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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

PRESS BRIEFING
BY
LARRY SPEAKES

The Briefing Room

September 27, 1984

12:38 P.M. EDT

INDEX

SUBJECT

PAGE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Presidential personnel.....1
Presidential schedule.....4-6
Vice Presidential schedule.....1-2
The First Lady's schedule.....2

FOREIGN

Meeting with Gromyko.....2-4,7-9
Gromyko/Mondale.....6
Beirut/Embassy security.....9-44

#1207-09/27

1:48 P.M. EDT

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

PRESS BRIEFING
BY
LARRY SPEAKES

September 27, 1984

The Briefing Room

12:38 P.M. EDT

MR. SPEAKES: The President today is announcing his intention to nominate Mark L. Edelman to be an Assistant Administrator of the Agency of International Development, Bureau of Africa.

And the President is announcing his intention to nominate Cathryn C. Semerad to be an Assistant Administrator, Agency of International Development, External Affairs.

The President has also invited Prime Minister Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara of Fiji to make an official working visit to the United States. Prime Minister Mara has accepted the invitation and will meet with the President at the White House on November 27th, 1984. Do you need a spelling?

Q I think we've got --

MR. SPEAKES: Oh, you've got it?

Q Yes.

Q We have --

MR. SPEAKES: You have a written notice? Okay.

Q That'll be during the transition?

Q -- how would you spell that?

Q Now, would you explain --

Q (Laughter.) Yuk-yuk --

MR. SPEAKES: The Vice President's schedule: Today, the Vice President is travelling in Michigan -- Saginaw, Michigan -- and Erie, Pennsylvania for Reagan-Bush rallies.

He's in Washington on Friday and Saturday.

On Sunday, he is at Cleveland, Ohio for the Cuyahoga County GOP Picnic. And -- how many have been to that? I bet a lot of you have; I have. (Laughter.)

Q I've been there. (Laughter.)

MR. SPEAKES: You the only one? The only who's been to the Cuyahoga Picnic? Yes?

Q Mark's wearing his full Cleveland right now.
(Laughter.)

MR. SPEAKES: You haven't -- (laughter) -- I'd -- (laughter) -- If you haven't been to the Cuyahoga Picnic, you haven't covered politics. So, everybody take off and go.

Q -- source there, David.

MORE

#1207-09/27

MR. SPEAKES: Monday, the Vice President --

Q Is that when he's going to give his tax returns?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know.

Q Ouuuuuuu.

MR. SPEAKES: Monday's in Athens, Georgia for the 200th anniversary of the University of Georgia.

Q How about them Dogs?

MR. SPEAKES: I was waiting on it.

And, then, Tuesday, Lubbock, Texas: Reagan-Bush rally.

Q I've been to Lubbock.

MR. SPEAKES: And he joins the President in Houston on the evening of Tuesday for a Victory '84 Republican Fundraising Dinner.

Q Well, wait, find out if Sam's been to Houston?

Q What's that? (Laughter.) I've --

MR. SPEAKES: Wednesday, the Vice President is in Little Rock, Arkansas and Tulsa, Oklahoma for Reagan-Bush rallies, and Thursday in Springfield, Missouri and Memphis, Tennessee for Reagan-Bush rallies.

Mrs. Reagan's schedule: On Friday, the 28th, Mrs. Reagan will attend the third national conference of the National Federation of Parents for Drug-Free Youth at the Hyatt Regency. Mrs. Reagan is the Honorary Chairman of the conference and will be the principal speaker at the luncheon. And I'm informed reliably that Brook Shields, among others, will be there. She's due to arrive there at the Regency Ballroom at 12:30 p.m. with the program beginning -- following lunch at 1:25 p.m. The press entrance is in the Yorktown Room, lower level. You should get there between 11:30 a.m. and 12:00 p.m.

The President this afternoon -- well, let me cover Gromyko. There are several inquiries about the Gromyko visit tomorrow and how the coverage will work. The Foreign Minister will arrive through the West Lobby at 10:00 a.m. You may, certainly, cover out there. There are no troops for this -- the Foreign Minister.

Q No arrival ceremony, in other words?

MR. SPEAKES: That's right.

Q Will Shultz greet him at the door?

Q Peace through strength.

Q Will Shultz greet him at the --

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know whether Shultz will greet him at the door or not. Do we know? Chances are he'll be there.

MR. SIMS: -- Protocol Officer, I think.

Q Selwa Roosevelt's good enough to for him.

MR. SPEAKES: At 10:00 a.m., he arrives. He signs a guest book in the Roosevelt Room and then goes to the Oval Office for the beginning of his meeting with the President. There'll be a standard Oval Office photo at the beginning of the meeting.

After the meeting, around --

Q -- photo op?

Q -- photo op with a --

MR. SPEAKES: What?

Q Was that a photo op -- with what type pool?

Q Tight pool? I mean what --

MR. SPEAKES: Standard White House photo -- or standard press coverage of an Oval Office foreign visitor.

After the meeting, they will walk over to the Residence, I would judge, around noon. And there will be another photo opportunity for the walk along the Colonnade. Then, there will be --

Q Why don't you tell us about that? Who all will be out there?

Q Can that be open coverage as it has been in the past?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know how we'll work it, whether there will be open coverage. We may do a tight pool at the end of the Colonnade and maybe open coverage in the center of the Rose Garden just to get two different shots.

Then, there'll be a --

Q You wouldn't do it with just photographers and no reporters?

MR. SPEAKES: One never knows.

There will be a photo at the beginning of the lunch --

Q Yes, I do.

MR. SPEAKES: -- just to have the opening of the lunch. There are no remarks presently scheduled at lunch. When the departure will take place from the Diplomatic Entrance, and there's coverage there -- there are no remarks planned.

Is that idea of how he goes out still the same?

MR. SIMS: Yes, I think that Secretary Shultz will --

MR. SPEAKES: Secretary Shultz will escort him out. The President will say --

Q Feet first. (Laughter.)

MR. SPEAKES: The President will say his farewells inside and will not accompany him to the lawn so that you don't read anything into that once it happens.

This afternoon, the President --

Q What about a briefing after --

MR. SPEAKES: Shultz will brief at 2:30 p.m. here in this briefing room, on the record --

Q Cameras?

MR. SPEAKES: On camera. And that will conclude --

Q What time do you expect the departure to take place?

MR. SPEAKES: I would guess maybe 1:30 p.m., but I don't have any guarantees. It depends on how much they eat and how much they talk.

Q Why isn't the President accompanying Gromyko?

MR. SPEAKES: That's just the way it is.

Q I mean is that protocol, or what?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know, George.

Yes?

Q Would you expect Shultz to be basically upbeat about the meeting when he briefs?

Q Will Shultz be upbeat --

MR. SPEAKES: I will have to wait until the meeting is concluded before I can make any predictions.

Q Well, what is he going to say to us?

MR. SPEAKES: The President, this afternoon, as you know, is meeting with Secretary Shultz in the Oval Office to receive the report of the Shultz meeting and Shultz's assessments. The meeting's scheduled for an hour.

At 4:15 p.m., the Egyptian Foreign Minister is meeting with the President in the Oval Office.

Q When is the Shultz --

Q What time is that? 3:00 p.m.?

MR. SPEAKES: 4:15 p.m. 3:00 p.m. and 4:15 p.m.

Q Will Shultz stay for that?

Q 2:30 p.m.

MR. SPEAKES: Shultz, 3:00 p.m.

Q 3:00 p.m.? All right.

Q Will Shultz stay for the Egyptian?

MR. SPEAKES: That's today at 3:00 p.m.

Q Will Shultz stay for the Egyptian meeting too?

Q Is Shultz going to be here today?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know whether he will or not.
Shultz will be here -- Who is Shultz?

Q Have you said whether --

MR. SPEAKES: What?

Q He draws a comic strip.

Q -- there's a photo op of the President's meeting with
Shultz?

MR. SPEAKES: I'm sorry, I was looking at Norm and
listening to you and it wasn't making any sense at all. Go ahead.
(Laughter.)

Q Have you said whether there is --

Q I'm going to read nothing into that. (Laughter.)

Q Have you said whether there's a photo op of Shultz
and Reagan meeting at 3:00 p.m.?

MR. SPEAKES: There is none. There's not a photo op for
the Shultz --

Q Could we have a White House photo release?

MR. SPEAKES: We'll see. Time squeezes, but we'll see.

Q Larry, is he talking to anybody else this afternoon
about the Gromyko meeting, to prepare for it?

MR. SPEAKES: He will be basically receiving a report
from Secretary Shultz. As a part of that meeting, he will be, of
course, joined by other --

Q Hour, then?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes, it's an hour long meeting. He will be
joined by other people from the national security community in that
hour long meeting.

