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FROM

Ben Bradlee

Keep

The Washington Post

Mike:

Any thing you say,
of course, but why?

The Queen isn't
50, is she?

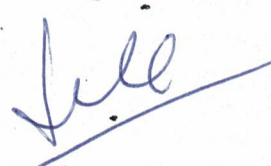
Cheers to you

Ben

MEMO TO JIM BAKER
MICHAEL DEEVER
FRED FIELDING

FROM MICHAEL EVANS

SUBJECT RONALD REAGAN DOCUMENTARY



Date: February 18, 1983.

To expand on the memo to Mike Deaver (February 8, 1983):

The proposed documentary would give the President an opportunity to define himself and the issues in a way that is not possible to do in the press conference format, personal appearances/speeches or the 90 second bites on the evening news.

The central theme of the project will be to show how the President is and accomplishes his agenda and to show how he deals with the conflict between the long term goals for the country and short term political realities.

I am aiming for a two hour documentary. A project of this size would take approximately six months after the start of filming. E.g. If filming started on April 1, it could air, assuming no major delays, September 1. I anticipate filming on 25 to 30 days over a 90 day period. The amount of time spent filming on any one of these days would depend on the President's schedule and the 'story line' of the documentary as it develops.

The way I would proceed would be as follows:

- * After final go-ahead on the project, I would need to discuss with the President for approximately 30 minutes his thoughts about his Presidency along the lines on the general theme of decision making.

- * Then we would film an interview covering the above.
(duration 1 hour)

- * I would then start the documentary filming on the 30 day over 90 day schedule. Each day's shooting schedule would depend on the President's schedule and specifics would be worked out with the

President and designated senior staff on a daily basis.

* A 'story line' will develop as the filming progresses. At some time after the conclusion of documentary filming and preliminary editing, I would then go back to the President for another hour long interview to get his assessments and amplifications on the 'story line'.

* the end result would be a neutral, largely self-narrated documentary showing how the President decides what he is going to decide and how he makes those tough decisions.

Some of the topics I would anticipate getting into and that I throw out for your consideration are:

* DEALING WITH THE MEDIA. --the whole process, briefings etc., leading up to a Presidential press conference.--the president watching the evening news.--small meeting with foreign reporters.--R.R.'s comments on this subject.

* A MAJOR DECISION. --would be a format for a discussions of pros and cons with staff, cabinet, congress, concerned citizens, i.e., the normal decision making process.

* A MAJOR CRISIS.-- up to one week before air date; the option to cover a "real time" crisis; a major decision that does not, for one reason or another follow the normal route through the decision making process.

* DEALING WITH FOREIGN LEADERS.-- an opportunity to discuss foreign policy.

* COMMENTS FROM FORMER PRESIDENTS --their frustration with implementing their programs; I suspect a frustration shared with R.R.

* GETTING HIS MESSAGE TO THE PEOPLE

* DEALING WITH HIS CABINET AND HIS STAFF

* SPONTANEOUS CONTACTS WITH CITIZENS

* OTHER ANGLES AND NUANCES. -- as suggested by the President and staff as filming progresses.

* AN INTELLECTUAL EXCHANGE.--A dinner with George Will. --contact with liberals, conservatives.

* THE HUMAN, PERSONAL, AND SOCIAL SIDE OF THE PRESIDENCY. -- a horseback ride with Senator Laxault.

There will be no "name" anchor. Additional voice over for the purpose of continuity would be done by someone like Floyd Kalber. There will be no analysis or outside opinion. I do not intend to tell the viewer what to think about what he sees and hears. I believe that the viewer is intelligent enough to make up his own mind. The documentary will be the exact stylistic opposite of a "Sixty Minutes" piece.

Additionally, I would like to have the option of having amplifying interviews with Messrs Baker, Meese, Deaver, Clark, as well as appropriate cabinet officers as and if necessary.

Memo to: Michael Deaver

From: Michael Evans

Date: February 8, 1983.

If President Reagan is not to be remembered and defined by the 90 second reports on the evening news, he must reveal himself and his Presidency in another way.

I propose an in depth film documentary on the President of about two hours broadcast length. A thoughtful documentary on Ronald Reagan's White House in good times and in crisis would be a living, exciting historical first on television and in the class room.

George Washington is remembered through the portraits of Gilbert Stuart and the measured praise of his contemporaries. Abraham Lincoln is remembered by the work of Mathew Brady. FDR is also remembered by still photographs, but even more by the audio tapes of his fireside chats. John Kennedy allowed film crews in the Oval office and was planning more. That scant footage helps keep the Kennedy legend alive. LBJ, that great collector of firsts, considered the documentary form, and then as the Vietnam War heated up and times got ugly, discarded it. Jimmy Carter allowed an ABC crew access in the Oval office too late. They came in during the final 24 hours of his administration. It was lost amidst the return of the hostages and the hoopla surrounding the inauguration. Ronald Reagan should avail himself of modern technologies to record his Presidency in an unbiased way.

Ideally, this documentary should be shot before the President declares his intentions for 1984, and before the White House becomes embroiled in the partisan realities of a presidential election campaign.

The timing of release of such a documentary could be after the next election or at such a time that the President deemed appropriate. For critical and historical reasons, as well as credibility, the documentary should be as candid and as realistic as possible. However, such candor would be inhibited by a release date that would make the President or his staff uncomfortable.

What I don't want is a flying circus with a cast of thousands descending on the President to do "a day in the life of". With some of the new technological advances in film and sound recording it is possible to do an excellent film in a very unobtrusive manner.

Neither am I proposing a propaganda piece. I don't have to tell you that Ronald Reagan himself is his own strongest weapon. A neutral view of the President unfiltered by the biases of the networks would serve Ronald Reagan and history very well.

The format of the project that I'm proposing would interweave intimate documentary coverage of certain parts of the President's everyday schedule with the President's reflections at of how he goes about being President and deals with its problems.

My aim is a film that would capture and surpass the wonderful flavor of Bill Moyer's PBS interview and be enhanced by appropriate documentary footage. Remember television is a picture medium, though much of the network news is talking heads or radio.

A personal note. While I could serve The President, and myself, very well by remaining in the position as his personal photographer, I feel that this documentary will bring an added, needed dimension. As a journalist as well as an employee of the President I feel that my documentary still photo coverage of the President, as good as it is, does not go far enough. To more fully explain the President and to do justice to his Presidency the immediacy and intimacy of sound on film is needed.

I feel strongly enough about this project that with satisfactory arrangements, I am prepared to resign my position to pursue this. The only way that such a documentary would be accepted is if it is done by a private individual -- one that the President could trust and that the viewers could accept. I could be the journalistic bridge that would make the documentary happen.

Proposed structure, financing, control and distribution would have to be worked out. I would like you to consider and approve the general concept. After approval, I will then produce a detailed proposal.

The President deserves, and I suspect wants, the opportunity to more fully explain himself and the people should have the opportunity to see it. In order to make democracy continue to work, the people must have a better understanding of the process. A look at Ronald Reagan functioning as President on a day-by-day basis will provide crucial insights into how the White House works and into the man himself.

The President's written biography is called: "Where Is The Rest of Me?". I believe a documentary would go a long way to providing a contemporary answer.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Date: 2/14/83

TO:

Mike Deaver

FROM:

Michael A. McManus, Jr.
*Deputy Assistant to the President
and Deputy to Deputy Chief of Staff*

☒ Information

☐ Action

☐ Let's Discuss

file

Saxe, Bacon & Bolan, P.C.

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Personal

February 10, 1983

- (1) New York
- (2) Connecticut
- (3) Connecticut, Washington, D.C., and New York
- (4) New York and New Jersey
- (5) New York and Connecticut
- (6) New York and Florida

Michael A. McManus, Jr.
Deputy Assistant to the President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mike:

Thank you for your letter of February 4, 1983.

