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THE WHITE HOUSE  
Office of the Press Secretary

PRESS BRIEFING  
BY  
LARRY SPEAKES

January 24, 1985  
The Briefing Room

9:19 A.M. EST

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#1305-01/24

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PRESS BRIEFING  
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LARRY SPEAKES

January 24, 1985

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9:19 A.M. EST

MR. SPEAKES: The President today at 9:30 a.m. is meeting with Italian Defense Minister Spadolini. We assume, or would guess, that he would probably go out on the lawn when he finishes.

Q How long a meeting?

MR. SPEAKES: Pardon?

Q How long is the meeting?

MR. SPEAKES: Oh, about 15 minutes or so.

Q What are the issues?

MR. SPEAKES: What are the issues? We'll wait until it's over. We'll give you a readout at noon or he'll give you a readout himself.

An addition to the schedule, and I don't believe you have it, at 11:30 a.m., and we will have writing pool and photo coverage, Western Hemisphere Legislators are coming in Room 450, EOB. The President will be there to make brief remarks.

It is a visit sponsored by the Center for Democracy, which has worked with our own Congress and invited 60 legislators from 21 Western Hemisphere democracies. They're here to explore ways to encourage the further development of democratic institutions. They will have meetings at Capitol Hill and then will be here.

The President's having lunch with the Vice President.

The Cabinet Council on Commerce and Trade meets this afternoon to discuss a report on the President's Commission on Industrial Competitiveness.

And that takes care of the President's schedule for the day.

Q Anything about the Trade Department merger? That is not on the agenda?

MR. SPEAKES: Not on the agenda and has not been decided.

Q What about the Japanese -- the voluntary restrictions?

MR. SPEAKES: Industrial competitiveness.

Q No Cabinet meeting today?

MR. SPEAKES: No. It is the Cabinet Council, not the full Cabinet.

Q Oh, it's not the full Cabinet.

MORE

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Q What's going to happen --

Q The meeting with the legislators, how long is it supposed to last and how long will be the readout --

MR. SPEAKES: The President's appearance there is very brief. I'm not sure how long they will be in the White House. We don't have a feel for --

Q Can you give us a list of the --

MR. SIMS: The Latin Americans?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

MR. SIMS: They're in for briefings so they'll be here for an hour or more.

MR. SPEAKES: See Kim for a list.

Q What's going to happen --

Q Will we get the text of the remarks of the President?

MR. SPEAKES: No. It will be piped in here and you'll get an as-delivered.

Q What's going to happen to Peter McPherson?  
(Laughter.)

MR. SPEAKES: I would wait until the President and Mrs. Kirkpatrick meet, which is next Wednesday, and see what the outcome of that meeting is and what her decision is on what the President has. I can't confirm that -- what the President is going to discuss with her beyond what he told Ms. Thomas yesterday.

Q Well, I mean --

Q Has he offered her the job -- whatever job he has in mind?

MR. SPEAKES: No, and will not until next week.

Q Well, is it thought that this post of Administrator of AID is a post that her talents can be used in properly? As you recall, a month or six weeks ago, the President said he didn't have one that he thought was commensurate with her talents.

MR. SPEAKES: Whatever -- whatever position he discusses with her will be commensurate with her talents.

Q I mean, most of us hadn't thought of AID in recent years -- (laughter) -- as one of those top visibility, top policy-making posts. It's not Cabinet rank, is it?

Q Well, it could be, you see.

Q Well, that would be silly to make AID Cabinet rank.  
(Laughter.)

Q Yes, well, there you go.

Q He could give her Cabinet rank.

Q I think he's sending her messages that he has got nothing for her, don't you?

MR. SPEAKES: I haven't really thought about it.

Q Has the President spoken with Mr. McPherson?

MR. SPEAKES: No.

Q Have Mr. McPherson and Mr. McNamar spoken?

Q Yes. (Laughter.)

Q When does the President plan to name a new Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisors?

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

Q Do you know if he's considering Treasury Undersecretary Beryl Sprinkel?

MR. SPEAKES: There are a number of people that are under consideration, but I don't want to be specific on it.

Q How about you, Larry?

Q For the UN job?

MR. SPEAKES: I'd be good on that. No, CEA.

Frank?

Q Larry, how does the White House view the Israeli \$12 billion request over three years?

MR. SPEAKES: We have been working with the Israeli government for a number of weeks to discuss their needs. The issue of extraordinary or additional economic assistance -- we've previously said that the U.S. will defer a decision on this, pending an adoption of an effective Israeli economic stabilization program and a determination of the utility of such additional U.S. assistance in supporting such a program.

Q Is deferred until when? Is there an estimate of how long it will take?

MR. SPEAKES: How long it takes them?

