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THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

PRESS BRIEFING
BY
LARRY SPEAKES

September 28, 1984

Mr. Speakes' Office

9:18 A.M. EDT

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#1208-09/28
9:32 A.M. EDT

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MR. SPEAKES: Let the briefing begin by noting that Emery King of NBC is here.

Q Yea. (Applause.)

MR. SPEAKES: I want that a part of the record.

Q That's right.

MR. SPEAKES: Let me run over the Gromyko coverage again. The arrival at the West Lobby -- there'll be a press area out there. There's no troops, no flags, just the standard --

Q Who will greet him at the door --

MR. SPEAKES: Protocol, I believe.

Q Does that mean --

Q Selma.

Q -- Selma?

MR. SPEAKES: I guess so.

Q Sounds that way.

MR. SPEAKES: And then he goes through the Roosevelt Room and signs the guest book, and then into the Oval Office. It'll be a standard Oval Office photo. We would like to prevail on your camera crews and others, if you can, for order. Probably have a lot of people.

Q How many waves is that going -- three waves?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know. It depends on numbers.

Q Can you find out for us how he signed?

Q That's what I hear.

MR. SPEAKES: Yes, I'll look at the guest book and give you the --

Q Are the Russians going to --

MR. SPEAKES: What?

Q Do the Russians have a crew? I mean, are they going to put this on their television, do you know?

MORE

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MR. SPEAKES: Do we have a Soviet --

Q Because they haven't --

Q They have a crew, according to Mary.

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know.

MR. SIMS: Yes, they've got --

MR. SPEAKES: Okay.

MR. SIMS: -- they've got about 15 correspondents --

MR. SPEAKES: Two hours in the Oval Office. Then, the attendees from the U.S. side -- and I'll have Kim give out the list -- I'll just read these quickly: the President, the Vice President, the Secretary of State, Bud McFarlane, Ambassador Hartman, Jack F. Matlock -- M-a-t-l-o-c-k -- at the NSC. And our interpreter is named Dmitri -- D-i-m-i-t-r-i -- I'll spell -- Z-a-r-e-c-h-n-a-k -- Zarechnak.

Q G-a?

Q Z-a-r-e-c-h --

MR. SPEAKES: Z -- z as in zebra. Z-a-r-e-c-h-n-a-k.

Q Zarechnak.

MR. SPEAKES: For the --

Q Is he on our side?

MR. SPEAKES: -- Soviets will be the Foreign Minister, the First Deputy Foreign Minister, the Ambassador, a notetaker and an interpreter. For lunch --

Q Is that Dobrynin you speak of?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

Q Could I just ask a question there?

MR. SPEAKES: And we'll have these names.

Q -- number two --

Q But are they ever going to be alone or will all that group always be in the room at that time?

MR. SPEAKES: It will start off with the large group, and unless the President and the Foreign Minister decide otherwise, it will continue as this.

Q Okay.

Q Ha-ha-ha.

Q Do we have a notetaker?

MR. SPEAKES: No. Matlock will be the notetaker.

At lunch, the group is expanded to include the President, the Vice President, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of

Treasury, the Secretary of Defense, Meese, Baker, Deaver, McFarlane, Admiral John Poindexter, Ambassador Hartman, Assistant Secretary of State Rick Burt, Matlock, again the interpreter. And we'll give out the list that gives you all the Soviets. There are a bunch of Ministers, Counsellors --

Continuing on the coverage, at noon the two will walk over together. There is open coverage in the center of the Rose Garden in a press area. There will be a tight pool at the end of the Colonnade to photograph the walk to the doorway.

Q Including a reporter?

MR. SPEAKES: No.

Q Just cameras?

MR. SPEAKES: Just cameras --

Q Is it tight pool?

MR. SPEAKES: There will be a tight camera pool. One camera and some stills.

Q Why no reporter?

MR. SPEAKES: You will be in the center of the Rose Garden.

Q Why no reporter, Larry?

MR. SPEAKES: At 12:00 p.m. --

Q Larry, why no reporter?

Q Larry, why --

Q Yes, I mean, if it's a tight pool --

MR. SPEAKES: It's a cutaway camera pool. Do you customarily go with your cutaway? No.

At 12:00 p.m. --

Q That's not a speech for a cutaway --

MR. SPEAKES: -- noon the lunch will -- Well, if you don't want it, we don't do it. We'll take the stills there and forget the --

Q We may not want it. I don't know yet.