Please explain to Ed, Jim and Mike that I received their responses to my telephone calls which were made before I wrote the letter to them, and having spoken with you in the interim, I did not want to take their valuable time by being repetitious after you and I had talked. Give them my warmest regards.

The point of the whole thing is that Rupert Murdoch is possibly the largest, and certainly the most influential publisher in the world. In addition to the New York Post (circulation over one million), which is America's largest afternoon paper and the third largest paper in the nation (having passed the New York Times recently); New York Magazine; the Village Voice; the San Antonio Express; the chain surrounding Houston, Texas; and now the Boston Herald, giving us a voice in Boston for the first time, he has worldwide influence because of his ownership of the London Times as well as the Sun and News of the Day, both of which have circulations of approximately four million in England, plus publishing companies such as Carroll's, plus the "Australian," the national paper there, and the key TV stations. At age 51, he is buying up papers here as fast as he can.

Michael A. McManus, Jr.
February 10, 1983
Page Two

He had been a mild Carter supporter, and had been responsible more than any other person for the election of a Democratic mayor and governor in New York. But since the day we brought him together with Governor Reagan at the Waldorf, he has been a strong and vocal supporter from the early days of the primaries up through and including every day of this year. There is no question that we could not have carried New York without his blanketing support in the Post every day. The treatment of people from the Post, etc. such as Niles Latham's exclusion from the correspondents' Christmas Party and sitting in the last row at press conferences while preference is given to totally hostile publications, has rankled people at the Murdoch publications over the last two years.

It was in this background that the Boston Herald incident took place. The ultimate request was simply for a reporter or editor to ride in the car with the President for a few minutes. All of this is not needed by and can accomplish nothing for Murdoch - his only interest is the strength which his publications can give to the President in these key areas.

Enormous progress was made by the gracious way in which the President handled his personal visit with Murdoch in the Oval Office a couple of weeks ago and by the dinner given by Charlie Wick for the Murdochs, as well as Charlie's constant attention to Rupert and his publications. Charlie has tremendous credibility with Rupert.

You had mentioned setting up an interview with the President for the editor of the Boston Herald and possibly the editor of the Post, etc. I would strongly urge that this be done as quickly as possible, as you will find for every little bit you do, Murdoch's responsiveness will be tenfold. He is in London (011 441 837-1234, 583-4524, 235-4071) and you are free to call him there at any time. He will be back in New York in a week or so.

Thank you very much for your attention to this matter, and I look forward to visiting with you at some future time.

Sincerely,



Roy M. Cohn

sb

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Date: 2/4/83

TO:

Mike Deaver

FROM:

Michael A. McManus, Jr.
*Deputy Assistant to the President
and Deputy to Deputy Chief of Staff*

☒ Information

☐ Action

☐ Let's Discuss

for your files

Tele

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 4, 1983

Dear Roy:

Ed, Jim and Mike have asked me to thank you for your letter of January 27 and to respond on their behalf.

As I mentioned to you during our phone conversation, we were all sorry about the confusion surrounding a possible Presidential visit to the Boston Herald. We are all aware of the very positive nature of such a visit. Unfortunately the request came in after the visit had been planned and the President's schedule was full. I did personally speak with Robert Page an editor of the paper three times before the visit and explained the circumstances to him. He seemed to understand the situation and thanked me for trying to help.

I also called Mr. Murdoch as you suggested, explained the situation to him and apologized for any confusion.

I am sure you are aware of our continued high regard for Mr. Murdoch personally and our appreciation of the importance of what he is doing.

Again, thank you for bringing the matter to our attention.

If I can be of any help in the future please let me know.

Sincerely,



Michael A. McManus, Jr.
Deputy Assistant to
the President

Mr. Roy M. Cohn
Saxe, Bacon & Bolan, P.C.
39 East 68th Street
New York, New York 10021

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BY HAND

January 27, 1983

Hon. Edwin Meese, III; Hon. James A. Baker, III; Hon. Michael K. Deaver
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Ed-Jim-Mike:

I had one interest when Tom and I first brought Rupert Murdoch and Governor Reagan together - and that was that at least one major publisher in this country (New York Post - over one million, third largest and largest afternoon; New York Magazine; Village Voice; San Antonio Express; Houston Ring papers; now the Boston Herald; and internationally influential London Times, etc.) would become and remain pro-Reagan.

Mr. Murdoch has performed to the limit up through and including today. I enclose the editorials from the three New York papers so you can see how the Daily News and New York Times blasted the President's speech and how Murdoch's New York Post gave its whole editorial columns to high praise for it.

After his warm meeting with the President and the goodwill created by Charlie Wick's dinner, Mr. Murdoch began to feel a little better about the consistent slights that have been dealt to Niles Lathem, the head of the News Media (Murdoch) Bureau in Washington, while the Reagan haters on TV and in the media have the run of the place.

When Mr. Murdoch learned the President was going to be in Boston yesterday, he offered to turn the Boston Herald over to him. The Boston Herald was saved by cooperation among the unions, the working men and Mr. Murdoch within an hour of its being closed down and the men and women there going on unemployment roles. The Herald was prepared to give credit

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*someone draft a
response from
the 3 of us.*

*Can you
arrange ? Thank
you*

*Mike
Why don't we have*

*M. Murdoch
pls do*

January 27, 1982

Page Two

Saxe, Bacon & Bolan, P.C.

to the President's private sector guidelines for this and a lot more. It suggested a ten minute visit to the paper OR a brief interview in the car on the way to the airport or back, which would then become headlines and stories in the Boston Herald. The only other paper in town is the Globe, which of course is violently anti-Reagan.

I telephoned Rich Williamson, who is always totally cooperative and sensible in these matters. Mr. Murdoch himself placed calls to Michael Deaver and to a Mr. Michael McManus, none of which were ever returned to him. One of his editors at the Boston Herald was told that the President "had no time for them."

Mr. Murdoch has been deeply disturbed at what he regards as a failure to stand by some basics in the President's original program, which he believes to be correct. His advice is consistently sought by Mrs. Thatcher and Prime Minister Fraser of Australia, in both of which countries he owns extensive media interests. he is not the kind who is offended when his advice is not taken but he does appreciate being treated courteously and having at least the same courtesies extended to his Washington reporters as seem to be heaped upon the opposition.

He is hurt at the way the Boston matter was handled and there is just so much that Tom and I can do.

Because I believe that the total support and loyalty of at least one major publishing chain in this nation is of key importance to the President, and because of our admiration and affection for the President, I thought I would be less than forthright if I did not bring this situation to the attention of the three of you.

I know how hectic things are there but if there is time for the enemy there must be just a little time for at least a thoughtful handling of a friend - unlike what happened in Boston.

Sincerely,



Roy M. Cohn

/sb

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

February 2, 1983

Dear John:

Thanks for your note. We have made a decision that it would be more productive for both the President and the members of your group to have individual interviews rather than having a larger group in.

We have already begun to schedule these meetings, and the White House Press Office will be in touch with them directly.

Many thanks.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL K. DEEVER
Assistant to the President
Deputy Chief of Staff

Mr. John Lofton, Editor
Conservative Digest
313 Montgomery Street
Laurel, MD 20707

Conservative Digest

John Lofton, Editor
313 Montgomery Street
Laurel, MD 20707

1.28.83

Dear Mike:

Nice to see you
today.

Okay. You say you
called repeatedly but I
wasn't there. Fine. I
believe you.

Can you drop me a note
re: possibility of my group (Blair
House Irregulars) getting back in
to see the President? (We saw
him last February). Thank.

Best regards,

John

John

Thanks for your note.

I don't really know what useful purpose ^{could be served} for the President to have any further meetings with your group.

I think a better way would be to include the members in various different informal and informal sessions as the need arises.

The WH Press office will

be in touch with them ^{directly}

I feel it is more productive to have ^{for both the members and the press} smaller groups meet with the President and to that end, we have begun to schedule interviews with some members of your group.

