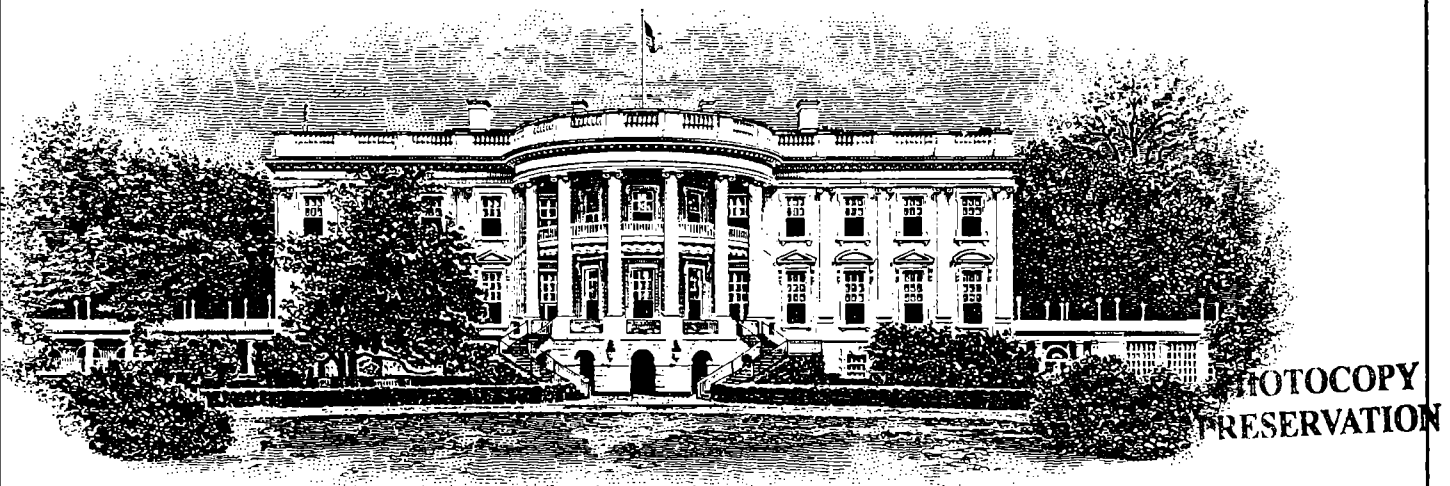


CONF OF INTL ASSN
OF FIRE FIGHTERS



The White House



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 12, 1999

REMARKS TO THE 17TH ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS

DATE: March 15, 1999
LOCATION: Hyatt Regency Hotel
Washington, D.C.
BRIEFING TIME: 3:15pm - 3:40pm
EVENT TIME: 4:00pm - 4:40pm
FROM: Samuel Berger
Bruce Reed / Chris Jennings

I. PURPOSE

To thank the International Association of Fire Fighters for their support and commend them for their bravery, loyalty, and dedication to public service; and to announce new efforts to provide firefighters and other first responders with the tools they need to defend against terrorist attacks involving chemical and biological weapons.

II. BACKGROUND

The International Association of Firefighters

You will address over 700 participants at the 17th Annual Legislative Conference of the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF). IAFF represents more than 225,000 professional career fire fighters and emergency medical personnel. The association represents local and state employees, federal workers, and fire and emergency medical workers employed at certain industrial facilities. It is affiliated with the AFL-CIO and the Canadian Labor Congress. IAFF members protect more than 85 percent of the people and property in the United States, and are the largest providers of pre-hospital emergency care in the U.S. Since its founding in 1918, the IAFF has worked to: create important fire fighting health and safety regulations; enact federal benefits for survivors of fire fighters killed or totally disabled in the line of duty; enhance public safety through national standards; improve training and education for fire and emergency personnel; and establish training programs for hazardous materials emergencies.

