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THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

PRESS BRIEFING
BY
LARRY SPEAKES

February 5, 1985

The Briefing Room

9:24 A.M. EST

INDEX

SUBJECT

PAGE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Presidential Schedule.....	1
French Foreign Minister Dumas	
New Industries Leaders	
President's Economic Report	
Niskanen/Regan Briefings	
Presidential Statements.....	2-3
Yalta	
ANZUS/New Zealand	

DOMESTIC

State of the Union.....	2
Budget Reactio.....	8-9

FOREIGN

Yalta.....	2-4
New Zealand.....	3-8
Foreign Minister Dumas.....	5

#1321-02/05

9:43 A.M. EST

THE WHITE HOUSE
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PRESS BRIEFING
BY
LARRY SPEAKES

February 5, 1985

The Briefing Room

9:24 A.M. EST

MR. SPEAKES: The President this morning at 9:40 a.m. is meeting with the French Foreign Minister Dumas, and at 11:00 a.m. the National Security Council.

There are some changes in the afternoon timing. At 1:00 p.m. the President meets with new industries leaders. These are a number of new industries which are leading the way in high technology, and the President will talk to them briefly about his budget.

At 1:45 p.m. the President will have a signing ceremony for the President's Economic Report to Congress. It will take place in the Roosevelt Room at 1:45. There is writing pool and photo coverage of that, and the President, of course, will have a statement.

At 2:00 p.m. the Cabinet meets in the Cabinet Room and there will be discussion there on the Economic Report with Bill Niskanen making the presentation. Joe Wright will report on the Management Report that is being sent to Congress.

Today the briefings are -- Bill Niskanen will be in here at 11:00 a.m. to speak on the Economic Report of the President which is embargoed until noon, right? And he will be on the record, but prefers not to have cameras for his briefing.

Q What time did you say that was?

MR. SPEAKES: At 11:00 a.m.

At 12:30 p.m. --

Q Well, let me just stop you there. Why not have cameras?

MR. SPEAKES: It's his wish, and we abide by his wish.

At 12:30 p.m. Don Regan will be --

Q Well, I want to protest it.

MR. SPEAKES: Okay. Duly noted.

At 12:30 p.m. Don Regan will be in the briefing room. He will be available for radio and television coverage at which time he'll be making announcements on White House personnel, and will take your questions for whatever remainder, of about 30 minutes, he will be able to stay with us.

Q Will the personnel be here as well?

MR. SPEAKES: No.

MORE

#1321-02/05

The State of the Union plans: tomorrow night at 7:00 p.m. there will be a briefing here by Chief of Staff Don Regan and Foreign Policy Adviser Bud McFarlane. At that time we'll have a text and a fact sheet. They will be embargoed for 9:00 p.m. The text will be distributed later in the press galleries on Capitol Hill.

Q We can't get the text before 7:00 p.m., even on a wire transmission basis?

MR. SPEAKES: No.

Q What time will we get the text, Larry?

MR. SPEAKES: At 7:00 p.m.

I have statements this morning -- a statement by the President which I will read, then we will pass out -- on the 40th Anniversary of Yalta. In addition, I have statements on the situation in New Zealand regarding the ANZUS exercise, and finally a statement on the budget.

We'll give you a copy of this, this is a statement by the President:

"Forty years ago this week the leaders of the United States and Great Britain and the Soviet Union met at Yalta, to confer on the approaching end of World War II, and on the outlines of the postwar world. The agreements they reached, including the Declaration on Liberated Europe, committed all three governments to the reconstruction of a democratic continent.

"Since that time Yalta has had a double meaning. It recalls an episode of cooperation between the United -- between the Soviet Union and free nations, in a great common cause. But it also recalls the reasons that this cooperation could not continue -- the Soviet promises that were not kept, the elections that were not held, and the two halves of Europe that have remained apart.

"Why is Yalta important today? Not because we in the West want to re-open old disputes over boundaries, far from it. The reason Yalta remains important is that the freedom of Europe is unfinished business. Those who claim the issue is boundaries or territory are hoping that the real issues, democracy and independence, will somehow go away. They will not.

"There is one boundary which Yalta symbolizes that can never be made legitimate, and that is the dividing line between freedom and repression. I do not hesitate to say that we wish to undo this boundary. In doing so, we seek no military advantage for ourselves or for the Western alliance. We do not deny the nation's legitimate interest in security. But protecting the security of one nation by robbing another of its national independence, and national traditions, is not legitimate. In the long run, it is not even secure.

