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Bonn, West Germany, 04/30/1985-05/06/1985)
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**United States
Information
Agency**

Washington, D.C. 20547

Office of the Director

301975



USIA

3413

JV

April 25, 1985

Dear Bud:

I wanted to send you the following relevant quote from my press breakfast with the Godfrey Sperling group yesterday morning. This quote illustrates the context of the remarks cited in Lou Cannon's article in the Washington Post this morning. You should be aware that Lou Cannon was not present at the breakfast, nor was anyone else from the Post.

"This very sensitive issue about Bitburg, I think, is very unfortunate. I think the tragedy is that both Chancellor Kohl and President Reagan sought to provide symbols that would ratify, nurture, and reaffirm the unity, the looking forward, ahead, of two allies that for some 40 years have participated in the NATO shield against the alarming Soviet buildup of missiles, SS-20s that are directly aimed at Western Europe as well as their strategic weapons. So, this divisive outcry does not emanate from groups that are on the fringes of either end of the political spectrum. They emanate from a multiplicity of well-meaning, highly-motivated people. And so the tragedy is that instead of achieving what Chancellor Kohl and the President had sought -- something extremely positive -- there is this tremendous dilemma."

At all times, I was seeking to put the controversy surrounding the Bitburg visit in its proper context.

Sincerely,

Charles Z. Wick
Director

The Honorable
Robert McFarlane
Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs
The White House

RECEIVED 26 APR 85 15

TO MCFARLANE

FROM WICK, C

DOCDATE 25 APR 85

KEYWORDS: USIA

NATO

SPERLING, GODFREY

MEDIA

CANNON, LOU

SUBJECT: WICK 25 APR MEMO / CANNON ARTICLE IN WASHINGTON POST

ACTION: ANY ACTION NECESSARY

DUE: 29 APR 85 STATUS S FILES WH

FOR ACTION

FOR CONCURRENCE

FOR INFO

RAYMOND

LENCZOWSKI

FORTIER

STEINER

MATLOCK

MAHLEY

SOMMER

SMALL

LEHMAN, R

CANNISTRARO

COMMENTS

no further action



REF#

LOG

NSCIFID

(HW)

ACTION OFFICER (S) ASSIGNED ACTION REQUIRED DUE COPIES TO

C 4/30 No further action required

DISPATCH

W/ATTCH FILE

EC

**United States
Information
Agency**

Washington, D.C. 20547

Office of the Director



April 25, 1985

301975

JV TR12301

Dear Don:

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At all times, I was seeking to put the controversy surrounding the Bitburg visit in its proper context.

Sincerely,

Charles Z. Wick
Director

The Honorable
Donald T. Regan
Chief of Staff
The White House

**United States
Information
Agency**

Washington, D.C. 20547

Office of the Director



301975

April 25, 1985

✓ TR 123-01

Dear Pat:

I wanted to send you the following relevant quote from my press breakfast with the Godfrey Sperling group yesterday morning. This quote illustrates the context of the remarks cited in Lou Cannon's article in the Washington Post this morning. You should be aware that Lou Cannon was not present at the breakfast, nor was anyone else from the Post.

"This very sensitive issue about Bitburg, I think, is very unfortunate. I think the tragedy is that both Chancellor Kohl and President Reagan sought to provide symbols that would ratify, nurture, and reaffirm the unity, the looking forward, ahead, of two allies that for some 40 years have participated in the NATO shield against the alarming Soviet buildup of missiles, SS-20s that are directly aimed at Western Europe as well as their strategic weapons. So, this divisive outcry does not emanate from groups that are on the fringes of either end of the political spectrum. They emanate from a multiplicity of well-meaning, highly-motivated people. And so the tragedy is that instead of achieving what Chancellor Kohl and the President had sought -- something extremely positive -- there is this tremendous dilemma."

At all times, I was seeking to put the controversy surrounding the Bitburg visit in its proper context.

Sincerely,

Charles Z. Wick
Director

The Honorable
Patrick Buchanan
Assistant to the President
and Director of Communications
The White House

NA5H

THE WHITE HOUSE
CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING WORKSHEET

ID# 301975

TR123-01

INCOMING

DATE RECEIVED: APRIL 26, 1985

NAME OF CORRESPONDENT: THE HONORABLE CHARLES Z. WICK

SUBJECT: FORWARDS A QUOTE FROM THE GODFREY SPERLING
GROUP PRESS BREAKFAST CONCERNING THE VISIT TO
THE BITBURG CEMETERY IN WEST GERMANY

ROUTE TO: OFFICE/AGENCY (STAFF NAME)	ACTION		DISPOSITION	
	ACT CODE	DATE YY/MM/DD	TYPE RESP	C COMPLETED D YY/MM/DD
ALFRED KINGON	ORG	85/04/26		<u>085/06/04</u>
REFERRAL NOTE: <u>Tom Gibson</u>		<u>A 85/04/29</u>		<u>1/1</u>
REFERRAL NOTE: <u>what do we do?</u>		<u>A 85/06/04</u>		<u>1/1</u>
REFERRAL NOTE: <u>NBC McFarlane</u>				<u>1/1</u>
REFERRAL NOTE:				<u>1/1</u>
REFERRAL NOTE:				<u>1/1</u>
REFERRAL NOTE:				<u>1/1</u>

COMMENTS: _____

ADDITIONAL CORRESPONDENTS: MEDIA:L INDIVIDUAL CODES: _____

MI MAIL USER CODES: (A) _____ (B) _____ (C) _____

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*ACTION CODES:          *DISPOSITION CODES:    *OUTGOING          *
*                       *                               * CORRESPONDENCE:  *
*A-APPROPRIATE ACTION  *A-ANSWERED             *TYPE RESP=INITIALS *
*C-COMMENT/RECOM       *B-NON-SPEC-REFERRAL   *           OF SIGNER *
*D-DRAFT RESPONSE      *C-COMPLETED          *           CODE = A   *
*F-FURNISH FACT SHEET  *S-SUSPENDED           *COMPLETED = DATE OF *
*I-INFO COPY/NO ACT NEC*                               *           OUTGOING  *
*R-DIRECT REPLY W/COPY *                               *                               *
*S-FOR-SIGNATURE       *                               *                               *
*X-INTERIM REPLY       *                               *                               *
*****

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REFER QUESTIONS AND ROUTING UPDATES TO CENTRAL REFERENCE
(ROOM 75, OEOB) EXT. 2590
KEEP THIS WORKSHEET ATTACHED TO THE ORIGINAL INCOMING
LETTER AT ALL TIMES AND SEND COMPLETED RECORD TO RECORDS
MANAGEMENT.

NSC/S

- ① no folder
- ② action

Martin
disapproved

Bill,

See John's note
attached to memo
per your question. Tx,

RL

John,

It might be awkward to send to
the President a letter Wick wrote him
in April. Do you know what
happened? Tx.

RL

National Security Council
The White House

RECEIVED

System #

I

Package #

4517

85 JUN 26 P 1: 25

1850

	SEQUENCE TO	HAS SEEN	DISPOSITION
Bob Pearson	1	✓	
William Martin	2/4	WM / WM	
John Poindexter			
Paul Thompson			
Wilma Hall			
Bud McFarlane			
William Martin			
NSC Secretariat	3/5		A File
Situation Room			
<i>Leucyowski</i>	3	✓	

I = Information A = Action R = Retain D = Dispatch N = No further Action

cc: VP Regan Buchanan Other _____

COMMENTS

Should be seen by: _____

(Date/Time)

Bill,
This looks OBE - Wick's letter was
revised dated 4/25/55.
I agree. Why so late? Pls.
find out. WM

85 JUN 26 P 6: 15

STANDARD

AL 1980

UNIT - A

UNIT - B

UNIT - C

UNIT - D

UNIT - E

UNIT - F

UNIT - G

UNIT - H

UNIT - I

UNIT - J

UNIT - K

85 JUN 26 P 1: 52

UNIT - L

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

June 25, 1985

ACTION

MEMORANDUM FOR ROBERT C. MCFARLANE

FROM: JOHN LENCZOWSKI *ll*

SUBJECT: Wick's Comments about Bitburg

Charles Wick wrote the President a letter (Tab A) explaining in his comments that the Bitburg visit was a "tragedy" were taken out of context by Lou Cannon.

