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DTG: 222138Z NOV 94
ORIG: SECDEF WASHINGTON DC//ATSD/PA DDI//
TO: AIG 8775
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SUBJ: DOD NEWS BRIEFING - CONDUCTED ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 22,
TEXT:

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03
SUBJ: DOD NEWS BRIEFING - CONDUCTED ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 22,
1994 AT 1:00 P.M. BY MR. KENNETH H. BACON, ATSD (PA) AT THE
PENTAGON

MR. BACON: GOOD AFTERNOON.

ON THANKSGIVING DAY SECRETARY PERRY WILL GO TO HAITI TO
SPEND THE DAY WITH TROOPS. THERE HE'LL TRAVEL TO A NUMBER OF
LOCATIONS. IT'S ONE OF HIS WAYS OF SAYING THANK YOU TO THE
TROOPS WHO HAVE DONE SUCH A GOOD JOB DOWN THERE.

THAT'S ALL I HAVE. I'M PREPARED TO TAKE YOUR QUESTIONS.

Q: DID YOU SAY HE'LL HAVE A MEAL DOWN THERE WITH THE
TROOPS? WHERE WOULD THAT BE, OR...

A: HE'S GOING TO BE TRAVELING AROUND TO SEVERAL LOCATIONS.
I THINK PROBABLY THE BEST THING TO DO IS EITHER TALK TO US LATER

IN DDI OR CONTACT THE JIB DOWN THERE. HE'S REALLY DOING THIS TO
SPEND TIME CHATTING WITH THE TROOPS AND NOT TO GET A LOT OF MEDIA
COVERAGE.

Q: ARE TURKEYS AND STUFF BEING SENT DOWN?

A: I THINK IT'S FAIR TO SAY THERE WILL BE A LOT OF TURKEYS
AND ALL THE FIXINGS.

Q: ON BOSNIA, HAS THERE BEEN ANY EVIDENCE THAT THE BOSNIAN-
SERBS HAVE GOTTEN THE MESSAGE THAT NATO INTENDED TO SEND
YESTERDAY WITH THIS AIR STRIKE?

A: WE'RE WATCHING THE SITUATION THERE. IT IS NOT A GOOD
SITUATION AND WE'RE HOPEFUL THAT THEY WILL GET THE MESSAGE. IF
THERE IS FIGHTING CONTINUING, WE STAND READY TO SEND THE MESSAGE
AGAIN IF NECESSARY.

Q: WHY HASN'T THERE BEEN A RESPONSE TO THE FIRING OF
GROUND-TO-AIR MISSILES AGAINST NATO AIRCRAFT? WHY IS THAT GOING
UNANSWERED?

A: THE MISSILES MISSED WIDELY, AS I UNDERSTAND IT. I ALSO
UNDERSTAND THAT THEY WERE FIRED FROM MOBILE SITES WHICH ARE HARD
TO FIND SOMETIMES. BEYOND THAT, I CAN'T GIVE YOU AN ANSWER.

Q: WHEN YOU SAY WE ARE PREPARED TO SEND THE MESSAGE AGAIN,

WHAT SORT OF MESSAGE WOULD IT BE? WOULD IT BE A MORE AGGRESSIVE OR STRONGER MESSAGE THAN THE PIN-PRICK STRIKE OF YESTERDAY?

A: WELL, THAT'S YOUR CHARACTERIZATION. THE STRIKE YESTERDAY SUCCEEDED IN DOING EXACTLY WHAT IT WAS SUPPOSED TO DO. IT HAD A LIMITED PURPOSE, AND THAT PURPOSE WAS ACHIEVED. SO I'M NOT BUYING YOUR CHARACTERIZATION OF IT. IT DID WHAT IT WAS SUPPOSED TO DO.

Q: IF BY SENDING A MESSAGE THE SERBS DON'T GET THE MESSAGE AND CONTINUE, THEN IT DIDN'T DO WHAT IT WAS SUPPOSED TO DO. THEREFORE WOULD A STRONGER ATTACK OR STRIKE BE IN ORDER?

A: THAT'S FOR THE UN AND NATO TO DECIDE. AS YOU KNOW, THE TWO-KEY CONCEPT REMAINS IN EFFECT. THERE ARE A NUMBER OF THINGS HAPPENING. ONE, CLEARLY, BOTH THE UN AND NATO ARE WATCHING THE SITUATION AND REACTION TO THE STRIKE YESTERDAY TO SEE WHAT HAPPENS AND TO SEE IF THERE'S ANY CHANGE IN SERB BEHAVIOR. THAT'S THE FIRST THING.

