

FOIA MARKER

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Briefing 3/17/93

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March 17, 1993

TALKING POINTS ON HEALTH CARE

Price Controls:

- The President has always said that we must move immediately to control the skyrocketing health care costs which threaten the security of American families.
- He believes that bold action is necessary to bring down the skyrocketing health costs that strangle the American economy and add to our growing deficit every day.
- Any list of options would obviously include ways to control costs in the short-term, but the specifics have not yet been decided.
- We're talking about a fundamental overhaul of our health-care system, and any new plan cannot be instituted overnight. There will clearly have to be some kind of transition in order to ensure that Americans can get quality care at an affordable price.

Oregon waiver:

- We expect a decision on Friday.
- Federal and state officials have been meeting with groups concerned about the issue.
- As a former Governor, the President is sensitive to the issue of state flexibility. (is this too much predicting the outcome?)

Taxing "luxury" benefits:

- There are many options under consideration for controlling costs and providing security to American families.
- However, the President will avoid using a broad-based middle-class tax to pay for health care. As Mrs. Clinton said in a recent AP interview, "...I do believe that it is unfair to come up with any solution that imposes more burden on people who have paid the price during the '80s...(T)he President is intent on avoiding that."

WHITE HOUSE PRESS GUIDANCE -- 11:30 AM
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17, 1993

Bosnia

Q: What is the status of the peace talks?

A: -- We expect the talks will resume today or tomorrow with representatives of all parties participating.

-- As negotiations are ongoing, I will not get into the details of the discussions.

Q: Is it true there are U.S. soldiers with General Morillon in the besieged town of Srebrenica?

A: -- Yes. Two U.S. servicemen are in Srebrenica (sreh'-breh-bit-sah); they are members of the Headquarters/element of the UNPROFOR which General Morillon heads.

Q: The Los Angeles Times cited a UN report saying that Bosnian Serb planes bombed Srebrenica in violation of the no-fly zone. How are you planning to respond? What about a UNSC resolution to enforce the zone?

A: -- We are outraged by this attack on non-combatants, and strongly urge the Serbs to halt such actions.

-- We are consulting with the UNSC about the best method to approach this problem.

Q: What is that status of the air drops?

A: -- Last night, March 16, marked the 17th air drop mission of Operation Provide Promise.

-- We continue to receive reports that air dropped supplies are reaching the intended recipients.

11:14 202 847 0998 EAP/P --- WHITE HOUSE P.O. 001/002
EAP PRESS GUIDANCE
March 17, 1993

KOREA: NORTH KOREA AND THE NPT

Q: Does the USG plan to increase the number of its troops on the Korean peninsula -- either by leaving behind some of the Team Spirit exercise participants or calling up additional forces?

A: -- NO. WE HAVE NO PLANS TO LEAVE BEHIND EITHER TROOPS OR EQUIPMENT THAT WERE PART OF TEAM SPIRIT, NOR DO WE HAVE PLANS TO CALL UP ANY ADDITIONAL FORCES.

-- CONTRARY TO PRESS REPORTS, WE HAVE RECEIVED NO REQUEST FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH KOREA IN THIS REGARD.

Q: Can you give us an update on North Korean military activities? Anything unusual?

A: -- NORTH KOREA'S MILITARY ACTIVITY REMAINS GENERALLY CONSISTENT WITH ITS NORMAL RESPONSE TO TEAM SPIRIT AND WITH ITS REGULARLY SCHEDULED WINTER TRAINING.

Q: Has there been another meeting in Beijing between USG and North Korean diplomats? Any details?

A: -- THE U.S. AND DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA POLITICAL COUNSELORS MET IN BEIJING ON MARCH 17, FOR THE 30th TIME. AS YOU KNOW, WE DO NOT DISCUSS THE DETAILS OF THESE EXCHANGES.

- 2 -

Q: What course is the USG following besides meetings at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)? What happens next?

A: -- WHAT HAPPENS NEXT DEPENDS ON THE DECISIONS OF THE IAEA AND POSSIBLY THE U.N. SECURITY COUNCIL. WE WILL CONTINUE TO WORK WITH THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO CONVINCE NORTH KOREA TO REVERSE ITS DECISION TO WITHDRAW FROM THE NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY.

