

Exchange With Reporters on the South Lawn December 16, 1997

President's New Dog

Q. So what's his name?

The President. Isn't he pretty?

Q. But what's his name?

The President. Press conference, press conference.

Q. His name is "Press Conference"?

The President. That's a good idea. That's probably what I should have called him. Do you want to go see them?

Q. Mr. President, where does he sleep? Where does your puppy sleep?

The President. Upstairs.

Q. Upstairs. And does he have his own little doggy bed?

The President. He has a little house in the kitchen. He's sleeping in the kitchen right now.

Q. He sleeps in a little doghouse?

The President. Yes, he sleeps in a little doghouse.

Q. Is he really trained?

The President. You may get a chance to see here in a minute. [Laughter] Yes, he is. He's done quite well so far.

Q. And what can he do?

The President. Sit. That's good.

Q. And what's he eating, Mr. President?

The President. Just a little dog biscuit. Now, he's pretty well-trained. And I get up in the morning and take him for a walk early, at 7 a.m., and then I give him breakfast. Then we go for another walk. [Laughter] And then he has lunch and goes for another walk.

Q. Who takes him at lunchtime?

The President. Well, so far, I have.

Q. He likes the press, Mr. President.

The President. Yes, he does. So do I.

Q. He doesn't bother your allergies?

The President. No, I've never been allergic to dogs. And I have a minor allergy to cats.

That's why most of the time when I play with Socks, I've tried to play with him outside.

Q. Has he met Socks?

The President. Yes, twice—three times. I'm trying to work this out.

Q. What happened?

The President. It's going to take awhile. It's kind of like peace in Ireland or the Middle East. [Laughter]

Q. What happened when they met?

The President. Socks was a little scared of him, I think. Yesterday—you could have had a great picture yesterday. She jumped—he jumped way up on my shoulders. Socks climbed right up and got up on my shoulders so that they would have an appropriate distance. But we're giving them items that the two of them have, to try to get used to the scent. And I'll get it worked out.

Q. Where will he hang out most of the day?

Q. What's his name?

The President. He can hang out nearly anywhere. We've got a little flexible cage back in the Dining Room now in the White House. He comes over to the Oval Office with me in the morning, and he does fine.

Q. Without telling us the name, can you tell us if it came from a citizen?

The President. No, in the end it didn't—[inaudible]—reviewing them. And then we went—don't eat that; you just had lunch—and we got down to about seven or eight, and then we got down to three and finally made a decision.

Come on, kiddo, come on. Let's go.

NOTE: The exchange began at approximately 1:50 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, prior to the President's departure for the State Department. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

The President's News Conference December 16, 1997

The President. Good afternoon. It is only fitting that we gather today in the Dean Acheson

Auditorium, for as Acheson was in his time, we truly are "Present at the Creation," the