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THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

PRESS BRIEFING
BY
LARRY SPEAKES

July 2, 1985

The Briefing Room

9:15 A.M. EDT

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9:35 A.M. EDT

#1479-07/02

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PRESS BRIEFING
BY
LARRY SPEAKES

July 2, 1985

The Briefing Room

9:15 A.M. EDT

MR. SPEAKES: Today the President is meeting with a group of business leaders -- it looks like about a dozen of them -- to talk about deficit reduction. They include people like the U.S. Chamber and the Automotive Management and the Association of Manufacturers and some private business outfits -- mostly associations. We will put out a list. That is at 11:30 a.m.

Q At 11:30 a.m. or 11:00 a.m.?

MR. SPEAKES: At 11:30 a.m.

And -- pardon?

Q How long?

MR. SPEAKES: Twenty minutes.

Q Photo?

MR. SPEAKES: No.

And then at about 2:30 p.m., depending upon the arrival time of the TWA plane, the President will leave with Mrs. Reagan to go out to Andrews, and we still have got our advance people out at Andrews working out the details, but this looks like what it is. Let's see, I have got a different time. The President will leave shortly after 3:00 p.m., arrive about 3:15 p.m. The TWA plane will be on the ground first, but the President will be there by the time the door opens.

He will go on board the plane and have some private time with the former hostages. There is no press coverage on board. The President will speak. I will go on board with him and give a readout to a pooler -- newspaper pooler there during the --

Q Have them turn down that speaker, will you?

Q Pooler is not on board with you -- is that correct?

MR. SPEAKES: That is right. We will just have a cutaway pool there that will include a writer.

And the President then will come back out of the plane, handshake each of the ex-hostages as they deplane. At that time, during the handshake, I will brief the pooler. He can either come to the press area or wait until you get inside at the Press Center.

Q Will there be a broadcast pooler for those who are involved in live broadcasts?

MR. SPEAKES: No.

Q Why is he making his remarks privately?

MR. SPEAKES: I haven't finished yet.

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Then the President goes to the podium with Mrs. Reagan and the National Anthem is played. The President makes remarks, which are very brief -- I would say three to five minutes. Then he gets on the helicopter and goes back.

Coverage is open. Gates open at 9:30 a.m. There is a sweep at 1:30 p.m. There will be one-network cutaway pool camera, which should identify itself to our advance people at 2:30 p.m. at Andrews.

Q Could you say that last thing one more time? A
one-network --

MR. SPEAKES: Cutaway pool camera, which should identify itself to our advance people at Andrews at 2:30 p.m.

Q All right. Can we appeal to you on a network pooler to come because the people who are on live are at a totally different location, as you know. They are in a little pen.

MR. SPEAKES: Oh, you mean somebody to scoot over to the live --

Q To that area, to brief.

MR. SPEAKES: To the live. Okay, that is fine. We will do that.

Q Larry, someone who has gone on the plane and seen what he has done.

Q Someone who hears Larry's readout, and then comes to where we are.

MR. SPEAKES: Drake.

Q What time are they going to close access to the open area today, because they did it sort of early that other Saturday?

MR. SPEAKES: I see. How late can you go out there, huh?

Q Yes.

Q Can we cover your briefing and go --

Q Oh, sure.

Q What time is your briefing?

MR. SPEAKES: Twelve noon.

Q Larry, do you know anything about credentials out there?

MR. SPEAKES: We will get Mark here. I think it is White House and etcetera.

Q Well, what about -- local reporters?

MR. ROUSSEL: He is checking on it.

MR. SPEAKES: He is checking on it. We will get it before the briefing is over.

Q Are all these people then going to be loaded onto buses? Is that the --

MR. SPEAKES: They will go into the terminal and TWA personnel will work with them to get them on the proper buses to get

to the various airports.

Mark?

MR. WEINBERG: It is the same time that Steve Hart gave to the producers last night, but I will go get it again for you.

MR. SPEAKES: But, like print reporters driving out. How late can they get there? Anytime up until --

MR. WEINBERG: Any time up until the President arrives.