Strong New Efforts to Help Emergency Response Personnel Combat Chemical and Biological Terrorism

America's unrivaled military preparedness means that potential enemies are more likely to resort to terror than to conventional military assault. In addition, new technologies are increasing the ability of terrorists to plan and execute chemical and biological attacks against our cities and citizens. In response, you are announcing new steps and highlighted continuing efforts to combat the threat of a chemical or biological terrorist attack, including:

Investing an additional \$11 million in Metropolitan Medical Response Systems in FY 1999. The Department of Health and Human Services plans to invest an additional \$11 million in FY 1999 in new rapid medical response teams trained to respond to a biological or chemical weapons emergency. The Metropolitan Medical Response Systems enhance local emergency response systems by removing victims, administering antidotes, decontaminating affected areas, and providing emergency medical transportation, primary care, hospital based medical care and crisis counseling. This new funding increases the previously planned FY 1999 funding level by almost 400 percent, supporting the development of rapid medical response teams in an additional 12 cities. Today's action takes a significant step towards the Administration's goal of establishing these teams in all of the nation's most densely populated metropolitan areas nationwide.

Providing funds to train emergency personnel to respond to chemical and biological attacks. The Department of Justice will award this month the first funds from a \$21 million initiative to combat weapons of mass destruction by helping states and local communities train local first responders (including firefighters) about responding to bioterrorist and other terrorist attacks. Some of these funds will also enable local communities to expand awareness of the threat of chemical and biological attacks.

Giving funds to communities to purchase new equipment for emergency response personnel handling a chemical or biological terrorist attack. The Department of Justice will make available in April \$73.5 million in grants to states and municipalities to procure equipment to detect chemical or biological agents and protect emergency response personnel and other first responders in the event of a terrorist attack.

III. PARTICIPANTS

Briefing Participants:

Karen Tramontano

Chris Jennings

Dick Clarke

Minyon Moore

Paul Glastris

William Wechsler

Program Participant:

Alfred Whitehead, General President, International Association of Firefighters

Seated On Stage:

Director James Lee Witt

Vincent J. Bollon, General Secretary Treasurer, International Association of Fire Fighters

IV. PRESS PLAN

Open Press.

V. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

-You will be announced, accompanied by Director James Lee Witt, Alfred Whitehead, President, and Vincent Bollon, General Secretary Treasurer, onto the stage.

-Alfred Whitehead will make remarks and introduce you.

- You will make remarks, work a ropeline, and depart.

VI. REMARKS

To be provided by Speechwriting.



Paul D. Glastris
03/14/99 01:44:09 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Joshua S. Gottheimer/WHO/EOP, Michael Waldman/WHO/EOP, Devorah R. Adler/OPD/EOP

cc:

Subject: revised final fire fighters

Revised Final 3/14/99 1:15 p.m.

Paul Glastris

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
REMARKS TO INTERNATIONAL
ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS
HYATT REGENCY HOTEL
WASHINGTON, DC
March 15, 1999**

Acknowledgments: IAFF Gen. Pres. Alfred Whitehead; Exec Assis. Harold Schaitberger [shate-berger]; Gen Sec-Treas. Vincent Bollon [bowl-en]; Sec. Shalala; Rep. Bill Pascrel [previous speaker and friend of fire fighters].

When I was a boy, like just about every boy, I dreamed of becoming a fire fighter. That didn't happen, of course. But over the last 20 years I have had the privilege of working closely with fire fighters and with the IAFF. I do not believe there is a single fire station in all of Arkansas that I did not visit as governor during our successful effort to create a statewide fire and police pension system and death benefits for fire fighters killed in the line of duty. To this day, whenever I go back to northwest Arkansas, Pete Reagan, President of the Arkansas Professional Firefighters, leads the motorcade. A few years ago, we were in Fayetteville and I asked if we could swing by and take a look at the house where I Hillary and I once lived. Pete kindly redirected our entire entourage past the house. Then he had to take us down a dirt road in order to get us back on the motorcade route. It goes to show that fire fighters are called upon to do a lot more these days than battle blazes.

Benjamin Franklin started the nation's first fire department in 1736. It was called the Union Fire Company, though it was not a union shop. It was a private fire company, and in those days different companies would typically show up at a fire and fight over who would put it out and be rewarded. Meanwhile the building would burn down. Reminds you of the way Washington works sometimes, doesn't it? That bickering ended with the rise of municipal fire departments in the 19th Century. Ever since, fire fighters have exemplified the values of courage, of professionalism, of teamwork, of helping one's neighbor--values that are at the core of the American character.

But while the values of fire fighters have not changed, the job they do has changed enormously. From reviving heart attack sufferers to cleaning up hazardous chemical spills to rescuing victims of earthquakes and floods, fire fighters have been called on to provide an ever-broadening array of sophisticated emergency services vital to the health and safety of our nation.

