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TITLE: SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT DAILY PRESS BRIEFING - JULY 29, 1992

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SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT DAILY PRESS BRIEFING - JULY 29, 1992

INFORM CONSULS ALSO FOR USEC/USOEC

RELEASED IN PART B3 CIA  
PERS/ORG

THE FOLLOWING SUBJECTS WERE COVERED IN THE DEPARTMENT'S  
DAILY PRESS BRIEFING TODAY:

IRAQ: UN INSPECTIONS FOR WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION (1),  
SEARCH OF AGRICULTURE MINISTRY COMPLETED (1), US ADMISSION  
OF IRAQI REFUGEES/NUMBER OF SOLDIERS (1-3), DEFINITION OF  
HIGH RISK REFUGEE (3), AMBASSADOR PERKINS TESTIMONY ON  
AUTHORIZATION FOR USE OF FORCE (4,6), SUPPRESSION OF  
MINORITIES IN NORTH/SOUTH BY GOVERNMENT FORCES (4-6),  
PATTERN OF FIXED-WING AIRCRAFT USE (4-6), EXTENT OF  
CASUALTIES (4), SECRETARY TO MEET WITH OPPOSITION LEADERS  
TODAY (6-7)

FORMER YUGOSLAVIA: US ADMISSION OF REFUGEES (3-4)

COLOMBIA: SEARCH FOR PABLO ESCOBAR (7)

CUBA: REPORT OF COUP (8)

ISRAEL: DELEGATION TO DISCUSS US ACCESS TO GENERAL DOTAN  
RE: DIVERSION OF US FUNDS (8-9)

TEXT FOLLOWS:

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MR. SNYDER: GOOD AFTERNOON, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN. ONCE  
AGAIN I APOLOGIZE FOR THE HOUR. I DON'T HAVE ANY  
ANNOUNCEMENTS; I'LL BE HAPPY TO TAKE YOUR QUESTIONS.

REVIEW AUTHORITY: James Cooper, Senior  
Reviewer

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DO YOU HAVE AN UPDATE FOR US ON IRAQ, WITH RESPECT TO THE INSPECTION AT THE AGRICULTURE MINISTRY AND THE PROSPECT FOR NEW INSPECTIONS ELSEWHERE?

MR. SNYDER: GEORGE, JUST A BIT. AS YOU HAVE ALL SEEN IN THE MEDIA REPORTS, THE U.N. HAS COMPLETED ITS INSPECTION AT THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE BUILDING AND HAS LEFT BAGHDAD.

I WOULD NOTE WE SAW IN ONE MEDIA REPORT THAT THE LEADER OF THE INSPECTION TEAM IN BAGHDAD IS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT THERE IS ROOM FOR DEEP CONCERN THAT SOME MAJOR MATERIAL MAY HAVE BEEN TAKEN OUT. HOWEVER, WE DON'T HAVE A FORMAL REPORT FROM THE TEAM YET ON WHAT ITS CONCLUSIONS ARE AND I WOULD SUGGEST, AT LEAST FOR THE MOMENT, THAT YOU GET IN TOUCH WITH UNSCOM.

Q: JOE, COULD YOU GIVE US A SENSE OF WHAT THE UNITED STATES POSITION WOULD BE IF IT IS FIRMLY ESTABLISHED THAT THINGS WERE REMOVED IN THAT INTERIM WHILE THE DEBATE WAS GOING ON AS TO WHO WAS GETTING IN? WHAT'S OUR ATTITUDE?

MR. SNYDER: BARRIE, IT'S SORT OF A HYPOTHETICAL QUESTION. I THINK IT WOULD DEPEND VERY MUCH ON THE NATURE OF WHAT WAS FOUND, AND I DON'T REALLY WANT TO GET INTO DISCUSSING VARIOUS HYPOTHETICAL QUESTIONS.

Q: WELL, THEY'RE QUOTED AS SAYING THAT THEY DIDN'T FIND ANYTHING INCRIMINATING.

MR. SNYDER: WELL, THEY'RE ALSO QUOTED AS -- THE QUOTE THAT I GAVE YOU, WHICH IS ALL THE MORE REASON WE OUGHT TO BE WAITING TO SEE WHAT THEIR FORMAL REPORT SAYS, AND THEN WE WILL REACT TO THAT WHEN WE GET IT.

