

Originally Processed With FOIA(s):

FOIA Number:

S

# FOIA MARKER

**This is not a textual record. This is used as an administrative marker by the George Bush Presidential Library Staff.**

---

**Record Group/Collection:** George H.W. Bush Presidential Records  
**Collection/Office of Origin:** Speechwriting, White House Office of  
**Series:** Speech File Draft Files  
**Subseries:** Chron File, 1989-1993

---

**OA/ID Number:** 13480  
**Folder ID Number:** 13480-015

---

**Folder Title:**  
Gridiron Club Dinner, 4/1/89

---

Stack:	Row:	Section:	Shelf:	Position:
<b>G</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>

---

**GRIDIRON DINNER**

**CAPITAL HILTON**

**SATURDAY, APRIL 1, 1989**

**THANK YOU, LARRY [O'ROARK, GRIDIRON CLUB PRESIDENT]**

**I MUST SAY I'M IMPRESSED.**

**THIS IS THE LARGEST WHITE TIE GROUP I'VE SEEN**

**SINCE THOSE COMING OUT PARTIES IN IOWA.**

**- 2 -**

**BY THE WAY, NEXT YEAR**

**WHO DO I SEE**

**ABOUT GETTING AN EARLIER SPOT IN THE SHOW?**

**((PAUSE)) EVEN THE ACADEMY AWARDS WEREN'T THIS LONG.**

**((ASIDE)) HAVE WE GOTTEN TO BEST PICTURE YET?**

- 3 -

**BARBARA'S TOLD ME TO BAN ASSAULT WEAPONS.**

**WHAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN BANNED**

**WERE THOSE LAST THREE SKITS.**

- 4 -

**BELIEVE ME, THOUGH, I KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO**

**FOLLOW A TOUGH ACT.**

**LET'S FACE IT: IF I WAS FUNNIER THAN RONALD REAGAN**

**I WOULD HAVE WON IN 1980 ((PAUSE))**

**AND HE'D BE UP HERE TONIGHT**

**TRYING TO LAUGH AWAY THE BUSH DEFICIT.**

- 5 -

I GUESS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING I'VE LEARNED  
SINCE BECOMING PRESIDENT  
IS THAT YOU CAN'T TAKE CRITICISM TOO SERIOUSLY.

FOR EXAMPLE, PEOPLE SAY I'M INDECISIVE. ((PAUSE, THEN  
HESITANTLY)) WELL, I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THAT.

- 6 -

PEOPLE SAY I LACK POLITICAL COURAGE.

DON'T FORGET. ((FORCEFULLY))

I'M THE ONE WHO WENT TO THE AMISH

AND TOLD THEM TO "JUST -- SAY -- NO."

- 7 -

PEOPLE SAY THAT MY AGENDA'S CONFUSING,

MY STAFF'S DIVIDED,

AND YOU CAN'T FOLLOW WHAT'S GOING ON.

THIS FROM THE GUYS ON THE McLAUGHLIN GROUP?

- 8 -

BUT I KNOW HOW TO TAKE A HIT.

GEORGE WILL PREDICTED

THAT IF I GOT ELECTED,

THE SOUND YOU'D HEAR FROM THE OVAL OFFICE

WOULD BE ((LOOK AROUND)) "THE ARF OF A LAP DOG."

((PAUSE, THEN INCREDULOUSLY))

AND NOW MILLIE GOES AND PROVES HIM RIGHT.

- 9 -

BUT, I AM GLAD THAT ONE OF THE PUPPIES  
WAS A BOY.

NOW CONGRESS WILL HAVE TO BE MORE SPECIFIC  
WHEN THEY REFER TO THAT  
S. O. B. IN THE WHITE HOUSE.

- 10 -

WATCHING YOU TONIGHT BROUGHT BACK  
A LOT OF CAMPAIGN MEMORIES.

CAMPAIGN-STYLE POLITICS HAS EVEN COME TO MOSCOW.

YOU CAN TELL THEY'RE NOT USED TO CAMPAIGNING.

I SAW BORIS YELTSIN ON TELEVISION THE OTHER NIGHT:  
SITTING IN AN 18-WHEELER; PLEDGING ALLEGIANCE; AND  
CRITICIZING THE POLLUTION IN ODESSA HARBOR.

- 11 -

I HAD A FEELING YELTSIN WOULD WIN, THOUGH.

ONCE I FOUND OUT HIS OPPONENT, BRAKOV,

HAD SPENT A LOT OF TIME RIDING AROUND IN A TANK.

- 12 -

ACTUALLY, I THINK OUR ADMINISTRATION

HAS GOTTEN OFF TO A GOOD START.

