

# FOIA MARKER

This is not a textual record. This is used as an administrative marker by the Clinton Presidential Library Staff.

**Folder Title:**

President's Trip to Camp David, Maryland for the Camp David Summit on the Middle East Peace Process (July 11-19, 2000) [3]

**Staff Office-Individual:**

Press-Crowley, Philip J. (PJ)

**Original OA/ID Number:**

3666

| Row: | Section: | Shelf: | Position: | Stack: |
|------|----------|--------|-----------|--------|
| 42   | 5        | 10     | 3         | V      |

**THE WHITE HOUSE**

**Office of the Press Secretary  
(Camp David, Maryland)**

---

**For Immediate Release**

**July 19, 2000**

**STATEMENT BY THE PRESS SECRETARY**

The President regrets he will have to delay his trip to Japan for one day. The President will now leave Thursday morning and will arrive in Japan for the opening of the G8 Summit on Friday. The President believes this is in the best interest of the Middle East Peace Process.

30-30-30

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary  
(Camp David, Maryland)

For Immediate Release

July 19, 2000

PRESS BRIEFING BY  
JOE LOCKHART

Thurmont Elementary School  
Thurmont, Maryland

11:10 A.M. EDT

MR. LOCKHART: Let me, as has become my custom, give you a brief rundown of what's transpired since the last time I think you talked to PJ late last night. The President last night had -- I think this was some time after about 10:00 p.m. -- had a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister Barak, and then a -- which was over at the Prime Minister's cabin. And then the President hosted Chairman Arafat back at his cabin, the President's cabin.

The President came back, met with the team for a while, and finished up, I think it was a little bit after 1:00 a.m. I know that there were various negotiators who stayed up and continued work -- work continued within I think all three of the delegations until very early this morning.

The President started this morning at 9:00 a.m. with a meeting with his team, and a short time ago he began a bilateral meeting with Chairman Arafat.

Questions.

Q Before the summit began, the President, Secretary Albright, Sandy Berger were all saying that what both sides had to understand in this process was that neither of them were going to get 100 percent of all their demands. At this late hour, now, do they understand that, or are you still trying to convince them that they have to understand it?

MR. LOCKHART: It's certainly a point that we have made over and over in public and in private, and I think ultimately, only time will tell the full comprehension of both sides on that concept.



Q Does that mean the answer is no, they don't understand?

MR. LOCKHART: The answer to that is only time will tell, and it's open question.

Q -- so far today, was the President's decision to extend productive? Was it worth it?

MR. LOCKHART: Well, I think the fact that he's sitting in a bilateral with Chairman Arafat as we speak indicates that we think it's worth it.

Q Joe, tell us a little bit about how he made the decision. Did he tell Chairman Arafat and Prime Minister Barak in those final bilats last night that he was doing it, or did he make the decision afterwards? And did they agree to some specific agenda as prerequisite for extending the deadline?

MR. LOCKHART: The formal communication happened through the negotiators, rather than in the leaders' meeting. I can't be certain of that because I didn't query the President about whether he raised it. The final decision to go ahead and put this off and stay another day wasn't made formally until after the two bilaterals were done. And then shortly thereafter we put out some paper here.

Q -- whether or not there was some sort of an agenda that could be worked on today, as prerequisite for extending the talks?

MR. LOCKHART: Well, I think certainly we wouldn't stay if we didn't think there was some chance of having a productive day. Whether the day turns out to be productive, again, we'll know at the end of the day.

Q -- whether there was a set list of things that were going to be --

MR. LOCKHART: I wouldn't point to a set list of things. I think the parties know what they need to do. And we felt that staying an extra day gave us a greater chance to get where we need the go.

Q Joe, can you confirm that the President has received a letter from the Orthodox and the Armenian community leaders in Jerusalem to take part in any future -- in any talks concerning the future of Jerusalem?

MR. LOCKHART: I'm not aware that a letter has been received. I'll check that.

Q Joe, we have seen the departure of one member of the Palestinian delegation for his son's wedding, he needed to go



back. But is there further deterioration of the delegations, are other people departing? And the ongoing --

MR. LOCKHART: No -- well, let me deal with that in two parts. One is, I think we've been providing running commentary on the fact that Abu Mazen's son is getting married tomorrow. I think he delayed returning as long as he could, but he did need to return this morning. The good news in all of this is because I've made an international event out of his son's wedding, I did receive an invitation. (Laughter.) The bad news is I'll be in Japan during the time of the -- or on the way to Japan -- during the time of the wedding.

On all the other reports, for those of you who have been through this kind of event before, there's a lot of stuff that flies around the air that's not worth a whole lot, but fills some column inches, and makes some people happy, and bumps you up in wherever you are in the news report, but just has no reflection of what's going on. What is going is these discussions are continuing; that's why we're here. And the President will work hard to do the best he can this day, and will travel to Japan tomorrow.

Q Joe, let me just follow up on that, because there have been some talk that if the leaders return to the region, they're going to be subject to too much political pressure back home, there will be too many leaks, and it will make it very difficult to resume the negotiations or schedule another round of talks. Do you feel confident that enough progress has been made that if either leader were to return to the Middle East, that you think that the progress that has been made thus far could be continued?

MR. LOCKHART: Well, I think without getting -- I'm not going to discuss the substance of the talks, which handicaps my ability to answer that question. But let me take that and a lot of questions off the table right now by saying that the discussions continue; there will be plenty of time for analysis of those discussions when they're complete, and I'll leave it until then.

Q Joe, has there been a paper statement released by Barak office? There have been reports to that effect? Is the White House aware of any genuine document coming out of Barak's office today regarding his leaving or any other subject?

MR. LOCKHART: The White House has not been informed of anyone planning to leave.

Q That's not what I asked --

MR. LOCKHART: Let me finish my answer if you don't mind. The White House has not been informed of anyone willing to leave. We have, because a number of --

Q Planning --

MR. LOCKHART: Planning to leave -- sorry. But because there were a number of calls based on some interesting reporting out of the region, we checked with the spokesman for Prime Minister Barak, who assured us there was neither a written, nor an oral official statement issued from Jerusalem this morning.

Q The Israeli press just announced that we were leaving this afternoon.

Q Yes, they told us to pack, because we are leaving tonight at 8:00 p.m.

MR. LOCKHART: Let me -- I've been doing this a long time. And I understand, and I've done it in a variety of roles. And when the President says he's leaving at the end of the day and you're at a meeting with the President and you have to check out of your hotel, it's probably a good piece of advice that you make sure that your bags are packed. But I wouldn't read what has been read into this by many of you.

Q What do you make out of this, that the President could delay his departure to attend the meeting in Okinawa, and Abu Mazen could not delay the wedding of his son?

MR. LOCKHART: I think both people made the right decision.

Q Can you rule out any possibility of cancelling the trip? Do you rule out any possibility of cancelling the trip?

MR. LOCKHART: I think sometime in the late hours of -- or the early hours of tomorrow, we will be on a plane to Japan.

Q Joe, do you know if Chairman Arafat has made any phone calls to President Mubarak, to the Saudi leadership or anyone else?

MR. LOCKHART: None that I'm aware of.

Q Joe, has the President entertained the idea that while he will be going to Japan, the parties will continue with Mrs. Albright and wait until he gets back?

MR. LOCKHART: I don't know that that issue has been formally discussed. It's been widely speculated in the papers, so anyone who reads the newspaper knows that people on the outside have raised the possibility, but nobody said to me that we've made any kind of request or discussed the ability of that to happen.



Q Joe, what did the President sense in the bilats last night led him to believe that another 24 hours might be able to get him what he didn't think he could get by 9:00 a.m. this morning?

MR. LOCKHART: I think the President made a judgment that the issues here are important enough and the stakes are high enough that spending an extra day -- and it was a difficult decision, because he had an important day planned in Tokyo for tomorrow, and he regrets having to cancel that -- but he made the judgment that he would take the extra day to see what additional work could be done.

Q But did he get a sense that they were willing to compromise? Did he get any sense that there was something that could be -- was he reading any kind of signals from the leaders that led him to believe that he was close enough that delaying by a day --

MR. LOCKHART: I think it would be impossible for me to give a fuller answer to that without getting into the substance of the discussions.

Q Joe, as you know, the President is scheduled Friday morning to address some commemorative services for Japanese and Americans who were killed in World War II on Okinawa. Can you tell us how important that ceremony is to the President?

MR. LOCKHART: I think it's a very important part of the trip. In addition to the G-8 responsibilities, it's a chance to speak to the people of Okinawa. So the President is very much looking forward to doing that event.

Q The Israelis are claiming right now that -- Arafat isn't willing to any compromise at all.

MR. LOCKHART: Well, I think that those who are in the talks aren't talking. Those who are outside the talks may or may not know what they're talking about.

Q The Japanese made their displeasure at the President's decision not to send Secretary Albright to Japan for the foreign ministers meeting of the G-8. What has been the reaction from the Japanese --

MR. LOCKHART: Well, I'll let the Japanese foreign ministry and the Prime Minister speak for themselves. But I think those who are involved in international affairs in a way like the Japanese are, as a leader in the world, understand the responsibilities that international leaders take upon themselves and the difficult decisions that sometimes have to be made.



Q Joe, when were the Japanese informed of this decision?

MR. LOCKHART: I think a couple of hours before we formally decided what we were doing, they were given a heads-up, the foreign ministry, that we were heading in this direction.

Q Joe, you took a question from me three days ago -- if the United Nations resolutions such as 242 and 338 and 194, constitute the cornerstone of your foreign policy in the Middle East. Can you answer me now?

MR. LOCKHART: The answer is, what we said is the basis of reaching a peace agreement hasn't changed over the times of these talks.

Q Joe, most of these reports that you object to seem to be in one category, suggestion of brinkmanship, even a suggestion of game-playing. I think you used "good faith" to describe the talks a few days ago. Would you still say that in these last hours, the parties are operating in good faith and not -- well, not engaging in a little game-playing?

MR. LOCKHART: Listen, if you stack up the news clips as we've gone through this process, I think with each and every day there's probably more reporting on people who are trying to provide some inside analysis of what's going on. But I think, ultimately, the test that I've put to this thing is, are the talks going on on the basis of the issues in front of them, or are they spending a lot of time arguing over what's in the paper in the morning. And these last nine or 10 days have been remarkably free of the latter.

Q But, Joe, you don't consider this latest story of statements in the region violate the news blackout in any fashion?

MR. LOCKHART: Well, I have yet to see somebody who's involved in the talks quoted in any of these stories, so unless -- I heard that, Barry. I heard that. (Laughter.)

Q I want to make sure they did. (Laughter.)

MR. LOCKHART: Okay, that's good. You know, the mike is over here, you might just --

Q Joe, are you ruling out a 48-hour delay in the President's departure?

MR. LOCKHART: I am not going to get into a speculative discussion of the President's schedule, only that we'll leave for Japan sometime after midnight tonight.

Q Have the delegations here -- there are some delegations who are saying that they have been told that they could expect a 48-hour delay. Is that's more erroneous recording?

MR. LOCKHART: That would be erroneous reporting and information.

Q Joe, can you tell us, totally based on what happens, whether you would leave from here, or whether you would go back to Washington first?

MR. LOCKHART: I think it's based on what happens at Camp, and that is a logistical question. We're certainly capable of taking a stop between here and Dulles, or going directly.

Q Do you think the issues that are being dealing here are important enough to have another extra day for the President here, or maybe cancelling all the trip to Japan?

MR. LOCKHART: Well, I think at this point I don't believe it's a question of providing unlimited time as finding a way to a solution to these issues. They're well-known. The parties' positions are well-known to each other. It's a question of whether the parties are going to be willing to step up and take the difficult decisions for peace. And as far as prognosticating on whether that will happen, I'm unable to do that.

Q -- the Secretary Summers is going to be in Tokyo, and he would replace President --

MR. LOCKHART: Yes, Secretary Summers left early this morning, and will participate in a series of events in Tokyo in place of the President. The bilateral meeting that the President had scheduled with Prime Minister Mori, however, I expect to be rescheduled.

Q You speak about the summit, and we see that there is no summit between the three leaders. We can't understand why did the President try and --

MR. LOCKHART: Well, again, the meetings are still unfolding. They're going in a way that we believe offers the best chance for reaching an agreement. And once it's all done we'll have some time for analysis.

Q You kept saying over these extraordinary -- the President wants to seal the deal before he goes to Japan. And you are saying he is still going to Japan. If he wants a deal before he goes Japan, is there any scheduling in that if there is a deal there would be a signing ceremony?



MR. LOCKHART: Listen, I think that's probably one of the -- you can put in the categories of the easy ones. It's pretty easy to get that put together and I don't think anyone is worrying too much about that.

Q Would it be accurate to say that a sensitive agreement has been reached and just to paint a good picture for each party, and then details to be followed later in upcoming summit?

MR. LOCKHART: That wouldn't be accurate to say.

Q Can you characterize the mood now? You suggested that they've increased the pace and intensity, so they must be getting to a fever pitch up there.

MR. LOCKHART: We've been searching -- I've been searching for an adjective -- that's not a bad one, fever pitch.

Q Joe, is it absolutely hard and fast, cannot be changed, that by this time tomorrow you'll be on your way to Japan?

MR. LOCKHART: The President's schedule is the schedule; I expect we'll be on that plane.

