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SUBJ: DOD NEWS BRIEFING - CONDUCTED ON TUESDAY, JUNE 24, 1997 AT
TEXT:

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SUBJ: DOD NEWS BRIEFING - CONDUCTED ON TUESDAY, JUNE 24, 1997 AT 1:30 P.M. (EDT) BY MR. KENNETH H. BACON, ASD (PA) AT THE PENTAGON

MR. BACON: WELL, GOOD AFTERNOON. IT CERTAINLY IS A GREAT THRILL TO BE THE WARM-UP ACT TO THE ROSWELL UFO REPORT! [LAUGHTER] AND I WELCOME YOU ALL TO THE BRIEFING. LET ME MAKE A FEW ANNOUNCEMENTS AT THE BEGINNING, AND THEN I'LL TAKE YOUR QUESTIONS. I KNOW YOU ALL WANT TO GET ON TO UFOS, SO WE CAN DO THAT AS SOON AFTER I FINISH AS POSSIBLE.

FIRST, I'D LIKE TO ANNOUNCE THAT SECRETARY COHEN HAS SENT A MESSAGE TO THE TROOPS ON FORCE PROTECTION ON THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF THE KHOBAR TOWERS BOMBING. AND THAT'S AVAILABLE AT THE BACK OF THE ROOM FOR ANYBODY WHO WANTS A COPY OF THAT. THE ANNIVERSARY, AS YOU KNOW, IS TOMORROW.

SECOND, I'D LIKE TO ANNOUNCE THAT SECRETARY COHEN HAS ANNOUNCED TODAY THAT THE PRESIDENT HAS NOMINATED GENERAL WILLIAM

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CROUCH OF THE ARMY TO TAKE OVER THE JOB OF VICE CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE ARMY HERE IN WASHINGTON. GENERAL CROUCH, AS YOU KNOW, IS CURRENTLY THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF U.S. ARMY EUROPE AND ALSO THE SEVENTH ARMY IN GERMANY.

AND WITH THAT, I'LL TAKE YOUR QUESTIONS.

Q: SPEAKING OF UFOS, WHAT'S THE PENTAGON'S TAKE ON THIS WHOLE THING? DO YOU ALL SUBSCRIBE TO THE AIR FORCE'S EXPLANATION THAT THESE WERE JUST A BUNCH OF DUMMIES DROPPED WITH PARACHUTES?

A: I THINK IT'S -- THE AIR FORCE HAS SPENT YEARS INVESTIGATING THIS, NOT JUST THIS INCIDENT BUT A NUMBER OF INCIDENTS, ALLEGED INCIDENTS INVOLVING UFOS, AND THEY HAVE FOUND OTHER EXPLANATIONS FOR ALMOST -- I BELIEVE FOR ALL OF THESE. AND THEY HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO CONFIRM ANY SO-CALLED "SIGHTING" OF UFOS. THEY FOUND EITHER NATURAL PHENOMENA TO EXPLAIN WHAT HAPPENED OR AIRCRAFT LIGHTS IN THE AREA TO EXPLAIN WHAT HAPPENED. BUT THERE HAVE BEEN A NUMBER OF EXPLANATIONS THEY HAVE COME UP WITH OVER THE YEARS. AS YOU KNOW, AFTER YEARS OF INVESTIGATING REPORTS OF UFOS, THE AIR FORCE STOPPED MORE THAN A DECADE AGO,

AND THEY HAVE NOT BEEN INVESTIGATING THESE INCIDENTS AT ALL BECAUSE IT WAS A WASTE OF TAXPAYERS' MONEY TO KEEP INVESTIGATING

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REPORTS THAT NEVER TURNED OUT TO BE TRUE.

BUT THIS WILL BE EXPLAINED IN GREAT DETAIL VIS-A-VIS THE ROSWELL INCIDENT AS SOON AS I FINISH.

Q: DO YOU THINK THIS WILL PUT THIS WHOLE THING TO REST?

