

FOIA MARKER

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Briefing Materials 4/29/93

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STATEMENT ON PERSONNEL APPOINTMENTS

As of today, President Clinton has filled almost 1,000 of the approximately 3,000 positions available to him, and has formally nominated 165 Senate-confirmed officials. This record surpasses the 100-day records compiled by Presidents Reagan and Bush, who had nominated only 139 and 76 appointees, respectively.

The President has been able to achieve this mark despite the existence of a far more extensive clearance process than previous Presidents have faced, and despite a search process that has reached beyond the traditional insider candidates to a diverse group of people from all parts of the country. The President's appointments come from 48 states. 45% are women, and 13% are minorities.

Of the 400 top positions in the White House and Cabinet departments, 192 have been filled. Of those, 34% are held by women and 22% by minorities.

WHITE HOUSE PRESS GUIDANCE -- 11:30 AM
THURSDAY, APRIL 29, 1993

Vietnam: IMF

Q: What position will the Administration take on Vietnam's IMF arrears at Friday's IMF/World Bank meeting?

A: -- At this time, our comprehensive review of Vietnamese progress on POW/MIA accounting and our assessment of the Soviet document and the material General Vessey brought back from Hanoi is still underway.

-- The issue of Vietnam's arrears is not on the agenda of this week's IMF/World Bank Semi-Annual Meeting, and it is our understanding that it will not arise.

----- The U.S. will be prepared to discuss Vietnam's arrears when that issue is scheduled to be on the agenda of an IMF Executive Directors Meeting in mid-June or July. By that time we expect our review process will have been completed.

-- Pending completion of that review, the Administration has not yet decided on further steps in its policy toward Vietnam.

Iraq use of Chemical Weapons against Kurds

[Background: This morning [Thursday] the group Physicians for Human Rights held a press conference at the National Press Club to present new evidence of Iraq's use of lethal chemical weapons against Iraqi Kurds in August 1988.]

Q: What can you tell us about reports this morning concerning Iraq's use of chemical weapons in Kurdistan at the end of the Iran-Iraq war?

A: -- This report of new evidence of Iraq's use of chemical weapons against its own population in 1988 underscores the need for a United Nations Commission to investigate Iraqi war crimes and crimes against humanity.

-- Vice President Gore and Secretary Christopher called for the creation of such a Commission this week during ~~their meetings with the Iraq National Congress~~ opposition leadership.

-- The report should also serve as a lesson to other outlaw nations that their use of these prohibited weapons will not go undetected.

Bosnia

Q: Has the President adopted a two-track approach -- that is lifting the arms embargo and limited airstrikes -- to deal with the situation in Bosnia?

A: -- We are still reviewing options; no decision has been made.

-- We continue to consult at the UN, here in Washington, and in other capitals on the what more can be done about this crisis.

Q: There seems to be considerable disagreement within the military about the feasibility of air strikes. How can the President be expected to decide a course of action when his own military advisers cannot agree on the efficacy of armed intervention?

A: -- In the course of reviewing his options, President Clinton has invited the opinions and sought the expert advice of his civilian and military national security advisers, members of Congress, and private citizens. In addition, there has been an ongoing public debate on the Bosnian crisis.

-- The President hears these views and weighs them in this thinking.

-- He has no intention of ordering the military to engage in operations which its leaders views as militarily impractical or unsound.

**EB PRESS GUIDANCE
APRIL 28, 1993**

SERBIAN SANCTIONS

Q: What effects have tightened sanctions had on the Bosnian Serbs?

A: THE EFFECTS OF THE SANCTIONS ARE AIMED AT SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO. EFFECTS ON THE BOSNIAN SERBS WILL BE INDIRECT. THE NEW RESOLUTION REQUIRES THAT ANY SHIPMENTS INTO ANY PART OF BOSNIA CONTROLLED BY THE SERBS MUST BE SPECIFICALLY AUTHORIZED BY THE BOSNIAN GOVERNMENT IN SARAJEVO. IT IS STILL TOO EARLY TO DETERMINE THE EFFECT THE NEW MEASURES WILL HAVE ON THE BOSNIAN SERBS.

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A: THE NEW RESOLUTION HAS JUST COME INTO EFFECT. UNDER EARLIER RESOLUTIONS, FIFTEEN SERBIAN/MONTENEGRIN OWNED OR CONTROLLED SHIPS AND AT LEAST SIX SANCTIONS VIOLATORS BELONGING TO OTHER COUNTRIES HAVE BEEN DETAINED.

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Q: What can you tell us about the implementation of the sanctions by the frontline states?

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BORDER CONTROL ASPECTS OF SANCTIONS ARE EXPECTED TO BE APPLIED IN THE VERY NEAR FUTURE.

OTHER ASPECTS, WHICH WILL REQUIRE CHANGES IN LEGISLATION, MAY TAKE A SHORT WHILE BEFORE BEING FULLY IMPLEMENTED BY ALL STATES. THESE ASPECTS WOULD INCLUDE IMPOUNDING SERBIAN/MONTENEGRIN CONVEYANCES AND CONTROLS ON CERTAIN SERVICES.

