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Last Updated: 11/14/2023

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20508

477792

IR C0071

~~8869~~

FG006-12

December 22, 1986

MEMORANDUM FOR TOM GIBSON

FROM: RODNEY B. McDANIEL *Rob for*

SUBJECT: Iran Themes

Attached are some draft themes on U.S. policy toward Iran which may be of help. We would appreciate an opportunity to review any further drafts you may produce.

Attachment

cc: David Chew

NSC # 8608869

IRAN POLICY: THEMES FOR USE BY ADMINISTRATION SPOKESMEN

- Managing foreign policy is rarely simple. Presidents must not only respond to events, but try to shape them as well. When countries of strategic significance, like Iran, are in midst of transitions, we can choose to sit back and ride out storm or try to position ourselves to deal with the emerging reality.
- Our dialogue sought to explore possibilities for a better relationship with a post-Khomeini Iran prepared to live at peace with its neighbors. We all understand the strategic imperative of preserving Iran as a buffer separating the Soviets from the Gulf. It is neither in our interests nor in the interests of our regional friends to see that buffer disappear.
- Our initiative also aimed to hasten a negotiated settlement of the Iran-Iraq war; curb Iranian support for terrorism; and help secure the safe return of all hostages in Lebanon--or at least those held by groups linked to Iran.
- No one involved in the decision-making process here had any illusions that those goals would be easily achieved. In the end, however, the President decided that the stakes and the potential rewards were worth running some substantial risks.
- In retrospect, these risks may have been underestimated. For a variety of reasons, our initiatives have been misinterpreted by the public and many of our allies. Moreover, it is clear that we made serious tactical mistakes in pursuing our dialogue with Iran.
- Clearly, the risks have overwhelmed the potential benefits. But no President worthy of the office will shy from taking actions merely because they may be risky. Leadership requires the willingness to run calculated risks. It also requires a willingness to accept responsibilities. Our President has demonstrated a willingness to do both.
- The President is acutely aware of the need to repair the damage done by the Iranian initiative. He has directed that there be no more shipments of military material to Iran so long as the Iranian government refuses to negotiate an end to its war with Iraq and continues to support terrorism. Nor will we condone arms shipments to Iran by other countries.
- The President has also pledged his full cooperation with the efforts of Congress and the independent council to determine whether laws were violated in the execution of our Iran initiative, either through diversion of funds or any other means. He is determined to get the whole truth out as quickly as possible.

- Whatever tactical errors may have been made along the way, the time has come to look ahead to the important strategic goals we all share. We accept the Iranian revolution as a fact, and we look forward to the day when a better relationship with Iran will be possible. We are not closing the door to that, but it is up to Iran to demonstrate that it is prepared for such a relationship.
- We remain firmly committed to a prompt and honorable end to the Iran-Iraq war. We are determined to push ahead in the Arab-Israeli peace process.
- We will not give in to terrorism or terrorists--our policy on that score has not changed, nor will it change in the future.
- This Administration has two years to run and an important but unfinished agenda for the future. Neither the Administration nor the country can afford to be paralyzed by the Iran affair. The President is determined that we will not be. We seek to move ahead now and address the larger questions of war and peace, regional stability, the expansion and protection of freedom, and the eradication of terrorism.
- We have a President who is prepared to be bold and to take risks for peace; we must not foresake opportunities to fulfill the promise of his Presidency.

IRAN POLICY: THEMES FOR USE BY ADMINISTRATION SPOKESMEN

- Managing foreign policy is rarely simple. Presidents must not only respond to events, but try to shape them as well. When countries of strategic significance, like Iran, are in midst of transitions, we can choose to sit back and ride out storm or try to position ourselves to deal with the emerging reality.
- Our dialogue with ~~some of the more pragmatic members of the Iranian leadership~~ sought to explore possibilities for a better relationship with a post-Khomeini Iran prepared to live at peace with its neighbors. We all understand the strategic imperative of preserving Iran as a buffer separating the Soviets from the Gulf. It is neither in our interests nor in the interests of our regional friends to see that buffer disappear.
- Our initiative also aimed to hasten a negotiated settlement of the Iran-Iraq war; curb Iranian support for terrorism; and help secure the safe return of all hostages in Lebanon--or at least those held by groups linked to Iran.

-- No one involved in the decision-making process here had any illusions that those goals would be easily achieved. In the end, however, the President decided that the stakes and the potential rewards were worth running some substantial risks.

-- ~~It is clear in retrospect that these risks were way have been underestimated and that we made serious tactical mistakes in pursuing our dialogue with Iran. We should have anticipated that our contacts were bound to leak out eventually. And we should also have anticipated that our limited shipments of military equipment--intended as a signal of the President's commitment to a more constructive relationship with Iran would help foster an inaccurate but damaging image of trading arms for hostages.~~

Moreover, it is clear
For a variety of reasons, our intentions have been misinterpreted

-- The President is acutely aware of the need to repair the damage. He has directed that there be no more shipments of military material to Iran so long as the Iranian government refuses to negotiate an end to its war with Iraq and continues to support terrorism. Nor will we condone arms shipments to Iran by other countries.

-- The President has also pledged his full cooperation with the efforts of Congress and the independent council to determine whether laws were violated in the execution of our Iran initiative, either through diversion of funds or any other means. He is determined to get the whole truth out as quickly as possible.

-- However, leadership requires the willingness to take risks. It also requires a willingness to accept responsibility. Our President has demonstrated

by the public and our way of our allies. a willingness to do so.

- Whatever tactical errors may have been made along the way, the time has come to look ahead to the important strategic goals we all share. We accept the Iranian revolution as a fact, and we look forward to the day when a better relationship with Iran will be possible. We are not closing the door to that, but it is up to Iran to demonstrate that it is prepared for such a relationship.
- We remain firmly committed to a prompt and honorable end to the Iran-Iraq war. We are determined to push ahead in the Arab-Israeli peace process.
- We will not give in to terrorism or terrorists--our policy on that score has not changed, nor will it change in the future.
- This Administration has two years to run and an important but unfinished agenda for the future. Neither the Administration nor the country can afford to be paralyzed by the Iran affair. We seek to move ahead now and address the larger questions of war and peace, regional stability, the expansion and protection of freedom, and the eradication of terrorism.
- We have a President who is prepared to be bold and to take risks for peace; we must not foresake opportunities to fulfill the promise of his Presidency.

The President is determined
that we will not lose.