"Long after Yalta, this much remains clear: the most significant way of making all Europe more secure is to make it more free. Our forty-year pledge is to the goal of a restored community of free European nations. To this work we recommit ourselves today."

Q In the past the President has frequently suggested he wishes to repudiate, formally I suppose, the Yalta agreement. Is that his position?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know of any plans to formally repudiate it. As we say, the issue is freedom and not boundaries.

Q And secondly, in this statement, there is a skein running through it which suggests the President believes the reason

the Yalta agreements did not work was because the Soviet Union didn't keep the promises they made at Yalta, as opposed to some betrayal, some treasonous action on the part of the Western-allied delegation.

Did I correctly --

MR. SPEAKES: I think a discerning reporter might deduct that from reading this statement.

Q I mean, because there are a lot of kooks out there that who think, you know, U.S. people were treasonable or something.

Q Sold us out, I think --

Q Sold us out --

Q -- sold us down the river, I believe, is the --

Q Quite seriously, that's not the President's view.

Q I thought you said --

Q Is that Mr. Buchanan's view?

MR. SPEAKES: No. It is not.

Okay. New Zealand. The United States requested on January 17th of this year the visit of the destroyer USS Buchanan -- speaking of Buchanan -- to New Zealand in connection with the ANZUS exercise Sea Eagle. The New Zealand government informed us, on January 31st, that it could not reach a decision on the ship's visit. Accordingly, in the interest of making appropriate arrangements, we reiterated our request for a definite response by February 11th. The government of New Zealand, on February 4th, informed us that it would not receive the USS Buchanan. We deeply regret this decision to deny port access to a U.S. Navy ship, contributing to the common defense of the ANZUS alliance.

This is a matter of grave concern that goes to the core of our mutual obligations as allies.

Q It goes -- sorry, Larry?

MR. SPEAKES: It goes to the core of our mutual obligations as allies. Accordingly, we are considering the implications for our overall cooperation with New Zealand under ANZUS. As a first step, in light of this action by the government of New Zealand, the United States has withdrawn from participation in exercise Sea Eagle.

We understand that following our decision, the government of Australia, as hosts for the exercise, has now cancelled it. We are considering other actions that we might take, but at this time we have no further decisions, and we have no further comment at this time as to whether or not the U.S. and Australia will go ahead with an alternate naval exercise to replace Sea Eagle.

We expect this will be a subject that will arise during the visit of Australian Prime Minister Hawke, who is in Washington this week, and meets with the President on Thursday. Tomorrow there will be a background briefing by Assistant Secretary of State, Paul Wolfowitz, as preparation for the Hawke visit that will take place at 10:00 a.m. here.

Q I take it we're unhappy?

MR. SPEAKES: Strong letter follows?

Ira?

Q : Can I go back to Yalta for a minute?

Q Yeah, would you? (Laughter.)

MR. SPEAKES: Why don't you -- why don't you stay six months, Ira?

Go ahead.

Q Did the statement that we don't want to re-open old disputes about boundaries --

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

Q -- compared with the statement today that we don't hesitate to say we wish to undo the boundary toward freedom -- can you attempt to distinguish between the political boundary and the freedom boundary since we've talked for 40 years about an Iron Curtain? It seems conflicting except to a nuance reader here. I wonder if you would state the difference between --

MR. SPEAKES: -- for the nuance reader?

Q -- state the difference between a political boundary symbolized by the Iron Curtain and this boundary of freedom because they're two seemingly conflicting ideas here about boundaries --

MR. SIMS: Larry --

MR. SPEAKES: They're practically the same thing.

MR. SIMS: -- the President in August had another statement on Yalta which, I think, answers that.

Q -- I didn't hear that at all.

MR. SPEAKES: He says there's an August statement that we can show you that seems to answer that.

Steve?

Q On the New Zealand thing, since almost all U.S. Navy warships, one fashion or another, are nuclear capable, doesn't that -- does the New Zealand request to keep the Buchanan out -- doesn't that mean that almost no U.S. warships can visit New Zealand now?

MR. SPEAKES: Well, we generally handle them on a case-by-case basis. Certainly, that could be the impact of it. I agree with you, Steve.