Q -- deferral --

MR. SPEAKES: -- just wait until -- as they progress with a plan along those lines.

Q Larry, on that score, have we laid down any conditions that they have to meet? Any goals? Targets? Objectives?

MR. SPEAKES: No, I don't think so, Dave. We've had discussions with them and they certainly understand; but I don't know that we've set economic milestones for --

Q Is there anything unusual about deploying air-to-air reserve units to fly missions to Panama or Central America, as in the case of the Air Reserve plane that crashed?

MR. SPEAKES: I would not know --

MR. SIMS: No --

MR. SPEAKES: Sims says not unusual.

MR. SIMS: -- they're fully integrated in the active forces.

Q They're what?

Q What'd you say?

MR. SIMS: There's nothing unusual. Reservists have been integrated into the active forces for transport missions, in particular, over a long period of time in different parts of the world. So --

Q Are these people on two-weeks active duty?

MR. SIMS: Have to ask the Pentagon the length of their commitment. I don't know.

Q Otherwise, they only fly two days a month.

MR. SIMS: The Air Reserve sometimes has people on for longer active-duty periods. And I just don't know what the case was in this, Jerry.

MR. SPEAKES: Candy.

Q Beyond what's already public record, does the President know of anybody in his Cabinet that's intending to leave?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know of anybody. I haven't asked him that specific question. I don't see it; but one can be surprised.

Q Well, what's going on with all these rumors about Elizabeth Dole? Can you shed any light as to whether she's firmly in place over there --

MR. SPEAKES: As far as I know, she's firmly in place over there.

Q Until she becomes Vice President.

MR. SPEAKES: That's right.

Frank.

Q Can I just come back to the Israeli question again?

Under the Camp David Accords, what is the formula for Egyptian aid versus Israeli aid?

MR. SPEAKES: Bob, am I correct in saying it's balanced?  
(Laughter.)

MR. SIMS: We recognize that both countries have need for assistance. There is -- and we treat their requests equally. But this does not mean that they have equal or the same needs; and we look at each country and its situation, its needs and make an independent judgment. So, equal consideration doesn't mean that they get dollar-for-dollar equal assistance.

MR. SPEAKES: Sam.

Q No, I was just going to ask whether it is still correct that the Labor Department is not being run by Donovan.

MR. SPEAKES: Yes. Ford B. Ford. Let Ford be Ford.

Q What about Deaver? Can you tell us anything?

MR. SPEAKES: Oh, yes, on Deaver, this is late yesterday afternoon, I talked to the doctors and they listed his condition as stable, undergoing further tests, which will, in all probability, continue through the end of the week. His spirits are good. He has received work from the office. He's talked -- talked to Baker, for instance, yesterday afternoon.

Q But what's wrong with him?

MR. SPEAKES: Not until they complete the tests, will we know.

Q You mean, until the end of the week they won't have any idea what's wrong with him? I don't believe that.

MR. SPEAKES: It's true.

Q In hospital terminology, beyond stable, is it good, satisfactory, fair --

MR. SPEAKES: I don't have the hospital terminology on it. I think you could also -- and I hope this doesn't conflict in your mind with stable -- but improving.

Q Stable usually means they don't -- it's somewhere in between. It could be very serious, is what I'm saying.

MR. SPEAKES: Well, his condition is stable, which means it is not getting worse and that, I would think, on the surface, Deaver's improved.

Q Well, given the -- somewhat public interest in this, could you keep up with them? Because the hospital refers us to 456-1414, which isn't very helpful. (Laughter.)

MR. SPEAKES: If you want a shortcut, you can go to 2100 and get closer to the source. (Laughter.)

Q Still a flu-like syndrome?

MR. SPEAKES: Pardon?

Q Is it still a flu-like syndrome?

MR. SPEAKES: That was the symptoms that he had when he was at home last week.

Q Has the President talked to him?

MR. SPEAKES: No, the President has not.

Q Larry, since --

Q The President has not talked to him?

Q -- Baker was confirmed by the Finance Committee yesterday and appears to be going to get quick confirmation. That means probably Regan will be over here soon. And Deaver hasn't set a date for his departure. So, should we assume that Deaver will continue to be like a Deputy Chief of Staff, helping Regan for a couple of months?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes. That's Deaver's intention until he leaves -- at least by the end of May is what he's sort of set his target for.

Regan, I think, if Baker's confirmation goes as it seems to be going, would probably would switch places -- oh, I'd say in a week or so.



Q The Senate's going to vote next week, according to Dole.

MR. SPEAKES: And then I think they would set an orderly transition date. It may not be if the Senate votes at noon that Baker would cross the street at 12:01 p.m. It may be a day or so. (Laughter.)

