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THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

PRESS BRIEFING
BY
LARRY SPEAKES

October 9, 1984

The Briefing Room

12:37 P.M.

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#1212-10/09

1:05 P.M. EDT

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PRESS BRIEFING
BY
LARRY SPEAKES

October 9, 1984

The Briefing Room

12:37 P.M. EDT

MR. SPEAKES: Next week's travel: The President will travel to Alabama, Georgia and South Carolina on Monday, October 15th.

Q -- this is Monday --

Q Alabama, Georgia, and --

Q Hey, it's okay, we're home by --

MR. SPEAKES: Alabama, Georgia and South Carolina -- hold the racket down in the front row, please.

The first stop will be in Tuscaloosa, where the President will address the students and faculty of the University of Alabama, at Tuscaloosa.

What's the record this year?

Q 0 and 3 --

Q Five and zero.

MR. SPEAKES: Oh, there's my man -- hey. What's Auburn's record?

Q Does the President have the authority to fire the coach while he's --

MR. SPEAKES: (Laughter.) Well how would that -- what would that do to the voters of Alabama.

Q What is Alabama's record?

Q It's terrible --

MR. SPEAKES: From Alabama, the President goes to Macon, Georgia, where he will address the Reagan-Bush rally at the Macon City Hall.

And then the President goes to Greenville, South Carolina to visit the Greenville Technical College. And he will go to the Advance Machine Tool Resource Center to meet with students and view the computerized industrial equipment.

Following that he does a Reagan-Bush rally on campus; and after the rally he comes back to Washington. You have the summary schedule -- the sign up sheet is posted.

Also available is the schedule, or will be available this afternoon, the trip schedule to Michigan. Press check-in is at 7:00 a.m.

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Q Ohhhhhh.

MR. SPEAKES: Today the President has departure statements -- is that Diplomatic Entrance, or --

Q Larry --

Q I think it's Rose Garden --

Q Rose Garden.

Q Larry --

MR. SPEAKES: Yes?

Q On travel -- you did say -- is there a trip on Tuesday also?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes, there is. There's an out and back on Tuesday. I'll probably have that for you tomorrow or Thursday. An out-back on Tuesday, the Al Smith dinner on Thursday, which is coming back, and that's it for the week.

Q What about Friday, can you -- do you know anything?

MR. SPEAKES: No travel on Friday.

Q So, it will be Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday evening

--

MR. SPEAKES: Thursday night, yes.

Q But none of them are overnights?

MR. SPEAKES: No. No overnights.

That's about it --

Q And Saturday -- or Sunday night overnight in Kansas City?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

Q What did you say the event was in Macon?

MR. SPEAKES: Macon is a Reagan-Bush rally at the City Hall.

Okay. Following departure statements today, the Assistant Secretary of State, Richard Murphy, will be the briefer ON BACKGROUND, for a briefing in the Press Briefing Room.

This afternoon the President has a meeting of the Cabinet Council on Economic Affairs in the Cabinet Room.

At 3:30 p.m. there is a signing ceremony for the Older Americans Act of the --

Q That's not cancelled is it?

MR. SPEAKES: -- the 1984. No.

Q There's a rumor that you'd cancel that one -- no?

MR. SPEAKES: Who started that -- Ralph --

Q Someone was just speculating that maybe he didn't want to be associated with Older Americans -- (Laughter.) --

MR. SPEAKES: As I say, speaking of older Americans, I

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thought maybe Ralph started the rumor -- (Laughter.) -- or O'Leary, one or the other.

Q Can you tell us what the bill is, Larry?

MR. SPEAKES: What the bill is --

Q Quick, Marlin --

Q Has to do with senility research --

Q It's senility research --

Q One hundred, ninety-three, eighty-six -- (Laughter)

--

MR. SPEAKES: We'll get it for you. A reception for leaders of the National Fraternal Congress of Americans in the State Dining Room.

Today, as you know, the First Lady's having a luncheon in the State Dining Room for Eleanor Roosevelt's birth centennial -- 130 guests --

Q That's old -- (Laughter.) --

MR. SPEAKES: -- including the Roosevelt family.