Q Well, let me -- you or Bob correct me if I'm wrong -- but do we not undertake in the case of Japan not to make port calls with warships that have nuclear weapons or are we simply silent on the matter?

MR. SPEAKES: Well, you're dealing with --

Q And Japan just kind of asserts its policy?

MR. SPEAKES: You're dealing with --

MR. SIMS: We're meeting our treaty obligations with Japan. And as a general rule, we never confirm or deny the presence of nuclear weapons in any location.

Q You mean, it's just Japan who says as a matter of policy that it does not expect us to dock with nuclear warheads?

MR. SIMS: As I said, we're meeting our treaty obligations with Japan.

Q Well, all right. But, obviously, I don't have the treaty provisions in mind, but my point seems to be -- or I want you to answer it -- is that if in some fashion we accommodate Japan's anti-nuclear position, whether by treaty of stated policy, why cannot we accommodate to New Zealand's?

MR. SPEAKES: Well, the --

MR. SIMS: We are meeting our treaty obligations with Japan. We look to New Zealand to meet their treaty obligations under the ANZUS Treaty.

Q Is this it for the Treaty?

MR. SPEAKES: Also --

Q Are you saying there's something in the treaty with Japan that speaks to this matter of nuclear warhead dockings?

MR. SPEAKES: Also, Sam, you're dealing with two or three things. You're dealing with conventionally powered ships that could be equipped nuclear weapons or you're dealing with nuclear powered ships that obviously could be equipped with nuclear weapons. So, what the distinction is, I don't know.

Pierre?

Q Larry, can you say what's on the President's agenda for the French Foreign Minister?

MR. SPEAKES: It's mainly a courtesy call, Pierre, to come in. He's -- a very brief time -- he's in town for other consultations, but --

Q How long is that session -- 15 minutes?

MR. SPEAKES: Something like that, yes. It's not a very long meeting, but it's an opportunity just to meet and get acquainted. I don't know what the specific topics will be. If there's more, we can get back to you on it.

Ira?

Q Well, is the ANZUS Treaty in trouble as far as we're concerned? Do we want to change it in any way as a result of --

MR. SPEAKES: We want to meet our obligations under it. And we think the other nations should, and naval exercise is a part of those obligations.

Q I know, but is there consideration being given to somehow looking again at the provisions of the Treaty?

MR. SPEAKES: I'd rather not comment on that.

Ben?

Q They think we're going to fund the Contras over there.

Q What is the NSC meeting on?

MR. SPEAKES: Never discuss NSC topics.

Candy?

Q Right after you said, you know, "This is a matter of grave concern which goes to the core of our mutual obligations," you said, "Accordingly, we're reconsidering" what?

MR. SPEAKES: Accordingly, we're reconsidering the implications of our overall cooperation with New Zealand under ANZUS.

Q Well, what does that mean? If you're not reconsidering the ANZUS Treaty, what does that phrase mean?

MR. SPEAKES: That means how we would cooperate with the New Zealanders on sea exercises and so forth that are part of the ANZUS exercises.

Q Are there any --

Q So, you're reconsidering some part of the Treaty?

MR. SPEAKES: Well, not necessarily the Treaty as a whole, but then -- so --

Q Are any New Zealand warships in any U.S. ports now, do you know?

MR. SPEAKES: Steve, I don't know the answer to that. I would presume not, but I don't know.

Q Larry, do --

MR. SPEAKES: Never seen a New Zealand warship.

Q -- are American ships routinely put in there on liberty calls or what?

MR. SPEAKES: I think it's fairly frequent that we're in and out of those ports or have been in the past.

Q They have made no objections to any other American ships putting in there?

MR. SPEAKES: Since this government came into power, there have been statements there regarding the nuclear aspects of port calls.

Q Are we --

MR. SPEAKES: Yes?

Q -- are we going to put any other ships in for liberty or refueling?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know what the schedule is, Dave. Do you -- you have any feel for it?

MR. SIMS: -- each visit is cleared on a case-by-case basis and there are none scheduled that have been approved by the New Zealand government.

Q How does --

Q None scheduled or what?

Q Didn't you just say --

Q How does Australia feel about this? Are they on our side --

MR. SPEAKES: Well, they cancelled the exercise.

Q Well, I mean is that something -- is that because we asked them to or put some pressure on them or would they normally be sympathetic to New Zealand?

