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**ATTACHMENT
FILE DATE** 3 February 97 20:43

**ATTACHMENT
FILE NAME** FEB03GUI.DOC

NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS GUIDANCE

February 3, 1997

Hong Kong

Peru

Bangladesh

Clearance for White House Visitors

European Trips and Visitors

Northern Ireland

North Korea

Marine Corps Hazing

Eastern Slavonia

Serbia

Bosnia

Saudi Arabia

Haiti

Tony Lake

Iraq

UN/Richardson

Cuba

Algeria

Germany/Scientists

CWC

Russia

Middle East

Gulf War Illnesses

HONG KONG

Q: What is the U.S. reaction to the decision made by the Hong Kong Preparatory Committee to agree with proposals to roll back laws related to civil liberties in Hong Kong?

A: As we have said, the protection of civil liberties is an important element of the 1984 Joint Declaration and the Basic Law for Hong Kong, agreed to by China and the UK. It is vital to continuing confidence in Hong Kong, and to the

continued economic success of Hong Kong. Whether civil liberties are protected in Hong Kong will significantly affect our overall relationship with China.

We remain deeply concerned over attempts to weaken civil liberties and basic freedoms in Hong Kong. Recommendations of the kind passed by the Preparatory Committee do not help foster confidence.

We note that the full Preparatory Committee did not accept fully the recommendations of the legal sub-committee in regard to some of the rights-related legislation. But our concern remains the same -- that the people of Hong Kong be able to make decisions affecting their future and continue to enjoy the political and economic freedoms that have made Hong Kong unique and successful, buttressed by a fair and independent legal system.

We will continue to convey to Chinese authorities in Beijing and to future Hong Kong Government officials as well, the importance the United States attaches to China's actions in upholding the commitments expressed in the Joint Declaration and the Basic Law. NSC Senior Director Sandra Kristoff underscored this point in recent discussions with Chinese foreign ministry officials.

Q: Will the recommendations, if implemented, constitute a breach of the Joint Declaration?

A: As we have said before, the United States generally does not offer legal interpretations of those agreements to which it is not a party. The Joint Declaration is a matter between the UK and China.

The important point is that China made certain commitments to uphold the economic and political freedoms of the people of Hong Kong in those agreements, and we have certain expectations about what those commitments mean.

In particular, we believe strongly that China must honor its pledge to preserve Hong

Kong's human rights, press and individual freedoms after the transition to Chinese sovereignty. These are essential to the people of Hong Kong and to the preservation of Hong Kong's unique political and business environment.

Q: What about restrictions on social groups ties with foreign organizations; will this restrict activities of such groups as the League of Women Voters?

A: Any restriction of the civil liberties enjoyed by the people of Hong Kong is a matter of serious concern, including restrictions on freedom of association.

We note that none of the Preparatory Committee's recommendations have the force of law, and that, even if they are passed by China's legislature, implementation will be the responsibility of the Hong Kong Government. We strongly urge China and the future government of Hong Kong to ensure that the people of Hong Kong have a decisive voice in such matters and that their basic freedoms are respected.

There has already been an active debate of this and other issues in the Hong Kong press -- a process we believe is important and should continue. We urge both the PRC and future Hong Kong government to take full account of the views of Hong Kong people in these matters.

PERU

Background: On Saturday, the Miami Herald reported that Fujimori said there will be no concessions to Lori Berenson, convicted last year on terrorism and treason charges stemming from her involvement with the MRTA. Fuji said: "Now you Americans see what the MRTA is. It's a very dangerous group. When the judges condemned [Berenson], they were not mistaken." He also said: "Lori Berenson was going to participate in an assault on the Peruvian Congress, taking hostages. And if she hadn't been caught and condemned, then she would be inside the

Japanese compound right now. Now I hope the American people will understand that we were right in capturing and condemning her... You are American. You also have the danger of terrorism. So be very careful with people like Berenson. They are able to take bloody and dangerous actions."

Points

☐ Subject was discussed. Noted that we hope President Fujimori will take another look at her case after the hostage crisis is resolved.

[IF ASKED]

☐ Before hostage crisis, Embassy Lima decided to switch to quarterly visits to LB. Consular access has, therefore, not been requested, nor denied. Supplies are being provided through her Peruvian lawyer.

Q: What's the situation in Peru at the Japanese Ambassador's Residence? What is the United States going to do about this situation?

A: We have continued our active and intense consultations with the Governments of Peru and Japan. The President's national security team has kept him fully informed as events there have developed.

This is a very serious situation and lives are obviously at risk. It simply isn't productive for me to address the other questions you have raised.

Q: Does the United States negotiate with hostages or condone those who do?

A: The United States does not condone making concessions to terrorists, but how to handle negotiations is a sovereign decision for the government involved.

BANGLADESH

FLOTUS Meeting with Bangladeshi Prime Minister

- The First Lady will be meeting with Sheikh Hasina Wajed (WAHjhed), Prime Minister of Bangladesh, at a White House tea on Monday, February 3.
- Sheikh Hasina is in town for the micro-credit summit.
- They first met in Bangladesh during the First Lady's trip to South Asia.
- The meeting is to congratulate the Prime Minister on her June electoral victory as well as to applaud and further encourage Bangladesh's commitment to democracy, their recent moves towards liberalizing the economy and their continuing contributions to international peacekeeping operations.

[Note to briefer: A Presidential drop-by is planned, but may not be on his public schedule.]

CLEARANCE FOR WHITE HOUSE VISITORS

Q: What role did the NSC have in screening persons who called on the President?

A: The NSC would from time to time be asked whether we were aware of any information that might bear on whether the President should meet with a particular person or not. In almost all cases, the question would be raised in the context of a meeting or event the President might attend with foreign persons. In response, the NSC would review the name in question with the appropriate directorates and, in most cases, and on an informal basis, with the State Department and CIA. I believe we were clear in our responses as to the strength or limitations of the information provided in the time allotted.

Q: Would the NSC recommend, did the NSC recommend, against the President seeing a particular individual?

A: We would make it clear where we thought it important that the President meet with a foreign person, if for example, it would serve a foreign policy

purpose as well as when we thought it better that he not do so from a foreign policy perspective. I should note, however, that in many if not the majority of cases we would in fact not have pertinent information, or the information we did have would be inconclusive.

Q: What you are saying is the White House had no formal process for vetting persons. Shouldn't you have had such a process?

A: As you know, the Chief of Staff has recently directed that such a formal process for reviewing names be implemented. The details of how this will be done are under review.

EUROPEAN TRIPS AND VISITORS

☐ President will travel to Netherlands May 28 for US-EU Summit and Marshall Plan commemoration event. No details yet.

☐ Do not yet know what else POTUS might do on that trip.

☐ Announced on Friday that Portuguese Prime Minister Guterres will be here for meeting and working lunch April 3. Do not yet know what other events will be included in his visit.

☐ Also announced that Spanish President Aznar will be here April 30 for meeting and working lunch. Again, no details available.

If asked about Bruton visit:

☐ Yes, we expect Irish Prime Minister here for annual St. Patrick's Day celebration.

If asked about Simitis visit:

Note: President Clinton met with Greek Prime Minister Simitis in Oval Office on April 9, 1996. Simitis intends to attend an event in New York in early March and has informally inquired about a meeting. We have not responded in any way.

- ☐ We are not aware of any invitation to Greek Prime Minister Simitis.
- ☐ The President had a good meeting with the Prime Minister here in Washington in April of last year.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release February 3, 1997

STATEMENT BY THE PRESS SECRETARY

President Clinton to Visit the Netherlands

President Clinton has accepted an invitation to visit the Netherlands on May 28, 1997 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Marshall Plan and to participate in the United States-European Union summit.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release February 3, 1997

STATEMENT BY THE PRESS SECRETARY

Canadian Prime Minister Chretien to Make Official Visit

In response to an invitation from the President, Canadian Prime Minister Chretien will make his first Official Visit to

Washington

April 8. Mrs. Chretien will accompany the Prime Minister.

The President and the Prime Minister intend to discuss the full range of bilateral and international issues, focusing on how our exceptionally close ties can be deepened as we approach the next century.

The President paid a State Visit to Ottawa in February 1995.

Prime

Minister Chretien and the President have met on several other occasions outside of the United States, most recently at the

November

1996 APEC Leaders Meeting.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release January 31, 1997

STATEMENT BY THE PRESS SECRETARY

Official Working Visit by Spanish President Aznar

President Clinton has invited the President of the Spanish Government, Jose Maria Aznar, to make an official working visit to the United States in the last week of April. The President will host a working luncheon in honor of the Spanish President on April 30, 1997.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release January 31, 1997

STATEMENT BY THE PRESS SECRETARY

Official Working Visit by Portuguese Prime Minister Guterres

The White House is pleased to announce that Prime Minister Antonio Guterres of Portugal has accepted President Clinton's invitation for an official working visit to Washington the first week of April. The President will meet with Prime Minister Guterres in the White House and continue discussions at a working luncheon in his honor on April 3, 1997.

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NORTHERN IRELAND

Visa Waiver for Sean O'Callaghan)

- ☐ Yes, Administration has granted visa waiver for Sean O'Callaghan. He is a former IRA operative who was convicted of terrorist crimes and served a prison sentence. He is therefore ineligible for visa and needs waiver.
- ☐ Issuance of visa waivers is a discretionary decision by the Administration.
- ☐ In making decision, Administration took into account Mr. O'Callaghan's unequivocal repudiation of terrorism and violence. He has severed his connection with the IRA and is an advocate of a non-violent solution to the problems of Northern Ireland..
- ☐ Mr. O'Callaghan is now a columnist for the London Sunday Times, which is sponsoring his trip to the U.S.

Parades Commission Report

Background: Last summer after the civil unrest over marches in Drumcree, the British set up a panel headed by Oxford don Peter North to recommend how to handle parades in the future.

The North report, just released, recommends that a commission be set up with, inter alia, the authority to make decisions on controversial parades. In its January 30 reaction to the report, the British Government neither accepted nor rejected the recommendation for a commission with decision-making powers but initiated an 8-week consultation period on this aspect of the report.

☐ North Review offers valuable insights and recommendations to deal with the very controversial and divisive question of parades and marches in Northern Ireland, particularly during summer "marching season."

☐ Report recommends establishment of independent parades commission. Pleased that British Government moving to set one up. Very much hope it can be up and running in time to make a difference and help avoid a repeat of last summer's bitter confrontations.

☐ Last summer's events cost the people of Northern Ireland dearly, both economically and politically. Vital for future political progress in Northern Ireland that new ways be found to meet needs of both communities and avoid annual confrontations.

Adams Refused Visa?

Background: Two London newspapers reported over the weekend that the White House has advised Gerry Adams he will not get a visa until the IRA reinstates its cease-fire. One paper sourced "officials of the NSC"; the other diplomats in London.

☐ Mr. Adams has not/not applied for a visa. Since there is no application, the Administration has made no decision.

☐ If pressed: As in the past, an application for a visa waiver by Mr. Adams would be decided on basis of whether it could contribute to search for lasting peace in Northern Ireland.

Loyalist Cease-fire Intact?

□ Up to British and Irish governments and participating parties to decide who participates in talks.

□ As President said in statement yesterday, we urge loyalists to maintain their cease-fire. There has been no claim of responsibility for car bomb attacks and there is no doubt loyalists have shown restraint in response to escalating IRA violence.

Recent Attacks

□ Condemn this latest attack. Thankfully, no serious injuries, but shows wanton disregard for human life.

□ Call again on IRA to declare and implement immediate cease-fire in words and deeds. People of Ireland, North and South, clearly want peace, political settlement.

Belfast Talks

□ Belfast talks, chaired by Senator Mitchell and his colleagues, represent historic opportunity and best hope in decades for achieving lasting settlement. Talks will reconvene for bilateral consultations January 13, in plenary January 27.

□ Must not squander progress of last months. Urge all political leaders to take responsibility for making these talks work. Need to move quickly into substantive negotiations on future of Northern Ireland.

□ Continue to believe that participation of all elected parties, including Sinn Fein, would give talks best chance of success; that can only happen with cease-fire.

□ Impressed with commitment and determination both governments have shown in search for peace. They and we share goal of inclusive negotiations on future of Northern Ireland, which can only happen if there is an IRA cease-fire.

Was 1994 IRA cease-fire "fake" as Prime Minister Major has alleged?

☐ Cease-fire from August 1994 to February 1996 saved hundreds of lives. I strongly condemned end of that cease-fire and I continue to call on IRA to declare new cease-fire immediately.

How Will You Know a New Cease-fire is Real?

☐ Will be up to British and Irish governments to evaluate new cease-fire; but as both Taoiseach and Prime Minister Major have said, will depend on both words and actions on ground.

Deportation Proceedings Against Matt Morrison

☐ Have been assured by Justice that these proceedings being handled fairly. Judicial matter - don't want to comment further.

NORTH KOREA

Postponement of Joint Briefing

☐ Last week the North Koreans informed us that they were unprepared to attend the joint briefing as originally scheduled for 29 January and then postponed to 5 February.

☐ We have noted press reporting indicating the North will participate in the joint briefing when it "gets a good result from the Cargill talks."

☐ The discussions that the DPRK holds with U.S. commercial firms are private ones to which the U.S. government is not a party.

☐ We are disappointed, but the U.S. and ROK proposal for four-party peace talks and a joint U.S.-ROK briefing to the DPRK remain valid.

Food Shortages

☐ We believe that there is a serious food problem in North Korea, as there was last year.

☐ Our policy is to review requests for assistance from international organizations as a

humanitarian issue and on a case-by-case basis.

☐

Taiwan-North Korea Nuclear Waste Deal

☐ The U.S. believes that any international shipment and storage of nuclear waste must meet the relevant international standards, as defined by the IAEA.

☐ The nuclear waste involved in the proposed Taiwan-North Korea deal is not a proliferation concern, but could present an environmental hazard if not transported and stored properly.

☐ We encourage Taiwan and North Korea to work with the IAEA to satisfy the international community (especially concerned countries in the region) that this proposed deal meets international standards.

☐ We note that strong concerns have been expressed within the region about this shipment, and believe these should be considered in reaching a final decision.

MARINE CORPS HAZING INCIDENTS

Background: NBC "Dateline" obtained videotapes of 1991 and 1993 "blood winging ceremonies" for Marines who qualified for their gold parachute wings at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. During these incidents, gold jump wings were physically pinned to a Marine's chest (not their uniforms).

☐ Hazing (as occurred in these incidents four and six years ago) is not tolerated in today's military. In recent years, the Marine Corps and the Department of Defense as a whole have taken aggressive steps to eliminate hazing through strong policy guidance, sound leadership and discipline for those who disregard the policy.

☐ Refer questions on specifics to DoD.

EASTERN SLAVONIA

□ We strongly condemn last Friday's attack on UNTAES soldiers by a Serbian gunman. We offer our deepest condolences to the family of the Belgian soldier killed in the incident and extend our hope for a speedy recovery to the other two soldiers injured in the attack.

□ This appears to have been an isolated act perpetrated by a single individual. The suspected gunman has been arrested and is in police custody under UNTAES supervision.

□ This was the first attack on UNTAES troops since they began operations in Eastern Slavonia over one year ago. UN military forces and the regional police force, under the supervision of the UN are working to insure that such incidents do not become a pattern. We would also expect the parties to do their part to reduce tensions and take actions to prevent further violence.

