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THE WHITE HOUSE

QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION  
WITH THE PRESIDENT  
AT  
KELLY AIR FORCE BASE

11:02 A.M. CST

QUESTION: Mr. President, what about the 1,200 civilians employed at Kelly that were laid off in the manpower cuts, and what specifically will you do for them, and what assurances do the people of San Antonio have that there will not be further cutbacks in the closing of Kelly?

THE PRESIDENT: First, I think we have to have a little history of what precipitated the closing here of Kelly and the loss of these civilian jobs.

Congress, in the 1975 fiscal year's budget for the Defense Department, imposed a 26,000 cut in civilian employment across the military installations, so this cut here at Kelly came as a result of Congressional action, which I, as President, didn't ask for but the law was passed and it was imposed on them.

Now, it will unfortunately have to be carried out as dictated by Congress. The Department of Defense, working through the Air Force, will make a maximum effort to try to find jobs either in the military or civilian community.

The word I have is they will make a maximum effort, and they are optimistic employment will be found.

And your second question, there are no actions being initiated involving any of the other military installations, of which there are many in this county, for cutbacks in the recent announcements by the Army, the Navy and the Air Force.

I quickly add that whatever has been recommended, not here, for the future, are only environmental impact statements, economic impact statements and probably it will be six to nine months before any final decision will be made on any of the others, except the one here which was imposed by the Congress.

QUESTION: Mr. President, do you have any statement regarding the annexation of San Antonio? We have been told that the Justice Department has ruled that we may have to give those territories back.

MORE

THE PRESIDENT: I understand that the members of the Texas delegation met with the Mayor of San Antonio and with the Assistant Attorney General, Mr. Pottinger, yesterday in Washington, D. C.

The matter was discussed in great detail, and it is hopeful that the resolution of the problem can be worked out. I am optimistic, but I don't think there is any specific comment I can make at this time. They are working on it.

QUESTION: Mr. President, has agreement been reached between the United States and the Soviet Union for on-site inspection of each other's nuclear weapons systems?

THE PRESIDENT: Under the Peaceful Nuclear Prospective Treaty, there are some very far reaching new steps that will be taken to insure that there are no violations. One of them does involve, under certain circumstances, on-site inspection.

QUESTION: Mr. Ford, are you giving up on trying to get Connally's endorsement, or have you two reached an agreement?

THE PRESIDENT: John Connally is a very good friend of mine. I don't ask people to support me. I want them to do it on their own, and I just think any comment on this situation ought to come from former Governor Connally.

Thank you very, very much. It is nice to see you.

END

(AT 11:07 A.M. CST)