Q But the President's schedule was the schedule a couple days ago and you didn't even --

MR. LOCKHART: Duly noted. (Laughter.)

Q So you're saying that it's up in the air?

MR. LOCKHART: No, I'm not. I'm saying that we made a decision to postpone by 24 hours. We've done that. But as I speak to you here, right now, we plan to get on a plane later on tonight and go to Japan.

Q Joe, can I go back to a domestic question that I asked you yesterday? Is it safe to assume that since I asked you, the President has not make any further decision about his role as the honorary --

MR. LOCKHART: That is safe to assume. It's an important role, but it has been pushed aside by bigger issues.

Q You seem in your answers to a couple questions, you seem to be saying -- you say that the question is whether the parties are willing to make, to step up and make the difficult decisions for peace. And in the answer to my first question you said it was an open question. So is there any sign from either side that they're willing to compromise on any of the issues?

MR. LOCKHART: Again, I can't answer that question without getting into the substance of the talks, so I'll leave it until I'm in a position to answer it.

Q But your answers imply that, no, they're not.

MR. LOCKHART: My answers were not meant to imply.

Q When you say later tonight, do you mean tomorrow morning? You said, later tonight -- do you mean tomorrow morning?

MR. LOCKHART: Well, later tonight, it's going to be sometime before the sun comes up tomorrow. We'll still working out the logistics of how the events will work and then what time we need to leave.

Q Joe -- with weather like this tomorrow, will it be like noon tomorrow?

MR. LOCKHART: No, no, no.

Q (Inaudible.)

MR. LOCKHART: I don't really think so. No, I plan to be back here at 5:00 p.m. unless something changes. If something changes, we'll let you know.

Q You said that you're not willing to give them unlimited time to reach an agreement, but you've given them an extra 24 hours now. What indication was there that the 24 hours would bare any sort of fruit?

MR. LOCKHART: It's a judgment that the President made that it was useful and in the interest of the peace process to do that. But it's not an open-ended commitment.

Q Are you considering the summit to be a success if there's even a partial agreement of some of the areas already agreed to, and then leave --

MR. LOCKHART: I'm not going to get into speculating about how we'll comment on it afterwards.

Q According to the schedule, the President is going to give a huge speech in Okinawa at 10:00 a.m. Friday morning. It means he shall leave for Japan before 8:00 a.m. Eastern time tomorrow morning. So do you think --

MR. LOCKHART: Well, that's after the sun comes up, so I think I'm pretty much in the right ball park here. (Laughter.)

Q If I could ask you a non-summit question.



MR. LOCKHART: Please. Step right up. (Laughter.)

Q Do you have any reaction to an -- agency report quoting President Clinton saying that Kim Jong-Il has said he's willing to give up his missiles in return for cooperation on space technology?

MR. LOCKHART: I haven't seen that report. Obviously, we've done a lot of work on that front, on the North Korean missile program. Let me get a chance to look at that before I comment any further, though.

Q Can you say that the two leaders, Mr. Arafat and Mr. Barak, did everything and doing everything to achieve a peace?

MR. LOCKHART: Again, I think that is a better question to be put once these talks are concluded and we're in the analysis phase.

Q Did the President at any time since your last meeting phone any leaders or talk to Mubarak or anybody?

MR. LOCKHART: Let me, just in the interest of being forthcoming, the President has made a call in the last couple of days to Sheik Zayid of the UAE, who is in the United States for medical treatment, and he called him to wish him well and wish him recovery. But they did not have a discussion about the Middle East peace process.

Q When was it?

MR. LOCKHART: I think that was two days ago. Yesterday, sorry.

Q Did he make any call to President Mubarak or another president in the Middle East?

MR. LOCKHART: No, no. Thank you.

END

11:30 A.M. EDT

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary  
(Camp David, Maryland)

---

For Immediate Release

July 19, 2000

PRESS BRIEFING BY  
JOE LOCKHART

Thurmont Elementary School  
Thurmont, Maryland

5:42 P.M. EDT

MR. LOCKHART: Good afternoon. Welcome back.

As is my custom, let me give you a brief rundown of what's gone on since I was last standing up here a few hours ago. As I think I indicated earlier today, I expected the President to begin a bilateral with Chairman Arafat. That did happen. He then proceeded to have a meeting with Prime Minister Barak, which was followed by a meeting within the team that lasted for some time. He had a discussion on the telephone with Prime Minister Barak and about 15 minutes ago he walked over to Chairman Arafat's cabin and began a one-on-one meeting with the Chairman.

In addition to the meetings, the President has made a series of phone calls this afternoon to leaders in the Middle East, in the region, to give them some sense of where we are in this process. And that is as it stands as I speak right now.

Let me say, as a general point, the last 24 hours have involved very intensive discussions at the leader level, at the negotiator level between the teams, discussions within the teams. We have worked very hard to find a path to an agreement. At this point in time, we have not reached that. But priority for the President right now is to continue to work as hard as he can to make sure that every possible avenue toward an agreement is explored. That is the work that is going on now and will continue until he makes the judgment that there is no way to get there. And when we reach that point, we will let you know about our plans on leaving to go to Japan.



Q Joe, will he offer to cancel the trip to Japan if he thinks that either side believed that would help?

MR. LOCKHART: I think the President has made clear that he has a commitment to go to participate in the G-8 meetings and that involves leaving sometime before early morning tomorrow and I haven't heard any real discussion of trying to postpone that.

Q -- how the differences can be bridged before the clock runs out?

MR. LOCKHART: I think that is the reason the President is still there, that is the reason the President is going the extra mile with the parties. The parties are still there going the extra mile. I can't predict that that will happen, but that's why all three sides are still there working on it.

Q There were reports that Barak was already ready to leave Camp David and in fact had practically left Camp David. Are you saying that's not true?

MR. LOCKHART: Those reports are erroneous.

Q Who did he call in the Middle East?

MR. LOCKHART: I don't want to get into who the leaders are but I can tell you that he made four or five calls to leaders in the Middle East.

Q Back to your comment, to the letter that Mr. Barak sent to President Clinton, talking about the failure of these talks -

MR. LOCKHART: Well, I think -

Q -- Palestinians saying that they are not willing to discuss the issues in good faith. That was their exact quote.

MR. LOCKHART: I am not going to stand here and make any judgments while the negotiations are continuing. So I will not offer any further analysis.

Q Your judgments aside, what about the letter from Barak and his judgments in there? Can you -

MR. LOCKHART: He is free to communicate with the President, but I will tell you a much more important piece of information that I think moots that at this point, which is they are all still there, they are all still talking.

Q Joe, during Wye the President called on King Hussein to come in at a moment precisely like this. Did he ask these Mid East leaders to inveigh upon Barak and Arafat here in any way?

MR. LOCKHART: I am not going to really - I don't want to get into the substance of those discussions, only to say that he gave them some sense of where we are in this process and discussed the need for support among leaders like them in order for the parties to make the tough decisions that face them.

Q Do you know, Joe, whether there were any conversations between Barak and Arafat and these leaders that Clinton spoke with?

MR. LOCKHART: I am not certain of that.

Q Joe, it sounds fairly pessimistic when you say, "trying to explore every possible avenue" before giving up on the talks. Would you describe it right now as an atmosphere of pessimism within Camp David or of optimism? How would you describe it?

MR. LOCKHART: I think the best way to describe it is, very difficult. And I think they understand the time pressures that face them, they understand how difficult these issues are, they have been going at this now nonstop for nine days in this session, much longer in other sessions. So I think we've obviously reached a pivotal moment in these talks and I can't predict how they'll come out and I don't know that people are sitting around, you know, spending too much time worrying about whether they're optimistic or pessimistic.

Q -- trying to right now reach a joint statement - to have a joint statement or an agreement?

MR. LOCKHART: Say again?

Q Are they working now to have a joint statement or to reach an agreement?



MR. LOCKHART: They are working right now to try to reach an agreement.

Q Joe, did the President receive a letter from President Arafat today?

MR. LOCKHART: I think the President late last night or early this morning received a written communication from Chairman Arafat.

Q How late are they prepared to carry on talking tonight, Joe?

MR. LOCKHART: Well, I think - let me just say this. I don't think that anyone sees any value in staying on forever. But I don't think there is anyone, any one of the leaders, whether it be Chairman Arafat, Prime Minister Barak or President Clinton, who want to leave here without an agreement. And they want to make sure - and that's what the President's focus is right now - make sure that they've done everything that they could in order to reach that agreement.

Q Should we expect a statement from President Clinton later in the evening, once he's reached a decision about when to go? And has Prime Minister Barak agreed formally to stay until he makes that decision, until Clinton makes a decision?

MR. LOCKHART: Well, I think the leaders will all be here until the talks are over. And I expect the President will have something to say before he goes to Japan.

Q When do you expect that will be?

MR. LOCKHART: What time do I expect that will be? It will be sometime early in the morning tomorrow.

Q You said until now there is no agreement. Does that cover all issues or just -

MR. LOCKHART: Any agreement would encompass, you know, the issues we're talking about. I am not going to go in - if the purpose of the question is to try to cull out certain issues that they've agreed on and certain issues that they haven't agreed on, I'm going to take a pass on that.

Q Joe, since they clearly haven't resolved - since they clearly won't end up with a completed, totally resolved situation tonight, has there been any talk of another summit, another gathering sometime before September 15?

MR. LOCKHART: I don't know between the parties if they've had any discussions. I think, for our part, we've certainly made it clear that this is the summit.

Q Is there any chance of having a partial agreement? I'm sure they agree on some points?

MR. LOCKHART: Listen, there is no way for me to speculate on that at this point.

Q At what point does the President say, it's over, it's done?

MR. LOCKHART: I think when the President is satisfied that he has done everything he could, he's explored every possible avenue and he makes the judgment that further talk is not valuable or constructive.

Q Do you expect that the President will make his statement alone or with the other leaders before he leaves?

MR. LOCKHART: I have no expectation at this point. I'll let you know when it's decided.

Q Has there been any contact between Chairman Arafat and Prime Minister Barak directly?

MR. LOCKHART: Not that I'm aware of.

Q Is their deadline for the talks tonight like for midnight? If they don't reach an agreement, the President will go?

MR. LOCKHART: Well, I think there is a deadline only in the sense that it does take some time to get from here to Okinawa.

Q Joe - listening to reports that the talks are on the verge of collapsing. Do you have anything just to change that or say something, that it's not true, deny it?



MR. LOCKHART: I think I said earlier that we've reached a pivotal moment here in these talks and that everyone is working very hard to see if there's some way to get from where we are now to an agreement. Whether that happens or not, we'll find out when they're done.

Q Joe, why does the President think that the G-8 meeting in Okinawa is more important than achieving peace in the Middle East? Why -

MR. LOCKHART: I don't think the President makes judgments like that, nor do other world leaders. There comes a time when you have to put some time limit on your discussions. You can't continue to discuss things in a completely open-ended way.

I think it was clear to the parties when we got here that the President had important commitments at the G-8 talks in Okinawa. The President made the decision last night to extend by one day and cancel his schedule in Tokyo which he regrets and has passed that on to the Prime Minister of Japan. But to get back to your question, it's not a question of trying to put one over the other. There comes a point in time when you have to get on with the other business that's before you.

Q Joe, is the President's statement likely to come here or at the White House?

MR. LOCKHART: My best guess at this point is the White House. If that changes, we'll let you know.

Q How did Chairman Arafat respond to Barak's letter, Joe? He must have heard about it.

MR. LOCKHART: I don't think he communicated anything to the American delegation on that subject.

Q Can we assume that you'll let us know in fairly close to real time if any of the delegations leave Camp David when the thing's all over, when you reach the point it's over?

MR. LOCKHART: Yes.

Q Joe, is there a sense from the leaders that if they had more time, they might be able to break the impasse? I mean, is the pivotal moment because the President has to leave or do they feel that if they had more time, they might -

MR. LOCKHART: That involves a judgment I'm not sure I can make. But I'm not certain, given the familiarity they have with the issues, the amount of time they've had, that more time is the answer here.

Q Is the President planning on spending the night at Camp David or at the White House?

MR. LOCKHART: Well, I think we're really going to spend the night on a 747. It's just a question of what time we get to it.

Q Joe, if giving them more time is not the answer, what is the solution?

MR. LOCKHART: Well, that's what they're working very hard right now trying to find out.

Q Joe, without delving into the substance of these written communications that the President received from Arafat and Barak - also if you could tell us which came in first - would you characterize them as similar in nature, these written communications, and purpose? Why is there a need for Arafat to send a letter at all?

MR. LOCKHART: I think they were different in nature, purpose and substance. But I'm not going to describe that difference.

Q How about did they have any effect on the proceedings up there? Did they make things more tense?

MR. LOCKHART: I'm not sure that they had a real impact on the discussions.

Q Which one came first?

MR. LOCKHART: I think there was a communication from Chairman Arafat first. But they are very different communications. There is no way to compare them except they both put pen to paper.

Q Joe, would you describe the parties as most of the way there with just a small number of critical disagreements or are the disagreements really across the board?



MR. LOCKHART: I wouldn't venture a guess there.

Q Why did he send him a letter? It seems like everything is, you know, very much on the phone, very much in person, at each other's cabins. Why would he send him a written communication?

MR. LOCKHART: That's a question you can ask the parties when they're done.