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: I'll tell you ON BACKGROUND, Ira, which -- that the Australians are sympathetic to us in this area and --

Q Let's go on deep background.

Q Yes, right.

Q Really tell us how they feel.

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: Should I presume to speak for the Australian government? No, not on the record. I won't. But they've generally been sympathetic and that will be a topic of discussion. And the Australians did cancel the exercise, I don't believe at our request; but I'm sure we consulted and we have all along on this question.

Back ON THE RECORD.

Q -- been some suggestions that we might re-examine our trade relationship with New Zealand as a result of this controversy. Is that what you're hinting at in saying that the U.S. is considering other actions --

MR. SPEAKES: Gene, I really don't want to go beyond that because I don't know at the moment all of what may be under consideration.

Q Well, is that, in fact, one of the things --

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know. That's what I'm saying, the reason I don't want to speculate.

Q Bob -- Could I just ask you something, Bob -- you said that we tend to think that there was not -- no visits are scheduled right now by U.S. forces at all. Is that unusual for New Zealand?

MR. SIMS: No, visits are infrequent because of the location of the country. And they usually are --

Q Too far away.

MR. SIMS: -- usually are related to an exercise like this one and during -- after or during a foreign exercise --

Q So there's nothing unusual about this.

MR. SIMS: Well, there's just nothing scheduled.

MR. SPEAKES: Bernie.

Q Have we made or has the U.S. made any attempt to reach out to our allies in Europe or Asia in terms of dealing with this situation, dealing with New Zealand?

MR. SPEAKES: Bernie, I don't know of anything, other than the normal communication that takes place on decisions of this type. But I don't know of any concerted effort.

Budget?

Q No.

MR. SPEAKES: Note the criticisms yesterday of the budget. Regard it as a lot of sound and fury for the moment; but when the smoke clears, the President's budget will serve as a blueprint for economic success.

There has been criticism of individual programs; but the critics are taking snapshots of their own special slice of the budget --

Q Jesus, who wrote this?

MR. SPEAKES: -- and --

Q "Sound and fury" -- "smoke -- "

Q Is this Regan's writing?

Q "Blueprints."

MR. SPEAKES: And I think we should look at the big picture.

Q "Snapshot."

MR. SPEAKES: But the budget as a whole --

Q Sorry, Marlin -- (laughter.)

MR. SPEAKES: -- is sound, coherent approach to the number one problem, the federal deficit. (Laughter.)

Every constituency will try to chip away at their special programs, but the constituency that counts, the American people, it is important to get the deficit down and the President's budget will do just that.

Q Thus saith the Lord.

Q Luke.

Q Yes, Luke 13 -- (laughter.)

Q Larry, you started -- saying that -- state of our criticism of the budget, do you want to refine anymore who you were talking about? I mean, is that supposed to include people like -- like some of the Republicans, who --

Q Hatfield.

Q -- criticized defense and so forth?

Q Jesse Helms and tobacco.

MR. SPEAKES: I made it as a general statement and leave

it as a general statement.

Q It includes all critics.

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

Q They know who they are.

MR. SPEAKES: They know who they are, as Mort Allin once said. (Laughter.)

Charles.

Q Is that your statement or the White House's or --

MR. SPEAKES: That is my statement --

Q Well, did this really --

MR. SPEAKES: -- written in my own little hand here.

Q -- feel that there is some -- the Holy Word of God is preaching forth? I mean, onward Christian soldiers on this budget. Was that just a little irrelevancy, a little Reaganism yesterday? Or does he really mean to invoke Divine Power behind David Stockman's blueprint?

MR. SPEAKES: I would look at the President's words and heed them. (Laughter.)

Q Tell the President to render under Caesar what is Caesar's --

MR. SPEAKES: He has spoken.

Q -- and unto God what is God's. (Laughter.)

MR. SPEAKES: The President has spoken.

Frank.

Q Larry, is there going to be coverage of the Cabinet meeting today?

MR. SPEAKES: No, there is not.

Q Can we sit in?

Q Larry --

Q Can we please sit in on a Cabinet meeting --

MR. SPEAKES: Yes, you can have my place.

Q Just one.

Q Larry, is there any coverage of the one o'clock?

MR. SPEAKES: No, just the 1:45 p.m.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END

#1321-02/05

9:43 P.M. EST