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*From - just got guidance
on Kraft + Safire from Seawright
and Hyland. I'll have it typed
since you're briefing at 12:05 pm MW.*

February 5, 1976

EARTHQUAKE IN GUATEMALA

A major earthquake struck Guatemala yesterday, the effects of which were felt in neighboring Honduras, El Salvador, and parts of Mexico. Casualty reports in the papers appear to be exaggerated according to official accounts from the area which indicate the death toll may be between 500 and 1500 with the injuries into the thousands.

Q. What are we doing to assist the Guatemalans, and what can you tell us about the safety of Americans there?

A. We have sent a disaster survey team from Panama to inspect the situation and to discuss with the Guatemalans how our assistance resources can best be utilized for their immediate needs. The Embassy in Guatemala (Amb. Francis Malloy) has authorized \$25,000 in cash for immediate relief needs. \$525,000 has been obligated from the Disaster Relief funds and supplies are already enroute to the area. We understand that the International Red Cross and the Catholic Relief Organization are gearing up to help and neighboring countries are providing assistance as well.

As for Americans, all official Americans are accounted for and we have no reports of injured U.S. citizens, although at this point, our information is not complete.

At this point casualty figures are sketchy. There is substantial property damage, injury and loss of life, but we cannot pin down any statistics as yet.

WHITE HOUSE ANNOUNCEMENT OF COSGRAVE VISIT

President Ford has invited Prime Minister Liam Cosgrave of Ireland to pay an official visit to the United States in connection with the United States Bicentennial. Prime Minister Cosgrave has accepted the President's invitation with pleasure and will meet with President for discussions on March 17, 1976 during the course of his visit. The two leaders look forward to marking the close ties of friendship between the American and Irish people and to reviewing a number of matters of current common interest.

* * * *

Q: Have Prime Minister Cosgrave and the President met?

A: No, they have not. This visit will provide them an opportunity to become acquainted.

Q: How long has Cosgrave been Prime Minister?

A: Since March, 1973.

Q: What is the purpose of this meeting?

A: The President attaches great importance to maintaining close and continuing consultations with all our friends in Western Europe. The Prime Minister's visit will be a part of that process. Also, as the announcement text indicates, the visit is in connection with our Bicentennial and will mark the contributions of Irish immigrants to the cultural heritage and growth of this country.

Q: Why is the Prime Minister visiting the United States at this time?

A: As the text of the announcement said, the visit is in connection with our Bicentennial year. March 17 -- St. Patrick's Day -- seemed an appropriate time and was convenient for both leaders.

Q: When was the last visit to the U.S. by an Irish Prime Minister?

A: In March 1971 when Prime Minister Lynch was here.

Q: Will the President and the Prime Minister be discussing specific problems?

A: I am sure that during their talks the Prime Minister and the President will discuss a broad range of issues of mutual interest.

Q: But there is no single issue which brings the two together?

A: No.

Q: Will they discuss Northern Ireland?

A: I really do not have an agenda for the meeting at this time.

Q: What is US policy on Northern Ireland?

A: Long-standing US Government policy is one of specifically avoiding direct involvement since we do not believe this would serve any useful or productive purpose. In our judgment, a solution to this centuries-old dispute can come about only through the efforts of the parties directly concerned.

Q: So, in other words, we are standing aside?

A: We are obviously very concerned about the tragic situation in Northern Ireland. As a people we have close ties of friendship and kinship with

all those involved -- Irish, British and the people of Ulster alike.

We therefore have offered and will continue to offer moral support and encouragement to all those of good will who are working to break the circle of violence and to build a peaceful, just society in that area.

Q: We hear about Americans contributing funds and guns to terrorists in Northern Ireland. What about that?

A: I don't think this is the time or forum to go into Northern Ireland, with all its complexities. Wherever there is evidence of illegal involvement in the affairs of Northern Ireland by persons in the United States, the US Government has enforced, and will continue to enforce, the laws against such involvement to the best of its ability.

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military 7-man

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February 16, 1976

PRESIDENT'S MEETING WITH DANIEL PARKER
FOR REPORT ON HIS TRIP TO GUATEMALA

The President is meeting this morning with Daniel Parker, the Special Coordinator for International Disaster Relief Assistance. As you may recall, we announced his trip last Wednesday. Mr. Parker departed early Thursday and returned Friday evening.

Among the conclusions contained in the Parker report are that the disaster affected primarily the rural poor because of the quality of housing. Loss of life is estimated at close to 22,000 with injuries far exceeding that figure. While some rebuilding has begun much work remains. The U. S. effort has been timely and effective. Other help is arriving from Central America but in many cases, the U. S. aid teams were the first to reach villages isolated by the quake.

For those of you who wish to see a copy of the Parker report, we will have one available after the briefing.