

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 Briefings: Records

**Folder Title:** 07/19/1985 (#1505)

**Box:** 37-Press Briefings

---

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

July 19, 1985

The Briefing Room

1:28 P.M. EDT

INDEX

SUBJECT

PAGE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Secretary Baker/Peruvian Inauguration.....1  
John Blane Appointment.....1  
Richard Bogosian Appointment.....1  
James Miller Appointment.....1, 12, 13-14  
President's Return to White House.....1

DOMESTIC

President Reagan's Health.....1-9  
Federal Budget/Congress.....3, 11-13

FOREIGN

El Salvador/U.S. Reward.....9-11

1:52 P.M. EDT

#1505-7/19

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

---

PRESS BRIEFING  
BY  
LARRY SPEAKES

July 19, 1985

The Briefing Room

1:28 P.M. EDT

MR. SPEAKES: The President has designated Treasury Secretary James A. Baker, III, to head the United States Presidential Delegation to attend the inauguration of Peruvian President-elect Alan Garcia in Lima on July 28, 1985.

The two other members are the U.S. Ambassador to Peru, David Jordan, and Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, Elliot Abrams.

Secretary Baker will make a brief stop in Guatemala on Monday, July 29, 1985, and return to Washington.

On Monday, here, July 22nd, at 2:30 p.m., we will have a background briefing with the -- Assistant Secretary Paul Wolfowitz, who is Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs. It will be on the visit of President Li Xiannian, who will visit on Tuesday.

The President today is announcing the appointment of John Blane to be Ambassador of the United States of America to the Republic of Chad, Richard Wayne Bogosian to be Ambassador of the United States to Niger, and James C. Miller, III, to be Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Q In other news -- (laughter.)

MR. SPEAKES: The President is particularly pleased to make the appointment of Jim Miller to this job, calling him an outstanding individual with considerable experience and background that will be a tremendous asset to the administration.

The news today is, the President of the United States will sleep in the White House tomorrow night. Doctors at Bethesda Naval Hospital today gave the President the green light to go home. He will arrive at the White House seven days, virtually to the hour, after his surgery.

His departure will take place after he addresses the nation by radio from his hospital suite.

The President said, and I quote, "Great. I will sleep in my own bed tomorrow night." And to Mrs. Reagan, "You can take the pictures down," meaning the pictures she brought to decorate the hospital room.

Doctors today told the President to plan on an abbreviated schedule for a few days, but other than that, he is good as new.

Last night the President stayed up until midnight

MORE

#1505-07/19

watching, God forbid, Nightline. (Laughter.) Look out, Ted Koppel. (Laughter.)

MR. DONALDSON: That will instill the fear of God into him.

MR. SPEAKES: The President slept through the night and was awakened at 7:00 a.m. to a breakfast of papaya with fruit balls, poached egg on toast, bacon, a piece of whole wheat toast with honey, and coffee.

This morning he spent with the newspapers and a bundle of paperwork that had come out from the White House. At 10:00 a.m. until 10:40 a.m. he met with Don Regan, the Chief of Staff, and they reviewed the list of candidates for OMB Director, and the President made the choice. They discussed a number of other personnel matters which are progressing through the White House system. The President gave his approval to a number of appointments that will be coming out in the future. And they went into another day of discussion of the budget situation.

Bud McFarlane arrived at 10:40 a.m. and stayed until 11:00 a.m. Bud discussed the upcoming Geneva meeting with the Soviet leadership, and the last round of the Geneva talks on arms control. This followed after Bud had the opportunity to debrief the arms negotiators yesterday afternoon. In addition, he talked more about tourism.

Secretary Shultz arrived at 11:00 a.m. and stayed until 11:35 a.m. The Secretary gave the President a detailed readout on his trip to the Pacific and Southeast Asian countries.

He met Don Regan and Bud McFarlane at bedside. The President remained seated in bed during that meeting. When Secretary Shultz arrived he got up and greeted the Secretary at the door to his suite and escorted him to the sitting room for that meeting.

