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Daily Press Guidance

Thursday
July 24, 1997

(For internal use only.)

Press Guidance
Thursday, July 24, 1997

Domestic

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2. **Tobacco** - TOBACCO
3. **Child Health** - CHILD DEVELOPMENT
4. **White House Spending** - WHITE HOUSE (NEW)
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Events

1. **Climate Change** - ~~ENVIRONMENT~~ CLIMATE CHANGE (NEW)

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GUIDANCE ON BUDGET
JULY 23, 1997

MEETINGS

- * Bowles, Rubin, Hilley are making the rounds of the Leadership to get a sense of where we are met this morning with the Speaker, Lott, Daschle in some configuration on the tax bill.
- * (If asked) The President met last night with **Senators Daschle, Dodd, Rockefeller, and Dorgan**, at their request, to talk about children's issues. They met for about an hour (with nobody else present except for Erskine at the very end).

KIDS CARE/PEAR STORY

- * We have just gotten the Republicans' plan, so we're still looking at it. Most of our reaction is based on press reports at this time.
- * If news reports are accurate, the proposal is not consistent with the President's principles. He has repeatedly stated -- as he did yesterday -- that **the children's health proposal must offer children meaningful benefits**. Apparently, some in the Congress are seriously considering **not requiring coverage of prescription drugs, vision, hearing, and mental health services**. This would not be acceptable.
- * In addition, we have to make sure that insurance coverage will be affordable for families. If out-of-pocket costs -- premiums, deductibles, co-pays -- are too high, we don't consider that meaningful coverage.
- * The President has also insisted that the plan use the funds **to provide new coverage, not replace benefits already covered**. States should have requirements to keep current Medicaid and state spending separate from this new program spending. And it should be governed by the same rules that we have used to ensure that Medicaid funds are well spent. **We are encouraged by preliminary reports that the Congress is moving in this direction, but we are still examining the language.**
- * Finally, House Republicans should join the bipartisan majority in the Senate in supporting a 20-cent tobacco tax increase. The cigarette tax not only will provide necessary resources to protect and improve children's health, but by raising the price of tobacco, it will discourage children from starting to smoke in the first place.

Press Guidance

July 24 , 1997

Tobacco Subsidies

Critics of the Administration claim our support of some tobacco farm programs contradicts our commitment to reducing the dangers of smoking. Senator Durbin has introduced a measure to make tobacco farmers ineligible for federally subsidized crop insurance.

- USDA does not provide subsidies to tobacco farmers.

(Note: there is a program at USDA into which farmers can pay to ensure crop stability. The program is more to equalize revenues from year to year with individual funds rather than provide a federal subsidies. This was designed as a no cost program and uses relatively nominal funds for administrative costs)

- Farmers do participate in a crop insurance program which involves federal funds. However, all farmers are covered by this program. The program does not discriminate against particular crops.
- We want farmers to participate in insurance programs to help them cover the costs of disasters. Tobacco farmers harvest a legal crop and should be accorded the same insurance protections from losses that any other farmer would have.

Mellody per USDA

NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE ON CHILDREN'S HEALTH

Q. THE PRESIDENT IS CALLING THE REPUBLICANS' VERSION OF THE CHILDREN'S HEALTH INITIATIVE A "MISTAKE". WHAT IS WRONG ABOUT IT?

A. First, we have not yet seen the Republicans' plan. We anticipate reviewing language soon.

However, if reports -- like those listed in the article -- are true, then the proposal is not consistent with the President's principles. He has repeatedly stated that the children's health proposal must offer children meaningful benefits. Apparently, some in the Congress are seriously considering not requiring coverage of prescription drugs, vision, hearing and mental health services. Clearly, this would not be acceptable.

The President has also insisted that the plan use the funds wisely. The investment should be used to cover provide new coverage, not replace benefits already covered. This means that states should have requirements to keep current Medicaid and state spending separate from this new program spending. It also means that this investment abides by the same rules that we have used to ensure that Medicaid funds are well spent. We are encouraged by preliminary reports that the Congress is moving in this direction.

Finally, the House Republicans should join the bipartisan majority in the Senate in supporting a 20-cent tobacco tax. The cigarette tax not only will provide necessary resources to protect and improve children's health; by raising the price of tobacco, it will discourage children from starting to smoke in the first place.

GUIDANCE ON WHITE HOUSE SPENDING
JULY 23, 1997

(As you saw from Steve Barr story, the House Appropriations Subcommittee that has the EOP account is proposing a new procedure for funding events at the White House.)

- * We worked closely with Congressman Hoyer, and we understand that he in turn worked closely with Chairman Kolbe on this.
- * We think they've done good work. Accurate accounting and prompt payment are important to us here at the White House.
- * The fact is, these new procedures will mean a lot more work for the Usher's office, so as the legislative process moves along, we'll need to make sure that they get the resources they need to carry this out.
- * If that happens, we would not anticipate opposing this measure.

TOIV

Press Guidance
July , 1997

Grand Escalante Monument

The Washington Times' Paul Bedard today reported that the Administration misled reporters and Congress about its intention to create a monument at the Grand Escalante National Staircase. In truth, we had a proposal that the Chief of Staff and the President did not have a chance to review. The fact is that a final decision was not made about the monument until very close to the event itself and after consultation with the Governor and representatives from the delegation. The article also indicates that press guidance was designed to throw reporters off the trail. While it is fair to say the leak in the Washington Post may have expedited the process -- no one intentionally misled the press and Bedard's reference to our press guidance is not reflective of the overall guidance. We didn't discuss the option publicly until we were certain that it was something that we liked.

Points

- Obviously, we did not announce the proposal until we were certain that it was something that the President liked and the Administration supported. That does not preclude us from discussing various options.
- In this case, the President wanted an opportunity to gain some feedback from interested parties prior to making a final decision. (The Chief of Staff was involved in meetings up until the final moments.)
- In the end, he chose to create an important monument to protect beautiful and valued lands for generations to come.

Mellody per B Johnson and past guidance

See attached press guidance from 9/9/97

Kemron AIDS Study – talking points and background

(Zonana, HHS 202-690-6343)

Background: On June 13, the National Institutes of Health terminated a study of Kemron (low-dose alpha interferon) in people with HIV. Promoters of the drug in Africa, as well as some physicians with ties to the Nation of Islam, had contended that the drug was being suppressed by a white, racist medical establishment. The NIH launched its study of the drug in part due to these criticisms, even though the drug had showed little effect in trials overseas.

Since the study of Kemron began, numerous highly effective HIV and AIDS treatments – including the powerful protease inhibitors – have been approved for use in the United States. The advent of effective, life-prolonging HIV treatments resulted in fewer people being interested in trying Kemron, so the study was terminated. (See story, today's Washington Post.)

Talking points:

- The study was ended because patient interest in it was limited. Only 233 patients enrolled at 14 centers; the study needed 560 patients to have meaningful results. In addition, the drop out rate from the study was about 20%.
- The study was terminated because, with the advent of effective HIV treatments like protease inhibitors, the window of opportunity to conduct it had passed.
- AIDS deaths fell 19% during the first nine months of 1996 as the nation entered a new era of treatment.

FCC

July 24, 1997

BACKGROUND

The White House is in the process of selecting a new FCC Chairman and naming a new commissioner. Some individuals were notified today that they will not be named although the process is not yet complete.

POINTS

o The President and Vice President are in the process of consulting with the Senate on this issue. And no final decisions have been made.

drafted by: GTerzano

cleared by: RKlain

NORM ORNSTEIN AND NAB

Note: The National Association of Broadcasters today called on Vice-President Gore to remove Norman Ornstein as head of the newly formed Advisory Committee on the Public Interest Obligations of Digital Television Broadcasters. The reason was that Ornstein this week “lent his name to a million dollar political advertising program, sponsored by the League of Women Voters,” urging Congress to pass free TV time. (This had been a proposal previously aired by Ornstein.)

Answer:

- The Advisory Committee will be a balanced panel that will bring all points of view to the table. The President named as co-chair not only Norman Ornstein -- a well known political scientist -- but also Leslie Moonves, a well-known broadcaster (currently the President of CBS Entertainment). The other members of the panel, who will be named shortly, will reflect a balance of views. We expect each of them to come to this process with their own opinions about what needs to be done. Nobody should expect the members of an advisory panel like this to be blank slates. The result is not preordained.
- In any event, in announcing the creation of this panel, the President made clear his strong support for free television time for candidates. President Clinton has long supported giving candidates free television time and believes that the Federal Communications Commission should require it to be provided, under the public interest obligations expected of digital broadcasters.
- In addition, broadcast time for candidates is only one issue this panel will examine. The committee will examine the entire range of issues resulting from the inception of the new digital era, e.g., children's programming, etc.

NOTE: The Counsel's office says that the NAB letter is not alleging any legal problem with Ornstein's role, nor is there any legal problem.



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July 24, 1997

Vice President Al Gore
Old Executive Office Building
Washington, DC 20501

Dear Mr. Vice President:

I write to express my deep concern over the direction of the upcoming commission designed to make recommendations on increasing broadcasters' public interest obligations in the era of digital television.

We are proud that the broadcast industry provides a consistently high level of public interest programming to our communities. We have repeatedly stated that broadcasters intend to maintain that exemplary level of service in the digital environment. We welcome the opportunity to review both our record and our responsibilities. But we fear that a process designed to be open and impartial has already been compromised by the actions of one of its only two members who have thus far been publicly identified.

We were initially somewhat surprised at the selection of Norman Ornstein to serve in a leadership position. While he has built a substantial record as a political analyst, he also was both an architect of and an advocate for a high-profile proposal to provide free airtime for political candidates. Our surprise turned to shock this week when Mr. Ornstein lent his name to a million dollar political advertising program, sponsored by the League of Women Voters, expressly designed to convince Congress to adopt this same proposal.

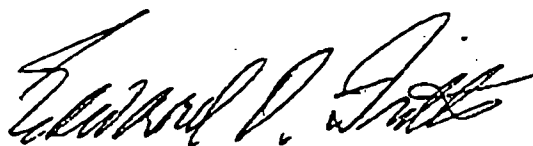
Why the announced co-chair of an ostensibly unbiased public body would continue in and even expand his activist political role on the very issue under study is difficult to fathom. Certainly Mr. Ornstein's actions make clear that he has no intention of restraining his own bias, nor the capacity to lead the commission through a balanced examination of broadcasters' record and responsibilities. His highly political activities are very likely to delegitimize the commission's recommendations - whatever they turn out to be - as having been pre-ordained.

Under these circumstances, how could one reasonably expect that Congress, the public and our own industry will have confidence that the recommendations of what has become known as "the Gore Commission" were developed in good faith based on an objective record? Accordingly, we ask that you consider replacing Mr. Ornstein with an individual who can inspire trust in the commission through his or her fairness, objectivity and integrity.

You will remember we expressed some of the same concerns about Newton Minow's potential appointment as commission chairman. However, Mr. Minow's public statements on the political free airtime issue pale in comparison to Mr. Ornstein's extreme approach.

I very much appreciate your consideration and look forward to helping our industry provide valuable input to the commission's work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Edward V. Galt". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Press Guidance

July 24, 1997

goes w/
crack cocaine

CBC MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT

Background: April Ryan is planning to ask you whether the President will meet with the CBC to discuss crack/cocaine.

+ AG

Yesterday, General McCaffrey, Eric Holder and Rahm met with members of the CBC to discuss crack/cocaine sentencing -- And there continues to be a policy disagreement. The President believes in 10-1 and the CBC believes in 1-1.

As far as a meeting goes, we are unaware of any specific request but the President is always interested in ~~meeting~~ the CBC -- They met as recently as the end of May and this was one of the topics.

Remington

Per Rahm

Crack Cocaine Sentencing -- Updated Question/Answer
July 22, 1997

- Q:** Mr. President, today's New York Times reports that you have received a recommendation from the Attorney General and Drug Director to reduce the disparity between sentences for crack and powder cocaine. What is their recommendation, and have you accepted or acted on it?
- A:** As you know, on April 29th the U.S. Sentencing Commission issued a report recommending that the disparity between sentences for crack and powder be narrowed. I asked the Attorney General and Drug Director to review the Commission's report and make a recommendation to me. They did, and their recommendation was that the trigger for 5-year mandatory drug penalties should be increased from 5 to 25 grams for crack -- and dropped from 500 to 250 grams for powder cocaine. That would drop the ratio from 100 to 1, to 10 to 1. I think this is a sensible recommendation. It makes good law enforcement sense, and it's fairer. It will ensure that federal prosecutors focus on mid- and high-level drug traffickers, rather than low-level users. I have asked the Attorney General and Drug Director to work with Members of Congress on this matter, and I hope we can make real progress.

CRACK/COCAINE

Q: Mr. President, your Administration has supported a sentencing policy that punishes blacks users of crack cocaine a hundred times more harshly than white users of powder cocaine. How can you defend this policy, and how can you say that your Administration is promoting racial reconciliation and dialogue when you support a policies like this, which seem blatantly unfair and discriminatory to most African Americans?

A: I understand the concern that many African Americans have when they are told that black users of crack are punished much more severely than white users of powder cocaine. The current disparity in our sentencing laws for cocaine -- or the so-called 100 to 1 ratio -- is unfair and should be adjusted. But the issue is not as simple and straightforward as equalizing penalties, and I would like to explain why.

Since the mid 1980s, crack cocaine -- and the armed gangs that deal in it -- have fueled an unprecedented level of violence in our cities and among our youth. And while this violence now seems to have stabilized, it remains at intolerable levels -- and crack cocaine defendants continue to be associated with much more violence than powder cocaine and other drug users. In principle then, I continue to believe that crack cocaine should be punished more severely than powder cocaine -- and that is why I rejected the Sentencing Commission's proposal last year to equalize penalties for crack and powder cocaine.

In practice, however, my Administration has realized that the current 100 to 1 ratio, which triggers 5-year mandatory drug penalties for crack users at 5 grams and for powder users at 500 grams, is flawed. Generally speaking, federal law enforcement resources should target serious drug traffickers -- or at least mid-level dealers that can provide information to help prosecute these more serious traffickers. Both the 5 and 500 gram triggers in current law seem to miss this mark: the crack trigger is too low, and the powder trigger is too high.

To some extent, however, we already compensate for this flaw in two ways: First, federal prosecutors generally use their discretion to target the more serious offenders. Thus, the typical crack defendant convicted in the federal system is not a kid, not a first-time offender and likely to have carried a gun and trafficked in at least 80 grams of crack -- or, frankly, a serious criminal. Second, the "safety valve" provision that I signed into law

as part of the 1994 Crime Bill exempts certain first-time, non-violent crack offenders from the 5-year mandatory drug penalty. As a result, hundreds of drug offenders -- including the small percentage of lower level crack dealers that make their way into the federal system -- will be eligible to have their sentences reduced an average of 25%.

In the final analysis, however, our own flexible policies in enforcing the law do not change the fact that the extreme disparity between crack and powder penalties is unjustified and should be reduced. That's why I intend to support a reduction in the 100 to 1 ratio, and to work with Members of Congress to make such a change to current law. The Sentencing Commission recently recommended a range of sensible options for doing this. I believe they suggested that penalties for powder and crack cocaine should be "pinched" -- that is to say, that the trigger for powder should be dropped from 500 grams to somewhere between 125 and 375 grams, and that the trigger for crack should be increased from 5 grams to somewhere between 25 and 75 grams. And I will ask the Attorney General and Drug Director to work with Members of Congress to adopt make an adjustment within these ranges.

Press Guidance
July 24, 1997

REDWOODS

The Washington Post reports today that some members of the House of Representatives are "balking" at the agreement reached by the federal government to buy back precious redwoods from millionaire Charles Hurwitz. They are claiming that the deal is unfair and the taxpayers are being taken. Katie McGinty is quoted in the article and will likely get any questions regarding this, but the following are a few basic points:

- This is a precious natural resource. In addition, to its visual beauty, it is an extremely rich as a habitat for threatened and endangered species. We are pleased that we could reach a satisfactory agreement to protect it.
- We are confident that members of congress will honor their commitment to preserve this important ecological land.



Mellody per B Johnson, CEQ

Part of the
Balanced Budget
Agreement!

NORTHERN IRELAND

July 21, 1997

Q: What will happen to the peace process now that the UUP has voted against the decommissioning proposal at the Belfast talks today?

British and Irish governments have expressed commitment to process, to negotiated settlement. Do not see negative vote as in any way end of process but how they take it forward is up to them, to Senator Mitchell and his colleagues and the parties involved.