Q: How would you characterize the reactions of other governments to North Korea's announced intention to withdraw from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)?

A: -- WHILE I WOULD LEAVE IT TO INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES TO SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES, COUNTRIES AROUND THE WORLD HAVE DEPLORED THE NORTH KOREAN DECISION TO WITHDRAW FROM THE NPT -- A DECISION THAT HAS FURTHER ISOLATED IT FROM THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY.

No. 079-M

MEMORANDUM FOR CORRESPONDENTS

March 16, 1993

Secretary of Defense Les Aspin was hospitalized Tuesday evening after keeping a previously scheduled appointment with his internist. He had complained of a cough for two days. Examination suggested he apparently suffers from a recurrence of a bronchial condition. His internist, in consultation with his cardiologist, recommended he be hospitalized to determine the status of the apparent infection and, while there, to have a pacemaker implanted, as previously recommended to treat an existing heart condition known as hypertrophic cardiomyopathy. The procedure could take place as early as Wednesday.

- 30 -

Somalia

Q: Are the peace talks in jeopardy now that Aideed has pulled out?

A: -- We understand that Mr. Aideed has left the talks only temporarily.

-- We believe it is in the best interests of all parties to remain in these discussions, and we fully believe that the talks will lead to improvement in the political and security environment in Somalia.

Iran -- Terrorism

Q: Do you have anything on the reported link between Iran and the assassination in Rome of an Iranian opposition leader yesterday?

A: -- We have no independent information on this murder. We would refer you to the government of Italy.

-- There is a long-established pattern of murders of Iranian dissidents outside of Iran, many of which have been traced directly to agents of the Government of Iran.

Q: What about the press reports today citing U.S. terrorist experts as saying the most aggressive terrorist threat comes from Iranian-sponsored groups?

A: -- We have long said that Iran sponsorship of global terrorism is a major concern of the United States.

India Bombing

Q: Do you have any comment on the latest bombings in India?

A: -- We understand the Government of India is still investigating this tragedy. It would be premature to speculate on responsibility for the incident in Calcutta yesterday or its relationship to Friday's bombings in Bombay.

Q: (IF ASKED) Has the USG expressed its condolences to the Indian government?

A: -- Yes, President Clinton has already written to Prime Minister Rao to express our condemnation of the bombings in Bombay.

-- In addition, our Embassy in New Delhi has expressed its condolences.

Q: What is your reaction to some Indian government statements alleging a possible foreign hand in the bombings? Especially a Pakistani role?

A: -- We believe it is premature and unproductive to speculate on responsibility for these incidents while the Indian government investigation is still underway.

-- We are assisting their investigation and will await its outcome.

-- While some Indian authorities have speculated about an outside role, the Indian government has not reached any conclusion or determination as to who is responsible.

Haiti

Q: Do you have any information about the release of the Haitian refugee who was arrested?

A: -- Yes. He was released by Haitian authorities yesterday (Tuesday). He is now in the United States.

Q: Doesn't this case illustrate the weakness of your in-country processing policy?

A: -- No. The resolution of this case to our satisfaction reflects our commitment to aiding those who seek refugee status. Our expanded in-country processing program remains the most effective way of obtaining and examining such requests.

El Salvador: Truth Commission

Q: Any reaction to the Truth Commission Report on El Salvador?

A: -- We are studying the Truth Commission report.

-- We salute the Truth Commission for its important work, which seeks to report the truth in order to allow El Salvador to move forward toward national reconciliation and democratic development.

-- The U.S. government supported the Truth Commission's work with a contribution of \$1 million, access to thousands of government documents, and interviews with more than thirty active duty and retired U.S. government officials.

Q: Does the Report prove that the Reagan/Bush Administrations were lying?

A: -- We do not want to put previous Administrations on trial. However, I would like to offer praise to the many journalists, human rights experts, and Members of Congress and their staffs, whose courage and hard investigative work did accurately report on many crimes committed in El Salvador during those years.

Q: What's the status of U.S. aid to El Salvador?

A: -- Our fiscal year 1993 assistance to El Salvador totals \$235 million: \$110 million in economic support funds; \$55 million in development aid; \$30 million in PL-480 food aid; and \$40 million in non-lethal military aid.