Mrs. Reagan arrived around noon, and it was she who gave the President the news, "You are coming home." She plans to spend the afternoon with the President at Bethesda.

One more quip. The two were talking about her visit to the carrier America a couple of days ago, and he said, "Since you spent the day with 5,000 men, I think I will ask you to marry me." And she replied, "I thought you would never ask." And that prompted a kiss.

More on mealtime --

Q She spent the day with 5,000 men so he thought he would ask her to marry him? (Laughter.)

MR. SPEAKES: Lunch today will be a cheeseburger, and it will be surrounded by -- the appetizer will be chicken broth and there will be relishes and crackers, cheeseburger, fresh banana pudding, and coffee.

Dinner will be pink salmon, fresh corn, spinach, fruit slaw, and peach melba.

And that takes us through the day.

Q What are the plans for when he comes home tomorrow?

MR. SPEAKES: Plans for when he comes home tomorrow? He will leave the White House shortly after the radio broadcast. Don't have a specific --

Q You mean the hospital.

MR. SPEAKES: -- hospital shortly after the radio broadcast. Don't have specifics on the time, but I judge it could be as early as 12:30 p.m. He will have a send-off from the operating room crew and those who have worked closely with him from the hospital, Naval personnel, at the hospital, perhaps outside. He wanted to give them a special tribute for what he has had out there.

He will drive a motorcade to the White House. He will arrive here twenty-five minutes after he leaves. He will come on the South Lawn. We are giving the White House and others within the government an opportunity to be on the South Lawn to greet the President. He will wave and go inside. No remarks are planned.

Q Open press coverage?

MR. SPEAKES: The President will spend the evening -- yes, open press coverage.

Q Remarks at either -- at neither place?

MR. SPEAKES: No remarks planned, no.

Q Will there be a pool going to the hospital?

MR. SPEAKES: Be a travel pool from the hospital to here.

Dale.

Q Will the President be meeting next week with members of Congress about the budget?

MR. SPEAKES: Chances are he will have a meeting with some members of Congress next week just to catch up on a number of items that are on the agenda. It is going to be a busy two weeks ahead for Congress and I think the leadership wants his input very quickly next week.

So, Candy.

Q Will we see him today on camera at all?

MR. SPEAKES: Don't plan to, no.

Q You are telling us more about Miller at some point, huh?

MR. SPEAKES: Sure. Let's get the health questions out of the way and cut the cameras off and go on to whatever else you have got.

I have one more announcement, too.

Q Will you give us an idea of what you know of his schedule next week?

MR. SPEAKES: Don't have anything specific. He will participate in the Li visit and we will take it day by day from there. Chances are there will be a congressional meeting. There will be staff and foreign policy meetings every day.

Q Larry, any idea yet on the topic for the President's radio address?

MR. SPEAKES: A good idea, but we will wait and see tomorrow.

Q What would it be tied in with?

MR. SPEAKES: Wait and see.

Q Let me press the question that you have been asked before in light of recent stories. Did his brother's operation have any bearing on his decision to go in?

MR. SPEAKES: No, did not. The trip to the hospital went on the President's schedule on June 7th. That was fully almost five weeks before the President's surgery. The President talked to his brother, Neal, just a few days before Neal's surgery, which, I believe, was June 29th. And then he talked to him when Neal left the hospital. It did not have any bearing. "Goodness, no," he said.

Q Neither going to the hospital nor the decision to do the full bowel examination had anything to do with Neal Reagan's position?

MR. SPEAKES: I asked him that this morning and her in their presence, and he said, "Goodness, no." So --

Bob?

Q Well, wait --

Q Larry, you said that the President would be on an abbreviated schedule for a few days. I wonder if you could just take some time and give us a sense of what that means for the next week and the following weeks and through the summer as he convalesces.

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

Q I know you don't know the details --

MR. SPEAKES: We'll determine that as time goes by. I'm sure he'll see Don Regan and Bud McFarlane and the Vice President probably each morning after a couple of days, spend some time with them. He will see Secretary Shultz on the same basis he generally sees him. He'll have the Li visit.

