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THE WHITE HOUSE

PRESS CONFERENCE
OF

ARTHUR A. HARTMAN
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
AND

RON NESSEN
PRESS SECRETARY TO THE PRESIDENT

HOTEL PLAZA

6:05 P.M. (Madrid Time)

MR. NESSEN: First of all, let me say this: We do have a couple of routine housekeeping matters I will give you after Secretary Hartman has done his briefing.

Let me give you just some kind of idea of what the Secretary is going to be talking to you about.

As you know, there were three substantive meetings today. The first, with Generalissimo Franco, lasted from 1:30 to 2:01 at the Pardo.

The second set of meetings involved the President and Prime Minister Arias. They had two 15-minute rides together in the car, at which they carried on discussions.

They sat next to each other at lunch from 2:32 to 3:40, at which they talked to each other throughout lunch, and then they had a business session from 3:40 to 4:50.

The third meeting was between the President and Prince Juan Carlos. They were alone, with no advisers on either side from -- well, the meeting lasted from 5:00 to 5:40. The wives were in together for the first couple of minutes, and then the President and the Prince met for the remainder of the time.

Now, to give you the details of these meetings and to answer your questions, the Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, Arthur Hartman.

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Q Why did no one else sit in on the meeting with Prince --

MR. NESSEN: I am going to let you direct your questions to the Secretary.

MR. HARTMAN: Ron Nessen has given you the program at the first meeting with Generalissimo Franco. The President and General Franco had a discussion of the purposes of the President's trip to Europe and his meetings in Brussels at the NATO Council, and he discussed the state of U.S.-Spanish relations.

I think they both agreed that those relations were good in diplomatic, economic and in our military cooperation area.

They noted that the discussions on the military cooperation are continuing and that the delegations will meet again in the near future.

The President stressed the degree of cooperation that the United States wants to have with Spain and the fact that our relationships have been longstanding and that we look forward to the future development of those relationships.

After the meeting at the Palace, the President met with Prime Minister Arias and Foreign Minister Cortina, and there the discussions continued along the same lines.

They discussed both our bilateral relationships and the meetings that the President has just come from in Brussels.

The President emphasized the importance of the U.S.-Spanish defense relationship to the general defense relationships in Europe and the importance of continuing our relationships with Spain.

The meetings with Prime Minister Arias really began at the lunch, which was also attended by the Finance Minister, and there was some discussion about the meetings last week in Paris of the OECD and the International Energy Agency and the economic cooperation between the United States and Europe.

The meetings continued after lunch, and after a period of time with the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister, they were joined by the three Chiefs of Staff for a further discussion of the defense relationships.

Following that meeting, there was, as Ron said, the meeting with Prince Juan Carlos, which was just with the President and the Prince alone, at which I understand they reviewed general world problems and the same kind of discussion that had taken place earlier, but I have no details on that.

So, I will take your questions.

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Q Did they discuss the bases in any specific terms?

Q Question.

MR. HARTMAN: Did they discuss the bases in any specific terms.

They talked in general terms about our defense cooperation, reviewed its history and the workings of our agreements, and expressed their confidence that the negotiators would reach a satisfactory conclusion of the current negotiations.

Q Who is "they," the Spanish?

MR. HARTMAN: Both sides.

Q What is considered satisfactory?

MR. HARTMAN: I think reaching an agreement on continuation of our defense cooperation and the use of facilities here in Spain.

Q Art, do you have the date the negotiations are to resume and is the President confident that we will retain all the current bases?

MR. HARTMAN: The date, I believe -- and I am not absolutely certain of this -- is in mid-June in Washington, and I think it is too early to say whether or not the agreements are going to have exactly the same form and content that they have today.

The situation changes and I would believe that there would be adjustments. That is why we are having these talks, so I don't think I can say today they would be exactly the same.

Q Well, what will be different? What directives?

MR. HARTMAN: That was not discussed at the meetings today, and I think that is something that ought to be left to the negotiators.

Q In the discussion with the Joint Chiefs, could you amplify on that? I don't quite follow what the Joint Chiefs were talking about in the discussion. More specifically, was there a request from Spain for United States nuclear-capable missiles in Spain?

MR. HARTMAN: To answer the last part of your question, no, there was no such request. The Chiefs joined the meeting after it had been underway for some little time in order to hear something of the discussion of what had taken place in Brussels, the general tenor of the meetings that had gone on there.

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Q Was there any discussion of the bases themselves?

MR. HARTMAN: No, there was no specific discussion of the bases, themselves.

Q What specific discussion was there of economic and military assistance?

