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THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

PRESS BRIEFING
BY
LARRY SPEAKES

September 21, 1984

The Briefing Room

12:32 P.M. EDT

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#1204-09/21

1:16 P.M. EDT

THE WHITE HOUSE
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PRESS BRIEFING
BY
LARRY SPEAKES

September 21, 1984

The Briefing Room

12:32 P.M. EDT

MR. SPEAKES: I'd like to quote from the good book here --

Q Is that the briefing book?

Q Yeah, that's the briefing book --

MR. SPEAKES: -- today, which says, "And I'm going to say that I believe that before warm weather's left us, I think we're going to see some settling down of interest rates."

Who said that?

Q Well, now the Morgan Guaranty Bank --

Q -- the President.

MR. SPEAKES: Who said that? Mr. Ronald Reagan. On April 12th, 1984, before the Homebuilders in Dallas, Texas. And, just moments ago --

Q He also talked about how --

MR. SPEAKES: -- pointing out that tomorrow is the beginning of fall and the day ends summer, the AP from New York City says Morgan Guaranty Trust, the nation's fifth largest bank lowered its prime rate to 12.75 percent, from 13 percent. So -- the gospel according to Ronald Reagan.

Q How come you didn't tell us to look up the quote ourself today? (Laughter.)

MR. SPEAKES: You never would have looked it up. You never would have looked it up.

I have a number of announcements here --

Q Can't we just question you on what you just said, or -- oh, well, go ahead. We'll wait.

MR. SPEAKES: Oh, you -- all right.

Q Well, do you think we're going to discover that Morgan Guaranty was asked to do all this?

MR. SPEAKES: No, you won't.

Q You're right. Bankers would never do anything -- money is money.

MR. SPEAKES: But do you suppose their board is all Republicans?

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Q Well, I -- probably not. They've probably got a few house Democrats in there.

MR. SPEAKES: The President today is announcing the appointment of Francis Stephen Ruddy to be Ambassador to the Republic of Equatorial Guinea.

Q Jeane Kirkpatrick --

MR. SPEAKES: That's Guinea. Richard T. Kennedy to be Representative of the United States of America to the 28th Session of the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency. And Helmut A. Merklein, Nunzio J. Palladino, and Richard Salisbury Williamson to be Alternate Representatives.

The meeting -- the President, this afternoon, is bringing in some United States Air Force outstanding airmen for a salute. He'll do that in the Oval Office.

At 2:15 p.m. this afternoon there will be a background briefing on U.S.-Soviet relations in the briefing room.

Looking to next week: There will be a detailed trip schedule for New York that will be available later this afternoon for your planning purposes. We're looking for an 8:15 a.m. check-in at Andrews on Sunday, with the press plane leaving at 9:00 a.m. The Air Force One pool leaves -- or, checks in at 12:20 p.m., and Air Force One will depart at 10:50 a.m.

Q What?

Q Something's wrong there. If the pool checks in at 12:20 p.m., and the plane departs at --

MR. SPEAKES: 10:20 a.m.

Q -- at 10:50 --

MR. SPEAKES: 10:20. Are you -- if you're on it, that was designed for you, so you won't go.

Q No, I have a little work on Sunday -- I normally do.

MR. SPEAKES: Oh, yes -- plug, get in a plug.

Q -- to denounce the politicians.

MR. SPEAKES: A fact sheet will be available also this afternoon.

At 4:00 p.m. Sunday we hope to have an advanced text of the President's remarks at the reception that evening.

And then Monday morning, at a time to be specified later, we will have an advanced text of the President's address to the United Nations.

I would like to come back to the week ahead, including the United Nations, shortly.

Another trip announcement. The President will travel to Ohio and Wisconsin on Wednesday, September 26th. He will travel first to Bowling Green, Ohio, where he will address students at

Green State University.

From there he goes to Canton, Ohio, where he will visit the Timken Company Faircrest Steel facility. The facility is under construction. The President will address employees and construction workers there.

The President then goes to Milwaukee where he will attend a family style community event at the Old Heidelberg Park. Make remarks there, and after his remarks, the President returns to Washington. You have a tentative summary schedule.

Now, let's see -- this morning the President met with the Japanese Finance Minister, Noboru Takeshita, who will chair the International Monetary Fund, World Bank Joint Annual Meetings held in Washington September 24th to the 28th.

The Finance Minister formally invited the President to address the IMF-World Bank meeting, and the President accepted. The President will speak to the group next Tuesday at 10:00 a.m. The meeting is at the Sheraton Washington.

The President congratulated Mr. Takeshita on his being chairman of this year's meetings,

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and thanked him for his role in reaching a successful agreement on the yen-dollar capital markets arrangement. Other participants in this morning's meeting were the Vice President, Secretary of Treasury, the Japanese Ambassador, the National Security Advisor, and members of the White House staff. We'll have a photo of this meeting available, a White House photo, if anyone is specifically interested.

Q Did he say, "the hell with Roy Acuff"?