SERBIA/KOSOVO

Serbian Elections -- General

□ We condemn the aggressive use of force by Serbian police against demonstrators in Belgrade in recent days. The use of violent tactics by Serbian authorities will only further their international isolation. We continue to hope that this situation can be resolved without violence and that the people of Serbia will be vindicated in their desire for the implementation of democratic norms and processes.

□ Although Serbian authorities have made announcements that appear to concede opposition victories in some municipalities, the regime continues to stall for time with legal tactics; we remain skeptical until the duly-elected members of the opposition are able to take their seats and begin work.

□ It remains that Serbian authorities must implement the OSCE

Gonzalez report
recommendations and recognize all opposition victories in the
November 17 elections. Until
Milosevic recognizes the will of the Serbian people, he will
remain isolated.

☐ We and our allies remain engaged in seeking ways to gain
Milosevic's acceptance of the
election results as an essential step for the resolution of the
situation in Serbia and are
considering a number of possible steps to put additional pressure
on Belgrade. We will not
be satisfied until the people of Serbia are vindicated in their
desire for the implementation of
democratic norms and processes.

☐ We are also moving forward with a plan of action to support
democratization in Serbia. We
are considering a number of actions ranging from economic and
political measures to
democracy building initiatives as well as continuing to support
the important roles of
international organizations such as the OSCE.

If asked about Sanctions:

☐ We are not actively pursuing the reimposition of sanctions at
this time, but are taking other
steps to convince Milosevic to accept the will of the Serbian
people.

Kosovo

☐ We remain concerned about the tense situation in Kosovo and have
urged all parties to
exercise maximum restraint in order to avoid violence.

☐ We deplore the continuing Serbian government repression and are
calling for the restoration
of full human and political rights for the people of Kosovo. We
have actively worked to help
the people of Kosovo, by providing direct humanitarian assistance
and by pressuring the
Serbian government to reverse its repressive policies.

☐ We have maintained the outer wall of sanctions, which is
directly linked to the restoration of
full human and political rights in Kosovo.

☐ At the same time, we do not support the independence of Kosovo

and do not recognize the unofficial parallel institutions that have been created.

BOSNIA

Brcko Arbitration

☐ The parties agreed at Dayton to binding arbitration of the disputed portion of the inter-entity boundary line in the Brcko area. The issue is in the hands of the Arbitral Tribunal, consisting of arbitrators from the two Bosnian entities and the internationally-appointed arbiter Roberts Owen. There is no U.S. proposal for a Brcko solution; we support the arbitration process.

☐ A decision is to be rendered by the Arbitral Tribunal by February 15. The Tribunal has been holding hearings in recent weeks including representatives of the Bosnian Federation and Republika Srpska.

☐ The U.S. and other Contact Group member states are aware of ideas under consideration by the Arbitral Tribunal, since the international community may need to move quickly to provide support for implementation of the Brcko solution. The Arbitral Tribunal is continuing its work, and we await the decision.

If asked whether a decision by the Tribunal is likely to trigger confrontations in the ZOS

☐ The parties agreed at Dayton to binding arbitration of the disputed portion of the inter-entity boundary line in the Brcko area. At tribunal hearings in recent weeks, views of all parties have been exchanged and will be taken into consideration in the Tribunal's decision. We recognize that the decision may cause an increase in tensions, but we will insist and expect the parties to peacefully cooperate with the Tribunal's decision.

If asked whether SFOR, which is smaller than IFOR, will be able to quell unrest should it erupt

☐ In developing SFOR's mission, NATO commanders established SFOR force requirements based on the forces that will be needed to fully perform its mission, which includes deterring a resumption of hostilities and providing a secure environment for greater progress on civilian implementation. SFOR planners were well aware of the tensions surrounding the Brcko decision in developing the force requirements.

Situation in Gajevi

☐ Calm has been restored to the area and we understand that settlers have begun to return and are following agreed procedures. We will continue to insist that refugees and displaced persons that follow the agreed procedures are allowed to return to their homes.

☐ We remain concerned about the potential for the use of violence or intimidation against returning refugees and displaced persons and the possibility of further confrontations in the Zone of Separation. SFOR and the IPTF are taking additional security measures to avoid the potential for additional violence around Gajevi.

☐ We are continuing to monitor the situation and will continue to insist that the right of refugees and displaced persons to return to their homes is respected. We are encouraged that Bosniaks appear to be returning peacefully and that the Bosnian Serb leadership joined us in condemning the recent attacks promised to take action against those responsible.

War Criminals

☐ We remain deeply concerned with lack of progress on war crimes front in Bosnia. Achieving justice is part of achieving an enduring peace.

☐ We're examining variety of ways we can help the Tribunal to bring indicted war criminals to justice. One possible option is to set up a special police force to assist the Tribunal in apprehending indicted war criminals. Such a force would not include SFOR personnel. We have made no decisions on how to assist the Tribunal. We are reviewing many different

options.

☐ While international military forces in Bosnia will detain war criminals if, in the course of normal duties, they encounter those under indictment, it is not the role of SFOR to hunt down war criminals.

Iranian Influence in Bosnia

☐ Iranian influence in Bosnia has been an ongoing concern, but we have taken effective measures to cut Iranian links.

☐ We have enforced the Dayton agreement ban on foreign forces and insisted that Bosnian government sever all military and intelligence links with Iran as a condition of the train and equip program. As the President certified in June, those conditions have been met. There have been no indications since June that military or intelligence cooperation has resumed.

☐ Hundreds of Iranian Revolutionary Guards have left Bosnia, Mujahadeen units have disbanded, and the Bosnians are looking to the U.S. and moderate Islamic states for security assistance.

☐ We remain concerned about Iranian influence and continue to watch the situation closely. Overall, we and the intelligence community assess that Iranian influence has substantially diminished since the implementation of Dayton and since we tied the issue to the train and equip program.

New Bosnia Mission/SFOR -- General

☐ The NATO-led Stabilization Force (SFOR) mission started December 20. SFOR's limited and focused mission will allow time to consolidate the peace built by the success of IFOR.

☐ The Stabilization Force is about half IFOR's size. U.S. share is less than half last year's commitment -- about 8500 troops inside Bosnia.

☐ The NATO plan for SFOR includes more limited set of military and supporting tasks than

IFOR, reflecting the more narrow mission of this smaller force. With fewer troops, SFOR will focus more on security, including force protection, and will be less involved in civilian tasks.

SFOR Mission Duration

☐ 18 months will give sufficient extra time needed for civilian implementation efforts on economic reconstruction, refugee return, and related issues needed to ensure a self-sustaining peace.

☐ We will review every 6 months to see if we can accomplish mission with fewer forces. SFOR will gradually shift responsibilities to civilian agencies and the parties themselves while moving from stabilization to deterrence to disengagement.

If pressed on whether this means that the U.S. has ruled out participation of U.S. forces after completion of SFOR mission:

☐ We believe that SFOR's mission can be completed in 18 months, and that the conditions will have been established in which stability and security can be maintained without an outside military presence.

If pressed whether the U.S. will insist that any force after 18 months will be European only:

☐ I'm not going to speculate about such scenarios. We believe the mission will be completed in 18 months.

If pressed whether every last soldier will be out of Bosnia in exactly 18 months:

☐ 18 months is the duration of the mission and the deployment, but not necessarily a deadline for withdrawal of the last SFOR soldier. Withdrawal at 18 months will occur in a timely fashion but may extend some days or weeks beyond the mission duration.

Train and Equip Program (Post)

☐ The international Train and Equip program is ongoing and is a

key success and a major step toward establishing a stable military balance in Bosnia, which is one of the keys to establishing a lasting peace in the region.

☐ The program's extensive training effort involves 170 U.S. contracted trainers, funded by international donations, and additional offers of training assistance from our allies in Europe and moderate Islamic states. The Federation has taken delivery of U.S. equipment from our \$100 million drawdown for Bosnia under the program and is receiving security assistance and equipment donations from moderate Islamic states.

☐ The T&E program continues to facilitate concrete progress in the formation of joint Federation defense structures that will be critical to strengthening the Bosniak-Croat Federation.

SAUDI ARABIA

F-16 Sales to Saudi Arabia

- ☐ No official request has been received.
- ☐ When and if we do receive a Saudi request, it will be examined in the usual manner by State and Defense, who will make recommendations to the President.
- ☐ We have a long-standing arms supply relation with Saudi Arabia and their security is vitally important to us, but no decisions have been made at this time on any major new weapons sale.

Saudi Cooperation with FBI

Q: What are you doing to get Saudi Arabia to cooperate with the FBI on the Khobar Towers bombing investigation?

A: The FBI is in charge of that investigation for the U.S.

I understand that they are in a dialogue with the Saudis

about what additional specific materials and cooperation they seek.

We have assurances from the highest levels in the Kingdom that we will get full cooperation and we expect that such assurances will be honored.

Q: What's your reaction to allegations that the al-Khobar bombing involved Iranians?

A: There is an investigation under way.

I'm not going to speculate about hypothetical outcomes to this investigation.

Nor am I going to speculate about hypothetical responses once this investigation is complete.

Q: Was there an Iranian or Syrian role?

A: We have reached no conclusions.

Q: If Iran was behind it, will we still attack Iran as Secretary Perry said last summer?

A: This is hypothetical and I'm not going to respond. But if you ask whether the U.S. responds to those who are proven to have attacked it, the record of this Administration is clear.

But I must stress that we have reached no conclusion about state sponsorship in the Khobar attack.

HAITI

Administration Efforts to Deal with Political Violence in Haiti

Broad Context

□ From its first days in 1993, the Clinton Administration has sought to end political violence and restore democracy in Haiti.

□ Political violence was a horrifying, frequent occurrence

during the de facto regime; according to local and international human rights groups, thousands of people were killed, tortured, beaten or imprisoned.

□ When international political and economic pressure failed to dislodge the de facto regime, the President decided to intervene militarily.

□ As part of the preparatory effort, the President ordered a broad-gauged plan to support the restoration of democracy by helping to create a new security/public safety structure, supporting a renewal of democratic political institutions and elections, and assisting with the establishment of the foundation for a viable economy.

□ Two years later, while many challenges remain, real progress has been made toward these goals. Former President Aristide returned peacefully. He abolished the repressive Armed Forces and worked to establish Haiti's first professional and apolitical police force. Three national elections occurred and were judged generally free and fair by international monitors (although logistical problems marred the first legislative contest). A new parliament is in place, and a democratically elected president succeeded another for the first time in Haitian history. Efforts to stabilize the economy continue with widespread international economic support.

Aggressively Targeting Political Violence

□ Throughout this period, the Administration has pursued a diplomatic and intelligence effort to identify threats to democracy and stability in Haiti. While the primary threat to democracy immediately after the military intervention was deemed to be from the right, the Administration was alert to the possibility of continued official involvement in political violence.

□ One important objective of this multi-faceted effort was to urge the Government of Haiti to investigate and remove individuals in the government reportedly involved in political violence or corruption.

- As a result of its efforts, the US was able to identify a number of individuals associated with political violence and corruption, and senior US officials effectively pressed the Government of Haiti to remove the personnel identified.
- President Clinton, Vice President Gore and other senior members of the Administration, including Secretary of State Christopher, US Permanent Representative to the UN Albright, National Security Advisor Lake, Deputy Secretary of State Talbott and others traveled to Haiti and raised these issues with senior levels of the Haitian Government.
- By March 1996, most of those then identified within the government as having been implicated in political violence were removed from official positions.

Building Law Enforcement Institutions

- The US has also played a major role in helping the Haitian Government create and train a wholly new police force, for the first time in Haiti's history. Although it still has a long way to go and requires much additional training and equipment, the new force's deployment represents a major departure from past practices.
- Initially, the Administration took the lead in organizing and overseeing an interim security force and in creating and training a new Haitian National Police mostly from raw recruits. Both units were carefully screened by the U.S. and UN to keep out known human rights abusers and criminals. Despite these efforts, some problems persist with the force.
- By June 1996, 5200 new police were trained and deployed through the ICITAP program of the US Department of Justice. UN civilian police advisers provide on-the-job training.
- With strong Administration encouragement, President Aristide established, and President Preval has strengthened, a Special Investigative Unit, with US and UN police advisers, to investigate possible political killings. This unit, while

limited in effectiveness to date, provides an institutional mechanism to tackle the problem of official impunity.

□ Preval has also appointed, and the Haitian Senate has confirmed, a new Director-General of Haitian Police, Pierre Denize, who is untainted by charges of human rights abuses or corruption. Denize, in turn, has reappointed a tough-minded Inspector General, Eucher Joseph, who has recommended severe disciplinary measures on police officials involved in the abuse of authority.

□ The Government has adopted a new set of standards for apolitical and merit-based recruitment of mid-level supervisors. Requirements include appearance before an examinations board that include US and UN police representatives, passing a battery of tests and successful completion of a supervisory course at the Police Academy, which emphasizes respect for the due process of law and support for human rights. At present, 54 mid-level supervisors have completed this training.

□ As is to be expected with a brand-new civilian police force in a country which has never had one before, the Haitian Police face many problems. The Police Inspector General has been actively investigating reports of police misbehavior, such as a March 6 incident in a Port-au-Prince slum in which a shoot-out with gang members left a number of civilians dead. The Director General of the Police has given strong support to the Inspector General.

The Bertin Assassination

□ The US tried to prevent the tragic assassination of Madame Mireille Bertin in March 1995 and immediately after it launched a comprehensive effort to identify and bring the perpetrators to justice.

□ When the Multinational Force(MNF) received information of a plot to kill Madame Bertin, US forces arrested and interrogated the alleged conspirators, and the MNF and Embassy asked Aristide and Justice Minister Exume to warn her of the

threat, and we were subsequently assured that they had done so.

□ Mrs. Bertin acknowledged to others that she had been warned by Justice Minister Exume, although she said that he had warned her to leave the country lest she be arrested.

□ After Mrs. Bertin was assassinated, the Administration offered an FBI team to aid in the investigation and dispatched it within hours following a request by Aristide. The FBI assisted with the investigation within the constraints of Haiti's weak criminal justice system. When it became clear the FBI investigation was unlikely to progress further, we worked with the Haitian government to establish an indigenous investigative unit under the Haitian national police. Results of the FBI's Bertin investigation were handed off to this Special Investigations Unit in late 1995.

□ Due to a proliferation of threat reports reaching US officials, the State Department sent instructions to the Embassy in Port-au-Prince to ensure that individuals be warned in the future when there is credible information of a specific threat of physical violence against them.

Responded Rapidly to The Leroy and Florival Murders

□ Based on the circumstances in which opposition leaders Leroy and Florival were murdered on August 20, and given the public allegations of official involvement, we felt strongly that there had to be a rapid and credible investigation.

□ APNSA Lake and Deputy Secretary Talbott delivered exactly that message when they traveled to Port-au-Prince on August 30 to meet with President Preval. Preval made clear his conviction there could be no room in his security force for those linked to crime, corruption or violation of human rights.

□ President Preval also agreed that in order for an investigation to be credible, those individuals perhaps linked to the murders of August 20 would have to be suspended.

- ☐ At the same time, Preval undertook a reorganization of his Presidential security force in order to bring it up to the same standards of professionalism that apply to the Haitian National Police.
- ☐ To help President Preval carry out the vetting, reorganization and retraining of his security unit, we dispatched a team of 20 State Department Diplomatic Security officers and 12 DoD civilian security personnel to augment the State Department's existing advisory unit.
- ☐ More than one third of the augmented team have completed their mission and returned home. Additional personnel will be withdrawn as the reorganization moves forward.