Q Nixon?

MR. SPEAKES: No.

Q Is Nixon coming?

Q Where are they eating, in the State Dining --

Q Will he be getting a briefing from Mondale?

MR. SPEAKES: Where are they lunching tomorrow? Is it
the Family Dining Room or the State Dining Room now?

MR. SIMS: I think it's going to be the State Dining

Room.

MR. SPEAKES: State Dining Room.

Q Two questions --

Q Is he going to get a briefing from Mondale?

Q -- do we get a photo op at the Egyptian --

MR. SPEAKES: No.

Q No? And when you say the national security community, you mean --

Q I've asked two questions now, Lesley, and I'd like to get an answer.

Q -- Soviet experts from outside the White House?

MR. SPEAKES: NSC and State Department.

MR. SIMS: Government officials.

Q Oh, all government.

MR. SPEAKES: Go, George.

Q Is he going to get a briefing from Mondale or is he going to get any word from Mondale?

MR. SPEAKES: Any word from Mondale following Mondale's meeting? The latest I heard was that they have not indicated whether they will be calling us or providing any briefing to us, but, of course, if they wish to, we certainly welcome what they'd pass along.

Q Can we assume that the President will put forward to Gromyko tomorrow, in some sense, these ideas -- I suppose, ones that he mentioned in his speech at the UN, maybe others? In other words, the President will, in some sense, propose ideas, as a briefer told us last week?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes, there's been no change from what the briefer told you last week and what I told you on Monday, or whenever it was -- Tuesday. And no change from what the President suggested in his United Nations speech or some of his ideas for --

Q Well, I'm just trying to get a form -- an idea for the form of the meeting. In other words, in addition to trying to dispel all of his suspicions, which I guess are rhetoric, he'll actually present ideas to Gromyko along the lines of the UN speech?

MR. SPEAKES: It's our anticipation that the President will be --

Q How will he do that, do you know?

MR. SPEAKES: Just with --

Q Does he hand him a paper --

MR. SPEAKES: No.

Q -- or just say something to him?

MR. SPEAKES: No. I judge it will be all conversation.

Q Did he see Gromyko on TV today?

MR. SPEAKES: I'm trying to get back to you.

Did he see Gromyko on TV? I don't think so.

Q Or hear the speech or read it?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't think he's done any of the above, but will receive the report on it later this afternoon.

Let me go to Ben. And then I'll come to Ralph.

Q Is the President going to meet with Gromyko alone at any point?

MR. SPEAKES: It depends on what the two want to do. There's no prearranged private meeting, but if the two decide they wish to talk alone, then they will.

Ralph.

Q What's the White House reaction to Gromyko's speech at the UN today?

MR. SPEAKES: Ralph, don't have anything yet, and really don't anticipate it. Shultz may have something to say in New York, but I don't anticipate anything coming from us today.

Andrea?

Q Well, just to follow up on that -- isn't there anything that you can say, just about the tone or whether you --

MR. SPEAKES: No. As far as the President's concerned, he will prefer -- he prefers to wait until tomorrow, until he concludes his meeting with the Foreign Minister before he comments.

Q And can you tell us who is coming with Gromyko?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't --

Q Is he bringing Dobrynin or --

MR. SPEAKES: I don't have a firm list and would not want to speculate until the Soviets nail it down.

Q Who will participate from this side?

MR. SPEAKES: The Secretary of State and Bud McFarlane, for certain. And there

will be others; but we'll tell you about that later.

Q But what about other Cabinet people? When you say "others" --

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

Q -- are you talking about specialists from various -- arms control or Pentagon specialists?

MR. SPEAKES: It's not going to be a very large meeting. I don't imagine there'll be more than four, five or six from either side in the two-hour morning meeting.

Q Well, would you anticipate that there would be any need for some technical people?

MR. SPEAKES: When you say technical people, I don't think there'll be anybody here from the Arms Control Agency; but there will certainly be the possibility that there would be the Soviet person from the NSC staff.

Ben.

Q Is the -- an hour meeting with Shultz today the only preparation that Reagan is doing today for the meeting tomorrow?

MR. SPEAKES: I would judge that the President probably has a fairly thick briefing book that will certainly be added to today.

Q It will certainly be what?

Q Do you know that he -- briefing book? Can you be more specific about that?

MR. SPEAKES: Have you -- Do you know how much material he's getting today?

Q Do you know what color it is?

MR. SIMS: He has already received a considerable amount of briefing --

Q Thanks, Bob.

Q What was --

Q Now, can you say it a little louder?

MR. SIMS: He's already gotten a considerable amount of briefing material, books and so forth.

Q How do you explain the --

Q Video tapes?

Q How do you explain the contradiction between the U.S. readout of the Shultz-Gromyko meeting yesterday and the Soviet readout, which was considerably more negative?

MR. SPEAKES: There's no requirement that I explain it. (Laughter.)

Q He asked you to explain.

Q I just said, "How do you explain it?"

MR. SPEAKES: Oh, so I'm constitutionally obligated.

Q No.

MR. SPEAKES: Doggone it. I forgot it.

Q But you're the Press Secretary. Come on. That's a fair question.

MR. SPEAKES: Yes. No, I don't have anything specifically on it. The briefer in New York for the American side gave a presentation, which, I would judge, before you make any -- draw any conclusions about him setting a tone for the meeting that you read that briefing in its entirety.

Q No way. (Laughter.)

MR. SPEAKES: And that -- Don't clutter your mind with the facts, huh?

Some people are waiting in the back that I keep ignoring. Helen.

And I've got more stuff here, if I can ever get off this subject.

Yes.

Q Would you please explain the President's remark today that we distorted his remarks.

MR. SPEAKES: I'll come to that in a moment.

The President this morning met with Ambassador Robert Oakley, Director of the Office of Counter-Terrorism and Emergency Preparedness at the Department of State. He received a briefing on the bombing of the Embassy in Beirut. The report took the tone that despite the bombing, the morale of U.S. personnel remains high.

Ambassador Bartholomew and his staff expressed appreciation for the President's personal concern in his telephone call.

They stressed that they strongly believe, the Embassy staff, that the U.S. must not allow itself to be forced out of Lebanon by terrorist attacks and threats.

Q -- do that one again?

MR. SPEAKES: He --

Q -- "stressed."

MR. SPEAKES: -- stressed that --

Q Who's "he"?

MR. SPEAKES: Oakley stressed that the Embassy personnel, staff from the Ambassador on down, believe strongly that the U.S. must not allow itself to be forced out of Lebanon by terrorist attacks and threats.

Q Yes, but what did he say about the state of security there?

MR. SPEAKES: I'm not through, Sam.

Q Sorry.

MR. SPEAKES: He noted that the Embassy is now back in business and is operating primarily out of the Ambassador's residence.

Ambassador Oakley reported on the additional protection measures provided by the Lebanese Armed Forces. Precautions are being taken by the post security and Marine Security Guards and reported --

Q Whose security? Post?

MR. SPEAKES: Post security. People that are there standing -- the post.

Q Those of Lebanese --

MR. SPEAKES: Yes. And the Marine Security Guards. And plans for the future.

Ambassador Oakley observed that the preliminary inquiry that he made shows that the principle weakness to security --

Q Jimmy Carter. (Laughter.)

MR. SPEAKES: -- derived from the fact that the terrorists struck before work had been completed --

Q On the kitchen. (Laughter.)

MR. SPEAKES: -- on all security measures for the facility.

Q I'm sorry, can you repeat it again?

Q Yes, "terrorists struck -- "

MR. SPEAKES: Ask Schuster. He got it while he was making a joke.

Q " -- derived from the fact that the terrorists struck before -- "

Q Shame on me. (Laughter.)

Q " -- before work had been completed."

Q Geez, Larry, I'm sorry.

Q After "struck." "Struck." (Laughter.)

MR. SPEAKES: If the public only knew. If the public only knew who their representatives were here.

Q Larry, why won't you let us broadcast it, if you'd like the public to know.

MR. SPEAKES: Do you want --

Q -- a service.

MR. SPEAKES: Wait -- wait a minute. Do you want this stuff or not?

Q Yes.

Q Yes.

Q We do.

MR. SPEAKES: Okay. Who doesn't want it?

Q There being no, no's --

MR. SPEAKES: All right.

Q -- you may continue. (Laughter.)

MR. SPEAKES: He also noted -- Wait a minute. Let me back up. This is -- Ambassador Oakley observed that the preliminary investigation showed that the principle weakness to security derived from the fact that the terrorists struck before work had been completed on all security measures for the facility.

He also noted, however, that the judgment had been made that the move to the annex in East Beirut was, on balance, safer than retaining the entire staff in West Beirut.