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Q: What is the situation on the borders with Serbia/Montenegro?

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Middle East Peace Talks

[Background: The Middle East peace talks resumed here Tuesday.]

Q: The New York Times reports that the U.S. secured Saudi funding for the PLO. Is this true?

A: -- No. We did not secure funding for the PLO. We believe it is helpful to encourage Saudi Arabia and others to help alleviate the economic difficulties Palestinians are experiencing in the Territories.

Q: Do you plan to restore the U.S.-PLO dialogue?

A: -- We have no plans to resume the dialogue with the PLO. Our policy on this remains unchanged. Palestinians are represented by their delegation at the negotiating table in the peace talks. It is that direct dialogue between the parties to the Middle East conflict that should be the focus.

Q: What are the dates for the next round of meetings for the multilateral groups?

A: -- Water Working Group, Geneva, April 27-29
Economic Development WG, Rome May 4-5
Refugee WG, Oslo, May 11-13
Arms Control and Security WG, Washington May 18-20
Environment WG, Tokyo, May 24-25

Q: What is your reaction to the Israeli decision to return Palestinians deported before 1987?

A: -- Our opposition to deportations is well known. We welcome any decision by the Israelis to allow deportees to return.

Q: Do you think the peace negotiations can make progress?

A: -- We welcome the resumption of negotiations. We have repeatedly stressed our commitment to continuity in the Middle East peace talks.

-- Our objective now should be to make 1993 the year of a breakthrough to peace in the Middle East. The United States will be a full partner in this process. We are dedicated to demonstrating that the negotiations can produce early results.

Q: What promises or commitments have been made to Palestinians to induce them to return to the negotiations?

A: -- The Secretary of State has worked hard over the past few months with the Palestinians and with Prime Minister Rabin to address the concerns of all parties.

- Agreement was reached on several measures which all believe address their concerns. The important thing now is to show that negotiations can resolve these issues. It is time to deal with the causes rather than the symptoms.

[Background: The Madrid terms of reference exclude the participation of East Jerusalem residents in the talks. Hussein, however, also has a residence in Ramallah. We suggest you avoid discussion of such distinctions.]

Q: Why is Faisal Hussein now on the delegation? Isn't this a change in the Madrid terms of reference?

A: -- The United States proposed that Mr. Hussein join the Palestinian delegation and the parties did not object.

-- We hope this and other steps that will be taken will help the parties make rapid and significant progress in the negotiations.

-- (If pressed) We have not changed the terms of reference.

Q: Isn't Hussein an East Jerusalemite?

A: -- He is a Palestinian leader who helped reach the agreement to resume talks today.

Q: Have we changed our policy on Jerusalem?

A: -- No. Nor have we changed our position on any matter of substance in the negotiations which led to the resumption of talks.

Q: Was Arafat helpful in this process?

A: -- A lot of parties played helpful roles. I am not going to go into details, except to say that we commend the parties for taking the decision to return to negotiations.

Q: Can you confirm that you have proposed the talks be conducted continually and no longer in rounds?

A: -- The Secretary of State has proposed that talks be held on a continuous basis, and we are in the process of consulting with the parties.

-- We believe that the concept has merit and could help advance the process.

Women in Combat

- Q: Does the President support Secretary Aspin's proposals to allow women to fly in combat aircraft and to serve on Navy combat ships?
- A: -- President Clinton has said he supports expanded roles for women in the Armed Services.
- Secretary Aspin will have something to say on this issue soon, and we'll gladly discuss our policy at that time.

EUN PRESS GUIDANCE

April 28, 1993

21

VANCOUVER AID PACKAGE FOR RUSSIA

Q: Yeltsin and Clinton both said at Vancouver that aid would flow quickly following the Summit but the press says nothing has started yet. Where do we stand? Has any aid started?

A: -- SEVERAL PROGRAMS ANNOUNCED IN VANCOUVER WERE, IN FACT, ALREADY UNDERWAY AND HAVE SINCE BEEN ENHANCED. INCLUDED UNDER THE RUBRIC OF THE "DEMOCRACY CORPS" IS THE FARMER-TO-FARMER PROGRAM, THE PEACE CORPS, THE COCHRAN FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM, THE QUICK-START HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH EXCHANGE, AND THE HOSPITAL PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM. APPROXIMATELY \$10 MILLION WORTH OF NUTRITIONALLY ENRICHED FOOD PRODUCTS FOR MOTHERS AND CHILDREN ARE BEING PROCURED FOR DELIVERY TO THE RUSSIAN FAR EAST. \$1.2 MILLION WORTH OF NUTRITIONAL DRINK SUPPLEMENT IS SCHEDULED FOR DELIVERY IN LATE MAY TO MAGADAN AND ANYDYR.