He'll probably have a Congressional meeting maybe later in the week. He'll probably make some phone calls next week on the budget. I'm sure he'll gradually increase his schedule, as he has an opportunity in the coming weeks.

He'll go to California. He'll rest, relax and --

Q When?

MR. SPEAKES: Couple of days probably -- we were scheduled August 14th. It will be a couple of days before that probably.

Q Do you anticipate him, at any point, going back to the Oval Office, or will he be primarily in the Residence?

MR. SPEAKES: Sure. No, I am sure he will go back to the Oval Office in short order.

Q How much time do you think he will spend in the Oval Office as compared to what he usually does?

MR. SPEAKES: It is hard to tell. I mean, as I say, we will play it by ear and he will do what he feels like doing.

Q But you do expect him to do more work in the Residence than he normally does?

MR. SPEAKES: Well, for a few days, sure.

Q Larry, this may have been asked during the many briefings out there, but it is my understanding that during a colonoscopy it is possible to give the patient an optical device so

that he can watch the same as the doctor. Did he?

MR. SPEAKES: No.

Q He didn't?

MR. SPEAKES: No, did not.

Q Larry, can you give us a little tick-tock on Mrs. Reagan telling him that he was coming home rather than the doctors? I mean, did they pull her aside or did they call her this morning?

MR. SPEAKES: No, she had talked to them yesterday and there was that possibility pending the check this morning. She got a final sign-off from the doctors this morning and --

Q Before she left here?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know whether it was before she left here. Maybe she chatted with them briefly out there, but generally yesterday it was regarded that everything was a go, but they wanted to, as I say, see how the night went and the morning went, and it went splendidly, and there he is.

Q Larry, just to clarify, the appointment for the colonoscopy was made June 7th. Now was that --

MR. SPEAKES: No, not the appointment. The scheduling on the President's schedule was made June 7th. It was delayed during the hostage crisis and then firmly scheduled for that Friday.

Q So my question is, was there an interim date that had been scheduled?

MR. SPEAKES: There was a date. I don't know what it was. It was tentatively scheduled and then slid back for a week or so during the hostage crisis.

Q Was the appointment ever actually made at Bethesda Naval Hospital?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know whether it was actually made or not, but I am sure that they probably put them on alert. I don't know whether they did or not.

Q I don't quite understand that. He was originally scheduled to go when? July 7th?

MR. SPEAKES: Probably a few days early. I don't know when, no.

Q June 7th?

MR. SPEAKES: On the morning -- on June 7th, the scheduling office took the calendar out and said, let's mark a weekend for the President to go. I don't know what weekend that was.

Q But the hostage thing --

MR. SPEAKES: The hostage thing briefly intervened. The President went on to the hospital.

So, Johanna?

Q Larry, you have probably given us more details than on any other Presidential illness in history about the President's eating habits during the last two days. Are the doctors providing the White House chefs with a special list of food that he should be having at certain times?

MR. SPEAKES: Oh, I think Eddie Serrano is a pretty astute chef and he's done an excellent job. I'm sure the doctors probably have a few recommendations, but I don't know of anything specific.

Q So he will be eating much as he has been lately with

--

MR. SPEAKES: As much as he has been? Oh, I'm sure --

Q No, much as he has been.

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know. They might prescribe some change, but so far they haven't. I think it was alluded to in the briefings out there at the hospital, but we'll let you know if there is a change.

So, Bob?

Q You said the President will be heading back to the Oval Office pretty quickly. I assume you don't mean on a full-time basis. Is that --

MR. SPEAKES: Oh, I don't know how quickly he'll do that. I don't know --

Q I mean you don't anticipate him actually working in the Oval Office every day, any time before going to California?

MR. SPEAKES: Not Monday morning, no.

Q Well, any time before he goes to California.

Q Is he filing?

Q He's filing.

Q I don't know what he's doing.

Q Is he filing?

Q It's on television, isn't it?

Q Larry --

MR. SPEAKES: We've got a filing problem here.