MR. SPEAKES: Any time up until the arrival.

Q They had a ramp freeze, Larry --

Q They freeze the ramp before landing, and --

MR. WEINBERG: The ramp freeze involves an airplane. Unless you are planning to arrive in an airplane, it shouldn't be a problem.

Q No problem.

Q When we went out there that last Saturday, they closed it off about an hour before --

MR. WEINBERG: It will be open until he gets there.

Q Mark, Mark, what about --

MR. SPEAKES: Let's stress this to Andrews so we don't have any goof-ups out there.

Q What about out-of-town correspondents with local credentials, and out-of-town photographers with local credentials?

MR. SPEAKES: They will be handled in the standard Andrews fashion.

Q Well, what is that?

Q Of course, it is to bar them.

Q The old standard --

MR. SPEAKES: What? Speak.

Q Is it possible to get from the press area back into the terminal while the President is there?

MR. SPEAKES: I would doubt it.

Q Will someone be able to tell us at some point which hostages are going to which local airports?

MR. SPEAKES: No.

Q Which one wishes to be critical? (Laughter.)

Q Larry, do you have a list of who is on the plane?

MR. SPEAKES: What?

Q Do you have a list --

MR. SPEAKES: Not yet, Nelson. We are working on that through DOD, but I am not -- or NTWA.

Q Will we have an advanced text of the President's

remarks?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't think so.

Q Will those people be available to reporters out there or not?

MR. SPEAKES: You know, they are going into the terminal, they are getting on buses. It is up to them. I don't know -- I doubt if you will be able to crash the terminal, but --

Q Will the President's remarks be strong enough to cause Dan Rather to cry once again? (Laughter.)

Q Do you have a list of families that are arriving? Families that are not on the plane -- families that are --

Q Well, a certain amount of courage is the footstool of all other virtues.

Q Oh, horse manure.

MR. SPEAKES: Can't tell them without a number, huh? Can't tell them without a number.

Q Cronkite did it naturally, so everybody thinks they have to do it now.

MR. SPEAKES: Peter don't cry?

Q To his benefit, I will say that, no, I don't think he did.

MR. SPEAKES: Big anchormen don't cry.

Okay, sales of one-family homes -- new one-family homes were up sharply in May. They rose 10 percent to adjusted rate of 676,000. This figure is remarkable. It is not only 10 percent above April, but it is 10 percent higher than the May figure. This is a tremendous rebound in sales. The supply of unsold homes is now down to 6.5 months. We expect sales to remain strong in the months ahead. I will give you a copy of this.

This is another glimpse of an economic picture that is beginning to define very clearly a strong resumption of steady growth.

Last week's

disclosure of a a seven-tenths of a percent rise in leading indicators follows the flash estimate of a second quarter GNP of 3.1 percent. There's a typo in that on percent. This will combine with current economic figures to indicate strong performance for the last two quarters of the year.

Economic growth is being accomplished with inflation running at a rate of only 2.7 percent. Even with this good news, Congress has an opportunity to ensure this unprecedented recovery can continue far longer than previous recoveries. Budget conferees can and must resolve their differences after Congress reconvenes, cut spending by at least \$50 billion for next year and \$295 billion over the next three years. This would reduce the share of federal spending out of GNP from 25 to 21 and could fall even lower.

Congress can pass the President's tax reform package, guaranteeing not only fairness and simplicity, but much higher growth potential for the economy.

Summit -- report out overnight and on the wires this morning. Both the President and Mr. Gorbachev have indicated they would like to have a meeting. We've been in contact with the Soviets regarding arrangements. I have nothing further for you at this time.

Q Did Dobrynin come to the State Department with some kind of advisory on Monday?

MR. SPEAKES: Ask the State Department.

Oh, by the way, press viewing the fireworks on the South Lawn -- White House press pass holders and their families are invited to view the fireworks on Thursday evening. The family must be accompanied by a pass holder, he can't clear anybody in. Southwest Gate, 8:30 p.m. You may come but you have to leave your car at home. We haven't got any parking.