National Security Council
The White House

1 P7 36

System # I

Package # 8869

DOCLOG ✓ A/O

	SEQUENCE TO	HAS SEEN	DISPOSITI
Bob Pearson	<u>1/3</u>	<u>P</u>	
Rodney McDaniel			
Rodman/Cockell			
Al Keel	<u>2</u>	<u>✓</u>	<u>A</u>
Paul Thompson			
Florence Gantt			
John Poindexter			
Rodney McDaniel			
NSC Secretariat	<u>4</u>	<u>Dg 12/22</u>	<u>D</u>
Situation Room			

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

cc: VP
 Regan
 Buchanan
 Other NSM/DBR/PW/ST

COMMENTS: DBR's paper on Iran Policy
 Should be seen by: ASAP (Date/Time)

Iran Themes

7

THE WHITE HOUSE
CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING WORKSHEET

CO 071

INCOMING

DATE RECEIVED: APRIL 21, 1987

NAME OF CORRESPONDENT: THE HONORABLE JAMES M. JEFFORDS

SUBJECT: FORWARDS NEWSPAPER ARTICLE FROM JOHN H. DOWNS
WHICH APPEARED IN THE BURLINGTON FREE PRESS
REGARDING INVESTIGATION OF THE IRAN ARMS DEAL

ROUTE TO: OFFICE/AGENCY	(STAFF NAME)	ACTION		DISPOSITION	
		ACT CODE	DATE YY/MM/DD	TYPE RESP	C COMPLETED D YY/MM/DD
WILLIAM BALL		ORG	87/04/21	WBA870424	
	REFERRAL NOTE:				
	REFERRAL NOTE:				
	REFERRAL NOTE:				
	REFERRAL NOTE:				
	REFERRAL NOTE:				

AB

COMMENTS:

ADDITIONAL CORRESPONDENTS: MEDIA:L INDIVIDUAL CODES: 1240
MAIL USER CODES: (A) (B) (C)

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*****
*ACTION CODES:          *DISPOSITION          *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.

April 24, 1987

Dear Mr. Jeffords:

Thank you for your letter of April 9 enclosing an editorial written by your constituent, Mr. John H. Downs.

I appreciate your taking the time to pass on this editorial concerning the investigation of the Iran arms deal.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

William L. Ball, III
Assistant to the President

The Honorable James M. Jeffords
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

WLB:KRJ:JWR:jwr

477845

JAMES M. JEFFORDS
VERMONT CONGRESSMAN

PLEASE REPLY TO:
 2431 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-4115

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SELECT COMMITTEE ON AGING

April 9, 1987

P.O. BOX 397
121 WEST STREET
RUTLAND, VT 05701
(802) 773-3875

Mr. William L. Ball, III
Assistant to the President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

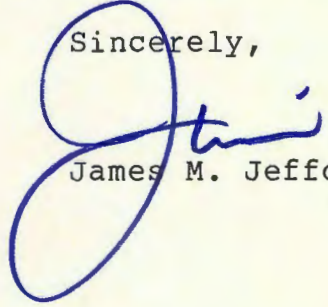
WB

Dear Mr. Ball:

At the request of my constituent, Mr. John H. Downs, I am
sending you an article he wrote concerning the investigation of
the Iran arms deal.

Thank you for your consideration of his words.

Sincerely,



James M. Jeffords

JMJ:ls:gb

Reagan Should Pardon North

Most of us agree that it is imperative to get the Iran-hostage/Contra-aid mess behind us. I submit that the quickest and best way to bring this about is for President Reagan to promise a pardon to Marine Lt. Col. Oliver North provided that he cooperates fully with the special prosecutor and the appropriate congressional committees.

The president's promise should apply to all crimes for which North might be indicted except for perjury and personal enrichment from the money he handled. Ultimately the president would determine whether North kept his part of the bargain, and could order a lie detector test if necessary.

The recent announcement that limited immunity will be granted to North and Rear Adm. John Poindexter confirms my worst fears. They won't testify publicly before mid-June — seven months after we first learned about their capers.

Public testimony could be interminably long — remember the McCarthy hearings in 1953? Later on, criminal prosecution of North would presumably follow. Irangate would be with us for years, and that is not what the country or the world needs at this point.

Instead, we urgently need a fully functioning government to deal effectively with many important domestic and foreign problems. Protracted preoccupation with "Irangate" will interfere with that.

President Gerald Ford understood the country's need to get Wagate behind us when he pardoned



Vermont Perspective

By John H.
Downs

Richard Nixon. We moved forward again after the initial public reaction.

A similar urgency exists today, and only courageous action by the president will get us moving again with dispatch. Learning all the facts now is much more important than a successful prosecution of North months or years from now.

Much of what happened is known only to North. His testimony in full now, rather than in part later and under protest, is worth the president's promise. North can direct the authorities to others who may not have been motivated by service to our country as he was.

It will be only after North has told all that the Congress can determine definitively if there is need for remedial legislation to prevent another rogue from getting so far off the reservation. Time may be critical.

The special prosecutor's job is to ferret out violators of our criminal statutes. He necessarily moves slowly and deliberately. Any immunity that he would recommend for North should be as limited as possible and

given reluctantly, if at all. It is not his responsibility to encourage a pardon for North. However, the promise of a presidential pardon should make his job much easier.

Similarly, we should not expect the special congressional committees to recommend the kind of immunity that would ensure North's instant and complete cooperation. They should work in harmony with the special prosecutor to the extent possible.

The Congress did not create or condone "Irangate" and its committees should not be expected to suggest a solution with political consequences that lets North avoid prosecution. The buck didn't stop there, and shouldn't now.

So we have no choice but to look to the Oval Office for the sensible way out. The president has assumed responsibility for the improper actions of his subordinates. As he said, it "happened on my watch." He has called North a hero and has not publicly repudiated that praise, to my knowledge.

We can assume that at the least North acted to implement his commander-in-chief's personal desires in working to free the hostages and provide aid to the Contras. The promise of a pardon for the reasons mentioned would be consistent with the president's assumption of blame and his high regard for the colonel. It would benefit the country immeasurably.

The president would gain credibility from the promise. Many Americans still believe that he knows more

than he is telling us. His own brother allegedly believes that the president knew about the diversion of funds to the Contras at a time earlier than he has admitted.

The promise of a future pardon puts the president at the mercy of North and whatever he will testify to about the president's prior knowledge. Reagan's supporters could justifiably argue that he would never promise a pardon if he knew that North's testimony could lead to his possible impeachment.

On the contrary, they could argue that, if the president has lied to us, he would make no commitment for a pardon in hopes that North would protect his superior officer. The colonel ought to be smart enough to know that such loyalty on his part could earn a pardon a few days before the president leaves office in 1989.

The president should make his commitment to North now and order the Marine colonel to testify and cooperate fully. I think we would become so engrossed with North's incredible tale that we would soon stop thinking about the political implications of the president's promise.

I believe that historians would look kindly on the president for such an act. But perhaps of even more importance to the country and the president, he could get on with the business of arms control with the Soviets that could ensure him a favorable place in history.

• John R. Downs is a former county prosecutor and president of the Vermont Bar Association. He lives in Lyndon Center.

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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

INFORMATION

December 15, 1986

TR

MEMORANDUM FOR ALTON G. KEEL

FROM: WALTER RAYMOND, JR.