Pleased that UUP decided to stay in the talks rather than walking out (as DUP and UKUP did).

Q: Do you think the Ulster Unionist Party will walk out of the talks?

(Note: The Unionist Party of the UK, a small unionist party, has already done so.)

Don't know but certainly hope the UUP will stay in the talks and work to reach a negotiated settlement to conflict.

Q: What is Senator Mitchell's role?

Senator Mitchell is chairing the talks in Belfast.

Q: What is your reaction to the IRA ceasefire declaration?

President has issued statement welcoming declaration. If implemented unequivocally and permanently, opens prospect of achieving just and lasting settlement.

Q: Did the U.S. play a role in getting the ceasefire restored? Has the President been in touch with any of the parties?

As you know, Administration has been in close touch with British and Irish governments and with the political parties, including Sinn Fein, in effort to get ceasefire restored and peace process moving again.

Credit belongs to British and Irish governments and to Northern Ireland's political leaders; hope our efforts were helpful to them.

If pressed: Not going to reveal who we talked to or when, but assure you that Administration fully engaged in peace process at this critical time, as we have been for several years.

Goal of peace process is democratically negotiated settlement. Will continue to work with governments and parties to support the negotiations chaired by Senator Mitchell.

Q: Are you concerned that IRA did not use the word "permanent" in the ceasefire declaration?

This is an unequivocal ceasefire, which we certainly understand to mean that it is to be permanent.

Q: Will you give Gerry Adams a visa?

We do not have an application but, as you know, Mr. Adams has previously been granted visa waivers on the basis of a ceasefire.

Q: Would he be allowed to raise funds here?

Ceasefire was just declared. Not going to comment on issues like this at this point.

Q: Did the President speak with the Irish Prime Minister last week?

A: POTUS called to talk to Prime Minister Ahern, establish personal contact on Northern Ireland peace process, as he had with Prime Minister Bruton.

POTUS and Ahern had exchanged letters since Ahern came to power June 26 but this is first call. They did meet in Dublin in 1995.

President keeps in touch with both Irish and British leaders to support their efforts to achieve a negotiated settlement in Northern Ireland. That was subject of this call.

Discussed Irish and British efforts to move talks into substantive negotiations; ideally with Sinn Fein participation on basis of unequivocal ceasefire.

Agreed this is critical period for peace process; President reiterated offer to do whatever he can to help.

Q: Any response to the press conference by members of Congress last week?

A: President deeply concerned about Northern Ireland -- remains actively engaged. Discussed it on numerous occasions Prime Minister Blair recently; kept in touch with former Irish Prime Minister Bruton, as he plans to do with new Prime Minister, Bertie Ahern.

If pressed:

Q: Who is the Administration dealing with in Northern Ireland?

A: Not going to go into detail on who or when, but certainly can say we are actively engaged with all key players.

Q: Is the British Government doing enough to move the process forward?

A: Believe British government seeking to move peace process forward; aide memoire of June 13 remains forthcoming offer for Sinn Fein participation in talks on basis of unequivocal ceasefire.

If asked:

Q: Any criticism of Mowlam's decision?

A: NIO Secretary Mo Mowlam has been determined and courageous in seeking to move peace process forward in Northern Ireland. Criticism of her on basis of one difficult decision is shortsighted.

If asked:

Q: Would the Administration support the use of UN peacekeepers in this situation?

A: Do not think that UN peacekeepers appropriate or useful in this context.

If asked :

Q: What about State Department Spokesman Nick Burns' comments regarding the British decision?

A: President did not say he agreed with British decision; we have said only that we understand it was difficult decision and we are not going to second guess British. Burns was speaking personally when he speculated that the decision may have been a good one in light of last year's violence.

Reaction to Events in Northern Ireland

- President following events in Northern Ireland with deep concern, saddened by spectacle of renewed confrontation and violence in Northern Ireland.
- We regret that local residents and marchers failed to reach agreement on contested parade.

- *If pressed on whether we support British decision:* Not going to second-guess decision, which Chief Constable explained was made on security grounds.
- *If asked about Adams call for nightly demonstrations:* Urge both communities to move beyond bitterness and confrontation, focus on avoiding future problems. Political dialogue and communal reconciliation are only way forward for Northern Ireland.
- Goal remains a just and lasting political solution; now more than ever, leaders need to work toward that goal.

Q: Is there hope for the peace process with tensions escalating during marching season?

A: Believe people of both communities want to avoid sectarian confrontation over controversial marches. Applaud determined efforts of British government and Northern Ireland leaders to find solution that will avoid exacerbating tension.

Peace process at critical juncture; confrontation over marches not in anyone's interest. Urge residents and marchers to approach issue with generous spirit, seek to avoid confrontation.

Hope men and women of goodwill from both communities will not allow destructive few to determine outcome.

Q: What do you think of statement Blair made in Parliament June 25 on Northern Ireland?

Welcome Prime Minister's statement and British aide memoire made public yesterday. British Government is making a courageous, straightforward effort to get an inclusive process going on the basis of an unequivocal IRA ceasefire.

We urge the IRA, as we consistently have, to declare and implement ceasefire, and to pursue goals by democratic, exclusively peaceful means.

The talks must go forward, ideally with Sinn Fein on the basis of unequivocal IRA ceasefire, without them if necessary.

Q: What do you think of the joint Anglo-Irish strategy on decommissioning that was unveiled June 25?

We welcome paper by two governments on how to handle thorny issue of decommissioning. Their proposal follows suggestion made in Mitchell Report for decommissioning in parallel with progress in talks.

We urge parties in talks to move forward into substantive negotiations on the basis of the reasonable approach outlined in joint paper.

BELFAST TALKS

- Belfast peace talks chaired by Senator Mitchell, which reconvened June 3, offer only way to achieve just and lasting settlement to conflict. Change can only come through dialogue and negotiation, not violence.
- If asked: Senator Mitchell has said he will stay on as talks chairman until either a result is achieved or he becomes convinced that no progress is possible.

CONTACT WITH SINN FEIN

- The President has many times called on the IRA to end the violence and declare an unequivocal cease-fire. Committed to remain actively engaged in search for just and lasting peace.
- The U.S. maintains contact with all parties to reinforce this message and to support the two governments' efforts to move the process forward.
- Also keep in direct, frequent touch with British and Irish officials.
- We do not go into detail on our diplomatic contacts in support of the peace process..
- [If pressed]: We will keep open channels of communication to Sinn Fein as long as we believe that is helpful to the peace process.

Most Recent POTUS Q/A's - 7/21/97

What is your reaction to the IRA ceasefire?

- *It's good news. If it is implemented unequivocally and permanently, it opens the way toward achieving a just and lasting settlement.*

Did the U.S. play a role in getting the ceasefire restored? Have you been in touch with any of the parties?

- *As you know, we have been in close touch with British and Irish governments and with the political parties, including Sinn Fein, to try to get the ceasefire restored and the peace process moving again.*

- The credit belongs to the British and Irish governments and to Northern Ireland's political leaders. I hope our efforts were helpful to them.
- I am not going to reveal whom we talked to or when, but I can assure you that my Administration is fully engaged in the peace process at this critical time, as we have been for several years.
- The goal of the peace process is a democratically negotiated settlement. We will continue to work with the governments and the parties to support the negotiations chaired by Senator Mitchell.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

July 24, 1997

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

"Immigration Reform Transition Act of 1997"

I am pleased to transmit to the Congress today the "Immigration Reform Transition Act of 1997." This proposal reflects my commitment to balance firm controls against illegal immigration with common sense and compassion. It would provide a needed transition for individuals who apply for a form of immigration relief called suspension of deportation and who had immigration cases pending before the 1996 immigration law took effect. It would prevent the inherent unfairness of applying new rules to old cases. (April) 97

This legislation also addresses the special circumstances of Central Americans who came to our country because of civil war and upheaval. Today, the remarkable progress in that region means that many of those people can return home. But as I assured the leaders of Central America when I visited the region in May, we want that to occur in a manner that avoids destabilizing the nations and economies of Central America, or imposing undue hardships on families. We also want to make sure that people who sought refuge in our country and who have contributed greatly to their local communities here in the United States are treated with fairness and dignity. To meet that commitment, this proposal ensures that certain groups of Central Americans whose cases were pending before the new immigration law took effect would be eligible to apply for suspension of deportation under the prior rules.

I am determined to do all I can to preserve our nation's tradition of generous legal immigration. But just as we are a nation of immigrants, we also are a nation of laws. To uphold the tradition of generous legal immigration and to do right by legal immigrants, we need to continue working to stop illegal immigration. The bill I am submitting today in no way diminishes the important enforcement objectives of the 1996 immigration bill, nor is it an amnesty or ~~waiver~~ program. Rather, it eases the transition to the new law for individuals who have put down deep roots in the United States -- and it advances our nation's strategic interest in promoting peace, prosperity and stability in Central America.

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IMMIGRATION REFORM TRANSITION ACT

July 24, 1997

Q. What is this legislation intended to do?

A. This legislation is intended to provide a needed transition for individuals who apply for the immigration relief called suspension of deportation and who had immigration cases pending before the 1996 immigration law took effect. Suspension of deportation is form of relief available to individuals who have been in the United States for a long period of time and have developed substantial equities here. The new law substantially restricts the rules relating to this form of relief and imposes some of these rules on persons with cases in the administrative pipeline. The legislation is designed to ensure that these individuals would be eligible for suspension of deportation under the rules that were in effect prior to the effective date of the new law. The legislation is also aimed at providing certain groups of Central Americans – Nicaraguans, Salvadorans, and Guatemalans – with an opportunity to be considered under the old suspension rules.

Q. Why is the Administration taking this course of action?

A: It is first an issue of fairness; we do not believe that new rules should apply to old cases. Second, it is driven by important foreign policy concerns. As the President learned during his trip to Central America last month, peace and democracy are still fragile in that region. The sudden return of Central Americans in the United States could jeopardize these important accomplishments. After so much strife in that part of the world – which had profound implications for the United States -- , the President believes it vital to the national security to assist in any way he can in bringing stability to Central America. The Administration also recognizes that many of these individuals, after years of being authorized to remain in the United States, have developed important ties to this country and should be treated fairly in light of the recently passed legislation.

Q: Isn't what the Administration proposes tantamount to an amnesty program for Central Americans?

A. No. The Administration's approach seeks only to ensure that persons whose immigration cases were pending prior to April 1 are able to benefit from the suspension rules in place prior to April 1. Persons who apply for suspension will continue to be considered on a case-by-case basis according to existing legal requirements. Not all individuals who apply for suspension will qualify.

Q: How many people will be affected by the legislation?

- A. The Department of Justice estimates that, under the proposed legislation, as many as 280,000 people might be eligible to apply for suspension under the old rules. It further estimates that about 160,000 might actually decide to apply for suspension. However, because suspension is decided on a case-by-case basis, it is impossible to estimate how many people might be able to gain permanent status under the proposed changes.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

July 24, 1997

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

I am pleased to announce the appointment of Jason S. Berman to serve as Special Counselor to the President and coordinate the Administration's effort to pass fast track legislation.

During his tenure at the White House, Mr. Berman will take a leave of absence from his current position as Chairman of the Recording Industry Association of America. I am grateful to him for setting aside this work to join our team. Mr. Berman's extensive knowledge of trade policy and unparalleled experience on the Hill will be invaluable to our effort.

I am also pleased to announce that I have asked Victoria L. Radd, an outstanding member of my staff, to join Mr. Berman in coordinating this effort. Ms. Radd is an Assistant to the President and Chief of Staff to Erskine Bowles. During the past four years, she has also served as Associate Counsel to the President and as Deputy Director of Communications. Prior to joining the White House, she was a partner in the law firm of Williams & Connolly.

The economic strategy of my administration, based on reducing the deficit, investing in the education and skills of our people and opening markets, has helped produce the strongest economy in the world. I am calling on the Congress to enact fast track legislation so we can continue our aggressive drive to open markets to our goods and services and create more high skilled jobs for the American people. Every President, Republican and Democrat, in the past two decades has had this vital tool to maintain effective American leadership in the global economy. Fast track authority is in the national interest of the United States, and my appointment of Jay Berman makes clear my determination to fight for passage of this important legislation.

-30-30-30-

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
WASHINGTON, D.C.
20508

July 24, 1997

TO: Interested Parties
FROM: USTR Press Office
SUBJECT: Q&A on POTUS Meeting with Members on Fast Track

Q: What is the purpose of today's meeting?

A: The President will express the need for fast track to ensure U.S. competitiveness in the global economy. Fast track is about expanding opportunities for U.S. exports and making sure the U.S. sets the rules and conditions for trade that are advantageous to U.S. workers and businesses. The Administration's trade agenda is focussed on exactly those areas where the U.S. is most competitive — telecommunications, technology, professional services, agriculture, biotechnology, and critical manufacturing sectors.

Q: Why does the Administration keep meeting with Members without presenting a proposal?

A: The only way to succeed in securing fast track authority is to build the broadest consensus possible before we head into the fall. It is important for Congress to have a clear understanding of why we need fast track, and the President will use today's meeting as an opportunity to do that.

Q: Why did the President meet with these particular Members?

A: Amb. Barshefsky and other members of the Administration have met with over 170 members over the last few months. The President's meeting today is part of an effort to personally address questions from those Members about trade and the need for fast track. This meeting is one of a number of meetings the President will have with Members in the coming months.

Q: What are the chances of the Administration securing renewed fast track authority?

A: We realize this will be a divisive battle, but the more Congress understands that fast track is necessary for U.S. competitiveness in the global economy, we believe they will support renewed fast track authority for the President. We can not afford to have the rest of the world march on by while we pass up opportunities for U.S. workers and companies.

PRESIDENT CLINTON MEETS WITH TOP SCIENTISTS TO DISCUSS CLIMATE CHANGE July 24, 1997

"The science is clear and compelling: We humans are changing the global climate...No nation can escape this danger. None can evade its responsibility to confront it."

*— President Clinton, Address to UN General Assembly
Special Session on the Environment, June 26, 1997*

Following up on their remarks to the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on the Environment, today President Clinton and Vice President Gore will hold a round table discussion with eminent scientists, including three Nobel laureates, to discuss the science of climate change and the widespread conviction that action to mitigate this problem is warranted. Today's discussion begins a series of Administration efforts and events to increase public awareness of the problems that could result due to climate change. The United States has led the world in the support of environmental science, including climate change research, and in the application of the results of that research to environmental management and protection.

As a party to the Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United States is engaged in long-term negotiations on the mitigation of climate change. The United States hopes to conclude the next phase of negotiations in December 1997 by agreeing to a legally binding target and timetable for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Today's meeting demonstrates the President's strong commitment to take action on climate change and to lay the scientific facts before the American people prior to the Kyoto Conference in December.

Why Climate Change is a Problem:

* Human activities are adding to the Earth's natural greenhouse effect by steadily increasing the atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases. Carbon dioxide (CO₂) is the largest part of this problem, accounting for about 85% of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions. Since about 1860, the atmospheric concentration of CO₂ has increased by about 30%. Other greenhouse gases, such as methane and nitrous oxide, amplify this problem. **Without intervention, emissions and concentrations of CO₂ will continue to increase, reaching the highest level in the last 50 million years by 2100 (over 700 parts per million by volume).**

* A variety of global-scale changes are expected, with significant regional variations. Average temperature will rise another 2-6° F and sea level will rise another 6 to 37 inches. The Earth's water cycle will intensify, with increases in rainfall and snowfall. More precipitation will occur in "extreme" downpours, where large amounts of rain fall in a short period. Some areas will be threatened by increased flooding, while others will suffer through an increased incidence of drought as the interior of continents warms and dries.

The United States is vulnerable to such changes, with likely effects including stress on western water resources, soil moisture limitations in the Midwest, loss of coastal wetlands in the Southeast, and significant changes in forest ecosystems in many regions.

Joining the President and Vice President today in the audience will be cabinet members and Administration representatives including Secretary Pena, Department of Energy; Secretary Shalala, Health and Human Services; Secretary Herman, Department of Labor; Secretary Daley, Department of Commerce; Carol Browner, Environmental Protection Agency; James Lee Witt, Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency and others whose agencies could play a role in dealing with the impacts of climate change.

The following scientists will participate in today's round table discussion with the President and Vice President:

*** Dr. F. Sherwood Rowland, University of California at Irvine.** Dr. Rowland won the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 1995 for his pioneering research in atmospheric chemistry of the destruction of the ozone layer. He currently serves as the Foreign Secretary of the National Academy of Sciences and is a former President and Chairman of the Board of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Rowland received his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago in 1952 and is currently the Donald Bren Research Professor of Chemistry and Earth System Science at UC Irvine.

