

visit our sponsor!!!

**DAILY
NEWS**
—online edition—

HOME

NEWS & VIEWS

Beyond the City

Headlines Index

Last 6 Days

Search/Archive

Shopping

Career

QUICK SEARCH

GO



Beyond the City

GOP, White House Spar Over Hil's Travel

By TIMOTHY J. BURGER
Daily News Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON

The White House and Republican National Committee clashed yesterday over GOP plans to use a congressional hearing to criticize Hillary Rodham Clinton for taxpayer-subsidized campaign travel.

The fireworks erupted after GOP Chairman Jim Nicholson issued a press release announcing a House Appropriations Committee hearing today on the White House budget.

He estimated that Clinton has taken 72 campaign flights on Air Force jets at a cost of \$905,406. The latest campaign filings show that the Clinton campaign paid \$34,000 to the government in reimbursements, based on the cost of first-class airfares for the trips.

"What the hell is the Republican National Committee doing announcing an official, taxpayer-funded hearing of the United States Congress?" asked White House spokesman Jim Kennedy.

It "proves what a partisan exercise this is and raises serious questions about whether taxpayer dollars and official resources are being used to investigate and dig up information for political purposes," Kennedy said.

The tiff underscored the crosscurrent of accusations in the campaign for the Senate in New York. Republicans complain that the First Lady is propped up by the White House, and Democrats charge that the GOP-controlled Congress uses its resources to attack President Clinton's wife.

Rep. John Peterson (R-Pa.) said he understands the "uniqueness" of the first-ever Senate bid by a First Lady, but added, "Let's be candid about it, and put it on the table."

Original Publication Date: 03/23/2000

PROMOTION OF IT TAKES A VILLAGE

Q: Is Mrs. Clinton planning a book tour? What cities will she visit?

A: The first swing of Mrs. Clinton's book tour on January 16th - 20th took her to Little Rock and Blytheville, Arkansas; Ann Arbor, Michigan; Chicago, Illinois; New York, New York; and Boston, Massachusetts. On February 5th, Mrs. Clinton will visit a Crown Books in McLean, Virginia. Simon & Schuster is planning a second swing for February 7th - 9th, when Mrs. Clinton will visit Dallas, Texas; Denver, Colorado; and Los Angeles and San Francisco, California.

Q: How did Simon & Schuster select these places?

A: Simon & Schuster selected these sites because they represent a good cross-section of major book markets around the country.

Q: What will be the format of the book tour events?

A: Simon & Schuster is determining with Mrs. Clinton the format of the book tour events. So far, book tour events have included receptions at local bookstores, visits to children's hospitals, and a variety of public and media forums where Mrs. Clinton has talked about the book and taken questions about the substance of the book.

Q: Is Mrs. Clinton signing copies of her book at bookstore events?

A: No. The events at the bookstores are not book signings. The books available at the stores contain a digital rendering of the First Lady's signature.

Q: How much will the book tour cost and who is paying for it?

A: Simon & Schuster is paying the costs of the book tour. We do not know what the total cost for the tour will be.

Q: Will you break out the costs after the tour?

A: You will have to address that question to Simon & Schuster.

Q: How will the costs for this book tour compare to the amount that Simon & Schuster pays for a typical book tour?

A: We do not know how much Simon & Schuster has spent on other book tours.

Q: How much does Simon & Schuster expect to spend promoting the book?

A: We do not know (refer to Simon & Schuster).

Q: Who will travel with Mrs. Clinton during the book tour?

A: As with all travel by the First Lady, one White House employee accompanied Mrs. Clinton on her book tour to perform official functions and to assist her in her performance of official duties while away from the White House. That person was Kelly Craighead, Special Assistant to the President and Trip Director for the First Lady. Her duties include coordinating logistics and security for the First Lady, facilitating communication between the White House and the First Lady while she is travelling, and working with the Secret Service, event hosts and related personnel regarding Mrs. Clinton's movements and security. Because Ms. Craighead always performs official duties in connection with the First Lady's travel, the government pays her travel-related costs.

Melanne Verveer, Deputy Chief of Staff for the First Lady, also travelled with Mrs. Clinton on her book tour. Ms. Verveer voluntarily took a leave of absence without pay for the days she travelled; she is also personally paying her own travel-related expenses. No other White House staff accompanied Mrs. Clinton on the book tour.