PS Sommer and *MS* Small concur.

RECOMMENDATION

That you sign the memo at Tab I forwarding Wick's letter to the President.

Approve _____

Disapprove ✓

Attachments

Tab I - McFarlane Memo to the President

Tab A - Wick Letter to the President

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

ACTION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: ROBERT C. MCFARLANE

SUBJECT: Charles Wick's Comments about Bitburg

Lou Cannon described Charlie Wick as a "critic" of your Bitburg visit and quoted him as saying that the visit was a "tragedy." Charlie has written you a letter explaining that Cannon, who was not present, unfairly took these remarks out of context.

Recommendation

OK

No

_____ That you read Wick's letter at Tab A.

Attachment
Tab A

Charles Wick's Letter to the President of April 15, 1985

85 JUN 4 A 9: 54

Dole, Wick Join Critics Of Trip

By Lou Cannon
Washington Post Staff Writer

Senate Majority Leader Robert J. Dole (R-Kan.) and U.S. Information Agency Director Charles Z. Wick yesterday joined the critics of President Reagan's scheduled May 5 visit to a German military cemetery, but White House chief of staff Donald T. Regan said, "We are going to Bitburg, period."

Regan said, however, that the ceremony in the cemetery where the graves of 47 troops of the Nazi SS are among 2,000 was "still under discussion," indicating for the first time that the president might do something other than lay a wreath.

Wick, a longtime Reagan friend, stopped short of urging the president to call off the Bitburg ceremony but called the trip "a tragedy" that the Soviets would exploit for propaganda advantage. Dole said it would be "a mistake" for Reagan to go to the ceremony, but also did not ask him to cancel it.

Wick told reporters at a breakfast meeting that "the Russians are going to have a field day" recounting Reagan's visit to the cemetery. Later in the day, he told The Washington Post that

he is preparing a summary of foreign press reaction, much of it critical, for the president to peruse.

"Obviously, what set out to be a very positive undertaking is now very negative," Wick said.

While Republican strategists have been searching for an escape hatch that would enable Reagan to avoid the embarrassment of being photographed in a cemetery with SS graves, Regan and other officials reiterated that Reagan intends to keep his commitment to West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl and go to the cemetery.

"In the absence of some further development, Helmut Kohl believes that his reputation is now dependent upon Ronald Reagan going through with this thing," said a senior administration official.

In Bonn, West German government spokesman Peter Boenisch confirmed that U.S. officials had tried to persuade Kohl to

cancel the visit in a letter written before Reagan reaffirmed his commitment to the trip in a telephone conversation with Kohl last Friday.

Boenisch said that U.S.-German relations could be harmed if Reagan called off the trip and said his government found it "difficult to understand why the president cannot visit a German cemetery that Allied soldiers have visited for the last 25 years."

"Let the dead rest in peace," he said.

In New York, former West German chancellor Willy Brandt, an underground opponent of the Nazis during the war, said that it was well known in Bitburg that the cemetery contained graves of SS men who massacred U.S. prisoners of war, and added that he was "astonished" this information was not passed on to Reagan.

At the White House, officials privately expressed frustration at Kohl's unwillingness to end the controversy by selecting an alternative site.

One official said that Reagan's "long understanding of the significance of the Holocaust and his support for Israel" was being "almost totally obscured" by the controversy. He said that Reagan had given his word to Kohl and didn't want to "disappoint someone he considers a friend."

"It is crystal clear that Kohl is unlikely to change his mind," said another official familiar with the U.S.-German negotiations on the visit. "Reagan is even more unlikely to change because he has given his word."

Meanwhile, a score of non-Jewish religious and ethnic groups added their voices to the chorus of protests against the Reagan visit. Howard I. Friedman, president of the American Jewish Committee, said that the protests of black, Polish, Lithuanian, Ukrainian, Hispanic and Asian national local organizations "have reinforced our conviction that the Bitburg ceremony cannot be an appropriate symbol for reconciliation."

White House officials confirmed that Marshall Breger, the administration's liaison official for Jewish affairs, had tried in advance to soften Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel's criticisms of the visit moments before Wiesel spoke at the White House last Friday.

They said Breger had asked Wiesel to make a private appeal to Reagan to cancel the visit rather than a public one. Wiesel rejected the suggestion.

Dole, Wick Join Critics Of Trip

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Washington Post Staff Writer

6

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RECEIVED 05 JUN 85 11

TO PRESIDENT

FROM WICK, C

DOCDATE 25 APR 85

LENCZOWSKI

25 JUN 85

KEYWORDS: USIA

GERMANY F R

SPERLING, GODFREY

MEDIA

SUBJECT: WICK 25 APR LTR / FWDS WASHINGTON POST ARTICLE RE BITBURG

ACTION: ANY ACTION NECESSARY DUE: 28 JUN 85 STATUS S FILES WH

FOR ACTION

FOR CONCURRENCE

FOR INFO

RAYMOND

LENCZOWSKI

SOMMER

STEINER

SMALL

SESTANOVICH

MATLOCK

LINHARD

COMMENTS

REF# 301975

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(HW)

ACTION OFFICER (S) ASSIGNED ACTION REQUIRED DUE COPIES TO

C 73 ~~Mark~~ Disapproved Record

JL

DISPATCH

W/ATTCH FILE

(C)

Σ.Α.

Director



United States
Information
Agency

4/26/85

Dear Dr -
Thanks a million
for your support and
friendship.
This is a copy of
what went to our friend.
Sincerely,
Charlie

**United States
Information
Agency**

Washington, D.C. 20547

Director



USIA

April 25, 1985

301975

TR 123-1

Dear Mr. President:

As I mentioned on the phone, I am enclosing the transcript of the Godfrey Sperling Press Breakfast on Wednesday of this week at which I was to discuss WORLDNET, VOA and USIA media treatment of our Administration positions. (Tab A) Press reports from this meeting, which was set up far in advance of the Bitburg controversy, were the basis for some of my asserted viewpoints on Bitburg.

I have outlined in yellow on the transcript that which is particularly relevant to the issues of my loyalty to you, to your principles, and to the defense of the modifications of you and your staff.

Further references attributed to me actually came from German news reports contained in our Foreign Media Reaction Report of April 25. It is attached at Tab B.

I hope that this will demonstrate that the friendship we share is based on unswerving loyalty to the admirable traits and philosophy that you and Nancy represent.

Further, I recall your steadfast support of me during the tough last year when you said, "Don't you know that they are trying to hit me through you and others...if you even think of resigning, they win and we lose." Know that there is nothing in the world that could ever induce me to be less than totally steadfast on your behalf.

Sincerely,

Charles Z. Wick

The President
The White House

SPECIAL REPORT

Foreign Media Reaction

United States Information Agency

April 25, 1985

PRELUDE TO BONN ECONOMIC SUMMIT: BITBURG CONTROVERSY

Summary

President Reagan's plan to visit and lay a wreath at the West German World War II cemetery at Bitburg on May 5 held world media attention over the last ten days, with maximum intensity of coverage and comment occurring from April 15-22.

Foreign media noted the outcry against the visit in the United States from various quarters, and most writers agreed with London's Daily Telegraph that the planned Bitburg stop was "a public relations fiasco."

In wide-ranging criticism, Le Monde of Paris decried "the formidable awkwardness displayed by Mr. Reagan and his advisers," Australia's Sydney Morning Herald judged that "Reagan's image has been tarnished" and Tel Aviv's Haaretz termed the itinerary "a scandal of universal proportions."

Rome's La Repubblica predicted that "it is not going to be easy for the United States to come out safely from the dispute."

In West Germany, writers held mixed views. Some argued that he should "drop Bitburg from the itinerary" but others declared, "He has to go through with it."