Results

- ☐ Political violence has been much reduced since the restoration of democracy. Despite the inadequacy of the legal system and the inexperience of its police, violence in Haiti remains far below levels experienced during de facto military rule and the Duvalier era.
- ☐ According to both local and international human rights organizations, Haiti suffered several thousand political murders during the three years of the de facto regime and countless additional beatings and other abuses. In contrast, a 1995 report by the UN/OAS human rights observer mission in Haiti estimated that the total number of killings with possible political or retributive motivation stood at about 24 since Aristide's return.

A Familiar Task

- ☐ The U.S. experience in El Salvador, where we confronted a much more serious problem of official human rights abuse, provides an instructive point of reference. There, as in Haiti, a fundamental objective of U.S. policy was strengthening democracy and supporting the rule of law. In El Salvador, the principles of democracy often ran up against the habits of violence and distrust bred by a long experience with dictatorship.

☐ It took repeated interventions by the most senior officials of the Reagan and Bush administrations to convince the Salvadoran government to put an end to officially-sponsored political violence.

☐ In 1984, Vice President Bush visited San Salvador personally to inform the government that aid would be cut off if the abuses did not stop. In response, the Salvadoran government established a new investigative unit and quietly dismissed or transferred abroad the military officers whom we had identified as possibly linked to political violence.

☐ Five years later, amid an apparent resurgence of death squad activity, it was Vice President Quayle who traveled to San Salvador to deliver the message that the U.S. government would not tolerate such abuses.

☐ We have profited from these experiences, and thanks to those lessons, have been able to come to grips with the problem of political violence in Haiti quickly and decisively.

☐ We have also been fortunate that the government of Haiti itself has been more quick to respond to indications that its officials might be involved in political violence.

TONY LAKE

Stock

Q: What about new stories that Tony Lake held energy stock as late as January of this year, even though he was already under investigation for having held such stock earlier?

A: The fact that Mr. Lake held stock in Williams Company, a natural gas pipeline company, was brought to Mr. Lake's attention when our lawyers noticed the stock on Mr. Lake's most recent financial disclosure form. Mr. Lake said that he was unaware such a stock

had been purchased.

Our lawyers contacted Mr. Lake's financial manager, who confirmed that the stock had been purchased in error in September 1996, without Mr. Lake's knowledge, and that he had already sold it, again without Mr. Lake's knowledge, when he realized he should not have purchased the stock for Mr. Lake.

IF ASKED: We immediately brought this information to the attention of the Justice Department in connection with their ongoing investigation regarding potential conflicts of interest raised by Mr. Lake's previous holdings of energy stock.

Q: Why does Mr. Lake retain the financial advisor despite these mistakes?

A: That is a matter between Mr. Lake and his advisor.

Arms to Bosnia

Q: What is your reaction to the stories regarding Mr. Lake and Mr. Berger and arms to Bosnia?

A: First, there is nothing new in these stories. This matter has been thoroughly reviewed by any number of Committees. This particular report was concluded in October and fully briefed by the Republicans at that time and selectively leaked ever since.

We are proud of our policy in Bosnia, which has brought peace to that country. We did what we thought necessary at the time to preserve the Federation in Bosnia and give that country a chance for peace. We understand that some may disagree with that policy, but it is unfortunate and wrong that anyone would try to turn policy disagreement into criminal accusations in order to gain political advantage.

Mr. Lake is the President's nominee for Director of Central Intelligence. He is uniquely qualified for the post. He will be good for the CIA, good for the President, and good for the country. It is time to put politics aside.

Q: What about the allegation that Mr. Lake was excessively secret and kept the not only the Congress, but also CIA in the dark about what was going on in Bosnia? Is this the man you want running the CIA?

A: As the President has said before, it would have been better to have informed key Members of Congress at the time of our instruction of "no instructions" to Amb. Galbraith in Croatia. Mr. Lake and the President are in agreement on that.

IF ASKED:

Q: Is it true Sandy Berger said it would be "dynamite" to put any of this in writing?

A: As the Republican report itself states, Mr. Berger does not recall making this comment. The concern at the time, as has been explained repeatedly, is that a leak of this sensitive diplomatic exchange would gravely damage our relationship with our allies and undermine NATO.

Q: Did Mr. Lake convey the instruction with a wink and a nod?

A: The instruction was "no instructions."

Q: The reports indicate that Mr. Lake refused to testify under oath, doesn't that suggest that he had something to hide?

A: Nonsense. Based on the constitutional separation of powers it is long-standing practice that the President's senior advisers do not testify, and cannot be compelled testify, before the Congress. While there have been some exceptions over the years to this general rule, the White House Counsel determined that a policy dispute such as this did not warrant an exception and instructed Mr. Lake accordingly.

Mr. Lake did make himself available to brief both the Senate and House committees looking into this matter.

Q: We are told that your staff, or the White House has classified the House report so that embarrassing details regarding this policy will not be revealed. Is that true?

A: No. At the request of the Congress, classification experts from the CIA, Defense Department, and State Department reviewed the document for classified information in both the Republican and Democrat House reports on this matter. Quite frankly, there are intelligence sources and methods that directly relate to the safety of our personnel in Bosnia revealed in the full reports.

Q: You seem to dismiss this matter, but hasn't it been referred to the Justice Department?

A: If the President had thought this was a problem for Mr. Lake, he would not have nominated him for the position of Director of Central Intelligence.

We are proud of our policy in Bosnia, which has brought peace to that country. We understand that some may disagree with that policy, but it is unfortunate and wrong that anyone would try to turn policy disagreement into criminal accusations in order to gain political advantage.

IRAQ

Possible Planned Invasion of Kuwait

Q: What is your reaction to the Washington Post story that Iraq is possibly ready to invade Kuwait again?

A: While Saddam Hussein does have military capabilities which can threaten Kuwait and other neighbors, we have no evidence that Iraq is staging new moves to threaten its neighbors.

I can assure you that we maintain a very close watch over Iraqi military movements and adjust our own military presence in the gulf to counter

potential threats.

Saddam Hussein has intimate familiarity with what we can and have done in response to his threatening military moves in the area. He would do well to keep it in the forefront of his thoughts.

UN/RICHARDSON

Q: Senator Helms alleged today (1/29) that the Administration is trying to bypass his Committee and force through a \$900 million emergency appropriation to repay UN arrears and refuses to condition that emergency appropriation on reforms at the UN. Is this true?

A: No. The Administration is not seeking an emergency appropriation. We want to work with Senator Helms and other members of Congress to develop a bipartisan, effective plan to encourage UN reform and pay off our arrears.

While the President believes that our arrears to the UN and its specialized agencies are an obligation that we should meet and are hurting our ability to lead at the United Nations, he has also said clearly, most recently when UN Secretary General Annan visited last week, that "as a practical matter, I know from consulting with the members of Congress that we won't be able to secure support in the Congress for paying the arrears unless they're convinced that reform is going forward."

The Administration is currently working with Congressional leaders and appropriators, as well as Senator Helms, to develop a plan to encourage UN reforms and to pay off our arrears. The Administration has not yet discussed specifics with Senator Helms, but we look forward to doing so in the near future. As these discussions continue, we will have a better idea what kind of effective and appropriate benchmarks can be agreed upon.

United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan's recent visit

to Washington demonstrated that goodwill exists on both sides of the aisle and on all sides of this issue. With Mr. Annan's leadership of the UN and his commitment to reform, I am convinced that we now have the best chance we've had in years to further the process of UN reform, get the UN on a firm financial footing, and pay off our arrears.

CUBA

OIG REPORT ON OFFICE OF CUBA BROADCASTING

Background: The Office of the Inspector General for State, USIA and ACDA has completed its investigation into allegations that management of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB) took reprisals against employees critical of OCB policies. The report, scheduled to be delivered to the Hill today (Monday, 2/3), says OIG found there is "insufficient credible evidence" to support the reprisals charge but notes that the OIG found a "pattern of personnel mismanagement" during the 1992-94 period it investigated.

Points

- ☐ We welcome the completion by the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) for USIA of its investigation into allegations of management reprisal against five employees in the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB), as well as the recommendations made in the report.
- ☐ The OIG found that there was insufficient evidence to support the OCB employees' allegations of reprisal.
- ☐ The OIG, however, found a pattern of personnel mismanagement for the period in question (1992-94). These deficiencies involved primarily procedures for hiring, evaluating and reassigning staff.
- ☐ We are concerned about such problems and are working hard to identify the additional steps

necessary to resolve those that may remain.

☐ We are committed to OCB's central task -- getting accurate, balanced and timely news to Radio Marti's large audience in Cuba. Radio Marti is an invaluable channel through which we provide news and information that the Castro regime tries so hard to deny the Cuban people.

REPORT ON SUPPORT FOR A DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION IN CUBA

What is this report?

☐ The President has transmitted to Congress a report, mandated by Title II of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act (LIBERTAD), that describes potential U.S. and other international assistance and other support for a transitional or democratic government in Cuba.

☐ The report communicates to the people of Cuba, including individuals in the Cuban government who support democracy, that the U.S. stands ready, along with other democratic nations, to help Cuba overcome the challenges it will face during the transition to democracy.

The Cuban government is calling this report a new violation of Cuba's sovereignty. Should the U.S. be planning Cuba's future?

☐ The report is premised on the fact that it is the Cuban people who must choose when and how a transition takes place, and what their new government's policies and priorities should be.

☐ It emphasizes that the U.S. -- far from threatening Cuba's sovereignty as the Castro regime alleges-- wants to assist Cubans in building an independent, prosperous and free country.

Has the U.S. consulted other countries about their roles in supporting a transition in Cuba?

☐ No formal consultations have taken place, although we have discussed the issue informally with officials of other governments. We look forward to in-depth discussions with

international donors at the appropriate time. We are confident they share our desire to provide Cuba with the help it will need.

Does the U.S. think a transition in Cuba is imminent? Is this report relevant now?

☐ We do not know. Certainly we have seen nothing in the behavior of the Castro regime which suggests that it is prepared to move in this direction. Nevertheless, we do expect a transition to occur at some point, as it has everywhere else in the Soviet empire and the Western Hemisphere, and we hope it will be soon.

☐ This report does not attempt to identify when or how that transition will come. It attempts to look past those uncertainties and discusses what kinds of support other transition and democratic governments typically have sought and what the international community is likely to provide.

Are you expecting this report to expedite a transition? How?

☐ Both the President and Congress want to send the Cuban people a message of hope for their future, and to counter the Cuban government's efforts to create a fear of change.

☐ We do not expect this or any other single step to prompt a transition to democracy in Cuba. Ultimately, it is for the Cuban people to decide when the time has come for democratic change.

Where did the \$4 billion-8 billion figure come from? How much will come from the U.S.?

☐ The assistance total is a rough estimate designed to provide an "order of magnitude" to the U.S. Congress and the Cuban people. We will continue the process of planning for a transition as the situation there evolves.

☐ We cannot say at this point what percentage of assistance the U.S. will provide, but the U.S. can expect to take a lead role among donors, given our obvious geographic and historical ties

to Cuba and interest in supporting a peaceful, democratic transition there.

What kind of reaction do you expect from Congress?

☐ We have worked particularly closely with Representative Robert Menendez of New Jersey, who has long advocated the need for a plan for assistance. We are also briefing other interested members of Congress.

☐ We believe that there is broad support for the report in Congress, and we will continue to work with interested Members on planning for a democratic transition in Cuba.

Would the U.S. provide assistance to a transition government that included Fidel or Raul Castro?
Helms-Burton says you can't.

☐ The LIBERTAD Act does contain that condition. We have no reason to entertain that possibility in any case. There is no reason to believe that Fidel and Raul Castro will undertake real reform.

Will the U.S. withhold assistance until property claims are resolved?

☐ As the report states, we believe that the prompt resolution of U.S. property claims in Cuba is essential. We would have to review at the time a transition was taking place how best to accomplish that, working closely with transition and democratic Cuban governments.

Is the U.S. planning for a violent transition? There's no mention of it here.

☐ Our policy is to promote a peaceful transition to democracy. This report does not address the form a transition would take; it focuses on the broader challenges any transition government could face, and what the U.S. and other donors could do to help.

Isn't this report months late? Were you waiting until after the elections?

☐ The LIBERTAD Act called for the report to be issued in

September, but its preparation required consideration by numerous USG agencies that was not completed until recently. The U.S. elections had no effect on its release date.

Who prepared this report?

☐ The report was drafted by USAID, in collaboration with a number of other U.S. agencies, including the Department of State.

CNN REQUEST TO OPEN BUREAU

Background: After the Cuban government in November approved CNN's request to open a bureau in Havana, CNN renewed its application for a license from Treasury/OFAC license to do so. A half dozen other U.S. news media want to open bureaus, but the GOC has approved only CNN. (FYI ONLY: The Helms-Burton Act contains a provision suggesting that Congressional intent was that the USG not grant any licenses unless the GOC indicates willingness to allow TV/Radio Marti open offices in Cuba, but State and Treasury lawyers have concluded that we have parallel authority to do so.) While most U.S. media favor authorizing CNN's request, views on the Hill and in the Cuban-American community remain mixed. The application is still under active consideration.

Points

- ☐ CNN's application is still under review.
- ☐ Want to ensure that any decision is consistent with U.S. law and our commitment to promote peaceful, democratic transition in Cuba.

ALGERIA

Q: What is your view of the worsening violence in Algeria, marked yesterday (1/28) by the assassination of the Algerian labor leader Abdelhak ben Hamouda?

A: We strongly condemn the acts of terrorism and deplore the loss of life. Our condolences go out to the families of the victims, particularly in this holy month of Ramadan. All elements of Algerian society need to work to end this violence.

If asked about planned elections:

We hope the legislative elections planned for May will contribute to ending the violence, to widen political participation, and to national reconciliation.

Q: What do you think about the request that the U.S. become a mediator in the Algerian crisis?

A: We have not been asked by the government of Algeria to play such a role. The focus should be on the Algerian efforts to end the violence and proceed with political and economic development.

GERMANY AND SCIENTOLOGISTS

[BACKGROUND: The Washington Post reported (1/27) that the State Department's Human Rights Reports -- due to be released on Thursday -- will be highly critical of German discrimination against Scientologists.

USG POSITION: While there are allegations that the Church engages in cult-like practices, and that it uses measures such as blackmail and harassment to keep members in the organization, our position has been that methods used by Germany to address these concerns have been excessive and inconsistent with freedom of religion and expression. State has raised this issue on several occasions with its German counterparts. The OSCE has also expressed concern.

HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT: The reports have noted German abuses over the past several years. This year's report devotes a significantly larger section

to this issue as Germany has stepped up its efforts against Scientologists: language calling for wide ranging surveillance and restrictive measures has appeared in the CDU party platform, and the German Federal Minister of Labor has taken a strong position against scientology. Likewise, discriminatory measures at the state level have been tightened in 1996. NSC/Europe reviewed the 1996 report on Germany and found it fair; it believes that our ongoing discussions with the Germans on this issue have prepared them for this report. It was also vetted by State/EUR.

INTEREST IN THE US: Over the past several months, various members of Congress have written to express their concern about Germany's discriminatory practices. They include Reps. Payne, McKinney, and other Congressional Black Caucus members.]