Q When is that luncheon?

MR. SPEAKES: At 12:00 o'clock, I think.

Q -- you ain't seen nothing yet --

MR. SPEAKES: How do you have two luncheons at once? You have one in the West Wing and one in the Residence -- okay?

Q While you're talking about schedules, what's going on Thursday?

MR. SPEAKES: In the day here -- got your sheet?

Q Can you give us a rest --

MR. SPEAKES: Take a break? You haven't been doing anything --

Q Some of us who are older are tired --

MR. SPEAKES: Thursday -- a ceremony observing Minority Enterprise Development Week; lunch with the Vice President -- that's pretty well it.

Q Is there any night stuff?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes, there is a night event --

Q Well, is it political, or what?

MR. SPEAKES: Political? No.

Q Social?

Q You mean he's not going to watch the debate Thursday night?

Q Yeah, what about the debate?

MR. SPEAKES: He'll watch it -- doesn't start until 9:00

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o'clock. It's a drop-by at about 8:00 p.m. in the evening.

I don't know what the word is, but we note with -- with
-- I don't know what the word is, but we note that --

Q Satisfaction?

Q Chagrin?

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MR. SPEAKES: No, it's not chagrin, I guess, for that -- former Vice President Mondale finds himself in Cincinnati today talking about Social Security. I am here to say that I have just spoken with the President and --

Q Ha. Ha. Was he awake?

MR. SPEAKES: -- Mondale ought to be ashamed. He's out to frighten the elderly.

Q He's what?

MR. SPEAKES: He's out to frighten the elderly.

Q Who's saying this?

MR. SPEAKES: The President will never stand for reduction of Social Security benefits for anybody.

Q Too fast, Larry.

Q Wait. Well, who is saying this?

Q Well, wait a second.

Q Has Mondale spoken yet in Cincinnati or are you anticipating --

MR. SPEAKES: Didn't you hear me talking? Who's speaking? I'm speaking. Mondale's on the wire. Don't you read the wire?

Q And you're suggesting, are you, that the President is saying this and relaying what he's saying?

MR. SPEAKES: No, I'm saying it and I'm speaking for the President --

Q What comes after, "He's out to frighten the elderly"?

MR. SPEAKES: He's out to frighten the elderly. Mondale should be ashamed.

Q No, that was the other way around.

Q You said that before.

Q You said, "Mondale ought to be ashamed" to begin with.

MR. SPEAKES: Okay. Wake up out there.

Q Seriously.

Q We're awake --

MR. SPEAKES: Mondale is speaking in Cincinnati.

Q Right.

MR. SPEAKES: Mondale is talking about Social Security.

Q Right. You went and saw the President.

MR. SPEAKES: I went and saw the President, showed him the wire story.

Q Right.

MR. SPEAKES: The President authorized me to say the following.

Q Okay.

MR. SPEAKES: He's out to frighten the elderly. Mondale should be ashamed.

Q Okay.

MR. SPEAKES: Mondale's statement is pure campaign rhetoric. (Laughter.) The President will never stand for a reduction of Social Security benefits for anybody -- those now getting it or future recipients.

Q Wait a second.

Q Ahhhhh.

Q Let's have that last line again.

MR. SPEAKES: -- those now getting it or future recipients.

Q The President is claiming that he will never stand for a reduction --

Q Yes, can you read that last --

Q -- of benefits in the future?

MR. SPEAKES: Absolutely?

Q Well, that's a new position, isn't it?

MR. SPEAKES: It's not a new position. We've said the same thing for the last six months.

Q -- to the contrary, Larry --

Q Oh, come on.

Q Larry, there's a lot of noise. Would you read the last sentence again?

Q Would you read that last sentence --

MR. SPEAKES: Yes. Why don't we calm down a little bit here? Can we handle it?

Q "The President will never stand -- "

MR. SPEAKES: The President will never stand for reduction of Social Security benefits for anybody -- those now getting them or future recipients, period.