MR. SPEAKES: The Japanese did? I imagine he's a Roy Acuff fan. He is a Cub fan, I think.

We're distributing an MBFR statement by the President as a result of his meeting with Ambassador Glitman this morning. And earlier today we distributed a statement regarding the CPI, which is, once again, running low.

Now, let's see.

Q Larry, isn't the CPI up?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

Q -- half a point.

MR. SPEAKES: .3 to .5.

Q But you're looking at that as a positive sign?

MR. SPEAKES: Interest is still remaining low.

Q Inflation.

MR. SPEAKES: Inflation is still remaining --

Q But if you annualize this, of course, it would be much higher than the last annualization figure you give us.

MR. SPEAKES: It's true, but look at it in terms of the last administration's inflation figure. That gives you some idea of the progress being made under the Reagan economic program.

Q Larry, on the same subject -- inflation has upticked. Unemployment has upticked. (Laughter.) That doesn't concern you?

Q Do you work for the government?

MR. FITZWATER: If the unemployment -- or the inflation level is well in line with the inflation level we've seen over the last nine months -- or first nine months of this year. It's a relatively low level. The increase is primarily in vegetables, which is a temporary kind of increase and we fully expect it to stay down.

MR. SPEAKES: So eat your vegetables, Ira.

Q What? (Laughter.)

MR. SPEAKES: The meeting with Ambassador Glitman, which we're distributing the President's statement, he is a newly designated U.S. ambassador to the Vienna negotiations. He will be leaving later today for the next round of MBFR talks which resume next week.

The Ambassador is a career foreign service officer who previously served as Paul Nitze's deputy at the INF. The President is issuing a written statement which you have. These negotiations, as you know, are -- involve 12 members of NATO and seven Warsaw Pact members. They've been taking place since 1973.

The President also this morning -- you saw the meeting with Ambassador Hartman. It gave the President an opportunity to review U.S.-Soviet relations with his Ambassador to the Soviet Union.

The President is continuing his preparations for his meeting next week with Foreign Minister Gromyko. The President sees the meetings in New York and here as an opportunity to renew high-level dialogue between the United States and the Soviet Union, oriented --

Q What did you say?

MR. SPEAKES: Pardon?

Q Would you slow down a little?

MR. SPEAKES: All right.

Q Renew?

MR. SPEAKES: To renew high-level dialogue between the United States and the Soviet Union. We're looking toward the hopeful resolution of problems across the board on bilateral issues.

Q Wait a second.

Q Could you give us that again?

MR. SPEAKES: We're looking -- we're hopeful that we can move toward a resolution of problems across the board in bilateral issues, arms control issues, and regional issues as well as a treatment of our concern over individual rights and liberties in the Soviet Union.

We can expand on that and --

Q Rights and what?

Q Read that --

Q Rights and liberties.

MR. SPEAKES: Rights and liberties in the Soviet Union. Individual rights and liberties in the Soviet Union.

We can expand on this during the briefing by the Senior Administration Official this afternoon at 2:15 p.m.

Q Well, can we just ask you something on the record, though, because I understand he won't be on the record. Could you address the question posed to the President which he snapped off with one of his one-liners -- based on the columns this morning that seemed to flow from a briefing yesterday as to whether he's going to take a hard line with Gromyko, as these columnists suggest?

MR. SPEAKES: I think we'll just have to wait and see, Sam. You may get more on background than I would like to give you on the record. But the President will be continuing his discussions. There is a lot that will take place between now and next Friday when the Gromyko meeting takes place, including the fact that Gromyko may attend the reception at the UN and the fact that Secretary Shultz will be meeting with him on Wednesday. And Secretary Shultz will be reporting to the President on Thursday prior to the meeting.

Q Why was Laird here, Larry? Was Laird part of that?

MR. SPEAKES: Laird?

Q Melvin Laird.

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know why Laird was here. Do you?

Q Is he meeting with the President?

MR. SPEAKES: Not that I know of.

Q You're going to approach the whole problem of liberties in the Soviet Union? In view of all the bilateral problems we had, do you think the U.S. is going to get anywhere dealing with the liberty of the Soviet citizen?

MR. SPEAKES: We've certainly raised these questions in the past. Our position is well-known and we certainly are not going to shy away from raising them again.

Q Well, what can you do about it when you can't even do about the things in the outside perimeter?

MR. SPEAKES: I think we've had some reasonable success with the Soviet Union on a --

Q Speaking of Jewish citizens --

MR. SPEAKES: Of Jewish immigration. We're speaking of other things.

Q Sakharov?

MR. SPEAKES: The Sakharovs. The treatment of our citizens who travel there, the Embassy relations, and so forth.

Charles?

Q Larry, every paragraph on this statement says, in essence, the U.S. has done this, set forth a proposal. The Soviets have done nothing. The U.S. has done nothing, the Soviets have refused to talk. Is that the tone you're going to have in your meetings with Gromyko?

MR. SPEAKES: I just don't think I can speculate on the tone of the meetings. I think the President --

Q -- just suggest the tone?