SECONDLY, IT'S WELL KNOWN THAT WE AND OUR ALLIES ARE DISCUSSING IN NATO AND AT THE UN A NUMBER OF STEPS THAT WE MIGHT TAKE. MANY OF YOU HAVE WRITTEN ABOUT THESE STEPS AND THEY INVOLVE THINGS LIKE EXCLUSION ZONES ON BIHAC, ASSISTED OPERATING

ZONES DEALING WITH AIR STRIKES, ETC. THESE ARE DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVES THAT WILL LEAD TO CHANGES ON THE GROUND THAT CAN BE TAKEN. THESE ARE UNDER CONSIDERATION. THAT CONSIDERATION IS ONGOING AND THERE SHOULD BE DECISIONS ON THAT.

AS I SAID, WE RETAIN THE RIGHT, BOTH NATO AND UNPROFOR, TO CARRY ON ADDITIONAL AIR STRIKES IF NECESSARY.

Q: HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT IS NOW BEING REPORTED IN THE SUBURBS AROUND BIHAC. IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE A SAFE HAVEN. HOW CAN YOU CLEANSE THAT AREA WITHOUT ENDANGERING THE PEOPLE IN THE SAFE AREA?

A: THAT'S ONE OF THE DIFFICULTIES WE FACE. THAT'S ONE OF THE REASONS WHY THIS ISN'T AN EASY PROBLEM TO DEAL WITH. NOTHING IN THIS AREA IS EASY TO DEAL WITH. IF THERE WERE EASY SOLUTIONS, WE WOULD HAVE FOUND THEM A LONG WHILE AGO. IT'S VERY COMPLEX, THERE ARE LIVES AT STAKE, AND WE'RE TRYING TO SORT OUR WAY THROUGH THIS AS BEST WE CAN.

Q: THERE ARE REPORTS THAT QUOTE UN SOURCES AS SAYING THAT THE SERBS HAVE USED A HELICOPTER GUNSHIP IN TODAY'S FIGHTING. CAN YOU ELABORATE ON THAT AT ALL?

A: I CAN'T ELABORATE ON IT. I'VE SEEN THE SAME REPORTS.

HELICOPTERS ARE ALSO VERY HARD TO FIND. THEY CAN POP UP AND SEE SOMETHING AND THEN GO BACK ONTO THE GROUND. THEY CAN MOVE VERY QUICKLY. SO BY THE TIME THE AIRCRAFT GET THERE, THEY'RE NO LONGER THERE.

Q: YOU SAID YOU ACHIEVED THE GOAL, I GUESS MAYBE I MISSED THIS YESTERDAY. WHAT EXACTLY WAS IT? WAS IT SENDING THIS MESSAGE, OR WERE YOU OUT TO DISABLE THE AIRPORT FOR A CERTAIN PERIOD OF TIME? WHAT EXACTLY...

A: THE MAIN GOAL WAS TO SHOW THAT UNPROFOR AND THE NATO ALLIES WORKING TOGETHER WERE PREPARED TO STRIKE IN A GIVEN SITUATION. ONE, WE SHOWED THAT WE WERE WILLING TO STRIKE. SECONDLY, THE GOALS OF THE STRIKE WERE TO DISABLE THE RUNWAYS, WHICH WE DID. THEY WERE TO SUPPRESS THE ANTI-AIRCRAFT FIRE, WHICH WE DID. AND THEY WERE TO SUPPRESS THE SAM STRIKES, OR THE SURFACE-TO-AIR MISSILE SITES, WHICH WE ALSO DID. THOSE ARE THE THREE TACTICAL GOALS THAT WERE SET OUT IN THE STRIKE, AND ALL THOSE WERE ACHIEVED.

THEY WERE NARROW GOALS. THOSE GOALS WERE ACHIEVED.

Q: SECRETARY PERRY WAS QUOTED THIS MORNING BY REPORTERS WHO ARE TRAVELING WITH HIM AS HE RETURNS FROM THIS TRIP,

INDICATING THAT IF THERE WERE ANOTHER STRIKE AGAINST AN AIRFIELD, THAT THIS TIME THE PLANES WOULD BE DESTROYED. IS THAT THE CORRECT POSITION OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE?

A: THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE ALWAYS STATES HIS POSITIONS CORRECTLY. (LAUGHTER)

Q: WHAT IS THE PENTAGON'S REACTION TO COMMENTS BY SENATOR HELMS THAT IF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, PRESIDENT CLINTON, TRAVELS TO HIS STATE, THAT HE SHOULD HAVE BODYGUARDS WITH HIM?

A: WHICH STATE IS THAT?