Let me point out that Ambassador Oakley was in Beirut for a few days. This is a preliminary report to the President. There is an ongoing assessment. And we also assume that Ambassador Oakley, and perhaps Ambassador -- or Secretary Murphy will be testifying before Congressional committees in more detail on this.

In that connection, the President is today forwarding to Congress a request for supplemental appropriations for FY '85 to increase the security of diplomatic missions overseas. This amounts to an authorization request for \$366 million and an appropriations request for \$110 million, as Assistant Secretary -- what's his name -- yesterday testified --

MR. SIMS: Spiers.

MR. SPEAKES: Spiers testified yesterday, the \$110 million is the amount that can be spent during the remainder of this year, before a new Congress convened. And it is our intention to ask for appropriations for the full amount at the beginning of a new Congress.

Q -- figures were revealed yesterday?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

But I just want to caution you that -- no criticism, of course, intended, but don't let -- don't be misled that we're not going for the full amount. Because the headline this morning did seem to indicate that we weren't.

So, it's \$110 million by the end of this calendar year and then \$366 million for the total project?

MR. SPEAKES: This is part of a five-year, \$1.5 billion recommendation. The first year of it is \$366 million and the immediate money that we want that can be spent between the time and when the new the new Congress convenes, when we will send an additional supplemental, is \$110 million.

Q What was that five-year figure, Larry, please?

MR. SPEAKES: \$1.5 billion.

Q What?

MR. SPEAKES: \$1.5 billion.

Q And that's just to beef up security at overseas installations? The \$1.5 billion?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

Now, let me also point out to you that the President directed the State Department early in this year to begin an over-all study of Embassy security worldwide. And this report, which this is the first part of, has just been completed and received. So this is --

Q What is it the first part of?

MR. SPEAKES: This \$110 million and \$366 million and so forth.

Also, you have a copy of the President's letter and the Message to Congress.

Q Larry, a follow up, would this -- this report that he asked from the State Department, has he received it --

Q I don't think we do, Larry.

Q -- the first --

Q We don't have that.

Q We don't have it.

Q We don't have the letter.

Q We don't have the letter.

MR. SPEAKES: Okay. Okay. We will have the Message to Congress. It's just one document.

Q Has the President received this report you just referred to? Has the White House received --

MR. SPEAKES: The White House has just received it in the last few days. I don't know that the President has received the full report yet.

Q Are you planning to make any of it public or the conclusions public?

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

Bob.

No, we don't. We will act on it,

but not make it public.

Q Sounds like there were --

Q Larry, do you know whether Oakley told the President whether or not it was the British that actually took out the terrorist driver, number one, which had been reported from over there; and, number two --

MR. SPEAKES: On the answer to that, I have not seen anything that pinpointed it that closely. There was a large amount of firing that took place by the Lebanese forces, by the marine guards, and by the British security people that were there. What element of that was the final blow to the terrorists -- I haven't seen anything to indicate that.

Q Let me follow on that --

Q But did Oakley tell the President was the question.

MR. SPEAKES: Yes, I don't know whether he did. My judgment is he did not, because I don't think it can be determined.

Q There has been some question raised in reports from Beirut as to whether or not we ought to have our marines not just posted inside, but posted outside because they are such better marksmen than the militia -- the Lebanese militia -- who were there. And that it -- the fact that the British Ambassador's guards were so well-trained, as ours are, that made them effective. Is there reconsideration by -- from Oakley's report -- or in the White House to changing that policy?

MR. SPEAKES: I have not heard any specific discussion of that in the White House. I think the State Department would be the one that could better tell you. And if we did, we probably would have talked about it, so --

Q Larry, it's been reported that a number of security measures -- temporary things -- such as using vehicles between the tank traps that are now being done were not used prior to this bombing. Given the fact that there was a prior warning, is anybody being held responsible for that seeming lapse in security?

MR. SPEAKES: Well, to address several of your points -- first of all, there is an ongoing assessment. This is a preliminary report to the President that he asked for. The second thing is specifically about what measures are being taken either before or after in the face of warnings. We've received a number of intelligence reports, there have been public warnings over the last months -- several months, more than a year -- two years -- on possible terrorist actions in this country, abroad, to many Embassies. Every one of them is taken seriously. Precautions are taken. Now, as far as the specifics about putting vehicles across the roadway, I can't address that as to what --

Q Larry, do you know if the Embassy in Beirut, right now, is on a special terrorist alert? There's a wire story today --

MR. SPEAKES: I'd ask the State Department -- yes, I don't know.

Q Helen's question earlier -- is that not now appropriate?

MR. SPEAKES: Some time --

Q I just want one follow up on this -- you have given us no surprises. Were there no surprises? I mean, we've been reading this basic information. Was there nothing in the report that would add to our knowledge?

MR. SPEAKES: I didn't know you had such extensive knowledge, but --

Q No, I mean, this has all been printed.

MR. SPEAKES: This is what the Ambassador told the President -- keep in mind, too, that this was a verbal report.

Q Did he tell him anything about the marines and the wisdom of pulling out the marines this summer?

MR. SPEAKES: He indicated that the decision that was made, as we all knew, was a joint decision made by the State Department and the Defense Department, and the President authorized him to make that decision at the appropriate time.

Q I know, but did he say anything about whether or not he thought that was a good decision?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't think he passed judgment.

Q And a follow up to that -- what was the relationship between the decision to move the marines out and the decision to move the Embassy. Were they made at the same time? Was there a decision made that if you move to a safer part of Beirut you can do without the marines? Or were they made independently --

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know the answer to that -- Bob, do you --

MR. SIMS: No.

MR. SPEAKES: I do not know.

Q What's the answer to Helen's question -- earlier --

Q Larry, is this appropriate --

Q -- I mean what did the President mean out there when he said that -- you distorted --

MR. SPEAKES: I think a few more people might want to stay on the Oakley report.

Q I've got another question on that -- how did they conclude that it was safer to move, since the building they moved to got blown up, and the other one didn't? (Laughter.)

MR. SPEAKES: I think they took into consideration all of the factors, particularly the location in West Beirut -- the number of potential elements that were disruptive in West Beirut. And I think all of the factors were taken into consideration --

Q Larry --

MR. SPEAKES: -- that it was a better place to go. So -- Charles?

Q Larry, an earlier question asked if there was anyone fixed with the responsibility for this lapse in security. I don't think you really answered that --

MR. SPEAKES: The answer was that --

Q Is it in the report -- any responsibility fixed?

MR. SPEAKES: The answer was this is a preliminary verbal report to the President, and that there's an ongoing assessment that continues.

Q Did the preliminary verbal report fix any responsibility?

MR. SPEAKES: Well, as I indicated, he primarily indicated that it was -- the main reasoning was that it was not security -- security precautions were not completed, security installations were not completed there.

Q Well, did he give a reason for why they weren't?

Q Responsibility for not completing the security --

MR. SPEAKES: If you're looking for names, it does not have names, no.

Q Didn't ask for names, I said, does it fix the responsibility for not completing the security arrangements?

MR. SPEAKES: On any individual?

Q Does it go that far?

MR. SPEAKES: No.

Q Does it give a reason, such as --

Q Well, it would have been on an agency, then --

Q -- materials not available, work stoppage -- I mean, did he give any reason?

MR. SPEAKES: The determination was made, number one, that it was the safer place to put the Embassy was in East Beirut, where it was. The second determination that was made was that they would proceed with it. It had not been completed, but I think, on balance, the judgment was made that that was the better place to have the Embassy.

Q In other words, the work was on schedule, it just simply hadn't been completed?

MR. SPEAKES: I can't speak for the schedule on the work, so --

Q Larry --

MR. SPEAKES: Let's get Lester out of the way before he wets his pants.

Q Is this appropriation designed to cut down or eliminate Secretary Shultz's references last June to preventative strikes against terrorists, and the President's 1981 promise of swift and effective retribution? Or not?

MR. SPEAKES: To eliminate a promise? No.

Q Yeah -- in other words, there's an appropriation of \$368 million --

MR. SPEAKES: No.

Q Beg your pardon?

MR. SPEAKES: No. The answer's no.

Q It is not. In other words, there's still the possibility that we use that policy that was -- has been referred to by Shultz and promise by the President?

MR. SPEAKES: We've spoken on it many times. I have nothing to add to it.

Q Did Bartholomew make a decision to move, or was that made by somebody here in Washington?

MR. SPEAKES: The decision to move the Embassy? I can't answer that question. I would assume that it was -- certainly the local staff recommended, and the State Department approved --

Q Well, then, following up on that -- you say Oakley said, on balance, that it was decided that that was the best thing to do. Does Oakley believe now that that decision was right? Or does he believe they should have taken their chances, despite all the vital elements that --

MR. SPEAKES: You would have to ask that question to the Ambassador personally, as to whether he's changed his assessment of it -- I have heard nothing, within our discussions here, that second-guesses that assessment.