MR. SPEAKES: The President is approaching these meetings as an opportunity to explore the feelings of the Soviet Foreign Minister and at the same time, make known his long-held feelings that there is an opportunity for the two governments to work together and that if we put aside some of the fears that have been raised on both sides, that it would be at least an opportunity that could bear fruit in the future. But as far as what we expect to achieve in the meeting, we can't speculate because we don't know.

Q Well, the President does not intend to put aside his inordinate fear of communism, does he?

MR. SPEAKES: I think the President has expressed his views many times on previous statements and actions by the Soviet Union. But I think that -- and the Soviets have expressed similar fears by the United States. But I think that that does not stand in the way of us reaching substantial agreements in the future on things such as arms control and other matters.

Q Well, is he going to create an atmosphere of hostility? It seems to me that the whole buildup now is in that direction.

MR. SPEAKES: I don't --

Q I mean, he is not going in with an open mind on this.

MR. SPEAKES: The President of the United States is not? You're wrong, dead wrong.

Q Am I?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

Ira?

Q Larry, in the recent speeches over the last -- I'm thinking of Grand Rapids yesterday. He's talking about America will be Number One and we "ain't going to come in second", et cetera. Was he referring to the competition between the United States and the Soviet Union or was that some -- is there any other way to read those lines?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

Q What is -- what is the way?

MR. SPEAKES: There is another way to read that line.
(Laughter.)

Q What is the way, then?

MR. SPEAKES: The way to read the line is the pride in America, that we like to be first; we like to be first economically. Olympic spirit. Those kinds of things.

Q You mean against whoever might be competing with us in any particular area? Like maybe the Japanese one day, the West Germans the other?

Q You're talking about the Olympics?

Q The Guineas.

MR. SPEAKES: Sure, yes.

Let me go to the back, to Candy. I've got a whole lot more, but we'll certainly stay on this subject.

Candy?

Q Okay, first of all, have you said how long this meeting is supposed to last?

Q Which meeting?

Q The Friday meeting?

MR. SPEAKES: No, we haven't.

Q And the other thing is --

Q Okay, how long is it?

Q Yes.

Q Oh, do you know? I'm sorry.

Q How long?

Q Are you going to tell us?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes, it will -- it certainly -- it probably will last more than an hour and probably include lunch.

Q More than an hour?

Q How about less than three or four hours?

Q Half day?

Q What's this?

Q The Gromyko meeting.

MR. SPEAKES: Yes, less than half a day and more than an hour. But it could be well over an hour. It will continue through lunch.

Q Can I also ask you, the President, when he was out here, seemed to indicate this was a very general kind of meeting. He talked about assuring Gromyko that we meant him no harm. And you seem to say -- you know, you're looking forward to progress on all these things. You don't mean specifically out of this meeting?

MR. SPEAKES: Not in this meeting, no. Let me emphasize that; that this meeting is a very general meeting and one that is not designed as negotiating on a number of specific topics but it's --

Q -- just to get to know one another.

MR. SPEAKES: It's an opportunity to talk and to explain the feelings of both sides. But we would hope that this meeting -- and if -- it certainly from our standpoint could lead to further opportunities. It remains to be seen what the Soviets' standpoint --

Q Are you saying specifically that he will talk about human rights issues, though? Are you saying that it -- in that --

MR. SPEAKES: Saying we will certainly be prepared to raise them, but I think I'd wait until the meeting's over before --

Q And what do we know about his appearing at the UN reception on Sunday? Where does that stand at this point?

MR. SPEAKES: We don't have firm word from the Soviets as to whether their Foreign Minister will be there, but he's certainly been invited and we do hope that he will attend.

Bob?

Q Will he also discuss Central America?

MR. SPEAKES: I just don't know until the agenda is fully developed and the President decides specifically what he wants to talk about?

Owen?

Q Have you had any contact with the Mondale people about him briefing the President on his --

MR. SPEAKES: Not that I'm aware of. State could probably tell us more -- tell you more about that. I don't know that there's been any contact.

Q Who's he meeting with tomorrow?

Q How's the White House -- how is the White House going to judge the relative success or failure of this meeting?

Q A success. (Laughter.)

MR. SPEAKES: Yes. --

Q I mean --

Q A success, right?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't think that we're going to try to term in it -- as a success or a failure. We're simply going to meet. We have our objective, and the objective is to seek to restore some dialogue with the Soviet Union on a wide range of topics, and we will hope it leads to that. But we're not setting any specific high standards for achievement in this meeting. It is the first meeting the two have had. So, I think that we will have to -- the outcome of it and how the world judges it as a success or a failure remains to be seen.

Q Larry, what's the -- what do you envision -- being the participants? Obviously, there'll be a few other people. But, for instance, does the President envision having Shultz or others in with him or is it basically --

Q They have to. (Laughter.)

MR. SPEAKES: I would judge there will be --

Q -- be a minimal number or --

MR. SPEAKES: -- all of the above. I honestly don't yet know how this specific meeting will be structured. Do you want to expand on that anymore?

