

James Earl Carter Jr. (*1924)

The President's News Conference

given on March 9, 1977

THE PRESIDENT. Good morning. I have two brief statements to make, and then I'll be glad to answer questions.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

I've sent to Congress this morning, a youth employment package which will consist of about \$1/2 billion, part of the economic stimulus package.

- 5 I've been particularly concerned in my own campaign trips around the country the last 2 years with the extraordinarily high unemployment rate among young people. More than half the total unemployed are less than 24 years old. And among those, say, from 16 to 19 years old, we have over 18-percent unemployment, and in some of the minority groups in urban areas more than 40 percent.

- 10 So, we're going to try a heavy concentration of effort in several of the major departments of Government to cut down unemployment among our young people. We have, for instance, a Youth Conservation Corps similar to what we had during the Depression years known as a Civilian Conservation Corps, the CCC. This will be administered by the Departments of Agriculture and Interior in the open spaces of our country.

- 15 We'll have a Youth Community Conservation Corps in the urban areas and a heavy emphasis on training for young people leading to employment. Including existing programs, this will be about a million jobs on a permanent basis plus another million jobs during the summer.

I hope that the Congress will act quickly on this proposal. I might say that many of the Members of Congress have been equally concerned and have done a great deal of work on this subject even before I became President.

FOREIGN TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS

- 20 The other item that I'd like to mention is one that's already been reported to some degree. I have long been concerned about our own Nation's stance in prohibiting American citizens to travel to foreign countries. We also are quite eagerly assessing our own Nation's policies that violate human rights as defined by the Helsinki agreement.

- 25 Later on this year we'll go to Belgrade to assess the component parts of the Helsinki agreement. And I want to be sure that we don't violate those rights. So I've instructed the Secretary of State to remove any travel restrictions on American citizens who want to go to Vietnam, to North Korea, to Cuba, and to Cambodia. And these restrictions will be lifted as of the 18th day of March.

I would like to point out that we still don't have diplomatic relationships with these countries. That's a doubtful prospect at this time. So, there will be some necessary precautions that ought to be taken by citizens who go there, since we don't have our own diplomats in those countries to protect them if they should have difficulty.

I'd be glad to answer any questions that you might have.

- 30 Ms. Thomas [Helen Thomas, United Press International].

QUESTIONS

HUMAN RIGHTS AND CHILE

Q. Mr. President, an American delegate to the U.N. Human Rights Commission has said that he believes and he hopes that his allegations concerning terror, suffering in Chile today, coincide with your human rights policy. Do they?

- 35 THE PRESIDENT. Well, I don't know which delegate this is or what his concerns are. But we are still concerned about deprivation of human rights in many of the countries of the world. I think Chile would be one of those where concern has been expressed. And I want to be sure that the American people understand that this is a very sensitive issue.

We've tried to be broad-based in our expression of concern and, also, responsible. At first, our policy was interpreted,

40 I think, improperly, to deal exclusively with the Soviet Union.

I've just pointed out how our own country has been at fault in some instances. Torture has been reported to us from some of the nations of the world. We are presenting these items to the Congress as required by law. But throughout the entire world, in Latin America, in our own country, in the Communist nations in Eastern Europe, and in the Soviet Union, we are very much aware of the concern about human rights.

45 I think it's entirely appropriate for our own country to take the leadership role and let the world say that the focal point for the preservation and protection of human rights is in the United States of America. I'm proud of this. And I intend to adhere to it with the deepest possible personal commitment, and I believe I speak accurately for the American people on this subject.

Q. Well, then, does that mean, Mr. President, that you don't object to the remarks that were made by our delegate?

50 THE PRESIDENT. I think that the remarks made by the delegate concerning our past involvement in 'Chilean political affairs was inappropriate. I didn't know about it ahead of time. It was a personal expression of opinion by that delegate.

I think that the Church committee in the Senate has not found any evidence that the United States was involved in the overthrow of the Allende government in Chile. There were some allegations made, I think, perhaps accurate, that we
55 did have financial aid and other--I think financial aid to be restrictive--to political elements in Chile that may have contributed to the change in government. But I don't think there has been any proof of illegalities there. And the statements made by our delegate were his own personal statements, not representing our Government's.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

Q. Mr. President, I gather the youth employment program you just announced is in addition to your economic stimulus
60 program. And I wondered how much money this adds to the deficit in the 2 upcoming fiscal years?

THE PRESIDENT. No, this is within the overall economic stimulus package already presented to the Congress.