Q Is Regan participating daily in senior staff meetings?

MR. SPEAKES: No.

Charles?

Q Have we -- have you heard from the Soviets yet on the March resumption date?

MR. SPEAKES: No.

Q The President yesterday seemed to suggest that he's willing to engage in an arms race if the Soviets are. What does he mean by that?

MR. SPEAKES: No, I don't think he exactly expressed it in that terms --

Q Well, it was an either/or -- either agreement or an arms race.

MR. SPEAKES: No, I think he was saying -- what he said was that this probably contributed to the Soviet decision to come back to the conference table knowing of our resolve to continue our national security -- restoration of our national security.

Q On that same subject, he made a comment in the interview with Helen that this is literally the first time the Soviets have expressed the desire to reduce weapons. That hardly seems true, given the propaganda -- many years where they've said that. Did he have something else in mind that he intended to say about that?

MR. SPEAKES: No.

Q Senator Lugar says you're not going to get the aid to the Contras. What do you think?

MR. SPEAKES: We're going to ask for full funding for our entire Central America program.

Q You think his estimate, then, is wrong?

MR. SPEAKES: No, we'll just have to see how the legislative bellgame goes.

Q Any water projects to cut from Indiana?

MR. SPEAKES: Pardon?

Q Any water projects to cut from Indiana?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know whether they got any water projects left or not.

Q The President said yesterday that he would see great difficulties in making overt the covert aid to the Contras. Does that mean that he has ruled it out, and he'd rather have no money whatsoever than keep on with the -- will have an overt program to the

Contras?

MR. SPEAKES: Let me have that again, here, your French accent got heavy at the end.

Q Yes -- does that mean that he has ruled out making the covert aid into overt aid to the contras?

Q Has he ruled out making covert aid --

MR. SPEAKES: Oh, overt aid into covert aid --

MR. SIMS: -- covert aid into overt --

Q -- no, the other way around --

MR. SPEAKES: Yes -- just --

MR. SIMS: We don't talk about covert aid. (Laughter.)

MR. SPEAKES: It's my judgment --

Q The President does --

MR. SPEAKES: It's my judgment that we'll proceed in the same -- the same approach as we've taken previously.

Q Well, the President really was very candid. I thought --

Q But if Congress insists in making the aid overt, does that mean that the President will oppose it --

MR. SPEAKES: -- would do nothing? I think we would have to wait --

Q -- and would rather do without any money?

MR. SPEAKES: We'd wait and see until we got to that bridge.

Q The President's very candid about it. I mean, if we make it overt, that's in violation of international law, quite clearly, so that's why he explained to Helen, we're not going to do that. We're going to continue to violate international law under the table.

MR. SPEAKES: Charles?

Q Thank you for your general views -- (Laughter.)

Q You're welcome.

Q Why is overt aid an act of war and covert aid is not?

MR. SPEAKES: I think there's -- you'd have to consult State Department lawyers, but there's something that -- the sponsoring of private groups to overthrow another government -- with the avowed purpose of it.

Q Yeah, but what's the difference between public sponsorship and private sponsorship?

MR. SPEAKES: I'd check with State Department lawyers.

Charles -- I mean, Frank?

Q Larry --

Q Wasn't -- I'm sorry -- wasn't the President trying to make that distinction yesterday?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes he was, but --

Q One is okay -- above the table's no good, under the table's okay?

MR. SPEAKES: Well, I think there's legitimate reason for it, and that State Department lawyers can figure in.

Frank?

Q Do you know anything about this \$4 million that was to have gone for notification, worker notification -- this hazardous waste thing that was apparently blocked by HHS?

MR. SPEAKES: That's not the West Virginia thing, is it?

Q No, this is on the 249 work places in 42 states.

MR. SPEAKES: No, I don't know anything about that story.

Q Is that the abortion thing?

Q Do you have something on West Virginia?

MR. SPEAKES: No.

Q HHS kicks it to CDC; CDC says, "We don't know anything about it."

MR. SPEAKES: I'll have to look into it -- be sure to check and see whether HHS knows about it. I don't -- I haven't even seen the story on that.

Q Anything on the guy who sent out those letters --

MR. SPEAKES: Over at --

Q -- for the pro-abortion people?

MR. SPEAKES: No, HHS made a statement back last week.

Q It's an old story.

MR. SPEAKES: Yes -- old story. No good, can't make anything --

Q They're all old stories.

Q Well, speak for yourself, Bill.

MR. SPEAKES: Let's get the Colonel before we --

Q Is there no way I could get a copy of the Deaver diet book? I've got a couple of enemies I'd like to give it to.  
(Laughter.)

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END

9:28 A.M. EST

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