SUBJECT: Reaction to the Iran Issue

The USIA survey attached at Tab I, taken the first ten days of December, indicates that there has been a modest upswing in popular attitude concerning the Administration in Europe in the past few days. The key papers believe the Administration has lost much of its strength and effectiveness and are concerned about a possible weakened Presidency and U.S. foreign policy for the next two years. Arab newspapers, on the other hand, are uniformly negative in comment.

The chief concern in Europe appears to focus principally on whether the Administration can regain its momentum. Europeans fear the consequences on East-West relations and arms control if the Administration were to be significantly weakened and become politically handicapped for the next two years. The Carlucci appointment and the plan for an independent counsel were both received positively overseas as an example of Presidential leadership.

It may be gratuitous, but it would appear that the best thing for the President to do to sustain our ability to project our foreign policy would be to reassure the American people and our foreign allies of his continued commitment to the basic policy that this Administration has worked so hard to establish. A positive policy reassertion, covering several critical areas will, in my mind, go a long way towards minimizing fallout overseas. (Domestic fallout is something else.) Specific iteration on different aspects of U.S. policy -- U.S.-Soviet relations, South Africa, human rights, democracy, etc. -- should be developed and supplement an overview statement. Possibly the State-of-the-Union would be the appropriate launch vehicle for this type of policy reassertion.

Attachment

Tab I USIA Survey

NSC # 8608816

Foreign Media Analysis

United States Information Agency
Washington, D.C. 20547



Office of Research

December 12, 1986

ARAB MEDIA CRITICAL OF IRAN-US CONTACTS

This report analyzes Arab media reaction during the period November 3-December 10 to revelations about secret U.S. contacts with Iran. It is based on USIS post and FBIS reports, including 243 editorials and commentaries from 17 Arab states.

SUMMARY:

Heavy news coverage and uniformly negative commentary on U.S. contacts with Iran pervaded most Arab media over the past month, although by early December this current was ebbing.

END SUMMARY

Commentary Is Uniformly Critical

Nearly all of the reported Arab editorials or commentaries were critical of American dealings with Iran. While official Arab responses were restrained, press comment has been much harsher than the statements (or silence) of government leaders. At the same time, the Soviet-bloc role in arming Iran has been largely ignored.

A Few Positive Notes: Good Intentions, Democracy, Admitting Error

A handful of editorials were willing to credit American good intentions (freeing hostages, cultivating Iranian moderates, or mediating an end to the Iran-Iraq war). A few editorials also praised the American system of legislative oversight and a free press, and President Reagan's "courage" in admitting mistakes. There have been few calls for anti-U.S. reprisals -- far fewer than after the U.S. air raid on Libya in April. Most recently, on December 7 and 8, new U.S. pledges of neutrality in the Gulf war got some editorial praise, mingled with skepticism.

News Coverage is Mainly Factual, With Scattered Speculation

In most Arab countries, news coverage of this story has largely consisted of straightforward factual reporting. Some reports, however, have cited sensational rumors -- including apparent disinformation about massive U.S. weapons deals with Iran. Reports of internal U.S. divisions have been widely featured. Charges of funds diversion to the "contras" got less attention, as did President Reagan's mid-November pledge not to ship more arms to Iran.

Most Common Editorial Theme Is U.S. "Duplicity"

The most common Arab complaint has been about U.S. "duplicity": declaring an arms embargo on the Gulf combatants while arming Iran, and paying "ransom" to pro-Iranian kidnappers while denouncing Arab terrorism. Press comments say this has eroded U.S. credibility.

Other Complaints: Israeli Conspiracy, Longer Gulf War

A close second in terms of frequency of protest in the Arab media is Israel's role as the alleged instigator in these U.S.-Iran deals. The third major theme of Arab media criticism is that the unintended or even intended effect of U.S. policy is to prolong the Gulf war.

Recent Commentaries See Cover-Up, Scapegoats, Political Decline

Many recent Arab commentaries have turned to the internal American aspects of the Iran "scandal." The consensus is that the full story has not yet been disclosed; that additional damaging revelations are possible; and that Adm. Poindexter and Col. North are "scapegoats" for other American officials implicated in this affair. The effect, according to these writers, is to undermine not just U.S. credibility abroad but also President Reagan's political effectiveness at home.

Moderate Arab Media More Vocal Than Radical Media

The most extensive and persistent coverage has been in Egypt, Jordan, Tunisia, and the small Gulf states. Prominent but less pervasive treatment was reported from Saudi Arabia. By contrast, the radical states of Syria and Libya, presumably embarrassed or angered by Iran's contacts with the U.S., have kept coverage low-key.

Iraqi Coverage Spotty; Commentary Blames Israel More Than U.S.

Iraq's state-controlled media at first adopted a low profile on this issue, but have gradually become more strident. Editorials stressed "Zionist-imperialist collusion" (not blaming the U.S. by name), along with Iraq's own ability to persevere. But Iraqi media have recently reported official statements or public remarks by high-level officials (including President Saddam Hussein) explicitly deploring the American as well as the Israeli role in transferring weapons to Iran.



December 10, 1986

WEST EUROPEAN PRESS ON U.S.-IRAN: THE PRESIDENT REGAINS SOME CREDIBILITY DURING A "CRISIS OF CONFIDENCE"

This analysis is based on USIS reporting of the major West European press, covering November 3 - December 9, 1986. It reviews more than 140 editorials, commentaries and news analyses in 59 newspapers of 14 countries.

SUMMARY:

The West European press said that after some concrete moves to resolve the Iran arms crisis, President Reagan had regained some of the credibility the papers felt he had lost. They said the President remains in the midst of his most damaging crisis of confidence. They predicted he will survive it, but will lose much of his strength and effectiveness.

END SUMMARY

The major findings of a quantitative analysis of the examined papers are:

1. West European press opinion, across the political spectrum, agreed unanimously that President Reagan had suffered a major loss of credibility because of the Iran-Contra arms issue. However, 70 percent of those papers later said he had regained "some" credibility as a result of the decisions he had made to resolve the crisis. They cited as positive the decision to appoint an independent counsel, the naming of Frank Carlucci as the new national security advisor, and the President's admission that some mistakes were made in the execution of the Iran policy. Nevertheless, the papers said he is in the midst of his "most damaging crisis of confidence."
2. 60 percent of the editorials predicted that the President will survive the crisis. However, most of them said the remainder of the Reagan Presidency will be weakened and doubted the President will remain an effective leader. Many also predicted a foreign policy paralysis because of possibly endless Congressional investigations.

3. 60 percent of the editorials depicted an Administration in some disarray, with an "unraveling" foreign policy that could mean problems for the U.S. and its allies, and provide the USSR with "targets of opportunity." There were also deep concerns for the future of arms control.

Confidence In the American Self-Healing Process

Despite strong criticism that cut across the political spectrum, much of the West European press expressed the hope that the President will have the determination to put the crisis behind him as quickly as possible. Many editorials said the past has shown that despite serious crises, the "American self-healing process" does work. The conservative Berliner Morgenpost echoed many: "The U.S. is and will remain the leading power of the free world. This position must not be impaired. We hope that the forces of prudence and responsibility will prevail."