Q Larry --

Q Is that it?

time -- Q -- as a policy matter, this is the first

Q "-- those now getting them or future recipients?"

Q -- that you've put in the qualifier, "future recipients" --

Q Shhhh.

Q Correct?

MR. SPEAKES: Not a qualifier. It's "un-qualifier."

Q Un-qualifier.

MR. SPEAKES: Perhaps it is. But that has been our position and our thinking for the better part of a year.

Q -- never expressed it --

MR. SPEAKES: Okay. Maybe it hasn't been expressed publicly; but it's something we've surely had in our mind.

Q How does this correlate with the desire to stop increasing Social Security benefits according to the rate of inflation, if the rate of inflation should go back up? That was discussed.

MR. SPEAKES: We're planning on keeping inflation down; but --

Q Well, I know you are; but --

MR. SPEAKES: But if we don't, the President is not planning on cutting benefits, period.

Q Larry, could I finish --

MR. SPEAKES: Period. Now or in the future.

Q Larry, as you know, sometimes these changes and benefits have to be made to keep the system solvent. So, is the President's pledge not to change benefits -- would he back off that if the solvency of the system were in doubt, as he did --

MR. SPEAKES: The solvency of the system will not be in doubt. As the President said in the debate, it is on a sound basis now and as far as you can see into the next century.

Q Don Regan doesn't say that.

Q Larry --

Q Larry --

MR. SPEAKES: The President does.

Q When the President --

MR. SPEAKES: I think Don Regan does, too. I haven't heard him say differently.

MR. FITZWATER: He does, yes.

MR. SPEAKES: Mick.

Q When the President mentioned this Sunday night in the debate, he said, "Those currently receiving benefits or those currently on Social Security roles," or whatever he said --

MR. SPEAKES: He said, "To the people that are now getting them." Strike all of that.

Q Strike all of what?

Q Strike all --

MR. SPEAKES: Now or in the future.

Q Strike what the President said Sunday night?

Q Strike what the President said Sunday?

Q Or strike what you just said?

MR. SPEAKES: I am telling you what the President told me in the last five minutes --

Q Larry --

Q Larry --

MR. SPEAKES: Despite the fact -- because Mondale's out there frightening the elderly.

Mike.

Q Since the President says it's going to be for anybody in the future, and he also says he's committed to keep the system solvent, I assume that means that he is committed to raising taxes however much it takes to keep Social Security solvent --

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know what leads you to make that assumption.

Q How else is he going to do it?

Q -- the President's words, or your words speaking for the President.

MR. SPEAKES: Have you had the benefit of the studies on Social Security which indicate that the system will remain solvent well into the next century? That's the President's belief. The President has no doubt about it.

Q -- those studies depend on -- like budget deficit projections -- depend on the economy remaining for the next 20 or 30 years like it is today. And, as we know, if there is a recession, if there is a change in the economy, those projections change. And --

MR. SPEAKES: You have the President's words.

Q Larry --

Q Well, these are the President's words then?

MR. SPEAKES: No, you have the President's thoughts expressed by me.

Q Well, I don't mean to be a nitpicker. But, I mean, it's important whether this is what the President is saying or whether you're saying this, relaying his feelings.

MR. SPEAKES: This is what I say, after I went and talked to the President about it. And I am relaying his feelings totally, fully, without equivocation, period.

Q Could this ever be subject to misinterpretation?

MR. SPEAKES: No.

It shouldn't be. It could be; but it shouldn't be.

Q This is his policy now?

Q This is the President --

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MR. SPEAKES: If you handle it right from here on out, it will not be. And I call on Mondale not to misinterpretate --

Q Misinterpretate?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

Q Regan said several months ago that Social Security would have to be revisited.

MR. SPEAKES: What?

Q Regan said several months ago that Social Security would have to be revisited. They were his words. How does that --

MR. SPEAKES: It won't have to be revisited as far as the President's concerned. It will not be revisited.

Q The President said it might have to be revamped --

Q That's right.

