



THE WHITE HOUSE

To: Edna Louise Saffy
From: Marilyn DiGiacobbe

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FROM: Marilyn DiGiacobbe

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The White House

(St. Petersburg, Russia)

For Immediate Release

April 18, 1996

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
UPON ARRIVAL

Pulkova Airport
St. Petersburg, Russia

10:30 P.M. (L)

THE PRESIDENT: Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for this welcome to St. Petersburg. I am very pleased to begin my visit to Russia here, a city so alive with promise and possibility. I have looked forward to this day for a long time and I very much look forward to my opportunity to see the city tomorrow.

Let me begin, however, by saying I arrived at a somber moment. On behalf of the American people, I want to express my deepest condolences to the government of Lebanon and to the families of those who were killed and wounded this morning in South Lebanon. I also offer my condolences to the government of Fiji over the casualties among its U.N. peacekeeping personnel.

Today's events make painfully clear the importance of bringing an end to the current violence in Lebanon. To achieve that goal I call upon all parties to agree to an immediate cease-fire. An end to the fighting is essential to allow our diplomatic efforts to go forward.

Before leaving Tokyo, I directed Secretary of State Christopher to travel to the Middle East to work out a set of understandings that would lead to an enduring end to this crisis. Special Middle East Coordinator Dennis Ross will travel to the region in advance of Secretary Christopher to begin this process.

Resolving the current situation will not only stop human suffering, it will help us all to make further progress toward our goal of a comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East. But let me say again, we should begin with an immediate cease-fire.

Thank you.

END

10:35 P.M. (L)