MR. HARTMAN: There was no specific discussion of economic and military assistance to Spain. The economic discussion at the luncheon was centered on the discussions that had taken place last week in the OECD on the importance of cooperation among the industrialized countries, both in terms of stimulating their economies and in terms of the necessity of finding ways to cooperate with the less developed countries.

Q Did the Spanish specifically request a security guarantee of any kind?

MR. HARTMAN: No, they did not.

Q Mr. Secretary, did the subject of Portugal come up, and what was said?

Q Question.

MR. HARTMAN: Did the subject of Portugal come up and what was said.

Portugal came up very briefly and as a matter of current interest to both countries, but I don't think I should discuss the details of it. There was a very brief reference to it.

Q Was it in line with what the President said publicly in Brussels about Portugal?

MR. HARTMAN: It was not in as much detail as that.

Q Mr. Secretary --

MR. NESSEN: Two more questions, please.

Q Was there any discussion of Spain's possible membership in NATO?

MR. HARTMAN: No, there was no discussion of Spain's possible membership in NATO.

Q We have several questions. Sir, we won't have a story.

Q Question.

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MR. HARTMAN: The question was, was there any discussion of Spain's membership in NATO?

No, there was not. It is my understanding that the Spanish have not requested such membership and there was no discussion of that specific point.

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Q Did the Spanish indicate there would be any restrictions on the U.S. use of those bases in the event of a Mideast airlift?

MR. HARTMAN: No, that matter did not come up.

Q As far as you know, they are to be used as we see fit during the course of the Mideast crisis?

MR. HARTMAN: Again, I would like to stick to the discussions today. There was no discussion of that point in the --

Q Where are we in the discussions? Are they midway or are they one-third or are they three-quarters?

MR. HARTMAN: Well, I think that the main body of the discussions was that at lunch and after lunch --

Q No, I don't mean that. I mean the state of the Spanish negotiations.

MR. HARTMAN: No, I think that they are beyond midpoint now. I think we are drawing toward a conclusion but I cannot give you a specific time when they can be completed.

Q Mr. Hartman, since the matter of Spain's relationship with NATO was an item for discussion in Brussels, I don't see quite why it was not discussed here.

MR. HARTMAN: No, the question was, did the question of Spain's membership in NATO come up, and it did not, but the relationship of the U.S.-Spanish cooperation to the defense of Europe did come up, and the President explained that he had in fact discussed this in Brussels and that we feel very strongly that our bilateral relationship is an important element in the defense of Europe.

Q Has there been a voice in public opinion polls here which purport to show that 48 percent of the people are engaged in having these bases removed?

MR. HARTMAN: I don't think it is appropriate for me to comment on the state of opinion here.

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Q Was there a request by the Spanish or any discussion on our part of U.S. upgrading its arms sales or arms deliveries?

MR. HARTMAN: No. The specifics of our assistance and our defense exports to Spain did not come up.

Q The possibility or the prospect of a Spanish Sahara--was that raised in the discussion?

MR. HARTMAN: No, that was not raised.

Q Did Spain express appreciation of the way the United States spoke up for Spain at the NATO meeting?

MR. HARTMAN: Yes. I think it is fair to say that they expressed appreciation for our having raised the question of our relationship and that they believed that this is important and that perhaps it has not received enough recognition in the past.

Q Mr. Hartman, are we -- the United States -- convinced that there are going to be and remain free American military bases in Spain as a result of the negotiations so far?

MR. HARTMAN: As I say, I would rather not comment on the details of what the outcome of these negotiations would be. That is really better left to the negotiators, who are really in midstream in their negotiation now.

Q I was not asking about the details. I was asking --

MR. HARTMAN: You are asking for my opinion, and I would rather leave that to any negotiator. I am not the negotiator.

Q Mr. Hartman, is Spain asking for a mutual defense treaty?

MR. HARTMAN: No, they are not.

Q Did the Spanish express any disappointment at the outcome of the discussion the President had in Brussels concerning the relationship of Spain in NATO?

MR. HARTMAN: No, I don't think that they did. I think that they have expressed their feeling that there ought to be greater recognition of the role that the U.S.-Spanish defense cooperation plays in the broader area of European defense.

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MR. NESSEN: Tom Brokaw.

Q Didn't you say that some of these chief issues such as bases, economic cooperation, military aid were really not discussed specifically? What, in the light of that then, or how, in the light of that, will you describe the purpose of this visit?

