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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

June 17, 1981

Mr. Ray Mattox
State Commander
The American Legion
Department of Florida
P.O. Box 917
Winter Haven, Fla. 33880

Dear Mr. Mattox:

I am pleased to respond to your recent letter to Ed Meese, Counselor to the President, concerning reductions in the Veterans Administration budget.

Since receiving your letter there have been several developments of a positive nature that should please you in view of your support of the President.

As you may know, the President has embraced the House and Senate approved Gramm-Latta budget proposal which restores \$598 million to the VA budget. This will obviate any need for personnel reductions affecting medical care and service to veterans.

Also, the President has nominated Mr. Robert Nimmo, of California, as his Administrator of Veterans Affairs. Mr. Nimmo is a former member of the California State Senate and Assembly. He is a rancher and businessman with distinguished service in World War II and the Korean Conflict.

Mr. Nimmo has already had a series of successful meetings with leaders of the major veterans organizations including the past National Commander of the American Legion, Frank Hamilton, as well as Robert W. Spanogle, former Executive Director of the Washington Office of the Legion and your new National Adjutant.

Mr. Nimmo has indicated that these meetings and consultations will be characteristic of his administration. I hope you will take the opportunity both directly and through your national officers to communicate your views to Mr. Nimmo.

We deeply appreciate your support of the President and look forward to your continued support of both the President and Mr. Nimmo in the tasks that lie ahead.

Sincerely,

Morton C. Blackwell
Morton C. Blackwell
Special Assistant to the President

*File
Amer. Legion*

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON
May 7, 1981

TO: MORTON BLACKWELL

Eut
FROM: EDWIN THOMAS
Assistant Counsellor
to the President

The attached was received by Edwin Meese III and requires special handling by your office and staff for response.

Please handle as appropriate and forward a copy of your response with the incoming to Ellen Strichartz, Room 35 OEOB, Ext 7489.

Thank you.



The American Legion

P. O. Box 917
Winter Haven, Fla. 33880

Department of Florida

(813) 299-2068
293-4039

April 3, 1981

Mr. Edwin Meese
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Meese:

The overwhelming majority of veterans supported President Reagan's candidacy because we sincerely believed in his goals of building a strong national defense and cutting unnecessary government spending.

Cutting V.A. medical services, however, is wrong for several reasons:

1. Veterans medical benefits are earned benefits as compared to welfare programs.
2. President Reagan and the Republican Party made a specific committment, a pledge to increase V.A. medical services.
3. Veterans supported President Reagan and helped elect him.
4. Welfare recipients did not support President Reagan.

You have allowed President Reagan's economic advisor to lump us all together for the same treatment. This was a very unfortunate and, I must say, sad move because of the consequences we all may suffer. Mr. Stockman's one-man show did not consider all of the results which will flow from his hasty, ill-advised action.

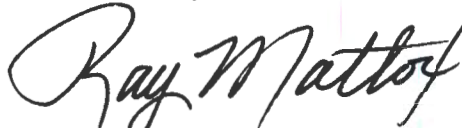
There are several areas where cuts in the V.A. budget could have been considered rather than medical services. Yet, we were not consulted in any manner; in fact, we were not advised of the details of the proposed cuts until days after they had been publicly announced.

Veterans were led into a sense of false security by the initial public announcement that no cuts were to be made in V.A. programs. Then we had the axe dropped without notice. As a result, many of our people feel they were deliberately mousetrapped.

There are 30 million veterans in the U.S. with 1.5 million residing in Florida alone who, together with their wives or husbands comprise well over 50% of the voting public (veterans are registered to vote).

The election of President Reagan was a great day for those of us fighting for the survival of constitutional, free-enterprise government. The achievement of that objective requires the cooperation and support of our veterans. Let it not be that you win this battle, but lose that war.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ray Mattox". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

RAY MATTOX
State Commander

RM:glm



MYLIO S. KRAJA
DIRECTOR

THE AMERICAN LEGION
Legislative Commission
1608 K Street, N. W.
Washington, D.C. 20006

—202-393-4811—

861-2711

**THIS
MAY
INTEREST
YOU!**

6/18

MSK
MP

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

June 17, 1981

Dear Friends:

I have been asked to thank you for
your kind invitation to the President.

Although he is unable to accept, the
President wants you to know he appre-
ciates your thoughtfulness and sends
you his very best wishes.

Sincerely,



Gregory J. Newell
Special Assistant
to the President

Members of the American Legion
1608 K Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20006

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Date: June 17, 1981

TO: MORTON BLACKWELL

FROM: JUDY POND 

FYI:

LET'S DISCUSS:

COMMENT:

As we discussed.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Date: May 28, 1981

TO: BONNIE BRITTEN

FROM: JUDY POND

FYI:

LET'S DISCUSS:

COMMENT:

Let me know as soon as possible if
Mr. Nimmo is available for this
event. 456-2845

*American Legion
Aug 89*

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Date: May 28, 1981

TO: JOAN COLBERT

FROM: JUDY POND

FYI:

LET'S DISCUSS:

COMMENT:

Let me know as soon as possible if
Secretary Haig is available for
this event.

no

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Date: May 28, 1981

TO: MARY LOU SHIELDS

FROM: JUDY POND

FYI:

LET'S DISCUSS:

COMMENT:

Let me know as soon as possible
if Secretary Weinberger is avail-
able for this event.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 14, 1981

STAR

Aug 29

Dear Mr. Kogutec:

Your request for a speaker has been forwarded to me with the recommendation that a surrogate be secured to speak to the 63rd Annual National Convention of the American Legion.

Your request is being considered, and I will be in touch with you at a time closer to the event to apprise you of its status.

Thank you for your interest, and I welcome the opportunity to work with you on this fine program.

Sincerely,

Judith A. Pond
Deputy Special Assistant
to the President

Mr. Michael J. Kogutec
National Commander
The American Legion
Post Office Box 1055
Indianapolis, IN 46206

GEN Nimmo. U.A. 393 4120
WRW
HABE
JAN 1981

April 9, 1981

Dear Mr. Kogutec:

Thank you for your invitation to the President to attend the 63rd Annual National Convention of The American Legion in Honolulu, August 29-September 3rd.

Although the President will not be able to attend I have sent a copy of your letter to our Surrogates Office and they will get back with you regarding the possibility of our sending a representative.

Sincerely,

Gregory J. Newell
Special Assistant
to the President

Mr. Michael J. Kogutec
National Commander
The American Legion
Post Office Box 1055
Indianapolis, IN 46206

cc & inc: F. Ursomarso
GJN:emb-30a

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

*Franklin D. Roosevelt
action
The
3/27*

REQUEST FOR SCHEDULING RECOMMENDATION

March 25, 1981

TO: Red Cavaney
VIA: GREGORY J. NEWELL
FROM: PATRICIA A. E. RODGERS

**at address he
would like to
and represent the
will be...
further about
the
cer...
Franklin
D. Roosevelt*

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR RECOMMENDATION ON THE FOLLOWING
REQUEST UNDER CONSIDERATION:

EVENT: 63rd Annual National Convention of the
American Legion

DATE: August 29 - September 3

LOCATION: Honolulu, Hawaii

The American Legion will be having its annual
BACKGROUND convention in Honolulu this year and would like
the President to speak to their group.

