

the second meeting and the dinner be held on the *Gorky*.

Due to weather conditions, plans to leave *Belknap* have been delayed until at least 8 p.m. The possibility of leaving the ship at that time will be assessed in terms of dinner plans and another meeting.

At 11:44 a.m., the commanding officer of *Belknap* ordered his crew to slip the stern anchor, and the ship has been steaming toward the bow anchor, a better holding position. When the wind subsides, the stern anchor will be reset. *Slava* is holding her position with the help of tugs on the bow and stern. Weather forecasters on the two ships are sharing information. The wind has caused 3- to 4-foot seas inside the sheltered harbor. Seas outside the harbor are 16 feet and building. The forecast calls for the low pressure cell to move east, away from Malta, allowing winds to decrease to 20-25 knots tonight and tomorrow.

The President has been viewing the storm from the bridge and has been considering possible alternatives for other meetings tonight or tomorrow. President Bush has been in contact with officials in Washington. All communications aboard *Belknap* are working. The President has received an update on the situation in the Philippines and has discussed other international issues.

I am offering an exclusive Presidential interview to any reporter who can get to *Belknap* in the next 15 minutes. Any reporter who swims will be granted three interviews.

Due to the high winds and heavy seas,

the Soviet delegation will not be coming to *Belknap* for dinner, nor will the U.S. delegation go to the *Gorky*. Therefore, the dinner and afternoon meeting were canceled. The President and the U.S. delegation will remain on *Belknap* for the night. We expect Sunday's schedule to be maintained as originally planned. I will brief tomorrow morning at a time to be arranged with the Soviets.

We are disappointed that the Soviet delegation was unable to join us for dinner on *Belknap* due to the storm. We look forward to tomorrow's meetings. We also regret that we were unable to visit the *Slava* for this afternoon's meeting. We feel this has been a very productive day in terms of the 5-hour meeting this morning. The 60 mile-per-hour winds preclude any movements off the ship this evening, but they have made for a very exciting afternoon sail.

Note: Four statements were issued during the day by Press Secretary Fitzwater. In the statements, he referred to John H. Sununu, Chief of Staff to the President; Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs; Robert D. Blackwill, Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs; Aleksandr N. Yakovlev, Secretary and Chairman of the International Policy Commission of the Soviet Central Committee; Aleksandr A. Bessmertnykh, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs; Anatoliy S. Chernyayev, foreign policy adviser; Anatoliy F. Dobrynin, foreign policy adviser; Sergey F. Akhromeyev, principal military adviser to Chairman Gorbachev; and Gennadiy Gerasimov, Chief of the Information Department of the Foreign Ministry.

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate on United States Military Assistance to the Philippines

December 2, 1989

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

In the early morning of December 1,

1989 (local time), a coup attempt was launched against the constitutional govern-

ment of the Philippines. The coup began when rebel forces, apparently under the leadership of Lieutenant Colonel Gregorio Honasan, seized Villamor Air Force Base adjacent to Aquino International Airport in Manila. Over the next twelve hours, rebel forces attacked Philippine military installations, broadcasting stations, and other government facilities. Rebel forces also seized the Philippine Sangley Point Naval Station and other installations. Rebel controlled aircraft bombed and strafed the presidential palace and the Constabulary Headquarters. In this context, President Aquino formally requested limited U.S. military assistance to support her forces as they attempted to put down the coup.

In response to this request, shortly after midnight on December 1 (Washington time), I ordered armed U.S. aircraft stationed at Clark Air Field to establish a protective cover over Villamor and Sangley Point to prevent rebel aircraft from taking off. No rebel aircraft attempted to take off, and U.S. aircraft did not fire. There were no U.S. casualties.

At present, I do not foresee the need for U.S. military action in addition to the measures described above. I am prepared, however, to take additional actions to protect the lives of Americans, should they be threatened, and, if requested, to provide further assistance to the Government of the Philippines. In this connection, I note that,

as a precaution, I dispatched a company of U.S. Marines to reinforce Marine guards at our Embassy.

This measured action by U.S. Forces was taken at my direction in accordance with recognized principles of international law and pursuant to my constitutional authority with respect to the conduct of foreign relations and as Commander in Chief. I am mindful of the historical differences between the Executive and Legislative branches and the positions taken by me and all my predecessors in office with respect to the constitutionality of certain provisions of the War Powers Resolution. I am sharing this information with you consistent with that Resolution.

Our two branches have worked together over the years to provide assistance to the democratically elected government of the Philippines. I look forward to continued close cooperation with Congress in order to further this important policy.

Sincerely,

GEORGE BUSH

The White House,
December 2, 1989.

Note: Identical letters were sent to Thomas S. Foley, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Robert C. Byrd, President pro tempore of the Senate. The letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 3.

Statement by Press Secretary Fitzwater on the President's Meetings With Soviet Chairman Mikhail Gorbachev in Malta

December 3, 1989

The President is in excellent spirits. He loves the sea. The President made a final visit to the bridge and the aft deck of the ship about 10 o'clock last night. The President seemed energized by the intensity of the storm, and he looks forward to the discussions today with Chairman Gorbachev. During his visit to the deck, the President discussed with the captain and the crew the severity of the weather conditions and the

handling of ships under such circumstances. Captain Sigler stated that this is the worst in-port storm he has seen in 24 years.

The President went to bed shortly after 10 o'clock Saturday night and got up around 7 o'clock this morning. He received his intelligence briefing and daily briefing from General Scowcroft, Secretary Baker, and Governor Sununu about 8 o'clock this morning.