Many thanks

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

January 28, 1983

file

TO: Mike Deaver
FROM: Mike McManus *mm*
RE: The Attached

I have spoken to Roy Cohn and Rupert Murdoch. I explained that I never received a call from Rupert Murdoch and that you had referred your call to the Press Office.

I went on to explain that the President traveled by helicopter so there was no opportunity for a car interview.

Finally, I explained that I had spoken three times to Robert Page at the Boston Herald and I had suggested to Mr. Page that we plan another time when an interview could take place.

I emphasized that fact that we hold Mr. Murdoch in high regard and value the contribution he has made through his service.

Saxe, Bacon & Bolan, P.C.

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*M. McMurdo
pls read &
let's discuss*

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January 27, 1982

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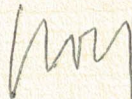
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Sincerely,



Roy M. Cohn

/sb

ESSAY

Reagan's White Flag

By William Safire

WASHINGTON, Jan. 26 — What a disappointment. The themeless pudding called this year's State of the Union address was a series of banalities intended to ingratiate the President with his political opposition; instead, this worst of Reagan speeches invited the grinning contempt it received.

When the man whose political life has supposedly been dedicated to reducing the Government's domination of the economy spoke the words "We who are in government must take the lead in restoring the economy," the Democrats immediately caught the signal that Mr. Reagan had admitted failure and abandoned "ideology."

On cue from the Speaker — who had seen the advance text and arranged the demonstration — they rose up with a derisive ovation and delightedly accepted the President's surrender. Tip O'Neill was quick to point out later that Mr. Reagan's new position was a far cry from "Government is not the solution" of yesteryear, and to hail the "historic reversal."

That was the moment the Reagan Revolution lost its zip, and the saddest part was that the man reading the Teleprompter never did understand why he was getting such a big hand. Never before had a President, while trying to be nonpartisan, been so stinging rebuffed.

His white flag followed a string of retreats, stunts and hand-wringings:

1. *The undefended defense increase.* To show that he was attuned to polls that show less enthusiasm for a strong defense, Mr. Reagan tacitly admitted that his previous call for an arms buildup was \$55 billion too much. He reduced the increase he had hitherto called "vital." Instead of using his bully pulpit to explain the need for defense spending — to lead the people, rather than follow the polls — he demonstrated that his proposals are tentative, thereby inviting Congress to slash them further.

His use of the popular word "freeze" to describe his budget as a whole was a trick. Real defense spending will rise 9 percent while other spending is cut 3 percent; because this averages out to a 5 percent rise, which is the rate of inflation, he called it an overall freeze. This deception is sure to be nailed: he

proposes a tax increase for 1986 and beyond. Those "out years" are the years when Mr. Reagan and much of this Congress will be out. The notion of directing tax policy in the future with a hand from the political graveyard would be the height of arrogance if it were not plain foolish.

To those pressing for a "flat tax" — genuine reform of an incentive-warping system in which even the loopholes have loopholes — the President could only say "we will continue to study ways to simplify the tax system." Meanwhile, he suggested four new tax credits to further complicate the system. The flat-tax plan has been sitting in Treasury for over a year; what he needs to do is decide. That's what Presidents are for.

3. *The Social Security Compromise Trap.* Mr. Reagan made much of his agreement to solve the system's insolvency by raising taxes and slowing down benefit rises. This is a palliative; only by pegging retirement age to rising longevity will the system be saved from general-revenue salvation. But Mr. Reagan is set up for a double-cross; his compromise now needs further compromise, and Speaker O'Neill is likely to exact a further price of stopping tax indexation for its passage.

To show the "Reagan people" he had not completely changed his spots, the President threw in a few feeble applause lines about respect for the military uniform (despite reducing real wages) and bringing back school prayer (with which a President has nothing to do). A more Reaganesque speech draft, by Anthony Dolan, was not sent to the President for several weeks until the speechwriter protested angrily about a "willful band" isolating Mr. Reagan; 10 days before deadline it was sent in along with the alternative concocted by Aram Bakshian. Mr. Reagan himself chose the themeless pudding.

Only in foreign affairs did the President's address not get into trouble. He refused to join the rest of his Administration in condemning Israel but not Syria for not withdrawing from Lebanon, stuck to his present negotiating position on arms control, and mouthed the boilerplate about free trade.

In all, he missed a great opportunity to be himself and to continue to try to

NEW YORK POST

RUPERT MURDOCH Publisher and Editor-in-Chief
 ROGER WOOD Executive Editor
 KEN CHANDLER, JOHN CANNING Managing Editors
 BRUCE ROTHWELL Editorial Page Editor
 STEVE DUNLEAVY Metropolitan Editor

Reagan's prudent gamble on national recovery

The State of the Union is changing. The recession is beginning to end. Inflation is being beaten. Interest rates are being brought down. New home building is increasing.

Cheaper oil following the collapse of the OPEC cartel could only hasten the recovery.

President Reagan properly underscores the threat of continuing high future deficits as the "clear and present danger."

It is possible to challenge the way Reagan's Budget Director David Stockman calculates those deficits without questioning the crucial need to curb the soaring entitlement programs that create them and so largely distort the entire budget.

There is nothing sacrosanct about these programs. The country simply cannot afford the rate at which they are growing.

They are an albatross around every wage earner's neck. Unless they are brought into the real world of what we can afford — in the same way that last week's bipartisan agreement proposes to rescue Social Security — the country will be locked into progressively soaring deficits.

By excluding defense from the proposed "federal spending freeze" Reagan, in effect, asks for a 3 per cent cut in all other programs. Defense spending must now run the gauntlet of angry Congressional attempts to impose harsher cuts than the President might have gotten away with had he proposed more calculated measures himself.

He can do better for defense than simply have Defense Secretary Weinberger think of a number.

Weinberger's proposed \$8 billion

worth of cuts in the new budget, announced a week ago, aim at precisely the wrong targets — military pay and operational readiness, the crucial areas that are always the first victims of Pentagon generals pretending to cut programs while protecting pet weapons projects.

There is plenty of fat in the \$247 billion defense budget from which to make reductions without striking at military pay and training — cost overruns, increased competitive bidding and gains from falling inflation, to say nothing of reconsidering the flawed F-18 fighter-bomber which the Navy doesn't want.

Reagan could also have done better with his proposal to increase individual, business and crude oil taxes over three years, starting Oct. 1, 1985, if today's deficit of 7 per cent of GNP has not been cut to 2.5 per cent.

Why wait almost three years for an unlikely contingency? OPEC's collapse and the prospect of cheaper oil prices provide the opportunity to gain a huge new revenue source right now with which to reduce the deficit, finance further tax cuts and promote economic development.

The President, clearly, is a gambling man. No action on his freeze proposal by Congress, no dice with his pledged tax increases.

It's a fair bet. The burden of the entitlement programs on the economy is such, of course, that if Congress were to signal that it is ready to make the President's changes, the deficits would fall immediately below 2.5 per cent of GNP.

And then, abracadabra, there would be no need for the proposed taxes. We would be on our way.

Who speaks for the Democrats?

What is the prospect that Congress will approve President Reagan's spending cuts in return for his pledge of contingency taxes?

Not much if Sen. Robert Byrd, the Senate minority leader, and Rep. Jim Wright, the House majority leader, are any guide.

They say the six-month delay in Social Security cost-of-living increases

would be unfair because the third year of the tax cut favors the rich.

Nonsense. The third year of the tax cut will favor every taxpayer.

Speaker Tip O'Neill, who joined President Reagan in a bipartisan agreement to save Social Security, should get his party in line before it reaps the whirlwind of the country's contempt for destroying the deal.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 26 — What a disappointment. The themeless pudding called this year's State of the Union address was a series of banalities intended to ingratiate the President with his political opposition; instead, this worst of Reagan speeches invited the grinning contempt it received.

When the man whose political life has supposedly been dedicated to reducing the Government's domination of the economy spoke the words "We who are in government must take the lead in restoring the economy," the Democrats immediately caught the signal that Mr. Reagan had admitted failure and abandoned ideology.