As we approach the 21st Century, we must ask our fire fighters to meet a new challenge--to protect our citizens from terrorists armed with chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction. Today, I want to talk about those new threats, and about new efforts we are undertaking to equip and train our nation's fire fighters to deal with those threats.

Thanks in large part to the IAFF, America's municipal fire fighters are already the best trained, best equipped in the world. All Americans benefit from that. The number of Americans killed in fires has dropped by one-third since 1988, thanks largely to prevention measures that the IAFF has tirelessly advocated. But another factor is the bravery and skill of fire fighters. With the help of better safety equipment the IAFF has fought for, such as flame retardant suits, fire fighters have been able to get to the heart of fires quicker, and pull more victims to safety.

Fire fighting is still an extremely dangerous profession: Fire fighters are six times more likely to be injured on the job than the average private sector worker. That is why, as President, I have worked hard with Al Whitehead and Harold Schaitberger to better the lives of fire fighters. We have improved the pay system for federal fire fighters, supported efforts to give all fire fighters the right to join unions and bargain collectively, and strengthened federal rules that protect the lives of fire fighters--while they are protecting the lives of the rest of us.

But we must do more as we approach the 21st Century--a century with limitless opportunities and dangerous new threats. Open borders and fast-paced technological change fuel our prosperity and spread the messages of freedom around the globe. Yet they also give new opportunities to the enemies of freedom. Scientists use the Internet to exchange ideas and make discoveries that can lengthen lives. Yet fanatics can also use the Internet to download formulas for substances that can be used to cut lives short.

In most instances of domestic terror, the first professionals on the scene--the ones in the best position to save the most lives--will be fire fighters. They are becoming front line defenders of our citizens--not just from accidents and arsonists but from those who would seek to sow terror and undermine our way of life. The truth of this should be apparent to anyone who ever saw that unforgettable photograph of fire fighter Chris Fields cradling in his arms a tiny victim of the Oklahoma City bombing. Since 1996, the number of weapons of mass destruction threats called into fire fighters, police, and the FBI has increased five-fold. The threat comes not just from conventional weapons like the bomb used in Oklahoma City but from chemical weapons, like the nerve agent that killed 12 and injured thousands in the Tokyo subway in 1995, and even from biological weapons that could spread deadly disease before

anyone realizes an attack has occurred.

I have been stressing the importance of this issue for some time. As I have said, my aim is to spark not panic but serious, deliberate, disciplined, long-term action--within government and the private sector. Nothing would make me happier than for people twenty years from now to look back and say I was being overly cautious back in 1999. But I believe we must be better prepared.

Last fall, the Attorney General announced plans to create a National Domestic Preparedness Office, a "one stop shop" where state and local first responders can get the equipment, training, and guidance they need from a variety of federal agencies. I proposed and Congress agreed to a 39 percent increase in resources for chemical and biological weapons preparedness. In the budget I submitted last month I asked Congress for \$10 billion to combat terrorism, including nearly \$1.4 billion to protect citizens against chemical and biological terrorism--more than double what we spent on such efforts two years ago.

Today, I want to announce the specifics of our domestic anti-terrorism initiatives that will most affect the people in this room. First, equipment. Later this year, the Justice Department will provide \$69.5 million in grants to all 50 states and the largest municipalities to buy everything from protective gear to chemical-biological detection devices. Next month, we will ask you to tell us what you need.

Second, training. Later this year the Justice Department will invest \$16 million to establish specialized training centers for state and local first responders. Justice will spend \$5 million to continue awareness training for fire fighters and EMS personnel at the local level. FEMA will provide \$4 million in new training grants to state fire training centers, and \$8 million in grants to state emergency management centers. And the Department of Defense will spend an additional \$46 million to train fire fighters in 33 more cities. All of these resources will be accessible through the National Domestic Preparedness Office.

Third, special response teams. The Department of Health and Human Services has helped 27 metropolitan areas develop specially-trained and equipped medical response teams that can be deployed at a moment's notice in the event of chemical or biological attack. These teams, composed of local medical personnel, will get to the scene quickly, work closely with fire fighters and police, and ensure that patients are safely transported to hospitals. Our goal is a response team in each of the nation's major metropolitan areas, and my new budget moves us in that direction. But the need is too urgent to wait for Congress to act on the budget at the end of the year. Therefore, Secretary Shalala will notify Congress today that she plans to spend an additional \$11 million this year to create medical response teams in 12 more metropolitan areas, including Salt Lake City, home of the 2002 Winter Olympics.