A: OF COURSE NOT. [LAUGHTER] PROBABLY, IN ANOTHER DECADE, WE'LL BE HERE HAVING -- ANOTHER COLONEL WILL BE HERE GIVING ANOTHER BRIEFING ON THE ROSWELL INCIDENT. [LAUGHTER]

Q: WHY DOES THIS COME OUT IN DRIBS AND DRABS? DOESN'T THAT SORT OF JUST FUEL CONSPIRACY? AND WHY WASN'T IT INCLUDED IN THE 1994 REPORT?

A: WELL, I THINK THE AIR FORCE WILL EXPLAIN ALL THAT. BUT THE FACT OF THE MATTER IS, THIS HAS BEEN INVESTIGATED MANY TIMES, AND THIS IS AN EFFORT TO PULL TOGETHER THEIR LATEST THINKING ON IT. I THINK THEY'RE REISSUING AN OLDER REPORT, AS I UNDERSTAND IT. [OFF MIKE] ISN'T THAT CORRECT?

Q: ON THE SUBJECT OF KHOBAR TOWERS, YOU MENTIONED THE ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY. IT HAS BEEN A YEAR. WHAT'S BEEN THE DELAY IN THE RELEASE OF THE RECORD REPORT AND ITS RECOMMENDATIONS, WHICH HAS BEEN COMPLETED FOR OVER SIX MONTHS NOW?

A: WELL, THE RECORD REPORT WAS REDONE, AS YOU KNOW, AT THE

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REQUEST OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE AND THE SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE. AND THE SECOND REPORT, BY THE AIR FORCE IG, LIEUTENANT GENERAL SWOPE, WAS COMPLETED SHORTLY BEFORE THE QUADRENNIAL DEFENSE REVIEW CAME OUT. SECRETARY COHEN MADE A DECISION AT THAT TIME THAT HE WAS GOING TO CONCENTRATE ON BRINGING THE QUADRENNIAL DEFENSE REVIEW TO CLOSURE AND PRESENTING IT ON THE HILL, PRESENTING IT TO THE PUBLIC. AND HE DID THAT. AND SEVERAL WEEKS AFTER THE QDR WAS RELEASED AND EXPLAINED ON THE HILL, HE BEGAN LOOKING NOT JUST AT THE SWOPE VERSION OF THE RECORD REPORT, BUT HE WENT RIGHT BACK TO THE BEGINNING AND STARTED WITH THE DOWNING REPORT. AND HE STARTED WITH NOT ONLY THE REPORT, BUT THE ATTACHMENTS, THE APPENDICES, AND THEN HE WENT THROUGH THE RECORD REPORT AND THE ATTACHMENTS AND THE APPENDICES, AND NOW HE IS ON TO THE SWOPE REPORT.

AND SO THIS HAS BEEN A MONUMENTAL UNDERTAKING. HE HAS WANTED TO BE VERY CAREFUL AND THOROUGH, AND HE HAS BEEN. AND HE'S NOT DONE YET. BUT MY ANTICIPATION IS THAT, IN SEVERAL WEEKS, HE WILL BE FINISHED WITH HIS REVIEW AND WILL BE ABLE TO DISCUSS WHAT HIS CONCLUSIONS ARE.

Q: KEN, WHAT IS THE DEPARTMENT'S POSITION UPON THE HOUSE

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ACTION OF LAST WEEK THAT PASSED A BILL, WHICH SAID THAT 10,000 SOLDIERS COULD BE USED FOR BORDER PATROL? AND, SECONDLY, WHAT IS YOUR RESPONSE TO MILITARY PEOPLE WHO SAY WE JUST DON'T HAVE THAT MANY TRAINED SOLDIERS TO SPARE, EVEN IF WE WANTED TO? AND LASTLY,

WHAT'S THE LEGAL STATUS OF THIS MARINE WHO IS ACCUSED OF SHOOTING A U.S. CITIZEN WHILE ON BORDER PATROL? AND YOU HAVE A CIVILIAN AUTHORITY INVESTIGATING AND CHARGING, AND ARE THE MARINES GOING TO HAVE A SEPARATE LITIGATION? WHAT'S THE STATE OF PLAY ON THAT?

