

Ronald Reagan Presidential Library

Digital Library Collections

This is a PDF of a folder from our textual collections.

Collection: Press Secretary, Office of the:
Press Releases and Press Briefings: Records, 1981-1989

SERIES: II: PRESS BRIEFINGS

Folder Title: 01/30/1986 (#1676)

Box: 41

To see more digitized collections visit:

<https://www.reaganlibrary.gov/archives/digitized-textual-material>

To see all Ronald Reagan Presidential Library Inventories, visit:

<https://www.reaganlibrary.gov/archives/white-house-inventories>

Contact a reference archivist at: **reagan.library@nara.gov**

Citation Guidelines: <https://reaganlibrary.gov/archives/research-support/citation-guide>

National Archives Catalogue: <https://catalog.archives.gov/>

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

PRESS BRIEFING
BY
LARRY SPEAKES

January 30, 1986

The Briefing Room

9:29 P.M. EST

INDEX

SUBJECT

PAGE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

President's Schedule.....	1-3
Breakfast with House Republican Leadership	
Meeting with Dr. Jonas Savimbi	
Lunch with Vice President	
Budget Discussion	
Taping for "Chinese Superbowl"	
Conservative PAC Dinner	
Presidential Statement on Philippine Election/Backgrounder	
Backgrounder on Savimoi Visit	
HHS Report on Health	
Economic Indicators	

DOMESTIC

Shuttle/Message to McAuliffe School.....	3
Economic Indicators/Trade Deficit.....	3-6
Shuttle/Memorial Ceremony.....	6-7
Shuttle/Phone Calls to Families.....	7-8
Shuttle/Report on Findings.....	8
Shuttle/Jacques Cousteau.....	8
Affirmative Action/Meese-Brock.....	13

FOREIGN

Americans in Libya.....	5, 8-11
Libya/Defense Exercises.....	11-12
China/Superbowl.....	13
Angola/U.S. Companies/Savimbi.....	13-15
South Africa.....	14
Haiti.....	14
Philippine Elections.....	14
Terrorism Report.....	14

9:50 A.M. EST
#1676-01/30

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

PRESS BRIEFING
BY
LARRY SPEAKES

January 30, 1986

The Briefing Room

9:29 A.M. EST

MR. SPEAKES: This morning the President had breakfast with about 25 members of the House Republican leadership, another discussion about upcoming budget, State of the Union.

And at 9:45 a.m., the President will meet with Dr. Jonas Savimbi, and that will be writing pool and photo coverage in that session.

He has lunch with the Vice President --

Q How long is the Savimbi meeting?

MR. SPEAKES: About 15-20 minutes.

Lunch with the Vice President.

At 3:00 p.m., he meets with a group of outsiders to discuss the budget briefly in the Roosevelt Room.

And he has an interesting taping this afternoon. It's titled "Chinese Superbowl." And what's happening -- it's very interesting -- is that the people of Chicago have arranged to have the Superbowl tape -- Superbowl XX tape flown to China week after next. It will be dubbed into Chinese next week and flown to China for broadcast the following week on Chinese Central Television, CCTV. And it will be shown within -- there, as well as various provincial television authorities. And the President is doing an introduction to this thing.

Q English or Chinese?

MR. SPEAKES: He will speak in Mandarin dialect.

Q Can't we see it, Larry?

MR. SPEAKES: Up to -- What?

Q Can't the American people see it?

MR. SPEAKES: See his introduction?

Q Yes.

MR. SPEAKES: Well, I don't think so. You can go to China and see it.

Q You mean they're cutting Brokaw out?

MR. SPEAKES: They expect the audience could be as many as 300 million people in China to see --

Q That's only a 20 share in China.

MR. SPEAKES: That's right.

MORE

#1676-01/30

Q Larry --

MR. SPEAKES: Yes, Jim.

Q Will his remarks be translated? Will there be a voice-over translation?

MR. SPEAKES: I'm sure there will be. Or either a crawler under the thing.