*** Dr. Mario Molina, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.** Dr. Molina was awarded the Nobel Prize along with Dr. Rowland for their research on the thinning of the ozone layer. Molina and his colleagues demonstrated experimentally how ozone-destroying chlorine functioned in the atmosphere. He is currently the Lee and Geraldine Martin Professor of Environmental Science at MIT. Dr. Molina serves on the President's Committee of Advisors on Science and Technology and has also served as an advisor to NASA, the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health.

*** Dr. Jane Lubchenco, Oregon State University.** Dr. Lubchenco is currently the Wayne and Gladys Valley Professor of Marine Biology and a Distinguished Professor of Zoology at Oregon State University. She has received numerous teaching awards and is also an American Academy of Arts and Sciences Fellow and a Fellow to the American Association for the Advancement of Science. She received her Ph.D. from Harvard University in 1975.

*** Dr. Stephen Schneider, Stanford University.** As a postdoctoral researcher at NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies and later at the National Center for Atmospheric Research, Dr. Schneider's work focused on the influence of greenhouse gases and suspended particles on the earth's climate. In 1992, he was awarded a MacArthur Fellowship for his ability to integrate and interpret the results of global climate research to the public. Dr. Schneider is currently a professor in the Department of Biological Science and a Science Fellow at the Institute for International Studies at Stanford University.

*** Dr. Bob Shope, University of Texas.** Dr. Shope has devoted his career to the study of viruses carried by mosquitoes, ticks and other biting insects. Since receiving his medical degree from Cornell University in 1954, Dr. Shope has spent time in Malaysia, Brazil and other tropical sites studying insect-borne diseases. He was a Professor of Epidemiology at Yale University's School of Medicine from 1975-1995 and served as the Director of the Yale Arbovirus Research Unit for 24 years. Dr. Shope is presently a Professor in the Departments of Pathology and Microbiology and Immunology at the University of Texas Medical Branch.

*** Dr. Henry Kendall, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.** Dr. Kendall won a Nobel Prize in 1990 for his work in particle physics. Throughout his career, Dr. Kendall's work has focused on U.S. energy and defense issues including the nuclear arms race, nuclear power and renewable energy sources. Dr. Kendall is a founding member of the Union of Concerned Scientists and has been elected to the National Academy of Sciences. He is currently the J.A. Stratton Professor of Physics at the Massachusetts Institute for Technology.

*** Dr. John Holdren, Harvard University.** Dr. Holdren is an expert on energy and environmental science. He is currently chairing the Presidential Committee of Advisors on Science and Technology Study of the entire U.S. energy research and development portfolio in relation to the economic, environmental and security challenges of the next century. He is presently the Teresa and John Heinz Professor of Environmental Policy and Director of the Program on Science, Technology and Public Policy in the John F. Kennedy School of Government and Professor of Environmental Science and Public Policy in the Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences at Harvard.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

July 23, 1997

**Climate Science Roundtable
with Nobel Laureates and other Distinguished Scientists**

DATE: July 24, 1997
LOCATION: East Room
TIME: 1:50- 3:00 pm
FROM: Todd Stern/Katie McGinty/Jack Gibbons

I. PURPOSE

To begin your process of public education on climate change, leading up to the Kyoto Conference in December.

You and the Vice President will meet with a small group of eminent scientists, including three Nobel laureates, to discuss climate change. The audience will include a half-dozen members of your Cabinet, several members of Congress, about 40 stakeholders on this issue and open press. The dialogue will emphasize the many points of consensus on the science of climate change and potential impacts on the American people.

II. BACKGROUND

In your speech at the United Nations June 26, you said: "In the United States, to do our part, we have to first convince the American people that the climate change problem is real and imminent." This is the first of several media events to raise the public profile of this issue.

In recent polling, just over half of those polled said they believe global warming is a serious problem. Concern increases significantly when respondents are told that the President and Nobel scientists consider the problem to be serious and when possible consequences (e.g., disease, droughts and floods, etc.) are identified.

III. PARTICIPANTS

Pre-brief Participants:

The Vice President, Todd Stern, Katie McGinty, Jack Gibbons, Shelley Fidler, David Sandalow, Rosina Bierbaum.

Event Participants:

The participants in the roundtable will be you, the Vice President and seven eminent scientists: Sherry Rowland (University of California at Irvine, Nobel laureate), Mario Molina (MIT, Nobel laureate), Jane Lubchenco (Oregon State University), Stephen Schneider (Stanford University), Bob Shope (University of Texas), Henry Kendall (Emeritus MIT, Nobel laureate), John Holdren (Harvard University).

The audience will include a half-dozen members of your Cabinet, several members of Congress and about 40 stakeholders on this issue.

Members of your Cabinet in attendance: Carol Browner, Bill Daley, Alexis Herman, Fredrico Pena, Franklin Raines, Larry Summers

Members of Congress in attendance: Sen. John Kerry (D-MA) and Rep. Karen McCarthy (D-MO).

IV. PRESS PLAN

Open press.

V. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

- You enter the Blue Room to greet the scientists.
- Scientists enter the East Room and are seated.
- You and the Vice President enter the East Room.
- Vice President makes remarks.
- President makes remarks.
- Dialogue with scientists. (Attached as Exhibit A).
- President makes closing remarks.
- President and Vice President depart.

VI. REMARKS

To be provided by speechwriters.

PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
CLIMATE CHANGE EVENT
THE WHITE HOUSE
JULY 24, 1997

As we approach the dawn of the 21st century, our great challenge is not only to prepare our children for the world but also to protect the world for our children. This challenge is part of a sacred pact between the generations to ensure that today's progress does not come at tomorrow's expense. And that is why we have no choice but to face up to the full reality of global climate change.

Whenever the security of our people has been threatened, the United States has led the world to action. Climate change poses a threat to all people -- one that is subtle today but which will grow in severity and significance in years to come. The world must act. And the United States must lead. I am determined that we will lead -- responsibly, flexibly, making sure that we promote prosperity as we protect the environment. We have no choice -- and the scientists gathered here today will explain why.

Years ago, scientists could not be sure that human activities would influence our climate. But today, the evidence is in, the science is solid, and what was once theory is now fact: Global warming is for real. On this fundamental issue, the scientific debate is over.

The world's scientists believe that if we do not cut our emissions of greenhouse gases, we will disrupt the global climate. In fact, the overwhelming majority of scientists take their conclusions one step further. They believe there is ample evidence that human activities are disrupting the global climate already today.

Our scientists are issuing clear warnings about what will result if we stick our heads in the sand and refuse to act. If we stay on our current course, average global temperatures may rise 2 to 6 degrees Fahrenheit in next century. To put this in sobering context, the difference in average temperature between the last Ice Age and today is only 9 degrees Fahrenheit.

If we fail to act, scientists expect that our seas will rise 2 feet or more over the next century, and thousands of square miles of Florida, Louisiana, and other coastal areas will be flooded. Infectious diseases will spread to new regions. Severe heat waves will claim the lives of more of our citizens. Our agriculture will suffer, and severe droughts and floods will be more common than ever.

The United States must confront this challenge head-on. As I pointed out recently at a special session of the United Nations, we have only 4 percent of the world's population, and yet we produce more than 20 percent of its greenhouse gases. For the sake of the planet and our own people, we simply must act.

In December, the nations of the world will convene in Kyoto, Japan, to come up with an agreement on how best to achieve meaningful emission reductions worldwide. Working with the American people, this Administration will bring to the Kyoto conference a strong American commitment to realistic and binding limits on our emissions. And let me be clear: Environmental protection and economic growth go hand in hand.

In Kyoto, we will emphasize flexible, market-based approaches. We will embrace research and development efforts that can help provide the technology to meet the new goals. And we will ask all nations -- industrial and developing -- to participate in a common solution.

I know that the nations of the world can work together to defuse the threat of global climate change. I know the science demands it. I know we owe it to our children.

And now, it is my honor to introduce Dr. Sherwood Rowland, the first of the distinguished scientists we will be hearing from today.

EXHIBIT A DIALOGUE WITH SCIENTISTS

THE PRESIDENT:

And now, it is my honor to introduce Dr. Sherry Rowland, the first of the distinguished scientists we will be hearing from today.

Dr. Rowland, you warned us of another global problem--ozone depletion -- many years before the rest of the world recognized it. You and Dr. Molina are owed a great debt, for through your work, we have begun to heal the ozone layer. You are also one of the original co-signers of the Scientists Statement on Global Climatic Disruption. Could you please tell us about the scientific consensus on this issue and explain why you are so concerned?

Dr. Rowland gives statement. During his statement, Dr. Rowland will give you a copy of the Scientists Statement on Global Climatic Disruption, plus a printout list of the more than 2600 scientists who have signed.

Suggested question for the President or Vice President:

The Scientists Statement uses the term “disruption” and “irreversible”--strong words for cautious scientists. How do the risks we face from global warming compare to the risks from destruction of the ozone layer?

THE VICE PRESIDENT:

Let me now ask Dr. Mario Molina to give us an overview of the science of climate change. One of the most compelling pieces of evidence is the long-term ice core record from Antarctica and Greenland. I invite you to use my favorite chart and talk about the relationship of temperature and carbon dioxide.

Dr. Molina gives statement

After Dr. Molina has unfolded the chart, President stands up and walks to chart for photo op. President asks Dr Molina:

Where on this chart can we see the latest Ice Age?

THE PRESIDENT:

Thank you, Dr. Molina. Let's turn now to Jane Lubchenco, our expert on ecology and see what such significant in greenhouse gas levels might mean for our natural resources.

Dr. Lubchenco gives statement

Suggested questions for the President or Vice President:

How might climate change interact with other environmental problems (such as local air and water pollution)?

Millions of Americans enjoy our national parks every year. Can you tell me what global warming might do to our parks?

THE VICE PRESIDENT:

Thanks, Dr. Lubchenco. Now I'd like to turn to Dr. Steve Schneider, to discuss the risks of severe weather events, such as droughts, floods and hurricanes. I'd also be interested to hear your thoughts on rising sea-levels as a result of global warming.

Dr. Schneider gives statement

Suggested questions for the President or Vice President

Well, we certainly have had more than our share of 100 year floods and droughts lately. Do we think we are seeing the first signs of climate change?

OR: The Scientists' letter talks about climate "surprises" being likely. What kind of unanticipated effects might occur?

THE PRESIDENT:

Thank you Dr. Schneider. Let me now ask Dr. Robert Shope, who has studied infectious diseases extensively, how climate change may affect human health?

Dr. Shope gives statement

Suggested questions for the President or Vice President:

The Chicago heat wave killed more than 400 people several years ago. How might such deadly heat waves change as the climate changes?

OR: Many people say that we have been very effective in eradicating infectious diseases and that medical advances will continue. Can't we count on medical science to protect us against the effects of climate change?

THE VICE PRESIDENT:

Thank you Dr. Shope. I'd like to ask Dr. Henry Kendall, Nobel Laureate and Chairman of the Union of Concerned Scientists, to speak to the international dimensions of this issue.

Dr. Kendall gives statement

Suggested questions for the President or Vice President:

Water--either too much or too little, seems to be at the core of a changing climate. What problems in water quality and water quantity do you anticipate?

OR: Sea-level rise will flood delta areas around the world and many poorer countries will be unable to fortify against the rising seas. Do you expect that climate change will create "environmental refugees"?

THE PRESIDENT:

Thank you. Let's turn now to Dr. John Holdren who has worked on many global issues--energy, the arms race, plutonium disposition. As a signer of the Scientist's Statement, you clearly see global warming as a threat. But many people in this country and around the world seem unconcerned. Why do you think people underrate the importance of this issue?

Dr. Holdren gives statement

Suggested questions for the President or Vice President:

The long lifetimes of these gases make the issue particularly difficult to address. Some argue that delaying action for several decades won't make much difference? Do you agree?

OR: How do you think climate change will affect the average citizen?

► **Elisa Millsap**
07/23/97 08:11:12 PM
.....

Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message

cc:

Subject: Climate Change List-will update tomorrow am

EVENT: Climate Change
DATE: Thursday, July 24
TIME: 1:50pm-3:00pm
LOCATION: East Room

** Members of Congress will arrive through the northwest gate by 1:30pm and park on the northwest drive.

MEMBERS CONFIRMED TO ATTEND:

Sen. John Kerry (D-MA) (t)
Rep. Karen McCarthy (D-MO)

MEMBERS PENDING:

Sen. Max Baucus (D-MT)
Sen. Ron Wyden (D-OR)
Sen. Jeff Bingaman (D-NH)
Sen. Chuck Robb (D-VA)
Rep. Wayne Gilchrest (R-MD)
Rep. George Brown (D-CA)
Rep. John Dingell (D-MI)
Rep. Elizabeth Furse (D-OR)
Rep. Thomas Sawyer (D-OH)
Rep. Lee Hamilton (D-IN)

MEMBERS INVITED BUT UNABLE TO ATTEND:

Sen. John Chafee (R-RI)
Sen. Richard Lugar (R-IN)
Sen. Joe Lieberman (D-CT)
Sen. John McCain (R-AZ)
Sen. Joseph Biden (D-DE)
Sen. James Jeffords (R-VT)
Sen. Paul Wellstone (D-MN)
Rep. Henry Waxman (D-CA)
Rep. Edward Markey (D-MA)

Rep. Ben Gilman (R-NY)
Rep. Sherwood Boehlert (R-NY)
Rep. John Porter (R-IL)
Rep. Frank Pallone (D-NJ)

Message Sent To:

Susan A. Brophy/WHO/EOP
Paul R. Carey/WHO/EOP
Ann M. Cattalini/WHO/EOP
Barbara Chow/WHO/EOP
Raymond E. Donnelly III/WHO/EOP
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Jeffrey A. Forbes/WHO/EOP
Elisa Millsap/WHO/EOP
Jessica L. Gibson/WHO/EOP
Debra A. Schiff/WHO/EOP
Laura K. Capps/WHO/EOP
nwwgate @ 4562784 @ fax
Lori L. Anderson/WHO/EOP
Jamie B. Schwartz/WHO/EOP
Setti D. Warren/WHO/EOP
David R Thomas/OVP @ OVP

There are three fast track related activities taking place this week at the White House:

1. President will officially nominate Jay Berman and Vicki Radd to head the Administration's fast track effort.

[Jay has had a long and distinguished career in Washington as the Chairman and CEO of the Recording Industry Association of America and has been particularly active on ensuring that US intellectual property rights are protected around the world. Vicki has been an Chief of Staff to Erskine Bowles most notably coordinating the Summit of the Eight in Denver. She will be working with Jay on coordinating this priority.]

2. Erskine briefed the Cabinet on the President's commitment to fast track on Wednesday afternoon and has asked that the Cabinet be available to speak out and work on this issue in the future.

3. On Thursday, the President will meet with congressional members to talk about why fast track authority is in the national interest.

General Points:

- **The President is clearly committed to securing fast track authority this fall. This will be one of the Administration's top priorities and the President and his Cabinet will work hard on articulating both to the American people and the Congress why fast track authority is vital to the nation's long term economic prosperity.**
- **Fast track is at the heart of the President's effort to prepare the American people for the challenges of the 21st century. A central pillar of the President's economic strategy has been aggressively creating opportunities to advance America's job growth, productivity and overseas trade.**
- **And it has worked: longest sustained period of growth of all our G-7 partners (25% of which was driven by exports), 12 million new jobs, unemployment under 5%--a 25 year low and sustained low inflation.**
- **Securing fast track authority is critical to continue this economic expansion and maintain America's leadership position in the world.**

The Administration's international trade agenda is on track and moving forward at full speed. In APEC, the Free Trade Area of the Americas, and in the WTO, the United States and the Clinton Administration are setting the agenda to open markets, expand trade, and increase

domestic prosperity. More than 25% of our economic growth in the past four years has been driven by export growth.

- In the last six months, the U.S. led the world to conclude trade agreements in information technology and telecommunications which covered more than \$1 trillion in global trade. We just led the developed countries of the world to conclude an historic anti-corruption agreement among the 29 developed nations in the OECD. We are moving forward in financial services talks at the WTO.
- The President was personally involved in securing the ITA agreement, working with APEC leaders last Fall to build support for this agreement. APEC has already embarked on "ITA II" to expand the reach of this agreement and will consider other sectoral trade agreements this year.

The President and the Administration are actively engaged with the Congress on the trade agenda.

