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WITHDRAWAL SHEET

Ronald Reagan Library

Collection Name WHITE HOUSE OFFICE OF RECORDS MANAGEMENT
(WHORM): SUBJECT FILE

Withdrawer

DLB 5/19/2023

File Folder CO071 (IRAN) (448022) (2 OF 4)

FOIA

S10-306

Box Number 91

SYSTEMATIC

1153

ID	Doc Type	Document Description	No of Pages	Doc Date	Restrictions
249696	MEMO	WHITE HOUSE STAFF MEMO RE: TALKING POINTS ON IRAN/CONTRA AFFAIR, ANNOTATED <i>R 1/15/2004 MJD</i>	1	12/5/1986	P5
249697	PAPER	IRAN BRIEFING MATERIAL - SAMPLE Q & AS FOR PRESS BRIEFING, P. 1, 3, 5 <i>R 1/15/2004 MJD</i>	3	ND	P5

The above documents were not referred for declassification review at time of processing

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- B-1 National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- B-2 Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
- B-3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
- B-4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
- B-6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
- B-7 Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
- B-8 Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
- B-9 Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

CABINET AFFAIRS

WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

DATE: 12/5/86 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: 10:00 a.m. 12/8/86

SUBJECT: TALKING POINTS ON IRAN/CONTRA AFFAIR

	ACTION FYI			ACTION FYI	
VICE PRESIDENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MILLER - ADMIN.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
REGAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	POINDEXTER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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REMARKS: Please provide your comments on the attached directly to Tom Gibson by 10:00 Monday morning, December 8th, with an info copy to my office. Thank you.

RESPONSE: *The I & R section needs much work. See comments. Trib*

David L. Chew
Staff Secretary
Ext. 2702

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

DRAFT

Iran/Contra Affair -- Executive Summary

- o For six years, the American people have supported the President and have welcomed his leadership.
- o No one has challenged the President's motives in the Iran initiative. The President, as leader, took risks commensurate with possible returns.

Contra Connection

- o Upon learning of excess funds to Contras, the President categorically stated that he had not been informed of the initiative.
- o The President wants all the facts out and has moved with unprecedented speed to organize an investigative effort:
 - 1st -- Ordered an Attorney General review;
 - 2nd -- By Executive Order, created a distinguished bipartisan panel (Tower Commission) to review the management and administration of the NSC;
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- o The President has already taken personnel steps within the NSC. Frank Carlucci was appointed as the new head of the NSC and has the authority to make necessary changes.
- o Additional information on the Iran/Contra Affair will certainly come to light. It is the purpose of the investigating groups to determine what is fact and what is merely intrigue, and to render their findings.
- o In six years, the President and his supporters have compiled a remarkable record of achievement. Much remains to be done. Initiatives for 1987 will require a unity.

WHITE HOUSE TALKING POINTS

THE PRESIDENT & IRAN/CONTRA AFFAIR

Leadership, Motives, and Risks

The Iran/Contra Affair began with an assessment by the President that compelling reasons -- ending a bloody war, freeing American hostages, finding a long-term end to terrorism -- warranted the undertaking of a secret initiative to Iran.

- o There were great risks. The President decided that the risks were commensurate with possible returns. History will judge the correctness of the President's decision.
- o Americans elect Presidents to lead. That is what the President has done since January 1981. There is a broad list of 6 years of accomplishments that reflect the benefit of a President willing to take risks.
 - "Reganomics" -- Risk bold tax cutting initiatives to restart a stalled American economic engine.
 - Achille Lauro -- Risk possible violation of "diplomatic procedures" to bring international murderers to justice.
 - Grenada -- Risk the lives of American servicemen to free a country from Communist tyranny and deny the Soviets another staging area in the Caribbean.

Contra Connection

Unknown to the President, another motive and additional risks were introduced to the Iran initiative by staff of the National Security Council -- financial assistance to freedom fighters in Nicaragua -- a policy that the President and a bipartisan majority in Congress have supported, but with implementation (U.S. funds) through procedures defined by Congress.

- o This free-lance effort was done without the President's knowledge, and represents a circumvention of established procedures for the conduct of U.S. foreign policy and may constitute a violation of U.S. law.
- o The President upon learning of this incident moved immediately to investigate in an orderly manner beginning with the offices of the Attorney General.
- o A swift investigation by the Attorney General revealed the need for additional review.