Pro-Christian Democratic weekly Rheinischer Merkur of Bonn wrote: "The original intention behind this state visit has vanished....Something which was supposed to become a grand gesture is threatening to deteriorate into a grotesque event."

A few commentators believed--as did a London Times editor--that although Mr. Reagan's arrangements "were made with a notable absence of finesse, yet he deserves some sympathy in his predicament..."

Soviet media over this period were highly critical of Mr. Reagan's Bitburg visit, calling it his "bow to the 'Third Reich' and "a sacrilege by Washington that will not be erased."

EUROPE

BRITAIN

"Fury Grows Over War Graves"

Significant London headlines from April 15-25 were "Senate Leader Tells President Not to Go...White House Follies Dent Image of Great Communicator...Belsen Visit Fails to Silence Critics" (independent Times), "Fury Grows Over War Graves Visit...Dismay in Bonn Over Criticism of Reagan Visit... Reagan Rubs Raw Nerves in Europe" (Financial Times) and "A Stain on the White House" (independent Observer).

White House Denies Rumors of Change

Washington correspondent Reginald Dale wrote in the Financial Times of April 25: "While many of Mr. Reagan's senior advisers were showing increasing dismay over the damaging political fallout from the bungled arrangements for the visit, the White House yesterday denied that moves were under way to persuade West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl to alter the venue for the planned gesture of U.S.-West German postwar reconciliation..."

Last-Minute Change Sought by Top Aides

The independent Times Washington correspondent Nicholas Ashford noted April 25 that "the President's top aides--his chief of staff, Mr. Donald Regan and Mr. Michael Deaver, the deputy chief of staff...now seem to think it best to have a last-minute change..."

"The Sad Paradox"

Washington Correspondent Nicholas Ashford observed in the Times of April 23 that "the sad paradox of the mess over the Bitburg visit is that President Reagan has been impaled by an issue on which he has traditionally demonstrated understanding and commitment. He has always been sensitive to anti-Semitism and the horrors of the Holocaust..."

"Bungled Festival of Reconciliation"

Correspondent David Shears wrote from Washington in the conservative Daily Telegraph April 23: "American and West German diplomats in Washington watched helplessly as the prospects for President Reagan's impending state visit to West Germany worsened with all the inevitability of a Greek tragedy..."

"American and German commentators are in wide agreement that Chancellor Kohl and Mr. Reagan have contrived through insensitivity and bungling to spoil a visit that both leaders wanted to stage as a festival of reconciliation..."

"A Shamefaced About-Turn"

On April 22, Times Washington correspondent Ashford called the White House decision for the President to visit Bergen-Belsen concentration camp a "shamefaced about-turn..."

"Difficult Issue"

Washington correspondent for the liberal Guardian, Alex Brummer, reported April 22: "The President's decision to visit the Bitburg cemetery and his latest clumsy remarks, in which he equated German soldiers with the victims of the Holocaust, is proving one of the most difficult issues for the White House to handle since Mr. Reagan assumed the Presidency..."

"Unleashed a New Wave of Jewish Fury"

A Washington correspondent story of April 22 in the Financial Times related that "the President has inadvertently unleashed a new wave of Jewish fury...by claiming that German soldiers buried at Bitburg were 'victims' of the Nazis 'just as surely as the victims in concentration camps.'..."

"Each time he opens his mouth, he makes it worse," said one Jewish leader yesterday..."

"He Deserves Some Sympathy"

A Times editorial of April 19 maintained that although the President's arrangements "were made with a notable absence of finesse, yet he deserves some sympathy in his predicament..."

The paper considered that there were "two currents of feeling" and that "both are generous in impulse, both command respect."

"One finds cause for celebration in the liberation of Europe and the transformation of German polity....The other insists that the crimes of Nazi-dominated Germany shall never be forgotten..."

"It is no wonder if the President has failed to hit upon a symbolism for his public arrangements that does justice to both emphases in the judgment of all."

"Has the 'Great Communicator' Lost His Magic Touch?"

Correspondent Reginald Dale asserted in the April 19 Daily Telegraph that the trip was "fast deteriorating into a public relations fiasco from which Mr. Reagan will need all his instinctive political skills to extricate himself..."

"American media are asking whether he has not finally lost his magic touch as 'the great communicator.'"

FRANCE

"Reagan's Unfortunate Week"

These were typical Parisian headlines during the past ten days "Reagan: Zero in History" (left-of-center Liberation), "Reagan's Unfortunate Week" (conservative Figaro), "Bitburg: The Shameful Visit" (Communist Humanite), "A Polemic Which Embarrasses Reagan" (independent Quotidien) and "Reagan's Blunders" (pro-Socialist Le Matin).

European Parliament Denounced Reagan's Double Visit

Communist Humanite said April 25, "In Strasbourg, a group of 36 members of the European Parliament denounced in a written declaration the double visit of Reagan (to Bitburg and Bergen-Belsen) which seems 'to associate victims and torturers.'..."

"White House Seems Determined to Continue on Wrong Path"

Influential Le Monde on April 24 spoke of "the formidable awkwardness displayed by Mr. Reagan and his advisers" and added: "None had yet gone so far as to mix up Germany's refusal of collective and eternal responsibility with obliviousness to and absolution of Nazi crimes..."

"Such disengagement is amazing and especially shocking to veterans associations, Jewish organizations and a large part of the press, because the White House seems determined to continue on the wrong path..."

"Ronald Reagan Went Through a 'Dark' Week"

Pro-Socialist Le Matin April 22 ran this account by a special (AFP) correspondent in Bitburg: "Luck deserted Ronald Reagan. He went through a 'dark' week following a series of widely noticed 'gaffes' and 'faux-pas.'"

"Huge Indignation"

Communist Humanite wrote April 22, "This way of putting Nazi victims and their torturers on the same footing provokes huge indignation."

"Bogged Down in the Minefield of Historical References"

Left-of-center Liberation noted in an April 22 media round-up, "The dark past of Germany is too complicated for the U.S. President....He made a number of blunders and got bogged down in the minefield of historical references..."

"How Can One Not Be Shocked?"

A front-page editorial April 18 in influential Le Monde asked, "How can one not be shocked by the hesitations showing regrettable moral confusion in an area that is still very sensitive?"

"After refusing to visit Dachau and after agreeing to lay a wreath at a German war cemetery, President Reagan finally decided to 'balance' the visit with an homage to victims of Nazi terror..."

Correspondent Faults Deaver

A Bonn correspondent commented April 17 in pro-Socialist Le Matin, "Everything started in February with the arrival in West Germany of a U.S. delegation led by Michael Deaver.... It's clearly a lack of culture and of a sense of history--or of political sensitivity--which is to blame for the mistake of the public relations genius, Michael Deaver..."

WEST GERMANY

"Reagan 'Shocked' by Reaction"

Typical headlines included "Reagan 'Shocked' by Reaction... U.S. President Reexamines Plan to Visit Bitburg" (pro-Social Democratic Frankfurter Rundschau), "Reagan Promise Also to Visit Concentration Camp Cannot Soothe Waves in U.S." (pro-Christian Democratic Rheinische Post of Duesseldorf) and "Reagan Causes New Protests in U.S...Indignation at Comparison of Victims of Nazi Terror to Dead Soldiers (left-of-center Koelner Stadt-Anzeiger of Cologne).

"Americans Haven't Yet Overcome Anti-German Feelings"

Conservative Die Welt of Bonn on April 25 said, "Irritation and partial blindness for historical facts have given rise to the misunderstanding that the debate on President Reagan's planned visit to Bitburg indicates that the Americans have not yet overcome their anti-German feelings."

"Reagan Should Adhere to His Intention"

Conservative Frankfurter Allgemeine on April 25 wrote, "In spite of growing pressure in America, President Reagan should adhere to his intention to visit the German military cemetery at Bitburg..."

