



President George W. Bush, right, and Vice President Dick Cheney, left, meet with Secretary of State Colin Powell in the Oval Office of the White House on April 18.

Powell urges Israel to ease Arafat's confinement

WASHINGTON (AP) — Secretary of State Colin Powell on Sunday urged Israel to loosen its confinement of Yasser Arafat so the Palestinian leader would be in a better position to act to bring down violence and start on peacemaking.

Powell also said he was pleased that Israel's withdrawal of forces from the West Bank towns of Nabulus and Jenin and sections of Ramallah "seems to be well under way" but would like to see it continue "until there is no more question about it."

As things stand now, he said, Israeli troops are "poised" to return to their previous positions. "We are moving in a good direction right now but it is not yet over," the secretary said.

Israel has confined Arafat to his Ramallah headquarters since December, and a military offensive that began March 29 has forced him into just a few rooms of his compound offices.

Powell suggested those restrictions on Arafat's movements have inhibited his ability to deliver

guidance and instructions to his subordinates.

"I think sooner or later, he has to be given access to the means of control, to the means of communicating with others and so I think we'll have to work through that problem," Powell said on NBC's "Meet the Press."

"He has to make a strategic choice now," Powell said. "He has to move away from a path of violence or terrorism onto a new path." If he does so, Powell said, "There is much the United States can do for him and the peace process."

Israel has said it will maintain its siege at Arafat's compound until he turns over suspects in the October killing of Rehavam Zeevi, Israel's tourism minister. The suspects are believed to be in the compound.

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said Arafat can stop violence despite his confinement. He has authority "more than ever before, because his voice today is more powerful," Peres said on NBC.

Tracks cleared at scene of Amtrak crash

CRESCENT CITY, Fla. (AP) — The track where an Amtrak Auto Train derailed in a deadly mess of mangled cars and rails was cleared Sunday, allowing the first trains to pass through this northern Florida town since the accident.

The original tracks were torn out by Thursday's derailment, which killed four people and injured more than 150. The first coal train that moved

through Sunday morning was on temporary rails, said Gary Sease, spokesperson for CSX, the freight railroad that owns the track.

The 39-foot-long sections of temporary track can hold slow-moving trains at 10 mph. The company plans to make improvements this week to allow the temporary tracks to withstand faster trains. He said an average of 28 trains a day are normally scheduled there.

As the coal train passed, workers continued clearing downed trees and debris from the area with bulldozers and cranes.

The Auto Train had been headed for Washington with 418 passengers and 34 crew members, as well as 200 automobiles stacked in 23 cars, when it derailed Thursday.

DeLay was expelled from Baylor, aide confirms

HOUSTON (AP) — U.S. Rep. Tom DeLay, R-Sugar Land, has apologized for the "misunderstandings" he caused by advising a group of Christian conservatives not to send their children to Baylor or Texas A&M.

But what the House majority whip did not say, the *Houston Chronicle* reported in its Friday edition, is that he was kicked out of Baylor in 1967.

When asked about the matter, DeLay's spokesperson Jonathan Grella said Thursday the congressman was booted out of the private Baptist school in Waco for his "extracurricular activities" and "too vigorous a social life."

Grella said DeLay's comments about Baylor had nothing to do with the fact he was kicked out of the school. The spokesperson declined to detail what DeLay did other than to say it involved "lots of pranks."

"He (DeLay) accepted the consequences of his actions and was glad they did it (kicked him out)," Grella said. "These experiences did him a favor and were helpful in helping him mature."

Baylor spokesperson Larry Brumley confirmed DeLay attended the university from 1965 to 1967, but said he could not divulge further details because of confidentiality laws. According to the *Washington Post*, DeLay's use of alcohol contributed to his antics at Baylor. He was a pre-med student at Baylor, and in 1970 he earned a degree in biology from the University of Houston.

According to a 1995 article in the *New Republic*, DeLay was kicked out of Baylor for "dancing and painting buildings green at rival Texas A&M." At the time, Baylor did not allow dancing on campus.

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