Q Well, it's obvious it was a bad move.

MR. SPEAKES: Well, how do you know what would have happened in West Beirut?

Q Well, what would have happened has nothing to do with what did happen.

MR. SPEAKES: Well now, if he had stayed in West Beirut --

Q Yes?

MR. SPEAKES: -- well how do you know what could have or would have, or --

Q I don't. But I do know what did happen --

MR. SPEAKES: -- or could it have been much worse?

Q -- and it was obviously a bad move.

Q The President keeps saying --

MR. SPEAKES: Wait a minute.

Q All right.

MR. SPEAKES: You can't state that, Helen.

Q She just did. (Laughter.)

Q Were there intelligence indications that something was about to happen?

MR. SPEAKES: In --

Q In West Beirut -- in the --

MR. SPEAKES: I'm just not going into that, but as I said, the entire -- the judgment of the State Department and Defense Department -- or the State Department, and with its advice from its

staff there, was that that was the proper thing to do, and the best thing.

Q Well, you obviously must have some second-guesses on that.

MR. SPEAKES: Well, Helen, I have not heard anyone trying to second-guess that decision --

Q What about --

MR. SPEAKES: Because you simply do not know how bad it could have been had the same thing happened in West Beirut, or how much more likely it was to happen in West Beirut.

Q I think that's -- that's way out of logic.

MR. SPEAKES: No, I think you're out of logic.

Q No, no, no -- I know what --

Q Well, why don't we go to Helen's original question.

MR. SPEAKES: I know you're antsy on that, Sam.

Q Just one more thing, Sam --

Q All right.

Q Is the U.S. Embassy now, both in the Annex and the one in West Beirut, are both of those now prepared and insulated against another truck bomb attack? At the moment?

MR. SPEAKES: We aren't using the Annex --

Q Or the Ambassador's residence?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know, you'd have to ask the State Department.

Q Well, but -- wait a minute --

MR. SPEAKES: I'm not going anywhere.

Q But, the point being that -- that, we weren't -- we're only talking about truck bombs, talking about somebody driving in the front gate --

Q What about helicopters?

Q -- well, but -- that's not happened, we're talking about bombs --

MORE

#1207-09/27

Q Weinberger said it could happen.

Q Well, Weinberger -- but that's not the subject. The point is that, are we now protected from that? Has the President --

MR. SPEAKES: I kind of liked -- who was that that asked that question, or what gates still open at the White House without the truck in front of the gate? That's kind of like that question.

Q Has the President banged on the desk and said, "By God, this ain't going to happen again."? I mean --

Q No.

Q -- retaliation.

Q Would you amplify on the President's statement that the Marines basically are necessary to have there because we can't have them out on the street? I mean, has the administration made a decision that the Marines were not an effective police for this new embassy? Was that --

MR. SPEAKES: The annex, you mean?

Q Yes, for the annex.

MR. SPEAKES: You would have to talk to the State Department about what went into the decision in conjunction with the Defense Department to withdraw the final group of outside Marines that were there. But the determination was made that it was the proper thing to do.

Q But it was made because -- the reason the President has given us is that apparently, it wouldn't be practical to have Marines at this new location. I'm just trying to understand it.

MR. SPEAKES: Yes -- I don't know the reasoning on that, David.

Steve?

Q I'd like to ask about your statement a couple of times that you've not heard anyone trying to second-guess the decision. Is it just -- been decided that there will be no attempt to make an assessment about the decision, decide whether or not --

MR. SPEAKES: This decision to move from West to East Beirut?

Q Yes. And decide whether or not an error or mistake was made? Find out --

MR. SPEAKES: No. As I said --

Q Let me finish my question.

MR. SPEAKES: All right.

Q Find out whether a mistake was made, find out who was responsible for the mistake, and take some kind of action. In that respect. I mean, surely --

MR. SPEAKES: I have heard no second-guessing of it, but, as I pointed out -- and when you ask for specific names or responsibility pinpointing, as I said, this is an ongoing assessment

that is taking place both there and here. We have people in both places that are reviewing the details and continuing -- continue the assessment.

Q But is -- wouldn't it be true -- are you saying it's not true or it is true that that whole exercise is an attempt to find out if the decision was a mistake, and if so, to hold that person accountable?

MR. SPEAKES: I think the approach to the terrorist incident in Beirut and what we're going to do to try to prevent them is a comprehensive approach, Steve. It's not centering on any one specific fact of it. Whether that's a part of it remains to be seen.

Q Well, it just seems logical -- I mean, mistakes sometimes happen. People make errors even out of -- if their intentions are good.

MR. SPEAKES: That's true, but --

Q Doesn't the President want to determine in his own mind whether someone made an error here in carrying out his instructions and take action on that basis?

MR. SPEAKES: Until we see the end of the -- the assessment is complete, I can't answer that question.

Q But you know --

Q I'm asking what his expectation and hope is for that assessment.

MR. SPEAKES: I think he wants a comprehensive assessment of it, but as to whether -- you're -- I want to zap you but I'm not going to do it because I'll get quoted on it.

Q Well, look --

MR. SPEAKES: I know, you want a head on a platter.

Q No.

Q No.

MR. SPEAKES: You want a head on a platter. You want a head on a platter.

Q No, Larry --

Q Come on --

Q Well, after --

Q We didn't say that.

Q After the October bombing --

MR. SPEAKES: Bob. I'm talking to Bob back there.

Q Let me just follow up.

MR. SPEAKES: No, go ahead. Bob's got a question.

Q I don't want to cut Bob off, but let's just follow up on this.

MR. SPEAKES: You're cutting him off.

Go ahead, Bob.

Q Well, will you come back to me?

MR. SPEAKES: I always come back to you. (Laughter.)

Q Will the gentleman yield?

Q Like the swallows come back to Capistrano.

Q Is that Joe Ferguson you're looking at --

Q Think up something fast.

MR. SPEAKES: I'll go to Ben -- or Bob.

Q Did Ambassador Hartley tell President Reagan that current security measures at the Ambassador's residence are better, more improved than they were at the Embassy?

MR. SPEAKES: Bob, I don't know whether he made that statement.

Ben.

Q After the Beirut -- after the Marine bombing, the President ultimately said he was responsible as Commander-in-Chief. Does he feel that same way about this incident?

MR. SPEAKES: Sam asked that --

Q Not yet I haven't.

MR. SPEAKES: You asked it in the soybean field, out there.

Q Oh, of course.

MR. SPEAKES: Or maybe it was Chris. You know I've got to where I can't tell you apart.

Ben, I -- the President is a big man and certainly willing to fulfill his responsibilities as Commander-in-Chief, but I'm just not going to play that game.

Q Well, I'm -- the point is -- let me go back.

MR. SPEAKES: All right.

Q After the October bombing --

Q -- Shultz has something to do with it.

MR. SPEAKES: Quiet, Lester.

Q -- a commission was set up in the military to determine what happened and who was responsible. And a number of officers were said to have made errors. It was after that was pointed out that the President, many people felt to head off any disciplinary action against those officers, came out here and said, "I accept the responsibility." I think what we're all asking is whether some formal commission, not just an assessment, will be set up now to make the same sort of judgment.

MR. SPEAKES: Yes -- I don't know of any plans to do so.

Q All right, the follow-up is that, as you know, Walter Mondale insists that the President must take responsibility. What is the response to that?

MR. SPEAKES: As a great man once -- named George Bush, said just ever so recently is, we didn't hear Walter Mondale crying out about embassy security before the incident.

Q Well, it hadn't happened yet.

MR. SPEAKES: I see, but --

Q And he does not have the responsibility.

MR. SPEAKES: I see.

Q Does the President feel it is his? That's the question.

Q How about the answer to my question?

MR. SPEAKES: Oh, let's go.

John.

Q Getting back to the central point, with this truck going into this embassy, don't -- it seems like the administration does not want to know who's responsible for this lapse in security.

Q What gives you that idea?

Q No, I mean, and the question is, does the administration want to know?

MR. SPEAKES: Deborah?

Q Why not answer that question? I think that's a legitimate question.

MR. SPEAKES: Chris?

Q Yes, I have --

Q I think it's a good question, Larry.

Q I'll take the question if you're not going to answer it.

Q Press the question, Chris.

Q Did the President not give anyone specific marching orders as to what he expected out of this investigation or did he just say, go over there and look at it?

MR. SPEAKES: It wasn't quite in those terms, but I think -- what could have been the specific marching orders?

Q The specific marching orders could have been to go over there --

Q Well, who in the hell is responsible for this?

Q -- find out what happened, find out if anybody goofed.

MORE

#1207-09/27

Q And find out how we prevent it again.

Q And fire them.