Papers Charge Hypocrisy and Naivete

The strong criticism of early and mid-November largely stemmed from the perception of the West European commentators that the U.S. had deceived its allies: that it had urged the allies not to have negotiations with terrorists while the U.S. was secretly selling arms to elements in a state that supports them.

While most papers were not against seeking contacts with Iran, many called the arms shipments a major blunder in the "naive hope" that they would reach moderate elements. They said the shipments could not remain a secret, would fuel the Iran-Iraq war and alienate moderate Arab countries. The papers understood the need to try to help the American hostages in Lebanon, but the delivery of arms was seen as an incentive to take more Americans hostage.

Many papers said the President had boxed himself into a "no-win" situation: if he said he did not know about the arms sales or the diversion of profits to the Nicaraguan contras, he looks incompetent, a President not even in charge of his own White House. If he subsequently admitted that he did know, he will be guilty of deception.

Everything about the President was called into question: his policies, his personal capabilities, his aides, his ability to govern the U.S. and his leadership of the Western world.

"The President Had Damaged His Reputation"

Many papers said the President had seriously damaged his reputation as an honest and strong leader. They said his image

as a champion of firmness against communism and terrorism had faded. Some predicted the end of the "Reagan Doctrine" of helping anti-communist insurgents.

As in the past, the strongest critics were on the left. They appeared to find renewed courage in their attacks on "the SDI utopia, the illegal war in Nicaragua, the Reykjavik fiasco," and the President's "mental capacities." The major change in tone in November, however, was in the conservative press: the papers that had usually backed the President began to question his judgment. They said they could not understand how the most popular modern U.S. President could permit a "blunder" that would lose the high confidence of his people; and how a President who had restored America's strength would allow "unforgivable sloppiness with America's interests and laxity in the use of U.S. power."

Most editorials brought up comparisons with Watergate, but quickly dismissed them. The papers, across the spectrum, generally refused to believe that the President violated the law. Many commentators labeled the crisis more political than criminal.

"The President Is Forced To Take the Initiative"

Late-November efforts by the President to deal with the issue through a speech and a news conference were labeled in the West European press as not very convincing. The President was seen as unable to quell a rising storm. However, the papers said the President was forced to take the initiative after a major plunge in public opinion polls, Congressional pressure, and what was called the threat of "a power vacuum." The revelation of secret Contra funding shocked the West European press, but Attorney General Meese's press conference was seen as a welcome initiative to lay the facts on the table. According to the press, the "survival" of Secretary of State Shultz, the reassignment and dismissal of some White House aides, the appointment of Frank Carlucci as the new national security advisor, and the President's admission that some mistakes were made in policy execution all served "to calm down the agitated waters."

These moves had an effect on the conservative press in early December, which cautiously applauded the President. West Germany's Die Welt was typical: "This strategy is wise because loss of confidence and White House paralysis threatened to become a dangerous burden for the West." The leftist papers agreed that the President would survive the crisis, but added that he had been weakened. Most agreed that "the Reagan Presidency will not be the same again."

Prepared by: Vello Ederma R 485-7116

FMA-12/10/86

Approved by: Nils H. Wessell, Director of Research 485-2965

PRESS SOURCES

Independent

AUSTRIA Die Presse; Kurier
BELGIUM Le Soir
BRITAIN Financial Times
FINLAND Helsingin Sanomat
PORTUGAL Diario de Noticias
SWEDEN Expressen
SWITZERLAND La Suisse; Le Matin
WEST GERMANY General-Anzeiger; Westdeutsche Allgemeine;
Der Tagesspiegel (West Berlin)

Centrist

BRITAIN The Independent
ITALY Corriere della Sera; La Stampa; Stampa Sera
SPAIN La Vanguardia
SWITZERLAND Tribune de Geneve

Conservative/Rightist

BELGIUM Gazet van Antwerpen
BRITAIN Times; Daily Telegraph
DENMARK Berlingske Tidende; Jyllands-Posten
FINLAND Uusi Suomi
FRANCE Figaro; Quotidien; Les Echos
ITALY Il Giornale; Il Tempo; Il Sole-24 Ore
NETHERLANDS Algemeen Dagblad
NORWAY Verdens Gang; Aftenposten
SPAIN ABC
SWEDEN Svenska Dagbladet
SWITZERLAND Neue Zuercher Zeitung; Journal de Geneve
WEST GERMANY Die Welt; Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung;
Berliner Morgenpost

Liberal/Leftist

BELGIUM De Standaard
BRITAIN Guardian
DENMARK Politiken; Information
FRANCE Le Monde; Liberation; Le Matin
ITALY La Repubblica; Il Messaggero
NETHERLANDS De Volkskrant
NORWAY Arbeiderbladet
SPAIN El Pais; El Periodico
SWEDEN Dagens Nyheter
SWITZERLAND Tages-Anzeiger
WEST GERMANY Die Zeit; Frankfurter Rundschau;
Stuttgarter Zeitung; Sueddeutsche Zeitung

SPECIAL REPORT

Foreign Media Reaction

United States Information Agency Wednesday, December 3, 1986

THE PRESIDENT'S CARLUCCI/INDEPENDENT COUNSEL SPEECH

Summary

President Reagan's appointment of an independent counsel and new national security adviser in the Iran controversy drew general approval in world media. At the same time many major papers around the world headlined reports that polls showed a sharp decrease in Mr. Reagan's popularity at home.

London's conservative Daily Telegraph judged that with the appointments "Mr. Reagan has fulfilled most of the demands that became a drumbeat on Capitol Hill and in the American media." Paris-based Europe One radio said that "the televised address was well received."

In Bonn, conservative Die Welt maintained that "this dramatic move indicates that he is determined to keep developments under control and that a new phase of resolute crisis management has begun."

Rome's conservative Il Tempo asserted that with the appointments "Reagan has succeeded in calming down the agitated waters."

In Tokyo, publicly-financed NHK-TV held that "Reagan's TV speech was aimed at averting criticism against his slowness toward coping with the incident." Hong Kong's pro-PRC New Evening Post thought the President's measures show "he has a candid attitude and nothing to hide."

Some, however, were doubtful these measures would help. A correspondent for BBC-TV said that the President "will have to act again" to reverse the dip in his popularity in the polls.

Liberal Donga Ilbo in Seoul maintained that "few optimistically believe that the measures will resolve the Iran incident." In Canberra, ABC radio said that "the President's announcement indicates there is substantial evidence that the law has been broken." Warsaw's Zycie Warszawy noted that the naming of an independent counsel "is linked by Americans to the notorious Watergate affair."

Many front pages abroad prominently played reports that polls show a sharp decline in the President's popularity. A typical headline was that of liberal Le Monde of Paris: "Reagan's Popularity in Free Fall."