Q Is he going to write them letters back to tell them an answer -

MR. LOCKHART: I'll ask.

Q How were they delivered.

Q Without naming the leaders that he's talked with

MR. LOCKHART: FedEx. (Laughter.)

Q Without naming them, how many leaders has he talked to, the President, in the region?

MR. LOCKHART: I believe four. I believe four.

Q Joe, on the question of phone calls, not only are there leaders in the Middle East interested in these talks, but there are leaders here and you've talked about members of Congress. Given all the events of today, has the President called anyone or the White House staff or the State Department staff called anyone in the United States who may have influence with either Arafat or Barak and asked them to bring some of that influence to bear?

MR. LOCKHART: Not that I'm aware of. I know there are a lot of interested parties in this country who have contacts at a variety of levels in our government. But I'm not aware - if they have been talking to people in the delegation, I just don't know about it.

Q Quickly, was there any trilateral meeting today?

MR. LOCKHART: No.

Q Right. Next question: Did any leader phone in to Clinton rather than Clinton phoning out, and could you name those leaders?

MR. LOCKHART: No. No leaders, so therefore I can't name them.

Q Can you confirm that there has been a US proposal on the table for the last 24 hours?

MR. LOCKHART: That goes to the substance of the discussion, so I can't confirm that.

Q Do you think the President will be able to bring them together tonight?

MR. LOCKHART: I can't - I can't speculate or offer prediction on that. It's certainly the President's hope that he can.

Q Joe, are they going to be continuing negotiating right through tomorrow morning?

MR. LOCKHART: They are going to continue negotiating until they are not negotiating anymore.

Q And what can we expect here from you or whoever else?

MR. LOCKHART: Well, obviously, we'll keep the office here staffed. To the extent that I have some news that I can transmit, you know, on the telephone to them, we'll get it out as far as any change in the status of the talks. And then I expect that there will be a variety of things to cover.

Q I mean, does that mean the pool will stay on all night?

MR. LOCKHART: Yes. I mean, at least until we go and get on the plane.

Q Are the two leaders refusing to meet with each other?

MR. LOCKHART: No.



Q Joe, since the White House has been discouraging the two leaders from saying anything that might damage the chance for an agreement, should the talks break up and they may try and regroup at some later date, is the White House copacetic with Barak having a press conference before he leaves this area and Arafat maybe doing the same thing?

MR. LOCKHART: I'm certain that the leaders, to the extent that there is something to say tonight one way or the other, the leaders including the President will want to say something.

Q Joe, outside the negotiations themselves, no substance of the negotiations, has the President been - has the President received any threat, implied or explicit from either party to leave the negotiations at any time in the nine, ten days we've been here? Has anyone ever threatened to leave?

MR. LOCKHART: Not what I would describe as something that was taken - that was real, no. (Laughter.) Did any leader or negotiator at some point in nine days of discussion say, if I don't get this point we're going to leave, I would be crazy to say that that didn't possibly happen and wasn't reported to me. But I think they've been at this, they've been working hard and we'll just have to wait and see what happens.

Q Would President Clinton's legacy be hurt if no agreement is reached?

MR. LOCKHART: Let me say that there is probably no subject that is further from his mind right now than that, the one that gets speculated a lot by analysts and pundits. The President has spent the last nine days here because he's committed to finding a lasting peace between the Palestinians and Israel and he will continue to work at that. That is why he's spending this extra time when he was supposed to be in Tokyo. That is why he is going and taking it every step imaginable to try to bring the parties together. And I think there will be time for others to speculate on that issue. It's not something -

Q Are you worried that you might have raised expectations too high and that any failure might be extremely counterproductive?

MR. LOCKHART: No, I think if you look at the comments that were made in advance of this summit, you'll find that that's a charge that we will be completely acquitted of.

Q As you know, the reports today, all day, from both sides have been universally grim. Not surprising at this juncture.

Would you say it's fair to say the President is now trying to rescue these talks or is he trying to consolidate progress that has been made?

MR. LOCKHART: I am going to resist providing any more catchy adjectives or descriptions and just say that the President is working very hard to try to reach an agreement.

Q Joe, obviously, if the President gets on a plane tonight and there's no agreement, he's not going to wash his hands of the whole Mid East Peace Process. So what are his plans in terms of continuing building on the progress that was made here and trying to bring them together?

MR. LOCKHART: I think that is a question, along with many of the analysis questions, that will be better put off for another time. I'll take one more.

Q Was there a point today when the two leaders said, this is it, we're going home, and the President appealed to them and that's why we're into extra time?

MR. LOCKHART: No, I don't think that's the dynamic. I think the leaders would like both to go home with an agreement. The problem is the substance and the structure of that agreement. So it is not a circumstance where the President is exercising undue influence to keep them there. I think they want to get this done but I think everyone understands that we don't have an unlimited time clock here.

Thanks.

Q Are we after a framework agreement or a comprehensive agreement?

MR. LOCKHART: An agreement.

END



6:04 P.M. EDT

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary  
(Camp David, Maryland)

For Immediate Release

July 20, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT  
UPON DEPARTURE FOR JAPAN  
ON THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE SUMMIT AT CAMP DAVID

Thurmont Elementary School  
Thurmont, Maryland

12:45 A.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: As all of you know, for the past nine days we have been engaged in the most comprehensive and thorough negotiations ever between Palestinians and Israelis on the core issues of their 52-year conflict. The two parties have been making an intensive effort to resolve their differences over the most difficult issues. That gaps remain substantial but there has been progress, and we must all be prepared to go the extra mile.

After a round of intensive consultations this evening, the parties agreed to stay at Camp David while I travel to Okinawa for the G-8 summit. Mr. Lockhart will be able to fill you in on the details of how this occurred. I have to take the plane and I'm running late, but I do want him to explain what happened.

During the time I am gone, Secretary Albright will be working with the parties and we'll continue to try to close the gaps. Upon my return, I will assess the status of the talks.

There should be no illusion about the difficult task ahead, but there should be no limit to the effort we're prepared to make. These are in fundamental ways the hardest peace issues I have ever dealt with, but the short answer to why we're still here after everybody thought we were through is that nobody wanted to give up. After all these years, as hard as these issues are, they don't want to give up. And I didn't think we should give up, and so we're still plugging away.



But you should draw no inference from this. I will observe the news blackout on the details and will continue to do it, but this is really, really hard.

Thank you very much.

Q Mr. President, could you say one thing about your personal involvement here, what you have invested here personally over the past nine days, and what it was that led you to conclude that this phase of the summit is not going to pan out as you had hoped?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I don't know that it won't now. I think anything I would say about that would in some way or another violate the prohibitions we have had. I have respected that rigorously. I have asked the other members of the parties to do so. And I just think any characterization or description beyond what I told you -- we all thought it was over, at least now that -- and then we discovered that nobody wanted to quit. Nobody wanted to give up. And that should be encouraging. Thank you.

END

12:48 A.M. EDT

THE WHITE HOUSE  
Office of the Press Secretary  
(Camp David, Maryland)

For Immediate Release

July 20, 2000

PRESS BRIEFING BY  
JOE LOCKHART

Thurmont Elementary School  
Thurmont, Maryland

12:48 A.M. EDT

MR. LOCKHART: Let me give you a sense of what unfolded since the last time I was here, which I think was about 5:30 this afternoon. Starting just before I was here, we set off a round of intensive consultations between the President and the two leaders. I think he went and spoke to Prime Minister Barak and Chairman Arafat, I think at least three times each, talked to them on the telephone. There were a series of discussions between the delegations, a series of meetings that went on within the delegations.

But I would say roughly 10 or 15 minutes before I called down to the filing center to make the announcement that the President was going back to Washington, the President made the judgement that it was time to leave, that we would be leaving, as the statement said, without an agreement and he would travel to Japan. That sentiment was passed to the two parties and we prepared to leave.

Now, while this was going on, the discussions that had been taking place among the negotiators had never stopped, and this was going on in a variety of places around Camp David, both involving the negotiators and their leaders. And as we were getting ready to leave, as I think the President indicated, it became clear that there was a willingness of the parties to stay in the President's absence and an unwillingness to let this break down.

So I can't give you a precise dissection of how this came about except for there was discussions going on at a variety of levels and a variety of places, and just before we left there was a sense that this could be put together in this sense and the way that will move forward over the next few days. And another round of discussions that involved the parties, the leaders,



ensued, and we are here now announcing that they have agreed to stay.

Barry.

Q You put that almost in a passive sense. I mean, somebody had to say first let's stay or why don't we keep going. If it wasn't the President's idea -- I realize you're saying it was a general feeling they ought to keep going, but someone had to speak up first. Without saying he initiated it, who began the discussion of a notion of staying?

MR. LOCKHART: I think the discussion or the notion of staying had been kicked around throughout the evening, but when we made the judgement that it was time to leave and there was no point in staying on, that had never come together as a real idea. I don't know that this is one person's idea. I think there just was a sense -- and I think what made this happen, it was a willingness on all sides. Once this started floating around in a real sense among the teams and then with the leaders -- and this was something that I think as the President indicated he thought was a good idea -- if the parties were serious and they were serious about staying to do this.

Q Just a logistical follow-up. As we move into this next phase, can you tell us for instance what tomorrow looks like? In other words, will you be at this pace with the Secretary simply standing in for the President, or will it be a chance for maybe a half a day, a day, of rest and then jump in?

MR. LOCKHART: I think the one thing they will look at is there are a number of people up there who have had very little sleep over the last three days. They are going to let some people get a little bit of sleep. And then the Secretary will sit down in the morning and try to work out a schedule with the leaders of both how she and the leaders will work over the next two or three days and how the delegations will work.

Q When do you think the President will return? Will he fulfill his full schedule in Okinawa, and what will he say to the leaders there to try and engender further support for what's going on here?

MR. LOCKHART: Well, I think it's fairly obvious given the President's statements over the last two weeks how important he believes this is, and I think he'll remind the leaders of the G-8 both what's at stake and discuss in some format how countries within the G-8 can help this process eventually.

As far as his schedule, I know we've been doing some juggling based on the fact that we stayed here at Camp David longer than we expected, so I don't know precisely the decisions that have been made.

Q Did you get the sense that the President's decision to leave and to -- the final decision to leave jolted the two delegations into -- the two parties in realizing that this was kind of a now-or-never deal?

MR. LOCKHART: I think it certainly was as concrete of an indication as possible to everyone, and made front and center what the costs of shutting down at this point are. I can't speak for everyone in the delegation or all the leaders to how we worked exactly to this point, but I can say that the President worked very intensively from around 4 o'clock till over the next three or four hours, maybe even five hours, to try to do anything he could to try to bring some life to this process and find a way to reach an agreement.

And it was only then that he began the process of coming to the conclusion that we would have to shut down, that we would have to leave for Japan. And I think on a different level this process sort of took on its own life and only became firm probably -- it was probably an hour and a half after I had called down to the press center saying we were leaving. I said, all of you know from your watches that we didn't move. That was because a series of conversations in different places around Camp David which had occurred in a -- I don't want to say less than serious, but certainly not in a concrete way earlier in the day became very real and very concrete.

Q (Inaudible) -- together to discuss this before he finally decided to resume?

MR. LOCKHART: No. I think the President -- no, the President has been going back and forth.

Q I'm sure you're -- you sound as though you're not sure of the schedule, obviously. But when the President said he will assess the progress of the talks on his return, does that mean or suggest he'll come right here? What do you assume the format will be?

MR. LOCKHART: Well, I don't know that we'll come right here, but I think the President is committed to playing a personal role upon returning from the G-8 meeting as he has played over the last nine days.

Q You just said that both leaders are willing to come up with something but, really, what made them stay? Is it because he said that there might be some concessions somewhere?

MR. LOCKHART: That's a good question, and it gives me an opportunity to say that there is nothing that's happened this evening, I think in a concrete way, that would make us believe that they are closer to resolving their differences. The differences are still real. This is still very, very hard; very, very tough.



What they have done is looked at the prospect of this breaking down and saying, let's take a different look, let's continue doing this while the President is gone in the hope that we can find a way to get to an agreement.

Q (Inaudible) articulated to each other? Did they say, let's take a look at what lies ahead if we don't do this?

MR. LOCKHART: I think the negotiating teams had a lot of interaction with each other this evening but, as far as the leaders, the President was the conduit.

Q Did they approach -- or representatives of the two delegations approach the President or the President's delegation together or separately to say that they weren't leaving?

MR. LOCKHART: There was no -- the delegations didn't come together. They didn't march in a room and say, here, we've got an idea, let's try this. I think there's more of a sense -- and, again, I don't know exactly the genesis of this beyond there was a sense in discussions. You know, it's one of those things where we made our decision that it was time to get in the cars to go get on a plane but, having made that decision, there were a series of conversations going on that didn't magically stop. People didn't say, okay, they're leaving; let's go, get in the car, we're leaving too. Conversations continued.

And in the period in which we were preparing to leave I think there, in the President's mind, was an opportunity and an opportunity to be seized.

Q It doesn't sound like there was any progress in the last 24 hours since President Clinton decided to stay. Did they narrow any gaps, or is the only progress really that they're going to --

MR. LOCKHART: I think I'll stick with where the President was; that we have made some progress, but not get into the specifics of that.