Q -- in an interview with The New York Times on April 12th.

MR. SPEAKES: Of what year?

Q This year. He said it might have to be revamped.

MR. SPEAKES: Well --

Q We may have to revamp it.

MR. SPEAKES: You got it now.

Mick?

Q To quote the President, now I'm confused. Did the President -- (laughter) -- did the President just omit this Sunday night or is it a change in his position from Sunday night?

MR. SPEAKES: Well, Mick, you can read it -- what I'm saying now -- as what the President told me five minutes ago.

Andrea?

Q -- let me follow up --

MR. SPEAKES: Calm down.

Q Let me follow up on Mick. When you said strike that, you meant that what the President said Sunday night is inoperative?

MR. SPEAKES: Pardon?

Q Just be content with --

Q When you said strike that --

MR. SPEAKES: Yes, ma'am?

Q Sir, did the --

Q Larry, I'm trying to --

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Q -- President discuss Medicare at all with you this morning?

MR. SPEAKES: No, ma'am. Not today. Did not.

Q Larry --

Q Explain what you just said to Mick and what you said -- we couldn't hear you when you said, "Strike that."

Q Yes.

Q Were you talking about Sunday night or about what --

MR. SPEAKES: I'm saying that what I am saying, speaking on behalf of the President, is what I got from him five minutes ago.

Q So, you're saying --

MR. SPEAKES: Simple as that.

Q Can you clarify whether something has happened since Sunday night that changed his position about --

MR. SPEAKES: Nothing has happened except you have another candidate for the President of the United States running around out there trying to frighten old people.

Q Larry, does --

Q What about young people? You're talking about the future of --

Q Yes, what about me?

MR. SPEAKES: Those, too. In fact, he used the age of 46. Yes?

Q Does the pledge extend to Medicare as well?

Q -- 46.

MR. SPEAKES: About Medicare? No, the President addressed that in the debate and stands right where it is.

Q -- the President does anticipate making changes in benefits or taxes in Medicare?

MR. SPEAKES: I think that there is a consensus out there that something is going to have to be done to Medicare, but until we have an opportunity to go into it in detail -- hopefully, on a bipartisan basis with the cooperation and not the demagoguery of the Democrats -- that we will be able to accomplish something as we did in Social Security.

Bob?

Q Is it your concern for the elderly or the post-debate analysis which now has you responding to Walter Mondale?

MR. SPEAKES: The former.

Lou?

Q What did you say?

Q Is the President being --

Q The former.

Q -- politically damaged on the Social Security issue?

MR. SPEAKES: Well --

Q Question?

MR. SPEAKES: Is the President being politically damaged?
No, I don't think the American people will swallow what Mondale is saying out there.

Q Larry --

Q Didn't they in '82, Larry?

MR. SPEAKES: Well --

Q Didn't the Social Security issue play a --

MR. SPEAKES: We said time and again that the Democrats asked us for an honest approach to it in 1981. We gave them that approach, and they took it and tried to beat us over the head with it in the '82 campaign. They aren't going to do it again.

Jerry?

Q Larry, on Social Security, does that mean that there wouldn't be any movement in the next administration? For example, for delay in retirement age --

MR. SPEAKES: No.

Q -- retirement age --

MR. SPEAKES: There will be none. It does mean that, yes.

Lester's ready. George?

Q Larry --

Q -- no --

MR. SPEAKES: Gene?

Q Larry, if you --

Q I want to stay on the same subject.

Q -- don't think the American people will swallow what Mondale is saying out there, why are you putting yourself in concrete on that issue here?

MR. SPEAKES: Because that's the facts.

George?

Q What?

Q In the past, you've always said you wouldn't comment on Mondale's statements. Why today are you -- why is there a shift in policy and all of a sudden you're commenting on what he --

MR. SPEAKES: He's crossed over the line, as far as -- on this issue.

Joe and then I'll come to the front row.

Q Since you've only now put yourself in concrete on this, why should Mondale be ashamed?

MR. SPEAKES: Pardon?