POINTS

- ☐ Human rights report for 1996 does include somewhat expanded section on Scientology, reflecting increased intensity of German actions affecting the organization and its members.
- ☐ Since report has not even been conveyed to Congress, urge you to read it when it is published in February.
- ☐ Overall, report on Germany paints picture of a thriving democracy with a superlative record on human rights -- where free speech is respected, judiciary is independent, ethnic minorities are treated fairly and where more refugees and asylum-seekers live in freedom than in any other nation in Western Europe.
- ☐ If pressed: Overall report outlines what we view as unsettling pattern of discrimination against Scientologists. Notes new developments in 1996 such as boycott in some German states of "Mission Impossible." Also notes resolution by one of members of governing coalition urging government to place organization under observation.
- ☐ Have been positive developments too. Ministry of Interior, under which Germany's FBI-equivalent falls, issued report noting there is no

legal basis, no evidence, which would allow Scientologists to be placed under observation.

CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION

- ☐ The President is committed to working with the Senate to secure the ratification of the CWC.
- ☐ We have been actively and regularly working with interest groups and the general public to educate them on the importance of this treaty.
- ☐ The meeting with Senator Lott was useful. He has committed to organizing a meeting with members in order to begin discussions on how we might bridge the gap between those who support the treaty and those who have difficulties with it. (IF ASKED: Specifically, we will discuss possible amendments to the resolution of ratification -- not to the treaty itself.)
- ☐ You would have to ask the Senator about the Senate calendar. We emphasized to him the importance of an early vote.
- ☐ As to whether or not he supports the treaty, I would, again, direct you to his office and to remarks he made at his Tuesday press conference.

RUSSIA/NIS

Current Items

Yeltsin Health/Clinton-Yeltsin Meeting/Chernomyrdin Suggests Moscow Venue

- ☐ President and Yeltsin agreed in December 5 phone conversation to meet in March timeframe; have not yet fixed specific date or venue for meeting. Expect this to be topic on Gore-Chernomyrdin agenda February 5-8.

What if Yeltsin Unable to Meet for Reasons of Health?

☐ As Russian government spokesman stated; he continues to recover from November surgery, recent illness. Note French president Chirac's comments after visiting him in Moscow February 2 -- "Yeltsin doing very well."

☐ Have heard nothing to indicate Yeltsin unable to meet in March timeframe.

☐ Personal contact between two leaders important, as we look ahead to work with Russia on wide range of issues -- American investment, arms control, European security structures. Our agenda very comprehensive.

☐ But we work this agenda at wide variety of levels, throughout two governments; will continue to do that.

Recent Duma Vote on Yeltsin "Incapacity," to Govern, Prolonged Absence

☐ Our understanding these resolutions (on health determinations) have no legal, constitutional validity; second vote (on another version of resolution) did not pass.

☐ Not appropriate for me to speculate on parliamentary activities in Russia.

Elections in Chechnya

☐ OCSE announced elections conducted fairly. Welcome fact that election proceeded in smoothly, without violence. Hope this will contribute to process between Moscow and Chechnya of finding peaceful and durable resolution of their differences.

NATO-Russia Talks

☐ In preparing for upcoming meetings between Presidents Clinton and Yeltsin, and between Vice President and Chernomyrdin, we are exploring several ideas to develop strong NATO-Russia relationship,

☐ NATO Secretary General Solana and Foreign Minister Primakov had good discussion last month on future NATO-Russia relations; to meet again week of

February 20 in Brussels.

☐ Talbott-Fuerth in Moscow January 22-24; had extensive discussions on European security and other U.S.-Russian issues in preparation for Gore-Chernomyrdin and Clinton-Yeltsin meetings. Positive tone.

General Issues

Russia-NATO

☐ Understand enlargement difficult issue for Russia, but U.S., NATO and Russia have interests in developing NATO-Russia relationship and broadening cooperation.

☐ Serious dialogue on NATO-Russia relationship underway.

☐ U.S. determined to proceed with NATO enlargement. Believe that is in interests of European security and stability. Equally determined to manage enlargement process in manner that does not threaten Russia and to do all that we can to build strong NATO-Russia relationship.

Prospects for Russian Ratification of START II Treaty

☐ Treaty faces ratification vote in Duma; parliamentary prerogative to debate its merits. While some may oppose Treaty, Russian government committed to ratification.

☐ START II in best interests of both countries, should be ratified by Russia.

If asked: is Administration planning to leap ahead" to START III:

☐ As Secretary Perry made clear last fall in Moscow, U.S. prepared to begin negotiations on further reductions in nuclear forces once START II has entered into force.

☐ Have no intention, however, of setting aside START II and moving ahead instead with negotiations on "START III." Entry into force of START II remains essential prerequisite to further reductions in nuclear forces.

MIDDLE EAST

VISITS BY LEADERS TO CONSULT ON PEACE PROCESS

-- As the President noted in his press conference on January 28, four Middle Eastern leaders will be coming to Washington over the next two months to consult with him on the peace process.

-- The schedule of visits is:

- Prime Minister Netanyahu - February 13
- Chairman Arafat - March 3
- President Mubarak - March 10
- King Hussein - March 18

-- Background Only: Visit by Prince Sultan (Saudi Arabia) should not be referred to in same category as these visits; he's being invited by Cohen (DOD) for Feb. 25th. Will meet President while here.

ISRAEL/OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

Background: In October 1995, the GOI requested the extradition of Mousa Mohammed Abu Marzook to stand trial in Israel for manslaughter, murder, grievous harm and wounding, harm with aggravating intent, harm and wounding under aggravating circumstances, and conspiracy to commit a felony, in violation of the Israel Penal Code. Abu Marzook is the head of the political bureau of Hamas.

Abu Marzook was found extraditable by a U.S. court in New York on May 8, 1996. Further proceedings in the extradition case were stayed while he exercised his right to challenge the finding of extraditability. Press reports this week indicate that he may now withdraw his legal challenges. If he does so, the extradition process will resume.

Q: What is the status of the extradition Matter of Abu Marzook?

A: We have seen press reports that Mr. Abu Marzook has withdrawn his legal challenge to the order finding him extraditable. This is within Mr. Abu Marzook's rights and entirely his own choice. We would refer you to the Justice Department for any further comments.

Q: What about Hamas threats against U.S.? Will Marzook be treated humanely if extradited?

A: We, of course, reject any such threats. As in all cases, our extraditions take place based on the rule of law and assurances from the requesting government on appropriate treatment.

SETTLEMENTS AN "OBSTACLE TO PEACE"?

Q: President Clinton seemed to say December 16 that settlements are an obstacle to peace in the Middle East. Is that the U.S. position?

A: The U.S. position is that settlement activity complicates the negotiating process and increases tension.

We have previously expressed concern that when one party to a negotiation says things or does things which are seen to preempt the negotiating process, it makes it that much harder for negotiations to succeed.

In that vein, the President was making the obvious point that when one party does something that is seen by the other as preempting negotiations it can become a problem or an obstacle to progress in those negotiations.

So, yes we are troubled by some of the recent settlement activity, and we've said so.

The President's response reflected his concern about the impact of settlement activity.

It's important to focus on that concern.

[If asked]:

Q: Does the President's response indicate a change in policy?

A: As I said, his response reflected his concern about the impact of settlement activity. It's important to focus on that concern. The comments did not signal a fundamental change in the nature of that concern.

LEGALITY OF SETTLEMENTS

Q: Prime Minister Netanyahu has made it clear that he subscribes to the view that as a matter of legal right, Jews and Israelis have a legal right to settle on the West Bank? Is that your understanding of the legalities?

A: I'm not going to get drawn into a discussion of the legal aspects of what is obviously a highly political issue. It is an issue, furthermore, that the Israelis and Palestinians recognize is difficult and therefore left for their permanent status negotiations. It is abundantly clear, however, that settlement activity, and even announcements of plans for possible future settlement activity, complicates the climate and the process of negotiation. When either party says things or does things that are perceived as prejudging the outcome of a negotiation, it makes it that much more difficult to achieve progress.

Q: But what about the precise question of the legality of settlement activity?

A: As I said, I'm not going down that road. We need to keep our focus on assisting the parties in their negotiations.

Q: Do you or don't you differentiate between new and old settlements?

A: I've just explained what our position is and I referred to "settlement activity." I'm not going to comment further.

Q: The Israelis claim that you didn't complain about settlement activity during the Rabin Government, so why are you making this an issue now?

A: We said the same thing during the time of the Labor

government.

JERUSALEM

Q: What is your reaction to Prime Minister Netanyahu's statement that Israel will not negotiate over the status of Jerusalem?

A: Our views have not changed. Israel and the Palestinians have agreed that Jerusalem is one of the issues for permanent status negotiations.

(If pressed) Our position on the status of Jerusalem is well-known.

Jerusalem is one of the most sensitive and volatile issues in the peace process. We remain convinced that it is unwise for the United States to take actions that could be interpreted as prejudicing these sensitive matters, such as Jerusalem, which Israel and the Palestinians themselves have formally agreed to discuss only in the context of direct, permanent status negotiations.

PEACE PROCESS

☐ There has been no change in the U.S. position on land-for-peace or anything else as a result of the Israeli elections. We have supported this principle and will continue to do so. At the same time, our experience makes clear that agreements are reached not through recitation of abstract principles, but through the hard work of direct negotiation. Syria and Israel agreed at Madrid to negotiate on the basis of resolutions 242 and 338. They should resume those negotiations to overcome their differences.

☐ Obviously, if progress is to be made, if differences are to be overcome, each side must take into account the needs and interests of the other.

☐ Peace is not an abstraction. Peace is closely tied to security and only the parties directly concerned can make the critical decisions which affect their future. The United States can't make these decisions for them. We will not try to impose decisions upon Israel or any other party to the peace process.

☐ That doesn't mean that the US, as the facilitator of the peace process, does not have views. It has been and remains our view that the land-for-peace formula offers the most promise for a workable solution to the problems of war and peace in the Middle East. But agreements will come not as a result of our views, but as a result of negotiations between the parties.

PALESTINIAN COMPLIANCE ON REVOCATION OF PALESTINIAN COVENANT

☐ We have welcomed the decision taken by the Palestinian National Council to cancel the provisions of the Covenant which contradict the formal undertakings made between the PLO and the Israeli government.

U.S. EMBASSY IN TEL AVIV

☐ Recognize what is required by the law passed by Congress requiring that the U.S. Embassy be transferred to Jerusalem. But at the same time, the President has made it clear that he will take no step that will undermine the peace process or jeopardize the negotiations. In this regard, the legislation provides a waiver provision that may be used by the President as necessary or appropriate to ensure that no steps are taken that could preempt or jeopardize the peace process.

ORIENT HOUSE

☐ Our position regarding U.S. contacts at Orient House has not changed. We do business with the Palestinian Authority only in Gaza and Jericho, not in Jerusalem. Would encourage all parties to concentrate on the negotiations, not on issues that may polarize the situation.

SYRIA

☐ We believe that a comprehensive peace requires negotiations and agreements on all tracks, including with Syria and Lebanon. But we recognize that -- as in the past -- some negotiations will move at a faster pace than others.

- ☐ Prime Minister Netanyahu told me that he agrees on the importance of talks with Syria.
- ☐ We have never had any illusions about Syrian associations with groups involved in terrorism.
- ☐ We consider this a serious issue, and we have made that clear both in our diplomatic contacts at the highest levels and in our annual report on terrorism.
- ☐ We would like to see Syria's ties to terrorist groups definitively broken.
- ☐ But it is important to distinguish between states that work to subvert the peace process -- like Iran -- and those who have shown a willingness to engage in it actively and seriously -- like Syria.

GULF WAR ILLNESSES

Has there been a cover-up?

- ☐ No -- There is currently no evidence nor any indication of a cover-up.
- ☐ The Presidential Advisory Committee concurs in this assessment.
- ☐ The fact that U.S. troops inadvertently destroyed Iraqi chemical weapons after the war came to light as part of our effort to learn all that we can; that effort has since been intensified.
- ☐ We're awaiting the outcomes of Army IG, DOD Intel Oversight & CIA IG investigations.

Were Chemical or Biological Warfare Agents used during the Gulf War?

- ☐ The CIA's thorough August 2, 1996 report on this issue concluded no Iraqi use of CBW.
- ☐ Moreover, based on current scientific evidence, the Presidential Advisory Committee found it unlikely that exposure to CBW explains undiagnosed Gulf War illnesses.

Is DOD the right choice to continue the investigation -- even with independent oversight?

- ☐ Yes, and that's the decision taken by the President when he extended the Presidential Advisory Committee to provide independent oversight.
- ☐ DOD has unique resources for this task and is committed to a thorough & open process.

☐ DOD's recent expansion of effort has included: (1) designation of a new Special Assistant for Gulf War Illnesses; (2) a ten-fold increase in investigative resources (including more than 100 additional staff); and (3) an outreach program to the more than 20,000 Gulf War veterans who may have been in the vicinity of Khamisiyah when chemical demolitions occurred.

Why are Gulf War veterans sick?

- ☐ I'll leave addressing the merits of specific theories to the many experts -- at DOD, HHS and VA, as well as outside government -- currently focused on Gulf War illnesses.
- ☐ The Presidential Advisory Committee carefully evaluated 9 leading environmental risk factors and concluded that current scientific evidence does not support a causal link -- pesticides; chemical warfare agents; biological warfare agents; vaccines; pyridostigmine bromide (PB); infectious diseases; depleted uranium; oil-well fires and smoke; and petroleum products.
- ☐ Stress is a likely contributing factor in some Gulf War illnesses.
- ☐ Bottom-line: further research on the causes of Gulf War illnesses is required and is now in progress.

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

- ☐ Through the dedicated efforts of DOD and VA personnel, veterans are receiving the care they need for Gulf War illnesses, whether diagnosed or undiagnosed.
- ☐ To date -- (1) DOD & VA toll-free help lines; (2) 80,000+ free medical exams; (3) 26,000+ compensation claims approved; (4) special legislation paying disability for Gulf veterans with undiagnosed illnesses; (5) thousands of pages declassified; and (6) 80+ federally-sponsored research projects underway.

Is there a "lessons learned" process in place for future deployments?

- ☐ DOD has begun to incorporate "lessons learned" in planning future deployments.
- ☐ Example: a new policy directive for a Medical Surveillance System for Deployments is near completion, with key elements having been tested in Bosnia and Southwest Asia.

M S M a i l

DATE-TIME 07 February 97 19:18
FROM Wozniak, Natalie S.
CLASSIFICATION UNCLASSIFIED
SUBJECT February 7 McCurry Press Briefing [UNCLASSIFIED]
TO Benjamin, Daniel
Blinken, Antony J.
Gibney, James S.
Gray, Wendy
Johnson, David T.
Moffett, Julia
Naplan, Steven J.
Rubin, Eric S.
Showalter, Victoria A.
Wozniak, Natalie S.
CARBON_COPY NO CC's on THIS MESSAGE
TEXT_BODY [[MIKE0207.DOC : 4919 in MIKE0207.DOC]]
**ATTACHMENT
FILE DATE** 7 February 97 19:17
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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release February 7, 1997

PRESS BRIEFING BY
MIKE MCCURRY

The Briefing Room

2:50 P.M. EST

MR. MCCURRY: All right, ladies and gentlemen. I think many of you are aware of how fond I am of House Budget Committee Chairman John Kasich. And I watched him struggle through his briefing yesterday and I felt bad for him. I felt even worse for him after I saw him on the evening news last night -- did you guys see him on the evening news, sweating away on a treadmill? (Laughter.) No, they had a whole thing about him -- he was running on his treadmill and sweating and looking all out of sorts.