(MORE)

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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

29-Apr-1993 09:01 EDT

UNCLASSIFIED

MEMORANDUM FOR: SEE BELOW

FROM: Elisa D. Harris
(HARRIS)

SUBJECT: draft press guidance

This has been coordinated with Bruce Riedel.

NOTE: At 10:00 AM today in Washington, the group Physicians for Human Rights will hold a press conference at the National Press Club to present new evidence of Iraq's use of lethal chemical weapons against Iraqi Kurds in August 1988. A press conference will also be held simultaneously in London by the British Government's Chemical and Biological Defense Establishment, which carried out the scientific analysis on which the evidence is based. The announcement may be newsworthy because the soil samples found to contain evidence of the use of chemical agents were gathered in June 1992, four years after the original attacks.

DRAFT GUIDANCE ON NEW EVIDENCE OF IRAQI CW USE
AGAINST ITS KURDISH POPULATION

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The report should also serve as a lesson to other outlaw nations that their use of these prohibited weapons will not go undetected.

Things of Special Note for Appointments:

- * **GEOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY:** With nearly one half of appointments to Executive Departments completed (192 out of 400), 75% of nominees come from outside DC/MD/VA, fulfilling promise of regional diversity. (At the same time in 1981, Reagan was criticized because 43% of his nominees came from inside the Beltway.)
- * **UNPRECEDENTED NUMBER OF WOMEN APPOINTED:** With nearly one half of appointments to Executive Departments completed (192 out of 400), one third (34% or 65) are women. (Note -- the executive department/PAS numbers are better than the overall appointment numbers (28% women) because of the high percentage of white men appointed to ambassadorships and to head independent agencies. At 28%, we are still far ahead of Reagan (7%) and Bush (20%).)

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COR PRESS GUIDANCE
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**OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY
PUBLIC AFFAIRS/PUBLIC LIAISON**

**1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
3442 MT
Washington, D.C. 20220
202-622-2920**

FACSIMILE COVER SHEET

DATE: 4/29/93

NUMBER OF PAGES: 2
(Excluding Cover Sheet)

TO: George Stephanopoulos

ADDRESSEE'S FAX NUMBER: 456-6423

ADDRESSEE'S PHONE NUMBER: _____

FROM: Ron Noble

FAX NUMBER: (202) 622-2808

COMMENTS/SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:

Re my conversation with Roger Altman.

TREASURY NEWS



Department of the Treasury

Washington, D.C.

Telephone 202-622-2960

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 28, 1993

Contact: Jack R. DeVore, Jr.
202-622-2920

Statement by
Lloyd M. Bentsen
Secretary of the Treasury

Treasury is still discussing details of a joint investigation of the Waco tragedy with the Department of Justice, but it is clear to me what the goal of Treasury will be.

Our inquiry into events leading up to the February 28 raid on the Branch Davidian compound by agents of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms will be thorough, objective and uncompromising.

We will use investigators from outside ATF. Prominent, respected experts from outside government will participate in the investigation and will review its results.

Let no one think the brave agents who attempted to execute a search warrant on February 28 let anyone down. Far from it. Four of those agents lost their lives, 16 were wounded, all performed their duty with distinction in the face of withering fire through the walls of the compound.

I want to know whether those agents were let down by a failure of ATF procedures or a failure to follow established procedures. I want everything possible done to avoid a repeat of this tragedy.

Beyond that, there are other questions that must be answered. I am deeply troubled by conflicting statements about the so-called "element of surprise." Was ATF aware it had been lost? If so, why did the raid proceed?

Before this investigation is finished, I will insist that this point, among others, be cleared up.

###

April 29, 1993

FACT SHEET

* -- Secretary Bentsen issued a statement yesterday (see attached) laying out some of the methods and goals of Treasury in its joint investigation with the Justice Department of the Waco tragedy.

* -- He said the investigation will be thorough, objective and uncompromising. He said Treasury will rely on investigators from outside ATF for its part of the inquiry and that prominent, respected experts from outside government will participate and review the results of the investigation.

* -- He praised the ATF agents who attempted to execute a search warrant at the Branch Davidian compound this past February 28 for their bravery and devotion to duty in the face of withering fire through the compound walls.

* -- He said he wants the investigation to determine whether ATF procedures, or a failure to follow ATF procedures, let those agents down. He said he wants everything possible done to avoid a repeat.

* -- He said he is deeply troubled by conflicting statements from ATF such as those about the so-called "element of surprise." If surprise had been lost, he wants to know why the raid proceeded.

* -- The Secretary did not assign blame for the conflicting statements, and news reports to the contrary are wrong. He has serious questions about what happened but at this stage, with the investigation just getting underway, he has reached no conclusions.

* -- ATF Director Stephen Higgins has recently refused to discuss the inconsistent explanations for the failure of the raid because he was instructed by Treasury to remain silent in order to preserve the integrity of the investigation the Secretary has ordered.