Q Now, are you specifically quarreling with the report of the date and the place?

MR. SPEAKES: I'm not commenting on it.

Q When do you think you'll have something.

MR. SPEAKES: Soon. (Laughter.)

Q Hours or days?

Q Wait a few hours --

MR. SPEAKES: It's hard to say.

Q One or the other.

Q Noon. I would say, 12:00 is the time.

Q A comment on Gromyko's promotion?

MR. SPEAKES: Comment on Gromyko's promotion? Nothing specific from us. The President, I would assume, would send a message to the new President.

Who can pronounce the name of the --

Q By the way, what's the name of the new Foreign Minister?

MR. SPEAKES: -- new Foreign Minister? First name is Eduard. (Laughter.)

Q Oh, good.

Q Edward, the VIII.

MR. SPEAKES: Shevernadze.

Q We'll all know it by November 19th.

Q Do you have any comment on the dumping of Romanov?

Q Any reaction to terrorist action yesterday?

Q Wait. We're still on this.

Q Larry, is there any reaction --

Q That's what he's on.

Q -- to the elevation of Mr. Shevernadze, who is relatively -- (laughter.)

MR. SPEAKES: The State Department will -- the Secretary will be sending him a message and will be looking forward to meeting with him --

Q Larry, who? (Laughter.)

MR. SPEAKES: My buddy, Eddie. (Laughter.)

Q A former ABC Moscow Bureau Chief.

MR. SPEAKES: What?

Q A former ABC Moscow Bureau Chief.

MR. SPEAKES: He never heard of this fellow. Nobody did, right? Have you heard of this fellow before?

Q He did a pretty good imitation of a guy that's heard of him.

Q Who did you say Reagan would send a message to? You said the President would send a message to somebody.

MR. SPEAKES: To Gromyko.

Q To Gromyko?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes. Shultz will send one to his counterpart -- (laughter) -- whose name is -- (laughter.)

Q Larry, can we expect some kind of simultaneous announcement --

Q Yes.

Q -- on the summit at some point today? Can you give us guidance?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know whether there would be anything today, but if we do have an announcement, customarily we do it simultaneously.

Q Will this be a summit or a meeting?

MR. SPEAKES: What?

Q Will this be a summit or a meeting?

MR. SPEAKES: Summit meeting. (Laughter.)

Q Good old McFarlane -- one of his lowest hours, you know?

MR. SPEAKES: I do plan to have him down here if we do have an event. (Laughter.)

Q No! No! (Laughter.)

Q Well, Mrs. Reagan made the same distinction --

Q Well now, some U.S. officials, or one in particular last summer felt confident that there would not be a meeting this year. I remember reading an official's output in some major newspapers.

MR. SPEAKES: No longer competent, I guess.

Q Well, I guess not.

MR. SPEAKES: Anything else? Bill?

Q I have a question --

Q Yes, what about the report -- Damascus that Assad thinks you're an ingrate? (Laughter.)

MR. SPEAKES: What?

The Post says Assad's aides think we're not pleased with him, and The Times says -- the headline is interesting -- "White House Commends" -- let's see what it says.

The Post says administration -- Assad's aide expressed his pleasure with the administration's lack of gratitude. Times says, "Syria's Role Wins Gratitude of U.S." -- so --

Q Send The Times to the aides.

Q Send him The Times?

MR. SPEAKES: Times -- do they get The Times in Damascus? Is it on the --

Q Israel is going to release 300 of its Lebanese prisoners. Does it not seem pretty clear that was tied to the hostage release? (Laughter.)

MR. SPEAKES: No, it does not.

Q Well then, why the timing?

MR. SPEAKES: You'll have to ask the Israelis.

Q -- July 3 deadline.

MR. SPEAKES: Frank?

Q Can we come back to the Assad business again? In what manner has the President himself communicated with President Assad since the --

MR. SPEAKES: Spoke to him by telephone yesterday.

Q Oh.

Q How long was the phone conversation, and what can you tell us about it?