A: I'M TEMPTED TO INVOKE THE WARREN CHRISTOPHER RULE THAT IN A MULTI-PART QUESTION, I GET TO ANSWER THE QUESTION I CHOOSE. [LAUGHTER] BUT I WON'T BECAUSE THEY'RE ALL SERIOUS QUESTIONS.

TODAY THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT HAS ABOUT 242 PEOPLE ON THE BORDER ASSISTING WITH OBSERVATION AND SURVEILLANCE OF BORDER ACTIVITIES. THIS IS PART OF THE SUPPORT OF COUNTER-DRUG EFFORTS, NOT MOUNTED BY THIS AGENCY, BUT MOUNTED BY GENERAL MCCAFFREY'S AGENCY.

WE PROVIDE TROOPS PURELY IN A SUPPORT CAPACITY, BECAUSE, AS YOU KNOW, THE MILITARY IS PROSCRIBED FROM PARTICIPATING IN DOMESTIC LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES UNDER AN 1878 LAW, THE POSSE COMITATUS LAW. SO WE PROVIDE SUPPORT IN TERMS OF EXTRA EYES AND

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EARS, SOME SURVEILLANCE, MAYBE SOME INTELLIGENCE FROM TIME TO TIME, BUT IT'S ALL IN A SUPPORT CAPACITY.

GENERAL MCCAFFREY HAS MADE IT VERY CLEAR THAT HE WOULD PREFER TO HAVE ALL OF THE BORDER PATROL OPERATION DONE BY BORDER PATROL AGENTS AND NOT HAVE THE MILITARY INVOLVED AT ALL. AND THE MILITARY WOULD CERTAINLY SUPPORT A DECISION LIKE THAT, BUT IT WOULD REQUIRE APPOINTING MANY MORE BORDER PATROL AGENTS THAN WE HAVE TODAY. SO WE CONTINUE TO PROVIDE SUPPORT IN AN AS-NEEDED BASIS. I DON'T THINK THAT WE NEED ANYWHERE NEAR AN ADDITIONAL 10,000 SOLDIERS TO ASSIST IN THE SUPPORT OF THE BORDER PATROL OPERATIONS RIGHT NOW. AND THERE HAS BEEN-- SO ANSWERING YOUR FIRST QUESTION, THAT'S IT.

I'M AFRAID I'VE FORGOTTEN MOST OF THE OTHER QUESTIONS, BUT -

Q: THE OTHER ONE WAS, WHAT'S THE STATE OF PLAY, LEGALLY, WHERE YOU HAVE CIVILIAN AUTHORITIES IN TEXAS CHARGING A MARINE WITH SHOOTING A CITIZEN WHILE ON BORDER PATROL, AND THEN YOU HAVE THE MARINES, WHO PRESUMABLY HAVE THEIR OWN LEGAL ACTION. WILL THE DEPARTMENT LET THE CIVILIAN AUTHORITIES QUESTION THE MARINE OR WILL THEY INSIST ON A SEPARATE LEGAL ACTION BY THE CORPS?

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A: WELL, FIRST OF ALL, THE MARINES HAVE COOPERATED FULLY WITH DOMESTIC LAW AND WITH CIVILIAN LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES IN THE COURSE OF THIS INVESTIGATION, AND THEY CONTINUE TO COOPERATE FULLY. THEY HAVE MADE STATEMENTS, THEY HAVE PROVIDED ALL THE INFORMATION THEY'VE BEEN REQUESTED TO PROVIDE.

Q: WHILE YOU'RE ON THAT, DOES THAT INCLUDE LETTING THEM QUESTION THIS ACCUSED PERSON?