Q For the raising the possibility of benefits cuts?

MR. SPEAKES: -- demagoguery, politics, old-time politics.

Q You say benefits will not --

Q -- old-time -- (Laughter.)

Q Okay. (Laughter.)

Q You say that benefits will not be reduced. The law includes a provision for increases in benefits based on cost of living. Does this guarantee those increases as well?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes. The law is the law. And, of course, it's based on that biggest tax increase of all that the Carter-Mondale administration put in.

Go.

Q And you say it doesn't include -- that there'll be no tampering or --

MR. SPEAKES: That's right.

Q -- delaying or trimming of cost of living?

MR. SPEAKES: No tampering. No nothing. There's no hidden agenda. There's no secret plan. There's no nothing -- trying to anticipate all of what Mondale might say later on today.

Q I don't understand. In the debate, he had the qualifier in there.

MR. SPEAKES: That's right.

Q Why did he have the qualifier in there in the debate if, as you say, this has been his thinking for the last year?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know why. But this is his statement as we stand right now.

Q Well, I just want to know, are you saying that there was no change in policy, that that was his position all along?

MR. SPEAKES: That's been our thinking all along. Yes.

Q Even though he didn't say that in the debate when he had the opportunity?

Q He's an old man, Chris.

MR. SPEAKES: I don't --

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Q He can't remember everything.

Q Is he now going to drop his criticism of the Carter-Mondale tax increase that pays for all of this?

MR. SPEAKES: Does he know what?

Q Is he now going to drop his criticism of that tax increase which he's bringing up over and over again?

MR. SPEAKES: No, our position is if the Carter-Mondale administration had approached the Social Security matter as we did -- with a straightforward, honest approach, that Social Security was in trouble -- they could have solved the problem in '77 and not wait and dump it on us in '82 when we had to put it together.

Q Larry --

Q -- they did with the tax increase.

Q -- vulnerable to criticism that you're making a major policy decision very hastily and within the heat of the political moment?

MR. SPEAKES: Who said it was hastily and in the heat of the political moment?

Q Tune in tonight.

Q -- vulnerable to that criticism?

MR. SPEAKES: No.

Q Larry --

Q Larry --

MR. SPEAKES: Let's get Sarah out of the way.

Yes?

Q Thank you -- after 25 people that you asked after I had my hand up. Let's clarify the record here. Would you please say that at no time in the past

has Mr. Reagan's policies caused anyone to be reduced in Social Security?

MR. SPEAKES: You know --

Q -- to be cut off the rolls or reduced --

MR. SPEAKES: The record is the record; it doesn't need clarifying.

Q Well, would you say for the record that at no time in the past have Mr. Reagan's policies resulted in anyone's being cut off of the rolls or being reduced?

MR. SPEAKES: The record is the record; you can't clarify what's on the record. Go ahead.

Q Well, I'm asking you to re-state the record of the past.

MR. SPEAKES: You can look it up but, as Casey Stengel said --

Q Well, now, did Mr. Reagan do -- cause that at any time, or not?

MR. SPEAKES: Sarah, go fly a kite.

Q -- if you know, you should tell us --

MR. SPEAKES: Go ahead, Candy, were you waiting?

Q -- can't you tell us --

MR. SPEAKES: Are you scared to open your mouth?

Q Don't you know, Larry?

MR. SPEAKES: Sarah, do what I told you.

Q What did you tell me?

MR. SPEAKES: I'm kind of glad you didn't hear. (Laughter.)

Q What did you tell me? I demand to --

Q He said, "Go fly a kite."

MR. SPEAKES: Go ahead.

Q If, in April, when the President did that interview and said that Social Security might have to be revamped, and we went round and round with this, I don't understand why this has been the policy all along --

MR. SPEAKES: Well, we've had -- haven't we had the benefit of the study on the -- that?

MR. FITZWATER: The trustees' report? Came out in April.

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

Q The what?

MR. SPEAKES: Trustees' report.

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MR. FITZWATER: The President has said on any number of occasions we're not making any changes in Social Security --

MR. SPEAKES: Period.