WHITE HOUSE TALKING POINTS

(Iran/Contra Affair, Cont.)

The President Wants the Facts Out -- Quickly and Forthrightly

- o On November 25 the President stated the facts concerning his involvement in the Contra funds initiative -- he was first advised of the action on November 24 by the Attorney General.
- o A week after learning of the Contra connection and upon the disclosure of additional information by the Attorney General, The President called for the appointment of an Independent Counsel to investigate the possibility of illegal activity.
- o The President has met frequently with leaders of Congress, urged an orderly investigation, and pledged his support.
- o Additional facts will be learned about the Iran/Contra transaction. That is the purpose of the investigations.

The President Will Fix the Problem

- o By Executive Order, the President empaneled a distinguished bipartisan Special Review Board (Tower, Muskie, Scowcroft) to investigate the procedures of the National Security Council that may have permitted excesses or improprieties.
- o Personnel actions were taken to address existing problems at the National Security Council -- Frank Carlucci was appointed to be the new head of the NSC.

The President will Continue to Lead and Serve the American People

- o The leadership of President Reagan through six years has fundamentally restored the stature of the Presidency in the American political system.
- o President Reagan's Six-Year Accomplishments are manifold:
 - Four years of economic growth with low inflation;
 - Better stewardship of the taxpayer's dollar by making government work better;
 - Restored international stature for America while getting tough on trade;
 - A vigorous domestic agenda to fight crime, drug abuse, improve education, and salvage Social Security;
 - Promote freedom and democracy in the world; and
 - Work for peace and provide America's security.
- o The President is not finished. Initiatives for continued prosperity, responsible spending, and greater personal and national security for the American people lie ahead in 1987.

WHITE HOUSE TALKING POINTS

CHRONOLOGY -- IRAN/CONTRA AFFAIR

- Mon 11/3 -- Lebanese magazine reports U.S. sent Iran spare parts and ammunition after a September visit to Tehran by Robert McFarlane. A day later, the speaker of Iran's parliament says McFarlane and four others visited Iran.
- Wed 11/5 -- White House confirms the U.S. is working with other countries for the release of hostages in Lebanon.
- Wed 11/12 -- President Reagan meets Congressional leaders, personally acknowledges sending military supplies to Iran.
- Thu 11/13 -- President Reagan addresses the Nation on his secret diplomatic initiative to Iran, says he authorized transfer of small amounts of defensive weapons and spare parts. The President's goals: Ending a bloody war, freeing American hostages, finding a long-term end to terrorism.
- Mon 11/17 -- President Reagan says he has no plans to send additional arms to Iran.
- Wed 11/19 -- President Reagan holds a formal news conference.
- i 11/21 -- Wanting a quick review of the record on implementation of his policy toward Iran that would be independent of the national security establishment, President Reagan directs Attorney General Meese to review the matter and report his findings.
- Sat 11/22 -- Aides to the Attorney General discover excess funds from the Iranian arms sale went to Nicaraguan freedom fighters.
- Mon 11/24 -- Attorney General reports preliminary findings to the President; the President tells the Attorney General he had no knowledge of the diversion. The President orders the Attorney General to make his findings public.
- Tue 11/25 -- President Reagan briefs Congressional leaders; announces reassignment of Admiral Poindexter and dismissal of Lt. Col. North. Attorney General reports to the Nation on his findings to date.
- Wed 11/26 -- President appoints 3-member panel to examine role of NSC.
- Tue 12/2 -- President addresses the Nation; directs the Attorney General to seek appointment of an independent counsel. Names Frank Carlucci as head of NSC.

IRAN BRIEFING MATERIAL

1. Do you think Don Regan should resign?

That's something Fritz Hollings and Joe Biden, among others, have demanded. ~~I don't~~ believe for one minute these two gentlemen -- who have White House ambitions of their own -- have Ronald Reagan's interests in mind.

The people of 49 states elected Ronald Reagan to make those decisions.

Those who focus on Regan's future ignore the looming threats to Ronald Reagan's future. What's at stake here is more important than the White House organization chart: The future of the Reagan agenda is all anyone in this country should care about today.

↳ Proper answer. —

It makes not one wit what I think the person who has to make that decision is the President and he has said he's not throwing anybody to the wolves.

2. How can you condemn the Democrats for their criticism of the President when Bob Dole, Richard Lugar and others have been just as harsh?