Q: NORTH CAROLINA.

A: THE PRESIDENT HAS TRAVELED WIDELY IN THE LAST FEW WEEKS AND MONTHS AMONG THE TROOPS, AND HE'S BEEN RECEIVED WITH WARMTH AND COURTESY AND ENTHUSIASM. I THINK WE ALL REMEMBER THE PICTURES OF THE PRESIDENT ADDRESSING MEMBERS OF THE 24TH DIVISION IN KUWAIT SEVERAL WEEKS AGO, SURROUNDED BY TROOPS AND THE WARM RESPONSE HE GOT THERE. I THINK THOSE PICTURES SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES AND THEY'RE AN ACCURATE PORTRAYAL OF HOW THE TROOPS FEEL ABOUT HIM.

Q: HOW DO YOU REACT TO SENATOR HELMS' ACCUSATION THAT PRESIDENT CLINTON ISN'T FIT TO BE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF?
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A: GENERAL SHALIKASHVILI HAS RESPONDED TO THAT. SENATOR DOLE HAS RESPONDED TO THAT. SECRETARY PERRY HAS RESPONDED TO THAT. I HAVE NOTHING MORE TO ADD.

Q: THE SPECIFIC QUOTE BY HELMS IS THAT THE PRESIDENT IS SO DISLIKED IN NORTH CAROLINA BY THE MILITARY THAT HE "BETTER WATCH OUT IF HE COMES DOWN HERE. HE'D BETTER HAVE HIS BODY GUARDS." DOES THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES NEED A BODY GUARD IF HE VISITS U.S. TROOPS IN NORTH CAROLINA?

A: THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES AS A MATTER OF COURSE ALWAYS TRAVELS WITH BODY GUARDS. I CITED TO YOU EARLIER PICTURES THAT YOU'VE SEEN, THAT YOUR NETWORK RAN, OF HIM BEING EMBRACED WARMLY BY TROOPS. WE'VE SEEN THAT IN KUWAIT, WE'VE SEEN IT IN NORFOLK, VIRGINIA, WE'VE SEEN IT IN ALASKA. HE WAS

RECENTLY IN HONOLULU AND DINED WITH THE COMMANDER, ADMIRAL MACKE OUT THERE, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE PACIFIC REGION. EVERYWHERE HE GOES HE SEEMS TO GET A WARM RECEPTION. I THINK THE RECORD SPEAKS FOR ITSELF.

Q: IS IT YOUR UNDERSTANDING OR IS IT YOUR SCHEDULE THAT SECRETARY PERRY'S DECISION ON DEUTCH'S PROGRAM MEMORANDUM WILL BE

DELAYED UNTIL THE BUDGET IS SUBMITTED? OR DO YOU STILL EXPECT IT TO BE RELEASED IN DECEMBER?

A: THE SECRETARY SPOKE ABOUT A WEEK AGO AND SAID THEY WOULD NOT BE THIS MONTH. I LEAVE IT TO YOU.

THIS IS STILL BEING WORKED OUT. IT'S A COMPLEX SITUATION. WE'RE DOWN NOW TO THE FINAL DECISIONS IN THE BUDGET. JIGSAW PUZZLES GET EASIER AS YOU GET TO THE END BECAUSE IT'S MUCH EASIER TO SEE WHERE THE FEW REMAINING PIECES GO. WITH BUDGETS, IT SOMETIMES GETS MORE DIFFICULT TO FIT IN EVERYTHING YOU WANT TO FIT IN AS YOU GET DOWN TO THE END. THERE ARE STILL A LOT OF DECISIONS TO BE MADE AND THESE ARE AMONG THOSE DECISIONS. SO I CAN'T GIVE YOU ANY DEADLINE ON THAT.

Q: GUANTANAMO BAY. THERE HAVE BEEN ADDITIONAL ATTEMPTS BY CUBANS IN THE LAST DAY OR TWO TO SWIM BACK TO CUBA.

A: YES.

Q: CAN YOU GIVE US ANY IDEA ON NUMBERS?

A: THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL ATTEMPTS. ON NOVEMBER 21ST, THREE CUBANS ATTEMPTED TO SWIM TO CUBA. ONE WAS SUCCESSFUL. TWO WERE RECOVERED AND RETURNED TO THE CAMP. THAT'S THE LAST REPORT I HAVE OF PEOPLE TRYING TO SWIM. ON NOVEMBER 20TH, A GROUP OF 46 CUBANS LEFT IN THE MORNING AND ATTEMPTED TO SWIM. THIRTY WERE SUCCESSFUL, 16 WERE RECOVERED. THERE WAS ALSO A SECOND GROUP ON NOVEMBER 20TH THAT SET OUT TO SWIM OF 44 CUBANS. SO THERE HAVE BEEN A NUMBER OF CUBANS TRYING TO SWIM BACK.

