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Prime Minister Silva of Portugal Photo Opportunity 1/11/90 [OA 4390]

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THE WHITE HOUSE  
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

January 11, 1990

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT  
DURING PHOTO OPPORTUNITY WITH PRIME MINISTER SILVA

The Oval Office

11:05 A.M. EST

Q Mr. President, has China done enough to restore relations, good relations with the U.S.?

THE PRESIDENT: We have a distinguished guest here, an old friend of mine who I am delighted to see -- the Prime Minister of Portugal. And I'll tell you, it's -- we've got a lot of business to talk about, but just receiving him here is a great treat and honor for me. And Barbara's looking forward to lunch with Mrs. Cavaco Silva.

And I will say one thing on any other -- on this subject you asked about. And we can't really do any more questions here.

We have a new policy. We don't take questions at what we call photo opportunities. But we'll have a chance later on.

But inasmuch as there is interest in this, let me just say, I view the lifting of martial law as a very sound step. For those that are interested in human rights and the reform that was on the move and that we'd all like to see go forward, there's no way you can look at that but not say it is very positive. And we will continue to watch this situation very closely. But I've taken a position that I do not want to isolate China by no contacts and set the clock back. And, of course, we welcome the lifting of martial law; it's a good sign.

That's all I've got to say about. And I hope you'll excuse me because we have no more time here.

Q Does this mean you're preparing --

THE PRESIDENT: I said that's the last question. You didn't hear what I said, Rita.

They've got their job to do and I've got mine.  
(Laughter.)

Helen, you're a star. I would like to talk to you off the record.

MS. THOMAS: On what?

THE PRESIDENT: Donahue -- Phil Donahue.

MS. THOMAS: Did you watch it?

THE PRESIDENT: You've got a lot of stars here. I saw it.

Did you see that show, Marlin? It was very interesting, actually.

MS. THOMAS: I was up against the TV pros.

MORE

THE PRESIDENT: It was interesting. I did it at the house --

MS. THOMAS: You think so?

THE PRESIDENT: I've got to argue with you about one point, but on some of it I was in agreement.

MS. THOMAS: When would you like to do that? (Laughter.)

THE PRESIDENT: There's another star right there. Well, I don't know. You guys don't like off-the-record, so we can't talk about it.

Let me just say to our friends from Portugal that I'm very pleased to have an old friend of mine, the Prime Minister, right here in the White House. He graced my own house in Maine when I was the Vice President, long before I was President of the United States. I consider him a friend; I value his counsel. I respect his commitment to democracy in Eastern Europe and elsewhere. And so I'm looking forward not only to a sound exchange of views, but to renewing a friendship that Barbara and I treasure, and a friendship, frankly, that doesn't need day-to-day contact because it's good and solid.

And so I view our relationship important, and I want to hear from the Prime Minister his views.

PRIME MINISTER SILVA: You want to see me in Portugal. (Laughter.)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I'd like to come. We want to see you back in Maine, too. (Laughter.) Where we get out of this formal setting here.

Welcome, welcome to all of you who are not based here.

END

11:11 A.M. EST