EUROPE

BRITAIN

"Reagan Might Have to Act Again"

BBC-TV's chief Washington correspondent Martin Bell reported December 3 on a "staggering drop" in the President's popularity rating over the past two weeks.

Bell added, "There's a widespread feeling that to reverse that trend, he will have to act again" beyond the Tuesday announcement.

"Reagan Sets Up Judicial Probe Into Iran Deal"

These were London headlines "Reagan Names CIA Man for Security Post" (Times), "Reagan's Aides Will Face New Prosecutor" (Guardian), "Reagan Pledges Full Cooperation With Congress Inquiries" (Financial Times), "Embattled Reagan in Crisis Move" (Daily Telegraph) and "Reagan Sets Up Judicial Probe Into Iran Deal" (Independent).

"Reagan Names Carlucci, Agrees to Independent Investigator"

The conservative Times Washington correspondent Michael Binyon reported, "President Reagan yesterday named Mr. Frank Carlucci ...as his new national security adviser. He also agreed to the appointment of an independent investigator to look at the Iran arms scandal...

"If the new inquiry was given a chance to work, he said, all the facts over Iran and the transfer of funds to the contras would shortly be made public.

"Looking strained, and with his voice almost breaking, he declared: 'Then the American people, you, will be the final arbiters of this controversy. You will have all the facts and will be able to judge for yourselves.'..."

"White House Foreign Operations More Extensive Than Indicated"

Washington correspondent Alex Brummer said in the liberal Guardian, "In the most startling disclosure since the Iran-contra connection was made known a week ago, the Texas billionaire, Mr. Ross Perot, acknowledged that he had placed \$2 million in a Swiss bank account, at the request of Lt. Col. Oliver North, to be used to pay ransom money for hostages.

"This came at a time when President Reagan was assuring the country, 'Americans will never make concessions to terrorists --to do so would only invite more terrorism.'..."

"This suggests that the foreign operations being conducted from the White House basement were far more extensive than Mr. Reagan and his Attorney General, Mr. Edwin Meese, said a week ago..."

"President Fulfilled Most Demands by Congress, Press"

The conservative Daily Telegraph Washington correspondent Ian Brodie filed, "With these accomplishments, plus the three-man review board announced earlier, Mr. Reagan has fulfilled most of the demands that became a drumbeat on Capitol Hill and in the American media.

"But there remain calls for him to move Mr. Donald Regan, his domineering Chief of Staff, and possibly others in a general 'house cleaning.'..."

"A Decisive Shift"

The independent Financial Times Washington correspondents Stewart Fleming and Lionel Barber wrote, "The latest White House moves are seen as a decisive shift from the confrontational approach to Congress and the press which characterized the Reagan Administration's initial response to last week's revelations..."

FRANCE

"TV Address Well Received"

Europe One radio judged December 3, "The televised address was well received. His decision to appoint an independent counsel was praised as well as his choice of Frank Carlucci....It is too early to know whether the measures adopted will be sufficient, but there is clearly an evolution."

"Reagan Plays the Card of Good Will"

France-Inter radio Washington correspondent Jean-Luc Hess observed, "Like an astute politician, Reagan felt the dangerHe decided to play the card of good will to reassure the public and Congress and to avoid compromising his last two years at the White House..."

"The appointment of a prosecutor has advantages....The pressure should ease up....The press will have to act cautiously..."

"Reagan's Free Fall in Polls Gives Republicans the Shivers"

Antenne-2 TV Washington correspondent Jacques Abouchar said, "Republicans even more than Democrats are pressing for radical measures. They are looking to the 1988 elections and Reagan's free fall in the polls is giving them the shivers..."

"Reagan Plays 'Mr. Clean' to Repair the Damage"

Parisian dailies bannered "Reagan's Popularity in Free Fall... Europeans Worried by Crisis in Washington" (Le Monde), "Reagan Approves Appointment of Special Prosecutor" (Tribune de l'Economie), "Irangate" (Les Echos), "Reagan Accepts Game of Truth" (Quotidien) and "Reagan Plays 'Mr. Clean' to Repair the Damage" (Liberation).

"Reagan Resumed the Initiative"

Left-of-center Liberation's editorial concluded, "In appointing a special prosecutor and Frank Carlucci, Reagan resumed the initiative. It was just about time..."

"The European allies and moderate Arab countries still must be convinced that U.S. foreign policy is credible and coherent and that its artisans are neither incompetent or cheaters. Weinberger was delightful yesterday with Chirac..."

"Shultz will follow in a few days with a similar mission, under the condition that the call for clarifications by President Reagan does not increase the damage."

WEST GERMANY

"Reagan Calls for Nomination of Special Prosecutor"

FRG headlines December 3 included "Reagan Calls for Nomination of Special Prosecutor" (Die Welt) and "Reagan Appoints New Security Adviser... 'Considerable Decline' in President's Prestige" (Frankfurter Allgemeine).

"A Dramatic Move"

Bonn's conservative Die Welt led with this story from Washington by Fritz Wirth, "President Reagan has turned the investigation of the Iran affair over to a special prosecutor...."

"This dramatic move indicates that he is determined to keep developments under control and that a new phase of resolute crisis management has begun..."

"The President decided to take these measures last but not least in view of results of latest public opinion polls which indicated that his popularity declined last week from 67 to 46 percent."

"A Difficult Stand for Shultz"

In the view of left-of-center Frankfurter Rundschau, "Vice President Bush is expected to visit the Middle East in the near future to tell America's friends there that the arms sale to Iran was a blunder, and Secretary Shultz will try to convince the European allies of the functioning of U.S. foreign policy..."

"However, (there is) little comfort for Shultz since the last clear lines of U.S. foreign policy disappeared at the Reykjavik meeting. Shultz will have a difficult stand in Europe as a result of double-talk in the fight against terrorism and precipitate action in the disarmament issue."

WEST BERLIN

"Not a Good Sign"

Independent Tagesspiegel judged, "It is not a good sign that responsibility for the investigation has been shifted from the Justice Department to an independent investigator, whose appointment was demanded by President Reagan himself. He is seeking relief in the attack."

"Three Years Before Gorbachev Can Deal With Another President"

According to sensationalist tabloid BZ, "The free part of Europe and the Kremlin now have something in common: it cannot please them that President Reagan will be a 'lame duck' for the rest of his term in office. It will take at least three years before Gorbachev can do business with the next American President..."

ITALY

"Special Prosecutor to Investigate Irangate"

These were significant Italian headlines December 3 "Special Prosecutor to Investigate Irangate" (Corriere della Sera), "America No Longer Trusts Reagan Now" (La Repubblica) and "Reagan, the Net Is Closing In...Special Prosecutor Comes to the Scene" (Il Giornale).