On cue from the Speaker — who had seen the advance text and arranged the demonstration — they rose up with a derisive ovation and delightfully accepted the President's surrender. Tip O'Neill was quick to point out later that Mr. Reagan's new position was a far cry from "Government is not the solution" of yesterday, and to hail the "historic reversal."

That was the moment the Reagan Revolution lost its zip, and the saddest part was that the man reading the Teleprompter never did understand why he was getting such a big hand. Never before had a President, while trying to be nonpartisan, been so stingingly rebutted.

His white flag followed a string of retreats, stunts and hand-wringings: 1. The undefended defense increase. To show that he was attuned to polls that show less enthusiasm for a strong defense, Mr. Reagan tacitly admitted that his previous call for an arms buildup was \$35 billion too much. He reduced the increase he had hitherto called "vital." Instead of using his bully pulpit to explain the need for defense spending — to lead the people, rather than follow the polls — he demonstrated that his proposals are tentative, thereby inviting Congress to slash them further.

His use of the popular word "freeze" to describe his budget as a whole was a trick. Real defense spending will rise 9 percent while other spending is cut 3 percent; because this averages out to a 5 percent rise, which is the rate of inflation, he called it an overall freeze. This deception is sure to be nailed; he would have had a better chance to maintain a strong military by arguing for it on the merits.

2. The maybe-someday \$50 billion tax increase. To placate the terrified deficit-contemplators, and to show how little faith he has in the success of his own tax cuts in place, Mr. Reagan

In all, he missed a great opportunity to be himself and to continue to try to make a difference. The polls and the papers must have rattled him. He chose to be somebody else, or everybody else and even his speech delivery suffered rather than Chief Executive as he took up the role of President. Too bad. I could have would stay the course

Only in foreign affairs did the President's address not get into trouble. He refused to join the rest of his Administration in condemning Israel but not Syria for not withdrawing from Lebanon, stuck to his present negotiating position on arms control, and mounded the boilerplate about free trade.

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3. The Social Security compromise. Trap. Mr. Reagan made much of his agreement to solve the system's insolvent by raising taxes and slowing down benefit rises. This is a palliative; only by pegging retirement age to rising longevity will the system be saved from general-revenue salvation. But Mr. Reagan is set up for a double-cross; his compromise now needs further compromise, and Speaker O'Neill is likely to exact a further price of stopping tax indexation for its passage.

To show the "Reagan people" he had not completely changed his spots, the President threw in a few feeble appeals about respect for the military uniform (despite reducing real wages) and bringing back school prayer (with which a President has nothing to do). A more Reaganesque speech draft, by Anthony Dolan, was not sent to the President for several weeks until the speechwriter protested angrily about a "willful band" isolating Mr. Reagan; 10 days before deadline it was sent in along with the alternative concocted by Aram Bakshian. Mr. Reagan himself chose the

To those pressing for a "flat tax" — genuine reform of an incentive-warping system in which even the loopholes have loopholes — the President could only say "we will continue to study ways to simplify the tax system." Meanwhile, he suggested four new tax credits to further complicate the system. The flat-tax plan has been sitting in Treasury for over a year; what he needs to do is decide. That's what Presidents are for.

"I thought it was a good speech. It was vintage Ronald Reagan. It was basically the philosophy that this President has had for many, many years and has carried into his major initiatives in this Administration, plus recognition of the philosophy of change from month to month and these adjustments."

—ABC News Correspondent Sam Donaldson.

"Sen. Baker was at the White House today and told reporters: It's amazing how Ronald Reagan the President, as apart from Ronald Reagan the man, can be pragmatic and can look at situations and make decisions on a day-to-day basis. I think he meant that Ronald Reagan, who preached all of that line of those years, is not the same man who sits up there today and has to make these adjustments."

What the man meant

President Reagan's proposal for a "quality education initiative" to encourage the teaching of mathematics and science in the nation's schools goes to the crux of what this country needs to be about.

American high technology leads the President Reagan's proposal for a "quality education initiative" to encourage the teaching of mathematics and science in the nation's schools goes to the crux of what this country needs to be about.

Let us take good care of it.

Innovation begins in the classroom

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The New York Times

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Hey, Big Spender

The State of the Union, to judge by the President's words, is togetherness. He talked about bipartisanship and working together a dozen times in his report to Congress Tuesday. A retreat toward moderation, conservatives fear. Let Reagan be Reagan, they say. But which one? Two Ronald Reagans emerge from this address. One, realistic at last about the big economic picture, has become probably the biggest spender ever. The other is the same old warrior against the poor.

The State of the Union, in fact, is Recession. And the President's larger response is exactly right: Stop worrying about the deficit until the economy recovers. But when it comes to how the hundreds of borrowed billions should be spent, he really means to stay the course.

If America is on the mend, there's no sign of it yet in the unemployment lines. About 12 million people are looking for work; 1.8 million more are so discouraged they have stopped looking. The President acknowledges responsibility: "We who are in government must take the lead in restoring the economy." How?

For all his years of railing at deficit spending, his response is that of any liberal Keynesian: In a recession, stimulate; spend big and borrow big. Underlying all else in his program is an immense deficit, close to \$200 billion in 1984 alone.

Willingness to borrow all those dollars is one thing. But there's nothing liberal at all about the President's program for spending them. The big item on his domestic agenda, implying fairness of sacrifice, is something he calls a Federal spending freeze. Slush would be more like it.

For all the President's professed concern for the

truly needy and the victims of recession, such a freeze would make them pay disproportionately. Mr. Reagan says total spending for 1984 should not be allowed to rise except for inflation. "All would share fairly in the burden of transition" to a healthy economy. But that, note, is an average, referring to total spending. Military spending would go up 9 percent after inflation, social spending would go down 3 percent. All would share fairly?

Mr. Reagan also asks Congress to control the uncontrollables, programs whose costs rise automatically. He singles out a bizarre example, food stamps, as if enrollment were going up because fraud has suddenly increased. In fact, misspending is going down. Enrollment is rising for the same reason: soup kitchens and food banks are booming: recession, need, hunger.

If eligibility for a program is determined on the basis of need, then people admitted are, by definition, needy. If those people are hungry, they are, at least by our definition, truly needy.

The sure, sensible way to control the "uncontrollable" cost of unemployment is not to reduce how much is paid to those who need it but to reduce the number of people out of work. The sure, sensible way to control the cost of food stamps is not to force the hungry to eat less but to reduce the number of people who lack the money to eat.

One Ronald Reagan is now willing to spend his way out of recession, but the other still bristles at government help for the poor, including the victims of a recession that Government decreed. They are left, like Gwen Verdon in "Sweet Charity," to beseech both Ronald Reagans: Hey, big spender, spend a little time with me.

Ignoring the nation's crisis

PRESIDENT REAGAN'S State of the Union message was full of splendid rhetoric, and he delivered it with the professional polish we have come to expect from the "great communicator." But the address was a bitter disappointment in the substance department. A nation eagerly awaiting bold, imaginative programs to deal with the tragedy of 12 million unemployed Americans is left in the lurch.

"America is on the mend" is the same tired theme that the President has been singing for months. The economic upswing the White House has been promising from tax cuts has simply not materialized, and the relief prayed for by those struggling without jobs is as distant as ever.

Sure, the President is calling for an extension of unemployment benefits and funds for job retraining, but they are nothing more than Band-Aids for patients who are bleeding to death.

Instead, the Reagan team has cooked up a half-baked series of budget "freezes" that will take more hide from domestic programs already stripped practically bare and leave his bloated defense blueprint largely untouched.

As for the huge deficits that Reagan pledged so eloquently to reduce when he took office, they are now running higher than ever. Worse still, he has yet to realize that they will continue to balloon until a substantial dent is made in the unemployment crisis. The arithmetic is starkly simple—every 1 million people out of work adds \$20 billion to the red ink because of welfare costs and revenue losses.