Q Would you characterize the reaction when you heard that they were going to stay as relief, as satisfaction, as delight?

MR. LOCKHART: Well, I think we look at this and there is obviously hope as they stay here to work through these issues as a demonstration of their commitment. But as I said, there is nothing about what's gone on this evening that makes it any easier to resolve these differences. So I think we view this with mixed feelings.



Q I have two things that I wanted to ask you. First, you know, it's extraordinary to get this close and many of us already started reporting that the talks had failed, and then to be able to come back and say actually it looks like they're going to continue. Just how close did it get? How many -- was luggage loaded into the car?

MR. LOCKHART: Luggage was loaded. The motorcade was assembled in front of the President's cabin. People changed into more formal clothing, except for me, to go back to the White House. We were ready to go.

And you know I didn't put out the information that I put out lightly. This was a decision we had taken and it was a decision that took four or five hours to make based on the one last push, which we thought was the last push, to try to keep this going and keep it going in a positive way.

I think it's something probably that is not that unusual in difficult negotiations and not that unusual when you have these sorts of difficult issues in the Middle East peace process at stake. But it certainly was somewhat surprising to get to the point of almost walking out of the cabin to get into the cars and realize that there was a reason to stay and a reason to stay at it.

Q I just wanted to follow up on that, and you started to get to that, saying the one last push. How would you characterize what forces the President brought to bear? Would you call it pressure? Would you call it cajoling? How would you describe it?

MR. LOCKHART: I would say the President used every ounce of his power of persuasion that he had available to him, and then some that he didn't know he had. But having done all that, we were at the point where we thought and had made a decision to leave. So I think, again, this is a potentially positive step that they will stay here and discuss but, again, there is nothing in the fact that they're staying here that magically makes this easier. It's not easy and there is nothing that can make it easy.

Q Would it make any difference -- I mean, after nine days of working hard, why if you expect some few days would make a difference in issues like Jerusalem, first? And, second, has President Clinton made any more calls to Arab leaders that helped in that persuasion?

MR. LOCKHART: I don't think he's made any more calls I know of. I think I've reported all of them.

Secondly, I don't know that a few more days will help this process, but I certainly know that we did have a sense of what the prospects were for forging a peace should these talks

break down and should the parties return home. So, again, I can't quantify the upside for you as far as its potential, but I think it shouldn't be hard for you all to have some sense of the downside of the talks breaking down.

Q Can we go back to powers of persuasion? Did the President ever get angry?

MR. LOCKHART: A few times.

Q (Inaudible)?

MR. LOCKHART: Almost everybody who was at the camp over the last nine days.

Q What about including the principals?

MR. LOCKHART: I think these are difficult issues and it's frustrating to work around the clock in close quarters, and it would be inhuman to think that from the leaders down to all the negotiators that there haven't been moments where your frustration shows through. And I think that's the same for the President, the Prime Minister, the Chairman, and all a lot of other people.

Q You and the President keep talking about the costs of failure or the cost of shutting the operation down. Can you be more specific about what you were afraid those costs were? And also talk about -- was the President explaining these costs and what the US view of them was?

MR. LOCKHART: Well, when I talked about it, what I specifically meant was the -- you come to a negotiation, you get into a discussion, and leaving -- just by nature of leaving, you negate anything that you've done and, in fact, in some respects even take the process a step backwards. And I think that's typical of any intense negotiation.

I mean, as far as the potential downside or costs of not being to reach an agreement, I think the President laid that out at the beginning of this process and that hasn't changed.

Q When do you think the President will be back at Camp David?

MR. LOCKHART: The earliest would be upon return from Japan.

Q What is the schedule for next week? Is there any sense of a deadline for next week or some plan the President might have for these negotiations?



MR. LOCKHART: Well, given the fact that this is news, that this development is news to us as well as it is to you, we're working through those issues now.

Q So what do you expect will happen when the President will return?

MR. LOCKHART: I don't know. I don't know that we have an expectation, but I know that the President will be keenly interested in the reports from the Secretary of State over what progress is made when he's not here.

Q Do you anticipate any progress in these efforts?

MR. LOCKHART: I certainly think that the fact that they want to stay here demonstrates a commitment to work through these issues, and it's certainly our hope that they can make progress.

Q Are all of the members of both delegations staying except for the member of the Palestinian delegation who already had to leave for his son's wedding? Can we expect everybody else to stay?

MR. LOCKHART: I'm not aware that anybody left. I know that Abu Mazen left and I don't know what the schedule is, whether he'll return or not. We just haven't gotten to that point. But I'm not aware that anybody from the delegation left.

Q Does Secretary Albright staying means that she's going to cancel her travel plans next week to Asia?

MR. LOCKHART: I know that she does have travel plans and, at this point, I think that her schedule remains the same and as we get closer to the day I'm sure Richard can give you some help on that.

Q Are you staying here, Joe?

MR. LOCKHART: I'm going to the airport right now.

Q (Inaudible) together?

MR. LOCKHART: I think so. I'm not really sure.

Q Is this going to be the press center (inaudible)?

MR. LOCKHART: Yes. We will stay here. I have to talk to Richard at some point about what we want to do as far as a briefing schedule, but this will remain up and all of the nice people who have been helping us who thought we were out of their hair have another thing coming to them.

Let me take one more, then I've got to go.

Q        When is the earliest the President can be back here?

MR. LOCKHART: The earliest he could be back here is when he finishes in Okinawa.

Q        Did the three leaders meet today together -- Chairman Arafat, President Clinton and the Prime Minister?

MR. LOCKHART: No, they did not. Thank you.

END

1:15 A.M. EDT



**THE WHITE HOUSE**

**Office of the Press Secretary  
(Camp David, Maryland)**

---

**For Immediate Release**

**July 19, 2000**

**STATEMENT BY THE PRESS SECRETARY**

The Summit has come to a conclusion without reaching an agreement. The President will return to the White House and will make a statement at the White House.

30-30-30

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE**  
**Office of the Spokesman**  
(Thurmont, Maryland)

For Immediate Release  
2000/809

July 20, 2000

**PRESS BRIEFING BY**  
**SPOKESMAN RICHARD BOUCHER**  
**ON**  
**THE CAMP DAVID PEACE TALKS**

Thurmont Elementary School

12:05 P.M. EDT

MR. BOUCHER: Good afternoon, everybody. Let me start out by trying to give you a sense of the day that we face today and then I'll be glad to take your questions.

As you all know, the Secretary is now leading the US delegation in the absence of the President. The two leaders and their delegations have remained at Camp David. Discussions will continue, in the President's absence, of the issues here. We expect today a number of informal discussions throughout the day and meetings by the Secretary with leaders and with negotiators.

She will continue to try to close the gaps and move forward on the issues so that when the President returns, he can assess the status of our efforts. As I left this morning, she was meeting with the US team and we expect meetings with delegations and leaders to start fairly soon.

With that update, I would be glad to take your questions.

Q Does she expect to have a three-way meeting with Arafat and Barak at all?

MR. BOUCHER: We'll see how things evolve. At this point, there is not one planned. She was going to begin with individual meetings with the two leaders. But that remains a possibility.

Q There have been reports that they are going to be working primarily on non-core issues now, moving perhaps to some of the issues that have been discussed in Emmitsburg, like water and economic issues. Is that true?



MR. BOUCHER: I think I mentioned that discussions will continue of the issues. I'd say discussions will continue of the core issues involved in permanent status.

Q Richard, last night both the President and Joe Lockhart acknowledged that the talks continued not because there was any real progress on any of the core issues but because all sides just agreed the price of walking away was too great. So now we've been here, this is day 10, and the success is that they're still talking, not that there's any agreement on any of the core issues.

Is there any hope that when the President returns, there will actually be some agreements in place, or is the hope merely that when the President returns, everyone will still be here?

MR. BOUCHER: No, I think it's clear that we want to use this period productively. The Secretary shares the President's determination to move forward on the issues. She is looking to put together as much as we can the positions of the parties and see how we can move all the issues forward. So the determination is there, the effort has certainly not slackened in any way, and I think the parties wouldn't be here, we wouldn't be here if we didn't think there was some potential. But, on the other hand, we are not laying claim to anything more than what the President said last night, that we've made some progress.

Q Would you expect the talks to continue in the same way as they have done and with the same intensity that they have done in the past 10 days, even in the President's absence?

MR. BOUCHER: Allowing for day-to-day variations, in that some days have been extremely intense, like yesterday evening, including the period after Joe issued his statement and before the President came down -- allowing for the day-to-day variations, yes. The same patterns and intensity will be maintained. We continue to do things in a variety of formats and settings, meetings among different people, you know, other kinds of meetings are possible. So as she works to move this forward, she will use all the tools at her disposal and continue with the same kind of intensity.

Q Richard, do you know if Chairman Arafat especially, but any of the leaders, either one, has made any calls back to the region or to other leaders?

MR. BOUCHER: I don't know. I couldn't give you a list, but I think they have either made or taken some calls. But I would leave it to them -- well, I wouldn't leave it to them. I forgot to say at the beginning, the press blackout continues.

We'll check on that and see if we have anything we can report on that to you.

Q Richard, can you talk with any more specificity than Joe did last night about what actually transpired? I mean, he was very vague on the sequence of events and

who actually made this suggestion and how that was communicated to the American team.

MR. BOUCHER: I can't really go into it in any more detail than Joe did last night or than the President did last night. The President had a very intensive series of meetings with the leaders. The idea had been kicking around for some time that they might want to say if there was productive work that could continue to be done. And during the series of meetings and discussions that the President had with the leaders, the sense emerged that that was indeed useful, and so that was what they decided to do at a point very late in the evening.

Q Why did they announce they were closing if there was this idea?

MR. BOUCHER: Because at that point, it looked like they weren't going to do this and, in fact, they were going to close. At the point where they decided to close, there were indeed still some discussions going on, delegations and other ways, and still some final meetings to be held. And during those final meetings, it emerged as a useful and productive idea to try to continue to stay here and move the ball forward and see where we could get to even in the absence of the President.

Q Richard, I have three questions. The first one is, the talks that are going to take place today, are they going to be talks with the Americans going back and forth between Israelis and the Palestinians or do you expect those groups to meet together today?

MR. BOUCHER: As we've seen in the past, there are a whole variety of discussions. I certainly expect informal discussions between the parties. The only scheduled meetings that I know of now would be meetings with the Secretary and the two leaders but things continue to evolve in different ways.

Q Last night when you thought the talks were going to end and the two leaders were going to go back to the region, in the few hours before it was announced, when it was understood that the talks were going to end, were any preparations made in terms of how these people would go back to the region and avoid some conflict from erupting in order to keep somewhat the momentum going, even though the talks weren't going here, some alternative plan?

MR. BOUCHER: I think that's a question we would have answered if we had gone that route. But at this point, I think that gets into the kind of substance of what's been discussed up there, so I can't.

Q Is there a new deadline set for the end of the negotiations?

MR. BOUCHER: We've made quite clear we don't think it's useful to go on for an unlimited amount of time. We certainly look forward to moving forward, to doing the



work we can when the President returns. It will maintain the same intensity, the same effort to reach conclusion, to reach an agreement. We have never specified a precise deadline, but I think certainly the effort to bring things together and reach an agreement will remain at the same level.

Q Richard, when does the President return? When is the earliest point he could return? When do you expect him to return? And also, last night. You talk about how it emerged, you know, that they should stay. Did somebody decisively make the call, okay, we're staying, and give that order? You know, when did that happen? Was it the President, was it the Secretary of State or was it the other principals?

MR. BOUCHER: I really can't go into that kind of detail. I just have to say it emerged from his discussions with leaders.

Q How about the President's return?

MR. BOUCHER: The President's return, again, we don't have precisely yet.

Q The day?

MR. BOUCHER: It's expected Sunday or Monday but we'll have to see. They're working on the schedule. I don't have an updated schedule yet from the White House.

Q Was part of the purpose of this shuttling back and forth in the last three hours to persuade the leaders to stay?

MR. BOUCHER: Part of the purpose was to discuss the status of where we were as we were concluding. And in that process, after we had determined we were concluding, in that process the leaders got a sense with each other that it was in fact not the best thing to do to conclude, but rather it was better to stay and to keep working on this. And that's why we're still here.

Q Richard, the Israeli media are reporting about the American bridging proposal being held to the parties, that the Israelis accepted and the Palestinians didn't accept the second bridging proposal. Do you anticipate any changes to this proposal?

MR. BOUCHER: I don't expect any changes to our policy of not commenting on any number of issues that you raise in your question.

Q Israeli media also is reporting from Israeli sources insisting that there are not going to be any direct negotiation between Palestinians and Israelis, formal direct negotiation, only Americans coming back and forth between them, and they are saying that basically they are waiting for Arafat's reply; they have nothing more to say right now and they are staying only because Clinton has asked.

What about this, this describing no direct negotiation between the Israelis and the Palestinians? Is that accurate?

MR. BOUCHER: We will describe to you what happens up there. I wouldn't draw any particular conclusions from the kinds of discussions, the kinds of contacts and communications that people are having. First of all, I don't think you can draw substantive conclusions from that. And, second of all, as far as various press reports go, particularly media in the region that are so far away, I wouldn't draw any conclusions that some might be right and some might be wrong.

Q It's coming from here.

MR. BOUCHER: Well, in that case, maybe it's not so far away. But the same rule applies. They are no more right because they're closer. We'll just have to see how things evolve.