A: SORRY?

Q: THERE WAS A COMPLAINT THAT THE CIVILIAN AUTHORITIES WEREN'T ALLOWED TO QUESTION THE ACCUSED MARINE.

A: I KNOW THE ACCUSED MARINE HAS PROVIDED A STATEMENT OF WHAT HAPPENED TO THE CIVILIAN LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES.

Q: BUT I JUST WANT TO KNOW IF I CAN TAKE IT FROM YOUR STATEMENT THAT, IF REQUESTED, THE MARINES WILL LET HIM BE QUESTIONED BY CIVILIAN AUTHORITIES.

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A: IT IS MY UNDERSTANDING THAT THE FOUR-MAN PATROL HAS COOPERATED FULLY WITH DOMESTIC LAW ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITIES. THEY REMAINED FOR FOUR DAYS IN THE AREA. AT THE END OF FOUR DAYS, THERE WAS NO MORE DEMAND OR REQUEST FOR THEM TO PROVIDE INFORMATION, AND THEY LEFT. THAT IS MY UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT HAPPENED.

THE MARINES HAVE LAUNCHED THEIR OWN INVESTIGATION OF WHAT WENT ON. AND THE JOINT TASK FORCE SIX, WHICH RUNS THE BORDER SUPPORT OPERATION, HAS ALSO DONE AN INVESTIGATION, AND THAT INVESTIGATION, WHICH I'VE READ IN DRAFT FORM, BUT I HAVE NOT SEEN IN FINAL FORM, CONCLUDES THAT THEY WERE FOLLOWING PROPER PROCEDURES IN RESPONDING TO AN ATTACK AGAINST THEM. THEY RESPONDED THE WAY THEY'RE ALLOWED TO, IN SELF-DEFENSE.

NOW, THE MARINES ARE LOOKING INTO IT, AND THERE IS A CIVILIAN PROCEEDING GOING ON, AT THE SAME TIME. AS I SAID, THE MARINES HAVE COOPERATED WITH THAT.

Q: ANY RESULTS ON THE TODAY'S MEETING BETWEEN THE GREEK MINISTER OF DEFENSE APOSTOLOS TSOHATZOPOULOS AND THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE WILLIAM COHEN HERE AT THE PENTAGON?

A: I HAVEN'T HAD A CHANCE TO TALK TO ANYBODY WHO WAS AT

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THE MEETING YET. THEY WERE PREPARED TO TALK ABOUT A WIDE RANGE OF ISSUES -- SECRETARY COHEN WAS -- STARTING WITH NATO ENLARGEMENT, WHICH OF COURSE IS AT THE TOP OF EVERYBODY'S LIST RIGHT NOW. THEY WERE ALSO GOING TO TALK ABOUT BOSNIA AND THE PROGRESS OF THE SFOR MISSION IN BOSNIA. THEY WERE GOING TO TALK ABOUT CYPRUS, AND THEY WERE GOING TO TALK ABOUT THE CONFIDENCE-BUILDING MEASURES IN THE AEGEAN. THOSE WERE THE MAIN ISSUES OF CONVERSATION THEY WERE PLANNING TO COVER.

Q: DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING ON THE EXTENSIVE MEETING BETWEEN THE GREEK MINISTER OF DEFENSE APOSTOLOS TSOHATZOPOULOS AND THE UNDERSECRETARY JAN LODAL YESTERDAY AT THE GREEK EMBASSY?

A: I AM AFRAID I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING ON THAT.

Q: AND LAST NIGHT, IT WAS REPORTED THAT YOUR AMBASSADOR IN ATHENS, THOMAS NILES, PROTESTED TO THE GREEK GOVERNMENT REGARDING THE WELL-KNOWN ISSUE OF THE UPGRADING THE F-4 GREEK FIGHTERS BY U.S. OR GERMANY. DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING ON THAT?