I THINK THAT SOME OF THIS REFLECTS THE FRUSTRATION THAT THE CUBANS MAY FEEL IN THE SLOWNESS OF GETTING PROCESSED TO GO BACK INTO CUBA BY CUBA. THE ARRANGEMENT IS THAT WE SET ASIDE A NUMBER OF VISAS, 20,000 A YEAR, FOR CUBANS TO COME TO THE UNITED STATES. IN ORDER TO GET THOSE VISAS, THEY HAVE TO GO BACK TO CUBA AND APPLY. THE CUBANS HAVE BEEN RELUCTANT TO ALLOW LARGE NUMBERS OF PEOPLE BACK IN FROM GUANTANAMO BAY TO CUBA. THERE'S A VERY LENGTHY PROCESSING PROCEDURE. IF WE SUBMIT A LIST OF NAMES, THEN THEY SELECT ONLY A VERY, VERY, FEW OF THOSE NAMES TO GO BACK FOR PROCESSING. SO THERE'S A FAIR AMOUNT OF FRUSTRATION ON THE PART

OF THE CUBANS WHO MAY WANT TO GO BACK AND TRY TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS NEW SYSTEM OF GETTING VISAS.

Q: IS THERE ANY PROBLEM WITH CUBANS TRYING TO BREAK OUT OF THE CAMPS IN PANAMA AND JUST BLEND INTO THE PANAMANIAN POPULATION?

A: NOT THAT I'M AWARE OF. THERE HAVE BEEN VERY ISOLATED INCIDENTS OF THAT. NOTHING THAT I RECALL IN THE LAST WEEK OR TWO, BUT I'VE BEEN GONE FOR THE LAST WEEK AND I HAVEN'T BEEN FOLLOWING THIS. BUT I DO NOT THINK THAT THAT IS A PARTICULARLY GRAVE PROBLEM.

Q: CAN YOU GIVE US AN UPDATE ON THE COST OF RUNNING THE REFUGEE CAMPS AT GTMO?

A: THESE ARE THE LATEST FIGURES I HAVE. THE INITIAL ESTIMATES ARE \$100 MILLION TO START UP GUANTANAMO BAY FOR THE CUBAN OPERATION. THAT'S ASSUMING MORE CUBANS THAN ARE THERE NOW. IN ADDITION, \$20 MILLION A MONTH FOR FOOD, WATER, AND OTHER CONSUMABLE SUPPLIES.

Q: BACK TO BOSNIA. SECRETARY GENERAL WILLY CLAES

YESTERDAY IN A PHOTO OPPORTUNITY AT THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE WAS ASKED ABOUT THE UNILATERAL LIFTING OF THE ARMS EMBARGO THAT THE

CONGRESS IS CONTEMPLATING, AND HE BASICALLY SAID THAT WOULD BE DISASTROUS. THAT NATO WOULD HAVE TO WITHDRAW, THE UN WOULD HAVE TO WITHDRAW, AND THE U.S. WOULD HAVE TO COMMIT TROOPS TO PROTECT THOSE TROOPS IN THEIR WITHDRAWAL. HE SAID THIS IS NOT A GOOD THING. HE WILL CONTINUE TO LOBBY CONGRESS ON THIS PARTICULAR ISSUE. CAN YOU STATE WHAT PLANS THE UN MIGHT HAVE TO BACK UP A UN WITHDRAWAL IF INDEED THE U.S. CONGRESS UNILATERALLY LIFTS THE EMBARGO?

A: FIRST OF ALL, UNILATERAL WITHDRAWAL IS NOT AN ISSUE RIGHT NOW. AS YOU KNOW, WE HAVE A PROPOSAL BEFORE THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL FOR A MULTILATERAL LIFT OF THE ARMS EMBARGO. THAT IS STILL UNDER CONSIDERATION. THE KEY TO THAT IS THAT IT WOULD BE LIFTED MULTILATERALLY AT THE END OF SIX MONTHS IF THE BOSNIAN SERBS DON'T ACCEPT THE CONTACT GROUP PEACE PLAN. THE GOAL OF EVERYTHING THAT'S HAPPENING RIGHT NOW IN BOSNIA IS TO PUT PRESSURE ON THE BOSNIAN SERBS TO ACCEPT THIS CONTACT GROUP'S PEACE PLAN. WE HOPE THAT THEY WILL DO THAT. THE END OF FIGHTING IS THE BEST WAY TO GO HERE. IT'S THE ONLY SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM IN THIS TROUBLED AREA. BUT RIGHT NOW WE ARE PROMOTING THE MULTILATERAL LIFTING, NOT A UNILATERAL LIFTING.