THE TRIP TO JAPAN WAS VERY TOUCHING.

IT WAS A NOSTALGIC EXPERIENCE,

VISITING OUR MONEY.

- 13 -

**YOU'VE GOT TO HAVE A GOOD STAFF**

**TO MAKE THE WHITE HOUSE RUN.**

**LIKE FRED McCLURE UP HERE.**

**FRED'S WORKED FOR ED MEESE, JOHN TOWER,**

**AND FRANK LORENZO. ((PAUSE))**

**I ALWAYS CONSULT FRED WHENEVER I WANT TO**

**RUB SOMEONE THE WRONG WAY.**

- 14 -

**AND I WAS GLAD TO SEE YOU APPRECIATE**

**LEE ATWATER'S TALENTS TOO.**

**LEE'S A SMART GUY. ((PAUSE))**

**HE'S THE FIRST PERSON IN HISTORY**

**TO GO THROUGH HOWARD UNIVERSITY**

**IN JUST THREE DAYS.**

**HAVE YOU SEEN LEE ON STAGE?**

**INAUGURATION WEEK.... THE LETTERMAN SHOW.**

**THE SUNGLASSES.... THE LOUD MUSIC.**

**THE DANCING AND THE SWEAT. ((PAUSE))**

**NOW I KNOW WHAT LEE MEANT**

**WHEN HE SAID HE WANTED TO LEAD THE PARTY.**

**AS LEE'S OFTEN TOLD ME,**

**YOU CAN'T GET A BREAK FROM THE MEDIA.**

**BILL BENNETT ANNOUNCED HE'D STOPPED SMOKING.**

**NEXT DAY, THE PAPERS CALLED HIM A QUITTER.**

- 17 -

EVEN MY GRANDKIDS ARE STARTING TO PICK UP  
BAD HABITS FROM THE MEDIA.

THE OTHER DAY, ONE OF THEM ASKED FOR A CANDY BAR  
AND I SAID "No".

THEN SHE SAID, "I'D LIKE TO ASK A FOLLOW-UP."

- 18 -

BILL'S TAKEN ON THE TOUGH JOB OF FIGURING OUT  
WHAT TO DO ABOUT SEMI-AUTOMATIC WEAPONS.

WE ALL KNOW THE NRA'S POSITION:

GUNS DON'T KILL PEOPLE, GRAPES DO.

AND OF COURSE, IF WE OUTLAW GRAPES,

ONLY OUTLAWS WILL HAVE GRAPES.

- 19 -

SERIOUSLY, I AM CONCERNED ABOUT THE  
CRIME SITUATION IN D.C.

I WENT ABOARD MARINE ONE

AND ASKED THE PILOT WHERE TO SIT.

HE SAID, "BACK THERE, BEHIND THE TAILGUNNER."

- 20 -

((LAST JOKE:))

YOU'D THINK THE WHITE HOUSE WOULD BE SAFE FROM CRIME.

BUT LAST NIGHT BARBARA WAS HEADED OUT THE DOOR

TO WALK MILLIE,

LOOKED BACK, AND SAID, "COVER ME."

- 21 -

WE DO A LOT OF KIDDING AROUND IN THIS TOWN. BUT IT'S IMPORTANT TO BE ABLE TO LAUGH. BECAUSE EVEN THOUGH HUMOR ISN'T SINGLED OUT IN THE FIRST AMENDMENT, AS TONIGHT'S FRIENDLY COMPETITION SHOWS, IT'S DARN NEAR A NATIONAL IMPERATIVE. AMERICANS ARE SUPPOSED TO TAKE THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES SERIOUSLY -- BUT NOT THEMSELVES.

- 22 -

MARK TWAIN CALLED LAUGHTER THE "ONE REALLY EFFECTIVE WEAPON," AGAINST WHICH NO HUMBUG CAN STAND. AMEN.

LAUGHTER IS PART OF THE MAGIC OF AMERICA, PART OF THE MAGIC OF OUR POLITICS AND OUR PRESS.

- 23 -

A YEAR FROM NOW -- HECK, A WEEK FROM NOW -- THERE'LL BE ALL SORTS OF NEW MATERIAL. MY MISSTATEMENTS ALONE SHOULD GIVE YOU PLENTY TO WORK WITH. AND THERE'LL BE THINGS YET UNTHOUGHT OF, AS UNLIKELY AS TAINTED GRAPES OR MILLIE'S PUPPIES.

- 24 -

I WISH YOU HAPPY HUNTING. AND I WISH YOU LAUGHTER IN YOUR WORK. I PROMISE TO DO MY PART -- REMEMBER PEARL HARBOR.

GOOD NIGHT, AND GOD BLESS YOU ALL.

# # #