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

April 29, 1993

PRESS BRIEFING
BY GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS

The Briefing Room

3:19 P.M. EDT

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: The President will be meeting later this afternoon with Secretaries Aspin and Christopher and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. They will be discussing the situation in Bosnia. He will also have a principals meeting on Bosnia on Saturday.

Q What time Saturday?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I'm not sure. It will be Saturday morning.

Q Will he have an announcement to make after that?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I don't think so, but he will have a meeting on Saturday morning.

Q Do you expect that he'll announce that Secretary Christopher may be dispatched to Europe?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Again, I can't comment on that. But as we've said, the President would make a decision this week and we expect that to hold.

Q What's the timing on this afternoon's meeting?

Q Who are these principals?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Principals of the National Security Council -- Madeleine Albright, Secretary of State Christopher, Secretary of Defense Aspin; the normal group.

Q What do you mean you expect that to hold?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: They don't make the decision this week.

Q You mean even when he consults with allies he expects the decision to hold?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: No, no. The announcement that he would make a decision this week. I expect that announcement to hold.

Q Do you still expect -- do you now expect Christopher to leave for Europe tomorrow afternoon -- Saturday afternoon, rather?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Again, I can't speak to that. We'll have the appropriate consultations with allies once the President makes a decision.

Q The President will make a decision and then try to sell it and get allied support for it?

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MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Yes, absolutely.

Q And will that decision possibly include a range of options?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Again, I can't describe the potential decision in any way until he's made it. I would just say that he will make a decision this week.

Q Do you see it as a possible menu?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I just can't get into what --

Q Will it be announced, George, what decision he's made?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I don't think the announcement will come until after the work with the allies.

Q Is he now consulting with allies?

Q What's the purpose of consulting with people after he makes the decision? Wouldn't they have some input into it?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Well, certainly they'll have input.

Q There will be appropriate consultations once he makes his decision?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: He'll make the consultations that he'll need after he makes the decision -- he's going to make a decision on what he's going to present to the allies; and then, of course, he's going to want to discuss that with them afterwards.

Q The decision will be made after these consultations, then?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: He'll make a decision on the approach he wants to take towards the allies.

Q -- allies have veto power.

Q The allies will be told this before the American people?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: The American people know that the President is going to be going forward with stronger action in Bosnia. And he wants to have a multilateral approach. In order to have a multilateral approach, you have to discuss it with your allies.

Q Is there something that the allies could say that might change his mind? Is he amenable to altering whatever he comes up with after he talks with the allies and before he makes --

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: The President's always said that he wants to have a multilateral approach, and he expects to get a multilateral approach and we're going to continue to proceed on that assumption.

Q Is the President talking to any of these allies before he makes a decision?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: He has. He's had several discussions with Prime Minister Major and President Mitterrand and others.

Q What about today's or tomorrow when he's actually making this decision?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I don't know what personal discussions he's having, but clearly the National Security Advisor has been in contact with his counterparts and Secretary Christopher has had discussions as well.

Q Can you tell us when? Like today, yesterday, tomorrow?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Well, it's been continuous.

Q Will he make a decision by the end of Saturday's meeting with the principals, at the principals meeting?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I can't set the exact time that he's going to make a decision, but he said he would have decision by the end of the week.

Q Is that the final meeting of the consultation process prior to a decision?

Q No decisions before that meeting?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I wouldn't expect a decision before that, thank you.

Q Is Christopher going to be at the meeting on Saturday?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Sure.

Q George, two quick questions. First, has any decision been made whether Secretary Christopher is going to Europe?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Again, we have nothing to announce on that at this time.

Q Is General Powell back from Europe?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: The President will be meeting with General Powell today.

Q George, on the Hill yesterday, Secretary Christopher said that one of the criteria that the administration will use in deciding on its policy in Bosnia will be that it has the support of the American people. How will you gauge that?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Well, the President will obviously go before the American people and explain what he wants to do and why he wants to do it. That is clear. And we will continue -- one of the lessons, obviously, of Vietnam is that -- and other conflicts is that you need the sustained support of the American people in order to have a successful venture. But again, I wouldn't want to prejudge at all what the President's decision would be.

Q Has the President made his own decision on what his objective will be when he goes before the allies or the American people? What is it that he wants to accomplish while he's searching for the means to accomplish it?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Well, again, that's all part of the same decision. I can't get into that until he's ready to make an announcement.

Q You mean to say that the President's objective there has to be part of the consultation with the allies?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Well, clearly, one of our objectives has always been to stop Serbian aggression and to get a peace agreement on the ground in Bosnia. Those are the overall objectives. As to the specific objectives of any operation, I can't speak to that until a decision is made.

Q Could you comment on what the President has been speaking about -- talking with the King of Spain a little bit?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: The President is looking forward to good discussions with the King of Spain over a range of issues between the United States and Spain. He welcomes the chance to have this opportunity to speak with the King.

Q Do you know whether they've met before?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I don't think they have.