MR. SIMS: I think we've got a briefer coming in to talk about this sort of thing.

Q Is the President going to read to Gromyko from the 4" by 5" cards?

Q -- 3" by 5". (Laughter.)

Q -- 3" by 5". Sorry.

Q -- six.

Q -- by six.

Q -- 4" by 6".

MR. SPEAKES: Rowley?

Q Larry, have the Soviets given the White House any indication of what they expect to get out of the meeting or what they would like to get out of the meeting?

Q Have to ask them.

MR. SPEAKES: I'd ask the Soviets.

Q Afghanistan. (Laughter.)

MR. SPEAKES: Let's go to --

Q Just one more question on the subject. The President's going to have some briefings tomorrow in connection with the UN and --

MR. SPEAKES: I don't think so --

Q How about in New York?

MR. SPEAKES: -- Shultz -- tomorrow's --

MR. SIMS: Not that I know of --

MR. SPEAKES: Okay.

Q What about non-government people?

MR. SPEAKES: We don't think so at the moment.

Joe?

Q What are the bilaterals that you've set for Sunday and Monday?

MR. SPEAKES: I'm coming to that.

Q Okay.

MR. SPEAKES: The United Nations trip will be the President's visit to the 39th General Assembly. It is an unprecedented third time that this United States President has addressed the UN in one term in office. This is indicative of our strong commitment to the principles of the UN Charter.

The bilateral meetings that will take place in New York -- we'll present you with a schedule shortly and with some UN background

briefing material.

On Sunday, September 23rd, the President will have a working lunch with the Secretary General Perez de Cuellar. Attending the lunch will be William Buffum -- B-u-f-f-u-m -- who's the Undersecretary General for Political and General Assembly Affairs; Brian -- how do you pronounce this guy's name?

MR. SIMS: Urquhart.

MR. SPEAKES: Urquhart? U-r-q-u-h-a-r-t -- Undersecretary General for Special Political Affairs; Secretary of State Shultz; the foreign policy advisor, Bud McFarlane; Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick; and perhaps others.

This is the President's fourth meeting with the Secretary General. We expect the luncheon will provide the President with an opportunity to outline U.S. views on key foreign policy issues of global concern, including East-West relations, Central America and the Middle East.

The President will meet Sunday afternoon with President Alfonsin of Argentina, President Mobutu of Zaire, and Prime Minister Willoch of Norway.

The President and Mrs. Reagan will be hosting a reception in the evening for the heads of delegations at which he will make brief remarks.

Briefing schedule will be: At approximately 5:30 p.m., which is at the conclusion of the last bilateral and prior to the reception,

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Secretary Shultz will brief. He will brief on the record and on camera. He will give you a readout on the bilaterals and preview the President's speech.

On Monday, September 24th --

Q When is that -- on the record --

MR. SPEAKES: At 5:30 p.m. Sunday.

Q When is the reception, Larry?

MR. SPEAKES: When is the reception? At 6:30 p.m. Sunday.

Q Gromyko --

Q Is Gromyko going to be there?

MR. SPEAKES: Is Gromyko going to attend? Somebody asked that a moment ago while you were asleep.

Q What was the answer?

MR. SPEAKES: The answer, while you were asleep, was that we have not heard specifically from the Russians. We're hopeful that he will.

On Monday, September 24th, the President will pay courtesy calls on the Secretary General at the United Nations, and the President of the 39th General Assembly, Paul Luzaka.

At 10:35 a.m. -- and we will be precise on these times -- he will address the General Assembly.

Following the General Assembly, he returns to the Waldorf where he will meet with --

Q Can I interrupt -- any idea of the length of the speech?

MR. SPEAKES: I really don't. I'd say 35, 40 minutes.

Q He goes on and on --

MR. SPEAKES: Is it that long -- the speech?

MR. SIMS: Thirty --

Q At 10:30 what?

Q Thirty and --

MR. SPEAKES: We're asking for 10:30:45, but -- we're going to have to get back to you and be specific. Ask Mark has he talked to New York about the start time on that thing.

After the General Assembly speech, the President returns to the Waldorf where he will meet with Prince Sihanouk and His Excellency Son Sann of Kampuchea, the President and Prime Minister respectively of the Democratic Kampuchean Coalition.

And after that there will be a final briefing by the Secretary of State.

The President will return to Washington mid-day, shortly after noon. Anything firm on the start time?

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MR. WEINBERG: Ten-thirtyish. (Laughter.)

MR. SPEAKES: Ten thirty --

MR. WEINBERG: At 10:30:45.

Q There you go.

MR. SPEAKES: At 10:30:45, is now a firm start time.

Q 10:30:45 --

MR. SPEAKES: Subject to -- what?

Q I'm sorry --

MR. SPEAKES: Subject, of course, to the way the United Nations operates. Hopefully they'll be on time.

Q What time do you think Shultz will brief?

MR. SPEAKES: Shultz will brief -- we're looking at 12:30 p.m., more-or-less, right?