Q The President doesn't sweat on the treadmill, is that correct?

MR. MCCURRY: So I looked into this matter of his trying to explain the budget situation using the map yesterday, and I said, I've got to help John Kasich, because he's a good guy and the guy needs some help. (Laughter.) So I'm going to explain to you what he was trying to explain yesterday, because I think he confused everybody, including Senator Domenici, who was there.

Now, he was making the point that we start over here -- (pointing to map) -- Washington, D.C., where we've got in 1993 annual budget deficits of \$290 billion. And under Bill Clinton's leadership we have now reduced that federal budget deficit by 63 percent, which it gets us all the way over here to Denver -- \$107 billion deficit this year. So we start right here in Denver and we're starting together, although I think that the Congressman got all caught up yesterday about assumptions. I think what he was trying to say was, well, if you look at OMB assumptions and CBO assumptions -- we're starting in Denver and Clinton has got a head start because he's up in Telluride somewhere, something like that. (Laughter.)

So we're like right up over there, just a little bit of a difference. Now, the point is -- (laughter) -- that we've come from

here to here.

Q What is the point?

MR. MCCURRY: Well, the main point is if we hadn't taken the action in 1993 to launch the President's economic program and make this journey two thirds of the way across America, in closing the budget deficit, we'd be all the way back here in Nova Scotia. Actually, we'd be \$2.5 trillion greater in debt by the year 2002; we'd be in London now. (Laughter.)

So what we're going to do is we're going to start off here in Denver together, and the President's going to get going -- when we get out here to Utah, we're going to drive at 55 miles an hour. And the Republicans, if they feel like they're behind us, we'll let them put the pedal to the floor and catch up with us. And then by the time we get rolling through Nevada and get into the great Golden State and go through the Golden Gates, the budget will be balanced. I think that's what the Congressman was trying to say yesterday.

Q It could be, but as I recall yesterday's deficit numbers, doesn't it seem like you're going to start in Denver and head to San Francisco by way of Chicago?

MR. MCCURRY: No, we are going to take -- look, we're going to take a little detour up here to Boulder, okay. (Laughter.) But that's just for one fiscal year. But look at the distance we made. You start here in Washington, and look at the hard choices -- we had to eliminate 200 federal programs along the way to get all the way out here. You know, along about Columbus, Ohio, which is where Gene Sperling tells me the Michigan Wolverines routinely pound the Ohio State Buckeyes -- just to make matters worse for Congressman Kasich -- you know, we made all these hard choices along the way, and they're going to be hard choices from here to there, too. But we look forward to making them together in the spirit of bipartisanship.

that
the President talked about yesterday. And we look forward to a
meeting on Tuesday where we start that hard work together.

Q Change of metaphor.

Q Thanks for clearing this up. (Laughter.)

MR. MCCURRY: Is it all clear now?

Q Where's the bridge?

MR. MCCURRY: The bridge. The Golden Gate Bridge. Right there.
The Golden Gate Bridge is the bridge to the 21st century and to
the
balanced budget -- 2002; be there. And there will be no fog
because
all will be clear.

Q Does this mean the Democrats are giving up on the South?
(Laughter.)

MR. MCCURRY: No, but it looks like we must have had a lot of
extra
money in our surface transportation budget for Interstate 80.
That's what I make out of that. (Laughter.)

All right, we're all set.

Q Moving on.

MR. MCCURRY: Moving on. Thank you. Remove visual aid.

Now, moving on to more profound matters. More profound matters
--
some personnel announcements. Ready for that?

The President is very happy, and a lot of us here at the White
House are very pleased that he will today announce his intention
to
nominate Kitty Higgins -- Katherine Higgins, Kitty Higgins -- who
is
currently our Cabinet Secretary, to be the Deputy Secretary of
Labor.
She now serves as Assistant to the President and runs the
Cabinet
Affairs staff here. She served prior to her position here at the
White House as Chief of Staff to the Secretary of Labor. Before
that, she was Administrative Assistant up on the Hill to Sandy
Levin,

worked as the Democratic Staff Director for the Committee on Labor and Human Resources up on the Hill; has a wealth of experience in labor policy, labor related issues that are in the purview of the department.

The President is happy to announce that Thurgood Marshall, Jr. will replace her in the position of Assistant to the President and Cabinet Secretary. He's currently Deputy Counsel and Director of Legislation Affairs in the Office of the Vice President.

The President is also announcing today that Maria Echaveste will become Assistant to the President and Director for Public Liaison. She joins the White House from the Department of Labor, where she is the Wage and Hour Administrator currently.

Alexis Herman, by the way, with that designation, will take the title, Counselor to the President while she awaits her confirmation in the Senate.

The President also announced that Craig Smith will leave his position as Co executive Director for the 53rd Presidential Inaugural Committee. He'll become Assistant to the President and Director for Political Affairs.

Two deputies in the Office of Political Affairs the President appoints today -- Robert Ben Johnson; he'll be promoted to Deputy Assistant to the President and Deputy Director for Public Liaison

--
I'm sorry, that's a Public Liaison announcement. He served as senior manager to the Mayor of the District of Columbia before coming here to the White House. So he will be Deputy in Public Liaison.

And then two new deputies in Political Affairs -- Minyon Moore who is currently the National Political Director for the Democratic National Committee will serve as Deputy Assistant to the President and Deputy Director for Political Affairs.

And Karen Skelton will also become Deputy Assistant to the President and Deputy Director for Political Affairs. She

currently
runs the political affairs shop for the Vice President. So she
moves
there.

And in addition to that, I think some of you have met already
Beverly Barnes, who is going to be a senior adviser on Erskine
Bowles' staff. She will take on the role of being a press
liaison for
Erskine and will do a better job of scheduling his press
interviews
than Mary Ellen did, she promises. (Laughter.) No, she would be

--

Mary Ellen has been graciously filling in in a role helping
Erskine
do some press chores in the interim, and Beverly will now be
taking
on that assignment.

We've got paper coming on all that with additional biographical
information on the new group of people that will add considerably
to
the depth, talent, skill, insight, persuasiveness, integrity of
the
current White House staff.

Q Did you say who the new Cabinet Secretary is?

MR. MCCURRY: Yes. That will be Thurgood Marshall, Goody
Marshall.

And with that, what else? Want more?

The President talked to Chancellor Helmut Kohl today. They had a
good call, talked about European security issues, issues related
to
the future of NATO. You will see in coming weeks, as we get
closer
and closer to the Madrid Summit in July, a regular pattern of
consultation that the President will have with other major
European
leaders. Obviously, we announced today that he will be seeing
soon
President Yeltsin, a meeting that's very important.

The President had a very good 40 minute meeting with Prime
Minister
Chernomyrdin and the Vice President, received a thorough briefing
on

the work the Gore Chernomyrdin has done. They talked about a number of the issues that have been identified for the agenda of the Helsinki meeting coming up. And I will leave it to the Vice President to give you a further readout on that meeting and on their discussions when he has his press conference shortly.

Q Did the Chancellor and the President discuss whether there should be this five power meeting? Or did the President rule that out?

MR. MCCURRY: Well, they talked about the concept, because the concept has floated publicly, but I will restate our view that it is very important for individual members of NATO and leaders within NATO to continue the pattern of bilateral consultation that you've seen underway.

We have announced today that President Clinton will see President Yeltsin. President Chirac has just recently completed his own meetings in Moscow with President Yeltsin. Chancellor Kohl has seen President Yeltsin fairly recently, may see him again soon. I would not be surprised if Prime Minister Major at some point is in contact as well.

I think any activity around the subject of the future of Europe has to be consistent with the goals the Alliance has identified and also consistent with our goal of a productive working relationship that deepens as a result of the sum of the conversations that NATO Secretary General Solana has been having with the Russian Federation related to the issue of the Russian NATO charter.

Q Would a five power meeting help or hurt that progress?

MR. MCCURRY: Well, if there were to be a meeting, it would only occur if it would be helpful to that process.

Q Mike, in the meeting, did Chernomyrdin elaborate at all on Yeltsin's health? Did they discuss that at all?

MR. MCCURRY: I will leave that to -- you can have an opportunity to question the Vice President and the Prime Minister on that subject. Based on our understanding and based on those that we've talked to who have had an opportunity to encounter President Yeltsin, he is vigorous, obviously recovering from his recent surgery, but pursuing a very active program.

Q Mike, the President simply said that there were a number of reasons why Helsinki was chosen as a site, but he didn't elaborate on what they were -- one of the basic questions being was it at least in part due to President Yeltsin's health that Helsinki was chosen.

MR. MCCURRY: He did not elaborate on them and said there were several reasons, lest you concentrate on only one explanation of why we go to Helsinki. There are many good reasons why that is the proper venue.

Q And what would those be?

MR. MCCURRY: Good diplomatic reasons.

Q Would President Yeltsin's health be one of the reasons?

MR. MCCURRY: I think that as the President said, this is a venue that works satisfactorily for both Presidents. There might be any number of reasons why it would be more convenient and perhaps somewhat easier for President Yeltsin to journey to Helsinki, but I would leave it to the Russian Federation to address that matter.

Q Is the President thinking of adding on other stops before or after Helsinki?

MR. MCCURRY: He, given his joy in journeying, would no doubt like to. But at the moment we schedule only a mission to Helsinki and return. Remember, we have a very active schedule that we've already identified for business in Europe as we look ahead to the first half and shortly after the first half of 1997, certainly leading up to the

Madrid summit. But we've also got very important sessions scheduled with the European Union in the Netherlands in May. So we will be in Europe at least -- one, two, three times in the coming months.

Q In his speech last year in Detroit about NATO expansion, the President said that NATO expansion -- talking about how important it was -- said that it wouldn't be cost free. I don't know that he's ever put any kind of estimate -- what did he mean by it would not be cost free? What will it cost?

MR. MCCURRY: Well, you cannot determine a cost absent knowledge of who perspective members are going to be because, remember, it is an alliance in which each members pledges mutual defense of the other. So what capacity you would -- each individual nation that would be a member of the alliance would bring and what would, in turn, be the shared cost within the alliance of adopting that type of security umbrella is something you can only determine after you know exactly what you're talking about in terms of additional membership.

Q So if you had an idea of maybe who the first three would be -- say, just like Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic --

MR. MCCURRY: I'm not at all going to speculate on what the costs would be, nor who might be likely candidates for first membership. It's been widely speculated upon and the speculation's probably based on reasonably informed opinion, but --

Q Is the President concerned that -- he's going forward with this almost as it's a fait accompli, but there is opposition to NATO expansion. Is he concerned that he hasn't made the case completely to the American public?

MR. MCCURRY: He is not going forward on his own, 16 nations that are members of this alliance are going forward together, based on the

consensus process that exists in what is one of the most successful treaty alliances in the history of the world. And that decision making and that argumentation has occurred over a long period; the President committed to the course of expansion several years ago and the work that we have done, I think, so far, in nurturing closer relations with former members of the Warsaw Pact, with the Russian Federation and others demonstrates the utility of building these closer relations.

We've made Europe a far more peaceful place. We have eliminated tensions that would otherwise conceivably exist between nations, particularly in the Central European corridor. We are bringing the benefits of less costly engagement as we think a forward deployment of forces along what used to be the premier division in the world between two adversarial blocs.

So there has been enormous benefit here to creating a new NATO that has adapted to the post Cold War era. And the President will argue forcefully those benefits, and the Secretary of State is out in the country today arguing matters like that. He will be, too.

Q At what point -- on that same subject again, at what point will we know about how much the United States' bill will be in admitting these additional members?

MR. MCCURRY: That would be -- you remember that adding a member to NATO is, in effect, an amendment to the existing North Atlantic Treaty. So bringing on new members would trigger a ratification process in our United States Senate, which I'm sure would be subject to lengthy and very close scrutiny by the members of the Senate. So as we look ahead over the course of the next year, there will be an extensive debate on exactly that kind of point and extensive debates about what the real costs would be and what the real benefits would be of expanding NATO and retooling NATO so it meets the

challenges of
the post Cold War era.

Q Does the administration have any kind of working estimate as to what --

MR. MCCURRY: There are different types of analysis of what the implications are of membership, but since they -- that would be putting many, many, many carts in front of the horse to begin judging exactly what the costs and the budgeting would be for that. They have not done much of that. Remember that there is a significant U.S. presence in Europe now attached to existing configuration to meet our current Treaty obligations. And what additions would incur at the margin with NATO expansion will be calculated presented to the American people and to the Senate and the Congress at the proper point.

Q Did Marsha Scott mislead the congressional investigators? And if she did, is the White House taking any steps to hold her accountable for that?

MR. MCCURRY: I understand that she has issued a statement indicating that she has not -- she did not.

Q Released through the White House Press Office?

MR. MCCURRY: She provided it to one news organization making the inquiry last night. And, Barry, you can get a copy of that if anyone needs it.

Q The White House is satisfied with her statement?

MR. MCCURRY: I'm not aware of any information that disputes her statement.

Q Is that different than the one put out through the lawyer? That statement?

MR. TOIV: That's the statement.

MR. MCCURRY: Barry says it's the statement that was provided by her lawyer to the Associated Press.

Q Was there any White House effort to assess the merits of either

the
charge that she did mislead or her claim that she did not?

MR. MCCURRY: I don't know the answer to that. I'll have to take it.

Q Senator Lott issued a very harsh statement in regard to the President's budget, and I wonder to what degree do you think this sets the prospects of a bipartisan --

MR. MCCURRY: Well, the President has responded and responded gently enough to indicate that we don't consider it any significant setback in what we look forward to as ongoing discussions with the Majority Leader and others over the FY '98 budget and the prospects for a balanced budget agreement.

The Majority Leader had a good conversation by phone with the President prior to making that statement. I think the President accepted it and knows that there certainly will be some differences but also knows that there's ample opportunity to come together to begin working on the details of the balanced budget agreement and to work through the differences that do exist.

Q Mike, the U.N. next week is going to put out --

Q Wait, Peter, may I follow on Bob's question?

Q Go ahead.

Q Trent Lott said that the President -- he thought the President was taken aback by what he had to say. Is that accurate?

MR. MCCURRY: The President said nothing to me indicate he was taken aback by it. He indicated that he told the Majority Leader he thought that they'd be able to work through any differences that do exist. He seemed to take it fully in stride.

Q Mike, is anyone in the administration planning to intervene to try to prevent the American Airline strike?

MR. MCCURRY: Well, we've received a correspondence from American Airlines related to the dispute. We are monitoring the dispute very closely. If the parties believe that our participation could help, we obviously would consider how we could play a more constructive role.

Q Meaning both parties -- currently one does, one doesn't.

MR. MCCURRY: Both parties would have to see a constructive role for us to play in order for us to be useful.

Q What is the White House position on the situation in Ecuador? Several men are claiming the presidency. Is the White House supporting one specific person, and why?

MR. MCCURRY: We are not -- we are reminding everyone that the rule of law applies, that it is important for constitutional processes to be followed. We obviously are monitoring the situation in Ecuador as they work through the statements. But we are encouraged by the statements been made by the military leadership of Ecuador indicating that they acknowledge the importance of the constitutional processes, and don't intend to play any role in the resolution of the current disagreements about the presidency.