Q: JOE, THERE'S A REPORT THAT THE UNITED STATES IS GOING TO BE TAKING IN A THOUSAND IRAQI REFUGEES IN THE NEXT TWO MONTHS AND 3,000 MORE OVER, I DON'T KNOW, THE NEXT TWO YEARS OR SO. IS THAT ACCURATE?

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MR. SNYDER: CAROL, LET ME GIVE YOU SOME BACKGROUND ON THAT AND SOME DETAILS ON WHAT WE'RE DOING.

AT THE END OF THE GULF WAR, THE SAUDI ARABIAN GOVERNMENT WAS PROVIDING REFUGE TO SOME 20,000 CIVILIANS WHO FLED SOUTHERN IRAQ AT THE TIME OF THE ANTI-SADDAM UPRISING IN THE SPRING OF '91. IN ADDITION, SOME 10,000 FORMER IRAQI PRISONERS OF WAR WHO DECLINED TO RETURN TO IRAQ AT THE END OF THE WAR WERE ADJUSTED TO REFUGEE STATUS.

MY UNDERSTANDING IS THERE ARE ABOUT 27,000 OF THOSE -- PEOPLE IN THOSE TWO CATEGORIES STILL THERE.

LAST WINTER, WHEN IT BECAME CLEAR THAT CONDITIONS IN IRAQ PRECLUDED THE SAFE RETURN OF MANY OF THESE REFUGEES, THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES CONCLUDED THAT OTHER SOLUTIONS, SUCH AS RESETTLEMENT IN THIRD COUNTRIES, MUST BE FOUND.

IMMEDIATELY ON HEARING THIS REPORT, AT ITS CONCLUSION, THE UNITED STATES BEGAN INITIATING REFUGEE ADMISSIONS PROCESSING. THERE WAS AN IMMIGRATION SERVICE VISIT IN MARCH. IT FOCUSED ON A SMALL GROUP OF HIGH-RISK CASES, INVOLVING 15 PEOPLE; AND ALL OF THESE HAVE ALREADY BEEN RESETTLED IN THE UNITED STATES. A SECOND GROUP OF HIGH-RISK CASES -- THAT IS, SOME 60 TO 70 PEOPLE -- WAS APPROVED BY INS IN JUNE. AT LEAST 30 OF THESE HAVE ALREADY ARRIVED IN THE UNITED STATES.

I WOULD SUGGEST YOU TALK TO INS FOR MORE DETAIL ON THOSE.

IN JULY, INS SENT TWO ADJUDICATORS TO SAUDI ARABIA FOR ALMOST FOUR WEEKS. OVER 1,000 IRAQI REFUGEES WERE APPROVED FOR ADMISSION TO THE UNITED STATES. WE HOPE THAT MOST, IF NOT ALL, OF THESE REFUGEES WILL ARRIVE BY THE END OF SEPTEMBER.

WE INTEND TO ADMIT AT LEAST A FURTHER 1,000 IRAQI REFUGEES

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FROM SAUDI ARABIA IN FISCAL YEAR 1993.

AND WE'RE ENCOURAGING OTHER RESETTLEMENT COUNTRIES TO RESPOND POSITIVELY TO THE UNHCR'S CALL FOR RESETTLEMENT OF THIS PARTICULAR GROUP OF PEOPLE.

Q: IS THIS THE NORMAL SORT OF COURSE OF EVENTS THAT IN JUST -- I MEAN IT SEEMS LIKE A VERY SHORT TIME SPAN FOR THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO DECIDE THAT THE SITUATION IS IRREVOCABLE AND THAT THESE PEOPLE WOULD HAVE TO BE RESETTLED IN THIRD COUNTRIES. IS THAT NORMAL? I MEAN WITH THE CAMBODIANS. I MEAN THEY WERE IN THAI CAMPS FOR YEARS.

MR. SNYDER: WELL, AGAIN, WITHOUT DOING COMPARISONS -- WHICH YOU KNOW WE ARE VERY UNCOMFORTABLE DOING --

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Q: NOT A BIT. (LAUGHTER)

MR. SNYDER: -- AND AS A MATTER OF POLICY DON'T DO, I THINK THE EXPECTATION WAS THAT THESE PEOPLE WERE GOING TO BE ABLE TO GO BACK AND THE SITUATION WOULD BE RESOLVED IN A WAY THAT THEY COULD GO BACK. AND AT A CERTAIN POINT UNHCR MADE ITS DETERMINATION, AND THIS IS IRAQ SPECIFIC AND I DON'T THINK YOU REALLY CAN DRAW EXACT PARALLELS -- OR USEFUL PARALLELS -- TO OTHER SITUATIONS.

