

Ambassador to Kuwait, and I am pleased he has agreed to accept this new assignment.”

NOTE: A biography of the nominee was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary.

Nomination for Administrator of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

February 24, 1994

The President today announced his intention to nominate Nelba R. Chavez, of San Francisco, as Administrator of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) in the Department of Health and Human Services.

“Dr. Chavez’ broad range of experiences in the areas of mental health and substance abuse

will provide valuable perspective in addressing these problems,” the President said. “Her dedication to these issues will be a great benefit in her new position.”

NOTE: A biography of the nominee was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary.

The President’s News Conference

February 25, 1994

Hebron Massacre

The President. Good morning. I want to speak briefly about events in the Middle East and in Russia.

Early this morning, Palestinian Muslim worshippers at prayer in the Mosque of Abraham in Hebron were brutally gunned down by a lone Israeli settler. It can be no coincidence that the murderer struck during the holy month of Ramadan and chose a site sacred to Muslims and to Jews. His likely purpose was to ruin the historic reconciliation now underway between the Palestinians and the Israelis.

On behalf of the American people I condemn this crime in the strongest possible terms. I am outraged and saddened that such a gross act of murder could be perpetrated. And I extend my deepest sympathies to the families of those who have been killed and wounded.

I also call on all the parties to exercise maximum restraint in what we all understand is a terribly emotional situation. Extremists on both sides are determined to drag Arabs and Israelis back into the darkness of unending con-

flict and bloodshed. We must prevent them from extinguishing the hopes and the visions and the aspirations of ordinary people for a life of peaceful existence.

The answer now is to redouble our efforts to conclude the talks between Israel and the PLO and begin the implementation of the agreement they have made as rapidly as possible. Accordingly, this morning I asked the Secretary of State to contact Prime Minister Rabin and Chairman Arafat and to invite them to send all their negotiators involved in the Israel-PLO talks to Washington as soon as possible and to stay here in continuous session until their work is completed. They have both agreed to do that.

Our purpose is to accelerate the negotiations on the Declaration of Principles and to try to bring them to a successful conclusion in the shortest possible time. Those negotiations have already made considerable progress as marked by the Cairo agreement. It is my hope that the parties can turn today’s tragic event into a catalyst for further progress and reconciliation.

Ames Espionage Case

I'd also like to say a word about the Ames espionage case and our broader interests regarding Russia. Three days ago, an employee of the CIA, Aldrich Ames, and his wife were arrested for spying, first for the Soviet Union and then for Russia, over a period dating back to the mid-1980's. If the charges are true, the Ames couple caused significant damage to our national security and betrayed their country.

This is a serious case, and we've made that crystal clear to the Russian Government. The CIA is working to assess the damage to our intelligence operation. The Justice Department is vigorously pursuing the court case. The FBI is continuing to pursue its investigations. It is important that we not say anything at this point that could jeopardize the prosecution. We need to be firm as we pursue both this case and our national interest in democratic reform in Russia.

Support of the United States for reform in Russia does not flow from a sense of charity or blind faith. Our policy is based on our clear American interests clearly pursued. It is in our national interest to continue working with Russia to lower the nuclear threshold, to support the development of Russia as a peaceful democracy, stable and at peace with its neighbors, to be a constructive partner with the United States in international diplomacy and to develop a flourishing market economy that can benefit both their people and ours. It is, therefore, in our interest to make every effort to help the long-term struggle for reform in Russia succeed.

That's why I've worked with members of both parties in Congress to secure assistance for reform in Russia, Ukraine, Armenia, and other new states, why I went to Moscow in January, to urge the Russian people to stay the course of reform, to join us in building a more positive partnership, and to advance the process of democracy and market reform.

