

Nomination of Nancy Risque Rohrbach To Be an Assistant Secretary of Labor

June 28, 1991

The President has nominated Nancy Risque Rohrbach, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Labor for Policy at the United States Department of Labor. She would succeed Jennifer Lynn Dorn.

Since 1989 Ms. Rohrbach has served as a consultant in Arlington, VA, and as a commissioner on the National Commission on Children. Prior to this she served as an Assistant to the President and Cabinet Sec-

retary at the White House, 1987–1989; vice president of Russo, Watts & Rollins, 1986–1987; and as a Deputy Assistant to the President for Legislative Affairs, 1981–1986.

Ms. Rohrbach graduated from Radford College (B.A., 1968). She was born April 14, 1946, in Paris, France. Ms. Rohrbach is married, has two stepchildren, and resides in Arlington, VA.

Exchange With Reporters Aboard Air Force One

June 28, 1991

The President. Well, look at it this way, it's Friday. T.G. it's Friday. I'm ready to get out of there, I'll tell you.

Resignation of Supreme Court Associate Justice Marshall

Q. Did you watch Justice Marshall—did you watch the news conference on TV?

The President. No. No, I didn't see it. What did he say?

Q. He basically said that you should pick the best person for the job and race wouldn't be a factor. Do you agree?

The President. Well, I'm going to try and do exactly that. And I saluted him yesterday. I didn't see the press conference, but I want to go for excellence, and I want to keep in mind representation of all Americans. But I would agree with him if that's what he said. Again, I didn't hear it, so I'd have to be careful.

Q. Do you feel pressured, Mr. President?

The President. I don't feel pressured at all. I want to move soon, though. I feel pressure to get this matter, get our nomination, up to the Senate as soon as possible. So, I would hope to have it resolved in a very few days.

Q. Is the process starting all over, sir, or are you going to pick up from the last time?

The President. No. As you know, we went

through a screening process earlier on at the time the vacancy came forward that was filled by Judge Souter. So, the process didn't have to start from scratch, square one. That's not to say that other names are not being considered. But in anticipation, we always try to keep a current look at these matters. Who knows what's going to happen?

Q. Sir, would you like to be able to name a black to this seat?

The President. I'd like to just weigh all the options and go for the best qualified candidate.

Q. Do you have a short list in your mind, sir?

The President. Fairly short.

Q. What do you mean by keeping in mind representation of all Americans?

The President. Somebody that will be seen as keeping with the judicial philosophy that I've always expounded in terms of interpretation, not legislation. Somebody that is very broad-minded on issues.

Q. Sir, some people are saying the decision is very near; indeed, you have already made it.

The President. No, I've not already made it. And it is near, but I've not made it.

Q. How short a list do you have?

The President. Well, I can't help you with

that.

Q. Is there any chance you'll name——

The President. A handful of names.

Q. Is there any chance you'll name someone before you return back to Washington?

The President. I wouldn't say there's any decision to do that, but I don't know. I'd have to hedge on that because I just don't know the answer to that. If I said yes, why, then you'd anticipate it.

Q. Why are you so eager to——

The President. Because it's better. As long as you're as close as we are, it's better to get the choice made so you don't get a lot of needless lobbying and pressure. There's plenty of pressure on it anyway, but I mean, I don't want a lot of needless putting forward of names that might not be considered—good people, I might add. But we've narrowed it down so that we're not looking for 20 new suggestions. And I think if we get people's hopes up or to have some advocate of a certain person and then not have that person seriously considered is not fair. It's not fair to the individual.

Q. Can you tell us anything about the traditional philosophy you're looking for?

The President. No, just the definition, the broad definition that I've always adhered to or that I've advocated, that I ran for President on. I'm not about to change my view on that.

Q. Is there a quota system on the Courts?

The President. I don't think so. I don't think there's a quota system on the Courts, nor do I think there should be a quota system on the Courts. It's a good question, and I don't think the appointment of a minority or one who represents a so-called majority should be viewed as quotas one way or the other.

Iraq

Q. How concerned are you, sir, about reports of Iraq fighting with——

The President. I'm very concerned. I understand the Secretary-General had a press conference on this expressing the concern of the United Nations, generally. And if, again, this is represented to me that he condemned these actions, why, clearly, we're in that view. But we've got some serious work now ahead of us—diplomatic, diplomatic process has to start. We can't, from

a U.S. standpoint, permit this brutal bully to go back on what was a solemn agreement and to threaten people that are there under U.N. jurisdiction. And that's exactly what he appears to have done.

