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Chapter 20

Marzook Release

5/6/97 Release
5/7/97 statement.

U.S. Department of State

Daily Press Briefing

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Tuesday, May 6, 1997
Briefer: John Dinger

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1 **MR. DINGER:** I don't have anything for you a briefing tomorrow morning.

2 **QUESTION:** Are there competing briefings though? If you are going to --

3 **MR. DINGER:** At 8 o'clock tomorrow morning?

4 **QUESTION:** Yeah.

5 **MR. DINGER:** No, I'm not aware of that.

6 **QUESTION:** All right.

7 **QUESTION:** It wasn't the same briefing.

8 **QUESTION:** Well, if there is a briefing then, the embargo doesn't apply?

9 **MR. DINGER:** No, that's not --

10 **QUESTION:** Right, that's true.

11 **MR. DINGER:** Well, no, the embargo applies regardless.

12 **QUESTION:** No?

13 **QUESTION:** Not if you have a briefing at 8 o'clock.

14 **QUESTION:** No, way.

15 **MR. DINGER:** Well, I'm not sure what - well, first of all, I don't want to speculate on an on-the-record briefing somewhere prior to the 11 o'clock briefing. We really have gone to, I think, considerable effort to try to ensure that embargoed copies will be available at 9:00 a.m., and that nothing will be published on this before 11:00 a.m.

16 **QUESTION:** Well, it's the information, not the paper, that is embargoed. So if it's released at 8:00 in the morning, then the embargo here won't apply.

17 **MR. DINGER:** I do not expect to see any published report on this before 11:00 a.m.

18 **QUESTION:** We'll see.

19 **MR. DINGER:** Next issue, very briefly. We have sort of a statement with attachments regarding an accusation by the Cuban Government that the United States has engaged in a violation of our obligations under a 1972 Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling of Bacteriological and Toxin Weapons. This regards an allegation by the Cuban Government that an aircraft of the Department of State used in crop eradication deliberately released a biological agent over Cuba. That is an outrageous charge that we categorically deny, and I have quite an extensive, lengthy, statement and attachments available in the press office that goes through that accusation and describes how baseless it is.

20 Next, I have a brief statement on the release of Mousa Mohammed Abu Marzook. The Immigration and Naturalization Service yesterday excluded and deported Mousa Mohammed Abu Marzook to Jordan under agreement entered into by Abu Marzook and the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

21 Under the terms of the agreement, Abu Marzook entered a plea of nolo contendere and did not contest the exclusion charges under the appropriate section of the Immigration and Nationality Act. These charges state that Abu Marzook is an alien who is engaged in a terrorist activity or, who a Consular Officer or the Attorney General knows or has reasonable grounds to believe, is likely after entry to

engage in terrorist activity.

1 Mr. Marzook also waived all rights to file applications for relief from deportation and relinquished his lawful permanent resident status. Most of the details regarding this lie with the Department of Justice and its Immigration and Naturalization Service.

2 **QUESTION:** Are you about to move on?

3 **MR. DINGER:** Pardon me?

4 **QUESTION:** Are you about to move on?

5 **MR. DINGER:** Yes. I have a brief statement noting that yesterday, as part of Public Service Recognition Week, the U.S. Department of State was very proud to dedicate its library to the memory of former United Nations Under Secretary General, Doctor Ralph Johnson Bunche. I just refer you to that.

6 Finally, a brief statement on noting that the U.S. and Canada have agreed to ask the International Joint Commission to examine the Red River of the North Basin to recommend ways to ameliorate future flood damage. So all of that will be available in the press office.

7 **QUESTION:** A quick question on Marzook.

8 **MR. DINGER:** Yes.

9 **QUESTION:** Have people in this building or elsewhere in the government seen his latest statements? He apparently hasn't changed his mind about war against Israel. Is there anybody - is it actionable in any way or is he out of now -- totally out of the machinery of the U.S. Government?

10 **MR. DINGER:** I haven't seen those statements. We excluded him under a law, as I just described, that applies to an alien who is engaged in terrorist activity, or we believe we have reasonable grounds, is likely after entry to engage in terrorist activity. So to the extent that that applies to your question, I guess that would be my reaction to that.

11 **QUESTION:** I don't know the statement. It was fairly recent. You don't -

12 **MR. DINGER:** I haven't seen that statement.

13 **QUESTION:** But they haven't been noted here or noticed yet? Okay.

14 **MR. DINGER:** I would note that Mr. Marzook is inadmissible to the United States under the same charges for which he was deported. The only way he could return to the United States now is by obtaining advance permission from the Attorney General, in other words, a waiver of his excludability.

15 **QUESTION:** So the deal was that unless he signs this waiver he would stay in jail where he was; is that about right?

16 **MR. DINGER:** I don't have any details for you on the arrangements. As you know, Mr. Marzook, his attorneys, and the attorneys representing the Immigration Service signed the agreement, so I would refer you, perhaps, to those parties for any details on the specifics.

17 **QUESTION:** Is his family going to be extradited as well? They live in Virginia?

18 **MR. DINGER:** For their immigration status, I think I would refer you to the Department of Justice or the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

19 **QUESTION:** A number of them are American citizens.

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