Is Michael Gordon right in this morning's New York Times that the U.S. is urging NATO to prepare a large military force, including up to 20,000 Americans, to impose or implement a Bosnian peace settlement?

--As President Clinton made clear in his joint press conference with French President Mitterrand Tuesday, the U.S. has no intention of sending troops to impose a settlement in Bosnia.

--As Secretary Christopher said when he announced our basic policy toward Bosnia on February 10, "if all parties to the conflict agree to a settlement containing enforcement provisions the United States would be prepared to join with the United Nations, NATO, and others in implementing and enforcing it, including possible U.S. military participation."

--Contingency planning has just begun on what might be required to implement a Bosnian settlement agreed to by all the parties. The work is necessarily preliminary; the requirements for implementation will depend in part on the exact nature of a settlement. Several hypothesis need to be considered.

--I will not comment further on internal contingency planning.

Is France blocking NATO contingency planning on this issue?

--Preliminary planning has begun in NATO, with French participation. The issue of how to make best use of NATO's unique assets, while accommodating possible non-NATO participants such as Russia as well as France's special position vis-a-vis NATO's integrated military command, will need to be resolved before plans are complete. But that is not impeding the work that needs to be done now.

Bosnia's Ambassador to the United Nations is quoted in this morning's Washington Post as saying that the U.S. has let his country down by not getting enough changes in the peace plan developed by Cy Vance and David Owen. Can you comment?

--We do not comment on every remark attributed to a foreign official. The important thing is that Bosnian President Izetbegovic was satisfied enough with the progress he made in New York last week with Vance and Owen to return home to confer with his colleagues with the hope of coming back to reach a successful conclusion.

The Washington Post also reports that a Bosnian government helicopter marked with a red cross evacuated wounded from Srebrenica. Was that a violation of the UN Security Council-mandated no fly zone over Bosnia?

--Humanitarian flights over Bosnia are possible if they receive specific exemption from UN authorities to the no-fly resolution. That is true for American and other flights into Sarajevo airport carrying relief supplies and for our airdrops over eastern Bosnia. It also is true for any Bosnian government or other flights.

--Our present understanding is that the Bosnians have been using helicopters to evacuate wounded from eastern Bosnia, and so far as I know they have not requested exemptions from UN authorities.

--All parties should respect the no fly zone, including the requirement to obtain exemption for humanitarian flights.

--(If asked) If the U.N. Security Council passes a resolution authorizing enforcement of the no fly zone, it should be enforced against violations by anyone.

To: George Stephanopoulos

From: Joel Berg

Date: March 17, 1993

RE: POLITICAL TALKING POINTS ON BEEF INSPECTION

The new changes announced in beef inspection provide one dramatic example of how the Clinton Administration has taken immediate and forceful action to reinvent government in order to protect the American consumer.

The Clinton Administration responded quickly and decisively to a public health crisis thrown into its lap as soon as it took office. By acting immediately, we protected public health and averted another scare like the Alar apple panic.

As soon as Secretary Espy learned of the crisis, he informed President Clinton in a Cabinet Meeting at Camp David. The President immediately asked Espy to fly to Washington State to address the problem, and the President immediately agree to request \$4 million in the stimulus package to allow Espy to hire 160 more beef inspectors.

The Clinton Administration did not accept the failing status quo that simply told the American consumer they had to cook the beef more. Yet the Clinton Administration also did NOT simply blame our predecessors for lax inspection standards. Instead, President Clinton and Secretary Espy took personal responsibility for the problem, and immediately began planning how to reduce the risk of future outbreaks of beef poisoning.

Faced with a highly intractable problem that has paralyzed the U.S. government for years, Secretary Espy brought all sides together to work out real solutions. Espy met with all interested parties, including consumer groups, industry groups, and whistle-blowers (dissident USDA meat inspectors.) He worked with the groups to develop a consensus about how we could all work together to improve meat inspection.

Some of the Espy plan can be implemented almost immediately, such as hiring new inspectors and placing new safe handling labels on meat packages. Some of the plan might takes years to implement, such as new processes for detecting dangerous pathogens (germs) in the meat. However, the bottom line of the proposal is that it moves us forcefully from a 19th Century system of visually inspecting beef to a 21st Century system of microbiologically inspecting beef.