Q On the dates, you said it would be flown there the week after next but shown --

MR. SPEAKES: We don't have a showing date. It will be dubbed next week, flown week after next.

Q And this was worked out -- worked out with the Chinese government?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

And, finally, tonight, the President will be going to the Washington Hilton to attend the Conservative Political Action Conference dinner. We hope to have a text for release at 5:00 p.m. The President speaks at 9:35 p.m. The release will be for 9:30 p.m. The pool should wear black tie.

Q Ummm.

Q Ohhh.

Q What a nice time to tell --

MR. SPEAKES: The briefing schedule today: Noon briefing. We have a couple of other briefings scheduled. At 10:00 a.m., we will release a written statement by the President on the Philippines election, to be followed by a background briefing by Assistant Secretary of State -- outgoing Assistant Secretary of State Paul Wolfowitz.

At 10:30 a.m., Assistant Secretary for African Affairs, Chet Crocker will brief on background on the Savimbi visit.

At some point between that -- and we'll work our briefings around it -- at the conclusion of the Savimbi meeting, he will be speaking on the lawn.

Q Who?

Q Who will?

Q Who will?

Q Savimbi. Savimbi out there?

MR. SPEAKES: Now, who would you think? The President?

Q Yes.

Q The President in Chinese.

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

Then, we have the 5:30 p.m. release of the text of the speech.

Q You said 5:00 p.m.

Q 5:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKES: 5:00 p.m.

Today --

Q What time is he talking?

MR. SPEAKES: Pardon?

Q What time is he talking?

Q 10:30 p.m.

MR. SPEAKES: 10:30 p.m.

Q 10:30 p.m.

Q Listen up.

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

Q This is a new subject.

MR. SPEAKES: Better not be a foolish question.

Q No, no, this is a news scheduling question.

MR. SPEAKES: All right.

Q This is on the message to the high school. Will it be released here before it's read there at 11:30 a.m.?

MR. SPEAKES: It will not be released here at all. We have been in consultations with the principal of the high school, and there's a desire that we -- as well as others -- let them handle their matters alone.

Q Well, are they going to release it?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know whether they will or not. It won't be read until tomorrow in an assembly at the school tomorrow, not today.

Also, today, the Health and Human Services Secretary, Dr. Otis Bowen is sending to Congress the annual report on health in the United States. The report is entitled "Health, United States, 1985." It finds life expectancy in the United States at a record high and infant mortality rate at a record low. And we see national health expenditures, at the same time, increasing, but increasing more slowly. Anyone who would like copies of this report, HHS, Office of Public Affairs, 245-6343.

This morning, we have the release of leading and coincident indicators, both of which show substantial increases. Leading indicators are up .9 percent, coincident indicators -- which measure economic activity -- at present, are up a healthy 1.1 percent.

The sharp gain in coincident indicators, which is the largest since -- in a year, since January 1984 -- in two years -- was particularly impressive. These indicators show us what was happening across a broad range of activities and serve as a clear signal of the gathering momentum in economic growth at the end of the year. It bodes well for predictions of continued growth in 1986.

At the same time, we saw another rise in the nation's trade deficit. We believe that the combined effect of the declining dollar, coupled with stronger prospects of growth overseas, should begin to show a reduction in the trade deficit no later than the second half of this year.

The U.S. economy continues to expand, creating jobs and opportunity for record numbers of Americans. What few problems we do see, such as the trade deficit, are more the result of this country's economic progress far outstripping that of other nations.

As the rest of the free world moves to reform their economies in keeping with the American example, we should see a global expansion that will spur even greater growth here at home.

Q Larry, do you have new trade deficit numbers? Is that what you're saying?

Q Yes.

Q Yes.

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

Q Where are they?

MR. SPEAKES: Where are they?

Q Yes.

Q Where are they?

MR. BRASHEAR: Department of Commerce.

MR. SPEAKES: At the Department of Commerce. If you want to know exactly what they are, I'll be glad to give them to you.

Q Yes.