RESPONSE DUE: March 30

YOUR RECOMMENDATION:

Accept ___ Regret ___ Surrogate Message ___ Other ___

IF RECOMMENDATION IS TO ACCEPT, PLEASE GIVE REASONS:

*3/25 Unless he'd would like a good reason to
visit Hawaii at this time of year. With Amer. Legion
and all the defense initiatives, it could
be a good spot if one wanted to do a strong
nati defense focus. Just about the deadest time
in the annual news cycle.*

Cell

The
American
Legion

★ NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS ★ P. O. BOX 1055 ★ INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA 46206 ★
(317) 635-8411 ★



OFFICE OF THE
NATIONAL COMMANDER

March 19, 1981
17

014740

The President
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. President:

The 63rd Annual National Convention of The American Legion will be held in Honolulu, Hawaii, August 29-September 3, 1981. I am pleased to extend this formal and most cordial invitation to you to address the delegates to our convention during the opening session on Tuesday, September 1. In addition to our delegates and guests, the ladies of the American Legion Auxiliary will be in attendance at our opening session.

Additional sessions of our convention will be held on September 2 and 3. If either of these dates would be more compatible to your schedule, the time and date of your appearance on our program could, of course, be arranged at your convenience.

Sincerely yours,

Michael J. Kogutak

MICHAEL J. KOGUTAK
National Commander

WHITE HOUSE
CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING WORKSHEET

- O - OUTGOING
- H - INTERNAL
- I - INCOMING

Date Correspondence Received (YY/MM/DD) 81103 123

Name of Correspondent: Michael J. Fogarty, Natl Commander The American Legion

MI Mail Report User Codes: (A) (B) (C)

Subject: The 62nd Annual National Conventions of the American Legion will be held in Honolulu, Hawaii, August 29-September 3, 1991. Invites the President to address the delegates during the opening session on September 1st.

ROUTE TO:		ACTION	DISPOSITION		
Office/Agency	(Staff Name)	Action Code	Tracking Date YY/MM/DD	Type of Response	Completion Date YY/MM/DD
SC Hawk		ORIGINATOR	81103124	GN	A 81109109
CMURSO		Referral Note: A	81104111		1 1
		Referral Note:	1 1		1 1
		Referral Note:	1 1		1 1
		Referral Note:	1 1		1 1

- ACTION CODES:**
- A - Appropriate Action
 - C - Comments
 - D - Draft Response
 - F - Fact Sheet
 - I - Info Copy/No Action Necessary
 - R - Direct Reply w/Copy
 - S - For Signature
 - X - Interim Reply
- DISPOSITION CODES:**
- A - Answered
 - B - Non-Special Referral
 - C - Completed
 - S - Suspended

FOR OUTGOING CORRESPONDENCE:
Type of Response = Initials of Signer
Code = "A"
Completion Date = Date of Outgoing

Comments:

Keep this worksheet attached to the original incoming letter.
Send all routing updates to Central Reference (Room 75, OEOB).
Always return completed correspondence record to Central Files.
Refer questions about the correspondence tracking system to Central Reference, ext. 2590.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 17, 1981

Mr. Fred A. Woodress
The American Legion
National Headquarters
P.O. Box 1055
Indianapolis, Indiana 46206

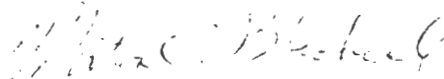
Dear Mr. Woodress:

Thank you for your thoughtfulness in sending me the photo of the speakers platform. You can be sure that I will make good use of it.

It is clear that much effort is needed to awaken Americans to the importance of recognizing Vietnam Veterans. You and your organization are doing a good job of this.

I wish you the best of luck in the future.

Sincerely,



Morton C. Blackwell
Special Assistant to the President

The American Legion

★ NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS ★ P. O. BOX 1055 ★ INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA 46206 ★
(317) 635-8411 ★



For God and Country

May 12, 1981

*Please
type up
brief
Thank you
note
MB*

Mr. Morton Blackwell
Office of Public Liaison
White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Morton:

I was glad to have had the opportunity to meet you in person Sunday, April 26, at the Vietnam Veterans Recognition Day ceremony near the Lincoln Memorial.

Enclosed is a color photo of you and the others on the speakers' platform. I thought you would like to have a copy of it.

We were pleased with your comments about Bob Spanogle's promotion to national adjutant.

Best regards,

FRED A. WOODRESS
National Director
Public Relations

file Am. Legion

THE NATIONAL COMMANDER
WASHINGTON, D. C.

April 28, 1981


Dear Morton:

This is just a short note to thank you for your attendance on Sunday, April 26, in tribute to Vietnam Veterans Recognition Day.

Your participation in welcoming the young men who hiked to Washington is most appreciated.

With best wishes.

Sincerely yours,


MICHAEL J. KOGUTEK
National Commander

Mr. Morton C. Blackwell
Assistant to Mrs. Elizabeth Dole
The White House, Room 190
Washington, D. C. 20500



Regret 6/22

*On behalf of The American Legion
you are Cordially invited to attend a Ceremony
dedicating a memorial plaque honoring*

IGNACE JAN PADEREWSKI

*at
Arlington National Cemetery
on
Monday, June 29, 1981 at 2:00 p.m.*

RSVP: (202) 861-2713

*Michael J. Kogutek
National Commander*



Fact Sheet

Indianapolis, Indiana 46206
(317) 635-8411
Washington, D.C. 20006
(202) 861-2792
News Hotline (800) 428-2686
In Indiana (317) 637-6649

PADEREWSKI AND THE AMERICAN LEGION

Paderewski was born in 1860 in the Russian portion of Poland, a country divided in the late 18th century between Russia, Prussia and Austria which disappeared from the maps of Europe for more than a century. He was trained and taught music in Austria and Germany before moving to Switzerland in the early 1900s, where he became well-to-do as an international virtuoso pianist.

But he was always an ardent Polish nationalist. During World War I, it was he personally who prevailed upon President Woodrow Wilson to include the restoration of an independent Poland as No. 13 of Wilson's famous "14 Points" for a peaceful world order after the war.

As a symbol of nonpartisan nationalism, Paderewski was named the first Premier of Poland in 1919, shortly after the Armistice. He retained the portfolio of Foreign Minister as well, and represented Poland at the treaty negotiations in Versailles. Aloof from politics, he developed no constituency of his own, however, and resigned from public office after 11 months.

Paderewski had expended his own money on war relief when he returned to Switzerland and resumed the concert circuit. On tour he recouped his fortunes and gave benefit performances for war, famine and refugee relief.

In 1925, he agreed to make a concert tour of the United States and give the entire proceeds to an endowment fund being created by The American Legion for the care of disabled American veterans and war orphans. The tour was cut short by Paderewski's illness after appearances in New York City, Washington, Philadelphia and Boston and the performer-composer returned to Switzerland, where he regained his health.