"Reagan Wants to Avoid Nixon's Mistakes"

Centrist, top-circulation Corriere della Sera New York correspondent Renzo Cianfanelli commented under the above headline, "Aware of the urgent need to avoid repeating the mistake which cost Nixon the Presidency...Ronald Reagan acted rapidly....With a mixture of pragmatism and rhetoric characteristic of his instinctive ability in his finest hours, Ronald Reagan tried to regain the initiative by accepting the foreseeable requests for a radical 'house cleaning' in the Administration..."

"Two Elements Changed President's Attitude"

Rodolfo Brancoli noted from Washington in leftist, influential La Repubblica, "Two elements have helped this change of attitude on the part of the President: the disastrous results of the most recent opinion polls and the firm pressure exerted by Republican leaders, concerned about the consequences of this Presidential crisis over the future of their Party..."

"Reagan's Moves Might Succeed in Clearing Up Atmosphere"

In the opinion of Washington correspondent Marino De Medici in conservative Il Tempo, "With two moves (Carlucci's appointment and call for special prosecutor) Reagan has succeeded in calming down the agitated waters of Irangate..."

"Initial reaction in U.S. political circles leads one to believe that Reagan's moves will succeed in clearing up the atmosphere and in dispelling the ghost of a new Watergate."

IRELAND

"Reagan Seeks Investigator on Iran Crisis"

Irish headlines December 3 included "Reagan Calls for Watergate-Type Arms Deal Probe...President's New Man" (nationalist Cork Examiner), "Reagan Seeks Investigator on Iran Crisis" (conservative Irish Independent) and "North Got Billionaire to Pay Ransom for Hostages" (liberal Irish Times).

SPAIN

"Reagan Cannot Ignore the Tremendous Pressure"

Liberal EL Pais commented in an editorial December 3 under the headline "Irangate" that "many comments highlight the fact that Reagan's ignorance is not believable."

"The President's first reaction...was indignation and contempt toward the media and Congress, but his tone is different now; he cannot ignore the tremendous pressure, both from Democratic and Republican quarters, requesting a totally objective investigation..."

BELGIUM

"Ronald Reagan Has No Real Support"

RTL TV remarked December 2 that the President is "only a shadow of the media champion he formerly was..."

"Ronald Reagan came back from his ranch without any real support other than that from Nancy....This is rather thin to confront a united opposition in Congress; rather thin when his aides are threatened or in disagreement with his strategy; and rather thin when Vice President Bush's only support is his smile."

"Reagan's Fatal Mistake"

RTBF radio said December 2: "Ronald Reagan has perhaps made a fatal mistake by antagonizing the press, when he compared the journalists to 'sharks...with blood in the water.'"

"Congress Bears Its Share of Responsibility, but..."

Conservative Catholic La Libre Belgique held December 2 that "Congress which requires a debate on every initiative, even clandestine, and which only sporadically supports the President's policy, bears its share of responsibility."

"But to defend the indefensible, to burn documents, and to blame the press for the mistakes of incompetent aides intoxicated by power will not solve America's problem."

"The President's Blindness"

Independent Le Soir commented December 2 on Reagan's Time magazine interview: "The President's remarks reflect...a blindness even more impressive than his faithful feared....The man is increasingly lonely. His latest call to public opinion should not change it much."

SWITZERLAND

"Reagan Counterattacks"

Swiss headlines December 3 included "Reagan Counterattacks" (La Suisse), "Reagan Makes Appointments to Rectify Situation" (24 Heures), "Reagan Puts Cards on Table: Special Prosecutor Will Bring Everything to Light on Iran Arms Scandal" (Le Matin), "Carlucci Is Reagan's New National Security Adviser" (Neue Zuercher Zeitung) and "Reagan Calls for Special Prosecutor" (Basler Zeitung).

"The Specter of Watergate"

Middle-of-the-road Le Matin headlined an editorial as above December 3 and commented, "To prevent another Watergate and a Republican debacle in 1988, President Reagan has reasserted himself....Instead of getting himself bogged down in denials and lies, he is playing the game democratically..."

"The President Is Showing the Public"

Independent La Suisse's Washington correspondent Yvette Janssens said December 3, "The President is showing the public on television, day by day, that he is determined to put the scandal behind him and get on with the business of government. But to row against the stream won't be easy."

"Just Boneheadedness"

Independent, liberal Aargaier Tagblatt said December 3, "The White House and the Pentagon appear to think that there is no reason to change course (on the SALT II breach).

"They also want to show that the Iran-arms affair is just a passing mishap which does not call for any basic change in foreign policy. But this may prove to be just boneheadedness."

NORWAY

"Reagan Wants to Take the Lead"

Independent conservative Aftenposten headlined as above December 3 and said that "both Democratic and Republican politicians who have been critical of the President, were yesterday on the whole pleased with his latest initiatives."

"Scandal Wears Hard on Reagan's Bedrock of Popularity"

NRK radio's Washington correspondent contended December 2 that "the arms scandal wears hard on the President's bedrock of popularity and credibility....If the President is to exploit the remnants of his credibility among the American people, he will have to act quickly..."

GREECE

"U.S. President Trying to Defuse the Crisis"

Some typical headlines in Greece December 3 were "U.S. President Trying to Defuse the Crisis That Undermines His Credibility" (opposition Kathimerini), "Special Investigator About the Weapons to Tehran...Reagan Appoints New National Security Adviser" (opposition Acropolis) and "Carlucci Is the New Poindexter" (Moscow-line Communist Rizopastis).

SOVIET UNION

"Carlucci Appointment"

Moscow TASS reported December 2, "U.S. President Ronald Reagan appointed former CIA Deputy Director Frank Carlucci his new National Security Adviser.

"He replaced...John Poindexter who had been forced to resign following a resounding scandal connected with the secret American arms shipments to Iran and the use of the proceeds for buying weapons for the Somocista forces."

YUGOSLAVIA

"Scandal of the Decade"

Belgrade's Borba headlined their front-page Tanjug News Agency report as above December 3 and said, "Faced with violent criticism and pressures, President Reagan has once again promised that 'nothing will be hushed' and that the whole truth will come to light..."

POLAND

"Naming Prosecutor Linked to the Notorious Watergate Affair"

Major Warsaw daily Zycie Warszawy on December 2 said that the President's agreement to the naming of an independent counsel "is linked by Americans to the notorious Watergate affair...

"Reagan, like Nixon, first began the internal inquiry in his own Administration, saying at first that there was no need for a special prosecutor.

"As during the Watergate affair, the White House claims that the Iran affair was known to only a small group of people, and the President himself maintains that he knew nothing about the secret financing of Nicaraguan counter-revolutionaries, as Nixon claimed that he did not know about the break-in at the Watergate Hotel."

MIDDLE EAST

ISRAEL

"Meese to Rosenne: U.S. Is Not Charging Israel With Anything"

According to Israeli radio on December 3, "Meese last night told Israeli Ambassador Meir Rosenne that the U.S. Administration is not charging Israel with anything in the Iranian arms affair or the contras funding case.

"Meese added that he hoped Israel would cooperate with American authorities investigating the issues."