- We are now working in Congress to preserve MFN trade status with China -- normal trade relations -- a critical measure to protect the economic health of Hong Kong because half of U.S.-China trade goes through Hong Kong.
- We have secured commitments from the congressional leadership to address "fast track" on an expedited basis this Fall and conclude this year. This effort will involve the President, the Vice President, and the resources of the White House.

We would like to see Congress approve "fast track" in the Fall to ensure that we can gain the best possible trade terms on a reciprocal basis for U.S. companies and workers. The trade agenda has not been held back by the absence of "fast track" negotiating authority. We are moving forward in the FTAA, within APEC, and in the WTO on a wide range of negotiations including financial services.

- Fast track is important because trade barriers in the fastest growing markets in the world are much higher than ours, and fast track will increase our leverage to bring those barriers down and open markets.
- We will work with the Congress this summer to build consensus on the scope of fast track and how to address labor and environmental issues.

GULF WAR ILLNESSES

July 24, 1997

Q: What is your comment on today's report that nearly 100,000 U.S. troops were exposed to low levels of poisonous sarin gas when soldiers detonated rockets at Khamisiyah?

A: From the beginning of his Administration, the President has been committed to getting out all the facts related to Gulf War illnesses. So, the President is pleased to see the results of the extensive efforts that DOD and CIA have expended to sort out the uncertainties of this particular event at Khamisiyah.

While this new information will be studied carefully in the weeks ahead, it should be remembered that the 98,980 troops were exposed to very low levels for a short period. The President is extremely supportive of the DOD and VA effort to notify the soldiers under the plume, and supports the aggressive research effort that is underway to find out what is making Gulf War veterans sick.

The Presidential Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans' Illnesses (PAC) was commissioned by the President to help us understand the various risk factors associated with Gulf War Illnesses, and to tell us where we were doing well and where we needed improvement. The President credits the PAC for asking the right questions and serving as a catalyst to improve CIA/DOD investigations. We should also give credit to DOD and CIA for the extensive efforts behind today's announcement which underline the President's commitment to get all of the facts out.

Q: What does low-level exposure mean? What should veteran's do?

A: The answer to what veterans should do now is the same as it has always been; if a veteran is sick -- whether shown as exposed or not -- medical care is available.

It is important to note that we're talking about very low levels of exposure, and current medical knowledge does not provide conclusive evidence suggesting the long-term impact is significant. However, there are still unanswered questions about low-level exposure as there is not much research in this area. DOD/VA/HHS have a research plan in place to look into this, as well as other risk factors. This research program will incorporate any new information to try to answer the fundamental question of why veterans are sick.

Q: What is your reaction to the recent GAO report criticizing the government's Gulf War illnesses-related research efforts and specifically suggesting that health problems

experienced by Gulf War veterans may have been caused by exposure to chemical or biological weapons?

- A: Will not be satisfied until we have all the answers possible, all the facts available. If evaluation of the GAO report -- not yet released -- indicates that any shift in emphasis or additional research needed, these decisions will be taken

We welcome the GAO's contribution to the other efforts currently underway to increase our understanding of Gulf War veterans' illnesses and provide them with the most effective care and treatment possible.

We plan on carefully reviewing the report and getting the reactions of the Presidential Advisory Committee and the agencies concerned. Any new findings and recommendations will be carefully considered for incorporation into the ongoing research and medical care programs.

I think it is important to note that the PAC has played a critical role in initiating and overseeing this process, and that many of the efforts currently underway were a direct response to PAC recommendations.

From the day I took office I have been committed doing the right thing to help our veterans. I view the GAO report in the same spirit: as another opportunity to shed light on the best possible program to help our veterans. My hope is that this new report will be helpful to further improve our ability to help the veterans who served their country in the Persian Gulf.

- Q: Recent developments suggest that GAO, DOD and the PAC have significant differences of opinion on the causes of Gulf War illnesses. What does this mean to veterans?

- A: First and foremost, I support all efforts -- by the agencies involved, by the PAC, and by Congress -- that may contribute to improving current programs for our Gulf War veterans.

In terms of any differences of opinion at this stage, remember that Gulf War illness causation issues are numerous and complex, and the research available to date is limited -- which is why the ongoing government research program encompasses more than 106 projects.

Finally, once, the agencies and the PAC are in a position to comment more specifically on its conclusions and recommendations, any new findings will be carefully factored in to the ongoing research and medical care programs.

- Q: Rep. Bernie Sanders of Vermont released a letter signed by 86 members of the House calling for the Presidential Advisory Committee on Gulf War Illnesses to reassess its conclusion that the illnesses reported by Gulf War veterans were likely caused by war-

related stress in the face of "clear" evidence that exposure to a wide variety of chemicals in the Persian Gulf may be a significant factor in Persian Gulf illness. Has this Congressional request undermined the PAC's ability to provide credible oversight to the government's efforts relating to Gulf War illnesses?

- A: We appreciate Rep. Sanders' and Congress' interest in getting to the bottom of the difficult question of Gulf War illnesses. As you know, the President had consistently pledged to leave no stone unturned in helping affected veterans

The Presidential Advisory Commission's conclusion that stress was a likely cause of illnesses reported by Gulf War veterans was based on a thorough review of the scientific literature available at the time, and was accompanied by a call for a substantial new research program looking into a number of other risk factors in addition to stress, including low-level exposure to chemical warfare agents, multiple chemical sensitivities, and infectious diseases, among others. Such a program -- encompassing over 106 projects between DoD, VA and HHS -- is now underway, and the PAC deserves a great deal of credit for providing its impetus.

As the new research and more thorough investigative efforts by the various agencies produce results, the PAC will continue to play a critical role as an independent guarantor that the overall program meets rigorous standards of scientific and clinical effectiveness.

- Q: What is your reaction to the study published in the New England Journal of Medicine showing no evidence that Persian Gulf veterans face increased risk of having children with birth defects?

- A: We welcome publication of this first-rate study addressing an important concern of the men and women who served our nation in the Persian Gulf.

The study compared the birth records of children born at military hospitals to virtually all of the nearly 580,000 active duty military members who served in the Persian Gulf with those of a parallel group of 700,000 military personnel who were not deployed to the Gulf. The results should reassure all Persian Gulf veterans, whether or not they have experienced possible Gulf War-related illnesses, that their family planning can proceed without worry about second-generation health problems related to Persian Gulf service.

We also note that this study is just one element in a large and comprehensive research program being conducted by many researchers in coordination with DOD, HHS, and VA. Additional research designed to address other important health concerns in a thorough and credible manner remains in progress, and we look forward to communicating future results to Persian Gulf veterans as soon as they become available.

- Q: Is the PAC likely to be extended again given the many problems still remaining?

- A. The PAC has a critical role to play -- we are relying on their expertise and independent assessments to enhance program quality across the full spectrum of government programs.

Discussion of PAC extension would be premature at this juncture given the many initiatives still underway and length of time remaining in the initial extension (31 OCT 97)

- Q. What has the Administration done for Gulf War veterans who are sick?

- A. Overall, to date -- (1) DOD & VA toll-free help lines; (2) 80,000+ free medical exams; (3) care for all Gulf War veterans who are sick (whether or not a diagnosis has been possible); (4) 26,000+ compensation claims approved; (5) special legislation paying disability for Gulf veterans with undiagnosed illnesses, with an extension of the presumptive period for undiagnosed illness compensation forthcoming soon; (6) thousands of pages declassified, and (7) 90+ federally-sponsored research projects completed or underway

Most Recent POTUS Q A's

We understand there is a new revelation that will show there is a huge increase in the number of troops exposed to nerve agents during the Gulf War -- is this true?

I have been committed to getting out all the facts related to Gulf War illnesses -- I won't stop pushing until all unanswered questions are answered. The Presidential Advisory Commission should get credit for asking the right questions and acting as a catalyst to improve the investigations.

This latest "plume" analysis is another step in helping us understand the scope of possible exposure of our troops during the Gulf War.

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

July 23, 1997

Statement by the President on EU Approval of Boeing-McDonnell Douglas Merger

I am pleased that Boeing and the EU have resolved their differences, and that the EU has agreed in principle to approve Boeing's merger with McDonnell Douglas. The Boeing-McDonnell Douglas merger will promote consolidation and efficiency in the U.S. defense industry, and preserve the jobs of 14,000 workers at Douglas Aircraft Company. Our own independent Federal Trade Commission determined that the merger would not harm competition. We hope that the EU will give the merger final approval expeditiously.

#

Press Guidance on EU Review of Boeing-McDonnell Douglas Merger
July 23, 1997

- We are pleased that negotiators for Boeing and the European Commission appear to have reached an agreement on the proposed merger of Boeing and McDonnell Douglas. We believe Boeing has gone the extra mile in order to resolve this dispute, and we expect that the European Commission will approve the merger.
- Our independent Federal Trade Commission ruled unconditionally on July 1 that the merger would not reduce competition in the aircraft industry. We believe it is important that this merger go forward because it will promote consolidation and efficiency in the U.S. defense industry and preserve the jobs of 15,000 workers at Douglas Aircraft Co., which has suffered with the rise of Airbus Industrie.
- Although we did not get directly involved in the negotiations between Boeing and the EU, the President and his senior advisers have been working quietly, behind the scenes for weeks to ensure that the EU would not block the merger. The President made phone calls on his day off this week. The Secretary of State interrupted her vacation to call several of her European counterparts. Our antitrust chief led a delegation to Brussels two weeks ago. We have kept our involvement quiet, so as not to turn up the volume on this issue any further.
- We think this quiet diplomacy has paid off:
 - The EU backed off of its initial demand that Boeing divest Douglas Aircraft Co., after we insisted that would both harm the airlines that currently operate Douglas aircraft and jeopardize the jobs of the 14,000 Douglas workers in Long Beach.
 - The EU also backed off of its initial efforts to use the merger review process to reopen negotiations on the 1992 bilateral aircraft agreement, which limits European government subsidies for new Airbus aircraft, after we warned them not to link trade and competition policy.

On background:

- The Administration has worked quietly behind the scenes to make certain the EU understands 1) that the merger is consistent with the Pentagon's conscious strategy of defense consolidation, and 2) that EU insistence on a divestiture of Douglas Aircraft (the commercial side of McDonnell Douglas) was both anticompetitive and a threat to the jobs of 15,000 workers at Douglas. We made a full court press, but we did so quietly, so as not to further inflame the situation.

- On the exclusive agreements, from a public policy standpoint, we did not consider them problematic. The FTC said the agreements were potentially troubling, but not a reason to block the deal. We did not encourage Boeing to give them up. More generally, we did not second guess Boeing on this or any other aspect of the negotiations.
- We do have some concerns about the way the EU handled its merger review process. Statements from the European side gave the appearance that the process was influenced by political factors and trade policy considerations. Whereas the FTC judged the merger based on its impact on *consumers*, the European side appeared to consider the impact on *competitors* to Boeing.
- Separate from the merger, we do have concerns about the possibility of new government subsidies to Airbus, particularly in light of the EU's recent criticism of the 1992 U.S.-EU bilateral aircraft agreement, which limits such subsidies. We will continue to monitor that situation and vigorously implement the 1992 Agreement.

BOEING-MCDONNELL DOUGLAS MERGER

July 24, 1997

(Note: Press reports that Boeing CEO Phil Condit and McDonnell Douglas CEO Harry Stonecipher will hold a news conference at 1 pm in the East Room of the Mayflower Hotel Washington to discuss their merger.)

- We are pleased that negotiators for Boeing and the European Commission appear to have reached an agreement on the proposed merger of Boeing and McDonnell Douglas. We believe Boeing has gone the extra mile in order to resolve this dispute, and we expect that the European Commission will approve the merger.
- Our independent Federal Trade Commission ruled unconditionally on July 1 that the merger would not reduce competition in the aircraft industry. We believe it is important that this merger go forward because it will promote consolidation and efficiency in the U.S. defense industry and preserve the jobs of 15,000 workers at Douglas Aircraft Co., which has suffered with the rise of Airbus Industrie.
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Most Recent POTUS Q/A's - 7/24/97

What is your reaction to the European Commission decision on the merger?

Very pleased. As I said yesterday, this merger will help with consolidation and efficiency in our defense industry, and also help save the jobs of 14,000 of our workers at Douglas Aircraft which has suffered with the rise of Airbus.

The EU seems to be crowing that it was able to wring so many concessions from Boeing -- do you think Boeing 'blinked'?

I'm not going to get into responding to that. What is important here is that we reached a solution that is agreed by all. We were able to make it clear to the EU that the some of their early demands, such as the divestiture of Douglas Aircraft, would be both anticompetitive and a threat to 14,000 US jobs.

What role did you personally play in helping to close this deal?

We weren't directly involved in the negotiations, of course, but we've been quietly and indirectly involved for some time. Secretary Albright and I both made calls to several of our counterparts, and others -- including senior people here at

the White House, and those from our Justice and Transportation Departments who went to Brussels -- played very significant roles in arriving at this outcome.

CANADA SALMON

July 23, 1997

Q: What was accomplished in yesterday's meeting between Foreign Minister Axworthy and Acting Secretary Talbott?

U.S. and Canada have decided to appoint two prominent citizens who will report to President and Secretary of State and to Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, to find, through consultations, most effective way to reinvigorate stakeholders process. (Note: Stakeholders talks broke down in May.)

Goal of stakeholders process is to resolve differences over implementation of Pacific Salmon Treaty.

Two representatives will act as resources to stakeholders and report periodically on progress; objective is to move quickly enough make difference for 1998 salmon fishing season.

Also agreed to set up channel to provide early warning of operational problems between respective fishing interests.

If asked whether our representative will be Bill Ruckelshaus: He would be an excellent choice; we are talking with Canada on the details of the process and working out administrative arrangements. (Note: He is our candidate but we cannot announce that until Ottawa has come up with theirs.)

Q: What is Foreign Minister Axworthy doing here?

Foreign Minister Axworthy flew in to discuss salmon issue with Acting Secretary Talbott, Under Secretary Wirth.

U.S. will certainly express strong unhappiness over blockade of Alaskan ferry over weekend.

Purpose of visit is to discuss how to get process going that will facilitate restoration of stakeholder talks, lead to resolution of salmon issue.

Q: What is the current status of the ferry blockade in Prince Rupert?

A: Blockade has ended and ferry has gone on its way to Ketchikan, Alaska..
*(Background: On Saturday, Canadian fishermen blockaded a U.S. passenger ferry in prince Rupert, British Columbia to protest Alaskan catches of sockeye salmon..
On Sunday, Alaska obtained an injunction against the blockade in Canadian court.
However, Canadian officials have not enforced that injunction.)*

U.S. pleased blockade is over but it should not have happened. Harmed many people who have nothing to do with the salmon fishery.

Now we are working with Canadian government to get a process in place to resolve our dispute over Pacific salmon.

Q: Will the U.S. retaliate?

A: We are considering our options very carefully.

Q: Weren't the Canadian fishermen reacting to a perceived violation of the Pacific Salmon Treaty by Alaska?

A: Canada's position on this point reflects a fundamental disagreement over how to interpret the provisions of the Pacific Salmon Treaty. In our view, Alaska's actions are entirely consistent with the treaty.

Alaska has always caught Canadian-bound sockeye incidental to its catch of pink salmon in its traditional pink salmon fishery.

This year, stock abundance has been particularly high and as a result the catches are up.

The relevant point is that the ratio of sockeye salmon to pink so far this season is consistent with -- and in fact is even wider than -- average ratios over the past five years, with more pinks to sockeye being caught. The catch levels reflect the abundance of fish, not a change in fishing practices or a redirection of Alaska's fishery to target Canadian stocks.

Q: But hasn't Alaska caught more than three times the number of fish they caught in this fishery last year?

A: I'm not going to get into specific numbers with you, other than to reiterate that U.S. fishermen are fishing consistent with sound conservation principles. While Alaska may be catching more fish than last year, they are doing so only because the stock abundance is correspondingly greater. If you want exact numbers, I would encourage you to contact the State of Alaska or the Pacific Salmon Commission.

Q: Didn't Canada deliver a protest note last Friday concerning the Alaska fishery?

A: Yes. Canada did deliver a protest note. We will be responding to the Canadian note shortly.

Q: Has the United States formally responded to the Canadian request for binding arbitration to settle the salmon dispute?

A: Not yet. We expect to do so shortly. As you know, we have rejected binding arbitration in the past. It poses a number of serious problems for us. We continue to believe that the best way to solve this issue is through the resumption of the stakeholders process.

Most Recent POTUS Q/A's - 7/21/97

What is your reaction to the Canadian blockade of one of our ferries? What are you doing about this dispute?