MR. FITZWATER: Period.

MR. SPEAKES: What he's saying is the trustees' report came out showing that it was -- the system was solvent into the --

Q That's when Regan said it would have to be revisited --

Q Yes, Larry, the trustees' report came out before the President's remarks.

Q What did he have in mind, if now all along he's had in mind not to change the benefits, not to change the inflation, what is -- what was the revamping about?

MR. SPEAKES: What revamping? Oh, in the interview?

Q Yes.

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know but --

Q Well, I can tell you. He said that young people were being unfairly -- paying taxes unfairly toward a system that they couldn't be assured of getting the benefits back. And, I wonder, does he still feel that way?

MR. SPEAKES: Let me put it simple as I can: No change in Social Security now or in the future, period. No change in Social Security now or in the future, period. I mean --

Q What about --

MR. SPEAKES: We can go round and round here, but that's it. If you write that, you'll be all right. You'll be safe. Lou?

Q Was this his policy, the policy that you're proclaiming here today --

MR. SPEAKES: Yes, this is not a new policy.

Q That was his policy Sunday night when he was in the debate?

MR. SPEAKES: That's right, yes.

Q Larry, when --

Q When did he find out? (Laughter.)

MR. SPEAKES: As the President said in the debate -- and everybody wants to be a comedian, but there are 10,000 of them out of work -- it is on a sound basis now -- that's as far as you can see into the next century.

Q Larry, when you say this is not a new policy, why -- how can we understand that, when you have briefed us over the course of the past year, when Reagan spoke Sunday night, when Reagan spoke in April, and no one ever articulated this policy?

MR. SPEAKES: Well, there you've got it.

Q Why should we --

Q Can we fairly conclude that the President has put aside the stated concerns about the younger generation and the Social Security system?

MR. SPEAKES: The President feels that the system is

solvent and that benefits can continue at their present pace; no cut necessary, no nothing necessary.

Q What about the unfairness to younger Social Security taxpayers?

MR. SPEAKES: Joe, I don't know enough about it to be able to address that. Sorry.

Q But you agree, then --

Q -- raised it, though.

MR. SPEAKES: What?

Q He was the one who --

MR. SPEAKES: Yes, but I don't know the issue --

Q -- that question, because --

MR. SPEAKES: I'll have somebody get back to you.

Q We have your words, but we have his words --

Q Get back to all of us.

MR. SPEAKES: Lester's ready.

Q Larry --

Q -- signing this afternoon?

Q Yes, the older Americans --

Q It'll be about Panthers in the White House.

Q Go ask the President what he's signing today. He'll tell you.

Q From the Washington Post this morning, a quote: "Devout as he was, he could not risk attending church because of the danger of terrorist attack. He did not say why he did not invite a minister to the White House or why he felt secure enough to campaign. He thought the Lord understands. If so, the Lord is the only one who does." I have a two-part question based on this Washington Post -- could you explain, Larry, why the President ducked the second part of Fred Barnes' question, which I've asked here in this room eight times, and has he ever invited his minister or any other minister to conduct services at Camp David or the White House and, if not, why not?

MR. SPEAKES: If you will be silent, the Lord will speak to you, Lester. (Laughter.)

The Older Americans Act of 1965 authorizes federal financial assistance for a variety of services to the elderly people in the area of nutrition, health, transportation, and social services. Under Title III of the act,

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the Department of Health and Human Services makes formula grants to the states for community based supportive and nutritional services, planned and coordinated by the state agencies on aging. The Department of Agriculture supplies the commodities or cash for the nutrition program under Title V. The Department of Labor makes grants to state agencies on aging and national contractors for part-time community service employment for elderly, low-income individuals. We'll put all this out at 3:00 p.m. And S-2603 would amend and extend through 1987 the programs of the Older American Act. The bill was passed by the House 406 to 12; by the Senate on a voice vote. And the Conference report has been agreed to.

Q Larry --

Q Can you now --

Q -- could you answer my question, please, Larry --
could you answer my question?

