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WITHDRAWAL SHEET

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DOCUMENT NO. & TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
1. transcript	Meese off the record comment (1 pg partial)	3/25/82	C

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STORY: SPEAKES
MA: 60 FMT:

QUEUE: BEQ-BEQ
HJ:

MSG:
INI:

OPR: ALC ; 03/25, 17:54

TO: MLS, LT, JF, DR, BFP, JG, GP, DXB, DCB, LH, JWM, SJF,
FA, PGH, SXM

FROM: RAK

RE: Background-only ivu with Larry Speakes

El Salvador and Nicaragua. In Speakes' view, the President is not at all serious about negotiations with either the Nicaraguan junta or the guerrillas in El Salvador.

Regarding reports of talks with the Nicaraguans: "I don't think we'll ever really negotiate with them. We might lay out some conditions for negotiations and we might do that as early as next week." But any dealings with Nicaragua would not progress far unless the junta halts arms shipments to the leftists in El Salvador--a step the administration does not think the Nicaraguans will take.

As for negotiations with the guerrillas in El Salvador, those discussions would be limited to the leftists' participation in the electoral process.... There will be no negotiations on sharing power."

Guatemala. Speakes speculates that the administration ultimately will embrace the new military government in Guatemala. But for now, the administration is being cautious about recognizing the new regime.

MX missile. Speakes referred MX questions to his deputy, Mort Allin. Allin believes that Senate opposition to MX funding will force the administration to speed up a decision on a permanent basing mode. He suspects an

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accommodation will be reached with the Senate to allow MX production to continue in the interim. The administration probably will accelerate its timetable for choosing a permanent basing mode to mollify Senate opposition.

Jim Baker and the Democrats. Reagan was angry when word got out that Baker had contacted the House Democrats, because Reagan believed it made him look like he was retreating. ``We were all a little ticked off that O'Neil spilled the beans.'' Speakes does not expect much to come of the discussions between Baker and O'Neil, et al.

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OPR: SJF ; 03/25, 17:57

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The administration wants to move 1,400 BATF agents to Secret Service to work on criminal enforcement matters and leave only 200 agents at BATF for regulatory duties.

During telephone negotiations, Meese rejected changes in the reorganization sought by the Senate subcommittee. Instead of moving about 1,400 BATF agents to the Secret Service, the Senate subcommittee wanted to move only 717-- leaving 600 more behind at BATF. Meese insisted that was unworkable. ``Unless we can get 1,100 we ought to just dump it and start over next year,`` he told Treasury.

Meese also resisted a Senate proposal to amend this measure to appropriations bill because that would send it to conference with the House, where there are ``all those anti-gun guys.``

MX. ``The MX is a vital part of our overall strategic modernization program,`` says Meese. ``I don't know what position we could change to that would make sense.``

But he admits that the U.S. has no basing plan that is any more survivable than the current basing plan.

Bill Clark. Meese does not praise Clark as most White House aides do. The jealousy is apparent. When asked about Clark, Meese pulls out a ``laundry list`` of NSC projects that was drawn up last year by Dick Allen. He says Clark is simply following Allen's list-- ``literally from A to V.``

Meese suggests that the Big Three have been generous with Clark, giving him plenty of time on the President's schedule. He concedes that Clark has been better at setting

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deadlines for his people than Allen was.

(END)

STORY:CLARKIV
MA:60 FMT:

QUEUE:BEQ-BEQ
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MSG:
INI:

CPR:RAK ;03/26,14:20

TC: MLS, LT, JF, DR, EFP, JG, GP, DXB, DCP, LH, JWM, SJF,
FA, PGH

FROM: RAK

RE: Background-only ivu with William Clark

Clark, who has refused almost all requests for press interviews, telephoned without any warning and offered to talk on background only. (My guess is that the call was prompted by David Gergen, who promised to talk to Clark about an ivu with us. Clark began the conversation by saying that he tries to return all of his calls--an absurd claim in light of the many times that our requests for an ivu have been turned down.)

The President. Clark asserts that Reagan retains much more control now over foreign policy than he did in his first year in office, and Clark complains somewhat harshly that under the old system of a weak NSC adviser, Secretaries Haig and Weinberger made too many decisions that only the President should have made. He made clear that he serves neither Haig nor Weinberger--only the President. Clark's independence and autonomy is very apparent.

Says Clark: ``The President in his first year was not totally involved in the national security process...The schedule was such that he wasn't given the opportunity to participate...He realized late last year that he was not always fully informed...

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“We’re acting from no more of a base of authority than always...He always had the control but it wasn’t exercised...State and Defense became somewhat autonomous...Too many decisions were being made at State and Defense instead of in the Oval Office.”