Q Well, no. It's on TV. I mean CNN may be --

Q Ohhh.

MR. SPEAKES: CNN's got it, yes. Is CNN on?

Q Can we go to the budget?

MR. SPEAKES: Any problem with -- any more health?

Q Yes. Just -- you say we won't get to see him with our cameras. We'll you release some stills, please?

MR. SPEAKES: I doubt if we will today. I don't know. I mean, there's stuff made out there but --

Q Can we beg?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes, you can beg. (Laughter.)

Okay, do you want to shift off health? Or, Bernie, do you have more health?

Q Is there any timetable for the President's future physical exams?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes. I think the doctors will lay down a regimen of physical exams that involve post-operative type of a schedule and he'll keep on that -- in that schedule. I don't have the specifics, but we'll certainly announce them as they come up.

David?

Q Budget?

Q I think there's still one unanswered question on health as to whether you expect him to resume a full-time schedule in the Oval Office before he goes to California.

MR. SPEAKES: I can't say. We'll take it on a day-by-day basis and as the President reaches his peak again, he'll be back on duty full-time.

Q Do you think he'd like to be on Nightline tonight?

MR. SPEAKES: Not after last night, I don't think. (Laughter.)

Q Did you tell the doctors about --

Q What was his comment?

MR. SPEAKES: I hope he doesn't write Shales' column tomorrow. (Laughter.)

Q Why didn't he watch "Key Largo"?

Q What happened last night?

Q Can I ask one more question about Neil Reagan?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know what he did.

Q Was the President aware of the findings of first polyps, Neil's polyps in January?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't think so.

Q Was he aware of the stomach pains that Neil Reagan

--

MR. SPEAKES: I don't -- he didn't indicate he was.

So, yes, sir.

Q Do you know the results of that first CEA test that

he had out there? You know, the carcinoembryonic antigen test.

MR. SPEAKES: No, I don't. In fact, you've stumped me. I don't know what that test does.

Q That's the one that Rosenberg mentioned --

MR. SPEAKES: Oh, yes. I don't know.

Joe?

Q Larry, because of the timing, I'd like to request either a tight pool camera or, at the very least, a couple White House stills of him giving his radio address tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKES: We'll probably do that -- something. I'm not sure whether we can get one camera in there or some stills or what.

Q Can you tell us anything about changes in lifestyle that he might, in the long-run, be dictated or --

MR. SPEAKES: Don't anticipate his lifestyle to change one whit.

Q What about medical treatment? Can you tell us of any medical treatment anticipated?

MR. SPEAKES: No follow-up medical treatment anticipated.

Q Larry, is anything simply cancelled for next week?

MR. SPEAKES: Not that I know of. I don't think so. The President's schedule was not fully fleshed out for this.

Q Cheyenne --

MR. SPEAKES: Cheyenne, yes, would be off --

Q What about the --

Q Dr. Oller, I think, out at the hospital has said that he saw no reason at that time why the President couldn't be riding his horses on his ranch on August 14. So what does Dr. Oller say at this point, or --

MR. SPEAKES: Haven't asked Dr. Oller about riding the horses, but I'm sure the President will be ready to ride. It just depends on how he feels.

Q Aren't those conservative Europe --

MR. SPEAKES: -- and there will be another vote taken.

Q Aren't those conservative European leaders coming in next week?

MR. SPEAKES: No, they were -- yes, they were due in next Friday. I don't know whether we'll do that or not.

Q That's up in the air?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

Q Two nonsequitur questions. What do they mean when he's "good as new," and also, the nonsequitur is, will he see Margaret Thatcher next week?

MR. SPEAKES: Don't know what the specific plans are. At the moment, we're not firm on our plans for that day.

MR. DJEREJIAN: We're not firm at all --

MR. SPEAKES: It's still not decided, and I don't know what of these leaders he will see next week. We just haven't we haven't -- that.

Q "Good as new." What does he mean? What do they mean?

MR. SPEAKES: That means that he can resume a full and active life, once he's completed his recuperation, and there shouldn't be any change whatsoever as I said in his lifestyle.