The Clinton Administration has done more to improve food safety in half a dozen weeks than has been accomplished in the entire last twelve years.

* 150 Deaths
150,000 illnesses
* Increase inspectors
Use advanced scientific to find bacteria
* New research
not sight & touch
microbiology

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

17-Mar-1993 11:51 EDT

UNCLASSIFIED

MEMORANDUM FOR:

Paul Clarke

(CLARKE)

FROM:

Beth E. Sanner
(SANNER)

SUBJECT:

Press Guidance on Mitterrand's G-7 statements

-- As the President has said, we believe the G-7 must engage intensively with Russia at this important time to support the historic economic and political reforms put in place by President Yeltsin.

-- We expect there to be additional G-7 meetings in the period ahead, before the Tokyo summit.

-- We hope to produce a substantial G-7 package by late April. The U.S. supports a meeting of our foreign and finance ministers next month to decide on the broad outlines of a package.

-- We think the G-7 should keep its focus on producing a concrete and substantial package for Russia. That must happen just before a meeting of Ministers.

-- For this reason, we think a Head of State meeting is premature.

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

17-Mar-1993 12:00 EDT

UNCLASSIFIED

MEMORANDUM FOR: SEE BELOW

FROM: Jane E. Holl
(HOLL)

SUBJECT: additional press guidance for March 17

For use on an IF RAISED basis:

Is it true that NATO ministers have approved the deployment of 50,000 troops to Bosnia to enforce an agreement reached among the parties?

-- The North Atlantic Council (NAC) met today to consider issues related to the situation in the former Yugoslavia as part of a process that has been going on for some time regarding planning for potential NATO participation in the implementation of an eventual Bosnia settlement. No decisions were taken.

-- This meeting was part of the ongoing process of exchange between the NAC and NATO military planners to develop a possible NATO role.

Distribution:

FOR: Nancy Soderberg
FOR: Natalie S. Wozniak
FOR: Paul Clarke
CC: Records
CC: Katherine M. Mathis
CC: Betty A. Marshall

(SODERBERG)
(WOZNIAK)
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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

17-Mar-1993 11:44 EDT

UNCLASSIFIED

MEMORANDUM FOR:

Paul Clarke

(CLARKE)

FROM:

Cheryl C. Washington
(WASHINGTON)

SUBJECT:

Press Guidance re China: Perceived Military Build-U

Q: Does the Administration have any comment on China's perceived military build-up? Is the USG doing anything about it?

A: China is making an effort to modernize its military forces, but its overall military expenditures are not a alarming level.

-- Ongoing developments in the region -- including these reports about China -- underscore the importance of dialogue among regional states and transparency in military modernization. For example, we participated in initial discussions on regional security at last July's association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Post-Ministerial Conference, an initiative we welcomed.

-- We have urged China only to undertake military modernization strictly necessary for defensive needs. We do not regard China as a military threat to the U.S. or its neighbors.

-- For the past decade we have been encouraged to see China involved in intensive conversion of military industry to civil monitor the situation.

-- Through both active diplomacy and a long-term strategy of forward deployment, the U.S. is committed to promoting peace and stability in Asia.

Q: What is the Chinese motivation for this build-up? Is it because they are trying to fill the military vacuum left by the U.S. after its departure from the Philippines?

A: You would have to ask the Chinese for the reasons for their recent modernization efforts.

-- As for the United States, our departure from the Philippines does not affect our overall interest in and

commitment to regional stability and security. We intend to maintain our capabilities in the region, including access to military facilities appropriate to the security situation.

-- The U.S. remains fully engaged militarily in east Asia, based on the foundation of our solid military-to-military relationships and development of strengthened defense ties throughout the region. This includes the presence of the Seventh Fleet, exercises, training, visits, and access.

Q: Us there any State Department role in authorizing or regulating Chinese arms exports into the U.S.?

A: No. Permanent imports of arms from China into the U.S., such as those described in the POST article today, are regulated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms of the Department of Treasury.