A: I AM AFRAID I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING ON THAT. WE'LL TRY TO GET INFORMATION ON THAT.

Q: WELL, THE CINCS THAT ARE IN TOWN FOR THE CINC CONFERENCE, WILL THEY MEET AS A GROUP WITH THE PRESIDENT? OR

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WILL ANY CINCS INDIVIDUALLY MEET WITH THE PRESIDENT?

A: I DON'T BELIEVE THE CINCS ARE MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT THIS TIME AROUND. AND I DON'T BELIEVE THAT ANY INDIVIDUAL CINCS WILL BE MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT, EITHER.

Q: YOU MENTIONED THE STATEMENT OF COHEN TO THE TROOPS. COULD YOU JUST PARAPHRASE WHAT THAT STATEMENT IS, TO GIVE IT A LITTLE BIT ON CAMERA?

A: SECRETARY COHEN MADE BASICALLY TWO POINTS IN HIS

STATEMENT TO THE TROOPS. THE FIRST IS THAT THE FBI IS MAKING PROGRESS IN ITS INVESTIGATION, TO LOCATE THE TERRORISTS RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS DEADLY ACT A YEAR AGO, AND THAT THIS GOVERNMENT IS DETERMINED TO BRING THE TERRORISTS TO JUSTICE.

I THINK THE RECENT CAPTURE OF THE MAN RESPONSIBLE FOR THE KILLINGS OUTSIDE THE CIA SHOWS THAT WE ARE DETERMINED AND DEDICATED TO BRINGING TERRORISTS LIKE THIS TO JUSTICE, AND WE WILL PURSUE THESE TERRORISTS WITH THE SAME VIGOR THAT WE PURSUED THAT FELLOW.

SECONDLY, HE STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF FORCE PROTECTION. HE REPORTED ON HIS RECENT TRIP TO THE GULF, IN WHICH HE HAD A CHANCE TO REVIEW A NUMBER OF THE INSTALLATIONS OVER THERE, THE

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PRINCE SULTAN AIR BASE AT AL-KHARJ, FOR INSTANCE, THE PRE-POSITIONING SITE IN -- AT CAMP DOHA IN KUWAIT, THE ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT FACILITY THAT HOUSES THE FIFTH FLEET IN BAHRAIN. AND HE ALSO VISITED A SITE IN OMAN. HE REPORTED THAT HE FOUND THE FORCE PROTECTION MEASURES VERY IMPRESSIVE, BUT NOTED THAT THERE'S NO ABSOLUTE LEVEL OF FORCE PROTECTION, THAT IT REMAINS EVERYBODY'S RESPONSIBILITY ALL THE TIME, AND THAT FORCE PROTECTION IS CLEARLY THE BUSINESS OF EVERY PERSON IN THE MILITARY, EVERY DAY IN EVERY WAY. THAT WAS BASICALLY THE GIST OF HIS MESSAGE TO THE TROOPS.

Q: COULD YOU CHARACTERIZE THE PROGRESS THAT THE FBI IS MAKING IN THE CASE?

A: I CANNOT. THAT'S SOMETHING FOR THE FBI TO TALK ABOUT.

Q: TODAY THE INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER, THE BRITISH PAPER, REVEALED THAT MOST OF THE AMERICAN BOMBS AND AIR-TO-GROUND MISSILES ACQUIRED BY ISRAEL IN LEBANON LAST YEAR, WERE SOLD TO THE UNITED STATES' ARMED FORCES AND NOT TO ISRAEL. AND THEY KILLED 200 CIVILIANS AND 14 GUERRILLAS. AND THEY FOUND OUT THAT 1,700 BOMBS AND MISSILES WERE TRANSFERRED FROM U.S. MILITARY STOCKS, WITH NO PROHIBITION ON THEIR USE AGAINST CIVILIANS. WHAT DO YOU COMMENT ON THIS REPORT?