Q Can we go to the budget, please?

MR. SPEAKES: Okay, you want to discontinue your cameras back there?

Q It's better than the balance.

Q I protest.

MR. SPEAKES: Oh, wait a minute. Let me give one more announcement before it slips my mind.

Q On the camera?

MR. SPEAKES: No. Today, the United States government -- and you'll have a sheet on this -- is announcing an award of up to

\$100,000 for information leading to the effective prosecution and punishment of those responsible for the murders of six U.S. citizens on June 19, 1985, in San Salvador, El Salvador.

Q It's right here.

Q Didn't we have that --

Q It's right here.

Q -- and you were willing to make the announcement before we dimmed the lights.

Q Can you turn the lights on so we can have --

MR. SPEAKES: Those with information in El Salvador should --

Q Larry, can we do it on camera?

Q Can someone turn the lights back on, please?

Q Lights, cameras.

MR. SPEAKES: I don't have my --

Q Want one, Larry?

Q Yes, tell us what that last --

MR. SPEAKES: I've got one. You ready? Today, the United States government announces a reward of up to \$100,000 for information leading to the effective prosecution and punishment of those responsible for the murders of six United States citizens on June 19, 1985 in San Salvador, El Salvador.

Those with information in El Salvador should notify the investigating authorities of the Salvadoran government. Those with information in the United States should notify the Office of Security, Department of State.

Those with information in any other countries should notify the nearest U.S. Embassy. Information received will be handled on a confidential basis, and the identities of the informants will be protected. Officers of -- or employees of governmental organizations who've furnished information while in the performance of official duties are not eligible for the reward.

Q Still no reward for the hijackers in Lebanon?

MR. SPEAKES: We are taking the situation in Lebanon on a step-by-step basis, and I'm sure we will have some steps to announce in the future on that.

Q Who decides what the amount of this award is?

MR. SPEAKES: The Secretary of State, with approval of the President.

Bob?

Q What's effective prosecution mean as opposed to simple prosecution?

MR. SPEAKES: I think it would mean the outcome of the prosecution.

Lights --

Q Conviction?

Q Does that mean conviction, Larry?

(Laughter.) Q You sure you don't have anything else to say?

MR. SPEAKES: Well, let's see.

Q Look down there, big boy. (Laughter.)

MR. SPEAKES: Let's see. (Laughter.) I can't --

Q The Miller announcement --

Q -- got a name already.

MR. SPEAKES: Does that mean prosecution? We don't want to be any more specific -- bringing them to justice.

Q Does it mean something like -- something like prosecution, like perhaps --

Q Killing.

MR. SPEAKES: Bob, I think we want to leave it unspecified --

Q You said the first --

MR. SPEAKES: That's right.

Yes?

Q Why did you announce Miller in such a ho-hum fashion?

MR. SPEAKES: Let me finish here.

Q Larry, there's been -- in the public print for a couple of weeks. Is there any reason why it's been so slow being officially announced?

MR. SPEAKES: No. I think there were not final decisions on it is the reason. I think sometimes the public prints run ahead of the facts, although they're generally right.

Q Is one of the things the President talked to McFarlane about in the terrorism --

MR. SPEAKES: Yes. That was mentioned. Sheila?

Q Is the fact that you're announcing the -- not --

Q Shhh!

MR. SPEAKES: That it would -- announcing it -- that it what?

Q Is the fact that you are announcing it in the El Salvador case mean it would not be effective in the Lebanon case without an announcement -- that you could not often warn in the Lebanon case --

MR. SPEAKES: That is correct. We would announce it if and when we decide to do it.

Budget?

Q You said about a week ago that this was the week -- last-chance week for progress on the budget. Is the fact that it's

now Friday and you have nothing mean that we've lost all possibility? And secondly, do you expect Miller to start immediately, or when will he take over?

MR. SPEAKES: Okay -- we can clear Miller out, and then I've got a little line I want to deliver on the budget. I don't know what Jim will do as far as getting over here, but I think as quickly as possible, as soon as he can clear out over there. I don't have a timetable.

