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FACT SHEET

Reagan Bush Committee

901 South Highland Street, Arlington, Virginia 22204 (703) 685-3400

September 26, 1980

HERE'S WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CARTER AND THE "MEANNESS" ISSUE

"The past few days have revealed a man capable of far more petty vituperation than most Americans thought possible even in a dank political season" (Hugh Sidey, "More Than a Candidate," Time, September 29, 1980, p. 21).

"He has turned away for the moment from his old friend St. Mark: 'For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?'" (Hugh Sidey, op. cit.).

"'Being bitter,' mused Truman, 'that's for people who aren't busy with other matters.' Jimmy Carter should be so busy" (Hugh Sidey, op. cit.).

"'You cannot have a proud and chivalrous spirit if your conduct is mean and paltry,' wrote Demosthenes, a political commentator of sorts, 'for whatever a man's actions are, such must be his spirit'" (Hugh Sidey, op. cit.).

"The totality of the White House assault on every Reagan word and phrase and on Anderson's effort to gain a wider audience seems at times a serious perversion of the campaign system. The wrath that escapes Carter's lips about racism and hatred when he prays and poses as the epitome of Christian charity leads even his supporters to protest his meanness" (Hugh Sidey, op. cit.).

"Mr. Carter, as a candidate, tends to convey a mean and frantic nature" (Editorial "Running Mean," Washington Post, September 18, 1980).

" . . . the president seems determined to discredit, rather than to prevail over, his opposition. It's as if he doesn't quite believe they are entitled to run against him, and so he won't actually fight them, but rather will only provide an endless series of complaints about their candidacies and their character" (Editorial, Washington Post, September 18, 1980).

"So the president calls names, and he baldly recreates his own record (for the better) and that of everyone else (for the worse) and he displays an alarming absence of magnanimity, generosity and size when he is campaigning" (Editorial, Washington Post, September 18, 1980).

" . . . Jimmy Carter, as before, seems to have few limits beyond which he will not go in the abuse of opponents and reconstruction of history" (Editorial, Washington Post, September 18, 1980).

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"In short, Mr. Carter, who should be ever mindful this year that he is not merely a candidate for re-election but the elected leader of us all, was trading in tarnished coin at Dr. King's church" (Editorial, "A Squalid Exercise in Church," Washington Star, September 18, 1980).

"The line of attack upon Governor Reagan which President Carter opened in Atlanta this week . . ." (Editorial, Washington Post, September 18, 1980).

"'Jugular Jimmy's' campaign of fear appears to be back-firing. Faced with an explosion of war in the Persian Gulf and an explosion of food prices at home, he has gone for Ronald Reagan's throat with charges of warmongering and racism.

"But those charges have been taken by press and public as desperation tactics. With his 'mean streak' showing, Mr. Carter is evidently giving thought to working the opposite side of the street . . ." (William Safire, "Looking for Trouble," New York Times, September 25, 1980).

"Until last Tuesday, Jimmy Carter had contented himself with implying that Ronald Reagan is an equal opportunity warmonger who will incinerate everyone on earth, regardless of race, color or creed. But Carter has decided that such moderation in pursuit of power is no virtue. Now he has said that Reagan is a racist" (George Will, "The Smear," Washington Post, September 21, 1980).

"Carter surrogates have tried to peddle such sleaziness, but Carter knows that if you want something done right you should do it yourself" (George Will, "The Smear," Washington Post, September 21, 1980).

"Carter knows that the public things he is a failed president but a nice man. Frustrated by his inability to alter the first judgment, Carter may yet, in his frenzy, alter the second" (George Will, "The Smear," Washington Post, September 21, 1980).

"Regarding Carter's attempt to smear Reagan, there are three likely explanations: nasty habit; the belief that he should be as ugly toward Republicans as he has been toward Democrats; and the need to raise enough dust to obscure the debate he is ducking" (George Will, "The Smear," Washington Post, September 21, 1980).

"To hear the apostle of love and compassion talking about 'hatred' and 'war' and 'racism,' with the practiced nod and the knowing wink, is for some of us too much like finding Carrie Nation under the influence of cheap whiskey. It leaves us more uncomfortable than amused" (Mark Shields, "Carter's Character References," Washington Post, September 26, 1980).

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