Q: WELL, DID SAUDI ARABIA SAY, "LOOK, THIS IS ENOUGH. WE CAN'T HARBOR THESE PEOPLE ANY LONGER"? WAS THAT A FACTOR?

MR. SNYDER: NOT THAT I'M AWARE OF. IT WAS AN HCR DECISION BASED ON EXAMINATION OF THE CONDITIONS IN IRAQ.

Q: AND WHAT DOES HIGH RISK MEAN?

MR. SNYDER: I DON'T KNOW EXACTLY. LET ME TRY AND GET A DEFINITION FOR YOU.

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Q: ARE WE TALKING POLITICAL?

MR. SNYDER: PEOPLE WHO WOULD BE AT A HIGH RISK IF THEY RETURNED TO THEIR COUNTRY.

Q: SADDAM DIDN'T LIKE THEM.

MR. SNYDER: THIS IS WHAT IT GENERALLY MEANS. IN GENERAL, I WOULD SUSPECT IT'S THEIR POLITICAL BACKGROUND, BUT LET ME CHECK SPECIFICALLY.

Q: AND HOW ARE THESE PEOPLE -- ARE THESE PEOPLE BEING ADMITTED UNDER, YOU KNOW, THE DISCUSSION WE HAD HERE A LOT THIS YEAR ABOUT ECONOMIC REFUGEES VERSUS POLITICAL REFUGEES. HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THESE PEOPLE?

MR. SNYDER: THEY ARE REFUGEES IN THE U.N. DEFINITION OF THE TERM "REFUGEES."

Q: WHICH IS TO SAY?

MR. SNYDER: WHICH IS POLITICAL REFUGEES.

Q: JOE, HOW MANY OF THESE PEOPLE WE'RE GOING TO ADMIT WERE FORMER IRAQI SOLDIERS?

MR. SNYDER: I DON'T HAVE THE BREAKDOWN. LET ME SEE IF IT'S POSSIBLE. YOU MIGHT HAVE TO GO TO INS FOR THAT.

Q: CAN YOU GIVE US SOMEWHAT OF A RUNDOWN ON THE NUMBER OF REFUGEES THE U.S. HAS ADMITTED, OR IS ADMITTING, FROM FORMER YUGOSLAVIA?

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MR. SNYDER: I DON'T HAVE THAT HERE, RALPH. LET ME SEE WHAT I CAN GET.

I CAN SAY THAT IN GENERAL TERMS IT'S OUR FEELING THAT MOST OF THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN DISPLACED FROM THEIR HOMES,

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EITHER WITHIN THEIR BOUNDARIES OR WHO'VE CROSSED INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARIES FROM THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLICS, WANT TO RETURN IF THE SITUATION CAN BE STABILIZED. THEY'RE NOT PEOPLE LOOKING FOR EMIGRATION. BUT LET ME GET SOMETHING SPECIFICALLY ON THE NUMBERS ON THAT.

Q: WELL, IN THE INTERVIEWS WITH THE IRAQI REFUGEES, DID THE U.S. DETERMINE THAT THOSE PEOPLE WERE LOOKING FOR IMMIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES?

MR. SNYDER: WELL, THEY APPLIED FOR REFUGEE STATUS. WE PRESUME THAT'S --

Q: WITH THE UNITED STATES?

MR. SNYDER: WITH THE UNITED STATES, SURE.

Q: JOE, BACK ON IRAQ. THIS MORNING AMBASSADOR PERKINS AND MR. WARD BOTH SAID THAT THE IRAQIS REMAIN IN WIDE NONCOMPLIANCE WITH VARIOUS U.N. SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS AND AMBASSADOR PERKINS SAID THAT NO FURTHER AUTHORITY WOULD BE REQUIRED UNDER U.N. SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 687 ANYWAY. IS IT STILL THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S POSITION THAT STATEMENT IS CORRECT; YOU DON'T REQUIRE ANY CONSULTATION WITH THE COALITION ALLIES IN ORDER TO TAKE ACTION?

MR. SNYDER: I WAS NOT ABLE TO WATCH THE HEARINGS TODAY NOR HAVE I HAD A CHANCE TO READ THE TRANSCRIPTS. I DON'T KNOW EXACTLY WHAT WAS SAID; BUT I CERTAINLY WILL STAND BY WHAT AMBASSADOR PERKINS SAID, YES.