Helen wanted to know why we announced it in such a ho-hum fashion. I don't consider approval by the President from the hospital and notification of Jim by the car telephone and walking in here and doing it on national television and giving the Presidential quote with glowing adjectives ho-hum.

Q Regan -- Regan called him by his.

MR. SPEAKES: Regan called him from the car.

Q The President spoke to him?

MR. SPEAKES: No.

Q He has to be confirmed, doesn't he?

Q What about this budget --

MR. SPEAKES: Yes. Has to go to the Hill --

Q Do you have a budget --

MR. SPEAKES: -- yes, budget. David wants to know if we've given up all hope. No, we haven't. We think there's still an opportunity -- both sides have an opportunity to look at their positions, to reconsider what is obviously at the moment an impasse, and to get back together. We want them to do that.

We think that the Senate and the President have already gone the extra mile on the budget. It's now up to the House Democrats to come up with genuine cuts needed to follow the framework of the Oak Tree meeting that laid out the guidelines for a budget agreement.

The House has only come halfway toward accepting Senate defense budget authority figures, and you recall how we felt about that. The House has proposed only 17 percent of what the Senate has proposed in non-defense, real program reductions. Chairman Gray of the House has never said how he will reconcile savings. We believe we must have some strong reconciliation language if there is ever to be any discipline in the subsequent appropriating process.

And for a long-term structural budgetary reform, we must be able to realistically expect Congress to keep from postponing spending cuts in the out-years. The Senate has proposed outright termination of thirteen programs. The House has finally come up with eight. But they're the ones with the least budgetary impact. And, in the meantime, some of those that are targeted for elimination, such as the Economic Development Administration and the Appalachian Regional Commission, are still being funded in appropriations bills.

David?

Q Larry, you talk about the long-term thing and also reconciliation, but both Houses -- both Chambers now appear on the verge of beginning to pass appropriations bills without a budget resolution. A, do you have any objections to that? And, B, is the President going to threaten vetos of appropriations bills as he has in the past --

MR. SPEAKES: There are some problems with the veto -- with the budgets -- the appropriations bills that have passed the House, but there's a long road to go through the Senate and into the Conference before the funds are actually there. We believe, very strongly, that we should have a budget. And even if Congress ends up with these bills, with these appropriations bills, which is highly unlikely, that meet our targets, they will still have to address our concerns in the out-years.

So, yes, we want a budget. If appropriations bills come along that are over budget, certainly, the President would be prepared to sharpen up his veto pen on it. But I think we can eliminate all of that and get straight down to the business of adopting a budget. It can be done. There's reasonable prospects of it and it ought to be done.

Q Yes. In terms of Presidential involvement on the budget, you said that he might have a meeting with Congressional leaders. But that sounded like it was more broad-based than just the budget. Do you expect him to get involved specifically in budget negotiations?

MR. SPEAKES: It depends, Chris, on what's needed. He will -- the Congressional people will -- need to talk over the next two weeks which is going to be a pretty good push on the Hill as far as a number of matters that are coming up there. But how much he gets involved in the budget process depends on how much he needs to get involved.

Q Can I go back one more time to your statement? Is the demand that they come up with an effective way to reconcile this something new that you've raised today or was this brought up in the --

MR. SPEAKES: No, it's been brought up all along. We really think there's got to be reconciliation language or it won't work.

Q And one final thing. Do you expect Miller to appoint a new echelon of senior officials under him -- a new deputy an a --

MR. SPEAKES: That would be his choice, consistent with what the President wishes. But I'm sure that he will be given a free

hand to run his agency. But I'm sure he would approach it certainly with a need to -- as you know, he served there and I'm sure he knows a lot of people --

Q He does have to be confirmed?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes, he does have to be confirmed?

Q Would I miss anything if I left now? (Laughter.)

MR. SPEAKES: Take the rest of the day off, Bruce.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END

1:52 P.M. EDT

#1505-07/19