We figure on -- we don't have a firm time. We figure we'll be back at the hotel around 11:30 a.m., 11:45 a.m. to start the Kampuchea meeting. Then 30 minutes for that, and then we'll have him at 12:30 p.m.

Q Doesn't Reagan have a lunch?

MR. SPEAKES: No.

Q What's the --

Q On the record and on camera, Larry?

MR. SPEAKES: Pardon?

Q On the record and on camera with Shultz?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

Q What's the President going to say to Sihanouk whom we drove out of Cambodia at one point, and established a man named Lon Nol -- now that he's back again?

MR. SPEAKES: What happened to Lon?

Q Well, he got a brain tumor eventually, but by that time we'd lost and pulled ourselves out.

Q He fell into a palidrome. (Laughter.)

MR. SPEAKES: I don't have any specific thing that the President will be dealing with.

Q Is he going to say, "We're glad you're back," or what? (Laughter.)

MR. SPEAKES: No. We've had some --

MR. SIMS: Met with him last year.

MR. SPEAKES: Yes. We met with him last year. We've had ongoing relations, an ongoing policy, toward this part of the Kampuchean government there, in dealing with -- in concert with ASEAN colleagues.

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Q Will there be coverage of this lunch on Saturday with Perez de Cuellar?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

Q Sunday.

MR. SPEAKES: Sunday. He will have photo-ops at the beginning of each bilateral.

Q So -- will he give remarks at the lunch --

Q Didn't you say a working lunch on Saturday? That's Sunday? The lunch?

MR. SPEAKES: Perez de Cuellar? Yes. We don't go to New York until Sunday.

Q Okay.

Q The meeting with Alfonsin and the others are taking place in the Waldorf?

MR. SPEAKES: In the where?

Q Waldorf.

MR. SPEAKES: Yes. Everything's in the Waldorf with the exception of the U.N. speech.

Q -- Zaire and Norway? Or did you mention someone else?

MR. SPEAKES: And Kampuchea, on Monday.

Q Larry, could you tell us how did Reagan decide with whom to meet, or did he schedule in everyone who asked?

MR. SPEAKES: No. We had a number of requests. These are people that we either haven't had an opportunity to meet with at one time or another, or those that have particular situations that we would like to discuss with them, or that they would like to discuss with us.

Q First meeting with Alfonsin?

MR. SPEAKES: First meeting with Alfonsin, I believe.

Okay. Now, next week the President has a considerable amount of foreign policy activity. The United Nations visit is Sunday and Monday.

On Tuesday he will address the International Monetary Fund meeting.

The President also sees President Mulroney of Canada for a meeting in the Oval Office which will be followed by a working lunch and departure statements.

Q When was that?

MR. SPEAKES: On Tuesday.

On Thursday --

Q So -- how long will be his speech at the IMF?

MR. SPEAKES: Anywhere from 20 to 40 minutes.

Q Does that mean he has nothing Monday when he gets back?

MR. SPEAKES: Let's see if I've got anything specific on the schedule on Monday -- On Monday, there's a reception for Presidents of Historically Black Colleges at 5:20 p.m. in the residence. I don't know whether we'll have coverage of that or not.

On -- let's see --

Q Thursday.

MR. SPEAKES: Thursday -- On Wednesday is a trip to Ohio and Milwaukee.

On Thursday, the President will continue his preparations for Gromyko.

We anticipate that the Secretary of State will return to Washington after his meeting with Foreign Minister Gromyko in order to report to the President.

In addition, today we're announcing that the President has invited Fernando Belaunde Terry of the Republic of Peru to meet with him in the United States. President Belaunde has accepted the invitation. He'll meet with the President at the White House on Thursday, September 27th, 1984.

The President is very pleased to be able to meet with President Belaunde during his visit to Washington next week. The Peruvian President will be in the United States to speak to the United Nations General Assembly on September 28.

President Belaunde is the dean of Latin America's democratic leaders, having first been elected in Peru in 1963. His term was cut short by a coup in 1968. But he was reelected after the return to civilian rule in 1980. And President Belaunde and his administration have worked hard to consolidate democracy. Elections to choose a successor are scheduled for next April.

President Belaunde's foreign policy reflects his administration's identification with the Western values that we share. His economic policies have been aimed at reorienting Peru from heavy government involvement in the economy toward a free-market, private-sector system, which we believe is the recipe for long-term development.

The President believes it is timely to demonstrate his and this administration's firm commitment to the strengthening of democracy and sensible economic policies in Peru and Latin America as a whole.

Q Could you spell his name, please?

MR. SPEAKES: Fernando, F-e-r-n-a-n-d-o. Belaunde, B-e-l-a-u-n-d-e. Terry is the last name, although he goes by Belaunde.

Q Terry is T-e-r-r-y?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

And then on Friday, the President has a meeting with the Soviet Foreign Minister, which is scheduled for 10:00 a.m. and will probably continue through lunch.

And tentative to go to Camp David on the weekend.

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Q Has he been invited to lunch or has he not?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

Q You keep saying he'll probably --

Q Depends how the morning goes.

Q -- to lunch.