Meanwhile, industry—large and small—staggers under the weight of unacceptably high interest rates and a record number of bankruptcies. What happens? The unemployment lines grow longer and longer.

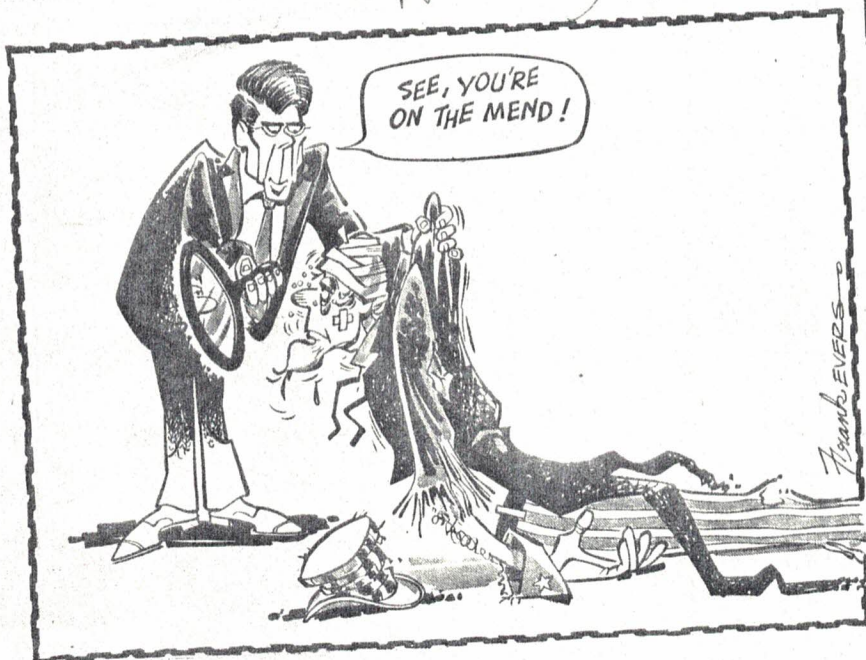
Yet Reagan stubbornly refuses to even consider a public works program that could provide jobs for hundreds of thousands of people, arguing that he will have no part of "dead-end, make-work boondoggles." There, again, he misses the point: a job, any job, is far better than idleness, and the nation's highways and public buildings are in desperate need of repair.

Beyond that, the President has ignored the sound, sensible approach suggested by such eminent men as Felix Rohatyn for a rebirth of the Reconstruction Finance Corp. to provide seed money for businesses that would grab at the opportunity for low-interest, job-creating loans. It wouldn't cost the Treasury a dime and would probably generate income over the long haul.

But Ronald Reagan is content to wait things out, putting more and more of a burden on states and cities battered by the recession and unable to make ends meet.

If there was one gleam of hope in Reagan's message, it was his repeated call for bipartisanship. What better way to demonstrate a commitment to that philosophy than by calling in governors and mayors now and getting to work with them—and Congress—in formulating effective programs to put this great country on the road to recovery.

Saving to



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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

TO:

D. Gergen

FROM:

MICHAEL K. DEAVER
Assistant to the President
Deputy Chief of Staff

☒ Information

☐ Action

dg

✓
1/30

37



Michael
Deaver
fji

Dear Abby

D. Zangen

913 Hartford Way
Beverly Hills, Calif.
90210

Dear President Reagan:

I didn't really write the "answer" the
Wall Street Journal attributed to me.

Should I sue?

My husband and I are looking forward to
seeing you and Nancy at The White House
for dinner on February 9th.
The one with the olive branch in her hair
will be.....

Aligail Van Buren

January 18th, 1983

REVIEW & OUTLOOK

Disappointed in Washington

Dear Abby:

I'm in deep trouble. I am a retirement and welfare fund, living in Washington. About 115 million people give me money so I can give it out to another 36 million. Well, I've been paying out \$17,000 a minute more than I've been taking in. I'll lose about \$20 billion this year, maybe a couple of hundred billion by the decade's end.

I thought about writing to you in November when I started borrowing from my sister, the Disability and Health Fund. I was pretty anxious because having millions of people dependent on me is a big responsibility; I'd hate to go broke and leave those people in the lurch. But I thought: No, why bother Abby? After all, the president of the United States has appointed a special commission to figure out what to do. Well, Abby, the commission announced its remedies this weekend and boy! what a disappointment! I almost didn't believe it.

Here we have this president who's been saying for years that Americans are overtaxed so that government can overspend. And he's been complaining about the lack of incentives to promote personal savings.

All that really makes me a prime candidate for reform, doesn't it? The taxes that go to support me are outrageous. Over the past 30 years, federal income taxes have increased by 570% while my taxes went up by, hmm, almost 4,000%. In fact, at the moment a lot of people pay more tax dollars for me than they do for federal income taxes. And spending! Dear Abby, Congress has bumped up my benefits by almost 700% since the 1950s.

That's not all, either. I also discourage savings—people don't save for their retirement because they assume I'll help 'em out, and goodness knows, I don't save either because I'm so busy sending checks out.

Well, I admit to a bit of concern when the president announced that the reform commission would be bipartisan, but I figured the president must know what he's doing. And I admit to more concern when, a few months ago, the commission started talking about raising taxes—you remember, right after the president signed the tax hike package last August and right before he signed the gas tax this

came out showing that social spending had increased over 10%, but I felt better when he declared that unnecessary social spending would be cut from the budget for 1983.

So, you can imagine my disappointment when I read the commission's proposals. Here is a package to increase taxes, to preserve the structure of benefits and even sweeten some, and to create new savings disincentives. Just check it out.

Payroll taxes will rise for employers, employees and the self-employed. Some of the tax money will be temporarily refunded to workers via their federal taxes. But that, along with the direct infusion from the Treasury to cover military personnel, just amounts to general revenue financing. A bit of the windfall gain going to beneficiaries from inflation will be taken back, but the basic inequity will remain and some benefits will be enlarged. Moreover, benefits going to people with income over \$20,000 will be taxed at 50%, thus penalizing private savings for retirement.

Now I can understand why Claude Pepper and Tip O'Neill are happy with this package. It embodies the familiar Democratic answer to all problems: tax and spend. And I can see why been-around Republicans like Dole and Greenspan are pleased. It embodies the familiar political way out: When imagination and daring are called for, reach instead for the same tired old "solutions."

But, dear Abby, how can the president support such a package? I mean, it even includes general revenue financing—something the Democrats have been in favor of, and Republicans against, for years. Indeed, what kind of bipartisan solution leaves three Republican members of the commission too embarrassed to sign off on it?

signed

Disappointed in Washington

Dear Disappointed:

I am disappointed in you. How can you have lived in Washington for so many years without mastering political "reality": The way a president gets an "accord" is to reward his enemies and punish his friends, especially those who thought he'd seek



General Services Administration

Administrator

TO: Mike Deaver
FROM: Jerry Carmen
DATE: January 28, 1983

JATB
FBI

Looks like it went very well.
Thanks much.