They have.

It is?

ok

That's a good point. [The President needs support, not a batch of resumes, from his fellow Republicans.]

~~It's~~ time members of the Republican Party realize that either we all hang together -- or we will all hang separately.

Some The Republicans ~~need to think~~ *might want to reflect* for a moment about how they did in 1980 and 1984 with Ronald Reagan -- and how they did in 1982 and 1986 without him.

All a conservative or a Republican needs to do to make news these days is to attack Ronald Reagan. I know it's hard to resist the temptation to see yourself on television, but the President's supporters should try. When CBS calls, just say no.

3. Is this another Watergate?

Absolutely not. This President has gone the extra mile in getting this thing out in the open.

There is one striking similarity, however: The Left's interest in bringing down another President. Senator Ted Stevens says he was bumped off of three network television shows after he told them he intended to support Ronald Reagan. Stevens finally got on MacNeil-Lehrer and hasn't been heard from since. (That's why the FBI wasn't called in sooner -- they were out looking for him.) -OK

Yes. There is a whole new generation of reporters out there who missed their chance 12 years ago to win a Pulitzer Prize.

Who is picking this fight
us or the Press —

Can't we stay on the
high ground — must
we grovel in the slum with
the Press where?

4. If the President is suddenly putting such a premium on loyalty, why didn't he fire George Shultz?

George Shultz hasn't said the President was wrong. He said the policy was debatable and that he argued against it. It would be rather ironic if someone who argued against a policy should be fired because its execution may have misfired.

5. Is our Central American policy now doomed?

It is no more doomed than the Strategic Defense Initiative is doomed, or tax reform is doomed. A number of candidates -- including Senator-elect Graham in Florida and Senator-elect Shelby in Alabama -- said they support the President's policies on Central America. I'm sure their constituents will hold them to these commitments.

We continue to believe the President's policies should be judged on their merits. Those who would abandon our efforts to promote democracy in Central America never supported us from the outset.

6. George Bush said this Iran mess was a mistake. Why doesn't the President admit it and move on?

delete given the Radio address

When these Democrats say, "We want to get this behind us," they're talking about Ronald Reagan.

7. The President said there would be no arms for terrorist nations, then he sold Iran arms. Wasn't that hypocritical?

No. This was not a government-to-government transaction.

awfully weak -

8. How can the President get anything out of Congress when they no longer trust him, respect him, or fear him -- and when the people don't believe him?

Keep

~~I disagree with the premise of that question.~~ The only people you hear from are the people who believe all of the above. But that is because to get yourself on television these days, you have to attack Ronald Reagan.

9. Why doesn't the President order Oliver North and John Poindexter to stop "taking the Fifth Amendment" and tell the truth?

Because the President is sworn to uphold the Constitution and they are exercising a constitutional right.

10. What effect will this Iran affair have on the 1988 elections?

The question illustrates what is so disappointing in the current debate. Some individuals on the other side think the "Misery Index" is Ronald Reagan's popularity, and that anything that drives it downward is good for them politically.


~~As far as GOP chances in 1988 are concerned, it depends upon how big a hole certain Republicans dig for themselves. They have a choice: They can take the short term gains of seeing themselves on television -- and risk in the long term being voted out of the Senate's group picture.~~

NSC

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86 DEC 5 P 2: 52

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DRAFT

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Contra Connection

- o Upon learning of excess funds to Contras, the President categorically stated that he had not been informed of the initiative.
- o The President wants all the facts out and has moved with unprecedented speed to organize an investigative effort:
 - 1st -- Ordered an Attorney General review;
 - 2nd -- By Executive Order, created a distinguished bipartisan panel (Tower Commission) to review the management and administration of the NSC;
 - 3rd -- Called for the appointment of a Independent Counsel to look into violations of the law;
 - 4th -- Encouraged Congress to work efficiently and expeditiously in conducting their own investigation
- o The President has already taken personnel steps within the NSC. Frank Carlucci was appointed as the new head of the NSC and has the authority to make necessary changes.
- o Additional information on the Iran/Contra Affair will certainly come to light. It is the purpose of the investigating groups to determine what is fact and what is merely intrigue, and to render their findings.
- o In six years, the President and his supporters have compiled a remarkable record of achievement. Much remains to be done. Initiatives for 1987 will require a unity.