"U.S., German Officers Lay Wreath There Every Year"

Pro-Social Democratic Neue Ruhr Zeitung of Essen on April 25 said, "A dam of feelings seems to have broken (in the United States). No one points out that, in the past 25 years, an American and a German officer have jointly laid down a wreath at the Bitburg military cemetery on Memorial Day every year."

"A Disaster Which Cannot Be Covered Up Anymore"

Liberal Mannheimer Morgen wrote on April 25 that "no matter who is responsible for it, the whole thing has turned into a disaster which cannot be covered up anymore."

"Drop Bitburg From the Itinerary"

Pro-CDU Frankfurter Neue Presse on April 24 urged that "Kohl and Reagan should drop Bitburg from the itinerary."

"He Has to Go Through With It"

Independent Westdeutsche Allgemeine of Essen on April 24 held that "Reagan obviously cannot revise his itinerary without exposing himself to charges of weakness. He has to go through with it and make the best of it."

"German Police Knock Down U.S. War Vets, Former Inmates?"

Liberal Sueddeutsche Zeitung of Munich said in a Washington report on April 23: "If Reagan's visit (to Bitburg) comes off according to its tactless plan, German police will have to be prepared to knock down protesting American war veterans and former concentration camp inmates who intend to block his road."

"Bitburg a Paralyzing Issue for the President"

West German TV One's Washington correspondent Fritz Pleitgen said on April 22: "It must be bitter...that the protesters (outside the White House) link the tensions in Central America to Reagan's FRG visit. Bitburg becomes a paralyzing issue for the President."

"Much Will Depend on Reagan's Performance in Europe"

Conservative Frankfurter Allgemeine said in an April 22 report from Washington: "Much will depend on Reagan's performance in Europe..."

"We Have to Be Concerned"

Reporting on commemoration of the liberation of the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, Bonn's independent General-Anzeiger on April 22 commented: "We have to be concerned when a prominent Israeli personality (Elie Wiesel) equates Ronald Reagan's intention to visit Bitburg with a 'victory of the Nazis' and a dishonoring of the memory of the Jewish victims of Nazism..."

"The Protest Is Not Over"

Erhard Thomas reported April 20 from Washington for TV One: "The protest against Reagan's decision to visit Bitburg is not over....The White House is still uncertain on how to regain lost ground."

"Original Intention Has Vanished"

Pro-Christian Democratic weekly Rheinischer Merkur of Bonn, out April 19, wrote: "Even now, the original intention behind this state visit has vanished....Something which was supposed to become a grand gesture is threatening to deteriorate into a grotesque event."

"The President Should Be Saved From Hollow Gestures"

Pro-Social Democratic Neue Ruhr Zeitung of Essen on April 19 said: "It is high time that the U.S. President be saved from making any gestures which might come across as nothing but hollow ceremonies designed for the television screen."

"Are Germans Now Friends or Still 'Old Nazis?'"

Conservative Die Welt of Bonn on April 18 asked, "Are the Germans now friends and allies of America or still 'old Nazis' with limited rights? Such questions have been heard in Bonn in reaction to efforts by Washington to cancel the planned...ceremony at...Bitburg..."

"The Degrading Back and Forth Goes on"

Right-of-center Stuttgarter Nachrichten on April 17 said, "The degrading back and forth goes on....The remembrance of this special date is inconsistent with the recent thoughtlessness of Bonn and Washington..."

"President's Visit to FRG Is Embarrassing"

Left-of-center Frankfurter Rundschau on April 16 wrote, "The program for the U.S. President's visit to the FRG is embarrassing--as embarrassing as a theater performance of untalented amateur actors..."

"Program Planning Not a Masterpiece of U.S. Diplomacy"

Right-of-center Stuttgarter Nachrichten commented on April 16: "The planning of the program for President Reagan's state visit to the FRG is no masterpiece of U.S. diplomacy..."

WEST BERLIN

"Dispute Over Reagan Visit Is Embarrassing"

Representative headlines were "U.S. Senate Majority Opposed to Reagan Visit to War Cemetery" (independent Tagesspiegel), "Dispute Over Reagan Visit Is Embarrassing" (pro-Social Democratic Volksblatt Berlin) and "Soviets See the U.S. in the Footsteps of Ghengis Khan" (conservative Berliner Morgenpost).

U.S. Senate Vote

The press highlighted April 24 a U.S. Senate vote turning down a move which demanded that President Reagan abandon his plans of visiting the Bitburg war cemetery.

"Politicians Should Dampen Emotions"

Conservative Berliner Morgenpost April 23 commented: "Given all the errors and excitement in view of President Reagan's West Germany visit, every responsible politician should have the goal of dampening emotions and preventing U.S.-German relations from being damaged."

"Dispute Over Reagan Visit Is Embarrassing"

Under the above headline April 19, pro-Social Democratic Volksblatt Berlin carried a statement by the chairman of West Berlin's Jewish community asserting that "more sensitivity on both sides--the German and the American--is necessary."

"A Cleverly Prepared Propaganda Action by the East"

Independent, conservative Berliner Morgenpost April 17 declared, "A cleverly prepared propaganda action by the East has forced us into a discussion of the question whether to commemorate the event as a day of liberation or as a day of mourning..."

"Moscow and East Berlin are pleased at how Bonn's representatives...are fighting with each other..."

"The Damage Is Done"

Pro-Social Democratic Volksblatt Berlin asked April 16, "How can one...explain such a mess? The constant zigzagging raises the possibility of a Bitburg visit being balanced by one to Dachau."

"The damage is done, and it will take quite an effort to mend it..."

"A Slightly Bad Taste"

Tabloid B.Z. April 15 commented: "The change of the intended visit (from a concentration camp to Bitburg war cemetery) has a slightly bad taste..."

"Inconceivable How Good Intention Can Be 'Embarrassing'"

Independent, conservative Berliner Morgenpost April 14 ran this commentary: "President Reagan, who sees his visit to the Rhine as a sign of reconciliation among former enemies...wants to honor the German war dead...at Bitburg.

"It is simply inconceivable how this intention can be referred to as 'embarrassing and irritating.'..."

ITALY

"The White House's Gaffe"

Representative headlines over the period were "Reagan in Germany: Naivetes and Mistakes (independent, centrist Il Mattino, Naples), "The White House's Gaffe Unleashes the Jewish Lobby" (conservative Il Resto del Carlino, Bologna) and "Reagan's Program for His Visit to Germany Irritates Bonn and the Jews" (left-of-center La Repubblica, Rome).

"U.S. President Risks Making Everybody Unhappy"

A Bonn correspondent judged in leftist La Repubblica April 21 under the above headline: "On the two sides of the Atlantic we have two characters who are both notable for their lack of a sense of history.

"The fecklessness of Reagan, who did not even understand why Kohl's seemingly good suggestion to celebrate reconciliation in a cemetery suddenly turned bad. And Kohl's heavier, German roughness..."

"Reagan's Visit Reopens Old Wounds"

Centrist Corriere della Sera of Milan April 18 ran a Bonn correspondent's report under the headline "Reagan's Visit Reopens Old Wounds...Continual Changes to Program Ended up Making Everybody Unhappy."

It said: "The disputes of the last few days have left a bitter taste in the mouth. Reagan's visit, which was to strengthen the U.S.-German friendship, demonstrated instead how frail it is and how the old wounds are still hurting..."

"Reagan Exposed Self to Accusations of Insensitivity"

New York correspondent Enrico Franceschini wrote in Rome's La Repubblica April 17: "For the United States it is not going to be easy to come out safely from the dispute on the Bitburg cemetery.

"Several U.S. commentators have remarked that a political expert like Reagan exposed himself to accusations of being insensitive on such a clear and old issue as Nazism..."

OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

NETHERLANDS

The Difference Between "Victims"

Socialist Volkskrant of Amsterdam declared April 22 in a comment on the President's statement of April 18 that German soldiers buried at Bitburg were "victims" of the Nazis "just as surely as the victims in the concentration camps:" It is extremely stupid and insulting to equate the German war dead with the millions who died in the Nazi gas chambers.