Q And don't let it happen again.

Q At least say, go over there and find out what we should do --

MR. SPEAKES: In the President's mind, assessment was a comprehensive and all-encompassing term.

Q Larry, I want to go back to the Oakley report. You're leaving the impression that to the degree that it made any judgments at all, it was basically to reaffirm the basic judgments that were made in Lebanon in terms of moving and that that was the right thing to do, given what was understood. Were there any critical judgments that Oakley made at all? Did anything that Oakley told the President today -- because you haven't told us so far -- that was done wrong over in Lebanon in terms of security?

MR. SPEAKES: As I indicated, it's a preliminary report

Q I understand that.

MR. SPEAKES: He has fixed the primary reason that the security -- security arrangements were not complete at the building --

Q Well, that --

MR. SPEAKES: -- and that is where it stands until we have an opportunity for the assessment to continue and to take its logical course and conclude.

Q Well, if I can follow up -- I mean, obviously, you know that's simply a description of what happened. I suppose the question is a judgment as to why it happened and if there's any blame to be fixed. And I'm simply asking, did he make any negative judgments or did he simply say there wasn't security there? We all know the reason that the guy got through there was there wasn't adequate security. That isn't much of a judgment.

MR. SPEAKES: That's what he said.

Q So -- and there were no --

Q He didn't say --

Q If I could just finish -- there were no -- he made no critical comments about something more should have been done or this -- there were mistakes?

MR. SPEAKES: If you have asked that question one time, you have asked it 10,000 times in this briefing. You're asking for the name of an individual.

Q I'm not. I'm simply asking if there were any critical judgments made.

MR. SPEAKES: The critical judgment was made that the reason -- the primary reason it occurred was because it's a security -- arrangements were not complete.

Q Well, are they saying -- is he saying that that was inexcusable or that it had to happen because of the fact that --

MR. SPEAKES: Once again, I can't find the one word for you to put on the screen. You'll have to follow your notes and take exactly what I told you --

Q We've asked you --

MR. SPEAKES: -- which is exactly what I've been saying here for now, nearly 40 minutes.

Q That's the sum total of what the President was told?

Q Yes, but we've asked you why the security arrangements weren't complete and you say you have no answer. Is there an answer?

Q Is there an answer in the report?

MR. SPEAKES: Is there an answer to what?

Q Why the security arrangements were not complete.

MR. SPEAKES: Because they had not had time to be completed, Sam.

Q Is that all he said?

Q There was a schedule. There was a schedule.

Q Now, that's the first time you've said some reason. I suggested materials not being available -- because it was inadequate time. Does that suggest that they weren't begun soon enough or does it suggest it's just a bureaucratic delay? Why wasn't there time?

Q Were they moved too soon?

MR. SPEAKES: I do not know whether they were on schedule.

Andrea, I've answered your question about were they moved too soon. The judgment was made that it was a safer place for the Embassy to be located in East Beirut, and it was in West Beirut. So they were there.

Q There had been a report that the State Department initiated the move before they knew -- the State Department knew that the Pentagon was planning to withdraw the Marines. Do you know whether that is a correct report?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes, they -- it was a joint decision made by State and Defense.

Q The State Department decided to move before they knew that the Marines were being withdrawn and then decided, subsequently, that even though this wasn't optimum, they should continue -- that the initial decision was made

before the Marines -- before the statement --

MR. SPEAKES: I do not know the timetable on --

Q Larry --

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

Q Well, Larry, apparently, there's been a dispute within the State Department people in Beirut as to whether there should have been a move or not. The head of the security over it, who was severely injured in the blast, has been quoted as saying he didn't think they were ready to move. He was concerned about going in with doors not up and so forth. Was he, apparently then, overruled by the Ambassador who decided to go ahead and move?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes, I do not know how the discussions took place at the time the move took place. I do -- it is my judgment, and I think you'd be a lot better off to go to the State Department to try to get the details about the decision.

Q Well, I --

Q How about the President's remark now?

Q Yes.

MR. SPEAKES: Does anybody --

Q No, I still don't understand. Did the report say anybody, without getting into names, that anybody did anything wrong? Is it critical of anyone or any judgment? I --

MR. SPEAKES: Jan?

Q Yes, did Oakley address the President's concerns about intelligence capability in the area which he expressed yesterday?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't think -- the bulk of the report was concerned with the incident and not specifically the intelligence. Now, whether they get into that discussion, I don't know.

Yes?

Q Larry, what I don't understand is not a specific individual but there is a practice -- the practice that Gene referred to of using vehicles that does not require time. It is something that you use at almost every campaign stop but -- using vehicles to block things. What I can't understand is why -- whether or not you're looking to see why that practice was not used in this --

MR. SPEAKES: I cannot be specific, but I would assume an assessment will be comprehensive and will cover many questions -- probably that one.

Q But, Larry, what assurances did Oakley give the President about security at the new temporary location?

MR. SPEAKES: Somebody had asked that earlier, and I do not know the answer to that. I think I'd go to the State Department.

Q Can we go to Helen's question?

MR. SPEAKES: No --

Q Could we -- I renew the request to go to Helen's question. Go ahead, Helen.

Q Yes.

MR. SPEAKES: The one above?

Q What'd the President mean?

MR. SPEAKES: -- go home?

Q -- no, we have lots of questions on this, and
Moynihan and CIA --

Q -- the President mean that his remarks were
distorted yesterday?

MR. SPEAKES: The -- well, let's look, at the beginning,
at what the President said, so that it will not be subject to
distortion.

Q We're talking about on intelligence, are we not?

MR. SPEAKES: The President said, "The real protection,
and we're feeling the effects today of the near destruction of our
intelligence capability in recent years -- Before we came here, the
effort that somehow to say spying is dishonest and let's get rid of
our intelligence agencies -- we did that to a large extent." Talking
about the United States. "We're" -- talking about this
administration -- is "trying to rebuild our intelligence to where
you'll find out and know in advance what the target might be and be
prepared for it."

Q Larry, could I interrupt to tell you --

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

Q -- that those of us who listened very carefully to
the tape did not punctuate that remark exactly the way you punctuated
it. And we found that "Before we came here" followed -- was the end
of this previous sentence, "of our intelligence capability in recent
years before we came here," period.

MR. SPEAKES: That's fine. Let's read it again. "The
real protection, and where we're feeling the efforts today of the
near destruction of our intelligence capability in recent years
before we came here," period. "The effort that somehow to say spying
is dishonest and let's get rid of our intelligence agents -- we did
that to a large extent. . . we're trying to rebuild our intelligence
to where you'll find out and know in advance what the target might be
and be prepared" -- okay -- just to finish --

Now, Helen asked specifically about distortions. The --

Q Wait a moment. Fair enough. Tell who the President
-- and then if you want to say that we distorted it-- tell us who the
President had in mind?

MR. SPEAKES: It's one and the same answer.

Q Which one?

MR. SPEAKES: The President -- if you're talking about
distortions, there have been representations in the media that
indicated that the President was putting this matter -- the blame --
entirely on the Carter administration. Did the President say that?
Answer: No.

Q Many of us were told that he meant that.

Q Well, before --

MR. SPEAKES: Whoever told you that didn't know what they were talking about, period.

Q So, who is the President putting the blame on then?

MR. SPEAKES: The President was discussing -- and it's -- once you look at this statement -- the decade-long trend of a climate in Congress that resulted in inadequate funding and support for intelligence-gathering capabilities; specifically human intelligence capabilities had been weakened considerably in that decade, partly because of lack of support and partly because of the confidence and trust abroad. We have reversed that trend. That is our objective -- to turn around that trend -- to put more emphasis on human intelligence.

Now, for those of you that want to enter into the budget argument, the President was not talking about dollars appropriated for the CIA or intelligence gathering. He was talking about the emphasis being placed on human intelligence.

Q Was he talking about Stansfield Turner as we were told on the field yesterday?

MR. SPEAKES: As I indicated to you, whoever told you -- that in the field was not me. The President was discussing a decade-long climate in Congress. In the decade of the '70s, there was a steady decline in the emphasis --

Q The climate in Congress?

MR. SPEAKES: In Congress, yes.

Q Was not Jerry Ford the first to --

MR. SPEAKES: Well, it --

Q -- propose some of those cutbacks?

MR. SPEAKES: Certainly. That there were two administrations that did cutbacks, both Democrat --

Q So, what's so great about three years of -- and three major bombings --

Q Wait a moment. Let's challenge you that. Two administrations have cut back. Which two?

MR. SPEAKES: The Ford and Carter administrations had had some budget cutbacks on the CIA.

Q Well, as I understand it, the Ford administration recommended --

MR. SPEAKES: But what we're taking interest -- what the President is emphasizing, and as he says -- the words right here are -- "intelligence agents." He is talking about human intelligence-gathering capability, not the dollars --

Q Right.