MR. SPEAKES: Exports fell 1.0 billion to 17.0 billion in December. Imports rose 2.7 billion to 34.4 billion. The trade deficit rose 17.4 billion during the month of December.

Q Larry, a related question --

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

Q Does the administration believe the dollar has fallen sufficiently or do you want the dollar to come down still further?

MR. SPEAKES: We would like to see other world economies rise to our level.

Q But the dollar to not fall any further?

MR. SPEAKES: Well, I think that whatever action is being taken on the dollar is a result of not any continued action on the part of the United States, but it's falling in the natural flow of world currency. And we think that other currencies will even out.

Q But you know there was a concerted effort by the United States and other countries to bring it down? It's come down 10 percent since September. Is that --

MR. SPEAKES: That's true -- 26 percent from its high.

Q Yes. Do you want it to still come down further? Are you pushing any policies to bring it down?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know of any specific policies other than those that have been set in motion. No new policies.

Ira?

Q Are all the Americans out of Libya yet? Do you have any progress report on it?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't have a progress report. We don't have the specific figures on it.

Q Do have the logistics --

Q What about a --

MR. SPEAKES: I have some other things, if we're going to start spinning off into umpteen other subjects. Let's talk about -- what do Americans in Libya have to do with the trade deficit? That --

Q Well --

MR. SPEAKES: Not much.

Q -- they're spending money over there.

MR. SPEAKES: Yes, sure. (Laughter.)

Q Well, it was a lead-in to the question about the American companies violating the --

MR. SPEAKES: Well, we haven't gotten to that yet, okay?

Q Another economic question: Do you expect another six months of increase in the trade deficit?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know. It may level off. I don't know.

Tomorrow, the President, as you know, will be traveling with Mrs. Reagan to Houston for a memorial service for the Challenger crew. Some information on that: The press plane will depart at about 7:30 a.m. We'll have a specific --

Q Check-in?

MR. SPEAKES: No, a specific schedule here at noon. I was just trying to calculate some times here.

Filing center at the Johnson Space Center will be within walking distance of the event site. It'll be located in a cafeteria. The event will be outdoors on a mall that is directly in front of Building No. 16, the avionics laboratory.

The President will arrive at 11:30 a.m. Central time at Ellington Field; motorcades to the site. He will meet privately with family members and then proceed to the service, which begins at 11:50 a.m. Central time. The President will make remarks at 12:10 p.m. The service concludes at 12:20 p.m. The President will leave Johnson Center at 12:30 p.m.; depart Ellington at 12:50 p.m. Scheduled to be back at Andrews at 4:25 p.m. Eastern.

Press plane should be about 6:30 p.m., allowing for filing time. Networks will have editing facilities there.

Q Does he go right up to Camp David from --

MR. SPEAKES: Yes, he'll go to Camp David from there.

Q Will we have his --

MR. SPEAKES: I would like to point out that there are already present at Johnson Space Center about 500 of your colleagues who have been involved with the NASA Public Affairs people since that time. So, I would judge that you should be on your best behavior. (Laughter.)

Q Larry, will we have a separate filing center?

Q Will we have his --

Q Thank you for that.

Q Will we have his text?

Q Do we have a separate filing center in there from the filing center that's being used by the --

MR. SPEAKES: Yes. We will have a separate --

Q Will we have a text in the morning of the President's remarks?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know.

Q Do we know yet which family members are going to be there with --

MR. SPEAKES: No, we don't know that. We're working on that. Mark is working on it. As you know, Mark Hess is with us again today and will be with us on the trip tomorrow. And we're working with that. We just don't know that.

One correction in the phone calls that were made yesterday: He reached the brother of

Astronaut Ellison Onizuka, Mr. Claude Onizuka, around 6:00 p.m. last night. I think we put out that it was the wife, but it was the brother.

Q The son.

Q The son.

MR. SPEAKES: Son -- okay. It was the brother -- Claude Onizuka. And that did conclude all of the calls that were made last night. I wrote another note here and I don't remember -- I don't know what it is.