(more)

National Public Relations Commission: Wm. M. Detweiler, Chairman; Frederick Woodress, Director

"We Help America Work"

Before returning to Europe, the musician presented the Legion his gift to its endowment fund, \$28,500 toward the campaign goal of \$5 million. In turn, the Legion gave Paderewski its highest award, the Distinguished Service Medal, in thanks for what has remained the largest single contribution toward the endowment fund. (According to the U.S. Labor Department's Bureau of Statistics, the 1926 dollar had a purchasing power roughly equivalent to \$5 in 1981. Thus, it would take more than \$140,000 to match Paderewski's gift today.)

The American Legion Endowment Fund, incorporated in 1925 under the laws of the state of Delaware, soon reached its goal of \$5 million--raised to \$7 million after World War II to generate more revenue. It continues today to yield in excess of half-a-million dollars per year for the Legion's Children and Youth Program--the only national Legion activity not supported by members' dues--and veterans rehabilitation work.

Paderewski was treated and allowed to consider himself as an "honorary member" of The American Legion, although strictly speaking, the Legion's charter does not permit such a category of membership. Throughout his life, the musician remained a friend of the United States, and of its veterans of World War I in particular.

At the outbreak of World War II in Europe, he was named President of the National Council of the Polish Government-in-Exile, based first in Paris, then after the capitulation of France, in London. The aged Paderewski moved to New York, where he was active in recruiting Polish immigrants for Free Polish military forces and raising money for Allied military hospitals in Britain.

He died in New York City on June 29, 1941--less than six months before U.S. entry into the war--at the age of 80. The American Legion mounted an honor guard around his bier before the funeral in St. Patrick's Cathedral July 3.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt ordered that the body of Paderewski, technically an Allied head of state, be temporarily placed to rest in Arlington National Cemetery until it could be interred in a free Poland. At family request, Paderewski's heart was to remain in America. It reposes in niche No. 25, aisle G, C. H. Abbey section 15, Cypress Hills Cemetery, Brooklyn. (more)

After a state ceremony in the Amphitheater at Arlington on July 5, 1941, Paderewski's casket was put in the base of the Mast of the battleship Maine, not far from the Tomb of the Unknowns. In 1963 during the administration of President John F. Kennedy, an 18x24-inch bronze plaque was placed on a concrete wall at the top of the steps approaching the Mast, the only marker noting Paderewski's temporary resting place.

In accordance with Resolution No. 177 of its 1980 national convention, The American Legion will dedicate a matching bronze plaque at the site on June 29, 1981, the 40th anniversary of Paderewski's death. The raised lettering reads:

The American Legion

IN MEMORY OF
IGNACE JAN PADEREWSKI

ARTIST, COMPOSER, MUSICIAN, STATESMAN
PATRIOT, HUMANITARIAN AND FRIEND OF
AMERICAN WAR VETERANS.

MAY HIS SOUL REST IN THE PEACEFUL
FREEDOM HE SO WANTED FOR HIS HOMELAND
OF POLAND.

ATTEST:

FRANK C. MOMSEN	MICHAEL J. KOGUTEK
NATIONAL ADJUTANT	NATIONAL COMMANDER

(end)



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
WASHINGTON OFFICE

6-9-81

Dear Morton:

Thanks for arranging lunch with Mrs Dole. It is indeed a new era when conversations can reach understanding concerning the vital issues facing our country.

Though I will be home based in Indianapolis, I will maintain an office in Washington. Call on us if needed. Thanks for all your help.

Bob Froy

Fide

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

June 8, 1981

Mr. Robert Spanogle
National Adjutant Designee
The American Legion
1608 K Street, N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20006

Dear Bob:

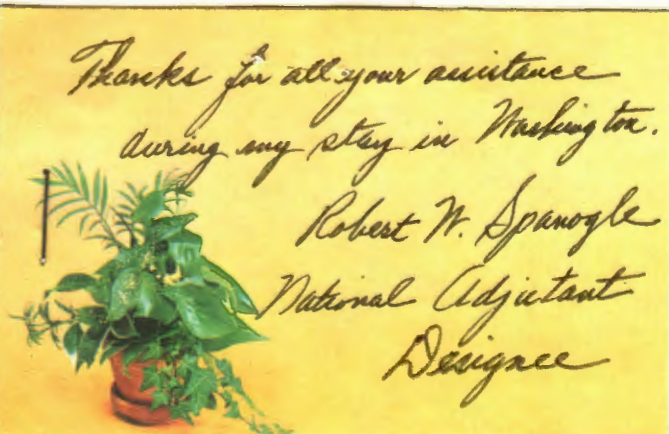
In an otherwise dismal week your flowers were a wonderful surprise. Kathy and I have enjoyed them to the fullest.

We will certainly miss working with you here in D. C. but we look forward to working with your successor.

All the best of luck to you with your new endeavors. If we can be of any assistance to you please be sure and call us.

Sincerely,

Maiselle Shortley



The American Legion

★ WASHINGTON OFFICE ★ 1608 "K" STREET, N.W. ★ WASHINGTON, D.C. 20006 ★
(202) 861-2700 ★



For God and Country

*File
Photo
request*

May 26, 1981

Mr. Morton C. Blackwell
Special Assistant to the President
for Public Liaison
Office of Public Liaison
Old Executive Office Building
Room 134, Attn: Kathy
Washington, D.C. 20500

*Please
comply with
request,
MB
Please call Maxella
when ready
2657*

Dear Kathy:

Enclosed is the photo of President Reagan which I discussed with you today.

If possible, I would like this brief inscription:
"To Jim, Best Wishes. Ronald Reagan"

Please return the photo to me at the above address.

I want to thank you for your effort.

Sincerely yours,

JAMES G. BOURIE
Director for Economics

sent 6/19/81

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 22, 1981

Mr. Edward T. Hoak
State Adjutant
Pennsylvania American Legion
Post Office Box 2324
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17105

Dear Mr. Hoak:

Thank you for your Mailgram of May 4, 1981, to President Reagan.

The Reagan Administration sincerely appreciates your support of the Reagan bipartisan Budget Resolution, Fiscal Year 1982, otherwise known as Gramm/Latta.

The President endorsed this budget amendment in the same bipartisan manner in which it was introduced, and your support was helpful during the House of Representatives vote.

As you know, the Reagan bipartisan Budget Resolution does call for the restoration of significant funding to the Veterans Administration. I assure you that the Reagan Administration recognizes its responsibility to be sure the very best use of VA resources is made.

I appreciate this opportunity to provide you with this information and thank you again for your efforts.

