblocked, such as H.R. 1, the Welfare Reform bill, the various other matters that are still in either one House or the other. There is no judgment on the part of the White House as to whether this is a good or bad record until the Congress concludes.

MORE

Q Do you agree with what you claim is the public attitude that the Watergate affair is an insignificant thing?

CONGRESSMAN FORD: It doesn't appear to be among the voters a very significant matter.

Q What about your own opinion of it?

CONGRESSMAN FORD: I don't think it is. I think it is far more important that we make progress both at home and abroad, internationally as well as domestically, on solving some of our problems. The judicial process will take care of whether individuals are guilty or innocent and I think that is the way the American people feel.

SENATOR SCOTT: I think the word "insignificant" could cause some misunderstanding. The question here is not what is significant or insignificant. The indictment of these people is very significant to them. If they are guilty, then it was a shabby and misbegotten thing they did, and they should be punished for it.

But the point is that charges as to others have utterly failed of any proof and if those charges continue to be made without proof and without a willingness to present proof, they open themselves to slander or libel charges as the case may be. I think we have had enough of this kind of abuse of the public's credibility. The public's willingness to accept those charges — the public is not willing to accept them and that is why they ought to ask the questions.

Q What charges specifically are you talking about?

SENATOR SCOTT: I am not going to give further currency by repeating the charges that George McGovern makes. I will say they are silly charges, they have been made by George McGovern and they have been widely reported.

Q Some observers are saying that Senator McGovern is doing so poorly in the polls and the President is doing so well with, so far, a minimum of campaigning that perhaps the President should let Senator McGovern do all of his campaigning for him.

Looking ahead do you see the polls staying the way they are?

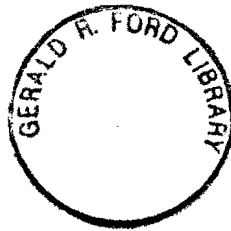
SENATOR SCOTT: Well, the President will, in due time, announce his own plans. He certainly will have things to say. Whether the polls stay the way they are depends on whether the voters stay the way they are. My own canvassing indicates an overwhelming support of the President. Normally the polls tend to contract a little as the undecided make up their minds one way or another. The only poll that counts is on November 7.

Q Do you see a landslide?

SENATOR SCOTT: No. I would hope that the President would receive the largest possible vote and that he would carry in a Republican House and Senate. I would be very happy with a landslide. I wouldn't ask for a recount. (Laughter)

THE PRESS: Thank you, gentlemen.

Sent by GRF on September 19, 1972 to
White House-Leadership meeting, but
only Ford, Arends, Scott, and Griffin
were at this meeting. NOT DISTRIBUTED.
Included in next Run-Down.



HOUSE ACTION, PERIOD SEPTEMBER 12, 1972 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 18, 1972

Tuesday, September 12, 1972

CLEARED FOR THE PRESIDENT: The House cleared for the President the following bills, by agreeing to the amendments of the Senate thereto:

U.S. magistrates salaries: H.R. 7375, to amend the statutory ceiling on salaries payable to U.S. magistrates.

Survivors benefits: H.R. 10670, to establish a survivor benefit plan.

Forgery and counterfeiting: H.R. 9222, to correct deficiencies in the law relating to the crimes of counterfeiting and forgery.

CHILD NUTRITION ACT

It was made an order to consider the conference report on H.R. 14896 Child Nutrition Act, on Wednesday, September 13.

IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY ACT

RULE

By a voice vote, the House adopted H. Res. 1108, providing for one hour of open debate.

PASSAGE

By a voice vote, the House passed H.R. 16188, to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act.

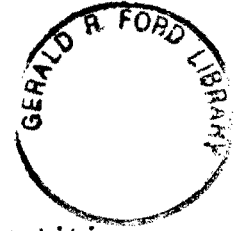
RECOMMIT

By a record vote of 53 yeas to 297 nays, the House rejected a motion by Mr. Price of Texas to recommit the bill to the Committee on the Judiciary.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CONTROL

The House agreed to the conference report on S. 3442, to extend the authorization for grants for communicable disease control and vaccination assistance. Subsequently, agreed to H. Con. Res. 698, authorizing the Secretary of the Senate to correct the title of the bill S. 3442, clearing the measure for Senate action.





Wednesday, September 13, 1972

MOTOR VEHICLE SAFETY

The House insisted on its amendment to S. 976, to promote competition among motor vehicle manufacturers in the design and production of safe motor vehicles having greater resistance to damage, and agreed to a conference asked by the Senate. Appointed as conferees: Representatives Staggers, Moss, Stuckey, Springer, and Broyhill of North Carolina.