- I'm sorry that this has gotten to this point. Our fishermen are fishing consistent with sound conservation principles and they haven't done anything wrong.*
- Prime Minister Chretien and I discussed this in Denver. We agreed that our experts would continue working on this and that the best way to solve this issue is through negotiation.*
- In the meantime, we have told the Canadians that they need to enforce their own court's injunction and release the Alaskan ferry. This blockade is harming innocent people who have nothing to do with this dispute.*

MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS

July 24, 1997

Q: What is going on with the Peace Process?

A: Contacts between the parties in the Peace Process are continuing. Chairman Arafat sent Palestinian Negotiator Saeb Erekat to Washington last week to meet with Dennis Ross and U/S/ Pickering. Dennis met with Israeli Cabinet Secretary Nevah Yesterday.

These meetings are part of our ongoing efforts, which have been continuing for some time, to work with the parties to try to put the Peace Process back on track.

Q: What happened at the Nevah meeting? Is progress being made?

The goal of our current effort is to find a way for the parties to return to the negotiating table. Our practice is not to go into details of our meetings. Our efforts are intensive and ongoing, but there is still work to be done.

Q: Is the US pushing for a settlement and Har Homa freeze? What is your view of moving quickly to permanent status talks?

A: I just said that I am not going to go into details on these or any other issues.

Q: Israeli press is reporting that Dennis will travel to the Region in August and that the Secretary will open permanent status talks in September. Anything on this?

Neither Dennis nor the secretary has any plans at the moment to travel to the region. Both will do so when they believe that their presence there will help to move the process forward.

Q: Any comment on the meeting between Arafat and Levy in Brussels?

A: We welcome the meeting in Brussels between Chairman Arafat and FM Levy. High-Level contacts between the Israelis and the Palestinians are an important component of rebuilding confidence between the parties.

Q: Was this a useful meeting? What occurred?

A: As you know, we were not a party to the meeting. You will have to address that question to the parties who attended the meeting.

Q: Have you been debriefed? Has Moratinos spoken with Dennis?

A: They have been in regular contact. We appreciate Mr. Moratinos efforts.

Q: Why are you ceding the initiative to the EU? Are you working in tandem?

A: There are several parties interested in helping advance the peace process, including, importantly, the EU and Egypt. We stay in close touch with both.

I would Characterize all of our efforts as complementary and mutually reinforcing. We all share a common goal in our dealings with the parties in the region, that is, to help them return to the negotiating table.

In this sense, any activities -- like the EU brokered Arafat-Levy meeting in Brussels -- that help to rebuild confidence between the parties are welcome.

Most Recent POTUS Q/A's - 7/24/97

Is it true that you have a new package of proposals to get the talks going?

You know that we don't discuss details of our discussions with the parties, and I am not going to start now. It is crucial that we maintain our ability to serve as an honest broker in this process.

We've had a number of recent contacts with both sides -- meetings which are part of the ongoing efforts that have been taking place for some time to try to get the process back on track.

Israeli press is reporting that Dennis Ross will travel to the region in August and that Albright will open permanent status talks in September. Is this true?

No. Neither of them has any such plans at the moment. Both will go when they believe their presence will help move the process forward.

DOLPHIN PROTECTION

July 22, 1997

Q: What is the problem on the Hill with the Tuna-Dolphin bill? Are we in trouble?

A: The administration strongly supports the Breaux-Stevens bill. We believe this legislation best protects dolphins and the marine environment. The President and Vice President are committed to implementing the Panama Declaration.

Legislation has been introduced in both the House and Senate to implement the dolphin protection program of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) which is among the best international conservation regimes in the world.

The "Panama Declaration" -- an international declaration adopted in Panama on October 4, 1996 - strengthens this program further. This legislation is supported by the Administration, the U.S. fishing industry and major environmental groups, including Greenpeace, Center for Marine Conservation, Environmental Defense Fund, National Wildlife Federation, and World Wildlife Fund. The Countries which have signed on to this declaration are Belize, Columbia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, France, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Spain, the United States, Vanuatu, and Venezuela.

This international program will ensure that dolphin mortalities in the tuna fishery never exceed 5,000. Not long ago these numbers were in the hundreds of thousands. The nations involved have made a commitment to work toward a goal of eliminating all dolphin mortalities.

With over 9.5 million dolphins in the region, this level is five one-hundredths of one percent of the population. This level of mortality is significantly lower than the mortality limits established in the Marine Mammal Protection Act for fisheries in U. S. waters. Because the tuna fishery is conducted almost entirely by foreign vessels on the high seas or in their own waters, it can be regulated only by international agreement.

This program also protects the ecosystem as a whole. It avoids alternative fishing methods, such as setting on logs, which produce a high bycatch of juvenile tunas, billfish, sharks, endangered sea turtles, and other species, all of which tend to congregate around ocean debris. New information on bycatches during the 1996 fishing season reinforces the negative consequences of these alternative fishing methods.

The program is the most strictly enforced international conservation regime in the world. An internationally trained observer works on every boat.

For this international program to take effect, the United States needs to lift the tuna embargoes and define dolphin-safe tuna as tuna caught without killing any dolphins.

To ensure consumer confidence in the label and avoid confusion in the marketplace, other labels would not be allowed. This would mean that only tuna caught without killing any dolphins could be labeled as dolphin safe.

Currently, the House has passed H.R. 408 by a vote of 262-166 on May 21st. In June, the Senate Commerce Committee passed S.39, and it is now for Senate floor action.

If the legislation does not pass, we are likely to lose this valuable international program.

TRIPS AND VISITORS

July 22, 1997

German President Herzog visits on July 24

- German President Herzog will be coming for visit, having lunch with POTUS July 24.
- Two will have chance for private discussion of importance of U.S. German relationship, then join Herzog's delegation for lunch. Delegation includes head of Germany's Jewish community Ignatz Bubis, Steffi Graf, Minister of Transportation Matthias Wissman, Dr. Christoph von Rohr, Executive Director of the New German Laender Industrial Investment council, as well as other government officials.
- President Herzog is head of state, not government but is figure of great moral authority in Germany. President looking forward to chance to talk with him.

Other Trips and Visitors

- President Aliyev of Azerbaijan meets with POTUS August 1.
- President's visits to Brazil, Argentina and Venezuela rescheduled to October 12-17.
- APEC Summit in Vancouver November 24-25.

ANGOLA
July 24, 1997

Q: Who is Maurice Tempelsman and what are his connections with Africa?

- Maurice Tempelsman is Chairman of Lazare Kaplan International (LKI), a leading diamond marketer and manufacturer. He has been involved in the diamond business throughout the world and in Africa for nearly four decades, and is well respected by numerous African leaders and businessmen.
- Tempelsman is the former Chairman of the African-American Institute and currently serves on the Board of Trustees of that organization. He also serves as Chairman of the Africa Subcommittee of the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), is Treasurer and a Board Member of the Southern Africa Enterprise Development Fund chaired by Andrew Young, and is Chairman of the International Advisory Committee of the Harvard AIDS Institute which looks at Africa.

Q: What has been Tempelsman's contacts with the US Government concerning his Angola proposal?

- Tempelsman has met frequently with State Department officials, both in Washington and Angola to discuss matters related to countries in Africa. He has also met with officials at the National Security Council.
- We understand Tempelsman was asked by Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos last summer if LKI could devise a commercial effort that might help resolve a major outstanding impediment to the Angolan peace process. Leader of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) Jonas Savimbi has been unwilling to relinquish diamond-rich territories his forces occupy and exploit without some assurance of a substitute source of revenue to help finance UNITA's role as an unarmed opposition political force. We understand Savimbi also expressed to LKI an interest in the creation of such a settlement.
- Tempelsman, with this encouragement from both Angolan leaders, developed a concept of establishing an international business consortium in which the respective diamond mining companies of both the Angolan government and UNITA would have a pooled interest. Such a concept could help resolve this outstanding issue, promote lasting peace, and expand diamond mining production from which both Angolan parties would benefit.
- Following a meeting at the State Department in July 1996, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs George Moose informed Tempelsman by letter in August that the State Department believed the idea he had proposed in response to President dos Santos' initial request was a constructive initiative, interesting and worth exploring.
- Tempelsman requested and received a meeting with then Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs Dr. Anthony Lake in October. Dr. Lake agreed to meet with Tempelsman after learning of the State Department's support for his efforts. The NSC staff also concurred in Dr. Lake meeting with Tempelsman.

- In this meeting, Tempelsman spoke about his proposal and recently concluded visit to Angola. As discussed earlier with State Department officials in Washington and Angola, Tempelsman also said that U.S. Export-Import Bank equipment loans and Overseas Private Investment Corporation financing could help provide international guarantees to a possible settlement. Dr. Lake believed, like the State Department, that the proposal was worthy of exploring.
- Dr. Lake instructed the NSC staff to consult with the NSC Legal Advisor and subsequently make both the Export-Import Bank and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation aware of the positive foreign policy considerations of Tempelsman's proposal without attempting to influence any decisions these institutions could make.
- Following the guidance of Dr. Lake and the NSC Legal Advisor, NSC staff in mid-October contacted both institutions. At no time was any effort made to direct the decisions of these two institutions. In any event, over time the parties to the Angolan conflict lost interest in the settlement proposed by Tempelsman.

IF ASKED

Q: Did Tempelsman stand to benefit financially from this venture?

- As we understand it, Tempelsman's proposal would not have placed any Angolan diamond mines under LKI's control, and was not regarded by Tempelsman as a business proposition except for the goodwill it might have earned him with the Angolan government.

Q: Was Sandy Berger involved in these discussions?

- No.

Q: Was any special consideration given to Tempelsman because of his Democratic Party connections?

- No. At no time was this a factor in any calculations. Both the State Department (whose legal advisor approved the August 1996 letter) and the National Security Council judged the proposal solely on its merits.

Q: What were the merits of Tempelsman's proposal?

- There was a clear need in the Angolan peace process for a resolution to the issue of diamond resources. This was not part of the 1994 Lusaka Peace Accord and it continues to be a major impediment to the implementation of the accords. Both Angolan parties requested Tempelsman's intervention and creation of a proposed solution. His idea, if accepted by the parties, could have created a workable solution to a long-standing, intractable problem. No other person or institution has proposed an alternative solution.

NAZI GOLD
July 23, 1997

Q: What do we know about the Vatican storing Ustashi (Croatian) gold?

A: Treasury document appears to be first reference to Vatican's role in safeguarding looted gold. State, other agencies working to determine if more information is available.

Committed to full historical review of Nazi gold issue. UK and U.S. have agreed to work together to hold an international conference of historians this fall in London.

Many of neutral countries have established commissions to study Nazi gold issue and many have expressed interest in attending such a conference.

U.S. urges Vatican, along with all affected countries, to open historical records and share relevant findings.

Most Recent POTUS Q/A's - 7/22/97

Q : Mr. President, are you concerned about the revelations overnight that the Vatican may have been involved in stashing Nazi-era gold? And have you been in touch with the Vatican government over this?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, let me say, I have talked to the --all I know is that there was apparently some suggestion that maybe there is a document here, somewhere in the government Archives which would shed some light on that question.

As you know, the United States has taken the lead on this. We've worked very hard. I well remember the first time I heard about it when Mr. Bronfman talked to the First Lady about it. And we've worked very hard on this. And the Treasury Department has assured me that they have historians combing the records, and we will reveal whatever information we have and let the facts take us where they lead us. But we'll keep working on this until we do everything we can to make it right

ICELAND
July 23, 1997

(For use after POTUS meeting with Icelandic President)

Q: What is the readout from the President's meeting with the President of Iceland?

A: President Clinton met this yesterday with the President of Iceland, Olafur Grimsson.

This was the first meeting of the two.

The two Presidents discussed plans for a joint Icelandic-Canadian-U.S. commemoration in the year 2000 of the one-thousandth anniversary of the first crossing by Europeans to North America: Leif Erikson's voyage of discovery in the year 1000.

President Clinton also thanked President Grimsson for his efforts on behalf of global environmental issues and for his strong support of the Comprehensive Test Ban treaty.

CFE Adaptation: Decision on "Certain Basic Elements"

- Since January of this year, the thirty parties to the CFE treaty have been engaged in negotiations to update or "adapt" the treaty to Europe's dramatically changed security environment.
- Today, in Vienna, the 30 parties to the CFE Treaty have agreed upon "Certain Basic Elements for Treaty Adaptation."
- The decision they adopted today locks in significant progress that has been made thus far in the negotiations, while also identifying issues that need to be further discussed.
- The decision will guide negotiators in their future deliberations to adapt the treaty. [If asked: This is a political document, not legally binding.]
- It demonstrates the commitment of all treaty members to work together toward a common goal of ensuring European stability by adapting the treaty so that it continues to enhance security in Europe for the coming years.
- The decision records agreement on certain core structural elements of the treaty. These provisions include:
 - The treaty's Cold War bloc-to-bloc structure will be replaced it with a new system of national ceilings;
 - The existing zonal structure, originally established to encourage the movement of troops and equipment away from the potential line of confrontation in Central Europe, will be replaced by nationally-based territorial ceilings;
 - The 30 CFE states will pursue the objective of significantly lowering the total amount of treaty limited equipment permitted in the treaty area;
 - The limitations of the flank agreement, as modified by the Flank Agreement in May, 1996, will be maintained; and
 - The adapted treaty will by open to accession by states who may request it, on a case-by-case basis.
- These agreed elements consistent with the NATO proposal of February 20, 1997.

Current

Yeltsin Rejection of Law on Religion

- Yeltsin rejected draft law on religion; said action motivated by concern that law violated Russian constitution, argued there could be no democratic society in Russia if minority interests "are not protected."
- Right decision for religious freedom and democracy in Russia; Yeltsin stood up for principle against political expediency, as when he vetoed similar legislation in 1993.
- Makes clear Yeltsin's concept of democracy for Russia embraces religious freedom.

(If asked -- what now happens to law?)

- Yeltsin has proposed amendments to law, which now goes back to Duma for reconsideration, possible reworking when Duma returns from recess in September.

(If asked -- Administration's contacts with Yeltsin about the law)

- President raised our concern about religion law; Secretary Albright discussed it repeatedly with Primakov; Embassy Moscow in regular contact with Russian officials.

Additional Background

The law would have required all religious groups to register with the government. Registration is also required in some other countries. The difference is that the Russia law had a number of troubling provisions tied to the registration requirement. Specifically, the law provided for significant official discretion in denying certification, required many religious groups to wait up to 15 years to obtain recognition, and separated religious groups into different categories--each associated with different rights.

* Under the 15-year requirement, religions and sects introduced to Russia since the Soviet period (when there were intense restrictions on religious freedom) would not have been able to obtain full status and their activities would have been severely limited.

* For example, such religious groups would have been denied formal recognition as legal entities, making it impossible for them to own property, produce or distribute religious literature, invite co-religionists from abroad, train religious workers, etc. Essentially, they would only have been permitted to engage in private worship.

* The law distinguished primarily between "religious groups" (those not meeting the 15 year requirement) and "religious organizations," with the latter enjoying full legal status.

* In addition, organizations operating in Russia for at least 50 years would have been eligible for "all Russia" status, which was associated with some additional rights (such as apparent veto power over the registration of local groups).

* The law also would have severely limited the activities of foreign missionaries. For example, it would only permit Russian citizens to form religious groups.

The perception that the law referred back to restrictive policies from the Soviet period contributed to the concern, felt in this country and elsewhere, about specific provisions. Some observers, including groups in Russia, feared that the law represented a real threat to Russia's democratic transition.

Several aspects of the draft law are contrary to Russia's constitutional protections of religious equality, separation of church and state, and freedom of association, as well as Russia's international commitments and accepted human rights norms. Yeltsin's decision to veto made reference to these constitutional and human rights concerns, so hopefully the Duma's redraft will make significant improvements on the current version.

POTUS-Yeltsin Energy Summit in 1998?

- Leaders of the Eight agreed in Denver to hold ministerial meeting on energy issues in Moscow in 1998, with results to be discussed at next Summit of the Eight (in Birmingham).
- Anticipate President and Yeltsin will meet in 1998, but no specifics yet on date or venue.

Visits

- Azeri President Aliyev to visit Washington July 30-August 1; will see President August 1.

Shevardnadze Visit

- Shevardnadze had good visit, excellent discussions with President and Vice President.
- President made clear strong U.S. support for continued reform in Georgia; said U.S. will work actively to promote resolution on Abkhazia separatist conflict; and agreed with Shevardnadze on importance of regional cooperation in Caucasus, including with Russia and Turkey.
- (If raised) Georgia's handling of adoption cases was raised with Shevardnadze. United States hopes for early, fair resolution.