WHITE HOUSE TALKING POINTS

THE PRESIDENT & IRAN/CONTRA AFFAIR

Leadership, Motives, and Risks

The Iran/Contra Affair began with an assessment by the President that compelling reasons -- ending a bloody war, freeing American hostages, finding a long-term end to terrorism -- warranted the undertaking of a secret initiative to Iran.

- o There were great risks. The President decided that the risks were commensurate with possible returns. History will judge the correctness of the President's decision.
- o Americans elect Presidents to lead. That is what the President has done since January 1981. There is a broad list of 6 years of accomplishments that reflect the benefit of a President willing to take risks.
 - "Reganomics" -- Risk bold tax cutting initiatives to restart a stalled American economic engine.
 - Achille Lauro -- Risk possible violation of "diplomatic procedures" to bring international murderers to justice.
 - Grenada -- Risk the lives of American servicemen to free a country from Communist tyranny and deny the Soviets another staging area in the Caribbean.

Contra Connection

Unknown to the President, another motive and additional risks were introduced to the Iran initiative by staff of the National Security Council -- financial assistance to freedom fighters in Nicaragua -- a policy that the President and a bipartisan majority in Congress have supported, but with implementation (U.S. funds) through procedures defined by Congress.

- o This free-lance effort was done without the President's knowledge, and represents a circumvention of established procedures for the conduct of U.S. foreign policy and may constitute a violation of U.S. law.
- o The President upon learning of this incident moved immediately to investigate in an orderly manner beginning with the offices of the Attorney General.
- o A swift investigation by the Attorney General revealed the need for additional review.

WHITE HOUSE TALKING POINTS

(Iran/Contra Affair, Cont.)

The President Wants the Facts Out -- Quickly and Forthrightly

- o On November 25 the President stated the facts concerning his involvement in the Contra funds initiative -- he was first advised of the action on November 24 by the Attorney General.
- o A week after learning of the Contra connection and upon the disclosure of additional information by the Attorney General, The President called for the appointment of an Independent Counsel to investigate the possibility of illegal activity.
- o The President has met frequently with leaders of Congress, urged an orderly investigation, and pledged his support.
- o Additional facts will be learned about the Iran/Contra transaction. That is the purpose of the investigations.

The President Will Fix the Problem

- o By Executive Order, the President empaneled a distinguished bipartisan Special Review Board (Tower, Muskie, Scowcroft) to investigate the procedures of the National Security Council that may have permitted excesses or improprieties.
- o Personnel actions were taken to address existing problems at the National Security Council -- Frank Carlucci was appointed to be the new head of the NSC.

The President will Continue to Lead and Serve the American People

- o The leadership of President Reagan through six years has fundamentally restored the stature of the Presidency in the American political system.
- o President Reagan's Six-Year Accomplishments are manifold:
 - Four years of economic growth with low inflation;
 - Better stewardship of the taxpayer's dollar by making government work better;
 - Restored international stature for America while getting tough on trade;
 - A vigorous domestic agenda to fight crime, drug abuse, improve education, and salvage Social Security;
 - Promote freedom and democracy in the world; and
 - Work for peace and provide America's security.
- o The President is not finished. Initiatives for continued prosperity, responsible spending, and greater personal and national security for the American people lie ahead in 1987.

WHITE HOUSE TALKING POINTS

CHRONOLOGY -- IRAN/CONTRA AFFAIR

- Mon 11/3 -- Lebanese magazine reports U.S. sent Iran spare parts and ammunition after a September visit to Tehran by Robert McFarlane. A day later, the speaker of Iran's parliament says McFarlane and four others visited Iran.
- Wed 11/5 -- White House confirms the U.S. is working with other countries for the release of hostages in Lebanon.
- Wed 11/12 -- President Reagan meets Congressional leaders, personally acknowledges sending military supplies to Iran.
- Thu 11/13 -- President Reagan addresses the Nation on his secret diplomatic initiative to Iran, says he authorized transfer of small amounts of defensive weapons and spare parts. The President's goals: Ending a bloody war, freeing American hostages, finding a long-term end to terrorism.
- Mon 11/17 -- President Reagan says he has no plans to send additional arms to Iran.
- Wed 11/19 -- President Reagan holds a formal news conference.
- i 11/21 -- Wanting a quick review of the record on implementation of his policy toward Iran that would be independent of the national security establishment, President Reagan directs Attorney General Meese to review the matter and report his findings.
- Sat 11/22 -- Aides to the Attorney General discover excess funds from the Iranian arms sale went to Nicaraguan freedom fighters.
- Mon 11/24 -- Attorney General reports preliminary findings to the President; the President tells the Attorney General he had no knowledge of the diversion. The President orders the Attorney General to make his findings public.
- Tue 11/25 -- President Reagan briefs Congressional leaders; announces reassignment of Admiral Poindexter and dismissal of Lt. Col. North. Attorney General reports to the Nation on his findings to date.
- Wed 11/26 -- President appoints 3-member panel to examine role of NSC.
- Tue 12/2 -- President addresses the Nation; directs the Attorney General to seek appointment of an independent counsel. Names Frank Carlucci as head of NSC.