Q Mike, the U.N. next week is going to ask -- issue a general appeal for humanitarian aid for North Korea. How's the United States going to respond to that?

MR. MCCURRY: Well, we do anticipate that they will issue such an appeal. They made one last year. We will consider it as we always do in the case of humanitarian appeals. Last year, I think, we ended up providing about \$8.2 million in response to an international appeal from an authorized international organization.

And I think, again, pending the formal request for humanitarian assistance, we would certainly take it on board as we did last year. We're not aware that they are any significant disagreements with

that approach with respect to our very close ally, the Republic of Korea. And we would clearly consult closely with the Republic of Korea on such a matter.

Q How do you think the situation now there compares to what it was last year?

MR. MCCURRY: I think that there is evidence that in some respects the condition has worsened as far as famine and food shortages. They, of course, have been facing some natural conditions that have exacerbated that, but they also have to deal with the inevitable consequences of having a command and control economy that does not allocate resources in a way that can provide, in this case, basic sustenance to citizens of the country.

Q Regarding the Tuesday meeting on the Hill between the President and the leadership, do you expect any specific preliminary agreements to come out of it Tuesday?

MR. MCCURRY: No. In fact, the President would caution everyone to understand that this is not the end of a conversation, it's simply the beginning of a conversation. And it certainly will continue. It would be wildly improbable that you would reach a balanced budget agreement at one meeting. There will be a lot of work that lies ahead as we work through differences, but you've heard the President often suggest that we need to have bipartisan processes that can address these differences and allow the Congress and the Executive to move forward. And we hope at least coming out of this meeting is the beginning of that type of process that can lead to a combination consensus that would advance the goals that Republicans and Democrats in the Congress share with this Democratic President, that we have a balanced budget by the year 2002.

Q But could they not agree at once on a few things they can agree on?

MR. MCCURRY: Well, I don't believe that Majority Leader Lott when he announced the meeting today suggested that that would be an objective of the meeting. They want to identify areas in which we know we can work together, see what kind of progress is possible in the short term, perhaps have some conversations about how we enter into a process that resolves the differences that exist.

Q Does the President see this as the first negotiating session?

MR. MCCURRY: The President sees it more as a way of organizing the work to be done as we look ahead. He's delighted that the members of Congress and the leaders of the Congress want to move quickly in the discussion about how we do some of those things that the American people sent the President and Congress here to Washington to do, and that's certainly the type of conversation he looks forward to Tuesday.

Q During the last round of budget negotiations, Leon Panetta was the chief point man in most of the negotiations with the Budget Chairman. Who is going to be that point person this time?

MR. MCCURRY: I just said that this is not a negotiating session and I'm not aware that they intend to convene negotiations as an objective of this meeting on Tuesday. The President and, I suspect, the Vice President will be the participants in the meeting on Tuesday and then we'll see what develops following the meeting on Tuesday.

Q Would Erskine Bowles or Frank Raines -- who would lead the -- if it gets down to the negotiating phase?

MR. MCCURRY: There will be a number of people from the White House who would be actively involved when we get to the serious budget discussions. And there will be different types of people at different levels, as there always is and always will be.

Q In terms of the schedule for next week -- Monday, Annapolis, Tuesday, this meeting --

MR. MCCURRY: Monday, Annapolis. Tuesday -- by the way, I do not anticipate the President doing anything tomorrow afternoon.

Monday,
he goes to the Maryland General Assembly. Tuesday, we obviously have
the congressional meeting. We've got it listed on our schedule at
11:30 a.m. I thought it was 11:00 a.m. Can you guys double check
that? Thought they said 11:00 a.m. What did Lott --

Q Lott said 11:00 a.m.

MR. MCCURRY: -- 11:00 a.m. So we've got -- on Wednesday, the President's going to receive the final report from the Vice President

on the aviation safety and security issue, the panel that was put together to study that issue. There's been a lot of speculation in
advance of that of what's in it, so I know there will be interest in
that.

Thursday at a time that is remaining to be announced, he will attend funeral services for Ambassador Harriman. He'll also meet later in the afternoon with Prime Minister Netanyahu and we intend at
the end of the meeting with Prime Minister Netanyahu to have a press
availability with all of you. Friday, no public events scheduled.

And to my knowledge, no travel scheduled.

Q What is he going to tell the General Assembly on Monday?

MR. MCCURRY: He is going to talk a bit more directly about some fo

his education agenda. Maryland is a state in which Governor Glendening has recently advanced some ideas about using HOPE scholarships similar to the program the President's talking about, so
he will continue to press his argument about why education has to be
the focus and much of the work we do in the coming months. And then
he will do -- he will be in a position now to make that argument in

the context of resources that the federal government can make available, and direct challenges that we are making to individual state governments.

So it will be an opportunity in front of a state legislature to talk about the shared responsibilities that all of us have when we address an issue as important as education and one that depends so much on state and local government direction.

Q Mike, is he going to do anything else in Annapolis? Is it just an in and out? And is he going to meet with the House and Senate leaders separately?

MR. MCCURRY: As of right now, just down and back. And, Paul, we'll let you know and let -- particularly for local folks -- let people know what they've got, and for Carl, and for Harris, and for everyone else out there.

Q What's the next state legislature after Maryland? Do you know?

MR. MCCURRY: We have no schedule -- as I said, no schedule that I'm aware of on Friday, but we'll keep you posted.

MR. TOIV: It is 11:00 a.m. You're reading from a draft.

MR. MCCURRY: It is 11 a.m. Tuesday.

Q Mike, you had mentioned yesterday and again this morning the possibility of him going out to Andrews tomorrow night. Is that --

MR. MCCURRY: I just said a minute ago I don't anticipate anything on Saturday.

Q Radio address. He's going to do that tomorrow, right?

MR. MCCURRY: He sure is. Didn't we put it out?

MS. GLYNN: He's tape it today and we should have a transcript out as soon as the briefing is over.

MR. MCCURRY: I think it's done.

Q What about the subject?

MR. MCCURRY: The subject is the anniversary of the telecommunications bill, but more importantly, remember the time that you saw Al Gore and Bill Clinton running around and stringing wires at Net Day in California? Remember that? That has been but one example of a lot of progress that the Department of Education is going to report on wiring America's classrooms to the Internet. So a newly released report will be newly released tomorrow in the radio address.

Q Does he think that the telecommunications bill has been successful in lowering costs to consumers -- cable costs?

MR. MCCURRY: You will hear him say some important things about the success that has arisen with respect to V chip and others. It will lead -- competition under the telecommunications bill will lead to advances for consumers. We didn't expect that they would happen all at once or within one year. But the competition arising under that bill, if you look at a range of telecommunications services, is advancing and will advance. And we continue to believe it is a good deal for the consumer.

Q Mike, did he get Senator Helms' letter about opening up -- allowing U.S. news organizations to open bureaus in Havana?

MR. MCCURRY: The President was very impressed by that letter.

Q Yeah?

MR. MCCURRY: Very impressed.

Q Is there any new policy announcement?

MR. MCCURRY: As we normally do if we have a new policy to announce, we will announce it. And he's got -- he has a recommendation from his national security advisors, based on a very close interagency review of this issue, and to my knowledge he

has
not acted on it yet.

Q He's going to release that in an exclusive interview with Wolf, right? (Laughter.)

MR. MCCURRY: It would be only -- no, we're going to give it to MSNBC -- (laughter) -- thought that would be better.

Anything else before we close it out? I don't know want to --
you
all will be interested in the Vice President and Prime Minister's
press conference. And we may have other things. Thank you.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END

3:21 P.M. EST

M S M a i l

DATE-TIME 13 February 97 16:27
FROM Wozniak, Natalie S.
CLASSIFICATION UNCLASSIFIED
SUBJECT February 12 McCurry/Kamarck Press Briefing [UNCLASSIFIED]
TO Benjamin, Daniel
Blinken, Antony J.
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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release February 12, 1997

PRESS BRIEFING BY
MIKE MCCURRY
AND DR. ELAINE KAMARCK

The Briefing Room

2:50 P.M. EST

MR. MCCURRY: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to the White House. I want to follow up on the event that the President just had with the Vice President on airline safety by having Dr. Elaine Kamarck, the Vice President's Senior Policy Advisor, who's worked very closely with the commission for this period and knows a lot about the recommendations in the report that the Vice President has just presented to the President -- have you talk to her and to Gerald Kauvar who is the staff director to the White House Commission on Aviation Safety and Security. They're both here, can take any questions as a follow up you have for the report.

Thank you for being here, both.

DR. KAMARCK: Good afternoon. I'd like to open up with just a slight clarification on some of the commentary that we've been hearing since we've released the report, and that is on the spending question, on the money question.

Chapter one deals with a set of safety related recommendations. Almost all of those recommendations are regulatory in nature. Therefore, there is no federal budgetary cost. These are dealing with how we regulate safety, the most significant probably being a regulation of aging aircraft. In addition, today NASA announced that it would reorient \$500 million out of its aeronautics research and development funding in order to address some of the issues raised in chapter one of the report -- most specifically, study of human error in flight and in accidents, which is something that NASA, DOD, FAA are all intensely interested in.

The second chapter is on -- deals with the modernization of the air traffic management system. And there is significant money built into the federal budget already for modernization of this system. In fact, there's nearly a billion dollars in the 1998 budget alone.

But in addition to the money that's already there, the commission recommends changing the way FAA has done modernization, in the

following four ways -- and let me just go through them. One is to begin to use current off the shelf technology, as opposed to what FAA and, frankly, the Defense Department used to do, which was to design their own technology. And as you know from following information technology, the costs of these things come down dramatically every year. And just as DOD is moving towards off the shelf technology, we encourage FAA to do the same because there is significant spending.

Point number two is that FAA now has unprecedented freedom to design its own personnel and its own procurement policies. This was granted to them in the summer of 1995 by the Congress. They are saving huge amounts of money in procurement alone through new procurement procedures. They've reduced their buying time from 18 months to four months. And they're achieving a lot of savings there.

Third, the FAA reauthorization bill this year sets up a management advisory committee which will give the users of the air traffic control system more interaction with the FAA on the design and modernization of that system. And this has been a constant critique of the FAA, that it was not responsive to its users.

And finally, the costs in aviation, particularly the fuel savings, are very, very significant from modernizing the system. And therefore, we expect that there will be airline enthusiasm for participating in the modernization of the system because the sooner the system is -- the new system is totally operational, there are very, very big savings.

Finally, let me talk about chapter three, the terrorism -- the counterterrorism chapter. Most of those recommendations we made in September of this year. And immediately afterwards, the President submitted his counterterrorism bill, which you will remember was a \$1.1 billion bill. Of that \$1.1 billion, \$429 million were directly

to fund the recommendations in the Vice President's report. That money is appropriated and in fact it is being spent as we speak.

I think you heard the Vice President say he was in Chicago on Saturday.

The Chicago papers had pictures of the new CTX 5000 machine that's installed now at O'Hare Airport. These machines are literally going out the door and being installed as we speak. So that money is being spent.

There is an additional \$100 million in this year's budget to be spent in 1999 for just more hardware, just more machines. We are basically buying all the machines that there are to buy right now.

And there's another \$100 million in this budget for enhancements at FBI and Customs, et cetera.

We feel that there is adequate funding to do the things in this report and that there will be another commission to look at how the user fees get constituted, and they may, in fact, end up bringing even more money into the system. But we're comfortable that the recommendations in this report are, in fact, funded and we can at least proceed in the next year with what we already have in the budget.

That being said, let me open it up to questions to myself or to Dr. Kauvar.

Q So you're saying there's no net new spending, or no net new spending will be required to implement this report?

DR. KAMARCK: No, because these are primarily -- the new -- we already funded the recommendations that required money. Most of these recommendations, if you look at them, are regulatory in their nature and those don't require a federal appropriation.

Q How do the user fees come into play then?

DR. KAMARCK: What the budget now has is that the ticket tax is extended for another year. Beginning in 1999 we will move to a user fee system. In the next year, a group that is composed of congressional representatives and representatives of the industry

will
meet to decide exactly what those user fees are, okay. And we
gave
guidance in this report on the user fees, in particular saying
that
they should not be anticompetitive either among carriers or
within
the industry.

But basically, we gave some guidelines on the user fees, and
there's a year to figure out, both in our budget planning and
Congress's mind, what the new user fee structure looks like.

Q The Vice President made a point of saying that every member of
the
commission had signed the report, and yet there's clearly a
space, at
least in the copies we have, where Victoria Cummock's signature
should be. Did she sign, or did she not?

DR. KAMARCK: She left the meeting saying -- and told the press
she
would not sign. She did not come back and sign. She then asked
me
afterwards how would she register a dissent, and I said that we
would
be happy to put her dissent in the report in whatever format she
wanted. And then she decided to sign. So we clarified that and
she
--

Q So you have her proxy; is that it?

DR. KAMARCK: Well, no, I got a note saying that she had said she
would sign. I mean, you should ask her, but --

Q Don't you really, though, to ensure some sort of long term
stability to fund all these systems and the expansion of the air
traffic control system particularly, need a stable source of
revenue
that reflects a new system? So why didn't you go ahead and bite
the
bullet and say what the President believes should be the new user
fee
system?

DR. KAMARCK: Because the user fee system is enormously
contentious. Congress has its own opinions and the airline
industry
is -- this is life and death for them, okay? They have very

strong
opinions about the new user fee system. And so Congress and the President signed off on a process that will begin very shortly for
designing this new system. We have made the first step in saying we're going to go to user fees, and that's imbedded in our budgets,
that's administration policy.

The second step will be deciding how that system works. Look, there's plenty of money right now in the out years for the new system, but there's a lot of redesign and reinvention that needs to go
on at the FAA to implement these.

Q But if you could explain how is the user fee different from a passenger ticket tax -- is that it?

DR. KAMARCK: There's two meanings here, okay? For our government
budgetary purposes, all right, a user fee could have exactly the same
economic impact as the ticket tax. The difference is the user fee
comes right to the agency, does not go through the Treasury and then
get reappropriated to the Agency.

As you can imagine, what happens whenever you have a nice big fat user fee or ticket tax like the airline ticket tax, sometimes, some
years, Congress is tempted to not return 100 percent to the agency.
So agencies like to have user fees because they have a funding stream
that they can count on. That goes back to them -- not only can they
count on that funding stream coming back to them, because they don't
have to worry about an annual appropriation, they can also then borrow against that funding stream, you see, for capital equipment.

So there is a budgetary governmental operations aspect to the user
fee versus the ticket tax. The question then is do you simply take
the current ticket tax, the amount, call it a user fee and change how
the government does the money; or do you, in fact, try to

increase
that and bring more money in. And I think that's a second
discussion.

Q Page 15, you recommend that children under two be given some
child
restraint system. Will that require passengers to buy a seat on
planes for infants and children under two?

DR. KAMARCK: Yes. The airlines, of course, will figure that
out.
We hope that the market will work and they'll be creative. But,
yes, that's what probably will happen.

Q You recommend profiling, but at the same time you hedge it with
all
kinds of precautions against stereotyping national origin, et
cetera. If you're that concerned about the civil liberties
impact,
what is left as criteria for the people on the front lines who
are
going to have to make profiling decisions other than random
selection
of passengers?