General

NATO-Russia

- Founding Act signed by NATO leaders and Yeltsin in Paris May 27 milestone agreement -- lays basis for robust and growing partnership between NATO and Russia.
- See Russia as partner of NATO in shaping more secure, stable and undivided Europe. That is good for United States, Russia and Europe. Now will work with Russia to give real substance to Founding Act.
- First meeting of Permanent Joint Council held at ambassadorial level on July 18; agreed to ministerial level meetings in September and December.

Prospects for START II Ratification by Russian Duma

- Believe Yeltsin committed to START II ratification by Duma.
- START II ratification in both U.S. and Russia's best interests -- provides for stabilizing reductions in strategic forces, reduced costs, and opens the door to negotiations on further reductions in "START III," as agreed in Helsinki.
- Ratification of START II by Russia remains an essential prerequisite to begin START III negotiations toward further reductions in nuclear forces.

Most Recent POTUS Q/A's - 7/24/97

What is your reaction to Yeltsin's rejection of this legislation?

It was a difficult decision, and it took a lot of courage. He has done the right thing by standing up for religious freedom and democracy in Russia. This is a mark of true leadership.

RUSSIAN MIR SITUATION
July 24, 1997

Background

There has been no significant change in the status of the Mir since yesterday.

Talking Points

- The Russians have announced that the internal spacewalk to reconnect the power cables from the damaged module will be conducted by the replacement crew, due to arrive August 7 or 8.
- The current schedule for crew replacement and repair is as follows:
 - o August 5 Replacement crew (2 Russians) launched to Mir
 - o August 7-8 Replacement crew arrives at Mir
 - o August 14 Current Russian crew returns to Earth. (Foale to remain aboard Mir.)
 - o August 20 Internal spacewalk to reconnect power cables from damaged module. (Foale to remain in Soyuz capsule.)
 - o Sept. 3 External spacewalk to inspect -- but not repair -- damaged module and solar arrays. (Foale to remain in Soyuz capsule.)
 - o Sept. 18 (pending NASA review) Launch of Shuttle with U.S. astronaut Wendy Lawrence to replace Michael Foale. Shuttle could carry parts needed for repair of Mir.
- The President is being kept fully informed of the situation by his Science Advisor, Dr. Jack Gibbons.

Q. Science Advisor Dr. Gibbons has said that Mir's power problems could prevent U.S. astronaut Wendy Lawrence from replacing Michael Foale at the end of his mission. Will she be going or not?

A: NASA's current plans are to send Lawrence to Mir, but a final decision will depend on restoration of the power from the damaged module and on the results of NASA's internal and external reviews of Mir safety. **The Russians are working to have power restored before the Shuttle arrives, and the Russian mission director has acknowledged that unless power is restored, there is little scientific justification for sending Lawrence to Mir.**

Q. Isn't it time to seriously reconsider our overall space cooperation with Russia?

A. The Shuttle/Mir program is only one facet of our space cooperation with Russia. We also work with the Russians in space science, earth observations, aeronautics and life sciences. We remain committed to the International Space Station and to Russia's participation in it. President Yeltsin has given President Clinton his personal commitment to continue Russia's role in the program. This incident has not altered our plans for future cooperation.

Q: Has the President approved Senator Glenn's request to fly on the Space Shuttle?

A: The President has a great deal of respect for Senator Glenn and we are aware of his interest in flying again in space. NASA is currently evaluating the Senator's proposal in light of the specific safety issues involved and the science requirements that could be met if he were to fly. This is not a process that will be run out of the White House; the decision will be based on NASA's recommendation.

Most Recent POTUS Q/A's - 7/17/97

Q -- the Mir critical now and are you giving second thoughts to ever sending another American be on the Mir spacecraft?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, when I came to the office this morning I got a briefing about it, and as far as we know right now, they have gotten control of things and there seems to be no immediate crisis. But I have no -- I'm not sure that I have all of the information I need. We have the -- that's the basic report I have now, and it's too soon after the incident for me to draw a conclusion about the question you ask. I can't say that we would not continue cooperation on what little I've heard this morning; I just don't know enough

7/11/97

Q Well, John Glenn wants to go [into space again].

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I think -- I think it would be a great thing and I do think the argument that he could be -- that he could be helpful in analyzing not only the effects of space travel on a normal person, but also what, if anything, could be learned about weightlessness and that sustained experience that might help us back home to deal with the increasing health challenges of our aging population. I think all that's really important.

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM REPORT

July 24, 1997

[Background: In compliance with a congressional request, the State Department released a report entitled "United States Policies in Support of Religious Freedom: Focus on Christians." It is available on the Internet at <http://www.state.gov>]

Q: Why did the State Department release a report on religious freedom?

- The report was prepared at the request of Congress.

Q: What do you hope to accomplish with this report?

- The Administration has been a leader in promoting religious freedom. We welcome this opportunity to bring attention to the problem of religious persecution and to share what we've been doing to advance religious liberty around the world.

Q: Why does it focus on the treatment of Christians?

- While the report fulfills a Congressional mandate to focus on the situation for Christians, it describes U.S. efforts to address religious persecution more broadly. It includes several examples of cases where the religious rights of other faiths have been violated.
- There should be no confusion: the United States vigorously condemns persecution against any believer and all faiths. We have defended the rights of Muslims, Jews, Buddhists, Baha'is and others to practice their faiths freely. Our efforts to combat religious intolerance have sought to protect the fundamental human right of people of all faiths to worship freely.

Q: What has the Administration done to address religious persecution?

- The report outlines the many ways in which the Administration has worked to support religious freedom, for example:
- Both the President and the Secretary of State have made religious freedom a priority of U.S. human right policy and an important focus of our diplomatic efforts;
- We created the first-ever Secretary's Advisory Committee on Religious Freedom Abroad, a group of distinguished American leaders of religious, academic, and advocacy communities that has been hard at work formulating recommendations to advance religious freedom and reconciliation;
- We highlight the issue of religious freedom in international for a such as the United Nations General Assembly and the UN Human Rights Commission;

- Our diplomatic posts around the world are giving greater attention to this issue, and have been instructed to work closely with local religious leaders to gather information on religious freedom and to promote religious tolerance;
- And we speak out publicly when there is a problem, including raising our concerns directly with foreign governments and consistently reporting on religious freedom in our annual human rights reports.

Q: How do you respond to the allegation that the report's release was delayed until after the MFN vote on China?

- It is simply not true that the report's release was postponed by the Administration. Rather, we have worked hard to prepare a thorough and accurate report. For example, the State Department consulted with members of the Secretary's Advisory Committee, and their contributions strengthened the report in important ways.
- We are proud that we produced a report that overviews all of our efforts around the globe to address religious freedom, and that includes country-specific summaries of conditions in 77 different countries. *[Note: The press has reported that 78 countries are included.]*

Q: Have certain countries, such as China, been singled out for criticism in the report?

- The report covers 77 countries around the globe, including several in Western Europe. No individual country is singled out for special criticism.
- The real story is what the U.S. is doing to address problems where they exist. As the report shows, we have been active in encouraging greater religious tolerance in a number of countries.

[Only If Asked]

Q: Does the attention on this issue mean that the Administration would support the Wolf-Specter bill on religious persecution? *[Background: Representative Wolf and Senator Specter introduced legislation—the Freedom from Religious Persecution Act—mandating the creation of a White House office to monitor religious persecution and imposing automatic sanctions on countries found to engage in religious persecution.]*

- As demonstrated by the report, we are deeply committed to defending religious liberty, and we share the concern of the authors of the bill about the serious problem of religious persecution.
- We are looking closely at specific provisions in the bill and we have concerns about some elements of the legislation.

We look forward to working with Members of Congress, the Secretary's Advisory Committee, and the American public to explore ways to advance religious liberty abroad.

Most Recent POTUS Q/A's - 7/24/97

The State Department issued its report on religious persecution - China looks particularly bad. Will this affect your policy of engagement?

Problems of religious persecution are severe in many parts of the world. We've had concerns about human rights in China for a long time and this has been a key topic in our discussions with the Chinese leadership. We've made clear the importance we attach to freedom of worship and will continue pressing the Chinese to improve their performance.

LIBERIA
July 24, 1997

Q: Who won the election?

A: Although the ballots are still being counted, the election commission has confirmed Charles Taylor's victory.

Q: Was the election free and fair?

A: The election was free and transparent. We hope that all parties and the international community will accept the results and work to rebuild Liberia.

Q: What are the challenges facing the new government?

A: After seven and one-half years of civil war, the challenges facing the new government are enormous. Paramount are national reconciliation, resettlement and reintegration of refugees and displaced persons, and economic recovery. We hope Taylor's government will address these issues based on the rule of law and protection of human rights.

Q: Is the U.S. planning to renew assistance to Liberia?

A: The United States remains concerned about the welfare and future of the Liberian people. We will examine the options available to contribute to Liberia's recovery.

KENYA
July 21, 1997

Q: Has there been recent violence in Kenya?

A: We have no reports of violence in Kenya since the clashes between students and police in Nairobi last week. Police did not interfere with a memorial service Friday for victims of violence earlier in the month.

Q: What is the U.S. view of the Government's statement that it will enact reforms in this Parliamentary session (before elections) and President Moi's decision to "automatically" license rallies except under exceptional circumstances?

A: The statement by Vice President Saitoti that the ruling party, KANU, had agreed to amend 11 laws targeted for reform by the opposition is extremely encouraging. We also see recent steps toward dialogue between the Government and opposition as positive.

Most of the laws identified by the opposition for repeal or revision relate to government powers over such basic freedoms as speech and assembly. Concrete steps to amend these laws, especially if implemented by the Government in a democratic spirit, would constitute real progress towards a free and fair electoral climate. Real action on these issues would also do much to restore a climate of civil peace in Kenya.

We believe that a dialogue on reform needs to be made as inclusive as possible. The Government of Kenya needs to work with the broadest possible representation of pro-reform forces if the country is to find a lasting solution to political violence.

President Moi's announcement Wednesday that licenses for public rallies will be issued automatically, except under "exceptional circumstances," pending revision of the Public Order Act is also a positive step. More important, however, given that opposition groups have said they will not apply for licenses at all, is that the Government not respond with force to any peaceful public gathering, licensed or unlicensed.

Q: Is the U.S. concerned that the Kenya Government will make only cosmetic reforms in an effort to deflect pressure and divide the opposition (Washington Post, 7/21/97, p. A18).

A: We are encouraged by the government's stated determination to move forward as rapidly as possible on democratic reforms. Donor embassies in Nairobi, including ours, have set out explicit criteria for the democratic reforms necessary for free and fair elections. These will not be cosmetic changes.

To produce a real solution to political violence, however, the process of reform needs to be inclusive. The government needs to engage the most representative elements of the

political opposition and democratic reform movements in dialogue, even as it takes action on easily identified areas of reform.

BOSNIA
July 24, 1997

Milosevic Named FRY President?

- The July 16 action by the Serbian Parliament to name Slobodan Milosevic as the new FRY President comes as no surprise and will not change our relationship with Belgrade. It remains that Serbian authorities must do more on a variety of issues before we can make progress with our relationship.
- These issues include facilitating Bosnian Serb compliance with Dayton, cooperating with the International War Crimes Tribunal, and recognizing the rights of the Kosovar minority in Albania.
- Until we see progress in these areas, there will be little if any improvement in the relationship and Serbia will remain isolated from a prosperous and free Europe.

RS Power Struggle/Plavsic Expulsion from SDS

- We continue to monitor the political developments in Republika Srpska and the situation involving Republika Srpska President Plavsic and the Pale hardliners. The challenge to the authority of the elected president is clearly an attempt to avoid implementing Dayton.
- We are not surprised that the SDS and President Plavsic have parted ways. This does not in anyway change to powers or authorities of President Plavsic. We hope and expect this can help foster the start of a genuine democratic process in Republika Srpska and a viable opposition to the hard-line nationalist leadership of the SDS.
- We support the rights of the legitimate democratically elected authorities to exercise their appropriate powers. The OSCE and the High Representative, among other experts, have concluded that Mrs. Plavsic's actions are legitimate and authoritative. We fully accept that judgment. We note that thousands of Bosnian Serbs have taken to the streets of different cities in Republika Srpska in support of President Plavsic.
- The legitimate authorities and institutions of Republika Srpska must be respected and that Radovan Karadzic should be handed over for trial in the Hague.
- We are calling for a diffusion of tensions and demanding that President Plavsic have full access to media in Bosnia; for the Special Police to stand-down from the current crisis; and for all police to cooperate fully with the International Police Task Force in restructuring and reform. We have told the RS authorities to end their media campaign of propaganda and disinformation that is exacerbating tensions in the RS.

- The international community will not tolerate the use of force or violence as a course of action in the current situation.
- In response to the uncertainty, SFOR has increased its alertness and presence in the Banja Luka area in order to better maintain security and stability.

Force Protection/Risk of Bosnian Serb Reprisals

- Protection for our troops is always a priority. Our security posture is appropriate to the situation on the ground. We are constantly evaluating it and will adjust it if we need to. I am not going to discuss the specifics of our security precautions.
- Tensions remain in some areas of Republika Srpska. We have clearly communicated to the RS leadership our expectation that they must calm their people and get on with the business of implementing Dayton, including handing over war criminals.
- We are concerned about the a recent string of incidents of violence or harassment. There have been a number of explosions targeted at international organizations, including the OSCE, IPTF and SFOR. We are grateful no one has been seriously injured. There is no evidence that the central RS authorities are directing these attacks.
- All the parties must understand that they should not challenge SFOR. We will hold the Parties' leadership responsible for keeping their people under control.
- They should know we would deal very effectively, very swiftly with a forceful response. We'll do what we have to do to protect our troops.

Has the policy changed on SFOR ending its mission in June 1998?

- The President has repeatedly said that the SFOR mission will end in June 1998.
- The critical question is what we do between now and then. We have to focus our energy on assisting the parties with full implementation: common institutions, refugees, economics, war criminals and police training.
- What role, if any, NATO plays, in or out of Bosnia, after June 1998 has not been decided -- let alone what role we would play.

If asked whether we absolutely ruling out United States troops in Bosnia after June 1998

- SFOR's mission should end on schedule in June 1998. US political and economic engagement will continue well beyond that.

- It is too soon to speculate as to what, if any, role there may be for NATO following the completion of SFOR's mission. Our focus is on intensifying civilian implementation across the board so that parties themselves can assume greater responsibility for their own future after SFOR's mission is completed.

Is SFOR is planning to detain Karadzic or Mladic or other indictees?
(Dole/Lieberman Press Conference)

- We continue to remain deeply concerned with the presence of war criminals in Bosnia, including Karadzic. We remain concerned about his potential influence -- in violation of agreements that he not be involved in political life -- and will not be satisfied until he is brought to justice in the Hague.
- The recent action by SFOR is an important step toward justice in Bosnia, a key ingredient to long-term peace. We will not be satisfied, however, until all indicted war criminals stand trial at the Hague.
- SFOR is authorized to detain war criminals encountered in the course of its regular duties and if the tactical situation permits. SFOR has no plans to hunt war criminals.
- The recent SFOR operation conformed to what is described above. These indicted war criminals had been encountered in the course of SFOR's regular duties. Of course, any indicted war criminals would be subject to detention in such circumstances.
- It is the Parties who bear the responsibility for turning over war criminals. We continue to press the Parties to live up to these obligations.

French Objected to Second War Criminals Operation? (NYT)

- The SFOR action was conducted under existing NATO authority that had been approved by all NATO allies. Having encountered these individuals in the course of their regular duties, SFOR concluded they should detain these individuals; NATO political authorities agreed with that view.
- That was the extent of this operation and it is concluded. Of course, any indicted war criminal is subject to detention under these procedures (if encountered in the course of regular duties and the tactical situation permits). All participating SFOR forces operate under these procedures.
- All allies are committed to seeing that indicted war criminals are brought to justice. We have enjoyed close cooperation with the French on all aspects of our shared efforts in Bosnia.

(if pressed, cannot comment on possible future operations)

Amendments for Date Certain Withdrawal from Bosnia

- President's senior advisors have recommended a veto if such a measure were to remain in the Authorization bill after the House-Senate Conference. Even though we have no plans to extend the SFOR mandate past June 1998, requiring a withdrawal from Bosnia by a date certain interferes with the President's foreign policy prerogatives and is counterproductive.
- A withdrawal by a date certain -- with no regard for the situation on the ground and progress to be made on civilian implementation -- would call into question our commitment to implementation of the Dayton Accords, our reliability as a NATO ally, and our commitment to peace and stability in Europe. To our troops on the ground and those who have served in Bosnia, this legislation would question the purpose and value of their service and sacrifice.