Q Richard, I just wanted to clarify something. When the President gets back, he will be coming directly back up here or he may be in Washington –

MR. BOUCHER: I don't have the updated schedule for the President yet. I can't make a statement like that.

Q Why do you expect or why would the two leaders give the Secretary the concession that they didn't give to the President? In other words, is she just here to protect the news blackout until the President comes back?

MR. BOUCHER: No, she is here to move forward on the issues, to continue working with the parties. She is here with the mandate of the President. She is here with the US negotiating team. And she is here to carry the ball forward so that the President can assess our progress when we get back.

Q Could you tell us how many times did President Clinton speak to President Mubarak? That's the first question. And the second one is, you said you would discuss, you know, when the decision was made. The State Department ordered rooms for the Israelis at around 8:45 yesterday evening. So you must have known they were going to stay.

MR. BOUCHER: Ordered rooms for the Israelis?

Q Yes, hotel rooms here.

MR. BOUCHER: We do a lot of contingency planning, okay? We probably have booked rooms all over the world at various times that we haven't taken up. So I can't tell you to draw any particular conclusion from that.



Q And Mubarak, please?

MR. BOUCHER: Joe didn't give the rundown of the exact phone calls the President made, so I don't think I can give you a number of times. I don't think I can give you that. I'm sorry.

Q Richard, can I follow up on that, though? Can I follow up on the issue of both sides – both Arafat and Barak have been accused at various times of threatening to leave, just as a way to keep the talks going. Perhaps President Clinton was using the same ploy. How real was it? How serious were you? Give us an idea. Were you in the car ready to go out of the compound?

MR. BOUCHER: All the cars were lined up, the bags were packed, people were ready to go. At any moment, we could have gotten in the motorcade and departed. This was real.

Q Joe had said several times in the last few days that you didn't think any extra time would be necessary. So why at the eleventh hour did they think the extra – he didn't think that extra time was an issue, that any amount of time probably wouldn't reach an agreement. And so what makes you think that this extra time will help and are the negotiations going to go around the clock? You said the same intensity, but are they going to go around the clock as they did the last few days?

MR. BOUCHER: The schedule may vary from day to day, as it has varied from day to day. But I would expect meetings during the daytime into the night, as much as is useful, as much as is appropriate. Again, with the same determination, the same intensity to move forward on the issues.

Now, what was the first part of your question again?

Q Joe had said the last several days that he didn't think it was an issue of time. The positions were already held and they knew the positions and time wasn't an issue. Why now is the extra time going to make a difference?

MR. BOUCHER: Well, time is not particularly the issue but time can be useful, and to have the decision made that rather than leave it was better to stay means we think it's useful to stay, that there is still the potential there, and we can continue to move things forward usefully in the next few days based on where we stand at the moment, and we were about to conclude.

Q Richard, is there anything you can tell us about the Secretary's role last night as the decision was being made to stick around? At what point was there an exchange between the Secretary and the President at the point they realized people were going to stay? What was her reaction?

MR. BOUCHER: She was working very closely with the President throughout this period. The President was meeting frequently with his advisors and team between the individual meetings, to come back and meet with the Secretary and Mr. Berger, Ambassador Ross, the other members of the team, have another meeting, go back, have another meeting and go back. So she was very deeply involved in this whole process, attended some of the meetings with the President, had some of the contacts herself. So this was a process they evolved into together.

Q So you mean there was sort of a tag team, in other words; if the President was with Barak, the Secretary might have been with Arafat at some point?

MR. BOUCHER: I'm not aware that that occurred last night. But there were -- she was having contacts with other delegation members. And obviously in working this through with the US team, the Secretary plays a very important role.

Q Was there any exchange between the Secretary and the President at this pivotal moment?

MR. BOUCHER: Constantly and frequently throughout the evening.

Q Anything you can tell us about that?

MR. BOUCHER: No.

Q Richard, last night, you had a summit that had collapsed, there had already been at least the beginnings of recriminations. How much of the job that the Secretary has to do this weekend is going to be picking up the pieces? Is she really going to be able to push the ball forward or is she just picking up pieces at this point?

MR. BOUCHER: No, I would describe it as continuing to move forward on the issue, continuing to focus intensely on the issues, continuing to try to close the gaps, rather than any other different way. I think the President said some progress was made. We've obviously focused very intensely on the issues. And the Secretary's intention is to keep the same determination as we try to move forward.

Q So there is no damage here that needs to be repaired?

MR. BOUCHER: I wouldn't describe it that way. Obviously, having been prepared to conclude and then deciding not to, it's useful for the parties to keep that experience in mind and to use this time very productively. So we would think that everybody would be even more focused on the need to make progress and even more focused on the potential that we have.

Q Richard, how did the parties learn that the President was giving up? Did he go to them individually and say, look, this is it, I'm leaving?



MR. BOUCHER: Well, I think what we're doing is describing to you a process of conversations, conversations between the President and the leaders. At one stage in those conversations, they had concluded in their conversations with the President that it was time to finish up and at the next stage, after we issued the statement or about the time, they started to look at that and say, no, that's not right, let's stay here and try to move things forward.

Q You said they had concluded it was time to give up, but we understood that the President said it was going to be his decision.

MR. BOUCHER: They, the leaders, together and in their conversations with the President, it emerged that it was better to stay than to leave.

Q Richard, two questions. You say the Secretary is going to spend the day trying to close the gaps. Do the gaps still exist not only with Jerusalem but also the other two core issues, the borders and refugees? And the second question, considering the round-the-clock negotiations that have gone on for the last three days, is there any down time being planned today, relaxation time, excursions, anything else for the two leaders?

MR. BOUCHER: There are no excursions planned at this point. I guess we're all kind of getting a little late start today, so people have had some time and I think, as I left the Secretary's meeting with the US delegation, others were meeting with their delegations. So I think there will be time for leaders to work with their delegations as we move forward and then start the series of meetings.

Q On the first question, the gaps are not only with Jerusalem but also with borders and refugees?

MR. BOUCHER: Yeah, I avoided that one in order not to tell you that that's the kind of question I can't answer.

Q Richard, is Berger still at Camp David? And also, is the President going to be in contact daily, or twice daily, with the Secretary? And is the President going to be in contact directly with the leaders by phone during his trip?

MR. BOUCHER: We'll have to see if the President has any direct contact with the leaders. Certainly the President will have contact with the Secretary. I'm not aware of any further conversations that had occurred by the time I came down here. But certainly she will stay in contact.

Mr. Berger is not at Camp David any more.

Q Just one more quickly. There were two trilateral meetings, if I understand it correctly, over the past nine days. Two trilaterals. Was there any trilateral meeting of any sort of the shortest time yesterday right up to the last minute?

MR. BOUCHER: No.

Q So only two trilateral meetings?

MR. BOUCHER: I haven't gone back and done the count. I don't remember if it was one or two. But there was not a trilateral yesterday evening, otherwise Joe would have reported it to you.

Q Do you see the possibility of the trilateral meeting happening within the next few days or maybe just like a formal dinner, just like the ones they used to have earlier?

MR. BOUCHER: Everything remains possible. We'll report to you what actually occurs. We said that we would expect there would be meetings in a variety of formations. I think I described to you what we expect today and that's continuing informal contacts and discussions between the parties, between the negotiators as well as some set meetings with the Secretary and the leaders and then possibly with negotiators. So we will see how those things evolve and if we have trilateral meetings, we will certainly report those to you as well.

Q In regards to the communication last night on the fact that both leaders were willing to stay behind and meet with the Secretary, did that happen simultaneously? Who notified you first they were willing to stay?

MR. BOUCHER: I don't think I can really describe it to you in that much detail. I'm sorry. It just was an idea that they had been kicking around. As they made their decision to leave, sort of one product of that was then reconsideration of this idea of staying, whether it would be useful. Then through a series of discussions with the President the idea gained momentum and it was the sense of the parties, after several of these meetings with the President, that it was indeed more useful to stay here and to try to move the ball forward and to continue to try to reach a conclusion.

Q Can you give us any kind of perspective --

MR. BOUCHER: I think she had a second that was pending.

Q The composition of the delegations and some of the -- well, at least we know one of the Palestinians. Is Martin Indyk still at these negotiations? Has any of the Israelis left? And what has happened to Emmitsburg?



MR. BOUCHER: Okay. The composition. The composition of the delegations with the exception of one Palestinian leader who left and, obviously, the departure of the President and Mr. Berger on our side, the compositions remain the same. Martin Indyk remains up there. I think he was on our delegation list and he still is.

As far as Emmitsburg, the negotiations that have been up there did as much as they could. They had focused on the issues, they had taken their issues forward and now the focus is back again on the core issues, so I don't think the negotiators are there. The experts remain in Emmitsburg and remain available to the parties should they need them and should we decide they're necessary.

Q Emmitsburg, I do want to clarify this, you mentioned -- you switched quickly to the core issues. I do want to confirm, was the Emmitsburg negotiations, were they interim issues? You know, the economic -- what exactly were the, as you call them, generic issues? What are we talking about in Emmitsburg? Was it political prisoners, was it safe passage, was it --

MR. BOUCHER: These are the issues. We described them to you, I think, as much as we can. It was civil affairs, it was economics and it was water. These are issues that are indeed part of the permanent status, that need to be resolved between the parties to have a permanent status settlement, but which we wouldn't describe as the core issues under discussion. So you had the core issues being focused on very intensely at Camp David and you had some of what we would call the non-core issues being discussed, the more generic issues of permanent status being discussed at Emmitsburg.

Q Does that include the outstanding interim issues which haven't --

MR. BOUCHER: I think I've described those three areas to you and that's where it is.

Q There is nothing on safe passages?

MR. BOUCHER: Economics, water and civil affairs.

Q I just want to know what the Secretary might have said to you about the extraordinary turn of events in the last 24 hours. You really had kind of a Harry Truman, "Dewey wins" kind of moment when you woke up today.

MR. BOUCHER: We're trying to get the headlines here. (Laughter.)

Q "Mid East peace talks fail." Do you have any perspective on that and did Secretary Albright say anything to you about waking up to headlines "Mid East peace talks fail" and indeed having them continue?

MR. BOUCHER: Oh, there were a few comments on the headlines in the press clips. But obviously we can hold up our own statement as much as your headlines to show that we all thought at a certain point yesterday evening that we had indeed reached a conclusion without getting an agreement and therefore it was time to go. As I said, bags were packed, we were ready to go.

The point is that in reaching that conclusion, it then emerged that, no, in fact, that wasn't the best course to take, it was better to stay. We still had prospects, we still had potential, we still had the ability to move the ball forward. We all wanted to do that, both ourselves and the other delegations. And therefore, it was better to say to try to move the ball forwards in the absence of the President, so that he can assess where we are when he gets back.

Q Can you share with us specifically what Secretary Albright may have said to you this morning or late last night? Did she say, "Whew, that was a close one," or what did she say to you?

MR. BOUCHER: I don't have any particular quotes I can share with you, I'm sorry.

Q On that same line, I'm a little curious why you are so reluctant to say or why Joe or the President was reluctant to say whose decision it was to stay? Because without you guys giving that detailed kind of rundown of it, there is going to be lingering speculation that this is another spin job, that in fact it was decided that it would look better for the President if, in fact, the summit had "failed" and then was brought back to life with his magic touch. Why can't it be broken down into who suggested what to whom and when – and when was it done?

Was the summit in fact – were you preparing to leave or were you preparing to conclude the summit when Joe put out the statement that it was over, or was this just, you know, a trick to make everything look wonderful and here's another great comeback?

MR. BOUCHER: I was asked a shorter version of that question about 15 minutes ago and I'll stick to the same answer. This was real. People, the leaders together, the discussions, had reached a point where we all felt that we had to conclude without reaching agreement. In the process of reaching that agreement, there were still conversations going on, people who felt maybe we should think differently, and in the subsequent final – what were to be the final conversations, it was decided – it emerged in the discussions between the leaders that we should do that.

Now, the kind of tick-tock of he said this, he said that, he proposed this, he proposed that and Mr. X decided, we have not done on any issue from the beginning of this process. And the same kind of lack of detail, I'm afraid, and lack of play-by-play has to apply if we are going to take these negotiations forward from here on in. So it's just not the kind of thing we are going to do on any issue.



Q How about this: Had the President prepared a different version of his statement than he ended up giving last night?

MR. BOUCHER: That has historical parallels. We were ready to go. We had – again, we had motorcades, we had bags, we had everything, everything was prepared. A lot of things were loaded, a lot of people were in the proper position. Everything was ready to conclude. That was a real situation, that was a real statement. And there were bags packed for other delegations as well.

Q Were the Israelis' bags packed?

MR. BOUCHER: I watched some of them be put on a truck, as a matter of fact. So we were ready to go.

Q Did the atmospherics among the principals, with the Secretary in particular, did the atmospherics parallel the sort of roller coaster ride that we saw from the outside?

MR. BOUCHER: Perhaps it was a little less of a roller coaster. But certainly they knew that there were – during the evening, there were different options in play. When they reached a conclusion that we had to go without reaching the agreement, then that was sort of definitive until the other path seemed to look a lot better. I suppose it was a little less of a roller coaster with them because they had both ideas a little more in their heads than we did as we approached that moment.