"If the 'common' German soldier was a relatively powerless cog in the Nazi wheel, it was he and many of his fellow countrymen who gave Hitler...the means for the armed subjugation of Europe and for carrying out their murderous plans..."

"The victims of the death camps were defenseless citizens, slaughtered solely because there were Jews, gypsies or whoever did not comply with Aryan notions of purity..."

AUSTRIA

A Need to Forget the Past

Independent Die Presse of Vienna commented April 19 that "World War II has left some ulcerous wounds. Although the Americans won the war, seemingly, they cannot forget that the Wehrmacht caused them great trouble in the Battle of the Bulge in December 1944..."

"Alliance is good, friendship is okay and they need the German partner today. But sometimes the impression prevails that the scope of American politicians isn't broad enough ...for them to reach out sufficiently to forget the past..."

SOVIET UNION

"Paying Tribute to Dead Criminals"

Moscow radio in English to North America on April 18 ran a commentator's statement that "White House spokesman Larry Speakes said the other day that the President's trip to Federal Germany is in the spirit of reconciliation.

"The question arises, however, what sort of reconciliation Washington means by laying a wreath at the graves of those who committed acts of aggression, atrocities and killed prisoners of war..."

"To observe the coming 40th anniversary of VE Day by paying tribute to dead criminals--as Washington plans--is a challenge to the conscience of humanity and to the memory of those who lost their lives in the battle against the Nazi aggressors."

"Manipulating Conscience"

In a Pravda article titled as above and disseminated by Moscow TASS on April 17, the writer concluded: "There may be other changes in the itinerary, but the sacrilege committed by Washington will not be erased. Many things can be manipulated, but not memory of millions of people killed by the Nazis."

"Reagan's Bow to the 'Third Reich'"

Moscow TASS quoted Pravda of April 14 as saying that "in the White House, they do not want to 'evoke memories of the past' and prefer instead to stage this act of blasphemy. Reagan's bow to the 'Third Reich' cannot be seen as anything else but a mockery of the memory of the millions of people who died at the Nazis' hands."

EAST ASIA AND PACIFIC

JAPAN

"Plans to Emphasize U.S.-FRG Cooperation Upset"

Tokyo's moderate Yomiuri on April 19 carried this report from a Bonn correspondent: "There is...strong criticism from Jewish organizations and war veterans on the planned visit to the (Bitburg) cemetery.

"The controversy has upset U.S. and West German plans to emphasize firm cooperation between the two countries in the international economy and world strategy sectors by banishing World War II into the past."

HONG KONG

"An Act Which Reopens Old Wounds"

The pro-PRC Center Daily News said April 21 that President Reagan's decision to visit Bitburg was "an act which reopens old wounds....It has become the most awful and damaging failure since Reagan took over the White House."

AUSTRALIA

"Reagan's Image...Tarnished"

The April 23 independent Sydney Morning Herald declared, "The President's image as the 'world's nice guy' has also been tarnished, however unfairly, by his association with Nazism."

MIDDLE EAST

ISRAEL

"Distortion of History and a Seering Insult"

Israeli headlines during this period included "Distortion of History and a Seering Insult" (independent Haaretz) and "Blasphemy" (independent Yediot Aharanot).

"Scandal of Universal Proportions"

Independent Haaretz editorialized April 22, "President Reagan distorts history by claiming that German soldiers killed in World War II are to be absolved of any guilt. His attempt to equate them with the millions of Jews, gypsies and Russians who were systematically humiliated and murdered in extermination and prison camps is a scandal of universal proportions."

"Shatters the West's Code of Ethics and Justice"

An April 22 editorial in independent Maariv argued, "President Reagan's questionable premise, which he uses to justify his decision to visit Bitburg, shatters the West's code of ethics and justice."

"Trying to Equate the Unequatable"

Independent Maariv's chief editor wrote April 19 that if Mr. Reagan supplements a visit to the Bitburg cemetery with a tour of a Nazi concentration camp, he would be "adding insult to injury. The President is trying to equate the unequatable."

"We Should Let Him Do It"

The April 18 independent Jerusalem Post carried a writer's opinion that "we should desist from urging President Reagan to visit Dachau....He wants on the 40th anniversary of World War II to tighten bonds of friendship within the democratic alliance. He wants to refrain from pointing the finger of scorn this time..."

"We should let him do it."

"We Cannot Remain Silent"

Independent Haaretz remarked April 16, "The Jewish people do appreciate the efforts of the United States, which together with the Allied forces assured the defeat of Nazi Germany.

"Still, we cannot remain silent when an American President seeks to...absolve the German people of the sin of having followed the Nazi tyrants and of having brought calamity on the world. We expect Ronald Reagan...not to turn his back on the victims of Nazism."

JORDAN

"Zionist Blackmail"

In an April 21 press roundup, independent ad-Dustur of Amman described the President's decision to visit Bergen-Belsen as "submission to Zionist blackmail."

AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

"It's Not Quite You, Mr. President"

The April 24 independent Johannesburg Star ran a cartoon depicting President Reagan wearing a German army helmet and looking into a mirror as an aide said, "Frankly, Mr. President, it's not quite you."

Godfrey Sperling Press Breakfast
April 24, 1985

Sperling: (How does the Bitburg visit help win the war of ideas.)

Wick: (Inaudible) Know exactly what we do, a lot of people really don't. We feel that the war of ideas is the only war going on right now, and therefore the cost effectiveness is something you ought to consider. Now whatever your decision is, we are all team players and obviously it is your very difficult choice. So, we put together this tape which runs 10 1/2 minutes. It explains fully the problems that USIA encounters. We tell the world about America and we are supposed to combat disinformation, but everything as compared to what? So, this will give you a pretty good idea of what we are about, what our problems are and I think we have used it somewhat successfully in our hearings, according to the people, some of the Congress people thought that they would just as soon that I read my opening statement and I said in lieu of that may I insert it in the record and show you this and this has been quite, quite successful. At least in telling what we do. So it is only 10 1/2 minutes--

Sperling: So we will go ahead with it right now, if it is all right.

Wick: Sure.

Sperling: (Inaudible)

Wick: The soundtrack is self-contained.

Sperling: (Inaudible)

Wick: Well, we were very well prepared with this. This was done internally.

(10 minute tape is shown.)

Wick: Well, let me first say that my job is to implement and communicate and disseminate U.S. policy. It is not to formulate it, although I do have an input obviously. Under the legislation that created USIA, the Director is the principal advisor on foreign attitudes to the President, National Security Council and to the Secretary of State.

Sperling: This is attitudes, foreign attitudes.

Wick: Foreign attitudes toward the United States and our policies which.... We have 214 posts in 129 countries which comprise Public Affairs Officer, Information Officer, Cultural Attache, and they are in effect the public relations arm of an Ambassador.

Now, this very sensitive issue about Bitburg, I think is very unfortunate. I think that the tragedy is that both Chancellor Kohl and President Reagan sought to provide symbols that would ratify, nurture, and reaffirm the unity, the looking forward, ahead of two allies for some 40 years now have participated in the NATO shield against the alarming Soviet buildup of missiles, SS-20s that are directly aimed at Western Europe as well as their strategic weapons. So, this divisive outcry doesn't emanate from groups that are on the fringes of either end of the political spectrum. They emanate from a multiplicity of well-meaning, highly-motivated people. And so the tragedy is that instead of achieving what Chancellor Kohl and the (inaudible) had sought, something extremely positive, there is this tremendous dilemma. It doesn't help...

Sperling: Well, a couple of—

Wick: It doesn't help if a shorter answer to your question....

Sperling: Talking about what your role is and reporting attitudes, I haven't really heard the answer to this but I think other nations of the West and public attitudes in those nations are very close to this. How are they— I mean I saw a poll this morning in the Post saying that the American public is narrowly against it. A lot of people don't even know about it. What do you find in other countries. How do they feel about it. I don't think I read that.