MR. SPEAKES: Bruce --

Q Has he invited any minister here?

MR. SPEAKES: Lester --

Q And I'm going to talk to Moomaw this afternoon --

MR. SPEAKES: Okay, good --

Q -- the other thing is, Larry, do you think that the President might have been a little less shattered by this question had you not replied with wisecracks for three years on it?

MR. SPEAKES: Bruce.

Q -- Larry? You don't want to answer that? Well, I can understand.

MR. SPEAKES: Bruce. (Laughter.)

Q Several of the Congressmen involved in this say that the administration had been on the other side of the issue during the time that these amendments were put together. Do you have any response to that?

MR. SPEAKES: Bruce, I don't know the -- I don't know the facts on that.

Q Larry --

Q Can you address the age issue -- when it comes to the President. Since the debate, there have been many people -- and without giving you names, so you won't be in a position of having to respond to any particular person -- raise the age issue, and say it's now going to be a legitimate issue in the campaign.

MR. SPEAKES: Who has raised it besides Coelho and Jaroslovsky?

Q Tip.

Q Tip O'Neill did this morning --

MR. SPEAKES: God.

Q Reagan --

Q John Zaccaro -- (Laughter.)

MR. SPEAKES: What -- in between his plans to go to the Cabinet meetings?

Q -- many observers --

Q Seriously -- it's a serious thing which is going to be with you, for a while, as you well know, do you have any serious response? I won't badger you on it, just -- do you have any serious response to the idea that the age issue is there?

MR. SPEAKES: Doesn't deserve a response. Go ahead.

Q Would the the White House object to Zacarro debating Barbara Bush -- would you have any --

MR. SPEAKES: You're over your head --

Q -- any objections to a Zacarro-Barbara Bush thing -- Considering her rhyming, Larry?

Q -- it doesn't deserve a response --

MR. SPEAKES: Right.

Q Does the White House have any plans to make public the full medical report from the President's examinations at the Naval Medical Center?

MR. SPEAKES: No.

Q I know you've released the summary. Do you have any plans to make public the full report?

MR. SPEAKES: No, but --

Q Can I ask -- would you consider making public the full report?

MR. SPEAKES: We don't plan to, but you've seen everything that -- that describes it in it's total -- I sat there and talked to the doctor --

Q What would be the problem of making public the doctors' observations and --

Q It doesn't deserve a response --

MR. SPEAKES: Go ahead --

Q Larry -- the arms treaty violations, are they going up to the Hill today?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't look for them today, but it's promised that they'll go by the end of the week. Sarah?

Q One more -- on the CR --

Q Larry, in view of the fact that there's so much confusion -- the White House says one thing, Reagan says one thing, and Mondale says another -- and they're just absolutely, totally opposite all the time -- who is, in the White House, responsible for your statistics and your facts? Who is the one that does the research for the President, and gives him this information? Because quite a few times when it looks like it's not exactly right --

Q A Baker aide -- (Laughter.)

Q Richard Darman -- (Laughter.)

Q Who is responsible for that?

MR. SPEAKES: Mick --

Q The House has apparently willed some \$8 or \$9 million dollars worth of water projects off the CR, it's just under \$100 million -- any idea what the President will --

MR. SPEAKES: No, Mick -- they're working on it. We will have to wait until they get through to tell you whether we would sign it or not.

Q So, there's no change in the position to the water projects?

MR. SPEAKES: No changes in position on the water projects and on the fact that we want a full time CR -- Mike?

Q Larry, on the medical report -- at the time that you briefed on that report, you said that the President might have a colonoscopy or related procedure, perhaps at his leisure this summer. Summer has come and gone, and we've never heard any discussion on that.

MR. SPEAKES: All the doctors concluded it wasn't necessary -- didn't need to do it.

Lou?

Q Yesterday, different people, including some who work for the Reagan campaign, acknowledged that the President looked tired in his closing remarks in the debate. Do you think, whether it's fair or not, whether it deserves a response or not, that he has raised -- that the issue of his age has been raised because of the debate performance --

MR. SPEAKES: No.