THE MIDDLE EAST

Q. Mr. President, there has been a lot of talk about defensible borders lately and what that means in regard to the Middle East. Could I ask you, sir, do you feel that it would be appropriate in a Middle East peace settlement for the
65 Israelis to keep some of the occupied land they took during the 1967 war in order to have secure borders?

THE PRESIDENT. The defensible border phrase, the secure borders phrase, obviously, are just semantics. I think it's a relatively significant development in the description of possible settlement in the Middle East to talk about these things as a distinction.

The recognized borders have to be mutual. The Arab nations, the Israeli nation, has to agree on permanent and
70 recognized borders, where sovereignty is legal as mutually agreed. Defense lines may or may not conform in the foreseeable future to those legal borders. There may be extensions of Israeli defense capability beyond the permanent and recognized borders.

I think this distinction is one that is now recognized by Israeli leaders. The definition of borders on a geographical basis is one that remains to be determined. But I think that it is important for the world to begin to see, and for the
75 interested parties to begin to see, that there can be a distinction between the two; the ability of Israel to defend herself by international agreement or by the some. time placement of Israeli forces themselves or by monitoring stations, as has been the case in the Sinai, beyond the actual sovereignty borders as mutually agreed by Israel and her neighbors.

Q. Well, does that mean international zones between the countries?

THE PRESIDENT. International zones could very well be part of an agreement. And I think that I can see in a
80 growing way, a step-by-step process where there might be a mutual agreement that the ultimate settlement, even including the border delineations, would be at a certain described point. In an interim state, maybe 2 years, 4 years, 8 years, or more, there would be a mutual demonstration of friendship and an end to the declaration or state of war.

I think that what Israel would like to have is what we would like to have: a termination of belligerence toward Israel

by her neighbors, a recognition of Israel's right to exist, the right to exist in peace, the opening up of borders with free trade, tourist travel, cultural exchange between Israel and her neighbors; in other words, a stabilization of the situation in the Middle East without a constant threat to Israel's existence by her neighbors.

This would involve substantial withdrawal of Israel's present control over territories. Now, where that withdrawal might end, I don't know. I would guess it would be some minor adjustments in the 1967 borders. But that still remains to be negotiated.

But I think this is going to be a long, tedious process. We're going to mount a major effort in our own Government in 1977, to bring the parties to Geneva. Obviously, any agreement has to be between the parties concerned. We will act as an intermediary when our good offices will serve well.

But I'm not trying to predispose our own Nation's attitudes towards what might be the ultimate details of the agreement that can mean so much to world peace.

REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Q. At the risk of oversimplification, sir, I believe I understand during the campaign you proposed a gradual withdrawal of American troops from Korea.

THE PRESIDENT. Yes.

Q. Yet, after your revised budget went to Congress, the Army has gone to Congress and asked in fiscal 1978, for a doubling of military construction funds for Korea and in the 3 ensuing years, for more than \$110 million for similar construction. How does that square with your withdrawal plans?

THE PRESIDENT. My commitment to withdraw American ground troops from Korea has not changed. I'll be meeting this afternoon with the Foreign Minister of South Korea. This will be one of the matters that I will discuss.

I've also talked to General Vessey, who is in charge of our Armed Forces in South Korea. I think that the time period as I described in the campaign months, a 4-or 5-year time period, is appropriate. The schedule for withdrawal of American ground troops would have to be worked out very carefully with the South Korean Government. It would also have to be done with the full understanding and, perhaps, participation of Japan.

I would want to leave in place in South Korea, adequate ground forces owned by and controlled by the South Korean Government to protect themselves against any intrusion from North Korea. I would envision a continuation of American air cover for South Korea over a long period of time.

But these are the basic elements, and I'm very determined that over a period of time, as described just then, that our ground troops would be withdrawn.

THE MIDDLE EAST

Q. Mr. President, I'd like to try to clarify the Israeli situation, if I might. A moment ago in answering the question, you spoke of the possibility of substantial withdrawal of Israeli control over territory and then, just a few seconds later, spoke of the possibility of minor territorial concessions by the Israelis.

What is it exactly that you have in mind here? Are you really talking about some big withdrawals, or are you talking only about minor withdrawals?

THE PRESIDENT. I don't think I would use the word minor withdrawals. I think there might be minor adjustments to the 1967, pre-1967 borders. But that's a matter for Israel and her neighbors to decide between themselves.

I believe that we will know by, I'd say, the middle of May, much more clearly the positions of the interested parties. I've not yet met nor talked to the leaders in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Egypt-Saudi Arabia, to a lesser direct participation degree.