Cordially,



Morton C. Blackwell
Special Assistant to the
President for Public Liaison
for Veterans

2 + 5/27/81

PENNSYLVANIA AMERICAN LEGION C N
PO BOX 2324
HARRISBURG PA 17105



4-043363s124 05/04/81 ICS IPMMTZZ CSP WSHB
7177637801 MGM TDMT HARRISBURG PA 80 05-04 0231P EST

Morton Blackwell

PRESIDENT REAGAN
WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON DC 20500

024068

I WISH TO INFORM YOU THAT THE PENNSYLVANIA AMERICAN LEGION HAS TAKEN ACTION TO SUPPORT YOUR BIPARTISAN BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY PHIL GRAMM D-TEXAS AND DELBERT L LATTI R-OHIO WE HAVE CONTACTED ALL PENNSYLVANIA CONGRESSMAN URGING THEM TO SUPPORT THIS PROPOSAL NOW WE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE ASSURANCE THAT THE 800 MILLION TAKEN OUT OF THE VETERANS ADMINISTRATION BUDGET BY THE SENATE WILL BE REINSTATED
EDWARD T HOAK STATE ADJUTANT PENNSYLVANIA AMERICAN LEGION

15:11 EST

MGMCOMP MGM

22/1

ID # 024068

FI004

WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING WORKSHEET

O - OUTGOING

H - INTERNAL

I - INCOMING

Date Correspondence Received (YY/MM/DD) 8/05/07

Name of Correspondent: Edward T. Hoak

MI Mail Report

User Codes: (A) _____ (B) _____ (C) _____

Subject: Support for Pres. Budget

ROUTE TO:

ACTION

DISPOSITION

Office/Agency	(Staff Name)	Action Code	Tracking Date YY/MM/DD	Type of Response	Code	Completion Date YY/MM/DD
<u>PL</u>	<u>Blue</u>	ORIGINATOR ^H	<u>8/05/08</u>			<u>C 8/05/21</u>
<u>VA</u>		Referral Note: <u>R</u> CH	<u>8/05/08</u>			<u>C^{MG} 8/05/15</u>
		Referral Note:	<u>1 1</u>			<u>1 1</u>
		Referral Note:	<u>1 1</u>			<u>1 1</u>
		Referral Note:	<u>1 1</u>			<u>1 1</u>
		Referral Note:	<u>1 1</u>			<u>1 1</u>

ACTION CODES:

- A - Appropriate Action
- C - Comments
- D - Draft Response
- F - Fact Sheet
- I - Info Copy/No Action Necessary
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- X - Interim Reply

DISPOSITION CODES:

- A - Answered
- B - Non-Special Referral
- C - Completed
- S - Suspended

FOR OUTGOING CORRESPONDENCE:

- Type of Response = Initials of Signer
- Code = "A"
- Completion Date = Date of Outgoing

Comments: _____

Keep this worksheet attached to the original incoming letter.
 Send all routing updates to Central Reference (Room 75, OEOB).
 Always return completed correspondence record to Central Files.
 Refer questions about the correspondence tracking system to Central Reference, ext. 2590.



**Veterans
Administration**

MAY 15 1981

MEMORANDUM FOR:

Leslie Sorg
Director of Agency Liaison
Presidential Correspondence
The White House
Washington, D. C. 20500

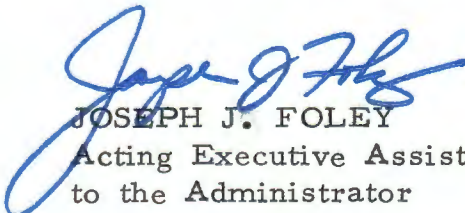


~~PLBLAC~~
Type for
my sig.
MB
5/21

I am pleased to provide the enclosed draft response to Mr. Edward T. Hoak, State Adjutant, Pennsylvania American Legion.

You referred this Mailgram to our office on May 11 for our direct reply. However, you agreed via telephone that a draft reply for a White House staff member's signature would be appropriate.

Please note our draft does not quote specific budget figures.


JOSEPH J. FOLEY
Acting Executive Assistant
to the Administrator

Enclosures

DRAFT

Mr. Edward T. Hoak
State Adjutant
Pennsylvania American Legion
Post Office Box 2324
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17105

Dear Mr. Hoak:

Thank you for your Mailgram of May 4, 1981, to President Reagan.

The Reagan Administration sincerely appreciates your support of

the ^{Reagan Bipartisan} ~~Gramm/Latta~~ Amendment to the ~~first Concurrent~~ Budget
Resolution, Fiscal Year 1982, ^{otherwise known as Gramm/Latta.}

The President endorsed this budget amendment in the same
bipartisan manner in which it was introduced, and your support
was helpful during the House of Representatives vote.

As you know, the ^{the Reagan bipartisan Budget Resolution} ~~Gramm/Latta Amendment~~ does call for the
restoration of significant funding to the Veterans Administration.

I assure you that the Reagan Administration recognizes its responsi-
bility to be sure the very best use of VA resources is made.

I appreciate this opportunity to provide you with this information
and thank you again for your efforts.

cordially

JIM MAYER

(101B)

MCB
St. Asst to the Dir.

Extension 5081

18
PENNSYLVANIA AMERICAN LEGION C N
PO BOX 2324
HARRISBURG PA 17105



4-043363s124 05/04/81 ICS IPMMTZZ CSP WSHB
7177637801 MEM TDMT HARRISBURG PA 80 05-04 0231P EST

Morton Blackwell

*copy-file
original sent
to Robert Niino
Administrator*

PRESIDENT REAGAN
WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON DC 20500

I WISH TO INFORM YOU THAT THE PENNSYLVANIA AMERICAN LEGION HAS TAKEN ACTION TO SUPPORT YOUR BIPARTISAN BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY PHIL GRAMM D-TEXAS AND DELBERT L LATTI R-OHIO WE HAVE CONTACTED ALL PENNSYLVANIA CONGRESSMAN URGING THEM TO SUPPORT THIS PROPOSAL NOW WE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE ASSURANCE THAT THE 800 MILLION TAKEN OUT OF THE VETERANS ADMINISTRATION BUDGET BY THE SENATE WILL BE REINSTATED
EDWARD T HOAK STATE ADJUTANT PENNSYLVANIA AMERICAN LEGION

15111 EST

MGMCOMP MGM

The
American
Legion



OFFICE OF THE
NATIONAL COMMANDER

★ WASHINGTON OFFICE ★ 1608 "K" STREET, N. W. ★ WASHINGTON, D. C. 20006 ★

File

April 23, 1981

Mrs. Elizabeth H. Dole
Assistant to the President
for Public Liaison
The White House
Washington, D. C. 20500

Dear Mrs. Dole:

I have reviewed the Reagan bipartisan budget proposal to be introduced in the House as a substitute for the House Budget Committee plan. My staff has analyzed both versions and we find the veterans function authority total is identical in each. Furthermore, we find the bipartisan substitute recommendation for additional national defense funds to be acceptable as vital to the security of the nation.

The American Legion will support the Reagan substitute despite concern over other budgetary categories in which the organization is mandated. In expressing this support, we recognize that the complete Reagan economic recovery package reaches beyond the Legion's scope, policy and specific mandates. While our members, as citizens and taxpayers, may individually embrace the entire proposal, the organization must limit its endorsement to those parameters within the confines established by our officially adopted mandates.

As National Commander, I thank the Administration for its cooperation in helping to resolve our concerns for the veterans program. I can pledge the Legion's continued dedication to addressing the vested interests of those who served the Nation in time of crisis, and who now seek the Nation's assistance in meeting their personal needs.

Sincerely yours,

Michael J. Kogutek

MICHAEL J. KOGUTEK
National Commander

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

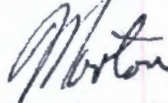
April 17, 1981

Dear Bob:

There are no words that will tell you how appreciative we here at the White House are for your kind expression of concern and generous offer of help during this very trying time.