MR. SPEAKES: That's right. We'll have a meal.

Q Are you ready for Beirut?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes, anything on Beirut you want to talk about? Sam wants to go to Beirut.

Q Can you tell us about the President's schedule for Saturday? Tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKES: Tomorrow?

Q Yes.

MR. SPEAKES: Radio address at noon. That's all we have. Right?

Q Any meeting with Soviet --

MR. SPEAKES: Who have you been talking to? Disappointed you, didn't it?

Q No. I mean, he doesn't have -- He's --

MR. SPEAKES: No.

Q -- not talking to anybody else tomorrow afternoon, period.

MR. SPEAKES: No, no. Not at the moment. Nothing scheduled.

Q The President said yesterday that he was satisfied with security. He answered a direct question, yes, when asked if he was satisfied with security.

I assume that at the time he did not know, and does he now know, that the second gate was not installed, that the car, apparently, did penetrate the compound. He said yesterday --

MR. SPEAKES: No, no, no.

Q -- his information was it hadn't.

MR. SPEAKES: No, it did not penetrate the compound --

Q Well --

MR. SPEAKES: -- depending on what you want to describe as the compound.

Q Well, wait a moment. I'm using the description provided by the U.S. Embassy itself.

MR. SPEAKES: Well, it depends on what you want --

Q The building was surrounded by a wall; but the compound started at the end of the street with the first guard gate, according to the Embassy.

MR. SPEAKES: It depends on what you want to call the compound. The President's description was accurate. The car was stopped in the street, which is a closed-off street. It was outside a nine-foot wall in front of the Embassy within a twenty-foot wall that surrounds the Embassy on the three other sides.

Q Well, I think the facts are that that car was admitted through the only guard gate manned by contract Lebanese that the Embassy had. Is that not a fact?

MR. SPEAKES: That is the gate; but I'd quarrel with your word "admitted."

Q Wasn't the door opened for it?

Q Well, all right. The car penetrated that. Is the President satisfied with that type of security?

MR. SPEAKES: We've sent Ambassador Murphy to Lebanon. He is there to access the facts and also to express the President's condolences to the situation that happened.

The President was satisfied with the facts, as he knows them. He knows that the Embassy was proceeding a construction project in order to make this as safe as possible from terrorist attacks of this type. And --

Q Well, Tip O'Neill points out that this is the third time in a year-and-a -- less than a year-and-a-half that the same modus operandi has been used to cause U.S. casualties there.

MR. SPEAKES: I don't have anything to say to Tip.

David.

Q Would you comment on these reports that there was a Dutch diplomat who had been forced or kidnapped in the front seat --

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MR. SPEAKES: We've not been able to substantiate that. As I understand the facts, there were only two Dutch diplomats in Beirut, but we cannot substantiate those news accounts.

Pat?

Q When asked about retaliation, the administration officials tend to talk of the difficulty in pinpointing the responsibility. Is there also another factor here, and that is -- possible confrontation with the Soviets if we discovered there was an enclave in Iran, and that we could indeed identify. Would there be some reluctance because this might involve us with the Soviets?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know of any connection with this specifically to the Soviets.

Yes?

Q Larry, let's take Tip out of the question, okay? In the last eighteen months they fooled us four times now -- roughly the same ammo, -- keep inflicting death and damage on us. Why is it, from the President's perspective, that we can't seem to keep them from getting through the front door, so to speak? That first guard house, that gatehouse, was not beefed up. Those guys were overwhelmed by two men with small arms. Is that excusable?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't -- I'm not going to deal with that kind of question.

Go ahead, Steve.

Q It's a fair question.

Q Why?

Q What's wrong with the question, Larry?

MR. SPEAKES: Go ahead, Steve.

Q What's wrong with the question?

MR. SPEAKES: I'm sorry, I don't have time for it.

Steve?

Q The decision to withdraw the Marines and replace them with Phalangist guards, and move to the new embassy site -- is that a decision made with President Reagan's participation?

MR. SPEAKES: It was a collective government decision.

Q Can you tell a little bit about what that means? In other words, was it reviewed by the President and approved by him before --

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know whether it was specifically reviewed by the President, but it was certainly a matter that was reviewed by the State Department and the Defense Department. And it was a collective decision, at which the White House had raised no objection to.

Q Can you find out for us whether the President was informed of the decision beforehand, and whether there was any discussion of the pros and cons --

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MR. SPEAKES: It certainly a collective judgment. The United States government -- that that was the proper thing to do in light of the situation there at the present, at the time that the action was taken.

Q Well, then, were --

Q Is there any feeling now that that collective judgment might have been in error?

MR. SPEAKES: I've not heard it expressed.

Mick?

Q When the marines were pulled out, there were several -- a couple of hundred, I believe, service --

MR. SPEAKES: Eighty.

Q How many?

MR. SPEAKES: Eighty.

Q Eighty? And that was the total number left for security?

MR. SPEAKES: Total number at the time, yes.

Q Does the President have any more withdrawal plans?

MR. SPEAKES: Withdrawal from?