Q Back to this point about -- I asked the question: Why should the Europeans be informed before the American people? You said that it's because they want to have a multilateral cooperation with them. But it doesn't have to be an either/or. Why can't the American people be informed at the same time as the Europeans and the American people make their judgment about this as the Europeans make their judgment about this? Because multilateral -- we're involved as much as they're involved.

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: That's true, and the President has gone before the American people and said that we need to have a new policy in Bosnia.

Q Right, and he's going to tell them the specifics and not us?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Well, the policy isn't ready to be announced until we understand its full nature. And part of that scope is the cooperation of the allies.

Q So it could change during consultations.

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Obviously, something could change. I don't know what the decision is, so it's hard to say exactly what will come out of any consultations. But clearly, the President will want to communicate his decision to the allies and hear what they have to say.

Q George, how long will these consultations take -- are you talking about hours, days -- before he goes before the American people to tell them what he's decided?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I just don't know. Again, this will all be dependent on the decision.

Q Is this the first time Mr. Clinton has ever met with a king? (Applause.)

Q Larry King. (Laughter.)

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Wolf Blitzer, CNN. (Laughter.) I know he's met with Prince Charles. I don't know if he's ever met with a king before. When he was a prince. I don't know if he's met with any -- I assume that he has, but I don't know.

Q Do you envision a presidential address to the American people sometime next week to go over the decision?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I expect the President will fully communicate any decisions to the American people in the appropriate way. I just don't know the timing or exactly what form that would take at this time.

Q Will he be meeting with Congress over the weekend?

Q I guess what I'm trying to get at --

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I'm sure he'll talk to people.

Q -- is do you envision a decision of such magnitude the President will want -- to address the American people, or will he unveil his decision in a more --

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I just can't characterize it in any way right now until the President makes a decision.

Q Can I clarify something that came up this morning? There's a question about the President's rule against any ground troops in Bosnia. The question came up this morning about committing ground troops in Bosnia and to what extent that commitment rules out U.S. forces going into assist in humanitarian assistance or to protect safe havens. Can you clarify that at this point?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Well, at this point, the President has said the only situation he's talked about having ground troops at this time is as part of a peacekeeping operation. I think that that stands.

Q Does that preclude protecting safe havens or humanitarian relief in the two parties that have signed on to the accord?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: If this were part of a formal agreement I suppose that's possible -- unless it were part of an agreement by all sides, and I think that that is not something that the President has contemplated at this time.

Q -- Serbian participation essentially holds a veto over any commitment of U.S. ground forces --

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: The President is not contemplating ground troops now.

Q For the two missions we're talking about.

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Right.

Q Since you have talked about the options of air strikes and lifting the embargo, can we rule in or out safe havens as an option that he's considering?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: You can't rule anything in or out until the President makes a decision.

Q But you were clear on the others. Why can't you be more explicit --

Q Is that also on the table?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: No, we've been clear -- the only thing the President has ruled out is ground forces at this time.

Q It will take ground forces, though, to enforce safe havens.

Q It better be someone else's.

Q Someone else's troops.

Q Have the allies put pressure on President Clinton at all?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Pardon me?

Q I'm from Spain -- I promise not to ask about the King of Spain but -- (laughter.)

Q Go for it.

Q We are Europe, too. (Laughter.) Are the allies putting a lot of pressure on President Clinton?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I don't think so. I think there's been a lot of discussions about the proper approach to take in Bosnia. The President's been fully engaged in those discussions, and those will continue over the coming weeks.

Q George, can I ask you a logistical question? Can you tell us what time this meeting is this afternoon?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: It's at 4:00 p.m.

Q Is there any coverage of it? And does that mean that the President is not participating in that other photo op with the teachers?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I think that's what it means. And there won't be any coverage. It's a private meeting.

Q Is it 4:00 p.m. or 4:15 p.m.?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: It could be 4:15 p.m., I'm not sure.

Q It's important to us.

Q -- the American people will know he's going forward with a stronger approach to Bosnia.

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: It's late afternoon. (Laughter.)

Q -- would you care to tell us stronger than what -- stronger than sanctions, stronger than --

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Well, it will be a change from the current policy. It will be a strengthened policy, and I just can't get into the specifics.

Q Does the President believe sanctions have achieved all they can, or does he expect that they can --

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: No, I don't think you're going to lift the sanctions. Obviously, the sanctions will continue. But, clearly, whatever we would have would be a supplement to that.

Q After the meeting with House members today, how does the President feel about his investment tax credit proposal?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: There was a lot of discussion about the investment tax credit, but the President pointed out the benefits that he sees in the proposal. Obviously, he's willing to listen to any suggestions that might come from the members of Congress on that proposal, but he still believes that it would lead to great benefit and great increases in investment in the private sector.

Q Do you know if he will continue to be out front and urge --

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: We'll continue to talk about it, but he would like it to go forward at this time.

Q Do you know if you've changed any minds on that?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I don't know.

Q George, could you bring us up to date on the anticipated timing of the release of the health care proposal? Are you still shooting for May 25th, or is that being pushed back?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I don't know about any specific date, but we've said that we'd like it in late May.