I know that President and Mrs. Reagan and Mr and Mrs. Jim Brady are most grateful for the American Legion's prayers and thoughtfulness.

Sincerely,



Morton C. Blackwell
Special Assistant to the
President for Public Liaison

Mr. Robert W. Spanogle
Executive Director
The American Legion
1608 K Street, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20006

THE AMERICAN LEGION ↙

1608 K STREET, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20006

Please write nice note of thanks for my sig.

Memorandum to: Morton Blackwell
Special Assistant to the President

DATE March 31, 1981

SUBJECT: Attached Telegrams

Shocked may not be a proper word for what The American Legion feels about the attempted assassination of President Reagan yesterday. For your information I have attached copies of telegrams sent by our National Commander and I personally want to assure you and the White House staff that if there is anything that The American Legion and/or Auxiliary and our three million members can do we stand ready.

BOB

ROBERT W. SPANOGLE
Executive Director

Attachment

March 31, 1981

STRAIGHT WIRE TELEGRAMS (sent a.m., 3/31/81)

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

American Legionnaires around the world are praying for your speedy recovery and for Mrs. Reagan and your family. We are proud of the courageous example you have set as our Commander-in-Chief during this ordeal, and we hope you will be back in full command very soon.

MICHAEL J. KOGUTEK
National Commander
The American Legion

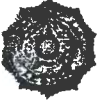
James S. Brady
Press Secretary
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

The wishes and prayers of American Legionnaires around the world are with you and your family. We sincerely hope that you will recover fully and resume the important duties you were performing when attacked.

MICHAEL J. KOGUTEK
National Commander
The American Legion

The American Legion

★ WASHINGTON OFFICE ★ 1608 "K" STREET, N. W. ★ WASHINGTON, D. C. 20006 ★
(202) 393-4811 ★



OFFICE OF THE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

April 10, 1981

Honorable Edwin Meese, III
Counselor to the President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. Meese:

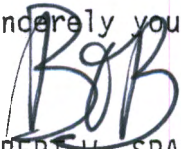
I thought you might be interested in the Louis Harris releases dated February 16, February 19 and subsequent releases of March 2 and March 5, 1981. Nearly all the releases support the President's budget proposals and in fact the release of February 16 indicates by its headline "Federal Spending Cuts Favored".

However I was very interested in the statistics cited in their poll "--Veterans benefits account for another \$23 billion in the federal budget. Once again, however, a 65 percent majority of the public nationwide opts for virtually no cut at all in this area; 31 percent would like to cut veterans benefits."

The American Legion finds this Harris survey to be valid judging from the surveys we have conducted with our polls both of our own members and the general public.

With warmest regards, I am

Sincerely yours,


ROBERT W. SPANOGLE
Executive Director

Enclosures

cc: Mrs. Elizabeth Dole
Mr. Morton Blackwell

The Harris Survey

For Release: Monday AM, February 16th, 1981

1981 #14
ISSN 0273-1037

FEDERAL SPENDING CUTS FAVORED

By Louis Harris

Americans are in favor of cutting back the federal budget by about \$19 billion, according to the latest Harris Survey. But among the 18 benefit and grant programs that account for the largest part of the non-military budget, people single out several programs as being virtually untouchable: Social Security, Medicare, veterans' benefits, Medicaid, school lunch and child nutrition programs, mass public transportation, and aid to elementary and secondary education.

The Harris Survey asked people about seven of the most costly benefit programs. Federal spending could be cut on these programs by restricting eligibility for certain benefits and by reducing future increases in benefits. For each program, the cross section of 1,250 adults nationwide was asked if federal spending should be cut by 50 percent, 25 percent, 10 percent or hardly at all.

--By far the largest part of the non-military budget goes toward Social Security: roughly \$160 billion a year. A substantial 77 percent of Americans want Social Security benefits to be cut "hardly at all," compared with only 20 percent who do want to cut such benefits. During last fall's presidential campaign, voters worried that Ronald Reagan was against Social Security. The vote of elderly Americans went to Reagan by only one percentage point. If Reagan were to make substantial cuts in Social Security, it might arouse the latent doubts and concerns that he is not committed to the program.

--Another sacred cow appears to be Medicare for the elderly, which now is costing more than \$46 billion in federal funds. A sizable 82 percent of Americans want Medicare costs cut back "hardly at all"; only 15 percent favor trimming the Medicare budget. Attempts to cut back on this program seem certain to meet with real grass roots opposition.

--Veterans' benefits account for another \$23 billion in the federal budget. Once again, however, a 65 percent majority of the public nationwide opts for virtually no cut at all in this area; 31 percent would like to cut veterans' benefits. Because many Americans have come to believe that Vietnam-era veterans have been given less than satisfactory treatment, there are quilt feelings about cutting veterans' benefits.

--Close to \$22 billion has been budgeted federally for unemployment compensation. A 38 percent minority of the public feels that unemployment benefits ought to be cut "hardly at all." Another 18 percent want to cut them 50 percent; 25 percent opt for a 25 percent cut; 15 percent favor a 10 percent cut in unemployment compensation. All in all, Americans would support a 17 percent cut in this program.

--Just under \$20 billion is now budgeted by the federal government for civilian retirement benefits. Only 35 percent of the public feels that this retirement program should be immune from cuts, while 17 percent would reduce spending in this area by 50 percent; 25 percent would reduce it 25 percent; 17 percent would cut it by 10 percent. All told, people favor a 17 percent cut in federal civilian retirement benefits.

--Another \$15 billion is allotted to federal military retirement benefits. However, a 51-45 percent majority would like to see the military retirement program trimmed. Overall, people want to cut spending on it by 10 percent.

--The federal food stamp benefit program is budgeted at \$12 billion. By 53-41 percent, a majority favors cutting food stamp benefits, with 19 percent who would reduce them by 50 percent; 21 percent who want to cut them by 25 percent; 13 percent who want them trimmed by 10 percent. All in all, Americans want to see an 11 percent cut in food stamps.

The Harris Survey then asked about 11 major federal grant programs:

--By 57-39 percent, a majority opposes cuts in grants for Medicaid, budgeted at \$18 billion.

--A substantial 72-23 percent majority would favor cutting federal highway grants, a program costing more than \$8 billion. Americans would like to see a 27 percent cut in highway grants.

--By 60-31 percent, a majority wants to see cuts in CETA and other job programs, another \$8 billion item in the federal budget. Most would be satisfied with an 18 percent cut in this area.

--By 70-24 percent, a majority wants cuts in welfare payments made by the federal government, now budgeted at more than \$7 billion annually. All in all, people would like welfare spending cut by 30 percent.

--By 63-34 percent, a majority does not favor cutting the school lunch and other child nutrition programs, now budgeted at more than \$4 billion a year.

--By 61-30 percent, a 2 to 1 majority favors cutting general federal revenue sharing with the states and localities, now budgeted at over \$4 billion a year. People will accept a 13 percent cut in federal revenue sharing spending.