Okay -- Ira had an opening question?

Q Could I ask something --

MR. SPEAKES: Okay. I'm sure --

Q Has the President received --

MR. SPEAKES: -- you would defer, wouldn't you, Ira, to Helen?

Q Certainly --

Q Has the President received any preliminary reports on the shuttle catastrophe?

MR. SPEAKES: The President has not received any preliminary reports on the shuttle.

Okay -- Ira, want to go to you?

Q Yes, on the --

Q Larry, on the shuttle --

MR. SPEAKES: Yes, shuttle for a little bit?

Q Yes, the French oceanographer or whatever you call it -- Jacques Cousteau apparently has sent a message of solidarity saying that he would be ready to fly on the shuttle. Have you --

MR. SPEAKES: Jacques --

Q I mean to show that Jacques Cousteau --

MR. SPEAKES: No, we can check our messages to see that -- if Jacques has applied.

Q Is that before or after --

MR. SPEAKES: Okay, Ira had a question.

Q -- Libyan -- or American firms violating the spirit, at least, of the order on petroleum.

MR. SPEAKES: We don't have anything specific. We're currently reviewing the situation about how American firms do business in Libya -- the oil firms, specifically, and we've had an interagency group. We've given no instructions to U.S. firms that do business there and, perhaps we might in the future, but at the moment we have not given anything specific.

Q Is your knowledge similar to that reported in the paper today? Is --

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know that. No, we don't have that information.

Q Larry -- considering that February 1st is the deadline set by the administration, could we get an update at that time what effect you think the sanctions have had and what compliance there's been?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know that -- whether there'll be a measurable -- whether we can state it in any terms. I don't know what you would want to know.

Q Any indications that you've had that the law is being complied with?

MR. SPEAKES: You mean the --

Q The sanctions that -- you know, orders not to travel there, the orders not to do business there --

MR. SPEAKES: Okay, we can --

Q People to leave --

MR. SPEAKES: We can look in that and see.

MR. DJEREJIAN: We don't have any firm statistics, but we do have indications that American citizens are complying with the law.

Q How -- what percentage?

MR. DJEREJIAN: But I can't give you -- we don't have those statistics at this point.

MR. SPEAKES: We don't have numbers because we don't have an embassy present there and -- presence there and they would be in -- an estimate.

Leslie?

Q Larry, if American firms are turning their facilities over to foreign companies or foreign subsidiaries, does the U.S. government consider that a breaking of the spirit of the President's order?

MR. SPEAKES: Once again, we have not delivered any specifics in how to conduct business to U.S. firms that are doing business there and until we do, I don't think we can expect them to do any different.

Q I want to make sure I'm straight on that. There were no regs issued? I mean, I think at the time --

MR. SPEAKES: There were --

Q -- in the statement, we were led to believe that Commerce and Treasury were going to be issuing regs.

MR. SPEAKES: There were no regulations on this specific type of an action taken and we actually deferred a specific decision on it until we had an opportunity to confer with allies. Now we have all that information and we're in the process of making a decision.

Q So, in other words --

Q Well, then --

Q -- you knew this was a possibility -- I mean this --

MR. SPEAKES: True. Yes.

Q -- and didn't do anything about it?

MR. SPEAKES: That's right.

Q So will there --

Q Now is it too late?

MR. SPEAKES: No.

Q Will there be regulations issued now?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know. We're in the process of making those determinations. So --

Q What agency would be looking at how U.S. firms are doing business? Would it be Commerce, would it be --

MR. SPEAKES: Be all agencies.

Q -- State?

MR. SPEAKES: Be Treasury, Commerce, State, White House, Defense.

Q And are there people, actually now, being in touch with the U.S. oil firms to make inquiries?

MR. SPEAKES: Not yet, no. Not until we make decisions.

Q In other words, you'd ask them to undo what they've done if you --

MR. SPEAKES: I think we would give them specifics about how we want them to do business there and how we want them to get out of business there.