I will meet with all these leaders between now and the middle of May. And I don't want to try to define in any specific terms the exact delineation of borders, but I think this is obviously one of the most serious problems.

There are three basic elements: One is an ultimate commitment to complete peace in the Middle East; second, border

determinations which are highly controversial and not yet been defined by either side; and, third, dealing with the Palestinian question.

And I'm not trying to act as the one to lay down an ultimate settlement. I don't know what an ultimate settlement will be. But these matters will be freely and openly debated within our own country and within the countries involved. And I think I've described as best I can my own position.

FEDERAL HOUSING AID

Q. Mr. President, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, if I read Secretary Harris correctly, seems to be moving towards a policy that would promote racial integration of the suburbs, namely, through the withholding of water and sewer and community development grants in communities that lack a positive commitment to low- and moderate-income housing. What are your views on this?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, this was a subject that was well discussed during the campaign, as you remember. I think that the 1975 Housing Act, I believe it was 1975, clearly describes a requirement that communities that request Federal help in establishing housing have to put forward a positive proposal to ensure a mixture of housing in the entire community without regard to race, and without regard to the economic level of the families involved.

This does not mean that every individual city block or suburban block has to have all different kinds of housing in it. It does mean that the overall package, as proposed to the Federal Government, has to provide for a wide distribution of housing opportunities for those in minority groups or those who have a low income.

And I believe that Secretary Harris' statement is compatible with that law requirement.

DISCLOSURE OF INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION

Q. Mr. President, last week in an interview you expressed concern about the disclosure of confidential and classified information. Admiral Turner, your choice to head the CIA, has said, I believe in testimony, that he would favor criminal penalties for disclosure by Government officials of that type of information, but Vice President Mondale said he's opposed to it.

I wonder, sir, if you'd tell us where you stand on that issue and what, other than restricting access to classified information, you intend to do about this problem?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, my own interest would be to minimize the use of any criminal penalties for disclosure of information. There are other penalties that can be used without criminal charges, and I think that Vice President Mondale drew that distinction.

I don't know yet what procedure we will follow. My own hope would be that we could prevent the disclosure of intelligence information that might be damaging to our national security, rather than trying to control that problem by the imposition of legal criminal penalties.

Q. Could you elaborate on how you might prevent that, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, I think, first of all, is a tighter control over the number of people who have access to material that's highly sensitive, that might damage the relationship between our own country and our friends and allies. We've already initiated steps to that degree and we'll be pursuing it.

As you know, Admiral Turner has only recently been confirmed. He's just now getting his presence felt in the defense communities. I'll be going out to the CIA headquarters this afternoon to see the oath of office administered to him.

But we'll make sure that the public knows what new policies we impose. But the one that's easiest to describe, and also very difficult to do, is to make sure that we don't have too many people knowing about matters that they don't need to know and, also, that we can protect the legitimate confidentiality of agreements between ourselves and our allies.

Now, I would never permit anything that was either illegal or improper. And we've got a very good arrangement that was primarily set up by President Ford to prevent abuses. The Intelligence Oversight Board is made up of three

distinguished men appointed by President Ford, who have complete access to any operation conducted by the intelligence forces.

Senator Inouye's committee in the Senate and, I think, six committees in the House also have access to this information. Of course, I'm monitoring it myself. And I think Admiral Turner's integrity is also a guarantee that there
175 will be no future abuses.

But that doesn't mean that everything that we do in gathering intelligence on which our security might very well depend has to be revealed to the public. And drawing of that distinction is one that's my responsibility, and I think I can handle that.

PAUL WARNKE

180 Q. What effect in your mind, if any, is the extent of debate in the Senate over Mr. Warnke's qualifications to be the chief SALT negotiator going to have eventually on our negotiating position?

THE PRESIDENT. I don't believe that the exact vote in the Senate on Mr. Warnke's confirmation will have a major effect on future negotiations with the Soviet Union on SALT.

The obvious impression that concerns me is a demonstration of lack of confidence of the Senate in my own ability and
185 attitudes as a chief negotiator. Obviously, as President, any decisions made with the Russians on reduction of atomic weapons would have to be approved by me.

I have promised the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who in the past perhaps have been bypassed in the process, that they will always know ahead of time what our position will be at the negotiating table. I've not promised the Joint Chiefs of Staff that they would have the right to approve or disapprove every individual item in negotiations.

190 But I hope that the Senate will give Mr. Warnke a strong vote. I think many of the people that oppose Mr. Warnke just do not want to see any substantial reductions in atomic weapons, even though they are agreed to mutually by us and the Soviet Union or even if they are designed to reduce the threat of nuclear destruction of the world.