Q: Why did the First Lady travel by government aircraft to her book events?

A: The Secret Service recommended, as it has consistently in the past, that the First Lady travel by government aircraft for security reasons. The White House followed that recommendation, determining that compromising the First Lady's security for the sake of political appearances would be irresponsible in the extreme, particularly in view of the Secret Service's recommendation. For more specific information on the Secret Service's recommendation, you should speak with Mike Tar with the Secret Service. Mr. Tar can be reached at (202) 435-5708.

The Office of Management and Budget requires that travellers reimburse the government at the coach rate for unofficial use of a government aircraft. However, the White House decided prior to the First Lady's book travel that we would require Simon & Schuster to reimburse at the first class rate rather than coach rate. Accordingly, Simon & Schuster pays first class airfare to the government for the First Lady and any Simon & Schuster personnel who travel with her. Simon & Schuster also pays the First Lady's hotel and ground transportation costs.

Q: Will that cover the flight's full cost to taxpayers?

A: Unfortunately, the security element involved in Mrs. Clinton's travel does come at some cost to the taxpayers. We certainly regret that, but accept the recommendations of the Secret Service.



US Department
of Transportation
Federal Aviation
Administration

800 Independence Ave S W
Washington, D C 20591

NOV 19 1999

Mr. Jim LeMay
News Director
WJLA-TV
Washington DC

By fax to: (202) 364-7751

Dear Mr. LeMay:

During our telephone calls with Assistant News Director Michael Fountain last night, we provided overwhelming information that WJLA was factually incorrect in its proposed reporting on Federal Aviation Administration treatment concerning the First Lady's aircraft, Executive One Foxtrot (EIF). Having reviewed the segment, we believe it is important to once again correct the false information contained in last night's story.

To state once again, there has been no new order or directive concerning EIF and, contrary to your broadcast, EIF does not receive the same handling as Air Force One (AF1). The October 27, 1999, memorandum used as the premise for your broadcast was written -- as its author has confirmed -- to remind air traffic controllers of the continuing procedures regarding all Presidential aircraft, which include AF1, Air Force 2, EIF, and any other aircraft so designated. Executive One Foxtrot has always been included in the definition of "Presidential aircraft." He also acknowledged that his memorandum was incorrect implying any new White House order. He merely meant to remind controllers of a long-standing FAA practice.

The memorandum, referring to FAA Order 7210.3, was written to clarify the issue of the level of supervision to be present when one of these aircraft is being handled, because questions about the level of controller had been raised regarding EIF in the Eastern Region. The memo states, it is "prudent to discuss these concerns," but it does not declare a new policy. As one might imagine, policy changes would be issued from FAA in Washington not a branch manager in one of our regions.

There are a series of controller procedures which vary according to the aircraft involved, but which for security purposes cannot be addressed in this letter. But as a matter of fact, EIF has never been handled in the same way as AF1 in this regard. I have included FAA documentation covering procedures for handling of Presidential aircraft, including EIF, that have been in place since at least 1984.

A review of the facts:

The broadcast reported that "the White House has ordered the FAA to treat any aircraft carrying the First Lady as if it were Air Force One with the President on board."

As we told your station, the White House has not ordered the FAA to do anything. There was no new order or directive and E1F is not treated the same as Air Force One.

2. The broadcast reported that E1F "will get special treatment every time she takes off and lands."

This statement is not fully correct. There are separate procedures for all presidential aircraft, as determined by the Secret Service and the FAA to ensure operational safety and security. However, E1F is not routinely provided priority over other aircraft and does not receive the same handling as AFI. This is not a new policy.

3. The broadcast reported priority handling of E1F causes "systemwide delays in the busy northeastern corridor."

Again, false. The aircraft, E1F, has never caused a systemwide delay of any kind.

4. The broadcast reported that the memorandum is a "new directive."

Again, false. Nowhere in the memo does it say that this is a new order, a new directive, or new guidance. In fact, FAA officials last night repeatedly stated that this was a reminder of existing policy, because of questions and concerns that were raised.

5. The broadcast reported that the "new directive gives Mrs. Clinton "Unique flight status, something enjoyed by no predecessor or political candidate."

Again, false. The treatment of E1F has not changed since at least 1984. There is nothing new and unique here. E1F in previous years has also been accorded the same treatment. Presidential candidates also get similar treatment, at the request of the Secret Service.