-- On the other hand, the Department of State does regulate exports of weapons from the U.S. to China. An embargo on such exports has been in effect since the 1989 Tienanman Square crackdown on Pro-Democracy forces.

Q: Can you comment on the types and volume of Chinese arms imports?

-- You will have to get that from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms.

Q: Do you have anything on reports that China plans to buy an aircraft carrier from Ukraine?

A: No. Both China and Ukraine have denied that such a deal is under discussion.

CC: Records
CC: Natalie S. Wozniak
CC: Cheryl C. Washington

(RECORDS)
(WOZNIAK)
(WASHINGTON)

PRESS GUIDANCE

Ohio Nuclear Weapons Plant Closing Delayed

- Q: Why has the Department of Energy postponed the scheduled April 19 shutdown of a nuclear weapons plant near Dayton, Ohio?
- A: Secretary O'Leary is reviewing the cost analyses used in the January 19 study to insure that the underlying assumptions are still valid and to determine whether they still make sense in light of greater budget cuts.

THE WASHINGTON POST

Ohio Nuclear Weapons Plant Closing Delayed

By Thomas W. Lippman
Washington Post Staff Writer

Ohio Democrats have persuaded Energy Secretary Hazel R. O'Leary to postpone the scheduled April 19 shutdown of a nuclear weapons plant near Dayton, in what has become the Energy Department's equivalent of the fight over military base closings.

O'Leary has agreed to review a decision made in January by her predecessor, James D. Watkins, to move some operations of the Energy Department's nuclear weapons complex out of Ohio to a factory in Kansas City, Mo. Watkins said the move would "save the American taxpayer \$100 million a year."

Missouri has two Republican senators, as does neighboring Kansas, where many of the Kansas City workers live. Ohio has two Democratic senators. After meeting with one of them, John Glenn, and with Rep. Tony P. Hall (D-Ohio) on March 9, President Clinton's secretary of energy put the Watkins decision on hold and said she would appoint three consultants to reevaluate it by June 1.

She asked elected officials in nine states that host nuclear weapons manufacturing facilities to submit nominations by yesterday afternoon.

Sen. John C. Danforth (R-Mo.) declined to par-

ticipate. Instead, he demanded an investigation. In a letter yesterday to Energy Department Inspector General John C. Layton, he called for an inquiry into "the arbitrary and sudden manner in which a political appointee has called into question the information gathered and recommendations made by department professionals after years of study."

With the end of the Cold War, the Energy Department's vast complex of laboratories and factories that produce plutonium and manufacture warheads is scheduled to shrink drastically. More than 100,000 jobs are at stake in the "reconfiguration" of the weapons complex.

While the overall future of the weapons factories is not expected to be decided until 1994, Watkins signed off in December on two reports that would have settled the fate of some units that would make non-nuclear weapons components, such as electronic systems, detonators and high explosives. These operations, including some conducted at the Mound plant near Dayton, would be consolidated in Kansas City.

Mound would also lose its position as one of two Energy Department sites equipped to handle and load tritium, a radioactive gas used to increase the explosive power of warheads. Mound would be closed and the tritium operations consolidated at Savannah River, S.C. The Savannah River option

was nearly \$2 billion cheaper than a consolidation at Mound, Watkins said.

Mound has more than 2,000 employees. Ohio has already lost most of the production jobs at the Energy Department's Fernald uranium processing plant near Cincinnati and is slated to lose 1,000 more in the next few years in closure of the department's uranium enrichment plant in Piketon.

The Mound shutdown was scheduled to begin April 19, but O'Leary stopped the clock after her meeting with Glenn and Hall. On March 11, Robert W. DeGraese Jr., a former weapons plant expert on the staff of the House Armed Services Committee and now a special assistant to O'Leary, summoned House and Senate staff members to a meeting to discuss selection of the consultants.

He said O'Leary would receive nominations until the end of the day yesterday, appoint the three by March 26 and ask them to report by June 1. In a statement issued late yesterday, the Energy Department said O'Leary had decided that "the most responsible course" was to review the "cost analyses" on which Watkins based his findings.

Among the nominees, according to congressional sources, are John Ahearne, former chairman of an advisory panel on weapons plant safety, and Victor Gilinsky, a former member of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.