Q In other words, if they have already turned over some of these operations, the regulations would --

MR. SPEAKES: I don't think the story said "turned over operations." I think it was indicating that they were somehow letting them pickup the slack there and so forth on that.

Q No, it was --

Q -- words?

Q It was a -- loan agreement --

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

Q -- transferring assets --

MR. SPEAKES: Right.

Q -- to foreign subsidiaries.

MR. SPEAKES: Ed points out something that we had here about the unique situations on the contractual arrangements and we're looking into it and how that fits in with our policy.

Q What does that mean?

Q Could you say that again, please? We don't --

MR. SPEAKES: Unique situations regarding contractual arrangements that businesses have in Libya and we would look into that -- that's part of our study. There's not much that I can say until we make a decision.

Frank?

Q Well, how does it square with the no undercut policy that Whitehead got from our allies and you've been given by our allies to learn that British and German and other workers are arriving in Tripoli, apparently to take the place of departing Americans.

MR. SPEAKES: I don't think you've had that much specifics from Whitehead.

Q Well, you certainly led us to believe, and Whitehead did as well as he stirred around Europe, that there was a pledge of at least no undercutting the U.S. policy.

MR. SPEAKES: Not involving those specific countries, that I recall.

Q Well, I thought you told us that Britain -- that there was a no undercut --

MR. SPEAKES: You didn't mention Britain, though.

Q Yes he did.

Q Yes he did.

MR. SPEAKES: He said Germany.

Q That was the first one --

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

Q He said Britain and Germany.

Q -- British and German workers --

MR. SPEAKES: I can't address that because I don't know whether what you state are the facts.

Candy?

Q Well, so, you don't know if we have a commitment from any ally not to replace American workers with their own --

MR. SPEAKES: I mean, you're dealing with a very complex situation. I don't know whether -- Great Britain has any regulation that would permit travel of British citizens to Libya. I don't know that. I think they have pledged, as a government -- those which we've stated have pledged as a government not to undercut our policies.

Q But you don't know that could stop --

MR. SPEAKES: That's right. That's right.

Q -- someone that wanted to go over there --

MR. SPEAKES: That's right.

Q Do you have another -- on that policy. I mean, if the allies do send people to take the place of Americans, something that you would do in response, or is that just sort of an open plea?

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

Q Is today the last day of those exercises, do you know?

MR. SPEAKES: Have to check with Defense Department.

Q Larry, how long with that fleet be in the area -- right off the Libyan coast? I've read that they're going to be there for quite awhile.

MR. SPEAKES: Yes. I really wouldn't state. We never talk about what the fleet's going to do.

Q Well, last week they said it was a one week exercise with specific dates. That's why --

economic and political freedom?

MR. SPEAKES: Well, I think what Savimbi supports is far better than what is there now -- the presence of Cuban troops and others.

Q And would that statement from State be read in any way to substitute -- with any logic substitute South Africa for Angola in the role of U.S. business in the war -- supporting --

MR. SPEAKES: Well, it's a little different situation there.

Q Well, the U.S. President, I take it, is still opposed to this investment --

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

Q -- in policy and the companies -- aren't the American companies in South Africa supporting one side of the civil war?

MR. SPEAKES: No.

Colonel?

Q What action is the United States government taking, if any, with regard to the violence and political unrest in Haiti?

MR. SPEAKES: Haiti? The situation is one that we're watching closely and we're reviewing our relationship, our policies -- how we deal with Haiti in light of that.

Q You don't talk about fleet movements -- whether there's any fleet movement --

MR. SPEAKES: I'm not aware of any, but I don't know.

Q What did the aid say?

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

Bernie and then Frank.

Q Do you expect to name the Philippine observer team to the elections this morning?

MR. SPEAKES: Do not anticipate it this morning and probably not today. There will be the statement regarding the elections, but I don't think I'll have the group.

Frank?

Q Do you have any idea of when the declassified sections of the terrorist report will be released?

MR. SPEAKES: Last of February is, I think --

MR. DJEREJIAN: Probably around February 28th we'll have the report.