Q From Beirut?

MR. SPEAKES: No. No plan to change those personnel --

Q But doesn't the President concede that on the face of it the security was not adequate? I mean, it happened.

MR. SPEAKES: Well, Sam, as he's addressed many times, it is a difficult world in which we live. That international terrorism is a fact of life. That you're dealing with daily threats. You're dealing with daily intelligence. The United States takes every step possible in the face of these threats, many -- the vast majority of which do not materialize, in order to meet these threats. We're determined to have a United States Embassy open and operating in Lebanon and many other countries where they face this terrorist-type threat. And we will continue to do so. An Embassy, by the very nature of itself, is not an armed fort, and has to remain open in order to carry on its diplomatic function. We take all the precautions we can, and we will continue to do so. We'll continue to review them, we'll continue to do what is necessary to try to meet these threats. But it is a very difficult world in which we live.

But we will not crawl in a hole diplomatically, as the President said.

Q Larry, there were preparations underway to make it more of an armed fort. Why had they lagged? Why hadn't they been implemented?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know that they lagged, Bill, because I don't really know the dates as to how long they had been in the Annex there, in East Beirut, versus the Embassy in West Beirut. I don't know that there was any delay. It certainly takes time --

Q I don't know the dates either, but my impression is that it's been a while.

MR. SPEAKES: Yes. I don't know.

Q July 31st.

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know how long it takes to do these type of preparations, but, certainly --

Q I want to get back to this question of whether the President is still satisfied with security. Yesterday he said, as far as we know -- Is he, based on the new facts, still satisfied the security was adequate?

MR. SPEAKES: We haven't received, are nowhere near receiving, a final report from Ambassador Murphy. And until we get that final report, I don't think the President's prepared to go any further than he did yesterday.

Q Is there going to be any further investigation? Or is the sole investigation of this security question being conducted by Murphy?

MR. SPEAKES: Well, Murphy is there for a variety of purposes; one being, certainly, to carry the message of the President forward about sympathy and praise

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for the courage of the people that are working there day and day out. But he also certainly look into the security matters.

Q Okay. What I'm asking you is, is anybody else --

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know of any other, no.

Charles.

Q Larry, if as you say, you intend to remain open for business, other than sending Ambassador Murphy there to assess what went wrong in this past incident, what options do you have to prevent it from its recurring? What options are available to the President?

MR. SPEAKES: As you know, the President, some months ago, sent four pieces of legislation to the Hill, all of which is pending there, all of which we would like adopted. At the economic summit in London, we initiated and were successful in an anti-terrorist resolution adopted -- or statement adopted by the participating countries. We have a special ambassador that is involved in the discussions with other countries on terrorism. This ambassador has made a number of visits to foreign capitals, will continue to do so. We have been --

Q What's his name?

MR. SPEAKES: His name is Bob Oakley, Robert Oakley.

We have made a number of contacts at the governmental level. I think the success of combating terrorism rests, to a great extent, in cooperation between other nations, and we're making progress in that area and will continue to do so.

As the President said yesterday, the only way to combat terrorism of this type is to know about it in advance and be prepared for it. The way to do that is strengthen the ties.

Q Resolutions are pretty easy to drive a truck through, too. I mean, are you going to take -- are you going to institute again broader security arrangements across the board at embassies or are you going to look at that whole thing as you have each time this --

MR. SPEAKES: I think we have been continually strengthening embassy security worldwide and we will continue to do so, particularly in those countries where the threat is so real.

Mick?

Q There were reports that the United States had intelligence information that such an attack was likely to occur, if not there, at least at other embassies, and that instructions were sent out to beef up security. But it doesn't sound like security was beefed up around the Embassy annex in Beirut.

MR. SPEAKES: Now, you don't know that, Mick.

Q Well, if they got as far as they did and encountered just small arms fire, it just doesn't seem that that's beefed-up security.

MR. SPEAKES: What would you suggest? A 155 at the end of the street?

Q If that's what it takes, I guess maybe I am.

MR. SPEAKES: At low level?

Q What I'm suggesting is that this power bomb got awfully close to the Embassy when we were on some sort of alert status.

MR. SPEAKES: Well, Mick, as I said earlier, we receive almost daily intelligence, we receive public threats. In every case the State Department does keep its embassies apprised. We do take every step possible to do that. But, as I say, the vast majority of

these threats and these intelligence matters do not pan out in reality.

Q You aren't meaning to imply that the threats were not taken seriously -- are you?

MR. SPEAKES: Every threat is taken seriously.

Q Are you, at the same time, taking seriously the most recent threat -- as a matter of fact, when the Islamic Holy War apparently took credit for this Annex bombing, they threatened to rid Lebanon of the United States, and that they would continue their efforts to do so.

MR. SPEAKES: Islamic groups are continually making threats over there, a lot of which don't pan out, but we take them all seriously, we do.

Q Larry, is there any consideration being given to returning any marines to Beirut for --

MR. SPEAKES: I pass.