AIR PASSENGER FEES

The House insisted on its amendments to S. 3755, to amend the Airport and Airway Development Act of 1970, as amended, to increase the U.S. share of allowable project costs under such act, to amend the Federal Aviation Act of 1958, as amended, to prohibit certain State taxation of persons in air commerce, and agreed to a conference asked by the Senate. Appointed as conferees: Representatives Staggers, Jarman, Dingell, Harvey, and Kuykendall.

ADVISORY COMMITTEES

The House disagreed to the amendment of the Senate to H.R. 4383, to authorize the establishment of a system governing the creation and operation of advisory committees in the executive branch of the Federal Government, and asked a conference with the Senate. Appointed as conferees: Representatives Holifield, Monagan, Fascell, Steiger of Arizona, and Brown of Michigan.

REVENUE SHARING

The House disagreed to the amendments of the Senate to H.R. 14370, to provide payments to localities for high-priority expenditures, to encourage the States to supplement their revenue sources, and to authorize Federal collection of State individual income taxes, and agreed to a conference asked by the Senate. Appointed as conferees: Representatives Mills of Arkansas, Ullman, Burke of Massachusetts, Griffiths, Betts, Schneebeli, and Broyhill of Virginia.

MILITARY PROCUREMENT AUTHORIZATION

RULE

By a record vote of 347 yeas to 23 nays, the House adopted H. Res. 1115, waiving the 3-day rule and waiving points of order against sections 605 and 608.

PASSAGE

By a record vote of 336 yeas to 43 nays, with 1 voting "present," the House agreed to the conference report on H.R. 15495, military procurement authorization for fiscal year 1973, clearing the measure for Senate action.

(MORE)



Wednesday, September 13, 1972 (continued)

CHILD NUTRITION ACT

By a record vote of 378 yeas, the House agreed to the conference report on H.R. 14896, Child Nutrition Act. The House receded and concurred in Senate amendment No. 26, clearing the measure for Senate action.

DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS

RULE

By a record vote of 341 yeas to 34 nays, the House adopted H. Res. 1114, waiving all points of order except section 743, and waiving the 3-day rule.

The House concluded all general debate on H.R. 16593, making appropriations for the Department of Defense for fiscal year 1973, and began reading the bill for amendment when the Committee of the Whole rose. Proceedings under the 5-minute rule will continue on Thursday.

Thursday, September 14, 1972

DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS

RULE

By a record vote of 341 yeas to 34 nays, the House on Wednesday, September 13, 1972, adopted H. Res. 1114, waiving all points of order except section 743, and waiving the 3-day rule.

PASSAGE

By a record vote of 322 yeas to 40 nays, with 1 voting "present," the House passed H.R. 16593, making appropriations for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1973.

Prior to final passage, the following action was taken:

By a record teller vote of 265 yeas to 116 noes, the House agreed to an amendment by Mr. Sikes that adds \$100 million of funds transfer authority for the further use of civilians in KP duties.

By a record teller vote of 160 yeas to 208 noes, the House rejected an amendment by Mr. Addabbo that sought to terminate U.S. troop involvement in Indochina within 4 months, conditioned upon the release of all American prisoners of war and a full accounting of the missing in action.

By a record teller vote of 98 yeas to 256 noes, the House rejected an amendment by Mr. Riegle that proposed a 5-percent reduction of funds in the bill actually spent in fiscal year 1973.



Monday, September 18, 1972

NO LEGISLATIVE BUSINESS DUE TO THE DEATH OF CONGRESSMAN WM. F. RYAN OF NEW YORK.

PROGRAM AHEAD

Tuesday, September 19, 1972

CONSENT CALENDAR

PRIVATE CALENDAR

H.R. 16654 - Labor-HEW Appropriations, FY 1973

H.R. 15003 - Consumer Product Safety
(OPEN RULE - TWO HOURS OF DEBATE)

Wednesday, September 20, 1972, and Balance of Week

H.R. 7130 - Fair Labor Standards Act Amendments--WEDNESDAY
(MOVE TO GO TO CONFERENCE)

H.R. 10295 - Cargo Security
(SUBJECT TO A RULE BEING GRANTED)

H.R. 15859 - Emergency Medical Services
(SUBJECT TO A RULE BEING GRANTED)

H.R. _____ - Foreign Assistance Appropriations, FY 1973
(SUBJECT TO A RULE BEING GRANTED)

H.R. 16645 - Eisenhower Memorial Bicentennial Civic Center
(SUBJECT TO A RULE BEING GRANTED)