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A: I HAVEN'T SEEN THAT REPORT, AND I'D RATHER NOT COMMENT ON IT UNTIL I HAVE A --

Q: THEY ARE SAYING ALSO THAT SO ROUTINE HAS THE SYSTEM OF WEAPONS TRANSFER FROM U.S. INVENTORIES BECOME, THAT MASSIVE SHIPMENTS OF ORDINANCE TO ISRAEL ARE NOW UNDERTAKEN WITH NO PUBLICITY OR DEBATE IN AMERICA.

A: I WOULD SAY THAT ALL ASPECTS OF OUR POLICY TOWARD ISRAEL ARE DEBATED HEALTHFULLY EVERY YEAR. BUT I CAN'T COMMENT SPECIFICALLY ON THAT REPORT, BECAUSE I HAVEN'T READ IT.

Q: ARE YOU DENYING THAT SHIPMENT OF ARMS ARE BEING TRANSFERRED TO ISRAEL FROM THE STOCKPILES HERE, WITHOUT ANY DEBATE?

A: I'M TELLING YOU THAT I'M NOT GOING TO COMMENT ON A REPORT THAT I HAVEN'T READ.

Q: WHEN SECRETARY COHEN MET IN SAUDI ARABIA WITH ABDULLAH AND SAUD, DID THAT RESULT IN THEM PROVIDING ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON THE KHOBAR TOWERS?

A: THIS IS A -- IS A TASK THAT THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT IS

UNDERTAKING, THROUGH THE FBI. THEY'RE IN CHARGE OF THIS INVESTIGATION. DIRECTOR FREEH HAS BEEN OVER THERE SEVERAL TIMES. UNCLAS FINAL SECTION OF 03

THERE IS EXTENSIVE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE U.S. AND THE SAUDIS ON THIS INVESTIGATION, AND IT IS NOT SOMETHING THAT SECRETARY COHEN HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN A DETAILED WAY.

Q: HE HASN'T RAISED THAT -- [OFF MIKE]?

A: HE DID TALK TO THEM ABOUT THE INVESTIGATION, AND HE SAID PUBLICLY THAT HE -- HE URGED THE IMPORTANCE OF COOPERATION, FULL COOPERATION WITH THE SAUDIS -- FROM THE SAUDIS WITH THE UNITED STATES. HE REPEATED WHAT THE PRESIDENT HAS SAID; THAT WE EXPECT FULL AND COMPLETE COOPERATION FROM THEM. AND HE DID SPEAK ABOUT ONE PARTICULAR INCIDENT, WHICH WAS THE DEPORTATION OF AL-SAYEGH FROM CANADA TO THE UNITED STATES. BUT THE DETAILED DISCUSSIONS OF THE INVESTIGATION ARE UNDER THE MANTLE OF THE FBI. YES?

Q: FOLLOWING UP ON MARK'S QUESTION, WITH THE CINCS IN TOWN, WILL DEFENSE SECRETARY COHEN CONDUCT INTERVIEWS REGARDING

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THE CHAIRMANSHIP, USE THE OPPORTUNITY?

A: I CAN'T GO INTO SPECIFICS, BUT CERTAINLY THAT'S ON HIS MIND AND IT'S ON THEIR MIND, AND THERE WILL BE OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOME OF THEM TO TALK.

Q: HOUSE MAJORITY LEADER ARMEY LAST NIGHT SAID THAT IF THE PRESIDENT IS NOT WILLING TO COMPROMISE ON THE QUESTION OF KELLY AND MCCLELLAN -- THE DEPOTS AT KELLY AND MCCLELLAN AIR FORCE BASES, THAT THERE WILL BE NO FURTHER ROUND OF BASE CLOSINGS. DOES THE PENTAGON SEE ROOM FOR COMPROMISE HERE, OR IS THE PRESIDENT GOING TO INSIST, AND PENTAGON GOING TO INSIST, THAT YOU RETAIN THE RIGHT TO PRIVATIZE THOSE DEPOTS?