Q -- just for the purpose of --

MR. SPEAKES: I have not heard it discussed, but you would have to ask the Defense Department if there is specifically any change in military personnel.

Q So you can't rule it in or out? I mean, you can't say whether it's under consideration at all?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't answer rule-in, rule-out questions. I don't know that it is.

Q Well, what are you going to say?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know of any discussion of that type, but certainly we don't rule out any contingencies in the future. I would ask the Defense Department has there been any change in the military personnel.

Yes?

Q Larry, as in the Embassy compound in Kuwait, and I believe in the two previous encounters in Beirut -- had there been a large vehicle across the central access point that would have to have been moved each time a vehicle sought entrance to the Embassy Annex compound, this couldn't have happened. Is the President asking why that wasn't done?

MR. SPEAKES: No, but I'll be glad to let you go with Ambassador Murphy and advise him.

Q It's a serious question.

MR. SPEAKES: I understand, but I'm just not dealing with you.

Pat?

Q When do you expect --

Q -- not dealing with you?

Q -- the report will be finished, and will it be made public?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know the answer to that -- the State Department.

Q Will it be before the election?

MR. SPEAKES: I just don't know, Pat. I guess when it's completed.

Mike?

Q Has the President called the families of the two
Americans --

MR. SPEAKES: He plans to, possibly

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during his lunch period here, or at least late this afternoon. It will be done before the end of the day.

Q Was he aware yesterday in Grand Rapids that one of the victims was from Grand Rapids?

MR. SPEAKES: No. He was not.

Steve?

Q Was there ever any consideration, in the last 36 hours, to in fact withdraw the Embassy in Lebanon, as I think the Saudis have done, and --

MR. SPEAKES: Yes --

Q -- in other words, it's not something --

MR. SPEAKES: Steve, not that I know of, and certainly not at high levels in the White House. There's no consideration of that. The immediate reaction of the President was determination. And the immediate reaction of the Ambassador was determination to remain. As he told the President on the telephone, that he had a job to do, and was determined to do it, so --

Q May I follow that up?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

Q As I understand it, however, there are some who make the case that there really is not anything that the U.S. Embassy is doing right now, over there. Is that -- could you address that? I mean, there are situations where diplomatic experts say that when a government is in such disarray, it doesn't make sense to have an Embassy.

MR. SPEAKES: It's been the determination by the President and the Secretary of State that we should have an Embassy there. And I just decline your statement that we're doing nothing.

Q Two questions: One, there are reports that the U.S. knew that Iran was shipping hundreds of pounds of explosives through Syria to Iranian terrorists in Lebanon. What can you tell us about that?

MR. SPEAKES: We're not going to speak to that specifically. As far as intelligence on that, we had no warning of a specific attack whatsoever.

Q Just following up on that -- do we know anything about any state involvement in this by either Syria or Iran?

MR. SPEAKES: Well, Islamic Jihad has, in the past, had some specific ties to Lebanon -- or has claims to Iran -- has alluded to these governmental ties. The Secretary of State last night said that all governments who sponsor any foreign terrorism certainly bear some of the responsibility for this; but as far as connecting this specific act to a government sponsored terrorism by Iran, I'm not prepared to do so.

Q And the other thing I wanted to ask is, can we get a posting this afternoon on the question -- Steve's question -- as to whether or not the President had or had not approved the moving of the Embassy?

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MR. SPEAKES: I'll see what I can do on it.

Q Larry?

MR. SPEAKES: Ben.

Q There was a remarkable similarity to the -- the reactions and responses given by various members of the administration yesterday, including the President, the Vice President, and the various people at the State Department.

Can you tell us when the strategy for how -- for the response was developed yesterday, and by whom?

MR. SPEAKES: Ben, we always talk among ourselves. The -- Sims is on the phone 19 times between 8:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon every day to the State and Defense Departments. I talk to them every day myself. Certainly the President talked to the Ambassador and the Secretary of State briefed him. The Foreign Policy Advisor was involved from 5:30 a.m. Eastern time on. Jim Baker talked to the Vice President. When something like this happens, there's a number of discussions that take place. So, I wouldn't call it a strategy; just simply a discussion of the way we deal with things.

Yes, sir? You.

Q Is the President concerned, or are his advisors concerned about possible political damage to the campaign as a result of this incident?

MR. SPEAKES: No.

Q Larry?

MR. SPEAKES: Ira wants to go to the MX.

Q Yes. What's the administration reaction to compromise, whereby you don't seem to be able to get the MX until sometime next year?

MR. SPEAKES: We would like our full funding, but that we're pleased that we've been able to work out this agreement on the appropriations and authorization for the DOD funding.

Q Five percent real growth in the expense budget -- fine with the President?

MR. SPEAKES: That's not all we'd hoped to get, but, as I say, we're pleased that we are able to work out the agreement and move forward on this matter in this session, and not have it held up into a continuing resolution, or other matters of that type.

Q Would you be able to find out why Melvin Laird was here?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

Q We've got these great pictures, and I want to know -- (Laughter.)

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END

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1:16 P.M. EDT