--By 65-28 percent, a majority would favor cutting federal grants for subsidized housing (budgeted at \$4 billion a year). A 22 percent cut in subsidized housing would meet with public approval.

--By 53-41 percent, a majority would opt for cutting federal grants for sewage treatment projects. A 12 percent cut would be approved in this \$4 billion program.

--By 66-29 percent, a substantial majority favors cutting community development programs. People would support a 22 percent cut in this \$4 billion program.

--But by a narrow 49-45 percent, people do not want cuts in mass public transportation grants by the federal government, now budgeted at more than \$3 billion a year.

--By a clear-cut 63-34 percent, a substantial majority is opposed to cutting federal aid to elementary and secondary education, budgeted at more than \$3 billion a year.

In terms of dollar amounts, Americans favor cutting unemployment compensation by \$3.7 billion, federal civilian retirement by \$3.3 billion, military retirement by \$1.5 billion, food stamps by \$1.3 billion, highway grants by \$2.3 billion, CETA and other job programs by \$1.5 billion, welfare by \$2.3 billion, federal revenue sharing by \$600 million, subsidized housing by \$900 million, sewage treatment by \$500 million, and community development by \$900 million. Together, these cuts total \$18.8 billion.

T A B L E S

Between January 22nd and 25th, the Harris Survey asked a cross section of 1,250 adults nationwide by telephone:

"A major first effort of the Reagan Administration will be to cut back on federal spending. One way they plan to do this is by restricting eligibility for certain benefits the federal government now supports and by reducing the amounts of future increases in these benefits. For each of the following benefits tell me if you think federal spending should be cut by 50 percent, 25 percent, 10 percent, or hardly at all?"

TABLE CONTINUED

-3-

FEDERAL SPENDING CUTS ON BENEFITS

	50%	25%	10%	Hardly at all	Cut more than 50% (vol)	Increase (vol)	Not sure
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Medicare for the elderly	2	6	7	82	*	1	2
Social Security	4	7	9	77	*	*	3
Veterans benefits	5	12	14	65	-	1	3
Military retirement	12	21	18	45	*	*	4
Food stamps for people with low incomes	19	21	13	41	1	*	5
Unemployment compensation	18	25	15	38	1	*	3
Federal civilian retirement	17	25	17	35	*	*	6

"Now let me ask you about major federal grant programs. Do you favor cutting federal spending on (READ EACH ITEM) by 50 percent, 25 percent, 10 percent, or hardly at all?"

FEDERAL SPENDING CUTS ON GRANTS PROGRAMS

	50%	25%	10%	Hardly at all	Cut more than 50% (vol)	Increase (vol)	Not sure
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
School lunch and other child nutrition programs	9	13	12	63	1	*	2
Aid to elementary and secondary education	9	12	13	63	*	*	3
Grants for Medicaid	9	15	15	57	*	*	4
Mass public transportation	13	19	13	49	1	1	4
Sewage treatment projects	11	23	19	41	1	*	5
CETA and other job programs	23	21	16	31	2	*	7
General revenue sharing with the states and localities	14	27	20	30	*	*	9
Community development programs	22	26	18	29	1	*	4
Subsidized housing	20	26	19	28	1	*	6
Welfare payment grants	30	26	14	24	2	*	4
Highway grants	21	33	18	23	*	-	5

* = less than 0.5 percent
- = no response

The Harris Survey

For Release: Thursday AM, February 19th, 1981

1981 #15
ISSN 0273-1037

AMERICANS OPPOSE CUTS IN BOTH FEDERAL SPENDING AND TAXES AT THE SAME TIME

By Louis Harris

Although Americans welcome efforts by President Reagan to keep federal spending under control, and they want substantial cuts in a number of programs, the prospects for the early adoption of Reagan's economic program are not very encouraging.

Essentially, the President will encounter a twofold problem, according to this latest Harris Survey of 1,250 adults nationwide:

1) By 67-28 percent, a majority of Americans rejects making "cuts in both spending and taxes at the same time," and opts for "no tax cut until federal spending has been cut in a major way." Even those who voted for Reagan give spending cuts a priority over tax reduction by 65-33 percent. But partly because of his campaign commitment to a 10 percent tax cut for three years running and the deep conviction of his supply-side economic advisers that tax relief must be sustained and continuing over several years, President Reagan has been unyielding in his insistence on getting spending cuts and tax cuts simultaneously.

2) Despite the general public commitment to cut federal spending, people actually are highly selective about just where the cuts ought to be made. For example, cuts in the CETA jobs program, a favorite of liberals, would be favored by 62-31 percent of Americans, but cuts in the school lunch program, another favorite of liberals, are opposed by 63-35 percent. Similarly, cuts in veterans' benefits, long a favorite of conservatives, are opposed by 66-31 percent, but cuts in general revenue sharing with the states and localities, another favorite of conservatives, are favored by 61-30 percent. By calling for cuts across the board, and in amounts well over the \$18.8 billion the public is willing to accept, Reagan faces the risk of obtaining far lower cuts in spending than he has called for. This in turn could be viewed as his being unable to deliver on his promises.

In addition, if the Democrats are successful in saving the budgets for such popular programs as aid to primary and secondary education, Medicaid and Medicare, or school lunches, then they will gain politically at the Republicans' expense. Significant, but often overlooked in this upcoming battle between the President and the Democrats in Congress, is the fact that Reagan must obtain a majority in both houses to have his programs passed, whereas the Democrats need only win in the House of Representatives to prevent a cut in a specific program. The tactical advantage clearly is with the Democrats.

However, it is also important to point out that the last two occupants of the White House who at times found their programs mired in Congress--Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford--were not effective communicators with the public. As a result, both presidents had trouble taking their case over the heads of Congress directly to the American people. President Reagan is something else again. By 77-17 percent an overwhelming majority gives him positive marks on inspiring confidence in the White House. For the moment, at least, he is presiding over a very popular administration, whereas the Congress has remained a relatively unpopular institution for many years now. So the instinct of Americans will be to sympathize with the President rather than with Congress. In addition, Reagan has amply demonstrated that he is one of the more effective communicators to occupy the Oval Office in recent times.

The outcome of this confrontation is likely to depend, first, on the extent to which Democrats can hold their ranks and block those proposed budget cuts that are unpopular, and, second, on the extent to which Reagan can go over the heads of Congress to the people. If Reagan can make an issue out of Democratic intractability on cuts that are popular, then he could well finish on top.

(over)

-2-

But one thing seems certain: the "honeymoon" mood of the American people--the desire to give the new President every benefit of the doubt--will be tested to the limit. Clearly, Reagan feels that the time to make use of the huge reservoir of good will is now, when it is at its peak. The President is pressing for simultaneous tax and spending cuts, which is not the popular position. Moreover, not all the proposed spending cuts he has recommended will be met with enthusiasm; some of them are downright unpopular. Without a doubt, how Ronald Reagan fares on this first test is likely to determine much of his tenure in the White House for the next four years.

T A B L E S

Between January 22nd and 25th, the Harris Survey asked a cross section of 1,250 adults nationwide by telephone:

"Some Reagan advisers think that both the federal budget and federal taxes should be cut at the same time. Others think that taxes should not be cut until major cuts in federal spending are made. Which would you favor: cuts in both spending and taxes at the same time, or no tax cut until federal spending has been cut in a major way?"