"Jerusalem: FBI May 'Interview' Israelis"

December 3 headlines were "North Said to Have Briefed Nir on Funds for Contras" (Jerusalem Post), "Jerusalem: FBI May 'Interview' Israelis" (Maariv), "Jerusalem: Reagan Talked About 'Third Country' but Did Not Mean Israel" (Haaretz) and "U.S. Investigators May Want to Ask Israeli Leaders, Too, a Few Questions" (Hadashot).

Reported North-Nir Discussion

The liberal Jerusalem Post led with Washington correspondent Wolf Blitzer's report that "authoritative U.S. officials said Lt. Col. Oliver North told Justice Department investigators 10 days ago that he had fully briefed the Prime Minister's counterterrorism adviser Amiram Nir on the secret funding of the Nicaraguan contras..."

"U.S. officials said they assumed that Nir had told his superiors about the contras link. 'We have no reason to believe that North was lying,' one U.S. official said."

"Certain U.S. Officials May Make Israel Take the Rap"

Conservative Yediot Aharonot cited a "senior Government source" as saying that "Nir told his superiors nothing because he knew nothing about the contra connection."

"It is not inconceivable that certain U.S. officials with their backs against the wall may try to make Israel take the rap."

"Israel Will Let U.S. Question Israelis"

Liberal Haaretz led with a political correspondent's statement that "it has been made clear in unofficial talks between the Israeli embassy staff and American officials that Israel will let the United States question the Israelis involved in the affair, either through written questionnaires or in interviews, on the condition that they are not hurt in any way."

Israel Should Cooperate

The lead editorial in middle-of-the-road Maariv held, "It is just as important to put an end to the conflicting statements from Jerusalem and Washington and to very obvious insinuations woven into remarks made by the President and his aides."

"An uncooperative Israel would only strengthen suspicion that it knows more than it cares to admit. This in turn would hurt our image among the U.S. public and our relationship of trust and cooperation with the Administration."

SYRIA

Carlucci Appointment

The Government-supported press on December 3 reported that Frank Carlucci had been named President Reagan's new national security adviser but did not mention the reason for the change-over.

"Reagan's Dilemma and the Final Downfall"

Government-supported al-Thawra, in a commentary headlined as above, said: "What is going on in the White House these days is just one aspect of a noisy election campaign destined to topple one of the top heads of the Administration to facilitate the election of others..."

"Perhaps the falling head this time will be Reagan's....Reagan himself has admitted to the bitter bile in his throat when he realized his great naivete."

JORDAN

Appointment of Independent Counsel, Carlucci

The Amman press on December 3 ran wire service excerpts from President Reagan's television address in which he approved the appointment of an independent counsel and the Carlucci appointment.

BAHRAIN

"Reagan Orders Iran Arms Probe"

The Gulf Daily News of Manama on December 3 ran a Reuter report headlined "Reagan Orders Iran Arms Probe."

"Reagan Has Appearance of Man With His Back to the Wall"

The paper stated December 2 that "President Reagan's love affair with the media seems to be over. The 'most popular President' now has the appearance of a man with his back to the wall, hitting out at anyone who dares to come close..."

"President Reagan's pigeons have come home to roost. Iran brought disaster to President Carter and the fiasco now surrounding Reagan smacks of deceit and underhanded deals."

EGYPT

"Deeper Revelations of Past Misdeeds"

A December 3 editorial in semiofficial al-Ahram termed it "regrettable that, as the story unfolds with deeper revelations of past misdeeds, heads roll in one camp, without even blushes from those on the other side (Iran)."

SUDAN

"Our Main Concern"

Independent weekly Sawt-al-Sharia, out December 2, said: "Our main concern here is our relation with the Reagan Administration which supplies weapons to Iran to kill innocent people and encourages the separatist movements..."

"We have to be careful with our relations with the United States (in case) we discover a shipment of weapons to the rebels in southern Sudan."

EAST ASIA AND PACIFIC

JAPAN

"Averting Criticism Against Slowness"

Publicly-financed NHK-TV's Washington correspondent Fujisawa held, "Reagan's TV speech was aimed at averting criticism against his slowness toward coping with the incident. The Reagan Administration has finally started full-scale operations in order to restore its credibility."

"Consolidation Necessary"

Liberal Mainichi's correspondent Kuroiwa wrote from Washington, "In view of the anticipated investigative activities by various committees in the January session of Congress, it has become necessary to consolidate them into a joint panel in order to prevent the summoning of Administration witnesses from interfering with the function of the Administration."

"Reagan previously assumed a favorable attitude toward establishing a special counsel for an independent investigation. This appears due to his judgment that to accept establishment of a joint counsel was only to avert criticism and to restore his credibility."

"Likely to Become as Serious as Watergate"

Liberal Tokyo Shimbun's Washington correspondent Tase reported, "The incident of secret deals with Iran and money transfers to contras is likely to become as serious a political scandal as the Watergate incident."

"There are strong indications that it will take long to investigate the case. Inevitably, this incident will be a fatal burden on the future of the Reagan Administration and will greatly weaken the Administration's power in implementing its domestic and foreign policies."

"Leadership Could Be Subject to Question"

An editorial in the conservative Nihon Keizai commented, "If the entire secret operation with Iran has been arbitrarily conducted (without authorization) by the President's aides, Reagan's leadership would be subject to question. If the President should happen to fake his ignorance of the operations, it would establish as fact that he had been 'lying.'

"Both cases will disgrace the President as 'a great communicator.'..."

HONG KONG

"Reagan Willing to Testify"

Pro-PRC New Evening Post said, "Reagan says that he is willing to testify before the investigative committee, to answer all their questions and cooperate fully. It appears that he has a candid attitude and nothing to hide. But is this how things really are?"

"If this supposedly frank attitude proves in the end to be only another show, then this incident may end like Watergate did."

"Reagan Reputation Will Slide Downward"

PRC-owned Wen Wei Po judged that "no matter what the result of the investigation, the reputation and efficiency of the Reagan Administration will slide downward....It is difficult to calm down the outraged Congress and public..."

"Reagan Underestimated Impact of Crisis"

The independent South China Morning Post said: "The questions still to be answered make it clear he (Mr. Reagan) has underestimated the impact of the present crisis just as much as Mr. Nixon misjudged the consequences of the arrest of the Watergate burglars."

SOUTH KOREA

"Reagan's Measures Favorably Interpreted"

Independent Hankook Ilbo's Washington correspondent Kim Byung-moo said that "there has arisen a growing sentiment from the general public which believes that President Reagan should explain that he made his policy mistake as a result of a sentimental impulse to save U.S. hostages..."

"Reagan's adoption of a series of measures, including his promise to fully comply with the investigations, has been favorably interpreted..."

"Few Believe Measures Will Resolve Incident"

Washington correspondent Chung Chong-mun wrote in liberal Donga Ilbo: "Congressional reaction to the special prosecutor announcement was affirmative....However, few optimistically believe that the measure will resolve the Iran incident..."