Q: JOE, ALSO ON IRAQ AND THE VIOLATIONS, CAN YOU -- YOU KNOW, THIS WHOLE ISSUE OF THE FIXED-WING AIRCRAFT BEING USED AGAINST THE SHIITES HAS COME UP. TO THE BEST OF YOUR KNOWLEDGE, IS THAT HAPPENING EVEN AS WE SPEAK OR ARE WE TALKING ABOUT AN ISOLATED INCIDENT OR SOMETHING THAT'S ONGOING?

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MR. SNYDER: WE ARE TALKING ABOUT A RECENT NEW PATTERN, CERTAINLY, OF MILITARY PRESSURE IN THE SOUTH. LET ME GIVE YOU A LITTLE BIT OF A RUNDOWN ON WHAT WE KNOW.

IRAQI MILITARY COUNTERINSURGENCY-TYPE OPERATIONS CONTINUE AGAINST IRAQI CIVILIAN POPULATION IN BOTH THE NORTH AND THE SOUTH IN AN EFFORT TO INTIMIDATE AND PACIFY THE POPULATION. THERE HAS BEEN A RECENT INCREASED EFFORT IN THAT DIRECTION.

LARGE IRAQI GROUND FORCES REMAIN POISED IN THE SOUTH.

AND WE'RE CONCERNED ABOUT SIGNS WE HAVE SEEN OF A POSSIBLE RESUMPTION OF A MAJOR IRAQI OPERATION AGAINST THE SHI'A IN THE SOUTH.

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Q: JUST TO FOLLOW UP ON THAT, DO YOU KNOW EXACTLY WHEN THEY STARTED FLYING FIXED-WING AIRCRAFT? I MEAN, WHAT I'M TRYING TO GET AT HERE IS, DID WE SEE ONE FIXED-WING AIRCRAFT FLOWN ONCE OR HAS THERE BEEN A BUILDUP? IS IT GOING ON ALL THE TIME? ARE THEY DOING IT REGULARLY?

MR. SNYDER: I DON'T KNOW THE ANSWER TO WHEN WE FIRST SAW IT. I DO KNOW WE'RE TALKING ABOUT MORE THAN ONE FLIGHT. I'LL SEE IF THERE'S ANYTHING MORE WE CAN GET FOR YOU. I'M NOT SURE WE CAN, BUT I'LL TRY.

Q: HOW RECENTLY?

MR. SNYDER: THAT'S WHAT I DON'T KNOW, IS WHEN IT BEGAN.

Q: DOES THE USE OF THESE GROUND FORCES CONSTITUTE A VIOLATION? IT'S NOT JUST AIRCRAFT; CORRECT?

MR. SNYDER: THE IRAQI USE OF THEIR FORCES TO SUPPRESS THE SHI'AS IN THE SOUTH, TO PUT PRESSURE ON AND TO SUPPRESS THE SHI'AS IN THE SOUTH IS A VIOLATION OF SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 688. THAT'S THE SINGLE SALIENT FACTOR HERE.

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Q: BUT, BASICALLY, THIS HAS BEEN GOING ON FOR THE LAST 18 MONTHS; CORRECT?

MR. SNYDER: BUT AS I SAID, WE HAVE SEEN A RECENT, MORE INTENSE PATTERN AND THAT'S WHAT'S CONCERNED US. I'LL SEE IF I CAN FIND OUT SOME MORE ABOUT WHEN THAT BEGAN, AND FIND OUT HOW MUCH MORE WE CAN SAY ABOUT IT.

Q: IF YOU WOULD, BECAUSE A RECENT, MORE INTENSE PATTERN, AS YOU KEEP SAYING, WOULD INDICATE THAT IT IS MORE THAN ONE OR MORE THAN TWO. SO COULD YOU FIND OUT IF IT'S BIGGER THAN A BREAD BOX?

MR. SNYDER: I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN FIND OUT.

Q: THERE WAS AN L.A. TIMES STORY YESTERDAY THAT I THINK REFERRED TO SIGNIFICANT CASUALTIES. COULD YOU TAKE THAT ONE?

MR. SNYDER: WE'LL SEE WHAT MORE WE CAN FIND OUT FOR YOU.

Q: DOES SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 688 ALSO CONTAIN ITS OWN TRIGGER?