IRAN BRIEFING MATERIAL

1. Do you think Don Regan should resign?

That's something Fritz Hollings and Joe Biden, among others, have demanded. I don't believe for one minute these two gentlemen -- who have White House ambitions of their own -- have Ronald Reagan's interests in mind.

The people of 49 states elected Ronald Reagan to make those decisions.

Those who focus on Regan's future ignore the looming threats to Ronald Reagan's future. What's at stake here is more important than the White House organization chart: The future of the Reagan agenda is all anyone in this country should care about today.

2. How can you condemn the Democrats for their criticism of the President when Bob Dole, Richard Lugar and others have been just as harsh?

That's a good point. The President needs support, not a batch of resumes, from his fellow Republicans.

It's time members of the Republican Party realize that either we all hang together -- or we will all hang separately.

The Republicans need to think for a moment about how they did in 1980 and 1984 with Ronald Reagan -- and how they did in 1982 and 1986 without him.

All a conservative or a Republican needs to do to make news these days is to attack Ronald Reagan. I know it's hard to resist the temptation to see yourself on television, but the President's supporters should try. When CBS calls, just say no.

3. Is this another Watergate?

Absolutely not. This President has gone the extra mile in getting this thing out in the open.

There is one striking similarity, however: The Left's interest in bringing down another President. Senator Ted Stevens says he was bumped off of three network television shows after he told them he intended to support Ronald Reagan. Stevens finally got on MacNeil-Lehrer and hasn't been heard from since. That's why the FBI wasn't called in sooner -- they were out looking for him.

Yes. There is a whole new generation of reporters out there who missed their chance 12 years ago to win a Pulitzer Prize.

4. If the President is suddenly putting such a premium on loyalty, why didn't he fire George Shultz?

George Shultz hasn't said the President was wrong. He said the policy was debatable and that he argued against it. It would be rather ironic if someone who argued against a policy should be fired because its execution may have misfired.

5. Is our Central American policy now doomed?

It is no more doomed than the Strategic Defense Initiative is doomed, or tax reform is doomed. A number of candidates -- including Senator-elect Graham in Florida and Senator-elect Shelby in Alabama -- said they support the President's policies on Central America. I'm sure their constituents will hold them to these commitments.

We continue to believe the President's policies should be judged on their merits. Those who would abandon our efforts to promote democracy in Central America never supported us from the outset.

6. George Bush said this Iran mess was a mistake. Why doesn't the President admit it and move on?

When these Democrats say, "We want to get this behind us," they're talking about Ronald Reagan.

7. The President said there would be no arms for terrorist nations, then he sold Iran arms. Wasn't that hypocritical?

No. This was not a government-to-government transaction.

8. How can the President get anything out of Congress when they no longer trust him, respect him, or fear him -- and when the people don't believe him?

I disagree with the premise of that question. The only people you hear from are the people who believe all of the above. But that is because to get yourself on television these days, you have to attack Ronald Reagan.

9. Why doesn't the President order Oliver North and John Poindexter to stop "taking the Fifth Amendment" and tell the truth?

Because the President is sworn to uphold the Constitution and they are exercising a constitutional right.

10. What effect will this Iran affair have on the 1988 elections?

The question illustrates what is so disappointing in the current debate. Some individuals on the other side think the "Misery Index" is Ronald Reagan's popularity, and that anything that drives it downward is good for them politically.

As far as GOP chances in 1988 are concerned, it depends upon how big a hole certain Republicans dig for themselves. They have a choice: They can take the short term gains of seeing themselves on television -- and risk in the long term being voted out of the Senate's group picture.