Q Did the Secretary express any sense of loss, of hopelessness, of "it's over"?

MR. BOUCHER: Again, I don't think I have any particular quotes for you. But they had all reached a conclusion at one point that it was over but I think determined, in the process of going through that, that maybe the other course was better and found that we can and should pursue that.

Q Richard, last week at this time, you were describing a very informal atmosphere, a very positive atmosphere. Everyone was taking their meals together. And now with the almost collapse of the talks, it seems the atmosphere is more tense.

Is one of the goals of the Secretary over the next few days to try to get them back together in this more informal atmosphere, having meals together, more of a kind of informal and more of an exchange?

MR. BOUCHER: I do think it's useful to clarify that the intensity of discussion of the issues and the intensity of the pace of the meetings at some point really hasn't changed the informal atmosphere between the delegations. I mean, yesterday evening I

think at one brief pause people went down to have dinner and the Israeli delegation members were there, Palestinian delegation members were there, people were eating together, meeting together, saying goodbye in some cases.

And it was – it continues to be friendly. It continues to be comfortable for the parties with each other, for the delegations in terms of their interaction. But this is very, very hard, this is very, very tough. And when you come to addressing these issues, it's very intense, it's very meaningful for both of the parties and it's very serious for the parties.

Let's make this the last one.

Q A couple of points, Richard. You described or journalists described in the course of the ten days the sort of atmospherics, talked about the President being determined, talked about the talks being tense, being a struggle.

Can you give us a sense of the atmosphere at the point where certainly, as far as the US delegation was concerned, the talks were over without agreement? Can you give us a sense of the atmosphere at that point?

And, secondly, do you know whether the President has cleared his schedule for next week?

MR. BOUCHER: I don't know if the President has cleared his schedule. I think – I would assume that he will devote the same time and energy upon his return that he did in the last nine days. And therefore I don't think I've had any questions – I haven't really asked the question that much because I think it's assumed that he will.

In terms of the mood at the point where the decision was made to conclude, I guess I would say in some way resigned to that course, because at that point that seemed the inevitable conclusion that we had to reach. And as people faced that conclusion, they started realizing that perhaps there was indeed there was a better way and that the alternate path was the better one to choose.

Thanks.

(The briefing concluded at 12:40 p.m.)



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
Office of the Spokesman  
(Thurmont, Maryland)

For Immediate Release

July 20, 2000

PRESS BRIEFING BY  
SPOKESMAN RICHARD BOUCHER  
ON  
THE CAMP DAVID PEACE TALKS  
Thurmont Elementary School

5:05 P.M. EDT

MR. BOUCHER: Good afternoon, everybody. Let me give you the five o'clock update. Camp David discussions continue between the parties on core issues of permanent status. The Secretary met during the course of the afternoon separately with senior negotiators from both sides. Shortly after noon, she met with Chairman Arafat. Later after that, she met with Prime Minister Barak.

Contacts between the parties continue on all the issues. As I left, the Secretary was meeting with her US negotiating team, looking at the next set of activities, and we continue our efforts to move forward on the issues.

So with that brief update, I'd be glad to take your questions.

Q Richard, would it be productive in, what is it, the tenth day now or the eleventh, for Barak and Arafat to sort of meet face to face, measure the gap?

MR. BOUCHER: As you know, that's happened. When we think it would be productive, when they think it would be productive, I'm sure we'll do that as well. But at this stage, we've conducted the negotiations at each stage in a way that we felt was the best way to move forward.

Q Have they set a schedule, a certain set of goals that they hope to have accomplished before the President gets back?

MR. BOUCHER: I think we keep going towards the same goal, which is to reach an agreement that deals with all the core issues.

Q Have they set a certain set of mileposts that they'd like to get to?

MR. BOUCHER: Well, I think there's only one milepost that really matters, and that's the one that we're still shooting for.

Q But certainly there's got to be some on the way to your final milepost?

MR. BOUCHER: I think not three miles down this issue and four miles down that issue. But obviously we need to solve the issues and they need to focus from time to time on what's the best way to move forward. So, to that extent, yes, they try to move forward on different issues at different moments. But the overall effort is to move forward on all the issues and to reach an agreement.

Q All along, you and the White House have had a very steady accounting of the meetings of the President. Can you tell us last night, roughly, what time of night Clinton had his last meetings, bilateral, with Barak and Arafat? What time of night? And do the same for Albright, around the sort of post-9:00 p.m. period. It gets very fuzzy looking at the transcript as to what was going on with the leaders meeting around that time.

MR. BOUCHER: And anything I say can and will be used against me, right? (Laughter.) Last night was a very hectic and involved process, first of reaching the conclusion that we'd reached a conclusion to the discussions, and then second of all seeing that in fact there was the opportunity to move forward and that it was worth staying.

I don't think I can go into any more detail than we have so far. Joe went through it with you last night in the middle of the night. I went through it again this morning with you as much as I can. Suffice it to say that the President was going back and forth and having discussions with the different leaders. The Secretary was having meetings with negotiators, largely, on the side, sat down at times with one or the other team. I know she sat down with the Palestinian team at one point. Negotiators were talking to each other, negotiators were talking to us.

So there were a great deal of conversations going on. Once the decision to conclude had been made, you might describe sort of the second idea of continuing and possibly finding the value of continuing emerged more starkly as an option that they wanted to take and the parties -- the leaders together in their meetings, in their discussions, the President with Chairman Arafat and the President with Prime Minister Barak -- agreed that they wanted to stay. And they wanted to stay.

Q There were bilaterals after the announcement that the talks were ending? There were -- Clinton was meeting?

MR. BOUCHER: Yes, the President was having meetings with the leaders until a few minutes before we got in the motorcade to come down here.

Q I thought the way Joe described it was that the face-to-face meetings weren't going on at that point; that it evolved into phone calls. Was it face-to-face meetings?

MR. BOUCHER: I would look back at Joe's transcripts. I think there were both.

Q Does the Secretary have any plans tonight to meet Chairman Arafat? And, second question, when was the last time Arafat and Barak met face to face over a meal or for talks?



MR. BOUCHER: I can't remember. You would have to go back to the transcripts, the last sort of formal sit-down meal we had together where they were together at the meal. You know, that may happen again, it may not. I am not sure that it will happen at this evening's meal; they were still thinking about it, about what kind of meal to have.

But people do get together at these meals, especially the negotiators, and people talk. And so there are a variety of conversations going on all the time, so I wouldn't read too much into a particular kind of meeting.

Q Have the parties given any indication of how long they are willing or able to remain here after the President returns?

MR. BOUCHER: I don't think we're gaming that out at this point. I'm not sure we've asked them.

At this stage, we are committed to unflagging efforts to use the opportunity before us. We are going to see where we are. The President will assess where we are when he comes back, and at that point he will make the determination as far as where we go next.

Q Mr. Lockhart said it makes no sense for this process to carry on indefinitely. When the President returns, you'll set another hard date to say we have to have an agreement by this point?

MR. BOUCHER: I think when he comes back, the President will assess where we are with the issues and determine where we should go next on the issues and for how long. But, obviously, we don't think that unlimited time should be spent on this. It is a matter of making decisions and working on the issues so that the decisions can be made. And so that's the key component.

Q Exactly when is the President scheduled to arrive back in the United States?

MR. BOUCHER: We don't have that for you yet. With the changes that resulted from his delay in departing, the White House is still reworking the schedule.

Q Will it be Sunday night?

MR. BOUCHER: You know, it's only a guess, Sunday, Monday was. But we don't have a new schedule yet from the White House. We talked to them a couple hours ago.

Q Richard, is the President expected to ask the G-7 nations to help finance a possible peace deal?

MR. BOUCHER: I'm sure they'll be interested in a general way in the events here. Obviously, we and others have stood up in support of peace deals in the past and we would expect any support that was needed to be an international effort. I wouldn't conclude from that, however, that there would be a sign of specific planning going on. But I would assume the topic will arise in his discussions.

Q Following after that thought, the idea has been floated that what happened last night may, in fact, work to the President's advantage at the G-8 summit to say, this is the price of failure, so it's time for you all to pony up to make this deal a reality.

MR. BOUCHER: I don't want to game it that way. I think in the end we and our G-7 partners and others in the world have been quite forthcoming when it comes to supporting peace in the Middle East. We have certainly done our part. We think others have done a lot as well. So to think that we are somehow playing with them or shaming them into it I don't think is necessary at this point. But certainly the President is going to want to talk to them about it.

Q There have been members of Congress who have said that actually the United States is going – is planning to shame them into making a financial commitment by promising the Israelis and the Palestinians a certain level of US support and then coming to Congress and saying, well, if you don't pony this up, you don't support peace.

Has the President been in touch with Congress on a specific level of what he sees as a level of US support that will be necessary?

MR. BOUCHER: I think, as we said in the past, we're not at that stage yet and that what I've seen from various statements from leaders in Congress is general support for the idea of supporting peace in the Middle East. People understand it's important to our nation, as they have in the past. But we're not at the stage yet, either here or in our previous discussions, of asking them to support some specific proposal.

Q Can I just follow up, Richard? There have been members of Congress that say that the Administration is not taking into consideration their concerns and they should be involved more in the process as the US tries to negotiate this, not in terms of a diplomatic level between the two parties but in terms of how the United States is prepared to help out.

Do you think that's warranted?

MR. BOUCHER: We consulted with members of congress along the way. And, certainly, as you know, the President had a number of discussions before we left. The Secretary has discussed this issue in a general sense in many of her contacts with congresspeople on the Hill in the last few weeks leading up to this. But we are not at the stage yet to get that specific with them.

Q Can you say something about the mood of today's session in light of last night's interesting events? Was it a wakeup call or how are they reacting today?

MR. BOUCHER: I think the wakeup call was a little later in the morning. I think people first wanted to get some sleep. The delegations have been meeting among themselves, you know, each leader with his own delegation in some ways, preparing for the next few days' work, looking at the events of last night and deciding how to move forward. We wanted to stay, they wanted to stay and now I think everybody is committed and determined to making it worthwhile and producing some productive movement during this period.

Q Richard, what contact does the Secretary have with the President since he went?



MR. BOUCHER: I'm not aware of any specific discussions but I know staffs have been in touch with each other.

Q Richard, one of the ways that appears to keep the blackout in effect, for example the Vice President's office is saying that while Leon's been in touch with people and getting updates, that they're not getting a lot of information and they're getting more information sometimes from the press than they are from White House officials.

Not just for Vice President Gore, but is the White House trying to limit the information given to Gore, Talbott, Pickering, Steinberg? Are you really trying to enforce the blackout by not only not consulting with Congress but limiting the number of –

MR. BOUCHER: Are you trying to find out how well informed your sources are? (Laughter.) I would say that the people who deal most specifically with this issue, with the exception of those who had to leave on the President's airplane yesterday, are all here. Certainly the information on exactly what's going on up there is not widespread because, frankly, there are not that many other people that need to deal with these issues on a day-to-day basis. That's not to say – you know, we're certainly not telling stories or lies or misinforming or somehow keeping in the dark people who are not here. But there is no particular reason to keep them informed and therefore they're not.

Q To follow up on that and what Elise was saying, not about the aid package but about just calls to members of Congress, did the Secretary or did the President call any congressional leaders, either late last night or early this morning or today to give them an update since things have changed quite a bit?

MR. BOUCHER: No.

Q Have the negotiations today been restricted to bilateral American-Palestinian on one side or American-Israeli, without encounters between the negotiators, Israelis and Palestinians? And if it's true, is it consistent with reports that Prime Minister Barak instructed his negotiators not to talk to the Palestinians until they answer their proposals?

MR. BOUCHER: I'm not going to deal with any specific reports but I did mention to you earlier the discussions and contacts between the parties directly on the various issues have continued.

Q What time did everything come to a halt last night and what time did it start this morning?

MR. BOUCHER: Well, I'd have to look back. The President's departure was 20 minutes before he arrived here. So I don't know exactly the time of the President's departure. He made his statement at 12:30, so shortly after midnight he departed and then we got back up the hill. I think there were probably people still having conversations after the President departed. But the Secretary didn't have any particular meetings when she went back up.

Q And this morning?

MR. BOUCHER: This morning, we started to get together in our individual team about 10 o'clock, and the first meetings occurred after noon.

Q And how does that compare to other days this week?

MR. BOUCHER: Depending on the night, it might have closed off a little bit earlier than some other nights and started a little bit later than some other mornings.

Q With Barak and Arafat not meeting for days and with the US meeting separately again and again with both sides, it seems inescapable that we get the impression the US is pitching a plan or a set of compromises to the two sides. We've never established that, indeed, the US is in the bridging game now. I know there is little likelihood that we'll get answers to any of these questions. But there was a little break yesterday and a little burst of honesty when I guess it was Joe said that the fact they decided to go on doesn't mean that there was any -- you know, the gap was closed in any way, it's just they decided to keep at it.

It's the US that's doing the pitching, isn't it? So I wonder if that's true. I wonder if the US still would not try -- and this goes to motive -- that the US would not try to sell either party a deal that they don't think is in their best interest. And I wondered if anybody would get so punchy that he might agree to something he wouldn't have agreed to on the first or the second day.

You can discard all those questions if you like. But that's the impression --

MR. BOUCHER: I haven't found the question yet.