MR. SNYDER: I REALLY DON'T KNOW, JIM. I'M NOT AN EXPERT. I HAVEN'T MEMORIZED IT. I DON'T KNOW.

Q: WELL, COULD YOU LOOK INTO THAT SINCE YOU'RE THE ONE WHO MENTIONED THE NUMBER?

MR. SNYDER: OR YOU COULD READ IT, TOO. IT'S A QUESTION OF WHAT IT SAYS. I'M SORRY, I DON'T KNOW.

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Q: IT TURNS OUT TO BE A MATTER OF SOME INTERPRETATION APPARENTLY, BECAUSE AMBASSADOR PERKINS SAID THAT WHILE IT'S LEGALLY PERMISSIBLE, ON ANOTHER LAYER OF DECISION-MAKING, IT MIGHT BE NECESSARY TO GO BACK FOR

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POLITICAL SUPPORT. SO IT'S NOT AS SIMPLE AS READING SOME LANGUAGE --

MR. SNYDER: I'LL SEE WHAT WE CAN SAY ABOUT IT.

Q: JOE, YOUR A LITTLE STATEMENT ON IRAQI COUNTER-INSURGENCY OPERATIONS IN THE SOUTH MADE NO MENTION OF FIXED-WING AIRCRAFT. DID THE COUNTER-INSURGENCY OPERATIONS TO WHICH YOU WERE REFERRING IN THAT ANSWER REFER TO THE USE OF FIXED-WING AIRCRAFT IN THAT CONTEXT?

MR. SNYDER: I DON'T KNOW SPECIFICALLY, RALPH. AS I SAID, I'LL SEE HOW MUCH MORE DETAIL I CAN FIND OUT ABOUT.

Q: YOU GAVE THAT IN ANSWER TO A QUESTION ABOUT FIXED-WING AIRCRAFT. IS THAT WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT? OR ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT LARGE GROUND FORCES POISED?

MR. SNYDER: AND THERE ARE GROUND OPERATIONS, THE COUNTER-INSURGENCY OPERATIONS. I DON'T KNOW SPECIFICALLY ABOUT THE USE OF AIRCRAFT IN THESE OPERATIONS. I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN FIND OUT.

Q: JOE, MEMBERS OF THE OPPOSITION GROUPS, PARTICULARLY THE KURDS, HAVE BEEN GIVING INTERVIEWS AND TALKING TO PEOPLE IN THE LAST DAY OR SO, SAYING THAT THEY ARE GOING TO BE SEEKING WIDE ECONOMIC, POLITICAL, AND MILITARY SUPPORT, INCLUDING THE SUPPLYING OF WEAPONS. HAS THE ADMINISTRATION TAKEN ANY POSITION ON WHETHER, IN FACT, THESE REQUESTS WOULD BE GRANTED?

MR. SNYDER: THE SECRETARY IS GOING TO BE MEETING WITH THE IRAQI OPPOSITION LEADERS THIS AFTERNOON. WE'LL GIVE YOU A READOUT OF WHAT HAPPENS AT THAT MEETING. I REALLY DON'T WANT TO GET INTO THAT BEFORE THE MEETING TAKES PLACE.

Q: WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THAT MEETING?

MR. SNYDER: WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THAT MEETING?

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Q: YES.

MR. SNYDER: IT'S TO UNDERLINE OUR SUPPORT FOR THE EFFORTS OF THIS PARTICULAR GROUP AT THIS TIME. THIS IS A NEW EFFORT ON THEIR PART. THEY GOT TOGETHER IN VIENNA. IT'S A HIGH-LEVEL GROUP WHICH REFLECTS THE FULL DIVERSITY OF IRAQI SOCIETY. THE SECRETARY IS MEETING WITH THEM TO SUPPORT THE EFFORT THAT THEY'RE ABOUT.

Q: HOW ARE YOU GOING TO DO THE READOUT, JOE?

MR. SNYDER: WE WILL HAVE SOMETHING IN WRITING FOR YOU. I REALIZE THE MEETING IS LATE. WE'RE GOING TO TRY AND GET IT OUT AS QUICKLY AS WE CAN.

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Q: AND YOU CAN GET IT BY CALLING THE PRESS OFFICE?

MR. SNYDER: YOU CAN GET IT BY CALLING THE PRESS OFFICE.

Q: IT'S SCHEDULED FOR 4:30?

MR. SNYDER: PARDON ME?

Q: IT'S STILL SCHEDULED FOR 4:30?