Earlier today, I met with Members of Congress from both parties to discuss these issues, to stress the need for continuing our long-term and bipartisan approach to dealing with Russia. And I urged them to resist calls to reduce or suspend our assistance for reform in Russia and the other new states of the former Soviet Union. After all, a great portion of our aid is to facilitate the dismantlement of nuclear weapons that were aimed at the United States for over four dec-

ades. It is in our interest, plainly, to continue this policy.

The majority of our economic assistance is flowing not to government but to reformers outside Moscow, mostly in the nongovernmental sector, to help them start business and privatize existing businesses, to help private farmers, and to help support exchange programs.

Throughout the cold war, our Nation acted with a steadiness of purpose in overcoming the challenge of Soviet communism. Today, whether it is in our policies toward Russia or toward the Middle East, we need that same steadiness of purpose. Our policies must be designed for the long term and for the American national interests.

Terry [Terence Hunt, Associated Press].

Q. Mr. President, Russia seems to be taking the view that the spy case is no big deal. Are you satisfied with Russia's response and cooperation to this? And if they don't withdraw individuals from their Embassy here, will you expel them?

The President. Well, let me try to clarify, first of all, what we have sought and why we have sought it. We have not sought Russian cooperation in any damage assessment. That was simply, I think, an erroneous report. We have sought Russian cooperation, if you will, in terms of taking what we believe is appropriate action in this case, and we think it's important that appropriate action be taken.

We have expressed our views in what we hoped the Russians would do. If they do not do that, then we will take action, and we will take it quickly, and then it will be apparent what we have done.

Helen [Helen Thomas, United Press International].

Q. Mr. President, has there been any formal response? Out of Moscow today they said they think they can have a dignified resolution. Has anything been offered? And also, are you looking for a second possible double agent in the CIA?

The President. We are—we have made our position clear. We have been in contact with the Russians. We think appropriate action will be taken one way or the other very soon.

David [David Lauter, Los Angeles Times].

Hebron Massacre

Q. Mr. President, you referred to the perpetrator of the massacre today as a lone settler, and the evidence so far suggests that he did

act alone. But there have been repeated reports over the years of Americans providing aid, both fundraising and other sorts of aid, to extremist groups on both sides. And I wonder whether, in light of today's massacre, whether there is more that needs to be done here to try to prevent Americans from providing aid and other forms of support to Jewish extremist groups that may be involved in these sorts of actions.

The President. Well, let me say, based on what we now know, we have no reason to believe that this killer was involved with any group. If we find out differently, we will assess our position at that time.

I can say this, that Prime Minister Rabin, himself, has recognized the need to strengthen the security provided by Israeli forces against extremists, including Israeli extremists. But as far as we know, this was the action of one individual.

Gwen [Gwen Ifill, New York Times].

Q. Mr. President, what is it about this massacre as opposed to other setbacks that have occurred in the Middle East that has brought you to this podium today, that makes you feel it's necessary to make a strong statement?

The President. First of all, its scope and setting is horrible from a purely human point of view. Secondly, it comes at a time when it appears to be clearly designed to affect the lives of hundreds of thousands of others by derailing the peace process. And I am hoping that the statesmanship of the leaders in the region and the attention that this will bring to the terrible problem will not only diffuse what could become a much worse round of killings and counterattacks, but will actually be used to thwart the purpose of the murder and to reinvigorate the peace process.

Yes, Rita [Rita Braver, CBS News].

Q. Mr. President, just to follow up on the earlier question, there have been reports from the scene that the Israeli army stood by and allowed this massacre to go on. What kind of recommendation would you make to Israel to try to do an investigation to see what happened and change the perception maybe of that?

The President. Well, we have no reason—we do not know that to be true. I can say that at this time. And we have—the Secretary of State has talked with Prime Minister Rabin. I was not able to talk with him myself yet because of the other meetings I had this morning. I believe the Israelis are committed to increasing

security where they can do so. And I don't want to comment on that without some evidence or reason to believe its true.