MR. SPEAKES: -- but the emphasis of where the dollars that are in the CIA are put. And he is saying that as far as gathering intelligence on terrorist activities the best method to do it is through --

Q But isn't it --

MR. SPEAKES: -- human intelligence.

Q But it was the Ford administration that recommended the cutback under the Ford administration, and Stansfield Turner who carried it out in the first months of the Carter administration.

MR. SPEAKES: Are you saying that he --

Q I'm asking --

MR. SPEAKES: -- that they recommended the cutback in dollars or recommended --

Q Both.

MR. SPEAKES: -- the cutback in people or recommended the cutback in where to cut the people?

Q Cutting -- I'm not -- I am not talking about any one thing except the cutback in the number of agents, some 800 agents.

MR. SPEAKES: The President --

Q Wasn't it not the Ford administration that recommended such a cutback?

MR. SPEAKES: I would judge that the record will speak for itself, and you can certainly look it up. But the President is talking about the emphasis, not the dollars, not the people, but where the cuts --

Q Larry --

Q So, he's not --

MR. SPEAKES: -- were made: in the area of human intelligence.

Q One more and I'll -- He's not, then, talking about Jimmy Carter or Walter Mondale?

MR. SPEAKES: Specifically on that? Well, I don't --

Q He's not charging that they carried out some effort to destroy the CIA?

MR. SPEAKES: I think you would have to look at the record, but I would like for you to look specifically at where the Carter-Mondale administration carried out the cuts which you say were agreed to in the Ford administration.

Q So, in other words, he was saying that Jimmy Carter had helped destroy the CIA?

MR. SPEAKES: He was saying that it was a decade-long --

Q -- he was not saying --

MR. SPEAKES: -- mood in the Congress that has resulted in that.

Q Well, I --

Q Well, was he or wasn't he?

Q -- follow that up, please?

Q Yes, go ahead.

MR. SPEAKES: Well, wait.

MORE

#1207-09/27

Q Isn't true --

MR. SPEAKES: Wait. If he says in the year -- "in recent years before we came here" --

Q Right.

MR. SPEAKES: -- he was talking about the decade of the '70s, the period prior to 1980.

Q -- Ford -- Carter --

Q -- I --

Q -- the Nixon administration because it started under Nixon actually?

MR. SPEAKES: -- what?

Q Is he also including the Nixon administration in this?

MR. SPEAKES: What started under Nixon?

Q The decade.

Q The decade.

Q The decade --

MR. SPEAKES: The decade started under Nixon.

Q It started then back, too.

MR. SPEAKES: But go back and review the history of the Church and Pike committees.

David?

Q Can I ask you -- isn't it true --

Q What is the answer to my question? Does he also include the Nixon administration?

MR. SPEAKES: He -- didn't I say climate in Congress? Yes, I think you would have to look at what the record is for 1974.

David?

Q Isn't it true that this was not simply a cutback, but what was happening was that -- under -- the bipartisan approval in Congress -- that the decision had been made to shift the resources of the CIA from human intelligence to technical means and that what was happening was these agents and people were being cut so more money could be spent on technical means and on basically on non-human intelligence-gathering capabilities and that that was a bipartisan decision, one supported by Republicans in Congress and Republican administrations and carried out largely during the Carter years? Does that -- do you have any quarrel with that description?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't quarrel with that description. And certainly the next paragraph should read that the President in 1981 set about a program that would restore the human intelligence capabilities of our national security agencies.

Q Well, that raises a question, Larry: This administration has been in power for three and a half years. Lebanon has been a serious terrorist problem for us for more than two years.

Q Right.

Q If that's the case, does the President feel that William Casey or someone else at the CIA has screwed up and not done the job that they should have done?

MR. SPEAKES: No.

Q Why not?

Q Why not?

MR. SPEAKES: Well, let's look at the decade of the '70s and the climate --

Q Well, let's look at what happened in three years.

Q Lebanon's an issue of the '80s --

Q Three major terrorist attacks on American facilities. And they've never beefed up the spies there?

Q Well, wait a moment.

Q Spying.

MR. SPEAKES: -- three questions further here on the Great Debate.

The decade of the '70's was quite a different climate from the decade of the '80's, as far as terrorism is -- Look at the worldwide incidents of terrorism that have taken place in the last two or three years, Lebanon being no exception, many other places being no exception, including the bombings in London in the last year or so.

Now, what?

Q The issue is there doesn't seem to be any predilection on the part of this administration to affix responsibility for something that is obviously a major security lapse, an intelligence lapse, as well, apparently.

This is something that --

MR. SPEAKES: Gene, you make statements that I don't think you can support.

Q Larry, but --

Q Larry, we're not talking about --

Q Going back to his initial question, Larry, does the President believe that under his three-and-a-half years that Director Casey and the CIA have adequately fulfilled their responsibilities to provide him with the best intelligence about these kinds of security threats?

MR. SPEAKES: And what was my answer to his question?

Q I'm trying to --

MR. SPEAKES: Do they think Casey screwed up? The answer to that is, no. Do you think there were adequate answers? That's, yes. So, we're --

Q What about the Defense Intelligence Agency warning about this? Was that disregarded?

MR. SPEAKES: All intelligence warnings were taken seriously.

Q Larry, we keep going back to this whole thing of preparation and so on. And it's almost as if we're talking about a high-tech problem and we've got all this dangerous and serious equipment here and so on, talking about concrete barriers in Beirut. And after this has happened twice, why is it not a legitimate question to say --

Q Three times.

Q -- I mean, you know, this is the third time, why is it not a legitimate question to say, "Why haven't you got blocks up there to stop vans?" I mean --

Q Dump trucks.

Q -- just anything, which we have at the White House and which we have on the campaign, which we have anywhere. And in a war zone in the most dangerous part of the world we don't have these things? Whose fault is it? Isn't that a legitimate question?

Q Is it the Ambassador's fault, Larry?

Q No, wait a minute --

Q Let him answer.

Q Is that not a legitimate question?

MR. SPEAKES: As I indicated, there is an ongoing assessment there.

Q Larry --

Q Larry --

MR. SPEAKES: Ben.

Q Larry, the one thing I can't understand, the President apparently feels there was an intelligence lapse because he's talking about the decline of human intelligence. Yet it's not clear to me that there was an intelligence lapse --

MR. SPEAKES: Nor is it to me, nor is it to the President.

Q Well, then, what was he talking about?

Q It isn't clear?

Q It's not clear to the President it was an intelligence lapse?

MR. SPEAKES: The President was talking about the -- number one, the difficulties of dealing with terrorist incidents without adequate intelligence.

We have begun, in three years, to reverse a decade-long decline in the emphasis on human intelligence.

Q But did you have adequate -- You had the DIA reports. Frequently, you have the intelligence; but it's the guys on the scene who don't act on what they've got, can't assess it as to --

MR. SPEAKES: As I indicated, and as we've indicated from the outset, there have been a series of intelligence reports. And that has been virtually, if not a daily, certainly a weekly occurrence throughout the world, all these reports are taken seriously.

Q -- intelligence was a factor --

Q The President is not convinced there's an intelligence lapse --

Q -- in this particular incident?

Q -- is that correct?

MR. SPEAKES: Pardon?

Q Does he feel that --

MR. SPEAKES: I can't deal with Sam and Chris at the same time. Nobody could wish that on anybody.

Q Did you say that the President -- What did you say? That he's not convinced or it is not clear to him there's an intelligence lapse? He doesn't think there is?

MR. SPEAKES: No, no, no. The question was did his statement yesterday -- I mean, that was the thrust of it, I believe, indicate that we -- that there was a problem with intelligence. The President was not addressing that specifically. He was addressing that it is a difficult problem to deal with terrorism worldwide and, therefore, you need more emphasis on human intelligence, which we are trying to do.

Q How about the specific question: Does the President believe there was some problem with intelligence?

Q In this particular case.

MR. SPEAKES: I don't think the assessment is complete, as I have said nineteen-hundred times here --

Q But why did he raise this --

MR. SPEAKES: -- and until the assessment is complete --

Q Why did he raise this if he doesn't know whether it's relevant or not?

MR. SPEAKES: Because he was saying that it is a difficult problem to deal with terrorism worldwide in this day and age. And until we have an opportunity to rebuild what was the decline of the '80's, an emphasis on human intelligence, that it is still a difficult job.

Q So he's just talking generally, and he was in no way saying that that was a problem in this particular case?

MR. SPEAKES: That's the first thing you've gotten right today.

Norman.

Q That wasn't answering the question --

Q So he was speaking generally and was in no way talking about --

Q Will he apologize for this remark, as Moynihan has demanded?

