

May 8 / Administration of George Bush, 1991

Statement by Press Secretary Fitzwater on Foreign Access to United States Ports

May 8, 1991

The President today announced a major revision in U.S. port access policy which will provide access for commercial cargo, passenger, fishing, and fishing support vessels of the countries of Eastern Europe to all U.S. ports on the basis of 24 hours' notice of entry into the port. This includes the 12 U.S. ports previously closed for national security reasons to vessels from the region. These ports are:

Charleston, SC
Hampton Roads, VA
Honolulu, HI
Kings Bay, GA
New London and Groton, CT
Panama City, FL
Pensacola, FL
Port Canaveral, FL
Port Hueneme, CA
Port St. Joe, FL
Portsmouth, NH
San Diego, CA

This revision is the result of a comprehensive interagency review, and is designed to stimulate commercial trade between the U.S. and the region. It was taken in recognition of the progress these countries have made toward democracy and the rule of law.

This policy change is designed to facilitate the development of trade between the U.S. and the countries of Eastern Europe by opening some of the largest U.S. bulk and

container ports to their fleets. Previously, access for Bulgarian, Czechoslovakian, Hungarian, Polish, and Romanian vessels required up to 14 days' advance request prior to entering a U.S. port, and vessels of Albania were denied access to all U.S. ports and the U.S. territorial waters.

It represents another step by the U.S. in discarding cold war restrictions and in welcoming the countries of Eastern Europe into the international community of democratic nations. It is taken in recognition of the progress these six countries have made toward democracy and freedom. This change also significantly reduces the administrative burden on the U.S. Coast Guard and on the private sector for port calls associated with commercial vessels of Eastern European countries.

Under this new policy, vessels of Cambodia, Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Syria, and Vietnam will continue to be ineligible to enter U.S. ports for national security reasons.

There has been no change in access for vessels of the U.S.S.R. to the 12 U.S. ports closed for national security reasons, and this new policy fully protects the national security interest of the United States. Access to other U.S. ports for vessels of the Soviet Union will remain as provided for in the U.S./U.S.S.R. Maritime Agreement which was concluded in June 1990.

Remarks Announcing the Resignation of William H. Webster as Director of the Central Intelligence Agency and a News Conference

May 8, 1991

The President. Well, it is with a great sense of pride, genuine pride in his accomplishments and long years of dedicated service to his country, that I announce that Bill Webster has informed me of his intention to retire as the Director of Central

Intelligence. Bill will be leaving Federal service after 26 years on the Federal Bench, as Director of the FBI, and as Director of the CIA. And as a former DCI, I know the complex organizations and interrelationships that comprise our intelligence