G-7 Meeting

Q. Mr. President, there's a G-7 meeting on Saturday in Frankfurt. It's supposed to focus on Russian aid. Do we go to that meeting with any particular proposition on the speed of aid or the conditionality of aid to Russia? And also, at that meeting, Bentsen will be meeting with Japanese Finance Minister Fujii regarding the failed trade talks, framework talks. Do you see the Gephardt and Rockefeller open markets still being helpful to your mission to open markets in Japan? Do you support that?

The President. Well, we've taken no position on any particular legislation. I think that it shows the determination of the American people to improve our trade and open the markets, especially the involvement of Senator Rockefeller, who's actually lived in Japan and I think is thought of genuinely as a friend of Japan but someone who understands what is at stake here.

With regard to the other question, I think we're where we always have been. The kind of aid and the amount of aid which will flow to Russia and the sources from which it flows I think will be a function of the policies and conduct of the Russians.

Yes, Brit [Brit Hume, ABC News].

Russia

Q. Are you concerned now, sir, apart from the Ames case, about other developments in Russia that might make your policy there appear almost to be in denial, based on what you and others wish were happening or hope will happen, rather than what really is happening there?

The President. No, I mean my policy has nothing to do with what I wish or hope will happen. Our response will be dictated by their behavior. But I think the—what I think is naive in this whole element is the suggestion that we should have ever believed for a moment that every event in Russia and every speech made by every Russian politician in every election of every member of Parliament would somehow be in a constant straight line toward a goal that we wanted to predetermine. They have to make their own future. That's what I said there over and over again.

This is not black and white; this is gray. There will be developments over the course of our

relationship with Russia which—as there are over the course of our relationship with every other country—where we won't like everything that happens. We should do things based on a clear-headed appreciation of what is in our national interest.

No one has made a compelling case to me, publicly or privately, that it is not in our national interests to continue to work with the President of Russia and the Government of Russia on denuclearization, on cooperation and respect for neighbors, and on economic reform where we can support it. That is, the privatization movement, for example, I would just remind you, is still going on in Russia and has basically occurred more rapidly there than in other former Soviet countries.

So I don't believe the fact that a few speeches are made that we don't agree with or that policies are pursued based on an election they had for a Parliament that we don't agree with should force us to abandon what is in our national interest. When it is no longer in our national interest to do these things, then we should stop it. But we cannot be deluded into thinking that our national interest can be defined by every election and every speech in Russia. That can't be.

Yes, Tom [Thomas L. Friedman, New York Times].

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, in inviting the parties to come here to Washington, do you also anticipate that you or the Secretary of State will adopt a different posture toward these negotiations? Up to now, we've kind of let them handle it and keep a hands-off approach, wisely. But do you see, in fact, now that they're going to be here and given the urgency you've assigned to it, do you see yourself or the Secretary taking a different posture toward the talks?

The President. I think, first of all, the very act of inviting them here indicates some sense of urgency on our part. What we have done to date, as you know, is largely to try to give both sides the security they needed to proceed and the assurances that we would support it, but that they would have to freely make the agreement. We still believe they will have to freely agree.

We believe they are close to agreement. We want to do things that will prevent this last terrible incident from derailing that and to try

to send a signal to the peoples in the region to not overreact to this horrible act, that the path of peace is still the right path. Whether that will require us to do more in particular meetings, I can't say, because we have discussed this with Chairman Arafat, with Prime Minister Rabin because we wanted to move quickly, and they did, too. And we'll just have to wait for that to unfold.

Andrea [Andrea Mitchell, NBC News].

Ames Espionage Case

Q. Mr. President, Senator Nunn has just said that we should not be asking Russia to voluntarily bring back their diplomats, that we should have simply expelled them the way we would have during the cold war and after the cold war, that this is too serious a case. Why didn't we just expel the diplomats still working here?

The President. I think that the judgment of the security services and the national security team was that the Russians ought to be at least told what we know—not negotiated with, there was no negotiation—told what we know and given an opportunity to take whatever action they wanted to take. And if they don't, then we will do what we should do. And we will take appropriate action. We will do that soon.