"Due to the limitations of the role of the special prosecutor, the room for controversy still remains the same....People believe that if Congress goes beyond the boundary of the special prosecutor's investigations, the credibility, leadership and competence of the President and his Administration could be greatly shaken."

"Appointment Resembles Watergate"

Government-dominated Seoul Shinmun Washington correspondent Yoon Koo commented: "With the President's request for the appointment of a special prosecutor, the style of investigation has finally come to resemble that of Watergate..."

"This decision made by the President resulted from his awareness of an abrupt drop in popularity....It remains to be seen whether the special prosecutor's investigations will prove the President's innocence..."

AUSTRALIA

"Reagan Still Sees Nothing Wrong With What He Did"

Washington correspondent Tim Colebatch's report on the front-page of the independent Age of Melbourne said, "White House officials were reported as saying that appointing an independent counsel was the only one of three actions widely demanded of him that Mr. Reagan was prepared to go along with."

"The officials said Mr. Reagan was determined to retain his chief of staff, Mr. Donald Regan, despite public and private urgings to replace him. And Mr. Reagan, they said, still sees nothing wrong with what he did and will not apologize for it."

"Appointment Concedes Evidence Law Has Been Broken"

Independent ABC national radio broadcast the reports of Washington correspondent Jim Middleton and New York correspondent Martin Gillam that "Reagan went on national TV again to announce his acceptance of the inevitable, an independent counsel..."

"The President's announcement not only removes the inquiry from the control of his hand-picked...Meese, but also indicates that the Justice Department is now conceding there is substantial credible evidence that the law has been broken, a prospect the Administration has not been prepared to admit until now..."

"The Iran scandal is turning Americans against Reagan in unprecedented numbers. Reagan, said by some to be the most popular White House incumbent since George Washington, has suffered the sharpest loss of public confidence in opinion poll history..."

INDONESIA

"Comparison With Watergate Correct"

Sensationalist Sinar Pembangunan asserted, "What is sensational about the shipment of arms to Iran is the morality of White House politics in carrying out its policy, and its slogan claiming that the Uncle Sam nation is the leader in anti-world terrorism."

"In fact, in the midst of international terrorist problems, the United States is carrying out a contradictory policy."

"If there is a tendency of comparing this event with the Watergate scandal, then it's correct, because it concerns U.S. prestige in the eyes of the world."

SOUTH ASIA

INDIA

Reagan TV Address

News reports in the December 3 press focused on President Reagan's TV address, announcing an independent counsel.

"Iran Arms Deal Funds for Pakistan"

The left-of-center Times of India ran Washington correspondent J.M. Parimoo's report under the above headline. Parimoo cited "official sources" as saying that "funds from the controversial U.S. arms sales to Iran have also been flowing into Pakistan to aid the Afghan rebels."

The Iran arms affair, according to Parimoo, "has lowered the public approval rating of the President...to the lowest level yet during his time in office."

LATIN AMERICA

BRAZIL

"Episode Serves to Renew Faith in Democracy"

Independent, business-oriented Gazeta Mercantil on December 2 wrote, "Knowing the American people's respect for the institutions and the great importance they give to the ethical aspects of governmental decisions, we can anticipate that this affair will still have many developments..."

"But no matter what its outcome may be, the episode today involving the White House serves to renew faith in democracy. Only in political regimes that guarantee freedom of opinion and all individual rights, like that of the United States, it is possible to impose limitations to the action of the Chiefs of State..."

"Face the Sharks"

An editorial in conservative O Estado de Sao Paulo stated December 2, "We think that this is the very moment for Reagan and Vice President Bush to 'go deep into the matter.'..."

"Let Reagan and Bush face the sharks....Sharks are extremely voracious but selective fish which give up soon if they don't have the carrion in sight..."

VENEZUELA

"Reagan Seems Ready to Clear Up the Matter"

Caracas' leftist El Nacional featured a byliner's view December 2 that "the secret sale of arms to a country fanatically governed as Iran is a serious matter for a man like Reagan.... But he has assumed his responsibilities in this controversy with integrity. He seems to be ready to clear up the matter..."

NICARAGUA

"End of the 'Reagan Doctrine'"

Official FSLN Barricada said on November 29 that "an internal debate has been sparked in the United States, 'Should the war against Nicaragua continue?'"

"Reagan credibility has suffered greatly....Both the lack of credibility of the President and his Administration and the questioning of his Central American policy mark the beginning of the end of the 'Reagan Era.' We Nicaraguans also hope it will mark the end of the 'Reagan Doctrine.'"

AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

"Watergate-Style Probe for Reagan"

These were December 3 headlines "Reagan Pledge on Arms Crisis... 'Full and Complete Airing of All the Facts'" (moderate Argus), "UNITA Derives Benefit From Transaction...S. A. Involved in Scandal" (pro-Government Die Burger), "Weapon Scandal: Reagan Takes Charge of Things" (moderate Beeld), "Reagan's Popularity Takes a Dive" (conservative Pretoria News), "Watergate-Style Probe for Reagan" (liberal Natal Mercury) and "CIA Man Named to Replace Admiral Poindexter" (moderate Natal Witness).

A.S.U.

National Security Council
The White House

System # _____

Package # 8816

DOCLOG A.S.U. A/O _____

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Paul Thompson	_____	_____	_____
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Rodney McDaniel	_____	_____	_____
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Situation Room	<u>3</u>	_____	<u>A</u>

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

cc: VP Regan Buchanan Other _____

COMMENTS

Should be seen by: _____

(Date/Time)

Info memo

NSC/S PROFILE

UNCLASSIFIED

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SUBJECT: REACTION TO THE IRAN ISSUE

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MEMO

DATE: April 6, 2010
FROM: Diane Barrie
RE: Case file 479814, OA 14330
TO: File

The material described in case file 479814 was assigned to the White House Press Office collection. This material was part of the "unsorted" Press Office material. We assume this material was incorporated into the Press Release and Briefings collection.

Ronald Reagan Library & Museum
40 Presidential Drive - Simi Valley, CA 93065
800 - 410-8354

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May 14, 1987

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

RE: PRESS BRIEFINGS REGARDING THE IRAN/CONTRA MATTER

At the request of the Counsel's Office all White House Offices were to review their office files, copy and forward to the Counsel's Office those that were relevant to the Independent Counsel's review of this matter.

The White House Press Office was asked to review transcripts of its daily press briefings for questions and comments on this topic. Connie Gerrard Romano of the Press Office subsequently asked the White House Library staff for assistance in this undertaking. The librarians reviewed all the Press Briefing transcripts, copied those that were relevant and sent one set of those copies to ORM.

This carton contains that set of press briefings covering the period, January, 1981 through October, 1984. Whether the search went beyond October is unknown.

ENCLOSURES FILED OVERSIZE ATTACHMENTS 14330

1