

White House Says Nixon Obtains Regular Briefings

NYTimes

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Special to The New York Times

SEP 21 1974

SEP 20 1974

WASHINGTON, Sept. 20— Although it is 42 days since he resigned the Presidency in the face of virtually certain impeachment, Richard M. Nixon remains an almost tangible presence in the daily affairs of President Ford's White House.

Today was no exception. At the regular White House news briefing, the deputy press secretary, John W. Hushen, disclosed that President Ford was briefing Mr. Nixon on a regular basis, chiefly on international policy matters.

Mr. Nixon is being kept abreast of United States policy by briefing papers sent out to California by military courier aircraft at least once a week. One reason for the practice, Mr. Hushen said, is that Mr. Ford might want to seek his predecessor's advice.

Questioned later by telephone, Mr. Hushen said that Mr. Ford had not spoken to Mr. Nixon since the former President left Washington. He said he did not know if Mr. Ford had received any advice from Mr. Nixon through representatives.

Standard for Predecessors

The White House spokesman added that it was standard practice for past Presidents to be briefed on a regular basis and that Presidents Johnson and Truman had both received such briefings.

When asked about the propriety of the briefings in view of the circumstances under which Mr. Nixon left office, Mr. Hushen replied, "I would not equate the way he left office with other Presidents, but he still is a former President."

The implication by Mr. Hushen was that as a former President, Mr. Nixon possessed knowledge that might be required by President Ford in making policy decisions even though Mr. Nixon had left office under a cloud.

The disclosure about the briefings was made while Mr. Hushen was confirming reports that Julie Nixon Eisenhower, President Nixon's daughter, flew from Washington to California yesterday aboard a military aircraft to visit her father. Mr. Hushen said she had gone aboard the courier plane.

He said it was long-standing White House policy to allow members of a former President's family to use available space aboard such courier craft, and he said that the daughters of former Presidents Johnson and Truman had used these facilities.

Tom Johnson, who served as press spokesman for former President Lyndon B. Johnson after Mr. Johnson left office, confirmed today that a courier plane had taken briefing materials from the White House to Texas every week.

Interviewed by telephone, Mr. Johnson, who is now editor of The Dallas Times-Herald, also said that the late Mr. Johnson had always made it a point to keep former Presidents Eisenhower and Truman briefed on a regular basis.

Meanwhile, William Gully, an official in the White House military aide's office through several administrations, confirmed by telephone that the daughters of both Presidents Johnson and Truman had used military courier planes after fathers had left office.

The lingering imprint of Mr. Nixon on the White House is also felt in other ways.

Today, for example, President Ford issued an executive order stating that Government officials could not have access to individual income tax returns except by written order of the President.

The order said that the measure was being taken to protect "the right of taxpayers to privacy and confidentiality regarding their tax affairs consistent with proper internal management of the Government."

Also today, in a "memorandum for heads of departments and agencies," the President called upon all department and agency heads to adhere to the merit principles of the Civil Service Act.