A: WELL, FIRST OF ALL, I CAN'T TALK FOR THE PRESIDENT ON THIS ISSUE. WE ARE SPENDING A LOT OF TIME, THE SECRETARY AND THE STAFF ARE SPENDING A LOT OF TIME THIS WEEK ON THAT ISSUE, WHICH IS BRAC, AND HOW TO GET BRAC THROUGH. THE SECRETARY WAS ENCOURAGED BY THE FACT THAT THERE WAS A 9-9 VOTE ON IT IN THE SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE. AS YOU KNOW, THERE ARE STRONG SUPPORTERS FOR BRAC IN THE SENATE, IN PARTICULAR; THERE ARE SOME IN THE HOUSE AS WELL. AND WE ARE PREPARED TO WORK WITH CONGRESS AGGRESSIVELY AND ENERGETICALLY TO TRY TO GET A BRAC PACKAGE

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THROUGH. I CAN'T TELL YOU WHAT THE DETAILS OF ANY EVENTUAL COMPROMISE WILL BE. I THINK IT MAY BE TOO EARLY TO TALK ABOUT DETAILS AT THIS TIME. I THINK WE HAVE TO GET A CLEARER IDEA OF WHERE EVERYBODY STANDS, AND THAT'S WHAT WE'RE TRYING TO DO.

BUT THE MOST IMPORTANT THING ABOUT BRAC IS TO STRESS THAT IF WE WANT TO GO AHEAD WITH THE MODERNIZATION PROGRAM THAT THE PENTAGON, THAT THE CHIEFS, THAT THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE -- AS ILLUSTRATED BY THE QDR -- THINKS IS THE RIGHT MODERNIZATION PROGRAM FOR THE FUTURE, WE HAVE TO GENERATE SAVINGS SOMEWHERE, AND IT REALLY DOES COME DOWN TO A CHOICE BETWEEN PROTECTING FORCES OR PROTECTING OLD FACILITIES -- PROTECTING FACILITIES THAT ARE EXCESS IN MANY RESPECTS. AND I KNOW THIS IS A CONTROVERSIAL

AND EMOTIONAL AREA, BUT IT'S AN AREA IN WHICH WE MUST MAKE PROGRESS IF WE'RE GOING TO GO AHEAD AND CARRY OUT THE MODERNIZATION PROGRAM WE THINK IS NECESSARY FOR THE NEXT CENTURY.

Q: ON THAT ISSUE, THERE'S BEEN SOME ANALYSES THAT INDICATE THAT IF THE CONGRESS DOESN'T LIFT THE 60-40 RULE, THAT THE PENTAGON WILL NOT BE ABLE TO PRIVATIZE KELLY AND MCCLELLAN -- EVEN IF THE COMPETITIVE BIDDING PROVES THAT TO BE THE BEST DEAL. HAVE YOU ALL HAD A CHANCE TO LOOK AT THAT AND SEE WHETHER --

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A: WELL, WE ARE STILL HOPEFUL THAT WE'LL GET SOME RELIEF FROM THE 60-40 RULE. THE SECRETARY HAS SENT LETTERS TO CONGRESS ON THAT. WE'RE ASKING FOR 50-50, WHICH GIVES US SOME RELIEF. AND WE CAN MAKE COPIES OF THOSE LETTERS AVAILABLE TO YOU, IF YOU HAVEN'T GOTTEN THEM ALREADY. BUT I THINK WE MADE SOME AVAILABLE LAST WEEK, AND THERE WERE SOME NEW LETTERS EITHER LATE LAST WEEK OR EARLY THIS WEEK.

Q: YOU DON'T KNOW WHETHER YOU COULD PRIVATIZE THOSE UNDER 60-40?