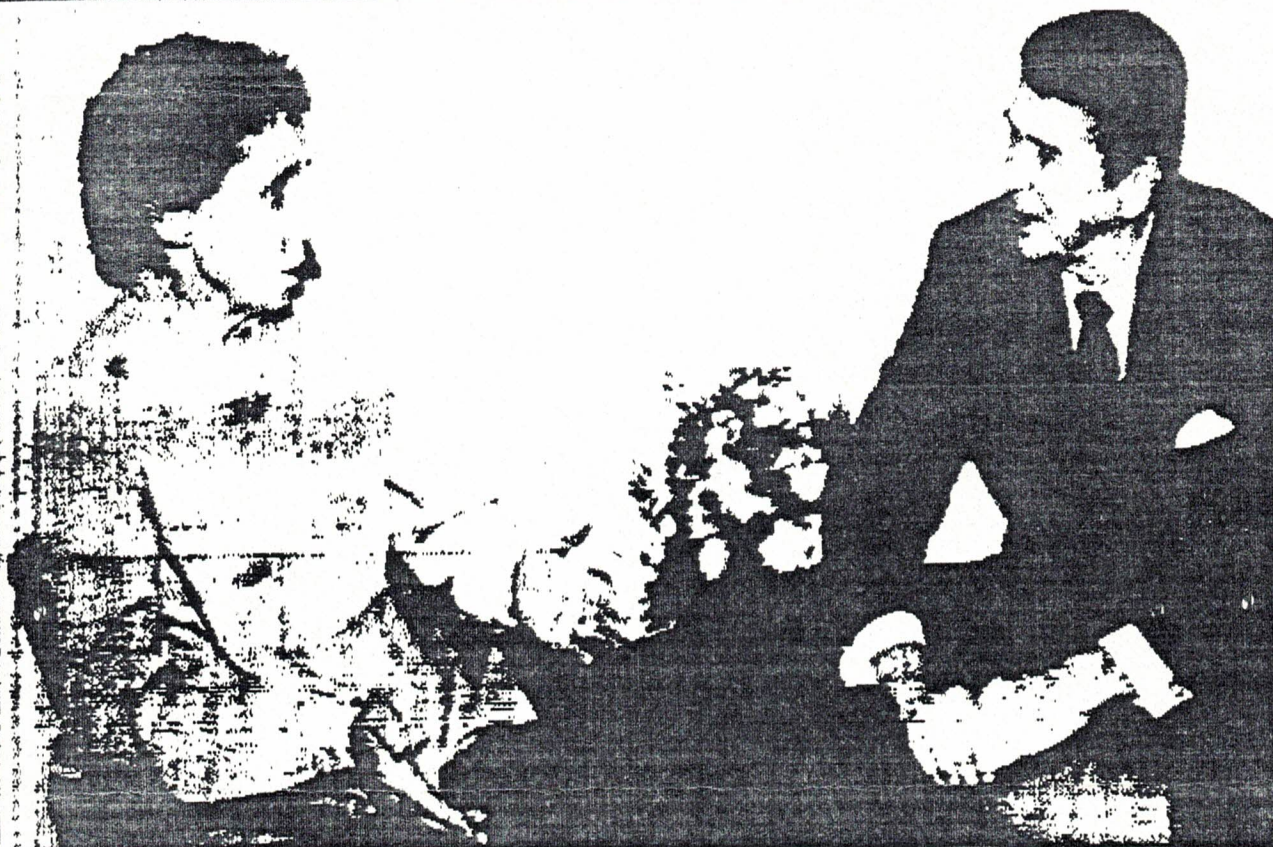
lets do some
copies of this
— 5 pls

27/WCOA

Jan 20 3 52 PM '83

1-28-83 For G. Carman GSA From UL

The President and the Publisher



UNION LEADER Publisher Nancy S. Loeb stresses a point as she chats with President Ronald Reagan at Digital Equipment Corp. Roxbury, Mass., plant yesterday. The meeting was set up by the White House after the publisher's editorial of last week in which she questioned the President's commitment to his own conservative programs. The two conferred in private, with Mrs. Loeb later telling a reporter that she "brought greetings to the President from the people of New Hampshire who gave him his start and who remain committed to his program."

(Staff Photo by George Naum)

Dear Ron, P.S.

(Continued from Page One)

The American people have been fed a lot of doom and gloom about the failing Reagan program, mostly by those who seem to have a death wish as far as this nation is concerned. We believe that Mr. Reagan fully realizes what he is up against in trying to proceed against such criticism.

As far as the nation's health is concerned, there again there is no reason to do other than to stay the course. Remember that interest rates are at the lowest level in two and a half years, that building permits and housing starts are up 10 percent since August, and that personal income is rising slowly and, as a result, personal savings are increasing — something that can spark further activity in the business world. Retail sales are on the rise and more than half of the economists seem to feel that recovery has already begun.

The best news is that the inflation rate is the lowest in 11 years. But, as the President told us, it is very frustrating to try to tell people about this when they still see the price of coffee going up on the grocer's shelves. Very few politicians or news commentators have bothered to point out how much higher that price would be if inflation were still raging.

...this nation is really not in as difficult a position as it might be — certainly not a position so dismal that the principles of the Reagan program should be abandoned.

We did, of course, have an opportunity to talk of other things, because this man is so down to earth and so pleasant that you soon forget that you are talking to the President of the United States. We talked of the pleasures of country living and one of his favorite subjects, horses, and some of his happy moments in New Hampshire.

Yes, indeed, we did ask for a couple of favors. We expressed the hope that he would forget the likes of the Washington Post and New York Times and TV commentators and instead speak directly to the people. After all, the voters of this country aren't stupid. They put the President in the White House and there is no reason why he shouldn't report directly back to them, rather than have his actions and words twisted by self-appointed "experts." We think the voters should have the opportunity to hear the truth from the man they hired to do the job.

Secondly, we asked him to come up and visit us — New Hampshire, preferably some time in the early part of 1984.

The President just smiled pleasantly at that moment and, of course, we knew we wouldn't get an answer to that just now.

Nevertheless, we are grateful to President Reagan for making time out of a busy schedule and for speaking frankly, and we repeat that he should most assuredly follow his own instincts and go forward with the Reagan program. There is no reason to do otherwise.

As far as this newspaper is concerned, the President and the nation would be a lot happier and better off with that advice than with the kind some of the self-interested politicians are trying to give him.

Neddy Shad

1/24/84

Dear Ron, P.S.

An Editorial

Having met with Ronald Reagan on Wednesday, this writer would like to add a "P.S." to the open letter we sent to him from this space last week.

(P.S. In my letter, Mr. President, I asked that you stay the course and remember the promises you made while campaigning here in New Hampshire.

Having had an opportunity to sit down and talk with you alone, I would simply add, again, that there is no reason for you to do otherwise. Considering what we discussed, and the state of the country, there is every reason for you to continue on that course. — N.S.L.)

In meeting with the President, first of all, we had a chance to bring him greetings from

his friends and supporters in the Granite State. This was obviously appreciated, as he again mentioned his deep respect for the state and its people.

Our first impression of the meeting was that, physically, here is a man capable of staying any course. We saw a man who is 71 years of age, has had a bullet removed from his chest is under 24 hours of constant pressure and looks like 40, only better!

In spite of an extremely tight schedule which at that point was running behind, he was completely relaxed. This is certainly not the man whose detractors tried to compare to a turkey a week before Thanksgiving.

AN EDITORIAL

Page 14

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

January 25, 1983



File here

MEMORANDUM FOR MIKE DEEVER

FROM: DAVID R. GERGEN

SUBJECT: Followup on Press Calls and Appointments

Several days have now passed since press guidelines went into effect on January 8, 1983. In nearly every case, the staff has been highly cooperative. As expected during this shakedown period, we have found that it would be helpful to many offices if we could now provide more precise information to you which would help to ensure a uniform and timely response to press requests and needs:

1. Handling of press requests: Per the guidelines, all press calls and appointments should first be checked with the Communications Department. Each office has employed different methods of checking and the following appear to be the most workable.
 - Phone calls may be made directly to the Communications Department (specifically Maxine Walker at ext. 7113) for checking. Many offices have found that a phone call twice a day is adequate for their needs; others need a more rapid turnaround. Each request will be logged and responded to in a timely fashion. A phone call to our office is the best method to respond to an urgent press request.
 - Several offices have opted to send written lists of requests which is fine. These requests should be sent directly to Joanna Bistany's office. It is advisable to priority red tag these requests in order to ensure that they receive a timely response. This method of checking may be preferable to offices with regard to long-term requests which do not require an immediate response.

Regardless of the method utilized, it is important that both you and the Communications Department know the subject matter of the request.

