

Official White House Transcript

of

PRESIDENT EISENHOWER'S PRESS AND RADIO CONFERENCE #191(Filmed, Taped, and Shorthand Reported)

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Held in Room 474, Executive Office Building  
 Wednesday, September 7, 1960  
 At 10:30 o'clock a.m.

This Copy For: -The President

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Next, they had a two-to-one majority. They were in session for a long time, and they did very little indeed.

I think the record was disappointing and certainly it was disappointing to me, but that isn't important. I think that it should be disappointing to the United States.

Within any little bit of give and take which, after all, is necessary in the legislative process, we could certainly have had a reasonable raise in the minimum wage. The Administration had asked for it. We could have had some schoolrooms constructed, and which would have been the kind of thing that I think the Federal government could well help out. And we could have had other things like that done with a little bit of give and take.

Now I am not going to start castigating people for motives or anything else. I am merely relating the facts which I think are such as to cause some disappointment, if not dismay, throughout the American Nation.

C. Mikhail Sagetlyan, Tass Telegraph Agency. Sir, at several recent news conferences --

THE PRESIDENT: Will you speak louder?

C. (Sagetlyan). At several recent news conferences you repeated, repeatedly stated that the United States and you personally are ready to do everything which may appear necessary for strengthening peace with justice, and mainly for progress in the field of world disarmament. Would you, sir, tell us what new steps for obtaining the above-mentioned aims the United States and you personally are going to make during the coming session of the General Assembly in which a certain number of heads of governments will participate?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I don't know whether you can say that there is anything new. There will be renewed effort made, there will be renewed effort to place the whole record of America in this field before the world again, to show where are the areas where we want to negotiate, concessions we are ready to make, the kind of agreements we are ready to make, provided only that every agreement has with it the kind of control and inspection that can make each side confident that both are acting in good faith. If that is the sole reservation we make in these negotiations, and I think it will be, of course, re-emphasized.

Now as far as any new proposal, I believe there have been one or two made in the United Nations again about a good many tons of U-235, and so on, ready to -- (Conferring with Mr. Magerty) -- I think made by Mr. Lodge -- made this before the United Nations just in a matter of a month. We will



continue to stand by such offers as that. But in every place we will review the whole situation and say, "Here is what we stand ready to do."

Q. Robert Spivack, New York Post. Mr. President, in appraising the short session of Congress, how much responsibility do you think the Southern Democrats and conservative Republicans, the coalition, must bear for not getting through the domestic, social welfare legislation you spoke of?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, it turns out, Mr. Spivack, that this contest now, in which everybody is so interested, and in the context of which all of this record of the Congress is viewed, is between Democrats and Republicans. So, there is where I would leave the Congress.

Q. Roberts, Newsweek. Sir, in the statements made by the two NSA defectors in Moscow, they indicated that they had made their unhappiness here -- made to a Member of Congress, and there was an indication that the State Department was informed that they were unhappy and contemplating defection.

I wonder if any reports coming to you show that there was evidence anywhere in the government that these men were under surveillance or were suspected of defecting prior to the time they left?

THE PRESIDENT: No. This is a new statement in the thing, so far as I am concerned. And I would say this: The Defense Department has already made quite a statement on it. One of these men, I believe, was investigated by the -- originally -- by the Navy, the other by the Army; and I think those two Services could give you more detailed information on this matter than I can. I know nothing about this, as a specific charge.

Q. (Arrowsmith, Associated Press). Thank you, Mr. President.

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