MR. SNYDER: IT'S SCHEDULED FOR 4:30. YES.

Q: JOE, WHO CALLED THIS MEETING? DID THE SECRETARY INVITE THEM OR DID THEY ASK FOR THE MEETING?

MR. SNYDER: I DON'T KNOW. I'LL FIND OUT. SORRY.

Q: STILL ON THAT. TO SUPPORT THE EFFORT THAT THEY ARE ABOUT, WHAT IS THE EFFORT THAT THE U.S. IS SUPPORTING? WHAT EFFORT? AN EFFORT TO CREATE A GOVERNMENT, AN EFFORT TO OVERTHROW SADDAM, PERHAPS SOME OTHER GOALS?

MR. SNYDER: RALPH, I HAD SPECIFIC LANGUAGE ON IT

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YESTERDAY WHICH I USED. I'D REFER YOU TO THAT. I DIDN'T BRING IT BACK.

Q: I'M SORRY. I'LL LOOK IT UP, YES.

MR. SNYDER: I THINK IT'S BEST IF YOU LOOK IT UP.

Q: NEW SUBJECT, ALTHOUGH STILL SPEAKING OF FIXED-WING AIRCRAFT. ARE U.S. AIRCRAFT OF ANY TYPE BEING USED TO LOOK FOR ESCOBAR IN COLOMBIA?

MR. SNYDER: LET ME GIVE YOU WHAT I HAVE ON ESCOBAR. HE'S STILL AT LARGE. THE GOVERNMENT OF COLOMBIA IS PURSUING HIM. COLOMBIA HAS OUR FULL SUPPORT IN THAT EFFORT, AND WE HOPE IT SUCCEEDS.

WE HAVE EXTENSIVE LAW ENFORCEMENT COOPERATION WITH COLOMBIA. THAT COOPERATION CONTINUES. HOWEVER, I WILL NOT COMMENT ON ANY SPECIFIC EFFORTS NOW UNDERWAY TO CAPTURE ESCOBAR.

Q: CAN YOU COMMENT ON U.S. PERSONNEL ARRIVING IN MEDELLIN THIS MORNING TO PARTICIPATE IN THE COOPERATIVE EFFORTS TO GET ESCOBAR?

MR. SNYDER: I'M NOT GOING TO GO INTO ANY DETAILS, RALPH.

Q: DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING ON THE MIDEAST PEACE TALKS, OR WHEN THEY MIGHT START?

MR. SNYDER: NO. NOTHING NEW.

Q: IS ANY ANNOUNCEMENT EXPECTED AFTER THE SECRETARY'S MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT?

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MR. SNYDER: I'M SORRY?

Q: ANY ANNOUNCEMENTS EXPECTED AFTER THE MEETING WITH THE

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PRESIDENT -- THE SECRETARY'S WEEKLY MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT?

MR. SNYDER: CHECK WITH THE WHITE HOUSE. THAT'S WHERE THOSE ANNOUNCEMENTS WOULD COME FROM.

Q: THERE ARE SOME WILD RUMORS OUT OF CUBA -- OUT OF MIAMI ABOUT CUBA; A COUP OR SOMETHING. DID YOU ALL --

MR. SNYDER: SORRY. THOSE WILD RUMORS DIDN'T REACH ME.

Q: OKAY. THEY DID REACH YOUR OFFICE BECAUSE I WAS THE ONE THAT ASKED AND I WAS TOLD IT WOULD BE LOOKED INTO. DID YOU ALL LOOK INTO IT AT ALL? DID YOU COME UP WITH A CONCLUSION? WAS THERE ANYTHING?

MR. SNYDER: I'M SORRY. IT DIDN'T COME TO MY ATTENTION. WAS THIS THIS MORNING THAT YOU ASKED?

Q: NO, IT WAS YESTERDAY.

MR. SNYDER: YESTERDAY? I'M SORRY.

Q: AND I UNDERSTAND THERE WERE CALLS FROM OTHER MEDIA AS WELL. SO IT WASN'T A QUESTION YOU ALL DEALT WITH AT ALL IN YOUR OFFICE? YOU ALL JUST IGNORED IT, OR WHAT?

MR. SNYDER: I PERSONALLY DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT IT. I'LL LOOK INTO IT.

Q: JOE, WOULD YOU MIND TAKING THE QUESTION?

MR. SNYDER: SURE, I'LL BE HAPPY TO TAKE IT.

