

AUGUST 1, 1975

POOL REPORT #17 - MEETING WITH SPANISH PRIME MINISTER

Prime Minister Arias arrived at the Embassy residence at 6:05 p.m. about ten minutes earlier than scheduled. He was met on the steps by Ford and Kissinger. The pool was then ushered inside the residence to a drawing room. As Ford showed the Prime Minister in he asked, "Are you flying back tonight?" Arias nodded and said, "And you?" Ford said, "No, I'm having a meeting tomorrow with Brezhnev and then we go to Romania at noon, Yugoslavia the next day and then back." He added, "Of course I remember with great pleasure my visit to your country," and Arias replied through his interpreter, "Our doors are always open."

There was a considerable amount of discussion about the amount of time it takes to fly from Madrid and Bucharest -- which Ford mistakenly called Budapest before catching himself -- to Helsinki.

Ford, Arias and the two Foreign Ministers came out the door at 6:55 p.m.; the session lasted 20 minutes longer than scheduled. One pooler thought he heard Ford ask Arias to extend his regards to "the Generalissimo" but we cannot be certain of that. Then the Spanish delegation drove off as Ford leaned over and waved to his counterpart.

Then State Department Counsellor Sonnenfeldt came over to the press for a sixty-second readout. He said the talk was a review of that status of U.S. military bases in Spain and added that the next round of base negotiations will begin August 18. "So there was a thorough review... in a positive spirit." Both governments will continue to prepare for the next round; he added that today's session was strictly for review and clarification and that he did not want to get into substantive matters with the pool.

Then Kissinger wandered over to banter with the press for a moment. He jokingly -- repeat jokingly told reporters, "They agreed to an interim agreement -- we don't care who makes an interim agreement anymore." We repeat that Kissinger was joking on this point.

Before the Prime Minister arrived, Ford engaged in some small talk with the pool and Kissinger including some discussion of nautical terminology in the context of his upcoming visit to the Icebreaker.

John Cochran - NBC

Ed Hodges - Durham Morning Herald

Tom DeFrank - Newsweek