2. Phone Logs: In addition to press requests called in or written in to the Communications Department, each office should be keeping a written log of all incoming press calls. This should be done on a daily basis and a copy should be sent to Joanna Bistany's office at the COB each day. In the event you do not have any press calls for the day, just indicate so on a press log and submit it for our records. There is no need to include logistical queries. Attached is a copy of a press log which you may find helpful as a model. The information included on this particular form is the information we need on a daily basis. Each office should also have one individual who will be the communications office contact for press requests.
3. Trips: For those on the road with the President, press contacts should be checked with Larry Speakes. Any press requests made to staff who are remaining at the White House should follow the normal route of checking through Joanna Bistany's office.
4. Weekend or after-hour press calls: Please check first with the press office duty officer (someone is on call 24 hours a day). If additional conversations are necessary, please check with Dave Gergen, Larry Speakes or Joanna Bistany.
5. Clearance for White House staff reporting to specific assistants to the President or department heads: Any press request made to a staff member should go directly to his or her department head to be forwarded to the communications department.
6. Privacy of Information: The information provided to the Communications Department regarding press contacts shall be regarded as private. No one outside the immediate office of the Assistant to the President for Communications shall have access to this information without the explicit authorization of the Chief of Staff.

* * *

Once again, your cooperation and assistance in this project is greatly appreciated.

Date: 1/20/83

Name: John Smith, Asst. to the President

(DUMMAY)
PRESS LOG

Contact: Ann Jones

Phone: ext. 3333

Reporter/ Organization	Purpose of Call or Appointment	Commun. Ofc.		No referral to Commun.	Final Action and Additional Comments
		Yes	No		
John Doe Washington Post	Wants an appointment to discuss the budget.			X	Call returned by Ann Jones to say that J. Smith not talking about budget.
Jane Thomas NBC	Wants a call back on job measures we are proposing.		X		A. Jones referred call to Craig Fuller who is designated hitter.
James Flynn NY Times	Wants an appointment to discuss outreach for the next two years.	X			Appointment set up with J. Smith for 1/23/83.

Date: _____

Contact: _____

Name: _____

Phone: _____

PRESS LOG

Reporter/ Organization	Purpose of Call or Appointment	Commun.Ofc.		No Referral to Commun.	Final Action and Additional Comments
		Yes	No		

Reagan, Pressed on '84 Plans, Is

1-24-83

By Lou Cannon
Washington Post Staff Writer

Ronald Reagan, entering the third year of his presidency, is resisting pressure from longtime conservative supporters to send a message that he will seek a second term.

Presidential intimate Sen. Paul Laxalt (R-Nev.), handpicked by Reagan to become general chairman of the Republican Party, said last week that Reagan should not be "stampeded" into announcing his intentions for 1984 before he is ready, despite conservatives' insistence that he give an early signal.

Administration officials said this view apparently reflects the opinion of the president, who has no plans now to make any announcement.

"I don't feel any imminent need of [Reagan] sending a signal," said Laxalt, who also reaffirmed his belief that the president will seek a second term.

Others said Reagan has not decided and probably will not until this summer. Two advisers said they expect reelection to be a prime topic at a meeting of strategists, advisers and friends that probably will be held in California in August. Reagan presumably then would give a firm signal of his intentions by Labor Day.

Conservatives have been urging Reagan publicly and privately to let his supporters know his intentions so they can begin mobilizing. Supporters of Republicans who are prospective candidates if Reagan does not run also would like an early warning.

Yesterday, Senate Majority Leader Howard H. Baker Jr. (R-Tenn.), who has said he will not seek a fourth term and may seek the presidency if Reagan does not run, said he hopes the president will announce his intentions early because it "helps the political atmosphere and even the situation in Congress to know what the president is going to do."

"The president should give a good strong signal," said former political adviser Lyn Nofziger. "He will be more effective with the Congress, particularly the Republicans, if they think they're not dealing with a lame duck."

"Secondly, there's a lot of restlessness out there with his troops. And in fairness to the others who would want to run if he didn't, they ought to be told. The election is nearly two years away, but the campaign will be on top of us before we know it."

White House aides, most of whom publicly predict that Reagan will decide to run, say privately that it would be a mistake for the president to give a signal now because it would look "too political."

They note that Reagan is entering a phase of his presidency in which he is trying to win bipartisan cooperation from the Democratic congressional leadership for important elements of his budget rather than relying on the conservative coalition that carried him through the first two years.

And there are some, although not in a majority, who think the president is not sending a signal because he is thinking about stepping down after a single term.

One longtime Reagan adviser said recently that "for the first time, I have doubts whether he will run." He said the doubts are based on a feeling that Reagan will have "had enough of being president," particularly if the economy improves and he can retire on a positive note.

Most aides and advisers agreed that Reagan is more likely to run under adverse circumstances, if his presidency is widely perceived as a failure, than if economic conditions improve to the point that he can make a credible argument that his policies are working.

Because of Reagan's well-known optimism, one adviser observed, the

president will "be able to make a positive case" for situations that others might find negative.

The top aide considered closest to the president, deputy chief of staff Michael K. Deaver, has predicted flatly that Reagan will run again. White House counselor Edwin Meese III and chief of staff James A. Baker III have said they expect him to seek reelection even though he has not made up his mind.

National security adviser William P. Clark, who has worked for Reagan since his first campaign in 1966, is known to have said recently that "the president isn't a quitter—he's not going to walk away and leave work unfinished."

While most of the discussion and speculation inside and outside the White House centers on the condition of the economy, some close to Reagan say the state of U.S.-Soviet relations also will be important in his decision.

According to one source, Reagan would be especially inclined to run again if an arms-control agreement was in the works but not completed or ratified, or if he thought his successor likely to abandon his defense policies.

The view of those who want and expect Reagan to run was expressed by Nofziger:

"There's no reason for Ronald Reagan not to run again. He's not going to get everything done he wants to in his first term . . . He doesn't show his age. People say that Nancy doesn't want him to run again. But if he wants to, she will support him as she always has."

"As [Sen.] Bob Dole [R-Kan.] used to say about the vice presidency, the hours are good, and there's no heavy lifting. There's no place to go after the presidency but home."

Baker said last week that Reagan "really enjoys" the presidency, adding that "he obviously enjoyed it more when everything was going swimmingly, but he still enjoys it."

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Resisting

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Meese said Reagan has aged less in the job than other presidents because "he keeps himself healthy and has a personality that doesn't lend itself to constant emotional drain."

But those in the entourage who wonder if the president will seek another term often mention his age. Reagan will be 72 on Feb. 6. If he won reelection, he would be nearly 78 at the end of a second term.

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will seek a second term.

Presidential intimate Sen. Paul Laxalt (R-Nev.), handpicked by Reagan to become general chairman of the Republican Party, said last week that Reagan should not be "stampeded" into announcing his intentions for 1984 before he is ready, despite conservatives' insistence that he give an early signal.

Administration officials said this view apparently reflects the opinion of the president, who has no plans now to make any announcement. "I don't feel any imminent need of [Reagan] sending a signal," said Laxalt, who also reaffirmed his belief that the president will seek a second term.

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The Midterm Crisis

By William Safire

WASHINGTON — The breaking of the President is merrily under way. Mr. Reagan's split staff buttonholes reporters to portray him as unwilling to listen to reason, and what Mr. Eisenhower called "sensation-seeking columnists" berate him for not abandoning the principles on which he was elected.

In response, the President weakly sends George Shultz out to tell reporters that Mr. Reagan is fully in charge, which demonstrates the opposite. The President himself steps out of the permanent Chinese fire drill that has become the West Wing to ask "What disaster?" which is taken as further proof of his removal from reality.

If he is to rescue his Presidency from its mid-life crisis, Mr. Reagan must dispense with his I-am-not-a-shnook defensiveness. He should use next week's State of the Union Message to confound his opponents and reinvigorate his supporters.