Q -- or the responses thereto?

MR. SPEAKES: No. What is the criteria for one looking tired? I mean, how do you -- is there a --

Q -- Friday night --

MR. SPEAKES: Do circles under the eyes -- black circles count for being tired?

Q Whatever the criteria is, I mean, this is a political campaign, and I'm just asking --

Q Larry --

MR. SPEAKES: I wonder who did that -- what campaign people did it --

Q Do you think he was halting at any time? Some people said that there were times during the debate where he seemed to be -- there were pauses, clearly -- where he seemed to be grasping for his train of thought. Is that the way you saw it?

MR. SPEAKES: No harm in anybody being thoughtful.

Charles?

Q What did he say?

Q -- no harm in anyone being thoughtful.

Q What? (Laughter.)

Q Larry, what exactly are your expectations on a CR today, and on down the --

MR. SPEAKES: We don't have much prediction, Charles. I just talked to Oglesby, and the conference is proceeding, but Hatfield was delayed in coming back, so I can't predict.

Q Larry, one very quick question -- one very brief one, one very simple and easy question, Larry, just one little one, that's all -- that's all I have.

MR. SPEAKES: If you ever tried listening and not talking --

Q I do listen --

MR. SPEAKES: -- you'd be a lot better off. Well, keep your mouth shut when the man is trying to follow up --

Q All these questions are all legitimate. They were raised in the debate. They deserve an answer.

Q Larry, just one, just one very brief --

MR. SPEAKES: Sam and Lester. Go ahead, Charles -- wait a minute, the man --

Q -- just one more --

Q Are you expecting a short, another short CR tonight, is that what it's going to mean?

MR. SPEAKES: We would prefer to get the final product, and for the full CR --

Q But you don't expect that tonight?

Q Expires tonight, right?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes, it's about midnight, it expires. I guess it's midnight.

Q Larry, just one very brief one --

MR. SPEAKES: Look, look -- I'm still answering this man's question.

Q I thought you were finished.

MR. SPEAKES: Well, what provoked you to think?

Q Well, because you paused. That's why, Larry, and I'm -- really, just one little --

MR. SPEAKES: Pat?

Q Can we expect the President to address some of these social security issues you mentioned at this bill signing this afternoon?

MR. SPEAKES: I haven't looked at the remarks. Have you seen the remarks -- I haven't looked at the remarks --

MR. FITZWATER: I've seen the remarks -- and they're not in there --

MR. SPEAKES: It's not in there, no --

Q Could he?

MR. SPEAKES: You never know.

Bob?

Q That's a request -- (Laughter.)

Q Has the White House received the analysis of the report done by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities which says that black Americans have -- are the highest percent of the people living in poverty as a result of the President's policies?

MR. SPEAKES: No.

Q Are you going to?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know whether we've received it or not. I'll check for you.

Q Do you know any better now -- now that there are only a few weeks left in the campaign -- the answer to the question Sam had been asking about whether there would be a formal press conference before election day?

MR. SPEAKES: No. I don't know.

Q On the Social Security thing, I want to -- you said "no tampering" -- does that mean, then, that not only would the President propose no cuts, but he wouldn't propose any restructuring that left beneficiaries getting the same benefits, but in a different way? I mean, there's no plans to internally change the benefit structure?

MR. SPEAKES: There are no plans to tamper with it at all.

Q Larry? Thank you -- why does the President believe that terrorists are more inclined to blow up churches that he goes to, than places like that center in Kentucky he goes to, and everybody knows he is going? Could you explain that, Larry?

MR. SPEAKES: Lester, I just don't -- I'm not in the mood for you.

Q You're not in the mood for me?

MR. SPEAKES: No.

Q In other words, this is the way you'd like to duck this issue, as raised by The Post, it was raised at the debate -- why not, Larry? Come on -- just venture something -- Larry? Okay -- what do you plan to do after January the 20th, Larry? Larry? (Laughter.)

Q Thank you.

END

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