MR. SPEAKES: Fifteen minutes with translation, which, if Arabic and English translate evenly, 7-1/2 minutes real time.

Q Aside from the interpreter, who did the most talking?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know.

Q Status of the other seven?

Q -- gratitude, Larry?

Q What did he say?

Q What did the President say to Assad?

Q Did they discuss the status of the other seven?

MR. SPEAKES: I'm not commenting on the content of the phone.

Q Did he thank him?

MR. SPEAKES: I am not commenting on the phone call.

Q Can you at least characterize it as some sort of thanks, or --

MR. SPEAKES: Three people asked the question. No, I will not characterize it.

Q He clearly didn't call him to chew him out, did he?

MR. SPEAKES: No.

John?

Q Would you steer us away from the assumption that he expressed gratitude?

MR. SPEAKES: I wouldn't comment on it at all.

Miles?

Q -- the Times or the Post clip?

Q Has Assad been invited to visit the United States?

MR. SPEAKES: What?

Q Has Assad been invited to the United States?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know that he has.

Q Has McFarlane talked to Nabih Berri?

Q Beyond what was mentioned yesterday, is there any new initiative for the other seven?

MR. SPEAKES: Not beyond what I mentioned yesterday.

Q When did the President call?

MR. SPEAKES: Midday yesterday.

Q What do you think of this woman -- what's her name -- who is going to see President Assad? Go ahead?

Q Was it to inform him about closing the Beirut Airport?

MR. SPEAKES: I'm not commenting on the comment.

Q Was it after the action the President took?

MR. SPEAKES: Not after it was announced, no, but you have to realize that we had diplomatic communications in various areas on the evening before.

Q What's your comment on this woman who is going to try to see Assad on behalf of her relative, the AP correspondent?

Q Peggy Say.

MR. SPEAKES: They ask about her every day, but I don't have any comment.

Q Why not? I mean --

MR. SPEAKES: I just don't -- sorry.

Q Is it concern for the plight of the --

MR. SPEAKES: That's a Lester question.

Q No it's not. No it's not.

MR. SPEAKES: I mean, no -- the follow up piece.

Mike?

Q -- reaction to the terrorist acts of yesterday in Athens, in Rome --

MR. SPEAKES: We do --

Q -- TWA office that --

Q -- Madrid --

Q Madrid.

Q Madrid, and I just -- wonder whether you felt that this was the opening -- their opening gun in a war.

MR. SPEAKES: Can't comment on that, but we have some strong words which were issued at the State Department yesterday that I don't have with me today. I'll be glad to get them and --

Q No separate -- White House comment.

MR. SPEAKES: No. Just -- administration position.

Q -- speak with one voice.

MR. SPEAKES: Yes?

Q Larry, apparently the original hijackers have been identified now. What does the administration plan to do now that it has this knowledge?

MR. SPEAKES: We've planned to take whatever steps are available to us both legally and otherwise to bring these people to justice.

Q What do you mean otherwise?

MR. SPEAKES: I mean otherwise.

Q Secretary Shultz pretty clearly said that we were a nation of principle. We'd follow legal means.

Q -- otherwise what?

Q Are you now quarreling with that?

MR. SPEAKES: No.

Q Well then what do you mean legally and otherwise?

MR. SPEAKES: You would -- to bring them to justice you would have to first --

Q Kill them?

Q Could you elaborate --

MR. SPEAKES: Leave it right there.

Q Kidnap them.

Q -- legally and otherwise --

Q Hijack them.

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Q Could you elaborate on that phrase legally and otherwise --

MR. SPEAKES: No.

Q -- clearly rule out you're not going to allow --

MR. SPEAKES: No, I won't.

Q Do you mean --

MR. SPEAKES: Leave it right where I got it.

Q -- capture?

MR. SPEAKES: John?

Q Would you take the legal -- would you attempt to work first through the normal legal procedures; that is, would you attempt to extradite them?

Q Then kill them?

Q Kill them first.

MR. SPEAKES: I don't think I'll will go beyond what I've said on that. I'd like to leave it right there.

