Singapore — Consular Information Sheet

May 9, 1994

Country Description: Singapore is a small, highly developed parliamentary democracy. Tourist facilities are modern and widely available.

Entry Requirements: Passports and onward/return tickets are required. Visas are not required for tourist/business stays of up to two weeks. For more current information, travelers can contact the Embassy of Singapore, 1824 R St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006; tel. (202) 667-7555.

Medical Facilities: Medical facilities and services are good and widely available in Singapore. Doctors and hospitals may expect immediate cash payment for health services. U.S. medical insurance is not always valid outside the United States. Supplemental medical insurance with specific overseas coverage has proved useful. The International traveler's hotline at the Centers for Disease Control can be reached at (404) 332-4559 for additional useful health information.

Information on Crime: Major crimes against tourists are uncommon. Petty crimes such as pickpocketing do occur in tourist areas. Visitors should be aware of Singapore's strict laws and penalties for a variety of offenses that might be considered minor in the United States, including jaywalking, littering, spitting, as well as the importation and sale of chewing gum. Singapore imposes a mandatory caning sentence on males for vandalism offenses. Canning may also be imposed for immigration violations and other offenses. The loss or theft abroad of a U.S. passport should be reported immediately to the local police, and the U.S. Embassy. Useful information on guarding valuables and protecting personal security while traveling abroad is provided in the Department of State pamphlet, "A Safe Trip Abroad." It is available from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

Drug Penalties: Travelers are subject to the laws and legal practices of the country in which they travel. Penalties for possession, use, or trafficking in illegal drugs are strict, and convicted offenders can expect jail sentences and fines. Singapore has a mandatory death penalty for many narcotics offenses.

Registration: Americans who register at the U.S. Embassy can obtain updated information on travel and security within the country.

Embassy Location: The U.S. Embassy is located at 30 Hill Street, Singapore 0617; the mailing address is American Embassy Singapore, FPO AP 96534; telephone (65) 338-0251.

No. 94-073

This replaces the Consular Information Sheet dated July 9, 1993, to include information on strict laws and severe punishments in Singapore.
For Immediate Release

STATEMENT BY CHRISTINE SHELLY/ACTING SPOKESMAN

LORD MEETING WITH SINGAPORE AMBASSADOR

Assistant Secretary of State of Asian and Pacific Affairs Winston Lord met at noon today with Ambassador S. R. Nathan, Singapore's Ambassador to the United States, to deliver President Clinton's response to Singapore's decision to deny clemency to Michael Fay.

Assistant Secretary Lord informed Ambassador Nathan that the President was very disappointed by this decision. Lord further stated that the Department of State would shortly be reissuing its Consular Information Sheet warning Americans considering travelling to Singapore that they will be subject to harsh punishment under Singapore law, if convicted of crimes.

During the course of a frank and candid discussion, Assistant Secretary Lord emphasized that this incident will have to be taken into account in the overall relationship between the U.S. and Singapore.
THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release May 5, 1994

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT IN ASSAULT WEAPONS EVENT

The Rose Garden

9:50 A.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: In a few weeks the Congress will pass, and I will be able to sign, landmark legislation to fight crime in this country. Working together we have been able to show that crime is not a partisan issue, it's an American issue, and it requires comprehensive solutions -- more punishment, more prevention, more police officers.

This afternoon, the House of Representatives will be considering a key part of that strategy -- a law that bans 19 deadly assault weapons that pose a clear and present danger to our citizens and to our police officers. Just two years ago, a similar law was defeated by a very wide margin in the House. Now we're a few votes away from a dramatic strike against these deadly weapons and the criminals who use them.

Congressman Steve Neal, in an act of conviction and courage, has joined the ranks of House members who support our local police and fight for safe neighborhoods, joining forces with law enforcement and standing up to a lot of the misapprehension and fear and misinformation that has been spread by the opponents of this very sensible crime control measure.

I want to thank Steve Neal and the citizens across this country who are concerned about this terrible problem, are in his debt.

The vote to keep dangerous assault weapons out of the hands of criminals occurs this afternoon. Members are having to choose and make difficult choices between supporting the local police and their efforts to disarm criminals who can use these weapons to kill lots of people and those who are spreading fears about the reach of this law.

Today, the American people hope and believe that common sense and the common good should prevail. With the help of people like Steve Neal, it will. I'm very grateful to him, and I wanted to give him the chance to say a few words this morning before we have the vote this afternoon.

Congressman.

REPRESENTATIVE NEAL: Thank you, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you so much.

REPRESENTATIVE NEAL: Thank you. Well, I would say that the President is right about this. It is the first responsibility of our government to protect our citizens. There is a war going on on the streets of America -- mostly in the big cities -- and the police are outgunned. Now they say they need this legislation to help them protect us and our families against violent criminals. So we ought to give them this tool that they say they need to protect us against violence.