FAVOR BOTH SPENDING AND TAX CUTS AT SAME TIME?

	<u>Cut both</u> %	<u>No tax cut</u> %	<u>Not sure</u> %
Total	28	67	5
Voted Reagan	33	65	2
Voted Carter	22	74	4
Conservative	32	65	3
Middle of the road	28	68	4
Liberal	22	77	1

"A major first effort of the Reagan Administration will be to cut back on federal spending. One way they plan to do this is by restricting eligibility for certain benefits the federal government now supports and by reducing the amounts of future increases in these benefits. For each of the following benefits tell me if you think federal spending should be cut by 50 percent, 25 percent, 10 percent, or hardly at all?"

"Now let me ask you about major federal grant programs. Do you favor cutting federal spending on (READ EACH ITEM) by 50 percent, 25 percent, 10 percent, or hardly at all?"

SUPPORT FOR CUTS IN SPECIFIC FEDERAL BENEFITS AND GRANT PROGRAMS

	<u>Favor cut</u> %	<u>Oppose cut</u> %	<u>Not sure</u> %
Highway grants	72	23	5
Welfare payment grants	72	24	4
Subsidized housing	66	28	6
Community development programs	67	29	4
CETA and other job programs	62	31	7
General revenue sharing with the states and localities	61	30	9

TABLE CONTINUED

SUPPORT FOR CUTS IN SPECIFIC FEDERAL BENEFITS AND GRANT PROGRAMS CONT'D.

	<u>Favor cut</u>	<u>Oppose cut</u>	<u>Not sure</u>
	%	%	%
Unemployment compensation	59	38	3
Federal civilian retirement	59	35	6
Sewage treatment projects	54	41	5
Food stamps for people with low incomes	54	41	5
Military retirement	51	45	4
Mass public transportation	46	50	4
Grants for medicaid	39	57	4
School lunch and other child nutrition programs	35	63	2
Aid to elementary and secondary schools	34	63	3
Veterans benefits	31	66	3
Social Security	20	77	3
Medicare for the elderly	15	83	2

Louis Harris and Associates, Inc. subscribes to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls. The principles are that all reports of survey findings of member organizations, prepared specifically for public release, will include reference to the following: sponsorship of the survey; dates of interviewing; method of obtaining the interviews; population that was sampled; size of the sample; size and description of the sub-sample, if the survey report relies primarily on less than the total sample; complete wording of questions upon which the release is based; and, the percentages upon which conclusions are based.

All of this information is provided in this release.

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 220 East 42nd Street, New York, NY 10017

The Harris Survey

For Release: Monday AM, March 2nd, 1981

1981 #18
ISSN 0273-1037

ALMOST ALL PROPOSED BUDGET CUTS SUPPORTED

By Louis Harris

Americans strongly support all the budget cuts called for by President Reagan except two. A substantial 80-15 percent majority favor Reagan's proposal to cut \$41.1 billion from the Carter budget.

The two exceptions are significant, according to this latest Harris Survey of a national cross section of 1,254 adults nationwide:

--By 54-42 percent, a majority is opposed to the President's call for a cut of \$1.25 billion in federal aid to primary and secondary education.

--By 60-36 percent, a clear majority is opposed to the Reagan plan to cut Medicaid by \$1 billion.

For more than a decade, the Harris Survey has consistently found that Americans line up against cutbacks in federal programs in the fields of health and education. By a nearly unanimous 92-7 percent majority, a lopsided majority of the people were relieved to hear Reagan say he would not cut Social Security, Medicare, veteran's benefits, aid to the handicapped, or the Head Start program. With regard to defense, the only area where an increase in spending is proposed, a substantial 72-25 percent favor increasing the military budget by \$7 billion.

All the other major cuts proposed by President Reagan receive impressive majority support:

--His call to cut federal welfare spending by \$520 million is favored by 74-23 percent.

--His proposal to cut the school lunch program by \$1.6 billion by eliminating free school lunches for children of families who can afford to pay is supported by 71-28 percent.

--The proposed Reagan cut of \$1.8 billion from the federal food stamp program is backed by 67-30 percent.

--The President's abolition of the Economic Development Administration, which was set up to stimulate economic growth, is favored by 65-26 percent.

--His call to cut the synthetic fuels energy program by \$3.2 billion, leaving it to business to finance the development of oil from coal, tar sands, and shale, is supported by 61-35 percent.

--Reagan's proposal to cut \$1.2 billion from unemployment compensation programs by shortening the time people can receive such benefits is backed by 59-38 percent.

--His appeal to cut, by one-third, loans made by the Export-Import Bank which stimulate sales abroad is approved by 58-32 percent.

(over)

Despite this rather sweeping mandate to give the new President what he wants in the way of budget cuts, the people do not feel that Congress should simply go along with the cuts Reagan has asked for:

--A 62 percent majority thinks that Congress should examine in detail the President's proposals and go along only where it feels the program makes sense. A small die-hard 5 percent hold the view that Congress should oppose most of the Reagan cuts.

This expressed preference of the people for Congress to go over in detail all the President's recommendations reflects their understanding of the way the American system works. In their wisdom, the framers of the U.S. Constitution, in addition to providing a separation of powers among the three branches of government, gave each branch the authority to check and balance the others.

Although the people clearly support the new occupant of the Oval Office on his dramatic budget-cut proposals, when asked if they think the federal budget will be balanced by 1984, as the Reagan administration now estimates, a 69-25 percent majority believes "it just will not happen." Obviously, Americans do not expect a miracle that would soon put an end to deficit spending.

But it is equally apparent that the people think Reagan is off to a good start, and for the most part, they are willing to give his proposals to cut the budget the benefit of the doubt.

T A B L E S

Between February 19th and 22nd, the Harris Survey asked a cross section of 1,254 adults nationwide by telephone:

"Let me ask you about a number of specific things President Reagan said he wants to do. For each, tell me if you favor or oppose it."

REAGAN'S BUDGET PROPOSALS

	<u>Favor</u> %	<u>Oppose</u> %	<u>Not sure</u> %
His assurance that there will be no cuts in Social Security, Medicare, veteran's benefits, aid to the handicapped, or the Head Start program	92	7	1
His call to cut 41.1 billion dollars from the 1982 federal budget	80	15	5
His call to cut federal welfare spending by 520 million dollars	74	23	3
His wanting to increase the defense budget by 7 billion dollars, making defense the only area where an increase in spending is proposed	72	25	3
His call to cut the school lunch program by 1.6 billion dollars by eliminating free school lunches for children of families who can afford to pay	71	28	1
His wanting to cut the food stamp program by 1.8 billion dollars	67	30	3

c o n t i n u e d

REAGAN'S BUDGET PROPOSALS (contn'd)

	<u>Favor</u> %	<u>Oppose</u> %	<u>Not sure</u> %
His abolition of the Economic Development Administration, which was set up to stimulate economic growth, but which Reagan claims is just another bureaucracy	65	26	9
His call to cut the synthetic fuels energy program by 3.2 billion dollars, leaving it to business to finance the development of oil from coal, tar sands, and shale	61	35	4
His cutting 1.2 billion dollars for unemployment compensation programs by shortening the time people can receive such benefits	59	38	3
His cutting by one-third loans by the Export-Import Bank which stimulate sales abroad	58	32	10
His call for cutting federal aid to primary and secondary education by 1.25 billion dollars	42	54	4
His call to cut Medicaid by 1 billion dollars	36	60	4

"And what action do you think Congress should take in regard to the proposed budget cuts? Should Congress go along with almost all President Reagan has called for, should Congress examine the program in detail and go along only where it feels the program makes sense, or should Congress oppose most of the program?"