I feel very deeply that we ought to pursue with every possible means, an agreement with the Soviet Union for substantial reductions in atomic weapons. I think Mr. Warnke agrees; most of the Senators agree.

195 So, there are a wide range of reasons for not voting for Mr. Warnke. I have complete confidence in him. And I might say there is one more very significant guard against any error that I and Mr. Warnke and the Secretary of State and others might make. The Senate has to approve, by a two-thirds vote after complete open debate, any agreements signed with the Soviet Union. So, I think that the attacks on Mr. Warnke are primarily by those who don't want to see substantial reductions in nuclear weapons in the world.

200 RICHARD HELMS

Q. It is widely reported that a grand jury in Washington may be investigating Richard Helms, the former CIA Director, to see whether to move forward on a case. It is reported that perhaps the jury will want to see certain CIA documents. And I presume you would be the final arbiter. Have you been asked for those documents, and what will be your policy if you are asked for them in this case or any other case?

205 THE PRESIDENT. I have not been asked for any documents. And the Helms case has not come to my attention, either officially or even indirectly from any of the people involved.

Whether or not to proceed with the case will be the exclusive right of the Justice Department. The revelation of any documents that affect our national security will be my own judgment, in this or other cases.

I can't respond any further than that, because that's all I know about the subject.

210 Q. Mr. President, if I may say, sir, the problem, as you know, relates to, I guess, national security considerations on the one hand and the legal system and justice on the other. Given the recent history, I just wonder how closely you will weigh those two.

THE PRESIDENT. Well, the prosecution of the case has nothing to do with me; that will be a judgment made by the Justice Department. The actual revelation to a grand jury, or in case of a trial, if it should ever evolve, of confidential

215 or secret material, would have to be judged by me.

Q. That would control, sir, would it not, whether the prosecution could go forward even if it chose?

THE PRESIDENT. It may or may not. At that point, the responsibility for making a judgment and the responsibility for the consequences of an inaccurate judgment, if it should occur, would be my own.

CIVIL DISORDERS

220 Q. Mr. President, in connection with your concern about human rights, a task force on terrorism and violence last week presented a report to Attorney General Bell regarding recommendations they had to make on how we should handle civil disorders should they occur again like they did in the sixties. It's a 600-page report, funded--the study was funded--by the LEAA, and Attorney General Bell typified this as one of the good things the LEAA was doing.

Well, sir, in the report there are certain recommendations, such as the use of mass arrests, the use of preventive
225 detention, some of the very things that were used in the sixties and later ruled inappropriate by the courts. And I wondered, sir, what you felt about this problem involving human rights in the United States?

THE PRESIDENT. I would be opposed to mass arrests, and I would be opposed to preventive detention as a general policy and even as a specific policy, unless it was an extreme case. Obviously, in a 600-page report there would be things with which we would agree and things with which we would disagree. I've not seen the report. I'm not familiar
230 with it. But I think the abuses in the past have in many cases exacerbated the disharmonies that brought about demonstrations, and I think the arrest of large numbers of people without warrant or preventive detention is contrary to our own best system of government.

RICHARD HELMS

Q. Mr. President, to follow on Mr. Donaldson's [Sam Donaldson, ABC News] question on the Helms case, he asked
235 you if documents have been requested.

THE PRESIDENT. They have not.

Q. You said they have not. Mr. Lipshutz, your general counsel, indicated to some reporters last week, however, that the matter of decision on release of information is in the White House, is in his office, and that would make it ultimately up to you.

240 Now, has the Justice Department not asked permission to declassify documents that they may have gotten from other sources, from other departments of the Government in this case?

THE PRESIDENT. If they have asked for it, it has not come to my attention. I can't say that somewhere in the pipeline from the Justice Department, the State Department, the CIA, or even my own counsel, that requests have been made. But I have not been aware of them.

245 Q. Were questions concerning Mr. Lipshutz's statements communicated to you last Friday after some briefings in the White House?

THE PRESIDENT. I've not received any request from Mr. Lipshutz. Obviously, when something gets to the White House it takes time for them to staff it and give me the options I have to address and, since I'm not an attorney, to give me some opinion on the legalities of. But it has not come to my attention at all.

250 Q. You cannot say whether he has it in his office?

THE PRESIDENT. I do not know.

CORY MOORE

Q. Mr. President, I understand that you have agreed to speak on the telephone to the man in Ohio who is holding a police official hostage after he releases him. Are you concerned that this might be regarded as a precedent?