MORE
Q Mr. President, what do you think of the caning of
the American in Singapore?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it was a mistake, as I said
before, not only because of the nature of the punishment related to
the crime, but because of the questions that were raised about
whether the young man was, in fact, guilty and had voluntarily
confessed.

Q What are you going to do about it, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we're discussing that, actually,
as we speak here, what would be an appropriate statement by our
government in the aftermath of this.

Q -- if the assault ban fails in Congress today, is
there any administrative action you could take, say, through the
Treasury Department, to ban these weapons yourself in the executive
order or prohibition?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't believe we can do that. There
may be some things that we can do that will minimize the problem.
But I don't think any options that are available to us will be as
effective as the ban on these assault weapons.

I do want to say, as I have talked to members, there are
basically two classes of concerns among those who wish to vote for
this bill. And I am convinced a majority, if left -- if they could
vote anonymously, would vote for this bill. And there are two
classes of concerns among those people. One is, some of the
administrative requirements, which we'll circulate a letter today
that Congressman Schumer and Mr. Synar and others have worked on, to
satisfy the people who are worried about the recordkeeping
requirements, all those concerns, those practical concerns can be --
in the conference report. The other is the so-called camel's nose
inside the tent theory. A lot of our members are being told by folks
back home that they have been convinced by the opponents of this bill
that today it's these assault weapons, which they don't own, and
tomorrow it'll be some legitimate hunting weapon, which they do own.

Well, that's why the bill contains the list of over 600
specific weapons that are protected. So I hope that we can, in
effect, just debunk that, can overcome that argument by the time of
the vote this afternoon. Those are the two things I've been hearing.

I was on the phone until about midnight last night. And
I've made several calls again this morning working on this issue.
And I believe we have a chance. It's very difficult, as you know --
we were way, way down when we started, and counted out right up until
the 11th hour. But we may still have a chance to pass this because
people like Steve Neal have been willing to come forward.

Q Mr. President, The Wall Street Journal says that
Judge Richard Arnold is now your favorite to become the next Supreme
Court justice. Should he be penalized because he's from Arkansas?
Is he your favorite?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, first of all, I have no comment on
whether I have a favorite or not. And, secondly, he shouldn't be
penalized because he's from Arkansas. I mean, he was first in his
class at Harvard and Yale; he's the Chief Judge of the 8th Circuit;
and he's been head of the Appellate Judges Association. So I don't
think anyone would question -- it would be difficult to find, just on
terms of those raw qualifications, an appellate judge with equal or
superior qualifications.

I don't think any American would expect someone to be
disqualified because they happen to come from my state.
Q: When will we learn about your selection?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, there's one or two other things going on here, but we're working on it. We're spending a good deal of time on it. It won't be long.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END 10:00 A.M. EDT
THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release April 14, 1994

PRESS CONFERENCE BY THE PRESIDENT

The Briefing Room

11:15 A.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: On behalf of the American people, I want to begin by expressing my deep sorrow at the tragedy this morning in Iraq, and to extend my personal condolences to the families and the loved ones of all those who lost their lives.

Three years ago, our Armed Forces joined in a multinational mission to provide humanitarian relief to the oppressed Kurdish minority civilians in northern Iraq. Those who died today were a part of that mission of mercy. They served with courage and professionalism, and they lost their lives while trying to save the lives of others. The important work they were doing must, and will, continue.

According to initial reports, two American helicopters were mistakenly identified as Iraqi helicopters and shot down by United States aircraft. I have met with Secretary Perry this morning; I have talked with him and with General Shalikashvili, and I have instructed him to lead a full inquiry into the circumstances of this terrible incident. We will get the facts. And when we get the facts, we will make them available to the American people and to the people of Britain, France, and Turkey, our partners in Operation Provide Comfort.

Later today, Secretary Perry and General Shalikashvili will be providing further briefings to you as we know more and more facts. The facts are still coming in and we will give them to you just as soon as we have verified exactly what occurred.

At this moment, let me close by saying that we should join together in terrible sorrow, and also in honoring the high purpose for which these individuals served and in which they lost their lives. The nation and the world should remember them in gratitude. Thank you.

Q Mr. President, what's your preliminary assessment, though? What are you being told of how this could have happened? And is there any suggestion that the troops there are on too fine of a hair trigger?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, all that will have to be, obviously, evaluated in light of the real facts here. There are at least three points of inquiry involving, first, the actions of the American jets; second, the AWACS and their actions and, third, the actions of the helicopters themselves. And, again, I will tell you we will give you as much information as we can. I just am very reluctant to say anything until we're absolutely sure. I want you to have good information, and we will be doing continuous briefings and updates all day long as we know more.