Fourth, governance. Later this year the Department of Defense will name members of a new Weapons of Mass Destruction Advisory Panel. Three of the 17 panel members will be fire fighters. And next month, the National Domestic Preparedness Office will hold a conference with fire and police chiefs and hazardous materials experts to develop guidelines for dealing with biological and chemical threats and incidents.

With action in these four areas to better equip and train fire fighters and other first responders we can save lives and show terrorists that assaults on America will accomplish nothing but their own downfall.

I was surprised to learn that today is the first time a President has ever addressed the IAFF in person. I will venture a prediction: the next President who addresses you will be the man you endorsed earlier this year, Al Gore. The IAFF has hardly gone unnoticed by past Presidents. On August 1, 1952, President Harry Truman sent a letter to IAFF President John P. Redmond, in which he described your union in plain words that I cannot improve upon. “Your members are at their posts day and night, ready to accept the call of duty and to protect the lives and property of their fellow citizens. They do so at risk of life and limb. For their devotion and heroism, they deserve the praise of all Americans.”

Thank you and God bless you.

SUMMARY OF BIOTERRORISM FY 2000 BUDGET PROPOSALS

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

The FY 2000 budget includes a total of \$230 million, an increase of \$72 million for the HHS anti-bioterrorism initiative, to be invested in:

Vaccine Research and Development. The Administration's FY 2000 budget proposes that Department of Health and Human Services receive an additional \$43.4 million for research and development to defend against biological weapons -- almost a 150% increase. The bulk of it -- \$30 million -- will go to research on new vaccines, including vaccines for smallpox and anthrax for eventual use in the national medical stockpile. The Food and Drug Administration will receive \$13.4 million for enhanced regulatory review of vaccines and therapeutics. In addition, the National Institutes of Health will receive \$24 million for research on diagnostics, vaccines, antimicrobials and genomic research.

Public Health Surveillance. The Administration's FY 2000 budget proposes that funding for improvements in the public health surveillance system and public health infrastructure increase by 22% to \$86 million. This will translate into increased lab capacity, strengthened epidemiological capabilities for state and local health departments and more resources for communications and information technology. The Center for Disease Control will create a network of regional labs to provide rapid analysis and identification of select biological agents.

Metropolitan Medical Response Systems. The Administration's FY 2000 budget proposes to increase funding by almost 400% over the FY 1999 funding level to more than \$16 million for Metropolitan Medical Response Systems. These local emergency medical teams will respond to a biological or chemical weapons emergency. Twenty-five new such teams will be funded.

AREAS WITH METROPOLITAN MEDICAL RESPONSE SYSTEMS

Currently, the Department of Health and Human Services has funded Metropolitan Medical Response Systems in 35 cities:

Washington DC; Atlanta, GA; New York, NY; Los Angeles, CA; Chicago, IL; Houston, TX; Philadelphia, PA; San Diego, CA; Detroit, MI; Dallas, TX; Phoenix, AZ; San Antonio, TX; San Jose, CA; San Francisco, CA; Baltimore, MD; Indianapolis, IN; Jacksonville, FL; Columbus, OH; Milwaukee, WI; Memphis, TN; Boston, MA; Denver, CO; Anchorage, AK; Honolulu, HI; Kansas City, MO; Miami, FL; Seattle, WA; El Paso, TX; Cleveland, OH; New Orleans, LA; Nashville, TN; Austin, TX; Fort Worth, TX; Oklahoma City, OK; and Portland, OR.

The new \$11 million transfer will fund the development of systems in an additional 12 cities, as well as to enhance the systems that currently exist:

Long Beach, NY; Tucson, AZ; St. Louis, MO; Charlotte, NC; Tidewater, VA; Albuquerque, NM; Oakland, CA; Pittsburgh, PA; Sacramento, CA; Minneapolis, MN; Tulsa, OK; and Salt Lake City, UT.