Q All right. Is the US offering bridging proposals? Is that the point of their not meeting face to face, with the US doing all the shuttling? Secondly, is the US still given to the notion that it wouldn't want an agreement unless the two sides saw it in their own self-interest, best interest? And, three, is there a chance that just weariness will convince them to take something they wouldn't have taken in the bright light of day?

MR. BOUCHER: Let's go back to this. On the issue of US bridging proposals, I'm afraid I have nothing more to say than what I haven't said on the subject in the past. On the question of whether one of these people would agree to something out of weariness, I would say that's not our plan. Certainly, we don't think that any of these leaders is going to compromise on an issue of vital importance to his people just because he's tired. We have to get these issues and these decisions to the point where they do serve the fundamental interests of the parties and where the parties feel they can agree with them in order to get peace. So I wouldn't count on anybody agreeing to anything just because he's tired.

And there was something in the middle there. Oh, I know, bilateral contacts. We do report to you on what the President and the Secretary have been doing in their meetings, kind of in more detail. But remember, every day we describe groups, discussions, contacts, meetings on the issues between the parties themselves at different levels and in different configurations -- sometimes larger groups, sometimes a couple people talking somewhere. There are a great deal of contacts and discussions directly between the parties, sometimes with us, very frequently



without us, to deal in great seriousness and sometimes in great detail with these issues. So the issues are being discussed directly between the parties, even if at the leadership level you might see more activity that's going between us and the parties themselves.

Q Is anybody being intractable on any particular issue?

MR. BOUCHER: That's not something we get into.

Q The word "intractable" was used here before.

MR. BOUCHER: I know, but not in that context.

Q Can I follow up on the weariness question? I mean, certainly you've said over the last few days that they're exhausted, they're frustrated and now they're deciding to continue. And it seems as if an extra few hours of sleep this morning isn't enough to give them renewed vigor to go on. So how does the Secretary regroup them and retool them to go forward and make progress?

MR. BOUCHER: Well, those of you who travel with the Secretary know that unflagging vigor has not been a problem for her. And I would say that these are all people who know how to deal very well with protracted and difficult issues and negotiations; and we have found it more frenzied or hectic at different moments but there is a very serious effort being made, there is a pace that continues. The ability to deal with the issues and create momentum on the substance is what's really important and that's what we're trying to do.

Q Yesterday, last night, when Joe was asked about the real reason that made them stay here, he said one of the reasons was that they are going to start looking at things from a different view. So doesn't this lead us to believe that there are some bridging proposals from the United States which, you know, made them stay? You know, they thought about it from a different view and that's why they stayed?

MR. BOUCHER: I'm not going to lead you to any particular conclusion on that.

Q Any outings planned, given that the weekend is coming up and everybody is waiting for the President coming back?

MR. BOUCHER: First of all, no, I'm not aware of any outings planned at this point. If something happens, we'll tell you. And, second of all, I don't think you'll find anywhere in my description everybody waiting for the President to come back. Everybody working hard in the President's absence is the way I've described it and that's truly what's going on.

Q Richard, is the State Department aware of any place in the world where shared sovereignty has been a successful and constructive formula?

MR. BOUCHER: That's a loaded question and I will refer you to academics with it.

Q Were you informed from the leaders of any deadline for them to leave?

MR. BOUCHER: I haven't really asked the question but I haven't heard of any.

Q Are we going to get a late night sort of --

MR. BOUCHER: We can do an evening wrap-up for you, hopefully not too late.

Q The talks between -- direct talks, are they happening between the two parties without your presence?

MR. BOUCHER: I said --

Q Yeah, today.

MR. BOUCHER: The parties have continued to have contacts and discussions on the issues, yes, without us.

Thank you.

(The briefing concluded at 5:23 p.m.)



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Office of the Spokesman  
(Thurmont, Maryland)

---

For Immediate Release

July 21, 2000

PRESS BRIEFING BY  
SPOKESMAN RICHARD BOUCHER  
ON  
THE CAMP DAVID PEACE TALKS  
Thurmont Elementary School

11:05 A.M. EDT

MR. BOUCHER: Good morning, everyone. I would like to bring you up to date from where we were yesterday afternoon when we briefed. I think when I briefed here yesterday afternoon, the Secretary was meeting with her team.

Before dinner, she had additional meetings with Chairman Arafat and Prime Minister Barak. Dinner was an open buffet. All the delegations were invited. I think almost everybody showed up. There were thirty or more people at dinner. People sat together. Both Chairman Arafat and Prime Minister Barak came to dinner and they sat at a table with the Secretary, one on one side of the Secretary and the other on the other side of the Secretary. After dinner, negotiators began meeting to discuss the issues involved in the settlement, in a permanent status, and they met well into the night.

Negotiators are resuming their discussions this morning and will continue throughout the day. The Secretary expects to meet with some of the negotiators to start off and I expect she'll see the leaders during the course of the day as well.

As far as briefings here go, I'll just take this opportunity to announce that this evening and tomorrow, we'll treat Shabbat the way we did last weekend, so we'll do a briefing here this afternoon, in the late afternoon. We'll give you the final update before sundown tonight and then we won't brief here again until Sunday morning.

With those updates, I will be glad to take any questions you have.

Q The President, there are reports, which seem to be credible, that he's going to come back a few – maybe several – hours early. So as we look ahead to Sunday, without a briefing for a while, what's your best advice?

MR. BOUCHER: My best advice is to wait and see.

Q Will he come back early? He's already canceled one meeting out in Japan.

MR. BOUCHER: I think most of those reports, Barry, are based on the statement that Mr. Lockhart made, traveling with the President. I checked with Okinawa about an hour or so ago. They do not have a new schedule yet but, as they said, they are looking to compress the schedule in Japan and see when the President can return here. So we'll look forward to seeing them back.

Q How are we going to work that out, Richard, if the President – because there is even – you know, based on the guidance Joe is giving, there is some indication the President may be back before a Sunday morning briefing. So how will we work that?

MR. BOUCHER: If there is such news, obviously we'll give it to you and then we'll plan on doing the Sunday morning briefing to tell you what happens when he gets back. I expect the traveling party with the President will put out the word on his exact travel plans.

Q Richard, how would you – the only meeting yesterday between the three people who are now leaders of the delegations was at dinner; is that right?

MR. BOUCHER: That was dinner, yes.

Q And you expect that the Secretary will see them again today. But separately? Is that the –

MR. BOUCHER: I don't know. There's always the possibility of a three-way meeting but I'm not aware of anything scheduled like that at this point, so I would expect to follow the pattern we followed in recent days.

Q Can you describe the mood at the top table there?

MR. BOUCHER: The mood at the top table? It wasn't a working dinner, it wasn't a dinner to delve deeply into the issues. They discussed a variety of things, some involving Camp David talks but also, you might say, the outside world. They talked about other things going on outside the confines as well.

Q There is something to life more than Camp David?

MR. BOUCHER: Yes.



Q Richard, without going into substance, is Madame Secretary dealing with the negotiators, negotiating with the negotiators on every subject? Or are one or two subjects being put back until the President comes?

MR. BOUCHER: There are discussions of all the core issues going on.

Q Can I follow up on the dinner? Were the two leaders engaging with each other? Were they talking? What was the dynamic?

MR. BOUCHER: It was a dinner conversation. Sometimes people were talking, you know, the three of them, sometimes to others, sometimes individually to the Secretary, sometimes to each other. So it was a normal discussion involving issues of the world as well as some of the Camp David things as well as everything else. Not a working dinner. I don't want to try to claim –

Q Would you agree with Joe's old appraisal that the batting average of reports from outside here is about four out of ten; four hundred good enough for the Hall of Fame but not good enough for journalists?

MR. BOUCHER: I think you're probably still in the Hall of Fame but I don't think all those reports out there are accurate and I wouldn't want to lead you in one direction or the other.

Q – this morning as reported by AP came out of Jerusalem that Barak is ready and willing to allow some kind of self governance in East Jerusalem?

MR. BOUCHER: I am not going to get into any particular position of any particular leader on the issues. I know there are a lot of reports out there and all I can tell you is some of them may be right and some of them are wrong.

Q Richard, can we just stay on the dinner atmosphere too? Because it is significant they haven't had dinner or even been together since the Shabbat dinner the week before, I think. And given the contents of the Barak letter to President Clinton that was somewhat critical or in fact was quite critical of Chairman Arafat, was it cordial, was it friendly? How was their relationship with one another at dinner?

MR. BOUCHER: I think everybody's in a serious mood in some ways, that we know we're hitting the hardest issues involved in permanent status. Everybody is aware, in fact, that we almost came to an end without an agreement the other night. So it's a serious mood; it's not jovial, I would say. And there –

Q It's not acrimonious?

MR. BOUCHER: It's not acrimonious. There are discussions between them, discussions are continuing, people are talking to each other. Certainly all the

delegations are talking all the time. I think, you know, a serious mood is probably the best way to describe it.

Q Is there any impatience on the side of the delegations for the President to return?

MR. BOUCHER: Well, we are certainly all looking forward to the President's return, but I don't think that translates necessarily into impatience. I think people are seriously working on the issues. As we said, the Secretary continues the discussions, continues to try to move the ball forward in the President's absence and we are, I think, focused on the issues and really working hard.

Q Do you think the President is going to limit the negotiations? I mean, if there is going to be a new deadline? Because maybe if they won't reach an agreement during this week, it can go over and over?

MR. BOUCHER: We don't look for unlimited negotiations; we look to try to bring this to a close and bring an agreement about. The President will assess where we are when he comes back. We will try to move the ball forward and try to move closer together on the issues and come up with solutions during the President's absence. And then when the President gets back, he will assess where we are and decide how we have to take it from here.

Q Do the Israelis plan to continue negotiating through Shabbat, as I understand they did last week?

MR. BOUCHER: I would expect the same thing to happen as happened last week. And that is, there would be informal discussions and that the activities would take into account the religious obligations of the parties.

Q Richard, was Rebecca right that last night's dinner the first time the two have met since last Friday?

MR. BOUCHER: I would go back to the record. We have reported to you on the times that they have met at dinner or other events and I would just go back to the record and look at that. My memory is not clear enough to tell you which day of the week it was.

Q Richard, the White House released – you know, obviously we all know the White House is in charge of pictures. So far we write our own stories. But they released a picture that shows great humor. I mean, Albright and Arafat and everybody seems to be having – he's pointing, someone's pointing. I suppose there were light moments.

Do you happen to know what that occasion was? Did somebody swallow a hot pepper?



MR. BOUCHER: I'm trying to think. I forgot to look at the picture before I came up. Was it at the dinner table or was it when they greeted each other? I mean, they greeted each other in a friendly manner. You know, they got their meals, they sat down, they talked during dinner. There was conversation, sort of normal conversation, sometimes light, sometimes a bit serious on the issues and on other events. And then afterwards, they got up together and I think said goodbye when people had to leave. So friendly at times, but I would say, by and large, to characterize it, I would say serious.

Q Richard, why is the President feeling the need to hasten his return? Are the two leaders indicating an unwillingness to move forward without him? Or are they indicating that they have things they've got to do back home and they want to get out of here? Or what's the reason?

MR. BOUCHER: I wouldn't draw any conclusions from that. The President is deeply engaged in this summit, has worked very, very hard at this summit, has had a very personal role in what's going on. And I am sure he wants to get back to that role as soon as he can after carrying out his schedule and doing what he can, the important business of the G-8.

Q I have a Negotiations 101 question. What's the benefit of not having the leaders meeting directly more often?

MR. BOUCHER: I guess what I would have to say, if you look at the way this negotiation, these discussions have proceeded, there is a lot of back and forth with negotiators, there is a lot of back and forth with the leaders. The leaders obviously have a role in supervising the positions and activities of their delegations. I wouldn't say any of the leaders are disengaged. They are all actively involved in the process; they're just not meeting together. So there are going to be meetings in a variety of formats, whatever we think is best to move the process along.

Q Richard, are they focused on one particular issue or group of issues?

MR. BOUCHER: They are dealing with all the issues.

Q How do you see the Arab leaders' activity? Some of them had spoken with Mr. Arafat and some of them with Mr. Barak. How do you see this? Has it affected the –

MR. BOUCHER: Well, I think what I would say is we have had some phone calls. I think we've said to you that the President has talked to Arab leaders on the phone. The Secretary has talked to a couple of the Arab leaders on the phone and we know that some of those leaders have talked to the parties as well. So there have been discussions with leaders in the outside world.

Generally what I would say is the peace process and peace in the region is very, very important to leaders in many countries and in our discussions we have heard a lot of support for the process of reaching an agreement and trying to settle these issues. So I would say that people in the region are generally supportive of the idea of reaching an agreement.

Q Who are these leaders?

MR. BOUCHER: I'm afraid we are not in a position to give you a list.

Q But are these phone calls affecting the negotiations, especially about Jerusalem?

MR. BOUCHER: I'm not going to get into any particular issue. I am just going to say that people have talked to others in the region and that they have had discussions about the importance of reaching an agreement and peace.

Q I'm a little confused because of the time difference between here and Okinawa but when was the President supposed to get back and when is the earliest he can get back at this point from everything that we've heard?

MR. BOUCHER: We haven't put out a schedule, but it hasn't changed. We looked forward to the President's return about Sunday or Monday. They're dealing with sort of exactly what time it can be and whether it can be a little earlier than might otherwise have happened, but at this point –

Q So late Sunday or early Monday?