Sarah?

Q Well, Larry, how can you bring to justice somebody who belongs to -- a citizen of another country in another country when they don't even have a government --

MR. SPEAKES: There are legal --

Q How can you expect to bring them -- say that you're going to bring --

MR. SPEAKES: There are legal provisions, Sarah.

Q Well, is this phrase that you just enunciated --

Q There are legal provisions under what?

Q -- is that a description in a general sense, or do you mean it to be policy? Is it a considered phrase that you use?

MR. SPEAKES: It's a considered phrase, yes.

Q This question of extradition came up yesterday. Are we talking about extraditing into Greece where the original crime took place? I mean, there's no crime --

MR. SPEAKES: You'd have to ask Justice for those particulars. There is -- are -- there are new statutes that apply to this.

Q Would there be any -- arguable -- any crime that justifies extraditing them to the U.S.?

MR. SPEAKES: You'd have to ask Justice. I don't know the statute, but there are relatively new statutes on terrorism that cover this.

Q What is the attitude of the Lebanese government? Have they been helpful in the search for the --

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know. I really don't -- I'd have

to get -- check on that to see exactly what.

Q Does the executive order that the President agreed -- against assassinations -- that the President either signed or concurred in, that Carter first signed, preclude hunting down people in another country the way Israel does?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know. I'd have to get my lawyer.

Q Bob, have any information?

MR. SIMS: No, I don't.

MR. SPEAKES: Steve.

Q Any recent -- what about reports that the United States is already running into trouble with Air France, specifically, for example, getting Western carriers not to go into Beirut?

MR. SPEAKES: I have not heard, except for the Vice President said yesterday they'd had a very good meeting with the French officials when he brought that subject up.

Jim.

Q Yes, on bringing the hijackers to justice, would the administration make any requests for assistance from Lebanon's Justice Ministry?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know.

Q What was the question?

MR. SPEAKES: Would we ask Nabih Berri to help us, since he's the Minister of Justice.

Q Would you expand a little bit on reports of possible U.S. action against Libya, Iran and the Bekka Valley?

MR. SPEAKES: No, I would not.

Bob.

Q I'm still a little -- "legal and otherwise," I take it that was not a slip of the tongue. Does it carry with it a possibility that the U.S. might act in a way that might be viewed as illegal?

MR. SPEAKES: No.

Q Larry, I'm confused now. There's legal and illegal. I don't think there's anything in between. So, if you say "legal and otherwise" --

MR. SPEAKES: No, I guess the better word would be "judicial." "Judicial."

Q Oooh.

MR. SPEAKES: And otherwise.

Q Legal judicial or judicial and otherwise?

MR. SPEAKES: Judicial and otherwise.

Q So that's what Shultz basically laid out --

Q So a legal step might be filing something, but there's other things you could do that --

MR. SPEAKES: Yes, judicial procedure. Judicial procedure.

Q Judicial and otherwise?

MR. SPEAKES: Be better. Not to imply illegal. Like that better?

I can't hear back there.

Q Larry, could you give us some percentage chances of guidance on -- the background guidance on the summit at noon?

MR. SPEAKES: No. You mean, whether we might announce something at noon? I really can't, no.

Q -- give us some guidance --

MR. SPEAKES: No, I won't go beyond -- if we don't have anything to announce, I won't go beyond what I've said here --

Charles.

Q I'm not clear now, is your statement "judicial and otherwise"?

MR. SPEAKES: That would be more accurate.

Q What would you consider non-judicial?

MR. SPEAKES: Let's leave it like that.

Q Larry, the other --

Q -- nevertheless still legal, rather than extra-legal.

Q Are you ruling out the possibility of illegal -- illegal --

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

Q -- efforts to --

Q Who gets to define what's legal and illegal? You will, of course.

MR. SPEAKES: Meese. (Laughter.)

Q Meese. We're lost. Jesus Christ. That crook. (Laughter.)

MR. SPEAKES: Had enough?

Q Meese?

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END

9:35 A.M. EDT

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