MR. SPEAKES: Well, let's pull the cameras out then.

Q We may.

MR. SPEAKES: Okay.

Q We don't need Gromyko, Larry.

MR. SPEAKES: You may not have a choice.

Q The President needs Gromyko.

MR. SPEAKES: At 12:00 p.m., there's a lunch. The lunch is in the State Dining Room, and it will be covered by a writing pool

and open photo.

And, then, the departure, which will -- the President will bid farewell inside. And Secretary Shultz will walk the Foreign Minister to his car. There's open coverage on the South Lawn.

Q What's your guesstimate as to time on that?

MR. SPEAKES: I would guess 1:30 p.m. but don't know.

Q And any update on a departure statement?

MR. SPEAKES: No, no departure statement.

Q And you said yesterday, I think, that Shultz would brief at about 3:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKES: He will brief at 2:30 p.m.

Q 2:30 p.m.

MR. SPEAKES: 2:30 p.m., unless there are -- unless something comes up. 2:30 p.m. with a hard start time. 2:30:45 p.m. on camera.

Q And is the photo op at lunch just a brief photo at the beginning?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

Q And what's on the menu for lunch, any idea?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't -- well, wait a minute. Do I have the menu in the stuff here?

Q Borscht.

Q Bear.

Q Bear fricassee.

Q Larry, no plans for the President to say anything --

Q Just a minute, just a minute.

MR. SPEAKES: Wait a minute. I don't have the menu here.

Q Can somebody get it for us, please?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes. In fact, I can give you a little more detail. The noontime begins with refreshments in the Red Room.

Q Ohh.

Q The Red Room.

MR. SPEAKES: And then they will go into the State Dining Room for lunch.

Q Impressions?

Q I think he said refreshments.

MR. SPEAKES: A total of 24 people.

Q Oh, is that what he said.

Q Does that mean borscht?

MR. SPEAKES: Mrs. Reagan will be in the Red Room to greet the Foreign Minister, then she will not attend the luncheon, but go upstairs.

Q Can you get us the menu, though?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes, you'll get the menu.

And that's pretty well it. At the -- in the afternoon at 3:00 p.m., the President will sign a number of bills, and there are a number of co-sponsors that are coming in for the opportunity to be with the President while he signs the bill.

Q Is this open?

MR. SPEAKES: No, there's no coverage of that. Very brief signing ceremony -- it's five minutes each.

Q Can you put out the release on these bills?

Q Can you tell us who is coming?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes, we will give you a release that includes all the bills. In fact, they're on the schedule, but we'll give you more details there.

Then at about 4:00 p.m., the President and Mrs. Reagan depart for Camp David.

There will be no midday briefing by me today. Let Shultz carry the ball. I'll take the day off. Go home and take a nap.

Q And then the President comes back Sunday?

MR. SPEAKES: Comes back Sunday.

Q And goes out Monday.

MR. SPEAKES: And goes out Monday.

Q You mean staff time this afternoon.

MR. SPEAKES: Pardon?

Q You mean staff time, not a nap.

MR. SPEAKES: For me? (Laughter.)

Q Has he now read -- has he read Gromyko's speech?

MR. SPEAKES: Helen, I have not asked him whether he's read Gromyko's speech. I would be fairly certain he has not, that he has probably seen reporting and he's probably discussed it with McFarlane and Shultz.

Q Has he heard from Mondale?

MR. SPEAKES: Let me ask Bob when he gets off. I don't know that we -- NSC has heard from Mondale.

Q Is Reagan having another preparation session this morning before he meets --

MR. SPEAKES: Yes, there's an hour where he's going to sit down with Shultz and McFarlane and others to talk about the meeting.

Q Right now? 9:00 to 10:00 a.m.?

Q Right now?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

Q Do you have anything --

Q He neither saw the speech nor read the speech? He's been given a synopsis of the Gromyko speech, what?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes, I would imagine it was a fairly detailed discussion with Shultz about it yesterday and again this morning, and I don't know whether he's received anything written on it or not. He's seen the news reporting on it.

Q Is he prepared for Gromyko to deliver a long diatribe criticizing his policies over the first three years?

MR. SPEAKES: Chris, we'll have to wait and see.

Q Did Gromyko come in last night?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know. Do you know if Gromyko came to town last night?

Q Or is he coming in today?

Q He came in last night at 8:05 p.m.

MR. SIMS: He came last night.