As the President has emphasized, our focus should be on the hard work that needs to be done in the next year on civilian implementation. U.S. political and economic engagement in Bosnia will remain essential after SFOR's mission is done, and we can only succeed if the parties and the international community remain assured of U.S. leadership and commitment

Most Recent POTUS Q/A's - 7/24/97

What is your reaction to Milosevic emerging as President of the Yugoslav Federation?

I'm aware of this development. I hope he will use that position to good effect -- it's certainly long overdue. He's got to get on with meeting the obligations of Dayton, and bring the former Yugoslavia back into the community of nations.

What is your position on the standoff between Bosnian Serb President Plavsic and her party?

She's the duly elected president -- this is a challenge to that authority, and it's clearly an attempt to avoid implementing Dayton.

I hope this split will help start a genuine democratic process there -- and a viable opposition to the hard-line nationalists in the SDS party.

Have you changed your position on the June 1998 deadline?

I have repeatedly said that the SFOR mission will end in June 1998.

The critical question is what we do between now and then. We have to focus our energy on assisting the parties with full

implementation: common institutions, refugees, economics, war criminals, and police training.

What role, if any, NATO plays, in or out of Bosnia, after June 1998 has not been decided -- let alone what role we would play.

Does the growing number of hostile incidents in the region mean that our troops are in increased danger? What are you doing about that?

Protection for our troops is always a priority. Our security posture is appropriate to the situation on the ground. We are constantly evaluating it and will adjust it if we need to. I am not going to discuss the specifics of our security precautions.

CAMBODIA
July 18, 1997

Q: How does the announcement that Cambodian Foreign Minister Ung Huot is the new FUNCINPEC candidate for First Prime Minister affect U.S. policy?

A: The announcement has little affect on U.S. relations with Cambodia. We consider Norodom Ranariddh to be still the official First Prime Minister until he has been replaced through the procedures set out in the Cambodian constitution -- i.e. that the First Prime Minister is chosen democratically by the party that won the most recent (1993) election -- FUNCINPEC -- through proper procedures and free of coercion and intimidation; and that he is approved by the King. We urge the Cambodian Government to respect these procedures. We have worked with Ung Huot (PRON: OONG WHOT) in his capacity as Foreign Minister and respect him.

Q: Other countries seem to believe this appointment will "legitimize" Hun Sen. Does the U.S. agree?

A: We remain deeply concerned at both the way a democratically-elected government was destroyed by military force, and outraged by a series of executions and arrests of FUNCINPEC supporters in the aftermath of the fighting. While we are gratified that the party that won the 1993 election will retain some positions, we urge that the appropriate democratic procedures be followed. As we have said, the imposition of a dictatorship in the guise of a coalition is not an acceptable outcome, nor is it consistent with the Paris Accords.

Background: Yesterday, those members of FUNCINPEC who remain in Cambodia chose Foreign Minister Ung Huot as their candidate to replace Ranariddh as First Prime Minister in Cambodia. That may be confirmed at a FUNCINPEC party meeting later this month. There also are reports that Ranariddh is preparing to appoint a successor.

Q: What is the status of events in Cambodia?

A: The situation in Phnom Penh remains calm. Sporadic, low-level violence continues in the northwest. The majority of those Americans wishing to leave Cambodia have already done so. The U.S. Embassy will be down to its reduced staff level by July 20. The State Department task force on Cambodia has been disbanded.

[IF ASKED ONLY about US forces at Utapao] U.S. forces in Thailand brought in to assist in case of a need for emergency evacuation are being redeployed.

Q: Should Secretary Albright have met with Hun Sen and Ranariddh during her recent trip, in order to counsel against violence?

A: The Secretary made repeated efforts to arrange a meeting with the two co-Prime Ministers in conditions that were acceptably secure. We were well aware of the deteriorating security situation in Phnom Penh. In the end, Ranariddh and Hun Sen refused to meet with her, indicating that they both were more focused on their internal struggle than on accepting advice from the international community.

Q: Will U.S. continue to provide economic aid to the Hun Sen government?

A: We have suspended most of our aid programs for 30 days while we conduct an intensive review of all our programs. Some basic human needs programs are still being funded. We are consulting with other donors about their programs of assistance. At the end of the 30 days (August 9), depending on the circumstances at that time, we would anticipate resumption of those programs that provide humanitarian, people-to-people support. We do not intend to resume a full aid program until our five principles are met (end to fighting that overturned democracy; FUNCINPEC free to operate; free and fair elections in 1998; maintain Paris Accords; no Khmer Rouge in the government).

Q: What about reports of executions and illegal arrests of opposition members?

A: Although many of these reports are vague, we nonetheless are very concerned about this, and have made clear to senior Cambodian leaders that this is unacceptable. We are also concerned about reports of intimidation of Cambodians who have been working to build a civil society, labor organizers and journalists.

Q: Will you support Ranariddh in mounting an armed opposition the Cambodian government?

A: Officially, we still recognize Ranariddh as First Prime Minister, and treated him as such in meetings with senior State Department officials last week. We continue to urge both sides to reconcile differences peacefully, avoid violence, maintain the Paris Accords, and continue plans for democratic elections in 1998. We also remain opposed to any role for the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia's government.

Most Recent POTUS Q/A's

Are you stopping aid to Cambodia until there are new supervised elections?

- *We're suspending our aid programs while we conduct an intensive review. We're talking to other donors about their programs.*

- Though it depends on circumstances when the review is finished, we expect to resume those programs that provide humanitarian, people-to-people support for basic human needs.

Q: Is the Administration now endorsing the addition of three new permanent members to the UNSC?

A: The UNSC currently has 15 members -- 5 permanent with vetoes (U.S., UK, France, Russia, China) and 10 nonpermanent that rotate every two years. We continue to work toward an expanded council, including permanent seats for Germany and Japan, up to a maximum of 20-21 members. Of those 20-21 members, we would be willing to accept 3 permanent seats -- one from Asia, one from Africa, and one from Latin America. Ambassador Richardson briefed a number of countries on our position yesterday. We believe that the regions themselves should decide how those seats should be filled, possibly on a rotating basis. We expect that part of process, which is still very much under discussion, will not be completed until next year.

Q: What about granting the veto to new members or limiting the veto for existing permanent members?

A: There will be no infringement on veto rights for existing permanent members. We have not yet taken a position on extending any veto rights for new permanent members.

Q: UNGA President Razali and others say that limiting the expansion to only 20-21 members is unrealistic, and that the U.S. should agree to expand to 24 or 26 or more. Why won't we accept these proposals?

A: Any more than 20-21 members on the UNSC would seriously hamper its efficiency and effectiveness. We cannot and will not support expansion beyond 20-21.

Q: Annan's reforms don't meet all of the benchmark conditions laid out by Congress for payment of U.S. arrears. Does this mean the arrears deal is dead?

A: The package announced by Annan does make progress toward some of the benchmarks. We have known all along, however, that many of the benchmarks require member state action beyond the Secretary General's purview. We will be working with our allies and other member states in coming months to ensure that the other benchmark conditions are met.

Q: Some on the Hill have argued that this package doesn't go far enough and proves that the U.S. must enforce discipline on the UN. Do you agree?

A: The UN is made up of 185 member states. We can best advance our interests in the UN by working with other member states. Strict unilateralism will only serve to alienate us from our allies and others whose support is necessary to fully reform the UN.

Q: Does this package represent the status quo as some on the Hill have argued?

A: Not at all. If implemented, the Secretary General's proposals should ensure significant change at the UN. While we have yet to review all the details of the proposals, we support the emphasis on improving management, reducing overhead and total costs, and sharpening the focus of the UN on its core missions. We were heartened to see the positive editorials in the New York Times and Washington Post that acknowledged the importance of these reforms.

Q: What do you think about the proposal for a new revolving credit fund?

A: The UN has experienced significant cash flow problems and needs to find a mechanism to overcome them, but this proposal needs to be carefully examined.

Q: What do you think of proposals to raise the profile of UN efforts in the areas of disarmament and proliferation as well as counternarcotics and international crime?

A: We support the UN's move to make itself more relevant by addressing concerns that we consider of utmost importance.

Q: What is the Administration's reaction to Senate passage of the U.N. arrears bill?

A: There is much in the bill that the Administration supports. The agreement to pay more than \$800 million in U.S. arrears to the UN is a major step forward.

Appreciate good-faith efforts that Helms, Biden, and others made on this issue.

The bill contains provisions that cause us concern. As the legislative process moves ahead we will work with Congress on them.

Q: The United States' summit partners have been critical of the arrears package. Comment?

A: I believe that overall the package is an important step in the right direction.

We know that persuading other UN member states to embrace these reforms will be a challenge for U.S. diplomacy.

Are confident the UN members will agree that a reformed UN will be stronger, more effective, and more relevant, and they will support this initiative.

We believe UN needs to embrace extensive reforms if it is to remain relevant in meeting the challenges of the next century – many of which we are addressing here in Denver.

Most Recent POTUS Q/A's - 7/21/97

What is your reaction to Kofi Annan's new reform proposals for the UN?

- We are still reviewing the full set of proposals -- so I don't want to go into any specifics. I want to emphasize, though, that we fully support the overall process, and regard Secretary General Annan's initiatives as a valuable contribution to that process.

The U.S. has been criticized for being the bully on the block on this issue -- how do you respond to that?

- We are not alone in calling for reform -- I think it's fair to say that all of our UN partners know that reform needs to happen to ensure that we have the best, most efficient United Nations we can.

KOREA
July 22 1997

Q: Did the North Koreans use the Nunn-Laney visit to send a message to the U.S. or South Korean governments? How would you characterized their discussions?

A: Following their trip to North Korea, Sen Nunn and Ambassador Laney provided both the U.S. and South Korean governments a brief overview of their discussions and observations. As their press statement released in Seoul indicates, they had frank and useful discussions with both Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Korean Peoples Army officials about promoting peace and stability on the Korean peninsula. We note that Sen Nunn and Ambassador Laney emphasized the value of four party talks and the need for the North to undertake economic and agricultural reforms to solve its long-term difficulties. We look forward to a more complete report of their discussions after they return to the United States.

Q: What is your reaction to July 15 incident in the DMZ? Will it have an effect on the August 5 four party preparatory talks in New York?

A: North Korea bears full responsibility for the incident in the DMZ. The United Nations Command has filed a complaint with the North Koreans at Panmunjom. The incident underscores the importance of the four party process which will get underway August 5.

Q: Can you confirm that former Senator Nunn and former Ambassador Laney will visit North Korea?

A: Yes, Former Senator Sam Nunn and former American Ambassador to South Korea James Laney plan to pay a private visit to North Korea 20-22 July and South Korea 22-24 July to discuss Korean Peninsula issues.

The trip is private, and is occurring at the invitation of North Korea. U.S. officials have briefed Senator Nunn and Ambassador Laney on Korean peninsula issues. We of course look forward to hearing their impressions on their return.

Q: What is your reaction to recent statements by international groups that the famine in North Korea is worsening?

A: The food shortages in North Korea inflict a horrible cost on the North Korean people who already are suffering from impoverishment. The international community has responded generously to calls for emergency humanitarian assistance, and the United States has contributed some \$50 million to the UN World Food Program appeals.

We are participating in the current WFP food appeal through the contribution of 100,000 tons of food. But the long term answer is not short-term food aid; the North's prospects

for agricultural production sufficient to feed itself will only improve through structural economic and agricultural reform. That reform can be greatly assisted through the four party peace talks, which we hope to launch in August.

U.S./ROK/DPRK Talks

Q: The United States and North Korea met in New York July 2 for bilateral talks. What was the substance of the discussions and were there any results?

A: The United States and North Korea met as part of our on-going effort to address issues of concern to both sides, as called for in the Agreed Framework. The talks were not related to the 30 June trilateral meeting between the United States, South Korea and North Korea that discussed four-party peace talks issues. The two sides discussed a wide range of issues, from missile talks and MIA concerns to the food situation in North Korea. The talks were informational in nature and will continue at the working level in the future.

Q: What is the significance of the preparatory talks that were announced in New York?

A: The agreement by North Korea to participate in preparatory talks 5 August in New York is the first real step toward realizing President Clinton and President Kim's offer of peace talks that will lead to a permanent peace on the Korean peninsula. China will join the preparatory talks during which we will establish the venue, timing, procedures and agenda for the plenary session of the four party peace talks.

Q: How long will the preparatory talks last and when do you anticipate the start of the plenary session of the four party talks?

A: We do not have a specific time limit on the preparatory talks. We anticipate each of the four nations involved will come to the talks prepared to work toward the earliest date for the start of the plenary session.

If Asked:

Q: What is China's reaction to the announcement by the United States, South Korea and North Korea that four-party preparatory talks involving China will start August 5, in New York? Has China agreed to participate?

A: China previously endorsed the four-party process and recently has issued a statement welcoming the agreement reached June 30. In its statement China agrees to participate in the four-party talks and continue to cooperate and play a constructive role in the process of establishing a peace mechanism for the Korean peninsula. We welcome China's positive statement and look forward to the contribution it will make in the talks.

Q: Has the U.S. interviewed the North Korean defector Hwang? What is your assessment of his information?

A: The U.S. routinely is given access to North Korean defectors by the South Korean government. Trained U.S. intelligence professionals conduct interviews of the defectors. In the case of Hwang, we recently sent a team to Seoul to interview him. We are in the process of evaluating the information Hwang has provided. It would be inappropriate to comment on the substance of Hwang's comments before that evaluation is complete.

Most Recent POTUS Q/A's - 7/21/97

What's your reaction to the exchange of fire incident on the DMZ?

- First, though no US troops were directly involved, our forces in the DMZ are always in a very high state of readiness.
- But also, this was a clear threat to the security of the region and proves once again how dangerous the Korean Peninsula is, and how important the success of the Four-Party talks will be to arriving at a lasting peace there.

Why are you sending more aid to North Korea?

- We've announced that we will donate another 100,000 tons of food through the World Food Program, adding to the \$50 million we have already contributed.
- The food shortages inflict horrible suffering on the North Korean people.

HOTUNG MEETING

July 15, 1997

Q: Did NSA Berger meet in the fall of 1995 with a UK citizen and Hong Kong resident named Eric Hotung? Was it in exchange for a campaign contribution? Why was the meeting scheduled? What was discussed?

A: Eric Hotung is active in Hong Kong, having authored op-eds and other commentary on developments in Asia. He has had meetings with senior working level U.S. officials during previous visits to the U.S. They have found him to be an individual with some interesting ideas about political developments and prospects in the region.

Sandy Berger's calendar indicates that he had a five-minute meeting with Mr. Hotung on October 4, 1995. [If asked: The meeting was arranged at the request of the White House Political Office, according to Mr. Berger's calendar.]

Mr. Berger has no recollection of the meeting or what may have been discussed at the meeting.

There was nothing improper or inappropriate about such a meeting.

THOMPSON HEARINGS

July 24, 1997

Q: What about Senator Thompson's allegation that White House officials not only knew about possible PRC involvement in campaign funding from an FBI briefing of NSC officials, but knew or should have known from other sources or indicators as well?

A: The issue raised by Senator Thompson concerning the FBI briefing of two NSC officials about China's alleged attempt to fund U.S. political campaigns has already been thoroughly reviewed.

The contemporaneous notes of one of the NSC participants, a career FBI special agent, clearly reflect that the NSC officials were asked not to disseminate this material. The decision not to disseminate, however, was made without reference to the FBI request. Hindsight would have obviously yielded a different decision.

As to the Senator's remarks that the White House had independent access by other means to the FBI-briefed allegations of possible illegal activity, we can find nothing to substantiate his assertion.

Q: What about the Senator's assertion that the PRC has undertaken efforts to influence U.S. elections in violation of U.S. law?

A: As the President said before it would be a very serious matter for the United States if any country were to attempt to funnel funds to one of our political parties for any reason. The Vice President and the Secretary of State brought this issue to the specific attention of the government of China during their visits this spring.

The Department of Justice has an ongoing investigation on these issues; I understand they have drawn no conclusions.

Q: Did Huang meet with Sandy Kristoff in September '94 on APEC?