6. The broadcast reported that "Bob Dole, for instance, didn't have such travel privileges."

Again, false. If the Secret Service requested expedited treatment for the presidential candidate, it would have been afforded to him.

7. The broadcast reported that the memo tells managers and controllers "to expect Foxrot One [sic] to cause delays."

Again, false. Nowhere in the memo is this stated.

8. The broadcast reported that "the White House and the FAA say that what we have reported is true, but that it is not a new policy."

Again, false. Your station was told repeatedly that it would be false to report that E1F would receive the same handling as AF1. Your station was told repeatedly there had been no change in policy. Your station was directly told on the record that it would be "absolutely false and grossly inaccurate" to make those statements.

9. Your broadcast reported that "They say it is a longstanding policy to treat the First Lady's plane exactly as AF1 and that nothing new is being done now to facilitate travel for the First Lady in the Senate campaign."

Again, false. We clearly stated those are different procedures for AF1, AF2, and E1F. It is correct that it is longstanding policy that E1F is included in the definition of "presidential aircraft," but that does not mean it receives the same handling. Nothing new is being done now to facilitate the current First Lady's travel than any of her predecessors for at least the last 15 years.

10. Your broadcast reported that "this is the first time as a matter of continuing policy rather than on an occasional basis the First Lady's plane is being treated exactly the same as AF1."

Again, false. Your station was told that the policy on handling of E1F, which has different handling than AF1, goes back for more than a decade. You were told that the memo, while perhaps vague in part, is a restatement of existing policy, and that "there has been no change in the policy. Absolutely nothing has changed as far as operational handling is concerned."

11. The broadcast refers to the "White House" as the source of this directive.

To the FAA in this memo, the "White House" is the office in the Secret Service that deals with the movement of the President and his family, the Vice President and his family, and any dignitaries or candidates the Secret Service protects.

Finally, we believe this broadcast provides false and misleading information to the traveling public. We are also concerned at the failure to take the basic step of professional reporting of seeking clarification of an internal FAA memorandum with the agency. We

believe based on the facts cited above and to correct the misleading impression from your report, it is appropriate for WJLA to broadcast a retraction of the story it reported last night.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Ronald E. Morgan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping initial "R".

Ronald E. Morgan
Director of Air Traffic Services

Enclosure



US Department
of Transportation
Federal Aviation
Administration

800 Independence Ave S W
Washington, D C 20591

NOV 19 1999

Mr. Jim LeMay
News Director
WJLA-TV
Washington DC

By fax to: (202) 364-7751

Dear Mr. LeMay:

During our telephone calls with Assistant News Director Michael Fountain last night, we provided overwhelming information that WJLA was factually incorrect in its proposed reporting on Federal Aviation Administration treatment concerning the First Lady's aircraft, Executive One Foxtrot (EIF). Having reviewed the segment, we believe it is important to once again correct the false information contained in last night's story.

To state once again, there has been no new order or directive concerning EIF and, contrary to your broadcast, EIF does not receive the same handling as Air Force One (AF1). The October 27, 1999, memorandum used as the premise for your broadcast was written -- as its author has confirmed -- to remind air traffic controllers of the continuing procedures regarding all Presidential aircraft, which include AF1, Air Force 2, EIF, and any other aircraft so designated. Executive One Foxtrot has always been included in the definition of "Presidential aircraft." He also acknowledged that his memorandum was incorrect implying any new White House order. He merely meant to remind controllers of a long-standing FAA practice.

The memorandum, referring to FAA Order 7210.3, was written to clarify the issue of the level of supervision to be present when one of these aircraft is being handled, because questions about the level of controller had been raised regarding EIF in the Eastern Region. The memo states, it is "prudent to discuss these concerns," but it does not declare a new policy. As one might imagine, policy changes would be issued from FAA in Washington not a branch manager in one of our regions.

There are a series of controller procedures which vary according to the aircraft involved, but which for security purposes cannot be addressed in this letter. But as a matter of fact, EIF has never been handled in the same way as AF1 in this regard. I have included FAA documentation covering procedures for handling of Presidential aircraft, including EIF, that have been in place since at least 1984.