Q In other words, he was -- To answer the question, the original question about what he meant by distortion this morning, then, was his complaint that there were some reports that suggested he had placed the entire blame for the affair on the Carter administration? Is --

MR. SPEAKES: Well, I don't know --

MORE

#1207-09/27

blame for the affair on the Carter administration?

MR. SPEAKES: I have no --

Q Is the word "entirely" the key word there?

MR. SPEAKES: No, I don't think so, but --

Q That's what you used.

MR. SPEAKES: The suggestions in most of the press reporting -- maybe fueled by someone who did not talk to the President to really understand what he was saying here --

Q How could they? (Laughter.)

Q He means on his staff -- someone on his staff --

Q Huh?

MR. SPEAKES: -- did not -- I lost my --

Q How come you haven't come out with this --

Q -- us doing --

Q -- five hours earlier?

MR. SPEAKES: Oh, entirely blame -- the Carter administration, that the word "entirely" is not -- is not essential to that statement.

Q So you're saying there was no blame -- he was not trying to blame the Carter administration at all then?

MR. SPEAKES: No, Ben, you're confusing --

Q Well, why don't you answer that?

Q Well, what is it? "Somewhat"? I mean, we're trying to find out -- talking about Congress?

Q Well, I don't understand --

Q You want it both ways, don't you?

MR. SPEAKES: Boy if I could get a word in, maybe you would understand.

Q Speak.

Q Oh, we understand.

MR. SPEAKES: The original question raised by Norm was -- what was he talking about distortions? My answer to that contained that the entire -- that the entire thrust of the reporting was centered on the Carter administration. You don't have to use the word "entire." Some of the reporting indicated that the President was blaming the Democrat -- the Carter-Mondale administration. The President was talking in general terms of the decade-long decline in the emphasis on human intelligence.

Q That would cover Carter --

Q Not talking about Carter?

Q And he wasn't linking it to this instance?

MR. SPEAKES: Wait a minute, wait a minute, wait a minute. Norm tried to follow, and Helen butted in, and Chris butted in. Now if you will please --

Q Oh, God --

Q If you would please answer some of the questions.

MR. SPEAKES: I'm trying to as best as I can, but I cannot do it when I'm interrupted. Now, I think this thing would go a lot more orderly -- or if you want to go to chaos, I don't mind. Would you prefer chaos?

Q Chaos! Chaos!

Q Chaos! Yeah! (Laughter.)

MR. SPEAKES: You're more capable of that than orderliness, I'll tell you. (Laughter.)

Q -- day in court --

Q Having a trip bible?

Q -- not today --

MR. SPEAKES: For some reason, I find that a guy like Bob has been sitting back there for 30 minutes with his hand in the air while you people in the first row are blurting out, never looking behind you to see if your colleagues want to talk.

Q -- then they'd be gaining on us --

MR. SPEAKES: Okay. Norm.

Q Blessed are the meek --

Q Are you suggesting here that the President was discussing this shortfall, this shortcoming in human intelligence in some context different from the incident in Lebanon?

MR. SPEAKES: He was using that as an example of how, over -- that world-wide -- and I've said it, I don't know how many times I have to say stuff -- world-wide, that it is very difficult to deal with terrorists. One of the major problems that contributes to the difficulty in getting good intelligence about what terrorists intend to do, is the decline in emphasis on human intelligence that began in the decade of the seventies and that we began to reverse in the decade of the eighties.

Q If he's reversed it, why are you having such a low score? And so many --

Q For the record --

MR. SPEAKES: Now, Norm, is that all right?

Q Larry --

MR. SPEAKES: Mike. I'm going to stay with the back half of the room until the back half of the room has an opportunity to ask all the questions they wish.

Mike?

Q How about the side half, Larry?

Q You said that the climate of the seventies was different from the climate of the eighties -- that terrorism became a greater problem in the eighties, and the President then moved, when he became President, to change the emphasis. Did he, or does he now, quarrel with the reemphasis that took place in the seventies, considering the threats that were seen then?

MR. SPEAKES: Mike, I don't know the answer to that, but the President certainly in 1981 could perceive the changing climate.

Jan?

Q Senator Moynihan says these are reckless and false statements about the CIA, and he demands an apology. How do you respond?

MR. SPEAKES: I'm just not going to really address the Moynihan -- Candy?

Q You won't apologize, is that it?

Q -- he just answered --

Q The trend that's now being reversed, how long do you calculate it's going to take to be reversed so that our intelligence -- human intelligence level -- is where he wants it to be? And what's holding it up? I mean, is Congress not giving you what you want? Is there a program? What's the problem?

MR. SPEAKES: I really can't answer that. We're moving with intelligence measures to counter terrorism wherever we can in concert with allies and so forth -- the terrorist --

Q -- it's chaos around here --

MR. SPEAKES: -- it's a changing scene, so I can't answer that.

Q Is it a money problem? I'm not quite sure what it's going to take to -- if Casey is not responsible, and that he's reversed the trend, what is --

MR. SPEAKES: I honestly don't know the answer to that, Candy, as to whether the National Security appropriations have kept pace with our request.

Q Larry -- I'd like to make a point and then ask a question --

MR. SPEAKES: David.

Q The point is, that those of us who did hear this remark -- it was early in the day -- made an effort to find out what the President was talking about. Now, I would just -- I've found, and some of my colleagues have found, that it's nearly impossible to reach you on these traveling trips. We have to rely on people who are not briefed, perhaps, or do not understand. And I'd like to make a request that if this happens again, that you, maybe, as well as us, should make an effort to talk; because, frankly, I didn't see you at all yesterday on the road.

MR. SPEAKES: I didn't see many of you, but it was one of those deals where we went straight into a speech, and left. In almost every case -- and there was not an opportunity -- but I can tell you this -- and I have learned this from dealing with some of my predecessors in this office and watching them work -- that it is important for me to come to the briefing room whenever I can, and I can assure you that I do that. --

Q Yesterday --

MR. SPEAKES: Yes, David --

Q Yesterday we were not -- available in Milwaukee, most of us, because of the difficulties of filing which was late -- six hours after this remark was made -- and I was not in the briefing room the whole time, but it would have been helpful, for instance, if you'd come to the briefing room there and taken a few questions --

MR. SPEAKES: If I could -- but the situation in Milwaukee was we flew straight in, went to a speech, and then -- we left. We walked right out.

Q The second --

MR. SPEAKES: I guess I could have left the speech and come to briefing room, but --

Q -- then no one's going to hear the speech --

MR. SPEAKES: -- that's right -- but, you can certainly find me right by the door where the President enters, and --

Q Oh, sure --

Q No way --

MR. SPEAKES: -- and you can certainly send your pooler to me, or you can ask a member of my staff --

Q I agree we should have made a better effort, and I'm just suggesting that we all should.

MR. SPEAKES: And I'm sorry you were misled by someone, and I --

Q Well, why did you let it go 'til 12:30 p.m. today, when it was such a burning issue with the President? He's obviously very unhappy with the stories --

MR. SPEAKES: Because I --

Q -- and also with the attack on his remarks --

MR. SPEAKES: Well, Helen, if you want to get into means and methods of how I operate --

Q Yes, I do, because if you say --

MORE

#1207-09/27

MR. SPEAKES: Let me answer and I will, because I had not had an opportunity to sit down with the President and go through this in great detail. I had not had an opportunity to look back at the President's previous statements. I had not had an opportunity to talk to the State Department. I had not had the opportunity to talk to two or three people on the NSC staff. And until I was ready to talk on it, I was not going to talk on it.

Q You could not have handled it yesterday then.

MR. SPEAKES: I could have handled it by going to the President, if you'd asked me a question, and said, "Were you talking about Carter-Mondale?" Simple as that.

Q And he was not talking about Carter-Mondale, right?
(Laughter.)

Q That's a good question.

MR. SPEAKES: David.

Q Let's hear it again.

Q We're still confused about that.

Q Yes, we are.

MR. SPEAKES: He was talking about --

Q Come on.

Q Everybody.

Q Chaos.

Q Nobody's perfect.

MR. SPEAKES: Don't shout, Lester, please.

Q The President says, "I will answer your questions."
The President --

Q Original sin, the falling of man.

Q Larry, you said that --

Q We're coming up on an hour.

MR. SPEAKES: What?

Q We're coming up on an hour and 15 minutes.

MR. SPEAKES: What is the record? (Laughter.)

MR. ROUSSEL: It's about an hour and 30, I think, was the all-time record.

MR. SPEAKES: All-time record.

Q We're going for it.

MR. SPEAKES: Filibuster.

Q What does this have --

Q You came late.

MR. SPEAKES: No, no, no. But I'm -- I came down -- I am at an hour.

All right, David.