CONGRESSIONAL ACTION ON PROPOSED BUDGET CUTS

	<u>TOTAL</u> %	<u>VOTE IN 1980</u>	
		<u>Voted Reagan</u> %	<u>Voted Carter</u> %
Congress should go along with almost all	32	48	17
Should examine in detail	62	52	72
Should oppose most of the program	5	*	10
Not sure	1	*	1

c o n t i n u e d

The Trophy is . . .

Presented to the person, company, or association which has been judged to have made a significant contribution to the betterment of the American Merchant Marine in the calendar year of the award.



Photo by R. V. Taylor



The Harris Survey

For Release: Thursday AM, March 5th, 1981

1981 #19
ISSN 0273-1037

REAGAN'S NEW ECONOMIC PROGRAM FAIR AND EQUITABLE

By Louis Harris

By and large, Americans seem to think that President Reagan's new economic program is a fair and equitable set of proposals.

When asked how they think the President's program will affect them and their families, 70 percent say the proposal is "fair and equitable," while 25 percent feel it is "unfair and will cause hardship on them." A bare 1 percent feel the program is "too easy on them."

In sharp contrast to this very favorable reaction to the Reagan program, when President Carter came up with a new economic program in 1978, 47 percent felt it was unfair to them and their families, 41 percent felt it was fair, and 2 percent felt it was too easy on them.

The Harris Survey interviewed a cross section of 1,254 adults nationwide between February 19 and February 22 and found that while the public is convinced that the Reagan program is fair and equitable to most groups, there is one glaring exception:

--A 52 percent majority feels that the President's new economic policies "go too easy" on high-income people. Another 38 percent feel the program is fair and equitable to those with high incomes, while 5 percent think it is unfair. Among those with incomes of \$35,000 or more, however, a 54 percent majority feels the program is fair and equitable to high-income people, 3 percent think it is unfair and too tough on them, and 40 percent think it is too easy on them.

The main reason why people think that Reagan's program is too easy on high-income families is that it calls for a 10 percent income tax cut across the board. Obviously, those in the higher income brackets will receive substantially higher cuts in total dollars than those who are less fortunate. Nonetheless, the President's call for a 10 percent cut across the board for three consecutive years is favored by a 65-31 percent majority of Americans.

The other area about which there is considerable concern is the impact of the Reagan program on the poor:

--A 49 percent plurality feels that the President's economic policies are "fair and equitable to the poor." Early on, Mr. Reagan emphasized that he was designing the program in a way that would not hurt those who are most in need. However, a substantial 45 percent of Americans feel that the poor will be treated unfairly and that the program will cause them hardship. Only 2 percent feel the program will be too easy on the poor. Notably, 75 percent of blacks feel the Reagan economic policies are unfair to the poor, a view shared by 54 percent of those with incomes of \$7,500 or less.

But with every other group tested, the overall view is that the economic program of the new President will be "fair and equitable."

--A 54 percent majority feels that the new program is fair for big business, although 37 percent think it is "too easy" on major corporations. Only 5 percent feel it is unfair to them. It is important to note the contrast between people's concern

(over)

that high-income people are getting off too easy and their sense that big business is being treated fairly. This is another indication that, for the first time in years, people are convinced that big business must get tax breaks to allow it to invest the capital that will make the economy grow and make productivity rise.

--A plurality of 45 percent feels that big labor unions are being treated fairly and equitably by the Reagan economic policies. But 31 percent feel that big unions are getting off too easy, while 12 percent think they are being dealt with unfairly. Among union members, 18 percent think trade unions are being treated badly, but a much higher 43 percent think Reagan is being fair to their organizations.

--A solid majority of 56 percent feels that the elderly and those on pensions will be treated fairly under the new Reagan economic program, undoubtedly, a reflection of the emphasis the President has placed on not touching Social Security. Among those 65 or over, an even higher 66 percent feel the program will be fair to them.

--A substantial 58 percent of Americans think the new policies are fair and equitable for workers who are not members of labor unions, although 28 percent think it is unfair to them.

--Finally, 65 percent believe that middle-income people will be treated fairly and equitably under the Reagan economic program, while 27 percent feel the plan is unfair to that group, and 3 percent feel it is too easy on them. Among those in the \$15,000 to \$25,000 income group, a substantial 66 percent think that President Reagan has come up with a fair set of policies as far as their group is concerned.

The new President's success in convincing large numbers of citizens that his program and policies are fair is a remarkable achievement. President Carter's policies were felt to be unfair to the elderly, the poor, middle-income people, non-union workers and "to people such as yourself and your family."

It will take quite an effort on the part of Democrats who oppose some parts of Reagan's program to convince the country that the President's plan is not fair and will favor big business or the more privileged. His income tax cut for individuals is probably the most vulnerable part of the program, even though it receives initial high scores.

T A B L E S

Between February 19th and 22nd, the Harris Survey asked a cross section of 1,254 adults nationwide by telephone:

"Do you feel that President Reagan's new economic policies will be fair and equitable for (READ EACH ITEM), will be unfair and cause hardship on them, or will go too easy on them?"

FAIRNESS OF REAGAN'S ECONOMIC PROGRAM

	<u>Fair</u> %	<u>Unfair</u> %	<u>Go too easy on</u> %	<u>Not Sure</u> %
People like you and your family	70	25	1	4
Middle income people	65	27	3	5
Workers who are not union members	58	28	4	10

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FAIRNESS OF REAGAN'S ECONOMIC PROGRAM (CONT'D)

	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Unfair</u>	<u>Go too easy on</u>	<u>Not sure</u>
The elderly and those on pensions	56	38	1	5
Big business	54	5	37	4
The poor	49	45	2	4
Big labor unions	45	12	31	12
High income people	38	5	52	5

"Let me ask you about a number of specific things President Reagan said he wants to do. For each, tell me if you favor or oppose it.

His wanting to give every taxpayer, regardless of income, a 10% cut in federal income tax rates every year for the next three years, which some people think will be inflationary and favor the rich, but which others think will stimulate economic growth."

REAGAN'S PROPOSAL FOR A 10%

INCOME TAX CUT

	8
Favor	65
Oppose	31
Not sure	4

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"President Reagan thinks his new economic program will work. If Congress adopts his program, do you think the federal budget will be balanced by 1984 as he claims it will or not?"

BALANCED FEDERAL BUDGET BY 1984?

	8
Will happen	25
Won't happen	69
Not sure	6

* = less than 0.5%

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