Q: YOU DON'T HAVE ANYTHING ON THIS DOTAN AFFAIR IN ISRAEL? ARE YOU GETTING INTO IT? I KNOW THE PENTAGON SAID SOMETHING YESTERDAY.

MR. SNYDER: YES, CONNIE, I'VE GOT A LITTLE BIT. LET ME GIVE YOU SOME BACKGROUND ON THE DOTAN CASE.

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THE GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL INITIATED AN INVESTIGATION THAT UNCOVERED GENERAL DOTAN'S FRAUD. HE WAS COURT MARTIALED, STRIPPED OF HIS RANK AND PENSION, AND SENTENCED TO 13 YEARS IN PRISON.

THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT HAS INITIATED CRIMINAL CASES AGAINST OTHER ISRAELI OFFICERS AND ISRAELI INVESTIGATIONS INTO THE ROLE OF OTHER ISRAELI NATIONALS AND COMPANIES. ISRAEL HAS RETURNED TO THE U.S. SOME DOLS. 6.2 MILLION CONFISCATED FROM DOTAN.

THE GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL HAS BEEN WILLING TO SHARE WITH US DOCUMENTS AND OTHER EVIDENCE IT GATHERED DURING ITS SUCCESSFUL PROSECUTION OF DOTAN. IT HAS ALSO BEEN WILLING TO MAKE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AVAILABLE TO ANSWER WRITTEN QUESTIONS WE HAVE REGARDING THE CASE.

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UNTIL NOW, THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT HAS NOT BEEN WILLING TO GRANT THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE'S REQUEST FOR DIRECT ACCESS TO DOTAN, ARGUING THAT ISRAELI LAW DOES NOT PERMIT SUCH ACCESS. WE'RE CONTINUING TO DISCUSS THIS WITH THE ISRAELIS. THEY HAVE INFORMED US THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL SEND A SENIOR DELEGATION TO WASHINGTON TO CONSULT ON THIS ISSUE VERY SOON. WE'RE PLEASED WITH THIS ANNOUNCEMENT, AND WE HOPE IT WILL LEAD TO A SATISFACTORY RESOLUTION OF THE ISSUE.

Q: ONE FOLLOW-UP. THE WALL STREET JOURNAL QUOTED A PENTAGON OFFICIAL WHO HAD A MEMO SAYING THAT THE LAST ISRAELI GOVERNMENT MIGHT HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN THE CASE. DO YOU HAVE ANY EVIDENCE --

MR. SNYDER: I'VE GOT NOTHING ON THAT.

Q: DID THE CASE AT ANY TIME INVOLVE A SUSPENSION, PARTIAL OR FULL, OF U.S. AID TO ISRAEL?

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MR. SNYDER: AS WE WERE REVIEWING THE CASE -- AFTER WE FINISHED OUR REVIEW, WE HAVE MADE A DETERMINATION THAT ILLEGAL PAYMENTS WERE MADE FROM THE FOREIGN MILITARY SALES PROGRAM TO ISRAEL.

UNDER U.S. LAW, THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE MUST PROVIDE A REPORT TO CONGRESS WITHIN 60 DAYS OF THIS DETERMINATION, WHICH INCLUDES RECOMMENDATIONS ON SECURITY ASSISTANCE. WE HAVEN'T YET SUBMITTED THIS REPORT.

Q: WHEN DID THE 60 DAYS START?

MR. SNYDER: I DON'T KNOW. I'LL SEE IF I CAN FIND OUT.

Q: CAN YOU FIND OUT?

Q: IN ANSWER TO THE QUESTION, IN OTHER WORDS, IT COULD INVOLVED AT LEAST A PARTIAL SUSPENSION OF U.S. AID?

MR. SNYDER: WE HAVE TO MAKE A RECOMMENDATION TO CONGRESS, AND WE WILL DO SO. WE HAVEN'T DONE SO YET.

Q: DO YOU KNOW IF EITHER THAT RECOMMENDATION OR THE ISRAELI DELEGATION WILL OCCUR BEFORE PRESIDENT BUSH MEETS WITH YITZHAK RABIN?

MR. SNYDER: NO, I DON'T. WE'LL FIND OUT WHEN THE 60 DAYS BEGAN, WHICH SHOULD BE HELPFUL.

Q: THANK YOU.

PORT-AU-PRINCE MINIMIZE CONSIDERED.  
TIRANA MINIMIZE CONSIDERED.

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