255 THE PRESIDENT. Yes, I am.

Q. What are the factors that you weighed in that regard?

THE PRESIDENT. The request was made to me to talk to Mr. Moore as a precondition for his releasing the police officer who now has been held about 24 hours. I replied that I would be glad to talk to Mr. Moore after the police officer was released.

260 It is perhaps a dangerous precedent to establish. I weighed that factor before I made my own decision. I understand that Mr. Moore has promised to release the police officer after this news conference, regardless of any comments that I might make on it. And I hope that the police officer will be released. But if he should be released, I will talk to Mr. Moore.¹

1 The White House later announced that the President spoke briefly with Cory Moore at 4:13 p.m., March 9.

265 THE MIDDLE EAST

Q. Mr. President, I'd like to go just a little bit further in your discussion of the defensible borders issue.

If I understood you correctly, you're talking about the possibility of something like an Israeli defense line along the Jordan River and perhaps at some point on the Sinai Desert and perhaps at some point on the Golan Heights, that would be defense forces but not legal borders.

270 Have I understood that correctly, that your feeling is that the Israelis are going to have to have some kind of defense forces along the Jordan River and in those other places?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, you added a great deal to what I said. In the first place, I didn't mention any particular parts of the geography around Israel. And I didn't confine the defense capability to Israeli forces. These might very well be international forces. It might very well be a line that's fairly broad, say, 20 kilometers or more, where demilitarization is guaranteed on both sides. It might very well consist of outposts, electronics or, perhaps, personnel outposts as were
275 established in the Sinai region as a result of the Egypt and Israeli agreement.

I'm not going to try to get more specific in saying what will or will not be the case. But that is a possibility that might lead to the alleviation of tension there, and it's one about which I will be discussing this matter with the representatives from the Arab countries when they come.

280 BOILER FUELS

Q. Mr. President, Mr. Schlesinger recently told the Senate committee that your April 20th energy policy recommendations will emphasize a switch from oil and gas to coal, but he stopped short of saying that you will support mandatory exclusion of oil and gas as boiler fuel. What is your position on that?

THE PRESIDENT. We've not addressed that question yet. How to encourage, or perhaps even to force the end of
285 wasting natural gas just for the generation of heat at central power plant stations is something that we'll have to address. It may be done by legislation; it may be done by economic penalties; it may be done by an appeal to the stationary heat producers to shift on a patriotic basis. I can't yet say which of the proposals will be mandatory and which will be voluntary.

SALT NEGOTIATIONS

290 Q. On several occasions, Mr. President, you have spoken in terms of the U.S. being ready to move to a quick SALT agreement, omitting cruise missiles, Backfire bombers, if necessary. I'm wondering, sir, have you had any indication yet of Russian intentions on this subject?

THE PRESIDENT. The Soviet Union, so far as I know, still would like to include the cruise missile question in the present negotiations. They don't want to discuss Backfire bomber at all. And my hope has been and is that by the
295 exclusion of both those controversial items, which will require long and tedious negotiations, that we might move to a rapid agreement at SALT II and immediately begin to discuss, for instance, the Backfire bombers, the cruise missiles in subsequent negotiations. But I do not have any indication yet that the Soviets have changed their position on that issue.

Q. Mr. President, what about nuclear reductions?

300 THE PRESIDENT. Again, I think you have two approaches to the question.

I have proposed both directly and indirectly to the Soviet Union, publicly and privately, that we try to identify those items on which there is relatively close agreement--not completely yet, because details are very difficult on occasion. But I have, for instance, suggested that we forgo the opportunity to arm satellite bodies and also to forgo the opportunity to destroy observation satellites.

305 We've also proposed that the Indian Ocean be completely demilitarized, that a comprehensive test ban be put into effect, that prior notification of test missile launchings be exchanged. And I would like to see any of these items on which the Soviets will agree quickly, be concluded, and then get down to the much more difficult negotiations on much more drastic, overall commitments to atomic weapons, leading ultimately to the complete elimination of atomic weapons from the face of the Earth.

310 This is going to be a long, slow, tedious process. But I think if we and the Soviets could agree on the easier items--and none of them are very easy--quickly, it would show good faith. I think it would let the world know that we are serious in stopping once and for all what has been a continuous and rapid escalation in atomic weapon capabilities since they were first evolved.

FRANK CORMIER [Associated Press]. Thank you, Mr. President.

315 THE PRESIDENT. Thank you very much.
(4932 Wörter)

Quelle: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=7139&st=&st1=>