Q: YESTERDAY TWO HIGH LEVEL DEFENSE OFFICIALS WERE SPEAKING ABOUT THE CYCLE OF ESCALATION AND RETALIATION. AND, MR. CLAES YESTERDAY SAID SOMETHING AT THE END ABOUT THE PEACE PROCESS COMING TO CONCLUSION AND AGREEMENT.

DOES THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE SEE A TREND HERE IN THE FIGHTING THAT WILL LEAD RAPIDLY TO A SETTLEMENT AT THE TABLE OR WITH THE CONTACT GROUP?

A: IT IS OUR HOPE THAT THERE WILL BE PEACE QUICKLY IN BOSNIA.

Q: THERE ARE A COUPLE OF LAWSUITS OUTSTANDING AGAINST THE NELLIS AIR FORCE BASE COMPLEX, ALSO KNOWN AS AREA 51. WITHOUT COMMENTING ON THE SPECIFICS OF THE LAWSUIT, COULD YOU SAY IF THERE'S ANY THINKING HERE AT THE PENTAGON TO CHANGE THE CLASSIFICATION OF THOSE AREAS, TO ANY WAY ACKNOWLEDGE IN PUBLIC WHAT IT SEEMS EVERYONE KNOWS ABOUT?

A: WHAT DO PEOPLE KNOW?

Q: LET ME REPHRASE THE QUESTION. IS THERE ANY DISCUSSION GOING ON WITH THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT NOW BETWEEN DOD AND JUSTICE TO LIFT THE SECRECY ON THAT AREA?

A: AS YOU RIGHTLY POINT OUT, THERE ARE PROJECTS IN AREAS UNCLAS FINAL SECTION OF 03 OUT IN THE NELLIS AIR FORCE BASE REGION THAT ARE CLASSIFIED. I THINK THEY WILL REMAIN CLASSIFIED FOR SOME TIME. THEY CAN'T BE DISCUSSED HERE FOR THAT REASON. THAT'S ALL I CAN TELL YOU RIGHT NOW.

Q: ON THE SUBJECT OF THE RECOMMENDATION TODAY THAT THE CHARGES BE DROPPED AGAINST THE F-15 PILOTS WHO MISTAKENLY SHOT DOWN THE BLACK HAWK HELICOPTERS IN APRIL. IT WOULD APPEAR THE WAY THE RECOMMENDATIONS ARE GOING, THAT ONLY ONE OF THE CASES IS GOING TO PROCEED TO COURT-MARTIAL, THAT AFTER THE PENTAGON HAD A

RATHER HIGH PROFILE BRIEFING IN WHICH IT LAID OUT A SERIES OF MISTAKES AND ERRORS... I'M JUST ASKING WHAT KIND OF A STATEMENT IS THIS SENDING IF IT APPEARS THAT ONLY ONE PERSON IS GOING TO FACE ANY SORT OF SERIOUS DISCIPLINE? EVEN THAT PERSON MAY YET BE

CLEARED OF CHARGES.

A: YOU'RE MAKING A LOT OF ASSUMPTIONS THAT I CAN'T MAKE RIGHT NOW. THESE CASES ARE, AS YOU POINT OUT, ARE CONTINUING. THEY'RE NOT OVER. THEY'RE PART OF THE LEGAL PROCESS. I CAN'T COMMENT ON THEM UNTIL THE LEGAL PROCESS IS COMPLETED.

Q: ONCE THOSE DECISIONS AND THOSE FINDINGS ARE COMPLETED INSIDE THE AIR FORCE JUDICIAL SYSTEM IS THERE ANY REVIEW BY THE SECRETARY OF THAT? OR DO THEY STAND? DO YOU KNOW?

A: MY BELIEF IS THAT THEY STAND. IF THERE'S A CONVICTION, IT STARTS A WHOLE NEW APPEAL PROCESS AND REVIEW PROCESS. BUT IF THEY'RE ACQUITTED OF THE CHARGES, THERE IS NO REVIEW AS I UNDERSTAND IT.

Q: DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING ON WHY THE ONE PILOT WAS NEVER CHARGED?

A: I DON'T HAVE ANY FURTHER COMMENTS ON THIS CASE. I HAVE NOTHING TO ADD.

PRESS: THANK YOU.

-END-

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