Q. Mr. President, does that also mean, as Senator Leahy and Senator Mitchell and others are suggesting following your meeting this morning, that you, the United States Government, will also expose Russian diplomats who are, in effect, who are really intelligence officers who are not declared to the U.S. Government as intelligence officers? Will you take that step, and if you do, don't you invite retaliation, counterexpulsions, counterdeclarations, exposures on the part of the Russian Government against U.S. officials in Moscow?

The President. We intend to take the action that we think is appropriate, and you won't have to wait long to find out what that is.

Representative Dan Rostenkowski

Q. Mr. President, are you in any way interfering with the judicial process in appearing with Congressman Rostenkowski in Illinois on Monday? There have been suggestions—

The President. Absolutely not.

Q. —that Attorney General Reno had concerns that you would be appearing with someone under investigation?

The President. First of all—let me make a couple of comments about that. First of all, I have had no conversations to that effect with anyone in the Justice Department. Secondly, there is no way in the world we would do anything like that. Thirdly, this investigation has been going on for months. I have been in Chicago before with Congressman Rostenkowski. I am going there and will be with other Members of Congress, at least one other I know and perhaps more, to talk about issues that directly relate to this administration's work that he is a critical part of, health care and crime. And finally, there is still a presumption of innocence in this country. He has not yet been charged with anything.

But I can tell you, there has been absolutely no contact of any nature about this case with the Justice Department and the White House that anyone could draw any inference of impropriety on. And I have received nothing back the other way that I shouldn't go to Chicago. I am going there to fight for things I believe in that he has played a critical role in. I am going to be with at least one other, perhaps more Members of Congress—I don't know yet—and I'm going to be doing something that I have already done while this investigation has been going on. No one ever said anything about it before.

Yes, Gene [Gene Gibbons, Reuters].

Ames Espionage Case

Q. You said that the Ames case had caused significant damage to the national security. Can

you be more specific, sir? And secondly, you've said the FBI investigation is ongoing. Are you satisfied that we know the full extent of the penetration of the CIA at this point?

The President. Well, I can say very little about that except to assure you: I talked with Director Freeh this morning myself; I am confident that the FBI, working with the CIA, is doing everything that is humanly possible to fully investigate this case. I do not want to raise red herrings or other possibilities, only to say this, that it is not unusual, as the FBI Director said this morning. Sometimes it happens that when you're in a criminal investigation and you're on to something, the investigation turns up information that could not have been anticipated in the beginning. I am not trying to say that has occurred. I'm not trying to raise any false hopes. All I'm telling you is, I have directed the FBI and the CIA and everybody else to do everything they can to get to the full bottom of this. And I have nothing else to say about it.

And again, I'm not trying to raise some tantalizing inference, I'm just saying that we have to keep going and try to root it out. After all, this is fundamentally a problem within America, about whether people here who are Americans are spying, and that's our responsibility to try to find it out.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President's 49th news conference began at 11:55 a.m. in the Briefing Room at the White House.

Remarks to the NCAA Soccer Champion University of Virginia Cavaliers *February 25, 1994*

Thank you very much, Mr. Vice President, Senator Robb, Mrs. Reid, and to the captains and all the members of this wonderful team, and your coach, and your athletic director, and your parents and friends.

We're very honored to have you here today. I was thinking about this a little bit. The Vice President is right, he and I are from the South, and when we were boys nobody played soccer down there, and we had to learn about it really through our children. And one of my most prized pictures is a picture of my daughter try-

ing to do what they did. It hangs on my wall in the White House now, with Chelsea kicking her soccer ball. I have followed this game closely since she was about 5 and entered a league which had both boys and girls in it. And I watched the little girls grow up in this league, fighting with the boys on the soccer field. It was a great experience for me. And I'm really proud that the United States is going to host the World Cup here. I think it will do a lot for soccer in the United States and a lot for