MR. HARTMAN: No, I think when I say specifics I mean that they did not get into amounts of assistance of the specifics of our negotiations on the bases. They talked about the general policy of having a close defense relationship with Spain and a close diplomatic and economic relationship with Spain, and the efforts that the President made in Brussels to also show in NATO the interest that we have in maintaining our commitments to NATO and our interests in continued cooperation with Europe more generally.

MR. NESSEN: Tom, and one more.

Q Let me try to straighten the thing out. You said that you will not forecast results of the negotiations, but you said earlier that --

MR. HARTMAN: I said that the two leaders expressed their confidence that there would be a successful conclusion to the negotiations.

Q A successful conclusion on the part of the President. I presume that you would maintain those three bases at the time.

MR. HARTMAN: The reason I don't want to comment on the details is that I don't want to get into what positions we have taken in these negotiations.

Q What is your definition of successful, Mr. Hartman?

MR. HARTMAN: The basis for your question is that we want to retain all facilities, and I don't want to get into the discussion of the details of what changes might take place in the course of these negotiations. There may be some.

Q You are leaving us with the distinct impression that we may not be uninterested in maintaining the facilities at all three bases.

MR. HARTMAN: No. What I am trying to say is that the situation from the time that some of the facilities were created has changed so there may be some alteration. Now, whether that means actually giving up anything or merely continuing it in a different form or with different purposes is something that I really want to leave to the negotiators to explain when they make more progress.

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Q If there is a change coming, on whose side is the change?

MR. HARTMAN: Again, I really want to leave that to the negotiators. That was not discussed in detail today, and I think the purpose of this briefing is --

Q Are there certain trends that will make a difference in a different kind of agreement that you can speak of?

MR. HARTMAN: The only trends that I want to mention here today are the facts that much has changed in the whole organization of defense since the beginning of our cooperation with Spain and, therefore, there may be some alteration in either the way we use facilities or in the content of the agreement itself.

MR. NESSEN: The last question over here.

Q Mr. Secretary, I wanted to ask you, are you aware of the rather critical tone of the Spanish press on the President's visit?

Q Question, please.

MR. HARTMAN: Am I aware of the rather critical comment in the Spanish press about the President's visit.

I had not been aware until you mentioned it.

Q Mr. Secretary, you mentioned there might be a change in arrangements on how the bases might be used. Were any of these potential changes made in connection with resupply in the Middle East?

MR. HARTMAN: No, look, I don't want to get into this. It was not a subject of these conversations.

MR. NESSEN: Thank you, Art.

Let me give you a couple of little nuts and bolts here. It won't take long.

Q Ron, can you also take some questions on this?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think so, Murray.

Q Other than the subject of Spain?

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MR. NESSEN: The press pool number 8, for those of you who are in press pool number 8, is leaving the hotel at 7:15 instead of 8 o'clock. This will go to the Moncloa Palace in order to cover the President to the U.S. Embassy staff, which will be gathered at the Moncloa Palace. So, press pool 8 leaves at 7:15 instead of 8 o'clock.

That same pool will stay there and will go with the President to the Royal Palace for the dinner that is being given for the President there.

We passed out the toasts for tonight. I think really you should consider those excerpts from the toasts, and we will pipe the toasts back here and there may be some differences in the final version of the toasts as opposed to the ones we have already handed out, so you will be able to listen to that here.

The baggage call -- you can leave your bags between either 10 and midnight, or between 5 and 6 in the morning. All the buses leave for the airport in the morning at 7:30.

That is all I really have. I don't expect to have anything after the dinner tonight. Possibly some color, so if you want to check the press room around midnight, you might be able to get just a little color from the dinner, but I don't anticipate anything else of substance today.

Q Will you attend the dinner, Ron?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Q Will you give us the menu, then?

Q Ron, your suggestion that these prepared texts or excerpts indicate the President might say something of substance that is not on those papers. Is that what you intend to do?

MR. NESSEN: No, I just intended to alert you to the fact that the as delivered toast may differ somewhat from the one that you have.

Q But it is not that he plans to make some special statement?

MR. NESSEN: As I say, there has been some editing and changing, and you will be able to hear it here.

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Q Will there be an as delivered distribution afterwards?

MR. NESSEN: Yes.

Let me say one other thing. I guess all of us think that the facilities are not exactly what we would have dreamed of if we could have planned it all for the best. I want you to know that you are not the only ones who are finding that things don't work exactly right, so we apologize and ask you to bear with us.

We are having many of the same problems you are.

Q You don't have hot water, either?

MR. NESSEN: No, I don't, as a matter of fact.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Ron.

END (AT 6:25 P.M. Madrid Time)