Q You're still planning to present at least the outline of the --

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: We're still on the same track we've been on. Nothing's changed.

Q Rostenkowski said that there was an impression on the committee that there weren't a lot of cheerleaders for the investment tax credit. Does the President feel that way, and is he going to try and drum up some?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: That was a good deal of discussion today with the Ways and Means Committee. I think that several members expressed some concerns about it; others expressed the need for investments in the private sector as well. So I think that those discussions will continue as we go into the hearing and mark-up stage over the next couple of weeks.

Q George, what's the difference between the announcement that the President's making tomorrow and the speech that he made up at Rutgers earlier last month?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Tomorrow he will actually be announcing the legislation that's been developed, that's ready to go. The formal "dropping in the hopper" in the House and Senate I think won't happen until next week. But this is the actual unveiling of the legislation.

Q What was it that he did last -- just the philosophical thing?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Yes, the legislation wasn't done back at Rutgers.

Q Is there any difference? Has there been any change?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: There will be details. I mean, full details of how the income-contingent loan proposal will work and the details of how the national service program will work.

Q What's the total price tag on that?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: He'll have that tomorrow.

Q Is he disappointed that there has been disagreement on the Hill and he can't proceed on campaign finance reform right now?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: We're going to have an announcement next week.

Q Do you think you can iron out the differences? There are serious differences, according to the Speaker.

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I think we'll have an announcement in the next week for real campaign finance reform. We're looking forward to it.

Q On the Waco inquiry. Why isn't there an independent investigation of the Waco episode instead of having the two agencies which were responsible --

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: There will be independent participation in that investigation. They'll bring in outside experts. They're going to have the final details on that either later today or tomorrow, but there certainly will be outside review.

Q Is the President satisfied that the agents, because the inquiry is under the auspices of those two agencies, that they will hold their own agencies accountable?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I think there's no question about it. I think he has full confidence that Departments of Justice and Treasury will conduct a complete and thorough investigation with the assistance of independent experts and investigators, yes.

Q What's the time frame on Bosnia, without pinning you down to a specific date? Could this President's announcement slip beyond next week?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I just can't comment on it in any way. The next step after a decision is consultation with the allies and for the members of Congress. I don't want to put a timetable on that at all.

Q How has the President marked the occasion of the 100th day?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: He was going to do a public reading of "Putting People First." (Laughter.) Figured it would go all night. (Laughter.) See how he's doing.

Q Was there nothing on his --

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Nothing planned. He's just going to work and -- (laughter) -- you know, meeting with the Ways and Means Committee. That's recreation. (Laughter.)

Q -- of the Russian factor -- is he going to talk with Boris Yeltsin?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I'm certain he'll have further discussions with President Yeltsin. He spoke with him this week and I'm certain he'll have more.

Q What's the President going to do different the next 100 days and --

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: He's not going to count the days, first of all. (Laughter.)

Q We are. (Laughter.)

Q Has he told you guys? Has he sat you down and said I want to do something different? (Laughter.)

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: We go through review every day. And I think some of the things he's talked about and he said we could have done some things differently. I think that we are always trying to figure out better ways to develop our programs and sell them and make sure the American people understand everything that we're doing. But we're also committed in this next phase to working very hard with the Congress to get the President's economic package passed as quickly as possible. And he wants to move forward on that. That's why he met with the Ways and Means Committee today and why those consultations will continue. And that's what we're committed to doing right away.

Q At the Ways and Means Committee meeting, did anybody express, any legislators express the same kind of pessimism that Mr. Panetta had expressed two days ago?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: No, it was a very upbeat meeting. And I think --

Q Give us an example of how -- (laughter) --

Q How upbeat was it? (Laughter.)

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Mr. Panetta declined to comment at the beginning of the meeting.

Q Another bad day?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: No, no, it was a very good day. There were a lot of laughs. I think it was just -- what the President heard from the Ways and Means Committee was a commitment to getting his package passed to the extent they can, as quickly as possible. I mean, I think they want it -- they understand the need to move quickly and the need to move as thoroughly as they can on the President's priorities. Obviously, there are some differences and there will be some give and take as we go through the mark-up process, but I think what the President was encouraged by was the commitment on the part of the Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee and the rest of the members, the Democratic members of that committee to get his package passed as quickly as possible.

Q What's the status of -- speaking of the package -- of thinking on another try at some form of a stimulus/jobs package, and can you talk to us a little bit about the concept of linking that with Russian aid?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I think it's something we're going to continue to discuss with the Congress in the coming days. Obviously, the economic growth numbers this morning are cause for great concern. And as the President said, it shows, again, why we need to make sure that we have the proper investments in wealth-creating sectors of the economy right now. We need to move forward and he believes we have to continue to search for ways to get those investments. So we'll be talking about that with the Congress in the coming days and weeks and when we have more we'll let you know.