Wick: Well, frankly, it, and somewhat surprisingly, the media in the other countries have done very little reporting on this ... in the sense of assessments, criticisms either way. It is just starting to emerge. As a matter of fact, I asked our people yesterday to immediately telephone our posts and see if we can get a better reading or a more current reading than we get every morning. I attend the Secretary's meeting every morning with his Assistant Secretaries and I have the incoming summarization cables of what the media is reporting in key areas around the world and in the last few days there has been practically nothing on this German controversy.

Sperling: Do you have a good feel of what governments are thinking, don't you, and certainly our own embassies. You must have something here, you are talking to McFarlane this morning. You have something to tell him don't you in terms of the impact of this abroad.

Wick: Yes, I will bring him up-to-date on whatever I will find when I leave here as to what are our embassies report in response to our urgent query to find out what it is. We have not been receiving anything that is reflective of a primary emphasis by any of the media.

Sperling: In terms of attitudes of other countries, certainly West Germany alone and your role here, would you too recommend that some sort of a symbol would be very important at ... not only about Bitburg but some sort of symbolic gesture or whatever it is on the President's part when he goes to Germany.

Wick: I was not involved in this at all. When this came up I was in Europe and then flew directly to California, from which I returned Sunday night.

Sperling: Well, you told us what your position is. We also know your close tie with this President. If you call this a tragedy, then I gather that you are going to recommend strongly that they get the hell out of it.

Wick: Well, frankly, I am not sure I am going to recommend anything. He has so many advisors right now, and everybody is so immersed in analyzing the situation with primary knowledge. What I will do is codify the attitudes that we find being currently expressed—foreign attitudes—and give that to them for their input.

Unknown: On those advisors, Mr. Wick, would you say as an insider that the President has been served well by his White House staff in this whole affair.

Wick: Well, I would rather not comment on that. I would say that the results are certainly unfortunate. He has a lot of good people around him with a pretty good track record, and I think unfortunately with human beings there are miscalculations that are unforeseen. I would say the quality of his advisors is certainly high, and I would think this is just one of those unfortunate unforeseen kinds of nightmares that befall people.

Unknown: Well, can't you pull out of this. Can't the President pull out of this without losing too much face. We have seen in other things, where this particular President has been able to get out of situations, you know, without (inaudible) couldn't that be, couldn't this happen too now. Or is it too late for this.

Wick: I really don't know. Frankly, I don't want to be evasive, but I am not really in a position to be privy to everything that has been going on, having just returned.

Hume: Do you think that this is something you are going to have to deal with in your in the information that is put out to foreign countries.

Wick: Well, let me tell you this, that my own personal philosophy is that the greatest weapon we have, and I hate to use those words which sound polemicist but my job is to tell the world about America. The taxpayers fund it, and the reason is that no longer are we fortress America, but we need everybody in the free world, and it is our job to encourage and nurture nascent democracies. A democracy has never started a war so we need all of the friends we can get. The cardinal value of getting people to listen to us, us—USIA, so-called public diplomacy for our various instrumentalities—is credibility. And, so when we fairly portray America with its warts and all, I think that those whom we seek to influence toward democratic ideals, recognize that nobody is perfect and the fact that they can find that we are candid about the good things as well as the bad things is that which enhances our credibility. So, to illustrate that being implemented, last Monday (day before yesterday) we implemented what some people call an historic first and that is an expansion of our WORLDNET broadcasts to five-days a week, two-hours a day in Western Europe. It is being picked up by 11 cable networks with reputedly 20 million viewers directly. It is going to our embassies—I think there will be 20 on-line. I think there are 10 now. We are installing television receive only dishes on the embassies. We will have up to 60 before the year is over. We open with one of our regular features on this 2-hour potpourri of news, features, English-teaching, slices of Congressional hearings, etc. We opened it with "America Today" which had two very attractive young man and young woman anchor people and we open the first one with a reporting of the news about the great uproar concerning the German trip.

Unknown: Oh, you did.

Wick: Yes.

Unknown: I am not sure what you consider unfortunate. Is it the scheduling you consider unfortunate or the reaction of well-meaning people.

Wick: Oh, I think, the reaction of well-meaning people is unfortunate or more simply was unfortunate is that which was sought to be a very positive bilateral at least reaffirmation of looking toward the future to the important allies in contemporary times. It is wrought with divisiveness and totally obscuring, the positive symbols and positive feelings that they sought to promote.

Unknown: Is it your feeling at all that the scheduling as it has been set up was unfortunate that it was an error to have done this.

Wick: Well, it is certainly very simple for anybody to look back and say it was an error. I am sure that those very competent people who have done a great job in that cauldron of high visibility by the press and the world generally aren't very happy about what happened. I think that if anybody there could have foreseen this kind of reaction obviously would have moved Heaven and Earth, which is their job, to ensure that there would be no misunderstanding.

Hume: To get back to one of your earlier questions (inaudible), since you do specialize in what other countries are thinking about us, your knowledge of these countries, do you think that it would serve us better or worse at this point to cancel this. Would they think that we were being weak and responding, you know, to this uproar if we cancelled this appearance, or do you think that it would be a sign of strength. Do you have any sense of how these kind of—

Wick: Well, I don't really know it, as I told you, that we are not getting too much yet in the way of a reaction. I would rather put it more simply in terms of principles. I think whatever should be done or not be done should not be a function of an artificial tactical approach sought to induce a certain kind of conclusion. By that I mean is artificially should one say, "Well, you better stand your ground and not cave in." Well, that is an appropriate principle, if its application is relevant, and I don't think it is necessarily relevant here. I think what is relevant is undeniably there is great damage. What is the principle that guided reaching this stage, and that was as I have said to promote goodwill,

a reaffirmation among the two governments, and their citizenry as to the importance of having stood together for 40 years and looking to the future in the face of this awesome missile-world we are living in. Therefore, what has happened has totally obscured in that particular goal. So to the analysis is: if you make some kind of an adjustment, query, do you prove anything? In other words, if you cancelled, does that lessen the damage. I am just speculating.

Unknown: How about maybe putting a wreath on Adenauer's grave. Something like that.

Wick: Well, yeah.

Sperling: There are a lot of alternatives that—

Wick: I am sure that, again, I am not privy to that as of this moment, and I certainly don't want to be termed as spokesman for the Administration on this very sensitive subject, and the only reason I am responding to you is you are all top professionals and I think you won't misunderstand any arrogating to myself any role as spokesman on this delicate issue.

Unknown: Tell me what have the Soviets done to this. You follow their propaganda.

Wick: Not much yet. Not much yet.

Sperling: Maybe you would think that they would run with this.

Wick: They have plenty of time.

Sperling: Yeah, that is right.

Wick: They have got plenty of time, I think.

Sperling: Mr. Wick, wait til it gets worse, huh.

Wick: Well, sure, in other words I think, you know, looking at it from their standpoint, I think they are probably about ready to move and the greatest ammunition they have is just merely a factual replication of what is being said. They can pick and choose like there we are watching their television now. We have just installed a specialized antenna on our television building where we are pulling down their Ghorizont Satellite. And, I don't know, frankly, I have asked somebody to look into the copyright implications, are they members of various conventions on copyrights pertaining to the nightly news and, for example, they cull everything that is objectionable or deleterious about America, and that is what they show. So I am sure that they are going to have a field day with replicating without any distortions.

Sperling: Well, that is something you (inaudible) Mr. McFarlane or have you already indicated this to him.

Wick: Well, I am just getting in to it today, pulling together the material on the whole thing.

Sperling: Well, you can see what we are focussing on. It is whatever your role may be. We see you as being someone who could be highly persuasive in this whole thing.

H. Smith: Are you not getting much reporting back on this because the embassies didn't pick this up as one of their normal issues. Are you really convinced that there has been very little reaction. I would be amazed that there wouldn't be much reaction...in the Third World

Wick: I have been amazed, too, frankly and I will be very happy, and I will probably have more today and more tomorrow that I will be happy to share with you very candidly. We get what we call our Media Reaction Report. We get a summarization every morning. I had a meeting yesterday stating with our key people why are we not getting more, and our key people, our Area Directors who are in touch with all five of our areas around the world, said there just has been not much so far.