DR. KAMARCK: The profiling systems that are being designed and
are
used -- and being used are primarily behavioral in their design,
as
opposed to using national origin or race as a criterion. And
those
behavioral aspects, obviously, we don't talk about in public.
And
therefore, when the civil liberties panel went through their
concerns
about a profiling system, we felt that we could meet most of them
and still have an effective profiling system.

Again, profiling, bag match -- all these things only work in
conjunction, in the context of a comprehensive security system.
It's
just one piece.

Q Can you put in plain English what you mean by "behavioral"?

DR. KAMARCK: No, I cannot because --

Q It's just left us a mystery as to what criteria, if any, are
going
to be used in profiling.

DR. KAMARCK: Yes, we do leave that a mystery for -- yes, for pretty good reasons, too.

Q Are you simply saying, we'll tell you what we're not going to use
--

DR. KAMARCK: Right. We are not going to -- that's right, for obvious reasons.

Q Can you take me through the process by which you reached the conclusion on antimissile defense systems? Did you consult with DOD?
Was this a controversial discussion?

DR. KAMARCK: It was -- no, it was not -- the antimissile defense systems was not a controversial item within the commission at any point in time. There was early drafting that everyone disagreed with and thought went way too far and was much too strong and was out of proportion to the actual threat. The facts are that 31 airplanes have been shot down by surface to air missiles. Those have all occurred in war zones. They've all occurred in Africa, Beirut, places like that where there's a war going on. They have not occurred in a place where there's not a war.

Nevertheless, the government of the United States does spend a lot of time planning for things that don't happen very often, or hopefully, never happen. And so the thought was that, given that we do know that terrorist groups try to get these missiles, et cetera, that we should have an interagency plan ready in case at some point in the future we think this is a bigger threat than it is now. That's all that recommendation is about. It should not alarm anyone. It's just prudent planning on the part of the government.

Q I've heard some complaints in the last week since the budget came out from the airport executives, that actually there was less money initiative he budget than there was last year for the aviation trust fund. Can you clear that up for me? I'm not really sure --

because
they seem to be upset that there was --

DR. KAMARCK: No, I haven't heard that. And what you probably should do, is a question like that Larry Haas can find it out from OMB later today.

Q How do you think this bag matching is going to end up? How's it going to be reconciled with the airline's concerns about how bag matching is going to jam up hubs?

DR. KAMARCK: I think that basically technology will eventually solve the problem, and the question is how fast does the government mandate it. We took an interim position today because there are a lot of problems with the hubs, because the connection times at the hubs are so short -- so we took an interim position of partial bag match until we can get to full bag match.

We don't know some critical pieces of information yet about bag match. We don't know the number of people who voluntarily don't board a connecting flight, and their bags go ahead, but they don't.

We don't know that number. Until we have better data, which we will have in May, it will be harder for us to make a rule on it. But our intent is, in fact, to have the most secure system possible, to get there, get to full bag match, but to begin with the proposal that's laid out in the report today.

Q Back to the behavioral profiling question. Are you suggesting specific behavior which will be suspect and subject to profiles? Or are you leaving it to local authorities to decide that?

DR. KAMARCK: There's a system being developed with Northwest Airlines and with the FAA, and they are looking at specific kinds of behavior. As with profiling, which Customs routinely does to catch drug smugglers, the behaviors also change constantly and are also constantly checked by random checking. So this is an ongoing process that's always changing as the people who are trying to do bad

things
are changing.

Q Another bag match question. In the short term, how do you implement partial or random bag match? How does that work?

DR. KAMARCK: By using a profiling system in conjunction with the bag match.

Q But the bags are already in the hold.

DR. KAMARCK: You will pull the bags, based on your profiling system.

Q Before they go into the hold?

DR. KAMARCK: Either before they go into the hold -- well, pulling them before they go in the hold is no problem. It's when do you -- the real question comes down to, do you delay a flight to pull the bag, okay. And that's where we will use a profiling system in conjunction with bag match.

Q How do you access them? How do you know where the bag is, or is that information --

DR. KAMARCK: This is why technology is going to eventually solve this. Some airlines have very sophisticated computer coded bar codes on the baggage tags that match the ticket, and then they literally sort the compartments, their cargo holds, by the bar codes. So some airlines already have the technology where it doesn't take them long to do this, they can instantly find that bag and pull it.

And, of course, the cargo planes, like Federal Express and those shippers, they know exactly where everything is at every point in their holds. More and more airlines are moving towards this technology. The faster they get to the technology, then the easier and the less disruption to the current system this is going to be.

Q It says that you're deploying 140 inspectors, Customs inspectors to critical airports. How many critical airports are there? Which airports are critical airports?

DR. KAMARCK: Category X airports -- there's 19 category X airports, those are critical airports.

Q Who knows which ones they are?

DR. KAMARCK: Do we say which ones they are?

DR. KAUVAR: I don't have a list. They're places like Kennedy, Miami, Los Angeles, San Francisco --

Q Miami, Philadelphia, Detroit, Charlotte?

DR. KAMARCK: Big ones.

Q What about this recommendation on mail that any package or envelope that weighs over one pound, somebody would have to go to the post office and sign a statement to mail anything over one pound?

DR. KAMARCK: Yes, you would sign a release that this can be expected, so that if somebody at the post office finds that it is suspect, okay -- it's ticking, for instance -- they have the right to open it up and make sure that it doesn't go on an airplane.

Q And they don't now? If it's ticking, they can't open it? Is that what you're saying?

DR. KAMARCK: Actually, they do now. The post office just started to do this.

Thank you.

MR. MCCURRY: Any other subjects du jour?

Q -- Cuba?

MR. MCCURRY: Want me to do that up top?

I'm going to take Helen's first question. Let me start by saying that the administration today has approved licenses to 10 major U.S. media organizations to open news bureaus in Cuba. This action is in keeping with the policy stated by the President in October of 1995 of supporting an increased flow of accurate information to and from

and
within Cuba itself. The administration believes that news
gathering
and reporting by U.S. news organizations will keep international
attention focused on the situation in Cuba and the realities of
economic and political conditions there and will bring greater
public
exposure to those who are advocating a democratic change in Cuba.

All qualified U.S. news organizations that have applied to the
Treasury Department to the Office of Foreign Assets Control for
licenses have been granted those licenses. Those news
organizations
are CNN, ABC, CBS, the Miami Herald, Dow Jones, the School for
Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins, which publishes
a
Cuba newsletter, Unavision, the Chicago Tribune, the Sun Sentinel
of
South Florida, and the Associated Press. To our knowledge at
this
point, only one organization, CNN, has already received
permission
from the government of Cuba to establish an office in Cuba. We
hope
other news organizations will soon be allowed to have a presence
in
Cuba.

The licenses issued today are valid for one year. They authorize
all transactions directly related to the establishment and
operation
of news offices within Cuba. They also stipulate that U.S. media
require that their news gathering activities within Cuba be
unconditioned and unrestricted -- a stipulation that I believe
all the
news organizations involved seeking licenses would quickly say
would
be part of their journalistic responsibility.

Happy to make that announcement.

Q To what extent, Mike, did the statement last week from Senator
Helms make it easier for the administration to reach this
decision?

MR. MCCURRY: The statement from Chairman Helms was very much
appreciated. This is an issue that we have been working on, but
news
organizations interested in this matter had had contact with a
variety of people representing certainly Florida, those who

follow
matters related to Cuban policy in the Senate, of course Senator Helms being a leading figure in that respect. But his letter was most appreciated.

Q Have you been in touch with the Cuban authorities on this?

MR. MCCURRY: Not to my knowledge, George, have we had through the intersection any direct contact with them. The effect of the licenses granted by Treasury, it now gives those news organizations the right to conduct their own independent negotiations with the Cuban government.

Q It seems to me in October of '95, the President referred to reciprocity.

MR. MCCURRY: The issue of reciprocity was more on the question of whether we would allow the establishment of Cuban news bureaus here in that United States, and that was a condition I believe by law -- if not directly in the Helms Burton Act, certainly by administration policy -- on a willingness by the Cuban government to allow representative sampling of national, regional, electronic, print news organizations to operate freely and fairly in Cuba. And, of course, we would welcome that development at this point. As I say, we're only aware of one news organization that's had any active negotiation with the Cuban government on that now.

Q Mike, will Radio Marti and TV Marti also be -- have to go to Cuba, be permitted permission to go to Cuba if Cuban representatives were here --

MR. MCCURRY: Well, they are entities that would be required to conform to the same stipulations that would exist. I don't know -- I think that the licensing procedures at OFAC go to private sector enterprises and don't affect those that are receiving assistance from the federal government. I'd have to check that absolutely with Treasury, but I think that would be the case.

Q Did the President himself sign off on this? How far up the chain does this go?

MR. MCCURRY: This is a matter that was handled in an interagency review process by the National Security Council, and a recommendation was forwarded to the President, which he approved.

Q Sorry. Did you say that Cuban organizations could open a bureau here, and do you have any requests?

MR. MCCURRY: No, I said that was subject to the existing stipulations in law and administration of policy that make that contingent upon a representative sampling of U.S. news organizations being allowed to operate in Cuba.

Q Mike, do you have any indications that CNN may be the only American organization allowed in? Or is it a case that their paper processing went earlier?

MR. MCCURRY: Well, we, to my knowledge, don't have any definitive representation of the views of the Cuban government of that matter. Our view is that all of those that have been granted license ought to be allowed to operate freely and fairly in Cuba.

Q The question is do you have any signals from Cuba as to what their intent is -- beyond CNN?

MR. MCCURRY: None that I'm aware of. We are aware of the fact that CNN has had discussions with the Cuban government, and as far as we know they are the only news organization that have been allowed to have those negotiations at this point.

Q The list that you're approving includes some newspapers, but not the biggest newspapers, like The Times and The Post. Why is that?

MR. MCCURRY: We granted on blanket approval of these licenses for all those that have pending applications at Treasury. So if there

was no application pending they would not have been granted a license.

Q Senator Helms said last week that in order for Cuban media to open offices here, it was necessary for Radio and TV Marti to be allowed in Cuba. Is this also the administration's position?

MR. MCCURRY: There are conditions that the President attached in October 1995, and they have not changed. We are looking for the right of a representative sampling of media to be allowed to operate there. That would be a factor in determination of any request for Cuban news organizations to operate freely in the United States.

Q Mike, do you know if any other U.S. organizations have talked to the White House about their interest in going down to Cuba?

MR. MCCURRY: We know that a number of news organizations have an interest, and we would strongly encourage the Cuban government to entertain conversations with those news organizations, specifically those that have been granted licenses.

Q Apart from -- in Cuba, do you expect it to have an impact on Cuban American policy, on your policy on Cuba?

MR. MCCURRY: Well, we in some measure expect that the reporting of truth about the conditions in Cuba would further our policy, which seeks to bring about peaceful democratic change in Cuba, to the degree that the world comes to understand the economic and political conditions in Cuba, we believe that builds support for the steps that we're taking to encourage change in Cuba itself.

Q Mike, just one other thing I didn't understand. in order for these obligations to be approved, the organizations had to agree that any contract that they enter into with Cuba would not involve their limiting their new gathering activities in Cuba?

MR. MCCURRY: We want to be assured that these news organizations would be allowed to operate in an unrestricted environment so

that
they could freely and impartially report the news. But I think
it's
safe to say of all these news organizations that they would
adhere to
that standard as a matter of journalistic principle.

Q What happens after a year? You said the licenses go for a year.

MR. MCCURRY: They'll take a look at where they are in a year and
assure that the news organizations have been able to meet those
kinds
of tests, based on the news organizations' evaluation. And I
don't
foresee any circumstances in which the license would not be
extended
if they were continuing to operate in that environment.

Q Would be on a year to year basis?

MR. MCCURRY: These licenses have been granted from one year.
There is no prospective action beyond the period of one year.

Q What's the latest policy over at CIA with regard to planting
some
of their people into reporting positions abroad?

MR. MCCURRY: They don't have -- they have a policy specifically
prohibiting that type of arrangement.

Q I thought that John Deutch had testified at one point
--

MR. MCCURRY: John Deutch had carefully --

Q -- that there would not be an absolute --

MR. MCCURRY: He had carefully explained what his requirements
were
under the act to make it clear that the United States does not
use
journalistic cover for covert agencies.

Q -- a recent annual report published -- reflecting the Turkish
position on the Aegean. This would specifically exempt the
entire
seabed of the Aegean Sea as a single continental shelf to be
partitioned between Greece and Turkey without mentioning -- in
the
eastern Aegean -- the six mile limit of the territorial waters,

and
the most important -- the existence of the continental shelf of
the
Greek Islands. Could you please comment and clarify the U.S.
position?

MR. MCCURRY: Let me just say, the National Defense University
map
you refer to does not reflect an official U.S. government
position on
the issue of the Greek Turkish border issues in the Aegean Sea.
We've said repeatedly that the dispute between Greece and Turkey
is
one that ought to be referred to the International Court of
Justice
so that issues related to the Amia Kardak Islet dispute could be
submitted for adjudication.

We've similarly called for Greece and Turkey to settle their
territorial differences without force or the threat of force,
with
respect the territorial integrity of each other and in accordance
with all relevant international agreements.

Q -- with involvement of Greece -- development poses a threat to
the
northern border of Greece -- Thessaloniki. I would like to know,
from a bilateral basis, the U.S. government guarantee that the
territorial integrity of Greece in that coastal area.

MR. MCCURRY: Well, as I just said, that we have called on both
nations, close allies of the United States, to settle their
territorial and border disputes with respect for the territorial
integrity of each other. No action by the United States
government
prejudices the resolution of those disputes through international
norms.

Q -- what about the Northern border of Greece?

MR. MCCURRY: That's one that we'll talk later about.
(Laughter.)
This is your last shot -- go.

Q -- yesterday's remarks by President -- the new ambassador of
Cyprus
presented the --

MR. MCCURRY: A comment on that?

Q The President's remarks to receive the ambassador -- yesterday.

MR. MCCURRY: He warmly welcomed the ambassador and said he was pleased to receive the presentation of credentials. A ceremonial occasion like that is not the occasion for lengthy discussions of bilateral issues, although the President had indicated and did indicate his very strong interest in the resolution of disputes related to Cyprus.

Q Has the President spoken to Bill Richardson since he was approved by the Senate?

MR. MCCURRY: I don't know the answer to that. I suspect he might have. We can try to find out, but certainly the President extends his warm congratulations to our new U.N. Ambassador.

Q Mike, you've been saying, in the potential American Airlines strike that neither side has asked for intervention by the White House. Has that changed? And even in the absence of a request for intervention, do you see a possibility that the President would intervene if it's not settled by Friday?

MR. MCCURRY: Well, the President took great care in saying today we are encouraging the parties to make use of the National Mediation Board to resolve their dispute. And I would echo that, say that the President and the White House calls on the parties to use that process to resolve their dispute. We are concerned about the presentations that we've just had here at the White House from a number of senators from states that are affected, that a strike could pose a substantial economic threat to interstate commerce and might deprive some of the states involved of a very valuable mode of transportation.

The President is very aware of that situation and thus is following, as he said, this dispute very, very carefully. But the President, again, calls on the parties to use the mediation board process to resolve their labor dispute so that there is no disruption of commerce.

Q If they fail to heed that call and the strike happens?

MR. MCCURRY: I'm not going to speculate on what happens. There are provisions under the Railway Labor Act that are very familiar to those who are following this dispute, including the President, but I'm not going to speculate on how they might apply.

Q Could you talk about the channels, how he's keeping in touch with this? Has the White House had any contact with either side, or are you doing it just through the mediation board?