MR. SPEAKES: Do we know whether Mondale has given us anything on his meeting? Nothing? We don't have anything.

Q Larry, yesterday --

Q What's the possibility of a follow-up meeting after this with Gromyko and Shultz or somebody else?

MR. SPEAKES: There's none scheduled.

Q You know, Mondale says there's a chance --

Q Did you say no Mondale briefing?

Q -- for a breakthrough. Is that -- what is your view of the possibility of a breakthrough at this meeting?

MR. SPEAKES: Sam, we'll just have to wait until the meeting takes place.

Q Do you think Mondale was saying that simply to raise expectations so that you will be let down?

MR. SPEAKES: I cannot interpret Mondale.

Q Well, are your expectations the same as they were the other day?

MR. SPEAKES: They are.

Q Why didn't Mondale -- do you know why, after what you all said, that Mondale -- that David Aaron did not call Bud McFarlane?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know. You'd have to ask Mondale. Send out the word.

Q Well, if Mondale presented ideas that were fairly -- an opening wedge with the Soviets, why don't we try to find out what they were? I mean, why don't you find out -- the White House?

MR. SPEAKES: Okay -- get me Mondale.

Q Larry, do you have anything on the --

Q No, really. I mean, wouldn't you be interested in knowing what he --

MR. SPEAKES: Well, I think it's up to Mondale. If he wishes to --

Q -- finds acceptable?

MR. SPEAKES: -- I think it's up to Mondale if he wishes to talk to us --

Q Are you sure of that? Because that was in the paper this morning -- they were saying they were going to call and give a briefing before the meeting?

MR. SPEAKES: Sims says they haven't.

Q To no one in either State or the White House?

MR. SIMS: No one at the White House.

Q Larry, do you have anything on the CIA analyst who left --

MR. SPEAKES: No.

Q -- who has not renewed his contract because he -- objected to Casey --

MR. SPEAKES: No. I'd ask the CIA.

Q Well, who's the innocent? I mean, is the administration, or is --

Q Ha. Ha. Lots of luck.

Q -- does the White House have an interest in finding out whether Casey distorts the intelligence?

MR. SPEAKES: Don't know anything about it.

Q Has the President called --

Q Is anyone going to find out?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know.

Q The attack on the U.S. Embassy in Beirut -- do you have anything on that?

MR. SPEAKES: No.

Q Has the President called President Carter to apologize?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know. I'll have to --

Q Did Carter call here?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know.

Q Can you check, Larry?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

Q Is there some suggestion that they talked? Are you asking because you know they talked?

Q Shot in the dark. (Laughter.)

Q That was Nixon, huh? (Laughter.)

Q That was Nixon.

Q Yes, that was Nixon.

Q Say you don't have anything for us on that.
(Laughter.)

Q Helen, I heard a groan after that shot. You must have hit something.

Q How about the attack on the U.S. Embassy in Beirut, do you have anything on that?

MR. SPEAKES: I heard you ask that a moment ago -- did you hear my reply?

Q No, I didn't.

MR. SPEAKES: No.

Q You haven't received reports yet, or you've heard reports, but you have no information, or what's the statement?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't have anything.

Q Does this President still hold to the notion that the CIA was nearly destroyed several years ago?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't have anything to add to that.

Q Sam, was there an attack this morning?

Q What? I can't hear you.

MR. SPEAKES: I do not have anything to add to that.

Q Well, I have something -- he has nothing --

MR. SPEAKES: Leading indicators out today -- (Laughter.)

Q Wait a minute --

Q Larry --

Q Can we just go back for one second -- do you know -- if -- what was attacked, Sam?

Q Well, I'm asking a question. From news reports the Embassy was sprayed on the outside with machine gun fire. There appears to have been no casualties. But I don't know. I'm here as a reporter asking a question.

MR. SPEAKES: I don't have anything on that -- I would have to check on it. I do not have anything.

Q Mr. Sims, have you heard about that?

MR. SIMS: I don't have anything on that at all --

Q But you've seen the news reports?

Q I don't think they have.

MR. SPEAKES: I haven't seen the news reports, no.

Q I think it's appalling --

Q Leading indicators --

Q Must be an intelligence failure --

MR. SPEAKES: Leading indicators increased by .5 of a percent in August. That returns them to the growth path that has been the economic course for the past two years. As you recall, the economic indicators dipped in June and July. This is indicative of economic activity in the months ahead. The indicators showed strong increases in stock prices and new business formations.