Unknown: I could substantiate that for Spain. I was in Spain these last three weeks and there was nothing.

Unknown: What, if anything, are you getting back from Germany itself.

Wick: Very little. Very little. The German press, I think, is trying to decide. I think from what little I get from friends in the German press over there with whom I spoke this morning, they are very unhappy and upset that there should be any sort of a division between American public opinion and German public opinion, and I guess they are still in a state of flux as to what they should advocate as we are here. I think, even our editorial comment here is very mixed. Fortunately, the editorial comment, no matter how they editorialized about Reagan's position in the election feels that he is sincere, his track record certainly would belie any type of bias that he would have against veterans or Jewish people or otherwise, but I think these opinions are now, will be crystalizing almost immediately.

Unknown: Mr. Wick. In the past, going back over decades, when the President went overseas on trips, his chief advisor would be Secretary of State, diplomat, he might have a Public Affairs advisor in the background to handle the press. In the past couple of years, not just this President, it seems like Presidential trips overseas are totally in the hands of public affairs advisors and the diplomatic people are in the background. Do you think maybe there has been a shift over too much toward the image-making side and that contains pitfalls?

Wick: Well, I don't really know. As part of the advance team, we have two veteran USIA people who have been intimately involved in going over—one is Jim Rentschler of USIA foreign service officer, who is now Ambassador to Malta. Jim has led several of those. I detailed Bud Korngold, who use to be—

Whitmore: Former Newsweek correspondent—

Wick: A terrific guy, a great sensitivity, and Bud has been involved since April 1st, and the reason the USIA people, they are intimately involved with all of their brother foreign service officers in various capitals which are relevant for this. And I think the public affairs element has been present pretty much the same as before. Whether there is a greater emphasis here at this time with less diplomatic input, I really can't tell you. But I do know that the State Department normally would be part of this team. They have got a large team in putting these things together. I can't answer that really.

Knapp (Scripps/Howard): Put in the contest for ideas or contest of ideas, I want to ask you how the three things play around the world in public opinion. One, our policy in Nicaragua including the mining of some time ago of the harbors. Secondly, Mr. Gorbachev's proposal, his freezing of deployment of missiles; and thirdly, the operation in Grenada.

Wick: The first one, the Nicaragua situation has had as much or more foreign play against our policies as the large amount of anti-American/Nicaraguan policy here. There is a large group or groups in Western Europe particularly that are peace-inspired. Some of them are manipulated and infiltrated by the Soviets or at least exploited, I say some of them. The Soviets have not created all of them. They are principally linked with the World Peace Council which is being a front, so-called, among others. I personally feel, having spent four years now on this subject, that there is a tremendous amount of fear over in Western Europe with all of

these missiles confronting them. The most voluble of the activists are the so-called successor generation, who are not privy to our comradeship in arms in two World Wars when the United States came over and contributed thousands of lives, billions of our resources in defending freedom and saving Western Europe twice. I guess those in the government at that time felt that we had forged such a link of understanding and appreciation for what we had done and having rebuilt Western Europe with the Marshall Plan and having rebuilt our adversaries as economically as well as our allies, that we would not have to broadcast it any more in Western Europe, and that is why we are not broadcasting in Western Europe. But the successor generation tends to view our problems as an East-West confrontation of a plague on both of your houses. They have grown up in a cocoon of social adjustments that have provided free educations, generous unemployment benefits, and I think that they don't want to face the realities—the harsh realities—of what this is all about, which ties into your other question and that is the freeze. I think, and people who study this and hopefully anybody who is totally aware of all of the facts under analysis, would feel that the freeze advanced by Mr. Gorbachev is really a captious sort of a ploy. What are they freezing? They are freezing an 8 or 10 to 1 advantage over us. In other words, I can't remember. I think they have 344 SS-20s right now that are pointed in every city in Western Europe. Each has 3 warheads, so they have got 12 or 1,300 warheads pointing against Western Europe. They have mobile launchers that can immediately resupply those same SS-20 missiles plus those older S-4s and 5s, for what purpose. While they are talking, in the last year or two they have been adding one SS-20 a week. So, we have just—

Knapp: I wasn't asking you about the substance of the move, I was asking about how it plays in world opinion.

Wick: Oh, excuse me. I think it probably plays pretty well in world opinion and I think, frankly, anything that is cloaked in a protestation against war and for peace, and any statements or gambits that seem to be reasonable in seeking to slow down the so-called arms race plays very well and our problem is while they are talking peace and talking restraint, they are just going ahead pell mell and they have the monolithic press and a monolithic position that they can advance. We have a very pluralistic press, which is the foundation of our system and some of the press and some of the groups obviously think that is a very good idea without going behind the fact.

Knapp: This third thing I asked you about on how it played was the Grenada Operation.

Wick: I think the Grenada Operation was played very badly against us initially. However, as the facts became more evident and the tons of documents were made available, delineated MEMCONS, memoranda as to how the communists were going to take over and how the government was going to be subverted, I think was conclusive evidence. Our first WORLDNET, November 3, 1983, was in response to my frustration. Having left New Delhi on the morning of October 5, when we were going into Grenada, arriving in Paris, and I addressed the EFRE group there, which is like our World Affairs Council. And I was stunned that Mrs. Thatcher and Hans Dietrich Genscher, who have been great friends and advocates, would have volubly publicly felt that we made a mistake and should not have done that, and I think that what we put on our WORLDNET, picked up Mrs. Jeane Kirkpatrick of the United Nations, we picked up Prime Minister Tom Adams of Barbados and Prime Minister John Compton of St. Lucia and with the interrogations by West European radio print television reporters by satellite how these two world class Prime Ministers of these countries, it was immediately established that there was an East Caribbean Conference organization. It was not some straw figment of the Reagan Administration. Prime Minister Tom Adams, who was extremely articulate, he delineated how he himself had received the urgent phone call from Paul Scoon, who was under house arrest in Grenada and was told that unless something were done in 24 hours it would all be over. I think this helped contribute to the realization and then that this was a proper exercise in protecting ourselves along with rescuing those medical students, and then I was in the control room and we were supposed to have this last for an hour and I said "Let it roll," and they were on—those two Prime Ministers—much longer. They told how over 18 months prior thereto they had watched with increasing apprehension the flow of thousands of East Germans, Cubans, North Koreans, Bulgarians into Grenada. Tens or hundreds or thousands of tons of materiel coming into there and in the whole I think it is 8 Caribbean—East Caribbean—Islands, they had no army and maybe a maximum of 500 policemen and they were scared.

Unknown: How did it come out on balance, if you looked at it 6 months afterwards. When you said initially it came out very badly, then it seemed to get better. But on balance, as you look back—

Wick: Well, I would say on balance, I think, that there is a preponderance of recognition that the reasons that we were asked for going in their were valid.

Unknown: I have a couple of questions maybe not too related but one is whether you feel that with our pluralistic press that you are at a disadvantage with the Soviets.

Wick: I think there is no question that we are at a disadvantage on the one hand, and on the other hand, we are at a tremendously great advantage with the principle. I announced in the beginning that we followed, and that is the pluralistic press scrutiny of government efforts, the emphasis being that government is there only by virtue of the consent of those who are governed, is our strongest long-range and short-range bulwark to our credibility of how our free world operates.

Sperling: In other words, this does speak to credibility, the fact that we have dissent and various points of view, where you are beaming, where you are going that credibility is there.

Wick: Oh, I think so. And—

Sperling: There is a lack of credibility on the part of the Soviets.

Wick: I don't think there is any question about this.

Sperling: So, you feel that anyplace where you can get in, you do have the advantage.

Wick: I think we have the advantage, yes. Because what happens is that we get into closed societies with the Voice of America and with other instrumentalities. The fact that we are giving them the truth about their own society, which is derived from emigres, derived from sources—Helsinki Watch Committee and others—that have accurate information, and then subsequent events validate what these people hear that underlines our credibility.