MR. MCCURRY: The mediation board has direct contact with the parties, of course. We have heard from at least one of the parties; we had a letter from the ALA. And Bruce Lindsey and the Counsel's Office have been very closely monitoring the work of the parties as they negotiate and --

Q How does that happen?

Q Are you in touch with --

MR. MCCURRY: The Department of Transportation and Department of Labor, who have staff people assigned to this, give reports to the White House and then they are assembled. The President has been briefed on it from time to time.

Q So there's no real White House contact with the parties that are in negotiation?

MR. MCCURRY: I'm not aware of direct contact with the parties. I think they've been done -- we've directed them to the mediation board and I think Transportation and Labor do have contact with the parties, but there's no prohibition on them having contact with us. But, again, to reiterate, we encourage them to use the facilities of the National Mediation Board to resolve their differences.

Q Mike, Senator Graham talked about his concern that there should

be
action in the event the talks not being successful before the
midnight Friday deadlines that there is no disruption at all. Is
the
President confident that he would act before midnight if that's
necessary?

MR. MCCURRY: The President and the White House are well aware of
the deadline.

Q But, Mike, can he assure the --

MR. MCCURRY: I'm not going to speculate. I've already said what
I
have to say on it.

Q -- traveling public that there would not be a disruption?

MR. MCCURRY: That depends on the disposition of the parties.
The
parties should assure the traveling public of that by indicating
their willingness to resolve their dispute.

Q Are the Clintons going to reimburse the Treasury for any of the
Lincoln Bedroom visits?

MR. MCCURRY: Well, they reimburse, I believe, the Usher's
Office,
out of their pocket -- I mean out of pocket expenses for
overnight
personal guests who stay.

Q As a matter of course?

MR. MCCURRY: That's automatically what happens.

Q But there's nothing -- there's nothing -- any new reimbursements
that are being considered? They always do that?

MR. MCCURRY: No. They always do that. They automatically -- my
understanding is that the Usher's Office automatically bills the
Clintons for their personal guests who stay at the White House.

Q And just on another subject, does the President believe that a
further delay in Lake's confirmation hearings decreases his
chances?

MR. MCCURRY: No, he thinks in the end of the day, as Mr. Lake
has
the opportunity to clarify any concerns that members of the

Senate
have, they will see him as a superb nominee, a person of
unquestioned
integrity and someone who is an excellent choice to be the
Director
of Central Intelligence. We hope that occurs sooner, rather than
later; but we understand that Senator Shelby wants certain
concerns
addressed and we will address those and respond appropriately to
any
queries that he has.

Q Mike, a follow up. Is the President or anybody --like anybody
here
-- doing anything extraordinary or something we don't know about
to
assure Shelby --

MR. MCCURRY: Well, the President talked to him yesterday, I
think
as you know, and that reflects the concern the President has that
we
get a Director of Central Intelligence on board, given the very
active schedule that we have in the foreign policy realm in
coming
weeks.

Q What goals does the President have going into this meeting with
Prime Minister Netanyahu tomorrow?

MR. MCCURRY: This begins the first of four visits that we will
have here in Washington by leaders in the Middle East and leaders
in
the process. The President is very anxious to see the parties
build
on the momentum of the recent agreement between the Palestinians
and
the Israelis concerning the Hebron redeployment. That was in a
sense
a hurdle for the parties themselves to cross so that they could
them
move on to the other, in some ways, more difficult issues that
are
imbedded in the process itself -- those issues that are defined
as
final status issues.

We'll be very keen on learning the Prime Minister's views on how
the process can be advanced at this point, how we can continue
the

momentum. Obviously, they will have discussions of other aspects of the process. I expect them to exchange views on the Syrian Israeli track and the status of that track and what might be done to restart talks on that front, although I do not expect any major developments on that issue. There will have to be continuing dialogue with the parties in the region.

We will have Chairman Arafat here. Will have President Mubarak here in March. And then later in March, King Hussein will be here.

This is always, as is the case with the Middle East peace process, a work in progress. And they will -- in addition to having those discussions related to the peace process itself, the kind of bilateral discussions we routinely have with the government of Israel related specifically to the security of the people of Israel. We have enormous and keen interest in the security of Israelis as they protect themselves from terrorism and as, specifically, the people of Northern Israel deal with the threat that they have faced emanating from Southern Lebanon.

Q Mike, to follow up, you mentioned all of the other leaders who are coming --

Q How about the people of Lebanon, though? Are you worried about them?

MR. MCCURRY: We have strong interest in advancing a peace process that's comprehensive and just that would include Lebanon, of course.

Q You mentioned all the other leaders who are coming. Is there room in there anywhere for the President to call Assad? Do you expect any contacts at that level?

MR. MCCURRY: We have very strong interest in the Syrian Israeli discussion. I'm not aware of any plans to have contact at that

level

at this point, but we maintain a fruitful dialogue with the government of Syria through other channels.

Q One of the security concerns that Prime Minister Netanyahu is apparently worried about, or so he has told reporters on his plane, is this potential, I guess, sale of F 16s to Saudi Arabia. He's telling reporters that he feels that this would erode Israel's qualitative edge in the Middle East. What sort of assurance, reassurance or whatever can the President offer --

MR. MCCURRY: I'm not sure what the potentiality of that sale is at this point, but regional arms balance issues are routinely on the agenda that we have with the government of Israel, and if the Prime Minister raises that point, I'm sure the President will respond in a way that makes clear and reaffirms our longstanding commitment to the security of Israel.

Q Mike, since the President time and again has said that he wants a comprehensive regional peace in the Middle East and believes that Syria has made a choice for these, why doesn't he invite President Assad to come to Washington? Why not add a fifth player who might be the ultimately critical player in the whole drama to come to Washington and see if you can move things along?

MR. MCCURRY: I think it's safe to say that the Middle East peace process itself is one of the most delicate in those challenging diplomatic areas where we use our good offices to advance the interests of those attempting to bring peace to a troubled region. We have thorough and intimate understanding of the current posture of both parties with respect to their dialogue. We would not do something that would work adverse to the interests of deepening and nurturing the peace process. Therefore, we conduct our diplomacy in a way that makes sense and allows for the type of prudent, disciplined approach that leads to the results you've seen in recent years, not meetings that might seem attractive that might not lead to

the outcome that would be desirable.

Q Well, the Secretary of State before this one, Mr. Christopher, went time and again to Damascus. The President himself went to Damascus.

Doesn't it cast some doubt on whether Assad is genuinely interested in peace to have him holed up in Damascus while all these other leaders are perfectly willing to come to Washington?

MR. MCCURRY: Well, to my knowledge there has been no invitation extended to President Assad to visit Washington, so I'm sure he would not come if he hadn't been invited.

Q My question is, why not?

MR. MCCURRY: Well, my answer is the one I just gave you.

Q Mike, in '93 the President intervened in the flight attendant strike, not under the act, but basically by prerogative. In this case, you seem to be looking for the mechanism of the act to trigger involvement. Are there distinguishing characteristics that explain why he would not get involved in the way this time the way he did last time?

MR. MCCURRY: I think each labor dispute has a different process and has different variables associated with it. This is one in which we have seen utility in the mediation process that the National Mediation Board provides. And the President, as I say again, is following it closely. Mary Ellen does give me a note that says we have had contact, Bruce has had contact with both parties directly, so we're well familiar with their views and we hope that they will amicably resolve their differences. That's much better than going to the emergency board route and triggering those aspects of the act, because the mediation board is a mechanism by which the parties can achieve results. And we want them to achieve results using that process.

Q Is the fact that there is no Secretary of Labor right now --

there's an acting Secretary of Labor -- is that a factor in hurting this process of coming to an agreement?

MR. MCCURRY: Not that I'm aware of. Routinely, this would be a matter that the Secretary of Labor would follow, but there are certainly many in the capacity at Labor who can follow that issue.

Q Mike, besides the '93 flight attendants, are there any other instances where the President has intervened in a labor dispute?

MR. MCCURRY: Well, the baseball strike -- I mean, there are others. The application of the Railway Labor Act specifically of an airline dispute has not been invoked since, I think, 1960s -- sometime, 1966, maybe.

Q He's intervened in some railway strikes.

MR. MCCURRY: We've had some metro north -- the metro north strike up in New York. There have been others in which we have convened emergency boards under the RLA.

Q Mike, has the President been informed about the defection of a senior North Korean official in Beijing? Has there been any White House contact with South Korea or China on this?

MR. MCCURRY: We've heard a thing or two about that. (Laughter.)

Oh, you wanted me to say more than that on it?

Let me find my very carefully calibrated words here. We do understand that a member of the North Korean government has reportedly sought asylum at the Republic of Korea's embassy in Beijing. At this time, we don't know the reasons for the defection. We are in close contact with the Republic of Korea on that matter. It would be premature to speculate further on the circumstances involved here, but I would say that we want this case to be handled in accordance with international asylum standards and practices.

Q Could you explain that? Just what do you mean?

MR. MCCURRY: There are ways -- there are international norms and customs that govern the processing and handling of asylum cases, and we hope that those practices are adhered to in this circumstance.

Q Do you know his name, the North Korean? Do you know his title?

MR. MCCURRY: There's some things we know about him and I'm sure that will be duly reported in due course.

Q Why did he go to Beijing?

MR. MCCURRY: I don't want to speculate on that.

Q Mike, if I could go back to a question a while ago -- the Counsel's Office, on the issue of who is paying for overnight guests, is taking the position that because the Clintons --

MR. MCCURRY: Deborah, hold on for a second. I can't hear you.

Q I said, the Counsel's Office, in regard to Mara's question about who is paying for overnight guests, the Counsel's Office is taking the position that because these are paid out of private funds, that no further information will be made available. Given all the questions that have been raised, could we get some documentation of precisely how much money the Clintons have paid to the Treasury?

MR. MCCURRY: No. No. It comes out of their personal -- it's a personal expense for them, comes out of their pocket.

Q -- for food and stuff --

MR. MCCURRY: Yes, this is incidental -- these are not the costs of the coffees or the dinners or anything like that. That's reimbursed by the DNC, duly reported on Federal Election Commission funds. When the Clintons have overnight guests, whether it's their family, friends, whether it's Chelsea's friends for a sleep over, whether it's people who have been supporters or even contributors that they invite over as their personal guests, if they have a bowl of Cheerios the next morning, the Clintons pay for it. And that's a personal

expense. It comes out of their pocket. There is no taxpayer money involved and that's their business.

Q And that's a longtime White House policy?

MR. MCCURRY: That's a longtime --

Q And Presidents have done this --

MR. MCCURRY: -- White House practice, and the Usher's Office is very good about keeping accurate books, I am told.

Q And the only people who this doesn't apply to are official guests?

MR. MCCURRY: When the President has a visiting head of state or if there is an official state dinner or something like that, there is an entertainment allowance that they have. But that's not what is indicated here. These are personal guests of the President. Therefore, the Clintons themselves are personally responsible for their incidental grocery expenses -- just as they're responsible for their own grocery expenses.

Q Mike, if I could just clarify one thing -- in other words the Clintons themselves pay and nobody reimburses them for that?

MR. MCCURRY: They pay out of their own pocket for that, correct -- for food -- right.

Q Senator McCain today has issued a statement expressing his deep disappointment that the President's 1998 budget requests an amount for airport improvement that's only two thirds the current levels, and he expresses his concern that in light of airport security needs, et cetera. Any reaction to that?

MR. MCCURRY: I think that -- I think Elaine -- I'll just refer back to what Elaine had to say on that.

Q I understand the President met today with the Chair of the House Committee on Education to discuss the agenda. What came out of that

meeting? Is there common ground that was discovered?

MR. MCCURRY: We were very encouraged by the meeting with Chairman Goodling. They had a review of the issues that are on the education agenda from his perspective as chair of the committee that handles that legislation in the House. The President obviously advanced all the same ideas that he put forward in the State of the Union address. They did look for ways that they could cooperate. And Chairman Goodling, I think, indicated that there is, at least on some principles, broad agreement that we need to do things to raise standards to assure that American students world class education both at the K 12 level and then beyond into higher education.

Q Well, he's expressed some reservations about that?

MR. MCCURRY: He said -- I would not at all suggest that they are 100 percent together in their approach. But there are good grounds to believe that we can work through a lot of the issues. We look forward to doing that. Of course, that's an area that bipartisan leadership has now identified for follow up work. We imagine Chairman Goodling will be very heavily involved in that as will Secretary Riley and others.

Q Mike, the President is due to address services for Ambassador Harriman tomorrow. Has he given any sort of indication, any thoughts that he's had on that so far, how he intends to approach it, how much is for a government official and how much is for a friend?

MR. MCCURRY: He will speak very warmly and affectionately about a woman that all of America loved and all of France loved. He will, befitting the occasion and given the request of the family that this be more or less a private occasion, I think it will be addressed principally to the family. But the President will say some things about his admiration for her public service to all Americans and to the remarkable work she did as our envoy in Paris.

Q What's the coverage of that?

MR. MCCURRY: A very limited pool, to honor the request of the family. We can give you that -- someone else has got the arrangements on it.

Q Mike, do you have an update on Alexis Herman's nomination -- any more about it?

MR. MCCURRY: I haven't heard anything new recently. I mean, she continues to make progress in clarifying concerns that exist. I haven't heard anything from Mr. Lockhart recently on the status, but we believe it's moving in the right direction, which is towards ultimate confirmation.

Q Is there a delay on that one, Mike?

MR. MCCURRY: I think that he's released a letter in response to concerns that were raised yesterday, that actually repeated some concerns that had been raised two weeks ago by Senator Grassley. And, again, we believe he's in a good position, as well, to clarify any concerns the senators might have. We're getting to the point now where we want to move these nominations to final consideration. We're not aware, in any case, of any issues that have been raised that imperil any of these nominations.

Q Mike, there was a report this morning that when Prime Minister Chernomyrdin was here last week the U.S. issued a demarche or some sort of warning regarding missile technology sales to Iran. Is that correct?

MR. MCCURRY: Well, let me turn it around a different way. The Gore Chernomyrdin Commission routinely deals with the issue of proliferation. We use that format to express our nonproliferation concerns and objectives. On the specific matter you're asking about, I don't comment on intelligence matters, but that is the type of concern, if it were raised, that we would raise in the Gore Chernomyrdin process.

Q Well, was a demarche issued? I mean, that isn't exactly a private --

MR. MCCURRY: We raised specific concerns we had in the area of

nonproliferation in the Gore Chernomyrdin meetings.

Q What's the next step on the staff level to follow up on the discussions on the Hill yesterday to work on the five areas?

MR. MCCURRY: John Hilley tells me that they're going to be working through with congressional staff, with the leadership staff, a program of meetings. We haven't scheduled any specifically at this point, but they're going to work to determine who needs to participate and how they can get those going. And the goal is to get them commencing very quickly. I'll try to keep you alert if I hear of any that are being scheduled, but I think it's moving pretty quickly at this point and they may just start getting together and involving the necessary Cabinet people and the necessary congressional people so that they can get moving based on the instructions they got from the leaders yesterday.

Q Having raised those proliferation issues of Gore Chernomyrdin, what response did you get?

MR. MCCURRY: It will continue to be an issue that both governments will need to address. We'll continue to press our concerns, continue to look for additional information and answers --work in progress.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

MR. MCCURRY: Thank you.

END

3:39 P.M. EST