The man has no shame. And he goes to these extraordinary ends, and I think world opinion will mount fast against him on this issue. I mean, shooting in the air to scare off people sanctioned by the United Nations who are there to expose what this man has done. I mean, I don't think the world will support this at all, anybody. The United States certainly won't. So, now the question is, what do you do about it? Deliberately take time to work the diplomacy, and this is under the auspices of two United Nations resolutions. And I think we need to be sure that we start immediate consultation at the U.N.

And then don't press me what I'll do beyond that because I'm not prepared to say, not prepared to say what we'll do.

Q. I just wonder whether the coalition might feel that it's entitled under certain circumstances, this time with the U.N. sanction of these actions, to take military action.

The President. Well, I think some could argue that the U.N. resolutions have already spoken on all means necessary, 678 having been incorporated into a more recent resolution. So, that's the way I'd answer that.

Q. Are you satisfied that, in fact, he has violated the cease-fire——

The President. Yes, I'm totally satisfied of that. I've seen incontrovertible evidence to this effect, incontrovertible. Unarguable. Clear.

Q. Beyond just simply not letting people in——

The President. Oh, yes, absolutely. We shared that information with the several different countries.

I've got to run.

Q. What kind of things——

The President. A wide array.

Note: The exchange took place at 12:01 p.m. while the President was en route from Washington, DC, to Kennebunkport, ME. In his responses, President Bush referred to Thurgood Marshall and David H. Souter, Associate Justices of the Supreme Court;

United Nations Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar de la Guerra; and President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. A tape was not

available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Question-and-Answer Session With Reporters in Kennebunkport, Maine

June 29, 1991

Supreme Court Nominee

The President. Look at all these happy faces out here. Otherwise, they'd be sleeping. [Laughter]

Q. Exactly. Thanks for having us here.

The President. One thing, you go to bed early up here.

Q. Is it true that Ken Raynor is one of the finalists for the Supreme Court? [Laughter]

The President. We're looking for a big Justice.

Q. Have you decided yet, Mr. President, on your choice?

The President. Not yet—6 in the morning. [Laughter]

Iraq

Q. Mr. President, anything new from Iraq as far as the situation in—

The President. No.

Q. Did you hear the announcement today that Hussein says he'll let the U.N. team in?

The President. Heard that, but he's been lying so much. I hope like heck he's telling the truth this time.

President's Golf Game

Q. How you doing, Mr. President—good round?

The President. Very good, yes. I played very well today. So, don't judge me by that last shot—no. [Laughter] Better, though, a little better.

Iraq

Q. Mr. President, can you give us an update on the situation with Iraq, what's going on as far as the inspections, what you're hearing?

The President. Well, what I'm hearing is we've got our policy, and we've got to start doing a lot of diplomacy on this matter. It's very disturbing. And you heard the

world reaction from this, so we're just considering, as I mentioned yesterday, what needs to be done. He must comply with United Nations resolutions. This concept of going in there and lying and shooting in the air to scare international observers is just something that cannot be condoned.

Now, he did make some statement today, but I've heard that before. So, I want to see full implementation of those U.N. resolutions, and so does everybody else. We have a serious situation and this man—I haven't changed my view about what it's going to take to have good relations with the United States. But this interim thing of keeping his word and then breaking it by harassing international inspectors is simply unacceptable to everybody. So, I'll leave it there.

Q. Would you consider a military option, Mr. President?

The President. I've said all I want to say about it. We will review the bidding and some diplomacy involved here. This is a U.N. resolution. That means there's a lot of people involved in it. But we feel that the authority exists for that under existing resolutions, 678 having been incorporated into the last resolution. So, it's a serious situation, it's not just one—

Q. Would you favor giving him a deadline to comply, sir?

The President. I don't—I'll just leave it where we are.

Q. Well, sir, do you think the fact that he didn't allow two inspections was stalling for time so he could try to cover up and hide—

The President. No question. No question about it. The intelligence is incontrovertible. And everybody that's seen it—there's no dispute. I mean, this isn't even a question. And I think those in the United States