Q Well, is there any indication of any movement with those numbers or anything else on the part of enough Republican senators that you could get a version of the jobs package through?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Well, I think that's what we're in discussions for. I don't know that -- that's a question for the Republicans. I mean, the President has laid out the kinds of investments he wants and he's already staked his claim on that. We're going to continue to talk with them and try and find ways to get these through.

Q And on the Russian aid linkage?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: One of the things we're hearing from Capitol Hill is that the failure to pass the jobs program and other investments in the American people complicates the prospects for Russian aid. I think that's a fact of life, but the President is committed to going forward with both packages.

Q George, I wanted to get back to the ITC. If Chairman Rostenkowski is telling the President that there are no cheerleaders among the Democrats on the Ways and Means right now, and the business of the community is telling him that the temporary ITC is a loser for them and they want a trade off, where are these cheerleaders going to come from that the President thinks are out there? Who wants this?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Well, I think that this can provide needed investments. The President is taking the concerns of the committee seriously; there is no question about that. And that's what we're going to be discussing over the next couple of weeks. But he believes that it can provide for real job-creating investments in this economy. He's willing to listen to their suggestions and adjustments.

Q Chairman Rostenkowski talked to him about his interest in maybe substituting more generous depreciation rules. He's told reporters he wants that this morning. Is the President prepared to do a trade-off at this point or does he want to wait and see if he can build --

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I think the discussions are just beginning; there's no trade-offs now.

Q One more on Bosnia, if I may. Is the President trying to achieve a consensus approach of taking the United States and its allies for military action, or is he prepared to assert American leadership even in the face of allied hesitancy?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: The President is asserting American leadership and he will continue to assert American leadership. That's why he is going to go to the allies once he makes a decision.

Q But he seems to be suggesting -- you seem to suggest that once he makes a decision it possibly could change dependent upon what the allies do or say.

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Well, again, I mean, that's just common sense. But the President's going to stake out a clear position and do what he can to persuade the allies of the wisdom of that approach. He has said he wants a multilateral approach and he expects to get it. And we expect he'll have a full and complete and persuasive accounting of his position.

Q I hate to use hypotheticals but --

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I probably won't answer them.

Q I understand that, but right now the allies seem to be undercutting or at least arguing against or opposed to any further

military approach. If that persists, as indeed it may, where does that leave the President? Can the President still assert his leadership?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: The President can and will assert his leadership.

Q So he's simply not looking for consensus approach
--

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: No, that's just not a fair conclusion to draw from these statements. The President is going to make a decision and he's going to assert leadership and he's going to move forward going to the allies to convince them of the wisdom of that decision.

Q And if he doesn't convince them?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: The President has not made a decision yet. He's going to go to the allies and he thinks that we will get a multilateral approach.

Q A follow-up to that -- is there a chance there will be no announcement?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: The President is going to make his decision and go to the allies and the announcement will follow.

Q There will be an announcement no matter what the allies say of some sort? There will be a stronger policy no matter what the allies say?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: The President expects that we will have a multilateral Bosnia policy.

Q George, is Yeltsin part of these consultations?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I wouldn't rule it out.

Q Has the President called any -- has he yet spoken to Mitterrand?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: No.

Q Is he planning to after he meets with Powell?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I'm just not sure.

Q Can I go back to Yeltsin for a minute? To what extent is he going to be included in this?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Well, the President has spoken to -- he spoke to President Yeltsin this week and I expect that he will continue to speak with him. Obviously, the Russians have a role in the United Nations on the U.N. Security Council.

Q Would Christopher be going to Moscow?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I don't know if Secretary Christopher is going to go anywhere.

Q When he spoke to Yeltsin this week we were told they did not discuss Bosnia.

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I don't think they did, but they have discussed it in the past.

Q But he will definitely include Yeltsin once this decision is made among his various phone calls or visits by Christopher or whatever --

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I would expect that to happen, yes.

Q - he'll be an equal voice with the others?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I would certainly expect that there will be some sort of communication.

Q The President is about to meet with the Joint Chiefs. Is it fair to say that all of the chiefs now have the consensus on what military options are best for the President to pursue?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: It's fair to say that the chiefs will present their views to the President in an hour.

Q No, it's a quarter --

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Whenever. Whatever time it is, I don't know.

Q Will the President seek a vote in Congress on whatever policy decision that he makes on Bosnia?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Depends on the decision.

Q So you're not ruling in that he will definitely get sanctions for a vote from Congress for his policy?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: If the decision requires a congressional authorization, he certainly will seek it.

Q So do you think at this point that he needs that?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I can't comment on that.

Q So you don't know or you just --

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I can't comment on it.

Q Theoretically, does the President believe that a military -- that military action -- multilateral military action requires congressional vote?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I just can't get into those kinds of questions now because that would in some way prejudge the decision. I just can't do that.

Q I'm asking whether the President, in the abstract, believes that Congress --

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: The President has always in the past supported -- when military force is used abroad, has supported the idea that we have to take action consistent with the War Powers Act.