Unknown: You have been criticized, I think, for having moved at least some degree toward a more monolithic point of view, that is reflecting the Administration's point of view. And I was wondering if that is really true and if it is true, does this have any effect on our credibility.

Wick: Well, if it were true, I guess it would. But I would like to challenge anybody to point out in any one instance, I am sure there might be, that would so be construed, but when I first came in office as part of the so-called conservative Reagan group, if you will recall there was a big uproar by activists—well meaning, I might add—at the Voice of America, and I remember going down to the Washington Post to call on Ben Bradlee and he said, "I would be delighted to have you address our Editorial Board" and I was on the subject of our first cartoon—editorial cartoon—by Herbloch in the Washington Post showing me trying to pull truth away from the Voice of America microphone. He said, "How about next week." I said, "No, how about tomorrow." So everything revolved in the way of all of that criticism and concern about what we were going to do to the Voice of America, not what we were doing. And I am sure you are aware that in the last three years, there has been no allegation—

Sperling: But was this partly a learning experience, after all this was a new, I mean didn't you have to learn to—

Wick: Oh, there is a lot of learning. But you don't have to learn how to be truthful or how to be fair or to recognize under your oath of office what you are supposed to be doing. In other words, the Voice of America has a charter. The charter which was promulgated in 1977 states that, and this is a mandate—this is a legislative admonition that the Voice of America shall tell the world about America, it shall report the news in an accurate balanced way, and generally shall tell about the diversity in America and shall be a consistently reliable source of the news. Anything other than that I think is illegal.

Sperling: (Inaudible) When you were here the first time, I sense though that you were telling us you felt that there was a bit of tendency, at least at times for the Voice of America to underscore the warts as opposed to the good things.

Wick: Yes.

Sperling: And that should be shifted a little bit.

Wick: Well, that is right.

Sperling: Have you felt you have done that.

Wick: Yes. We have, may I tell you that we have some very good professionals, many of whom you know that are involved in the editorial policies of the Voice. Ken Tomlinson, Gene Pell, former head of the NBC press bureau in Moscow, all we have asked them to do is be balanced and be fair. And what we have done also is, we are being funded to tell the world about America's policies in addition to reporting on lives of America and our pluralistic system. So when we do give our editorial commentary, it used to be called Commentary, what we have done under John Hughes, starting with John Hughes, our editorials are prefaced by "The following reflects the opinion of the United States Government." We give the editorial which relates to our government's current policy. At the conclusion of the editorial we say, "The preceding reflected the opinion of the United States Government." We go back to our news, there is nothing that is enunciated on that on the news that could be controversial or somewhat esoteric without confirmation of two reliable sources, usually two press services, or leading recognized media authority.

Unknown: Mr. Wick, in terms of projecting the image of America, there has been some controversy over the activities of Radio Liberty and somewhat less over Radio Free Europe. Are you aware of the criticisms that have been made against both and have they affected America's image overseas.

Wick: I frankly don't know to what degree they have affected America's image overseas. I will say this with a degree of bias, that those of us who are entrusted with these powerful information instruments which can be easily translated by someone to white propaganda, grey propaganda, black propaganda are under constant surveillance and I think some people get a little bit too picky, possibly, others may feel that they are entirely correct. I don't know too much about that other than what I read, however, I would be very much persuaded by the likes of a Ben Wattenberg, who counters some of the allegations that would be very disturbing otherwise. I don't really think, frankly, that it has hurt us at all because the objects of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty are those repressed countries behind the Iron Curtain and I don't think that any allegations that surface in the free world can in any way affect the listeners there as to their forming a different opinion about what they hear, opinion about which they have formulated a long time ago with the track record of both of those broadcast entities.

Smith: Your Russian and your East European Service have not come under attack.

Wick: Yes, they have. Occasionally, and sometimes justifiably. The people that man those services usually or for the most part are emigres. And, of course, the fluency with which they speak their native tongue and the nuances that they employ which are esoterically identified with the people that we are seeking to reach make that necessary and sometimes they have got their own agenda, and we have a very strong monitorship. But that does happen from time-to-time that these people will seek to inject their own point of view.

Smith: What specifically has been done. As I recall the charges were made and I only read this at a distance and perhaps forgotten the details or remember them wrong, but there have been allegations that particularly in the Soviet/East European Services that there have been some broadcasts with Anti-Semitic overtones done by some of the emigres.

Wick: Yeah, but not by VOA. It was in Radio Liberty.

Smith: (Inaudible) Similar allegations.

Wick: No, no. I am not aware of any that...

Whitmore: I wondering what is happening with Radio Marti. Is it going to just die a quiet death or do you expect it will get on board during your term of office.

Wick: Yes. The answer is that it will not die a quiet death. It is really vibrant. It was an enormous logistical undertaking. Under the legislation we had to have a Radio Marti service totally apart from the Voice of America that was going to broadcast 14 1/2 hours a day. So we had to create a large journalistic enterprise, in other words, we just can't use the wireservices, we can't open a radio station and have automatic cassettes with one fellow pushing buttons. In designing it we projected a need for 187 people—technicians, journalists, researchers—we are going to be talking only about Cuba and that closed society doesn't lend itself too well to research, because of the sensitivity of Radio Marti and our sources, we have had to have security clearances for everybody who works there. The security clearances have taken anywhere from 4-6 months. I think, as of January 1st, we have had about 98 people cleared. I think we have about 121 now. About 4 weeks ago we instituted 14 1/2 hour a day broadcasts which are now being broadcast in the building.

Unknown: But you are not broadcasting.

Wick: Not yet. I wanted to be sure that when we went on the air, not only would the quality be such that is now being critiqued on a daily basis by people who know Cuba, people who know programming, but that we would have the capacity to sustain 14 1/2 hours a day. So, yes, we will be going on the air sometime very soon.

Unknown: What about Radio Maccabee.

Wick: We have nothing to do with that and I don't know exactly where that stands. We broadcast about an hour a week...

Unknown: May I continue on with Radio Marti. There have been rumors that the question of whether Radio Marti opens up at all may be susceptible to exchange negotiations somehow with the Cubans and that is being deliberately delayed to give the chance for a Havana/Washington agreement to be worked out.

Wick: Well that's not true. And under my oath of office I am charged with implementing the legislation. Congress, October 1983, created this legislation to launch Radio Marti. So it could not be the subject of a negotiation for its abandonment without Congress.

Sperling: I know that Mr. Wick has to get to the White House, he has an appointment with Mr. McFarlane, this is going to have to be the last question, Ted.

Knapp: Back to the Gorbachev offer, which you said is playing pretty well because it has a peace label on it. Would it have helped our side if instead we had given a more positive response instead of an instant rejection. If we had said something positive like, you know, "when you come down to our level or we come back up to your level we will freeze or such" and if I could slip an allied question, have we renewed our offer for the TV exchange between their leader and the President since Gorbachev took office.

Wick: Yeah, I'll answer it in reverse order. Yeah, we are trying to figure out what to do right now. He hasn't answered my January 25th at all, he had this tirade against WORLDNET and VOA in the Lituraturmaya Gazeta, as you know, and they have had innumerable, well I guess they are numerable, of their people on American television. And he is apparently deliberately not responding, which they have the best of all worlds. They get on our free society's television, give their points of view and there is no reciprocity on theirs. As to your first question, to the

best of my knowledge, we have just responded with the facts. There seems to be so much pressure among those that feel that we should be more responsive to the Soviets, I don't really know how we can be. There seems to be so great an advocacy for making unilateral concessions. They've had this enormous buildup, they apparently are violating the ABM treaty with that new radar system, they have repeatedly broken pacts and treaties and yet they seem to do that with impunity in so far as mass outcry by the media or the people against them. So I don't know what else we can do, we're ready willing and able, we didn't leave the negotiating table — they did. And yet they continue that buildup of SS20's and other strategic elements.

Sperling: Well I think we are there, it's been a very useful session and I want to thank you for coming in.

Wick: Thank you.

Sperling: Come again.