A: At the time, Sandy Kristoff was working for the NEC on APEC issues. In the fall of '94, in preparation for the Jakarta APEC Leaders Meeting, Ms. Kristoff's office handled the logistical arrangements for a number of inter-agency meetings to prepare for the President's trip to Jakarta. These meetings were sometimes chaired by Ms. Kristoff, sometimes by others, e.g. those responsible for scheduling. It is likely that Mr. Huang was cleared into the White House under Ms. Kristoff's name for one of these meetings.

Ms. Kristoff has no recollection of ever having met with Mr. Huang; he played no role in the policy issues that she worked on.

Most Recent POTUS Q/A's - 7/21/97

What is your reaction to the Washington Post article claiming that your Administration is interpreting the information on Chinese lobbying efforts differently than members of the Senate of both parties?

We have received the relevant briefings. We believe there's no basis for a change in our policy toward China, which is one of engagement.

What about Senator Thompson's assertion that the PRC has undertaken efforts to influence U.S. elections in violation of U.S. law -- and Senator Lieberman's statement in support of that assertion with respect to Congressional elections?

I am not going to comment beyond what we've said already -- as you know, there is an ongoing investigation.

KUWAIT
July 16, 1997

Q: What can you tell us about the Administration's involvement in the Kuwaiti artillery deal?

A: Yes, the Vice President wrote a letter recommending our equipment.

Yes, we are encouraging the Kuwaitis to buy from us, because we believe we have the best equipment to offer.

LATIN AMERICA

July 10, 1997

If asked about Washington Times story saying we are close to lifting our Latin America arms embargo:

- Our policy remains under review.
- No decisions have been made.

Latin American arms transfer policy

Q: Has the President decided to permit the sale of advanced fighter aircraft to Chile?

A: The President has decided to authorize the state department to issue marketing licenses in order to allow companies who wish to compete for Chile's prospective purchase of advanced fighter aircraft to participate in the process. A decision has not yet been made, however, on whether to permit such sales to Chile.

Q: Does this mean the policy on arms transfers to Latin America is still under review?

A: Yes. In light of the changes underway in Latin America, the administration has been taking a very careful look at its policy on advanced arms transfers to Latin America and whether it should move to a case-by-case review of requests to transfer advanced arms to Latin America. That policy remains under review. However, Chile's process for deciding which fighter aircraft to purchase has already begun. In order not to prejudice U.S. companies from competing for the sale while the policy review continues, the president decided to authorize companies to at least participate in the current technical stage of the bidding process.

Q: What were the president's reasons for this decision and how does it fit in the administration's overall policy toward Latin America?

A: For many years, the United States has exercised a policy of restraint related to arms transfers to Latin America, particularly of advanced weapons systems. This policy of restraint was imposed at a time when military governments dominated Latin America and when there was considerable tension between some Latin American states. The policy reflected U.S. desire to reduce conflict and avoid an arms race in the region.

Now democracy is taking hold in all but one country in the hemisphere, a remarkable achievement, and economic integration and political cooperation are making great advances. As a result, tensions have diminished and the risk of inter-state conflict among neighbors is lower than it has been in decades.

Our main goals in Latin America are to promote and strengthen these democracies, to support the economic and social development of the hemisphere's citizens, to encourage growth, expand trade and assure access for American exports, and to cooperate on counternarcotics and other fields. We are also committed to promoting restraint in arms purchases, confidence-building and transparency measures among countries in the region.

Q: When will the president make a decision on whether US companies can actually sell fighter aircraft to Chile?

A: The administration will continue reviewing the matter and will ultimately make a decision based on several factors, including the sale's impact on regional stability and restraint and consolidation of democracy.

SUPERCOMPUTERS

July 1, 1997

Q: The Administration has just published a list of entities in Russia, China, India, Pakistan, and Israel that require a license for U.S. exports because of potential involvement in nuclear weapons-related activities. Isn't this list too little, too late?

A: Of course not. We have a responsibility to ensure that U.S. technology does not assist foreign nuclear weapons programs. Even where proliferation has already taken place, limiting the flow of technology can limit further development. At the same time, we recognize that the growth and spread of high technology, such as computers, make absolute controls impossible. The list we published is designed to inform U.S. exporters of particular end-users of concern, thereby facilitating other legitimate commercial transactions with these countries.

Q: Why does the Administration oppose Congressional efforts to tighten computer export controls?

A: The President's 1995 decision to streamline computer export controls was based on an assessment of technological trends and national security concerns. In particular, we focused controls on high powered computers to end users of concern. Overall, this new system has worked well. It has facilitated U.S. computer exports for peaceful purposes, while blocking exports to proliferation programs.

Of course, no export control system is perfect. We are already responding to the small number of problems that have been detected. Legal investigations are underway. We have raised the issue with foreign governments at very senior levels. We are taking administrative measures to tighten controls, such as the recently published list of entities.

Additional controls as proposed by some in Congress would not be helpful in maintaining the balance in our current policy between national security interests and economic competitiveness.

U.S. High Performance Computers/China

Q: Is it true that the U.S. is investigating the transfer of a U.S. supercomputer to a Chinese military research and development facility?

A: Yes. This matter is being investigated by the Commerce Department, and we have already raised our concerns with the Chinese government. Obviously, I can't go into the details, but we are taking the appropriate steps to deal with this situation.

Q: What has the Administration determined about the reported shipments of 46 "supercomputers" to China?

The Administration revised export controls on computers in early 1996, consistent with our national security and nonproliferation concerns. Systems between 2,000 and 7,000 MTOPS (Millions of Theoretical Operations per Second) may be exported to civil end-users/uses in countries like China without prior permission.

We require companies to keep specific records of all such exports, which we are reviewing. If problems are identified with any of these shipments, we have the legal and administrative means to address them and I can assure you we will use that authority.

Q: Can you comment on the report that a Chinese government weapons development facility has acquired a U.S. supercomputer?

The matter is being investigated by the Department of Commerce. Because there is an active investigation, however, further comment at this time would be inappropriate.

Q: What are the export controls on computers destined for China?

In January 1996, the Administration implemented the following computer export policy to, among other countries, China:

Computers at any level require an export license when the exporter knows, or has reason to know, that the shipment is being made to a facility engaged in the design, development and production of weapons of mass destruction.

Computers up to 2000 MTOPS may be sold to all other end-users in China, including military end-users, without a license.

Computers up to 7000 MTOPS may be sold to strictly civilian end-users for civilian uses, without a license.

Computers above 7000 MTOPS, for all end-users/end-uses, require a license.

Q: Isn't it difficult for a company to know in every case whether an end-user is civilian, or military, or engaged in proliferation activities?

It can be. That is why U.S. exporters have been clearly instructed to contact the Commerce Department when they are uncertain about an end-user.

Q: Doesn't this shipment show that the Administration's computer decision has allowed a serious breach to our national security - namely that a U.S. supercomputer is now helping the Chinese government build weapons?

The Administration's computer policy recognizes the growing worldwide availability of high performance computers. It also recognizes that U.S.-origin computers should not be shipped to certain end users without explicit U.S. authorization.

This was, and is, a reasonable balance to our security and economic interests that was carefully considered and supported by all of the national security agencies involved in the export policy development process, including Defense, State, Commerce and Energy.

An unauthorized shipment of a U.S.-origin computers is a matter for our enforcement officials, and as I noted, an investigation into this matter has been initiated.

Q: Why has the United States sold supercomputers to China to aid in the development of their nuclear weapons program?

The Administration announced in 1995 that it would revise its controls on supercomputers, recognizing that they were becoming more powerful and increasingly available worldwide.

But in liberalizing these controls, the Administration made special provision for licensing supercomputers to China--as well as other countries of proliferation concern--so as to ensure against sales for military end uses.

As a result, we require licenses for military-related computer sales to China for computer in the 2,000-7,000 MTOPS (millions of theoretical operations per second) range.

We also seek to ensure that supercomputers are not diverted to military uses through continuous Commerce review.

We continue to believe that our policy appropriately takes into account that significant changes in computer technology while protecting our non-proliferation goals.

With respect to the development of nuclear weapons, the Chinese have joined the other nuclear powers in a moratorium on nuclear testing. We believe it would be very difficult through computer modeling to acquire confidence in the redesign of nuclear weapons without testing.

Most Recent POTUS Q/A's - 7/11/97

Your administration has announced it will tighten the rules on sales of supercomputers to entities that secretly produce nuclear weapons. Isn't this too little, too late?

- *Of course not. We have to make sure that U.S. technology doesn't help foreign nuclear weapons programs. Even when*

proliferation has already taken place, limiting the flow of technology can limit further development.

- At the same time, the growth and spread of high technology, such as computers, make absolute controls impossible. The list we published is designed to let U.S. exporters know about the particular "end-users" that concern us without interfering with our legitimate commercial transactions with these countries.

Why does your administration oppose amendments to the Defense Authorization bill that would legislate these kinds of export controls?

- My 1995 decision to streamline computer export controls was based on an assessment of technological trends and national security concerns. Overall, the new system has worked well. It has helped increase U.S. computer exports for peaceful purposes, while blocking exports to proliferation programs.
- Additional controls as proposed by some in Congress are unnecessary and could upset the balance in our current policy, which makes sure we are defending both our national security interests and economic competitiveness.

SWISS GUARD
July 22, 1997

Background: In late 1996 or early 1997, Chirstopher Meili, a guard at the Union Bank of Switzerland prevented the shredding of documents related to the Holocaust, in contravention of regulations related to the Swiss investigation into bank activities of that era. He was subsequently fired -- and filed suit against the bank president. Congress has now passed a private bill granting him permanent residence status(not citizenship).

Q: When will the President take action on the bill?

A: The President has until July 30 to sign. We received last Friday. Don't know when the President will sign.

--If asked: Know of no reason why President would veto this bill.

June 25, 1997

Q: Where are we more than a year after the Khobar bombing?

About a year ago a terrorist bomb exploded in front of Khobar Towers in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, killing 19 Americans. We share the special grief this day brings to the families of the airmen who died a year ago.

Since then, we have made every possible effort to bring those responsible to justice, a process that is still ongoing. As we have pursued this investigation, we have received cooperation from the Saudi authorities. We have enhanced our military security by moving our facilities in Saudi Arabia, with substantial Saudi cooperation and funding.

We will continue to give this investigation top priority. We have reached no conclusion regarding responsibility for Khobar. Just as we have in other terrorist cases, we will take all the time necessary to complete a thorough investigation. Because this is an ongoing criminal investigation, I cannot comment on the details of our current activities.

Q: Many reports are pointing the finger at Iran. Is this where your investigation is leading? If Iran or those under Iranian influence prove responsible will we react militarily?

As this is an ongoing criminal matter, I cannot comment on our investigations. Nor will I comment on what action we may or may not take in a hypothetical situation.

(Taken from Ken Bacon's DoD Briefing on July 22, 1997)

Q: Has Secretary Cohen had a chance to read the report? And if so, is he going to announce his decision this week or next week?

A: Probably next week, towards the end of the week, I would guess. And yes, he has read it and he continues to review it and to work on it. I would hope there will be a decision next week.

Q: One year later, not one commanding officer has been court-martialed or even fired for their negligence in allowing 19 of those under their command to be killed. Where is the accountability?

These matters are still under review by the Secretary of Defense, who said just two weeks ago that he is in the process of going through the Downing report, the General Record report and the IG report. I refer any further questions to the Defense Department.

Q: Will U.S. forces in the region be on increased alert during the anniversary period?

USCENTCOM continues to monitor and enhance force protection measures to minimize potential risk to U.S. forces in the region.

Q: What is status of Sayegh?

Mr. Sayegh was deported from Canada to the U.S. He is in custody. I cannot comment any further.

Q: Was Sayegh working for Iran? What about reports that he was in Iran at the time of the bombing?

We will not comment on an ongoing investigation.

Q: Can you confirm that Sayegh is linked to Khobar? Did you make a deal for his extradition?

A: The Canadian government decided to deport Sayegh to the U.S. The deportation was based on the fact that the U.S. was the last country he had been in prior to entering Canada.

He has arrived in the U.S. and been taken into custody. I cannot comment further on this matter.

HAITI
July 15, 1997

Q: Does the U.S. support extension of the UN mission in Haiti?

A: In a November 1996 letter to the UN Secretary General, Haiti's President Preval formally requested a continued international presence in Haiti for up to one year. In May, he publicly stated that that full 12 month period would be required before the Haitian National Police would be able independently to ensure a secure and stable environment. Based on that request, our assessment of the security situation in Haiti, and our judgment of the pace of progress being made by the Haitian police, we support a continued UN mission in Haiti for an additional four-month period.

LANDMINES
July 24, 1997

Q: What happened at the July 16 meeting on landmines?

A: In January, when the President announced that the U.S. would pursue a ban on anti-personnel landmines through the Conference on Disarmament, he also decided that we would assess our progress after the second part of the CD session had ended on June 28.

We are now in the process of taking stock. At the July 16 meeting senior officials exchanged views on the state of play with respect to negotiating a ban on anti-personnel landmines and prospects for achieving our goal of a comprehensive, global ban on anti-personnel landmines.

No conclusions or decisions have been reached.

The Administration will continue to review the issue.

Leahy Legislation

Q: Senator Leahy has announced that he is introducing legislation further curbing U.S. use of anti-personnel landmines. What is the Administration's position on this new legislation?

A: The President has committed the United States to aggressively pursue an international agreement to ban use, stockpiling, production and transfer of APL, with a view to completing the negotiation as soon as possible.

We are pursuing that goal in the Conference on Disarmament (CD) in Geneva, working to establish a negotiating mandate as soon as possible.

The CD offers the most practical alternative for achieving a global ban. Its membership is broad and geographically representative. It has a proven track record. The CD includes most of the countries which are historically the world's landmines producers. It is precisely these countries which need to be part of a ban to ensure the ban will be effective.

The proposed legislation would prohibit funding for new U.S. deployment of anti-personnel landmines (APL) beginning January 1, 2000.

This would be inconsistent with U.S. APL policy, which seeks a global agreement to ban APL and reserves the option for the U.S. to use self-destructing/self-deactivating APL in military hostilities to safeguard American lives and hasten the end of fighting.

The United States views the security situation on the Korean Peninsula as a unique case and in the negotiation of a global APL ban will protect our right to use APL there until alternatives become available or the risk of aggression has been removed.

We note that the legislation does take into consideration a key element of U.S. APL policy in allowing for the possibility of an exception for U.S. deployment of APL on the Korean Peninsula, provided the President submits an annual report to Congress certifying that new deployments are "indispensable to the defense" of South Korea.

However, this recognition of our security requirement in Korea does not outweigh the disadvantages of the proposed legislation, especially in undermining our strategy of seeking negotiated global ban rather than a unilateral measure.

Q: How significant is the decision yesterday at the Conference on Disarmament?

On June 26 in Geneva the 61 nations of the Conference on Disarmament agreed to set up a special coordinator on anti-personnel landmines. Ambassador Campbell of Australia will serve in this role.

The special coordinator will act as a facilitator to develop a mandate for next steps in negotiations on anti-personnel landmines.

This agreement is an important step forward toward the establishment of negotiations on anti-personnel landmines in the CD.

We look forward to early progress in the next CD session beginning on July 28.

Q: What is your position on the Canadian-led "Ottawa Process"?

A: We welcome the Ottawa Process as providing important momentum toward the common goal of a ban on anti-personnel landmines.

During the visit here of Prime Minister Chretien, this issue was discussed. We and the Canadians agreed to meet to see if we could "narrow our differences."

Pursuant to this agreement, experts met in Ottawa in mid-June. These meetings were a good first step.

A U.S. delegation was present as observers at this week's "Ottawa Process" conference in Brussels. Negotiations on the Ottawa Process treaty text will begin in Oslo in September.

Between now and September we will continue our close consultations with the Canadians and others.

No decision has been made on whether we will participate in the Oslo meeting.

Q: Is there a policy review underway?

A: Now that the first six months of this year's CD session has concluded we are taking stock of our progress there. We are also taking stock of progress in the Ottawa Process.

We want to ensure we remain on the most effective path for achieving the goal the President set forth last year -- achieving a comprehensive ban on anti-personnel landmines that is worldwide.

Q: When will this "stock-taking" exercise be concluded?

A: This assessment will be conducted over the course of the summer.

Most Recent POTUS Q/A's - 7/24/97

Your landmine policy has been under review -- has it changed?

In January, when I first announced that we would pursue a ban through the Geneva Conference on Disarmament process, I also said we would take stock of our progress at the end of June -- when the second session in Geneva ended.

We are now in the process of doing that -- so I have my senior people looking at the state of play and at the prospects for our reaching our goal of a comprehensive, global ban.

We've not yet come to any conclusions -- we are continuing to review the issue.