Also, the index of leading -- of co-incident indicators, which measures the current economic strength, increased at .2 of a percent in August on top of a .1 percent increase in July.

The good news comes on the heels of a drop in the prime interest rate by most major banks. The lower rates -- interest rates -- should help insure continued economic growth in the months ahead, and bolster consumer interest in such items as housing and autos.

The combination of rising indicators and declining interest rates provide an excellent outlook for the future.

Also, on another good news note -- the trade deficit in August is turned in the right direction, at least for the month, by declining to \$9.9 billion.

Q To what --

MR. SPEAKES: To \$9.9 billion --

Q I may have to do a story on this --

MR. SPEAKES: Imports declined 16.7 percent. Also our exports declined 7.2 percent. The total trade deficit remains high, but should decline as world economic recovery continues.

Okay -- anything else?

Q Larry, who are the -- who's the U.S. representatives in on the Gromyko meeting?

MR. SPEAKES: I read them out here a little bit ago.

Q Oh, did you?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes. And we'll put out a list.

Q Has the President signed the veto to continuing resolution.

MR. SPEAKES: We'll have to wait and see what's on it. We're still working with the Republican leadership, particularly in the Senate as the Senate considers it over the weekend with the hopes that we can get a clean continuing resolution. But we will just have to wait and see how it ends up, because it's clearly a changing.

Q Do you know yet which co-sponsors are coming in today?

Q Continue what?

MR. SPEAKES: For these bills?

Q Yes.

MR. SPEAKES: Yes? A whole batch of them.

Q On the resolution, does the President oppose that Grove City amendment because he thinks that it ought not be attached to this resolution or does he oppose it on the principal of it?

MR. SPEAKES: Marlin, do you know anything about that?
I don't.

MR. FITZWATER: The Grove City amendment? You mean the Civil Rights bill?

Q Civil rights.

MR. FITZWATER: The position on the Civil Rights bill is the same as it has been, which is that we favor overturning the Grove City decisions. And that portion of the bill that does that. But we still have reservations about other portions of the bill, which we think expand the law in ways that aren't anticipated, or are undesirable.

Q Such as?

Q So as written, you oppose the amendment that they're going to have a vote on whether to attach it or not?

MR. FITZWATER: I would say part of it we endorse, part of it we don't. It's one of those kinds of --

Q But what particularly, do you think it -- where is the --

MR. FITZWATER: I don't have it here. If you'll come by later, I'll get you the --

MR. SPEAKES: See Kim, and she can give you all this stuff about --

Q Is there -- are there Senators -- any foreign policy --

MR. FITZWATER: There is extensive -- There's extensive Justice Department testimony that goes through every provision. It's -- and there are a lot of provisions. I mean, it's not a small bill.

MR. SPEAKES: All right. Anything else? Thank you.

Q Larry, one other question. How long is --

Q Thursday.

Q Yeah, we --

Q Week ahead --

Q How long is that signing, Larry?

Q A.G. -- After Gromyko. B.G. and A.G.

MR. SPEAKES: How long is what?

Q How long is the 3:00 P.M. signing?

MR. SPEAKES: Thirty minutes. But one after another.

Monday and Tuesday, of course, are travel to Michigan, Mississippi and Texas. Be back about midday on Wednesday. I don't have anything for -- for the Wednesday afternoon.

Q Sweet day.

MR. SPEAKES: And the President -- I really don't have anything for the rest of the week.

Q Is the President doing any debate preparations?

MR. SPEAKES: He will be doing some debate preparation but what else is on schedule really hasn't been --

Q Larry, -- Walter Mondale --

Q Any chance of a news conference, because he had talked about answering questions. Is he planning something?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't really have anything for you on a news conference.

Q He and Mondale --

Q Will he ever take student questions again?

Q Yes?

Q When?

Q 1985.

Q Does he anticipate going to Louisville on Saturday?

MR. SPEAKES: No, Sunday.

Q Sunday morning?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

Q Any travelling after that?

MR. SPEAKES: Travelling -- I can give you OFF THE RECORD -- I know that's going to be firm in Charlotte on Monday after the debate and back in here. There's no -- right now there's no second stop on Monday.

Q Charlotte, North Carolina?

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: Charlotte, North Carolina.

Q Is he spending the night?

Q Is that to see Jesse Helms?

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: I don't know what he's going to do in Charlotte.

Q Spend the night anywhere else?

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END

9:32 A.M. EDT
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