Q Does that mean he will here, though? Or what are you saying?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: It doesn't mean anything about here. It's a statement about the past, and it's a statement about theory and philosophy.

Q George, does lifting the arms embargo require congressional approval?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Excuse me?

Q Does lifting the arms embargo require congressional approval?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I don't know about congressional approval; it certainly would require -- I think it would require U.N. action of some sort.

Q George, does the President see a special role for Spain in the Bosnia problem, since they have some troops on the ground? And was he planning to talk to the King about that today?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I just -- I'm not sure. I expect it will come up in some fashion, but I don't know about any kind of special role for Spain. But I'm certain that they'll be consulted.

Q Well, there's been talk at the State Department about meeting of the permanent -- four of the five permanent U.N. Security Council members. That would be minus China and then adding Spain? Is that on the table?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I just don't know anything about that. I'll take the question. I just don't know.

Q George, have you any updated information on the schedule on the tax bill -- the legislative language?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I think it's going to be -- I thought -- I originally thought it was going to be today, but I think it might be Monday or Tuesday.

Q What caused the delay?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I'm just not sure. I know there's been some small holdup in Treasury, but I don't know what the exact reason was.

Q It has nothing to do with the discussion here this morning?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: No.

Q George, can you confirm reports out of Tokyo that the President will be going to Tokyo on the 5th for the summit in July?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Yes, that was the first I heard of that this morning. At this time we haven't made any final decisions yet. We're certainly -- we've announced going out for the summit on the 7th, 8th, and 9th, but we haven't finalized our schedule beyond that.

Q Is that an invitation that they've put to you folks?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I'm just not sure.

Q Any other countries planned?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Nothing at this time, but not to rule it out.

Q George, does the President believe that he has an authorization by the U.N. to use air power, or is he going to seek --

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I just can't get into those questions until he's made a decision.

Q Given travel tomorrow, can you tell us anything about next week's schedule?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: No. We'll have an announcement tomorrow.

Q General Powell is going with him tomorrow?

Q -- finance reform, George?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I don't think that's right.

Q Question?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I'll have to double-check, but --

Q What's the question?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Whether General Powell is traveling with him tomorrow. I have to double-check on that. He may be, but I don't think so.

Q Can you update us on where you are on campaign finance reform? Is there any update?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I expect to have an announcement next week.

Q Do you have a day yet?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: No.

Q George, I'm a little bit confused, I guess. When the economic stimulus package was wiped out on the Hill, what we heard coming out of here seemed to suggest that you all were going to come back fast with pieces of it or something. I think the President himself mentioned next week when he was talking about it. He used the words. But when I hear you in this briefing here, you're talking about discussing with Congress over the next weeks and months. You seem to be taking a very long --

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Well, that's moving forward. I mean, part of --

Q I understand. But you all seemed to be much more anxious to do something previously and you seem to be much more laid-back about it now.

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: We remain as anxious as ever to -- we remain as anxious as ever to move forward on a package of job creation for the American people. There's no question about that. But part of that process is working through the Congress, and that's how we're going to do it.

Q Some of these are pretty time-sensitive, specifically summer jobs. When -- next week on that?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Again, I just don't have any announcements right now.

Q George, to follow up on Ruth's question, George --

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Which one?

Q The one on linking Russian aid to stimulus.

Q I only asked one.

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: It was a two-part question.

(Laughter.)

Q Are you considering repackaging the stimulus program with a supplemental for Russian aid and trying to push the two simultaneously?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I wouldn't rule it out, but there's just no hard and fast decisions of any kind right now.

Q George, do you have some insight into the President's thinking process as he makes this very important decision? Is he talking to people from the former Yugoslavia? Is he reading histories? What is he doing as he tries to come to terms with his decision?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: He has spent a fair amount of time obviously reading different kinds of briefing materials. I don't know about history per se. I assume that's part of some of his briefing material. I don't know of any books or anything like that. He's talked to a number of people, both in and outside the government. Obviously, he is consulting with members of Congress, with the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and with other foreign leaders. And that's all part of the process.

Q What kind of people out of government?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I think he has spoken with Secretary of State -- former Secretary of State Shultz, for example, and others.

Q When was that?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Over the last couple of days.

Q In person?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Phone.

Q Why did he talk to Shultz?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I believe that Shultz called him. As you know, he has very strong feelings on Bosnia.

Q -- going on today?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: No, you can go to Treasury.

Q Following on Mike's question, any former Presidents in that list of people that he consulted?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I know he spoke with President Nixon early this week, largely on Russia. But I would expect that there was probably some discussion on Bosnia as well.

Q Has he called Bush?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I don't think he's talked to him this week, but I expect he will soon.

Q Why?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I'm certain that he'll talk to all the former Presidents, as he does periodically.

Q Has he consulted with Bush before?

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: Oh, sure, on Russia. He talked to him a couple of times.

Q If we name them one by one, will you confirm --

MR. STEPHANOPOULOS: I'll probably say, yes, I expect it at some point. (Laughter.)

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END

3:47 P.M. EDT

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