MR. SPEAKES: That's right.

Okay, Helen?

Q Has the President decided on how much aid he will give to Savimbi?

MR. SPEAKES: The President, as we've indicated, desires to be supportive to the Savimbi movement. We're looking for the best

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

Frank?

Q How many more meetings will Regan be having with Brock and Meese, this week and next?

Q Ongoing discussions?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes. Why don't we get it all together -- one, two, three -- ongoing discussions.

Q Right, well, in those ongoing discussions, is there a sense of trying to get this thing settled before the State of the Union? Would the President now like to mention something about affirmative action in the State of the Union? (Laughter.)

MR. SPEAKES: What I'm going to say is that these are ongoing discussions between those who have been involved in it. And I will say no more.

Okay, Dale? Where was Dale? You waiting? Yes?

Q Who was it in Chicago who initiated this football visit?

MR. SPEAKES: The information I have is that the members of the Chicago community have made arrangements. That's a large group there to pick from. I don't know. Let's check and see with the State Department. Ed will get back to you on any specifics on that.

Okay, Jim?

Q Larry, on Angola, what is the White House position on the role of U.S. companies there?

MR. SPEAKES: The State Department made a statement yesterday or the day before regarding that, which I will give to you -- see if I can get my hands on it here. Ed, do I have that?

MR. DJEREJIAN: Yes, you have that.

MR. SPEAKES: What did I do with it? Okay.

The State Department indicated that we are telling American companies active in Angola they should take note of the fact that they are in the middle of a war, operating at a great risk, and they should be thinking about U.S. national interests as well as their own. Much of the hard currency earned by the Angolan government, with the help of these firms, goes towards military equipment and payment for Cuban troops. This supports the war rather than the search for peace.

Q Does that mean that the administration is suggesting or asking those companies to cease their operations in Angola?

MR. SPEAKES: We have told them what we've told you. They can draw their own conclusions.

Q And what's --

Q Savimbi has a bit of a checkered, ideological past. Does the President believe that he -- that Savimbi shares his view of economic and political freedom? Or does he support him only because he's opposes the Cuban presence?

MR. SPEAKES: Both.

Q He does believe that Savimbi shares his view of

economic and political freedom?

MR. SPEAKES: Well, I think what Savimbi supports is far better than what is there now -- the presence of Cuban troops and others.

Q And would that statement from State be read in any way to substitute -- with any logic substitute South Africa for Angola in the role of U.S. business in the war -- supporting --

MR. SPEAKES: Well, it's a little different situation there.

Q Well, the U.S. President, I take it, is still opposed to this investment --

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

Q -- in policy and the companies -- aren't the American companies in South Africa supporting one side of the civil war?

MR. SPEAKES: No.

Colonel?

Q What action is the United States government taking, if any, with regard to the violence and political unrest in Haiti?

MR. SPEAKES: Haiti? The situation is one that we're watching closely and we're reviewing our relationship, our policies -- how we deal with Haiti in light of that.

Q You don't talk about fleet movements -- whether there's any fleet movement --

MR. SPEAKES: I'm not aware of any, but I don't know.

Q What did the aide say?

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

Bernie and then Frank.

Q Do you expect to name the Philippine observer team to the elections this morning?

MR. SPEAKES: Do not anticipate it this morning and probably not today. There will be the statement regarding the elections, but I don't think I'll have the group.

Frank?

Q Do you have any idea of when the declassified sections of the terrorist report will be released?

MR. SPEAKES: Last of February is, I think --

MR. DJEREJIAN: Probably around February 28th we'll have the report.

MR. SPEAKES: That's right.

Okay, Helen?

Q Has the President decided on how much aid he will give to Savimbi?

MR. SPEAKES: The President, as we've indicated, desires to be supportive to the Savimbi movement. We're looking for the best

way, in consultation with Congress -- the best way that this could be done and the most effective way.

Q When are you going to brief again, Larry?

MR. SPEAKES: High noon.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END

9:50 A.M. EST
#1676-01/30