A: IT WOULD BE MORE COMPLICATED, OBVIOUSLY, AND THAT'S ONE OF THE REASONS WE HAVE ASKED FOR RELIEF. WE HAVE ASKED FOR 50-50. ALL ASPECTS OF THIS ISSUE ARE CONTROVERSIAL, AS YOU KNOW. BUT WE'RE TRYING TO MAKE THE CASE THAT -- AS THE PRESIDENT MADE IN 1995, THAT THERE SHOULD BE A COMPETITIVE ASPECT IN TRYING TO RESOLVE THESE PROBLEMS. AND 50-50 WOULD GIVE US MORE ROOM TO ALLOW COMPETITION.

Q: HAS SECRETARY COHEN RECEIVED ANY TYPE OF BRIEFING ON THE ROSWELL REPORT? AND IF SO, WHAT WAS HIS REACTION?

A: I AM NOT AWARE THAT HE DID, SO I CAN'T REPORT ON HIS REACTION.

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Q: COULD YOU TAKE THAT QUESTION?

A: SURE.

Q: THANK YOU.

A: JUST A SEC' -- GEORGE?

Q: JUST A SHORT [INAUDIBLE]. YOU SAID THAT WE DON'T NEED 10,000 TROOPS THERE TO HELP IN DRUG PATROL. ASIDE FROM THAT, COULD YOU SPARE THAT MANY TRAINED TROOPS TO DO THAT JOB? THE COMMANDERS TELL ME THEY DON'T HAVE THAT MANY TO SPARE.

A: [PAUSE] THE TROOPS ARE STRETCHED NOW, AS YOU KNOW. THE OPERATIONAL TEMPO AND THE PERSONNEL TEMPO IS VERY HIGH.

TO A CERTAIN EXTENT, WE RESPOND TO THE DIRECTION WE GET FROM CONGRESS AND THE DIRECTION WE GET FROM THE PRESIDENT. WE ALWAYS RESPOND TO THE DIRECTION WE GET FROM THE PRESIDENT, THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF. BUT RIGHT NOW THERE DOES NOT SEEM TO BE A NEED FOR AN ADDITIONAL 10,000 TROOPS. WE'RE COMFORTABLE WITH THE FORCE THAT WE HAVE PROVIDED TO THE BORDER PATROL OPERATIONS ALREADY. I DON'T SEE A HUGE DEMAND, ON THE PART OF GENERAL MCCAFFREY, OR ON THE PART OF THE PRESIDENT, TO SUPPLY LARGE NUMBERS OF ADDITIONAL TROOPS. I THINK THAT PEOPLE ARE SATISFIED WITH THE SUPPORT WE'RE PROVIDING ALREADY.

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AND I THINK THAT WE HAVEN'T GOTTEN TO THE NEXT POINT OF WHETHER WE COULD DO IT, BECAUSE I DON'T THINK WE ARE GOING TO BE ASKED TO PROVIDE AN ADDITIONAL 10,000 TROOPS TO THE BORDER PATROL OPERATIONS.

PRESS: THANK YOU.

-END-

TRANSCRIPTS OF THE DOD NEWS BRIEFING ARE ALSO AVAILABLE ON DEFENSELINK, THE DOD HOMEPAGE - [HTTP://WWW.DTIC.MIL/DEFENSELINK/](http://www.dtic.mil/defenselink/) OASD/PA IS LOOKING AT DISCONTINUING TRANSMITTAL OF THE TWICE WEEKLY PRESS BRIEFING IN MESSAGE FORMAT. WE BELIEVE MOST, IF NOT ALL, AGENICES ON OUR DISTRIBUTION LIST ARE ABLE TO OBTAIN THIS BRIEFING VIA DEFENSELINK. WE SOLICIT YOUR COMMENTS ON THIS PROPOSAL. PLEASE REPLY VIA MESSAGE TO: OASD/PA/DDI (ATTN: LT COL SCHULTZ) OR VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL TO: TSCHULTZ@PAGATE.PA.OSD.MIL. YOUR OPINION IS IMPORTANT. PLEASE LET US KNOW.

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