Q Do you know anything, Mr. President, about the numbers of people that might be involved, and whether they were all American?

MORE
THE PRESIDENT: We know that there were probably more than 20 people involved and that they were not all American. We do not believe they were all American; we believe there were some other people on the helicopters.

Q And, just to follow, you seem to be indicating --

THE PRESIDENT: We do not have -- let me say, as of the moment I walked out here, we do not have an absolute roster of the people on the helicopters. I would tell you if I knew. But we think there were approximately 12 total crew members, and we know there were some other people on the helicopters, and we know there were some other member countries in the operations. We do not know any more than that. When we know who was on there, we will tell you.

As you know, we've dispatched an American team to the site to get all the facts.

Q Do you know, sir, how high up the chain of command the decision had to be made to go ahead and take these helicopters out; what the process was, and whether it was followed?

THE PRESIDENT: I have been briefed on that, but I believe, to make absolutely sure that no error is made in answering that question, that is a question you should direct to Secretary Perry and General Shalikashvili, because they will be briefing shortly.

Q Mr. President, in the wake of the decision by the U.N. and NATO to bomb in Bosnia, you're now confronted with a developing hostage crisis, it appears there, where French troops are the latest to be encircled by Serbs. What is your message to the Bosnian Serbs as this appears to be moving toward crisis proportions?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, of course, this was a concern in the beginning of all our allies who had troops on the ground there. But I would remind the Serbs that we have taken no action -- none -- through NATO and with the support of the U.N. to try to win a military victory for their adversaries. What we have done is taken military action in Bosnia through NATO, with the approval of the United Nations, to get them to honor the U.N. rules and to encourage them to do what they say they wish to do, which is to engage in negotiations.

There was a hopeful report in this morning's press about the ongoing efforts of the Russians through Mr. Churkin to get the Serbs to stop the aggression and to return to the negotiations. We are in touch with all of the events in Bosnia today; there are lots of things going on there. I think the Serbs would be making a mistake to start treating the United Nations and NATO forces as adverse combatants. That is not what we are doing. We are trying to get them to honor their word, and they would be making a mistake to do that.

Q Sir, if I could follow, how would you get them to make the distinction that you're making? They don't seem to be picking up on that.

THE PRESIDENT: I think they know quite well what went on. I think they're just trying to leverage their position.

Q Mr. President, Singapore seems intent on caning this American teenager who was convicted of vandalism. Do you think American companies that operate in Singapore should exercise their economic clout to try and stop this? And, also, former President Bush is in Singapore today. Should he -- would you like to see him intercede on behalf of the young man?
THE PRESIDENT: I've not thought through your first question; I don't know the answer to that. We have generally quite good relations with Singapore. They have a different culture, a different view, a different set of laws.

As you know, I have not objected to the young man's being punished. I have not even objected to the young man's being incarcerated. I have objected to this caning. I think many Americans who have expressed sympathy with it do not understand exactly what it involves, how it is going to be administered, and that he is going to bleed considerably and may have permanent scars. And I think it is a mistake.

President Bush will have to decide for himself what he wishes to say, but I would -- if he decides to say something supportive of the absence of caning, I would certainly be grateful for that. But that -- it will be a decision for him to decide what he wants to say.

Thank you.
For Immediate Release

April 8, 1994

PRESIDENT CLINTON NOMINATES TIMOTHY CHORBA
AS THE AMBASSADOR TO SINGAPORE

The President today announced his intention to nominated Timothy A. Chorba
of Washington, D.C. as Ambassador to the Republic of Singapore.

Mr. Chorba, a partner in the Washington, D.C. law firm of Patton, Boggs &
Blow, is an international corporate lawyer. Prior to joining Patton, Boggs & Blow,
Mr. Chorba was an attorney with Simpson, Thatcher & Bartlett in New York City, and
he had been Legislative Counsel to Congressman Jonathan Bingham. His professional
experience has included assignments throughout Western Europe and the Middle East,
Australia and Canada.

Born on September 23, 1946 in Yonkers, New York, Mr. Chorba was raised in
New York City. He graduated magna cum laude from Georgetown University's
College of Arts and Sciences in 1968, where he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa.
Fluent in German and conversational in French, Mr. Chorba was a Fulbright Scholar in
international law and international relations at the University of Heidelberg, Germany
graduation from Georgetown's ROTC program, Mr. Chorba was commissioned a
lieutenant in the Army Reserve. He served as an Army Officer and a Judge Advocate
General Officer, attaining the rank of major. He is married to Ruth Wimer and has
three young sons--Timmy, Jr. (7), Christian (5) and William (2).