PRESIDENT CLINTON UNVEILS NEW EFFORTS TO COMBAT TERRORISM IN AN ADDRESS TO THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIREFIGHTERS

In an address to the International Association of Firefighters today, President Clinton announced new steps to provide firefighters and other first responders with the tools they need to defend against terrorist attacks using chemical and biological weapons. These steps, which build on the President's longstanding record and prior budget proposals, include: investing an additional \$11 million this year in rapid medical response teams trained to respond to a biological or chemical weapons emergency; awarding \$21 million in grants to help communities train firefighters and other first responders to respond to bioterrorist attacks; and providing \$73.5 million to communities to purchase protective and communications equipment for emergency response personnel, policemen, and firefighters.

STRONG NEW EFFORTS TO HELP EMERGENCY RESPONSE PERSONNEL COMBAT CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL TERRORISM

America's unrivaled military preparedness means that potential enemies are more likely to resort to terror than to conventional military assault. In addition, new technologies are increasing the ability of terrorists to plan and execute chemical and biological attacks against our cities and citizens. In response, the President announced new steps and highlighted continuing efforts to combat the threat of a chemical or biological terrorist attack, including:

- **Investing an additional \$11 million in Metropolitan Medical Response Systems in FY 1999.** The Department of Health and Human Services plans to invest an additional \$11 million in FY 1999 in new rapid medical response teams trained to respond to a biological or chemical weapons emergency. The Metropolitan Medical Response Systems enhance local emergency response systems by removing victims, administering antidotes, decontaminating affected areas, and providing emergency medical transportation, primary care, hospital based medical care and crisis counseling. This new funding increases the previously planned FY 1999 funding level by almost 400 percent, supporting the development of rapid medical response teams in an additional 12 cities. Today's action takes a significant step towards the Administration's goal of establishing these teams in all of the nation's most densely populated metropolitan areas nationwide.
- **Providing funds to train emergency personnel to respond to chemical and biological attacks.** The Department of Justice will award this month the first funds from a \$21 million initiative to combat weapons of mass destruction by helping states and local communities train local first responders (including firefighters) about responding to bioterrorist and other terrorist attacks. Some of these funds will also enable local communities to expand awareness of the threat of chemical and biological attacks.
- **Giving funds to communities to purchase new equipment for emergency response personnel handling a chemical or biological terrorist attack.** The Department of Justice will make available in April \$73.5 million in grants to states and municipalities to procure equipment to detect chemical or biological agents and protect emergency response personnel and other first responders in the event of a terrorist attack.

BUILDING ON A STRONG COMMITMENT TO PREPARING FOR CHEMICAL OR BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS ATTACKS

- **Providing leadership from the top.** President Clinton signed Presidential Decision Directive 62, in May to define the Administration's policies on preparedness against weapons of mass destruction and other unconventional threats. At that time, he also designated the first National Coordinator to bring together the Federal government's various programs on unconventional threats. The President soon afterward asked for and received a special budget amendment to increase funding for programs to combat biological terrorism. In January, the President announced that his budget calls for over \$10 billion in counterterrorism and related programs, including about \$1.4 billion for programs to defend weapons of mass destruction.
- **Safeguarding our citizens from the threat of deadly weapons.** The President's FY 2000 budget makes a significant investment in new programs to combat unconventional threats. The \$1.4 billion dedicated to preparedness against weapons of mass destruction includes significant increases in funding to research and develop new vaccines and other therapeutics, a network of regional labs to provide rapid analysis of select biological agents, and to make other improvements in the public health surveillance system.
- **Training firemen and other first responders in 52 cities.** The Department of Defense has trained over 15,000 firemen and other first responders in 52 cities to respond to bioterrorist and chemical weapons attacks. The Pentagon also expects to train first responders in 16 more cities before the end of FY 1999. In addition, the Federal Emergency Management Agency will spend \$12 million to help States conduct training exercises and other activities to improve the ability of fire departments and other agencies providing emergency services to respond to a terrorist attack.
- **Soliciting input from stakeholders and working with communities to improve domestic preparedness.** In August 1998, the Attorney General met with firefighters, emergency rescue experts, emergency medical services personnel, public health providers, law enforcement, and local emergency managers, who urged the Administration to establish a "one stop shopping" network to improve domestic preparedness for terrorist attacks. In response to their concerns, the Administration announced plans for the National Domestic Preparedness Office in October 1998, which coordinates Federal, state, and local activities to ensure the effective use of resources.