MR. BOUCHER: Well, I don't want to try to guess because, frankly, it would just be a guess for me. We'll get a schedule when they're ready.

Q Has the Secretary talked to the President?

MR. BOUCHER: I don't believe she has. I know she's been in touch with Mr. Berger. Obviously, the teams, our people, our staff people have been in touch with people on the President's trip, but I am not aware that she's talked to the President. I'll double check on that for this afternoon.

Q In terms of Albright's role here, and she's talking to Sandy Berger and perhaps even the President, is she leading things on her own as she sees fit, or is she taking cues from the President on what he wants done while he's gone?

MR. BOUCHER: Well, she is leading the US side in these talks, so she is carrying forward the momentum, making the decisions, directing the team, organizing the talks in the absence of the President. Now, that said, the President invested a lot of time and energy in getting us to the point where we are, and so she is continuing the



work that the President was doing and, obviously, they're keeping the President informed, so that when he comes back, he will pick up where she leaves off and take it forward.

Q Right, but how close is the contact with the White House, whether it be Sandy or someone else? Is she calling continually? "I'm planning on doing this," "I'm planning on doing this"? Or is it just like periodic updates?

MR. BOUCHER: It's periodic, to update where we stand or sometimes discuss decisions. But basically, the Secretary, as we said, is leading the delegation, is making the decisions about how we operate and how to go forward here.

Q Richard, can we determine from her not phoning the President and the President not being contacted, that nothing new has happened since he has left now, no improvement of –

MR. BOUCHER: No, I've kept you updated on what's going on, I've kept you updated on the kinds of meetings and discussions that we're having. All the issues were in play before the President left. All the issues remain in play. The President, obviously, is out there for a very important G-8 meeting; she is not necessarily going to be calling him in the middle of dinner.

Q Unless something were to happen?

MR. BOUCHER: Well, I wouldn't make any assumptions like that. I would make the assumption that we are moving forward on the issues that were under discussion when the President left, that we're continuing the work that he had been doing and that we'll be in a position to let him assess the progress, let him assess where we are when he gets back.

Q Richard, we know that King Abdullah has been called and we've asked you this before, but it's a new day so I'll ask you again. Is any consideration being given to bringing any other leaders from the Middle East here? Or have any of them been asked – we know that Arafat wanted Mubarak to weigh in, or at least we've been told, to weigh in on Jerusalem. Any request from the White House or from the other delegations for leaders to weigh in from there to try and influence the talks?

MR. BOUCHER: I think that would take me into the substance of discussions with leaders so I really can't do that. I am not aware of any plans to bring anybody in, other than negotiators, and we told you the experts might show up. But not in the terms that you're talking about, of leaders. As far as who is talking to whom about the peace process and support for the peace process, I think I just have to leave it general.

Q Okay, well, let me ask you this: Is the White House open to the idea? Do they welcome input from the other leaders or do they see it as disrupting the flow of keeping it between –

MR. BOUCHER: I think we recognize the importance of other people in the region. We recognize that it is important to some of these leaders to talk to other people in the region as they go forward. And so we recognize that as what you might say a normal and perhaps useful part of the process.

Q Can you tell us how the respective religious Sabbaths are affecting the talks, Moslem Sabbath and Jewish Sabbath?

MR. BOUCHER: Well, I think we just did that the other day. There are facilities in Camp David and opportunities for people to carry out their religious devotions, their religious obligations during Shabbat. Last week, we had a Shabbat dinner. There were informal discussions during the day on Saturday. I would expect a similar pattern to be maintained, and that people's religious obligations will be taken into account in any activities.

Q I was just wondering, as the summit spokesman, could you tell us if Mr. Barak or Arafat have made calls to leaders as well?

MR. BOUCHER: I know they've had calls or made calls to leaders in the region, yes.

Q Both of them have?

MR. BOUCHER: Yes.

Thank you.

(The briefing concluded at 11:27 a.m.)



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Office of the Spokesman  
(Thurmont, Maryland)

---

For Immediate Release

July 21, 2000

PRESS BRIEFING BY  
SPOKESMAN RICHARD BOUCHER  
ON  
THE CAMP DAVID PEACE TALKS

Thurmont Elementary School

5:00 P.M. EDT

MR. BOUCHER: Let me run through a few of the activities this afternoon for you and tell you where we are as we do the last briefing before Sunday morning. So we will try to give you a sense of what's going on.

Today, small groups of negotiators continued to meet throughout the afternoon to discuss these core issues up at Camp David. The Secretary participated in some of the discussions in one of these groups and she has been kept up to date on the activity and discussions of the others. She has been meeting on and off with her team. At lunch, the Secretary held a discussion with senior negotiators from both sides and they discussed all the issues.

One new development coming up is they've agreed to take an hour or so off and play a game of basketball. The teams will be mixed up between Americans, Palestinians and Israelis. So there will be a basketball up there at 6:00 p.m.

Q I'll bet I know whose idea it was.

MR. BOUCHER: No, it wasn't, as a matter of fact. He had to be talked into it.

Q Will Secretary Albright be playing?

MR. BOUCHER: I'm not aware that Secretary Albright, Chairman Arafat or Prime Minister Barak is participating but it is open to anybody up there who wants to play.

Q What time does it start, Richard? Can we have travel pool to shoot that, please?

MR. BOUCHER: No.

The game starts at 6 o'clock and it's open to American, Palestinian and Israeli delegations, some of the folks from Camp David. So it will just be a pick-up game with a lot of people.

Q Are there no coaches then for either side?

MR. BOUCHER: I'm sure there's moral support from the leadership. But they're not divided up into sides so they will find it hard to figure out which team to support. (Laughter.) Maybe I shouldn't have mentioned it.

In other – back to the work at hand. There is a Shabbat dinner tonight hosted by the Israelis to which the American and Palestinian delegations are invited. We have heard a lot of people are showing up, but I don't expect the leaders all to be there.

Q But Arafat's not coming, is that what you're saying?

Q Is it a kosher dinner? Do you happen to know?

MR. BOUCHER: I know there is kosher food available at Camp David for anybody who wants it so I'm not sure if the whole dinner is kosher or just for those who want it.

Q You didn't expect all the leaders or any of them?

MR. BOUCHER: Well, it's open to everyone so one or two may show up but not necessarily – this is not planned as an event for everybody.

Q What's been the gist of Secretary Albright's day today?

MR. BOUCHER: The gist of her day has been to keep in touch with her team, with the negotiating groups, the small groups that have been meeting on specific issues. She's had discussions with one of those groups, she's had discussions with people involved in those groups. The Americans have been sometimes participating in these small groups, sometimes not, have been in and out. So she's been sort of monitoring the process, pushing the process forward, encouraging the process and generally making sure this process of discussion among small groups of people is moving forward.

Let me just tell you that in our view the parties are making serious efforts to deal with the issues, serious efforts are under way by the negotiators, led by their leadership, to try to deal with these issues. But, nonetheless, it remains very hard going. As we've said before, the issues are tough and they're really trying to deal with them.

Okay, now let's go to questions.

Q I just wanted to ask if those working groups are organized by issue.



MR. BOUCHER: The small groups that are meeting are organized on issues in order to deal with all the core issues that need to be discussed.

Q There is a group for this and a group for that and a group for that, by issue?

MR. BOUCHER: Yeah.

Q She did not meet with either Arafat or Barak thus far today?

MR. BOUCHER: No. She's had some discussions with their people and talked about things back and forth but not had direct meetings with them.

Q Are you expecting a meeting –

MR. BOUCHER: I don't know of any that are planned at this point.

Q Is there any plan for the talks at Emmitsburg – for there to be a more direct exchange on what's going on at Camp David with what's going on in Emmitsburg?

MR. BOUCHER: No, not in that sense. Some of these non-core, generic issues, things like that were discussed last week at Emmitsburg, the economics, the water, the civil affairs, some of these issues have been discussed by some people up at Camp David in the context of the negotiations on the core issues, but there has been nothing the other way around.

Q I have two questions. What is the plan for tomorrow, Saturday? And the other question, is the schedule for President Clinton becoming more clear so we can say when he is probably coming back?

MR. BOUCHER: No, I don't have a new schedule on President Clinton but I would expect that to come out of the traveling White House in Okinawa anyway. As of the time I came down to brief, we didn't have anything new from them; I don't think they have it yet.

And the plan for tomorrow is to continue informal discussions, to continue discussions between the parties, but to plan the activities as we did last week in keeping with the religious obligations of the parties.

Q A photo was distributed earlier today showing the Secretary, Barak and Arafat looking very happy. Can you tell us what happened there, what that was, what was said?

MR. BOUCHER: That was last night, before the dinner. That was when they were greeting each other, I think. I forget who came in last, but when they were first all three

together saying hello to each other before dinner. I think I described it earlier as a friendly greeting, but also a serious mood and discussion at dinner that followed.

Q – what they discussed at dinner?

MR. BOUCHER: During the dinner, they talked about some of the issues and some of the processes that were going on at Camp David, but it wasn't a working dinner, it wasn't a detailed discussion of the issues.

Q Any plans for them to go off campus this weekend?

MR. BOUCHER: No plans at this point. If something changes, we'll tell you.

Q How did Madeleine Albright react to the G-8 picture signed by all of the leaders faxed to her?

MR. BOUCHER: I wasn't aware of that, so I will have to check on that.

Q Two questions. One, since we last asked you this question, has she had any need to speak to President Clinton, has she spoken to the President?

MR. BOUCHER: No, she hasn't.

Q And then secondly, they've all been here for a long time and all three leaders, Secretary Albright, Barak and Arafat, have other things to tend to. Have there been any other pressing issues that Secretary Albright has had to focus some time on this week or today and what about the other two?

MR. BOUCHER: I assume that they're all sort of keeping up with the other work as they need to. Obviously, leaders have other things to do, even though the most important thing may be here. Secretary Albright has done some other work and kept up on some of the other issues, largely handled it by talking to members of her staff, calling people who are working on things for her in Washington.

Q Are there any separate dinner plans for Barak tonight, to invite Arafat?

MR. BOUCHER: I think I described that. The Israeli delegation is hosting a dinner tonight. Americans and Palestinians are invited to it, but I don't necessarily expect that all the leaders would be there.

Q We are reading in the media overseas about the issues on the table at Camp David. Does this mean that the leaders are allowed to talk with their government and does this mean an easing of the blackout with the leaders at Camp David?

MR. BOUCHER: Are you starting to tell me what your sources are? (Laughter.) No, the blackout remains and we do expect people to respect it. We're all aware that there



are a great many media reports out there. We know that some of them are true and many of them are not. I know I was quoted as saying something the other day that I had never said and was actually in one of your questions and not in one of my answers, so don't believe everything you read.

Q TASS is reporting that Putin has pledged his support for the peace process and whatever comes out of it. Was that solicited and what role do you see Russia play in this?

MR. BOUCHER: I'm sure that the Middle East Peace Process was part of the discussion with the President and President Putin in Okinawa and I think the White House has briefed on that, so I think I'll leave it to that.

Q Has the King of Jordan talked to Arafat today?

MR. BOUCHER: I'm not aware of any further phone calls, but I couldn't say for sure.

Q For them playing basketball one hour from now, I understand it's Shabbat, but the case wasn't like that a week ago. Does that mean – like they have formal meetings. Does this mean that everybody now is waiting for President Clinton to come back so that they can –

MR. BOUCHER: No, as I said, there is a very serious effort under way. People have been up there working very hard in very sometimes tense, always intense circumstances. We're ten days, eleven days into this. People have found various forms of recreation, some people have gone running, some have gone walking, some have played pool, things like that. And at this point, the idea came up, folks decided to organize a basketball game. The amount of work being done is prodigious, but also people need a chance every now and then to unwind and to make a little effort in another direction. So that's all that's going on; it doesn't detract from the seriousness.

Q Where is the basketball court?

MR. BOUCHER: At Camp David.

Q Is it outside or is it inside some recreation facility?

MR. BOUCHER: It's inside, but I'm not sure I can describe it exactly.

Q Arafat playing?

MR. BOUCHER: There is no team roster yet, but I hadn't heard that any of the leaders was intending to play.

Q There was a report from Egypt quoting an advisor of President Mubarak and the same report quoting Esmat Abdel Meguid, the Secretary of the Arab League, both

saying that it would be impossible to get an agreement without granting Palestinians sovereignty over Jerusalem. Can you comment on that?

MR. BOUCHER: No. There's a lot of commentary out in the region. There are a lot of views, a lot of people expressing a lot of views. I caution you against believing that those views are necessarily based on any real understanding or detailed information about what's going on at Camp David. People obviously have their views and they're going to express them.

Q But this is the advisor of the Egyptian President. You know, President Clinton –

MR. BOUCHER: I'm not trying to denigrate him. I know he's a very able and brilliant man, but there are a lot of views generally out there in the region and people are going to express their views. I don't take any one or the other as being more informed.

Q A non-Middle East question. Federal agents today arrested 16, 17 people in Charlotte, North Carolina, allegedly involved with Hizbollah. Can you tell us anything more about that and how many other cells are suspected –

MR. BOUCHER: I don't have anything for you on that. I think you would have to go to the domestic agencies for that.

Thank you.

(The briefing concluded at 5:15 p.m.)