To take the high ground on the economy: he should stop joining the Henny Pennies clucking about the deficit and should start campaigning against the alternatives offered by his critics.

The fact is that Reaganomics slowed down the breakneck economy and succeeded in defeating public enemy number one, runaway inflation. To encourage recovery from the unavoidable recession, he has already put in place a stimulative fiscal policy (the deficit, which the economy now needs) while the Federal Reserve has pursued a stimulative monetary policy (pulling down interest rates with a money supply growth far beyond "the high end of the range").

That double dose of stimulation is a recovery policy that makes good sense. Mr. Reagan should go on the attack against the gloomy purveyors of Kaufmanomics, who cling to their theory that the deficit of 4 percent of G.N.P. might abort recovery. He should pound away at the foolishness of raising taxes when the recovery needs consumers with more disposable income; in this regard, Mr. Reagan is in the role of F.D.R., while the other guys are playing Herbert Hoover.

Sparked by this combined fiscal and monetary stimulus, the economy is likely to show a solid recovery this summer. The housing industry, always the bellwether, is finally stiffening. The great majority of large and small investors believe the recession has bottomed out, which explains the five-month stock market climb. The President should stop pleading for patience and start pointing the finger at high-tax politicians who have a vested

interest in Republican hard times.

To put his mark on foreign policy: he should stop trying to placate the *détenteniks*, and return to the theme that expresses his essence: we will rebuild our strength until the Soviets know that real arms reduction makes sense, and we will never shrink from peaceful ideological combat against Communist tyranny.

The appointment of George Shultz earned him polite applause from all those who implacably oppose Reagan views, and cost the President the vital support of those who share Reagan views. Instead of being a lightning rod grounding criticism aimed at Mr. Reagan, the pragmatic and popular Mr. Shultz has offered accommodationists a port in the President's anti-Soviet storm. The Secretary of State is a hero to those who think the President all the more a villain.

Accordingly, the concessions the President makes to that crowd — overturning the Camp David accords to award West Bank sovereignty to the Arabs, caving in to Europeans who put pipeline profits ahead of common defense, and soon kowtowing to the Chinese on a scale that would make Mr. Carter blush — gain Mr. Reagan no press credit while they fritter away his own constituency.

In preparing his State of the Union Message, Mr. Reagan will undoubtedly be lumbered with phrases submitted by State and the N.S.C. calling for a policy of "incentives and penalties" to achieve "behavior modification" so as to "stabilize the global balance." He should reject that 12-year-old pap and use the occasion to remind Americans and others that we are in an intense ideological competition that we cannot afford to lose.

Finally, to put order in his own house: he should stop pretending the press is making up its own leaks and start to decide which of the two White House staffs represents him.

Although his White House News Summary avoids commentaries that sting, Mr. Reagan should know that a staff lineup that pits the compromisers (Baker and Deaver) against the cronies (Clark and Meese) generates the gossip that feeds the breaking of the President.

Here is a man who grabbed the mike and took charge in a debate, who twice shook up a staff that thought it owned him, who went into a convention to head off a power play that might have weakened the Presidency. This President has shown the ability — and certainly has the cause — to sweep aside those who patronize him and to seize the midterm initiative.

A Leaky Boat

President Reagan is learning to his mounting displeasure what some of his aides mean when they use the term "knowing how to operate." It means perfecting the art of the so-called leak—the ability to plant unattributed information prominently in the press.

Leaks don't happen by accident. The skillful White House leaker cultivates reporters with great care, providing "background" information about the day-to-day doings in and around the Oval Office. The best of the "unnamed sources" are highly placed and thus able to offer "firsthand" tips and tidbits for the "insider" stories that Washington reporters and their editors delight in producing.

The press thrives on confrontation, and so the master of the leak often frames his message in terms of who is winning and who is losing. Such stories most frequently are planted with a mind toward influencing the outcome of an internal debate. In this Administration, they sometimes seem to be the best way to attract the President's attention.

Leaks also tend to have an insidious element of one-upmanship. The aides most adept at feeding the press are usually the ones portrayed in the news as the most influential and effective of the President's advisers. Aides who don't "know how to operate" by playing the anonymous source game are more likely to appear in print as scapegoats than savants.

Comes now Reagan himself pronouncing that he has "had it up to my keister with these leaks," which of late have not exactly pictured him as a savant. He has asked White House chief of staff James A. Baker III to crack down on unauthorized disclosures by members of the presidential staff. Communications director David R. Gergen, who reports to Baker, responded with a set of "guidelines for press coordination" that requires White House aides to obtain official clearance before talking to reporters. Under the new rules, certain key staffers are to handle hot topics, presumably on an on-the-record basis.

Baker, interestingly enough, is on record as regarding "leaks" as inevitable. He once told *National Journal*: "You can't operate within a vacuum. You have to make your views known to your staff, and, unfortunately, you make them known to a handful of staff and they ultimately find their way into public print." It should also be noted that Baker has proved no slouch in getting controversial views directly into print from time to time. Gergen, whose job it is to be in constant contact with the press, is thought by some to have been Deep Throat, *The Washington Post's* source during the Watergate exposé.

Reagan has been irked before by the chattering in the ranks of his troops. Several top officials, some of whom no longer work for the Administration, have been called on the presidential carpet. At a Nov. 10, 1981, press conference, Reagan was asked about reports of sniping between then-Secretary of State Alexander M. Haig Jr. and members of the White House staff, including then-national security adviser Richard V. Allen. At that point, the President seemed to think that a stern lecture might correct the problem.

"I called them in," he responded, "to find out and to urge that

they, with their staffs, just as I have with my own, ensure that we're a little more careful. There seems to be too much just loose talk going around."

The assembled press corps, which had been covering the story of Haig's squabble with the senior presidential staff, burst into laughter when Reagan asserted that "there is no animus, personal animus, and there is no bickering or back-stabbing going on. We're a very happy group."

Two days later, it was budget director Dave Stockman's turn to emerge from an Oval Office session that he likened to "a visit to the woodshed after supper." Stockman received a presidential spanking for his colorfully candid expressions of doubt about Reagan's economic policy, published in *The Atlantic Monthly*.

Because Stockman, unlike Haig and Allen, has survived as a valued member of the Reagan team, it is instructive to recall that after apologizing for his "careless rambling to a reporter," he proceeded to defend what he had said. "Those quotes are words that I spoke," Stockman said at a press conference. "Almost anything other than maybe an indiscreet quotation or expression or metaphor . . . basically reflects things that I had been saying in our private deliberations as well as in public comments over the last nine months."

Stockman's behavior, it seems, was perfectly acceptable so long as he remained generally invisible or, at the least, was left with sufficient maneuvering room to issue credible denials. The problem with the *Atlantic* article, based on a series of tape recorded interviews, was that it wasn't deniable.

Accordingly, the savvy White House aide who is happy to talk at length with reporters first seeks a pledge that he will not be identified. In a recent interview, for example, one of the more talkative presidential aides insisted on recording the following disclaimer: "If I can just say for your little [tape] machine that it's on the understanding that none of this is for quotation, that it's all on some sort of deep background basis."

Having thus immunized himself, the aide discoursed for more than 45 minutes on a variety of pending issues, offering his views on which top advisers lined up on opposing sides in the fight to persuade the President to scale back his requests for increases in defense spending and to consider the need for tax increases.

The aide also cheerfully assessed the often reported friction between top Reagan staffers Baker and counselor Edwin A. Meese III. Volunteering that the White House is a competitive environment inhabited by aggressive people interested in their own advancement, he characterized Baker-Meese collisions as being largely over turf, not policy issues or strategy, adding archly that Meese spends a great deal of his time on issues that others in the White House do not regard as very interesting or of strategic importance.

Despite the disparagement of Meese, the aide suggested that after two years, the White House crew has come to realize that all are in the same boat together. He might have added that it is a very leaky boat and that Reagan will not have to look far if he wants to take action to plug some of the biggest holes. □