A review of the facts:

The broadcast reported that "the White House has ordered the FAA to treat any aircraft carrying the First Lady as if it were Air Force One with the President on board."

As we told your station, the White House has not ordered the FAA to do anything. There was no new order or directive and E1F is not treated the same as Air Force One.

2. The broadcast reported that E1F "will get special treatment every time she takes off and lands."

This statement is not fully correct. There are separate procedures for all presidential aircraft, as determined by the Secret Service and the FAA to ensure operational safety and security. However, E1F is not routinely provided priority over other aircraft and does not receive the same handling as AF1. This is not a new policy.

3. The broadcast reported priority handling of E1F causes "systemwide delays in the busy northeastern corridor."

Again, false. The aircraft, E1F, has never caused a systemwide delay of any kind.

4. The broadcast reported that the memorandum is a "new directive."

Again, false. Nowhere in the memo does it say that this is a new order, a new directive, or new guidance. In fact, FAA officials last night repeatedly stated that this was a reminder of existing policy, because of questions and concerns that were raised.

5. The broadcast reported that the "new directive gives Mrs. Clinton "Unique flight status, something enjoyed by no predecessor or political candidate."

Again, false. The treatment of E1F has not changed since at least 1984. There is nothing new and unique here. E1F in previous years has also been accorded the same treatment. Presidential candidates also get similar treatment, at the request of the Secret Service.

6. The broadcast reported that "Bob Dole, for instance, didn't have such travel privileges."

Again, false. If the Secret Service requested expedited treatment for the presidential candidate, it would have been afforded to him.

7. The broadcast reported that the memo tells managers and controllers "to expect Foxtrot One [sic] to cause delays."

Again, false. Nowhere in the memo is this stated.

8. The broadcast reported that "the White House and the FAA say that what we have reported is true, but that it is not a new policy."

Again, false. Your station was told repeatedly that it would be false to report that E1F would receive the same handling as AF1. Your station was told repeatedly there had been no change in policy. Your station was directly told on the record that it would be "absolutely false and grossly inaccurate" to make those statements.

9. Your broadcast reported that "They say it is a longstanding policy to treat the First Lady's plane exactly as AF1 and that nothing new is being done now to facilitate travel for the First Lady in the Senate campaign."

Again, false. We clearly stated those are different procedures for AF1, AF2, and E1F. It is correct that it is longstanding policy that E1F is included in the definition of "presidential aircraft," but that does not mean it receives the same handling. Nothing new is being done now to facilitate the current First Lady's travel than any of her predecessors for at least the last 15 years.

10. Your broadcast reported that "this is the first time as a matter of continuing policy rather than on an occasional basis the First Lady's plane is being treated exactly the same as AF1."

Again, false. Your station was told that the policy on handling of E1F, which has different handling than AF1, goes back for more than a decade. You were told that the memo, while perhaps vague in part, is a restatement of existing policy, and that "there has been no change in the policy. Absolutely nothing has changed as far as operational handling is concerned."

11. The broadcast refers to the "White House" as the source of this directive.

To the FAA in this memo, the "White House" is the office in the Secret Service that deals with the movement of the President and his family, the Vice President and his family, and any dignitaries or candidates the Secret Service protects.

Finally, we believe this broadcast provides false and misleading information to the traveling public. We are also concerned at the failure to take the basic step of professional reporting of seeking clarification of an internal FAA memorandum with the agency. We

believe based on the facts cited above and to correct the misleading impression from your report, it is appropriate for WJLA to broadcast a retraction of the story it reported last night.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Ronald E. Morgan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ronald" being more prominent and the last name "Morgan" written in a more compact, flowing style.

Ronald E. Morgan
Director of Air Traffic Services

Enclosure

First Lady's Plane
November 19, 1999

Q: WJLA-TV reported last night that the White House has ordered the FAA to treat the First Lady's plane the same as Air Force One, and that this new policy will mean delays for travelers on the East Coast. Is there a new policy?

A: No. The story is false, and WJLA was told it was false by the White House and the FAA. There is no White House order and no new policy regarding the treatment of the First Lady's plane. It continues to be treated in the same manner that it has for years, going back well before this Administration. And it is not treated the same as Air Force One.

Q: But what about the FAA document that purports to describe this new policy?

A: That memorandum simply restates long-standing policy. It does not announce a new policy. The memorandum was mischaracterized by WJLA.