Q You said to us --

MR. SPEAKES: Ann is leaving. You cannot leave. You've got to punish -- take the punishment everybody else takes.

Go ahead.

Q No filing.

MR. SPEAKES: David.

Q You said to us that the President made this comment, not in reference to Beirut. But he made it in response to a question. I'd like to know if you think you're going to have to beef up security in the embassies around the world because of what happened in Lebanon. If I continue to read the transcript, the first two paragraphs before he made that remark were specifically about the Beirut episode.

MR. SPEAKES: That's right, but he went on and he said, "the real protection" -- and I think he was, at that point, in my judgment and in his judgment, he was talking about the general problems associated with --

Q So, at that point, he departed from Beirut, basically, is what you're saying.

MR. SPEAKES: Yes, but then again, we go back -- certainly, it's -- it's certainly a specific reference that it is difficult.

Q The President said, "I will answer these questions."

Q Sam, come on.

MR. SPEAKES: No, go ahead. I want to --

Q My impression from hearing it and reading it again is that he was talking about this episode. You have tried -- you have made the point to us that he was speaking generally, and I'm just suggesting that the transcript suggests to most people that he was talking about Beirut.

Q One could reasonably assume that he was talking about Beirut in the preceding and following --

Q That last sentence of that paragraph --

MR. SPEAKES: This is a --

Q He keeps right on going with the same subject.

Q Where "you'll find out and know in advance what the target might be and be prepared for it".

MR. SPEAKES: That's right, but --

Q It's the same thing he said the day of the bombing.

MR. SPEAKES: He was speaking in general terms of the

difficulties, as evidenced by Beirut, of and dealing with terrorism worldwide.

Q Doesn't that imply that he's suggesting an intelligence failure in this instance, which is contrary to everything that we've been told?

MR. SPEAKES: Not an intelligence failure.

Q Lapse. Shortcoming.

MR. SPEAKES: None of the above. He was talking about the difficulties with the assets that we have, particularly in the human intelligence field, the difficulties in ferreting out what terrorists are going to do and when they're going to do it.

Q To follow, does the President believe that part of that problem in this location is that we lost many of our best intelligence people in April of 1983? In Beirut.

MR. SPEAKES: You mean in the bombing?

Q Yes.

Q It's a trap, watch out. (Laughter.)

Q First bombing.

MR. SPEAKES: Once again, I don't think the President was being that specific. (Laughter.) The President --

Q I know that.

Q Does the President believe that

that is an ongoing problem in Beirut, that we lost many of our Middle Eastern specialists in April of --

MR. SPEAKES: I have not heard him address that.

Q It means that moles --

MR. SPEAKES: Steve.

Q It takes a long time --

MR. SPEAKES: Quiet.

Q -- to grow a mole --

MR. SPEAKES: Quiet.

Q -- Larry, wouldn't that --

MR. SPEAKES: Quiet.

Q -- be accurate?

MR. SPEAKES: What does the word "quiet" mean? It means, "shut up." Now, shut up, Lester. (Laughter.)

Q Larry --

MR. SPEAKES: Let's go, Steve.

Q -- how ascerbic.

MR. SPEAKES: You won't quit, will you?

Steve.

Q Larry, lots of times the President criticizes policies in the years before he came in. And reporters have written that he was referring to the Carter-Mondale years and no one has ever quarrelled with that.

MR. SPEAKES: That is usually the tax-and-tax and spend-and-spend quote, though.

Q But there have been other statements about the contrast there is now --

MR. SPEAKES: Well, Steve --

Q -- as opposed to the previous years. My --

MR. SPEAKES: I have told you the facts. I have told --

Q Well, my question --

MR. SPEAKES: -- told you what the President was thinking.

Q I have a question which is that I -- It's obviously special pleading on the part of -- but why, given --

Q One more.

Q -- an understandable reaction --

Q One more.

Q -- over the fact that --

Q -- a quick one.

Q -- he's criticized previous years many times and people have proved that it's Carter-Mondale and that he was talking about the Beirut bombing, or the question was about the Beirut bombing, why does the President say that this was a distortion? Why affix blame on the reporters, when what might have happened is an honest misunderstanding? He seems very --

MR. SPEAKES: Distortions can be honest.

Q Oh, no --

Q No.

MR. SPEAKES: Can't they? I mean, if you -- No, what I meant, if you --

Q -- distortion is intent.

MR. SPEAKES: Well, that's what I'm getting at.

Q You're right.

Q A venial distortion, rather than --

Q You're right.

Q -- a moral distortion. (Laughter.)

Q He does not mean to say that --

Q Is he going to come and answer --

Q -- reporters deliberately --

Q Wait. I get to do that.

Q -- inadvertent.

Q I mean, I've been sitting here --

Q It was a misunderstanding --

Q -- for you to do it.

Q -- a failure to communicate.

MR. SPEAKES: That's fine.

Q A second degree, rather than a first degree.

Q -- not had a question recently.

Q Could you answer Sam's question about when he's going to answer our questions --

Q Ah, good. (Laughter.)

Q -- said he would?

Q The President said, "I will answer your questions."
Did he mean it?

MR. SPEAKES: Sure. He answered some questions --

Q No, on this subject. "I will answer your questions."

MR. SPEAKES: -- yesterday.

Q No, no, no. "I will answer your questions about the distortions you've made."

MR. SPEAKES: Yes. I don't have --

Q -- answered questions yesterday.

Q What?

Q Is this the answer?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't have a timetable.

Q You're answering -- responding to these questions, or does he intend to come answer the questions?

MR. SPEAKES: I'm sure, in due course, if you asked him, he would certainly respond to you.

Q All right. Fine.

Q Larry, here's a question --

MR. SPEAKES: Lester, I've cut you off --

Q -- just to your --

MR. SPEAKES: No, I'm sorry. You're --

Q -- expertise.

(Laughter.) MR. SPEAKES: I'm sorry. No more questions for you. Mick.

Q No more? I had one. Sam's had 14.

Q Shhhhh.

Q Larry, when you were --

MR. SPEAKES: You wasted your questions in statement form.

Q When you were responding to Andrea's question a few minutes ago about the loss of intelligence people in the April bombing, you seemed to indicate that there was no lapse in intelligence in advance of the most recent bombing. Is that what you wanted to say?

MR. SPEAKES: What did I say, Mick?

Q There was a question about --

MR. SPEAKES: You had a "seemed to indicate" in there that probably meant you're straining the point.

Q No, I don't think so. I'd have to go back over the transcript; but she talked about a lapse in intelligence and you said, no. And I'm not sure if we meant to say that there was no lapse in intelligence --

MR. SPEAKES: No, her question was -- and I seem to recall what was said on both sides here better than you do -- is that in -- she said, as a result of the 1983 bombing, was there a lapse of intelligence in the current incident. And I said, no.

Q Larry. Larry --

Q You're connecting it --

MR. SPEAKES: I said the President was not addressing that.

Q Are we ready to --

MR. SPEAKES: Wait.

Q I've got a question.

MR. SPEAKES: Wait. I haven't finished with Mick. I always get to you. Have I ever ignored you?

Q Yes. (Laughter.)

Q He was out of business.

Q -- out of business --

MR. SPEAKES: Well, if you keep on, you may get back in the same category.

Q Ooooh.

Q Is that a threat or a promise?

Q Negotiating with Libya.

MR. SPEAKES: Pardon?

Q I want to ask about negotiating with Libya.

Q Well, wait.

Q No, go ahead.

MR. SPEAKES: Who's negotiating with Libya?

Mick, the question I was answering: Was that what the President was saying yesterday? No, that was not what the President was saying yesterday.

Q What was --

Q Larry --

MR. SPEAKES: The President was not saying that in 19-- -- because in previous bombings that there was a number of intelligence agents lost, that that was what caused the problem in Beirut this time. The President was not saying any of the above. He was not talking about loss of intelligence agents. He was not saying that caused it.

Q Larry.

MR. SPEAKES: Chris.

Q There was a time in the past when you criticized the intelligence cutbacks of the Carter administration and Mr. Moynihan got so upset that he wrote a letter to Mr. Casey. And Mr. Casey wrote a letter back that Moynihan made public yesterday in which he said that, in fact, Carter had been responsible for part of the rebuilding of the intelligence agency in the late '70's. Given that, are you, in fact, being unfair to the Carter administration to include them in this decade-long decline?

MR. SPEAKES: Once again, we're talking about the emphasis placed within the agency on human intelligence capabilities.

Now, I would --

Q But Casey seemed to be satisfied with that in that letter.

MR. SPEAKES: I would think what you would do is go back through the record of what the CIA under the Carter administration did with the number of people that were cut back. Where did they put the cutbacks? Where did they put the emphasis? Did it go to human intelligence or not?

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END

1:48 P.M. EDT

#1207-09/27