Under Clark, Reagan devotes considerably more time on his daily schedule than ever before to the study and consideration of foreign and national-security issues. On Thursday the President spent three hours in meetings with Clark and others discussing non-domestic concerns. Today, Clark reports, nearly two hours will be devoted to foreign affairs: At this morning’s NSC briefing in the Oval Office, Clark covered six subjects in a half hour and the President signed three documents requiring him to make three separate decisions. Then, for the next 20 minutes Reagan watched a slide presentation of “Soviet power in a particular part of the world.” Experts from the Defense Intelligence Agency gave the slide show at Clark’s request. He regularly brings in experts in the morning to brief the President on various issues. Reagan’s schedule today also includes an afternoon meeting with Clark and a group of experts. Perhaps Reagan’s well known disinterest in international affairs is changing under Clark’s tutelage.

White House control. How has Clark brought the control of foreign policy back to the White House? He offers this example: Under Richard Allen, Haig and Weinberger would return from their various trips abroad and request a

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meeting with Reagan to brief him on the trips, more or less at the secretaries' convenience. Clark implied that the briefings were not always prompt and helpful to the President, that Haig and Weinberger were slugging it out between themselves, leaving the President out of the ring altogether. Now, however, the White House initiates the meetings and Clark tells Haig and Weinberger when the President expects see them--usually immediately upon their return. Richard Allen, working through Ed Meese, lacked the clout to coordinate for the President in this manner.

Clark also complains that trips abroad by Haig and Weinberger ``were too numerous.'' The implication is that both secretaries were competing to set policy through their dealings and public statements outside the country. Now neither secretary leaves the country without the President's prior approval and without Reagan signing off on the purpose and objectives of the trip.

The NSC adviser, through his staff and his new team of outside consultants (including former Army Secretary Tom Reed), has reinstituted independent NSC policy studies. One involves a sweeping analysis of the U.S. military posture around the globe.

Clark also imposes strict deadlines for decisions by the President and other entities. To end the kind of bureaucratic foot-dragging that he believes kept Reagan on the sidelines on some issues, Clark has warned State and Defense that ``if the paper [to the President outlining the

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department's position on a question] isn't in on time, then we're going to have to go it alone in making the decision."

On a number of occasions, Clark has insisted that Reagan's decisions be formalized in signed documents that go out to all concerned, so there is no misunderstanding about the President's decisions and authority.

Clark's authority. In talking to Clark, it is obvious that he does not need to invoke the President's name to get things done. It is worth noting that at several points he referred to Reagan as "we"--as if Reagan and Clark were one person. The authority vested in him by the President is so fully implicit--and Clark's manner so self-assured--that there is no doubt in anyone's mind that he speaks for Reagan.

He explains: "My authority is really only the President's authority...We act not unlike a small law firm in which we have only one client...Everything goes out in his name...Everything revolves around the President and making sure that he is fully briefed." Clark says he has put out some 15 directives over Reagan's signature since January. He sees Reagan three or four times each day and "on weekends we're in constant communication."

Clark's role. Apart from the policy analyses, Clark is not as yet initiating many policy options. With his obvious lack of depth in foreign affairs, he is not likely to become another Kissinger or Brzezinski advancing grand

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global designs. But that does not mean that he does not hold considerable sway in shaping Reagan's decisions.

He describes his role this way: "I take positions when the President asks me to, but I hope to continue the role of the honest broker, making sure everyone's views are advanced...I'm still playing judge from the standpoint of making sure that everyone in the courtroom has his views before the charter of fact, and the charter of fact is the President."

Report with RR. Clark says it is hard for him to judge how much "my personal views"--which are innately conservative--influence Reagan. He seems to offer his views carefully and only when asked, but Reagan certainly asks his advice often. "In a larger meeting, in particular, the President does look over for my reaction...When things appear to be stalemated, he invites my position." Clark stresses, though, that Reagan makes the final decision in most cases. He does not suggest that Reagan always follows his advice.

The President asks for Clark's thinking on domestic issues, too, but Clark declined to offer any examples. When I asked whether Clark and Reagan ever relax over a drink to talk things over, Clark responded: "There have been many occasions when I might be headed out the door of the Oval Office and he says, 'Just a minute, Bill....'"

He is sensitive about speculation that he advises the President on domestic matters. Such reports really sting

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Meese, and Clark is aware of that. ``I've been very careful to respect the lines of duty and authority, not wanting to get into anyone else's area.'' Others have cited this trait in Clark.

Haig vs. Weinberger. How does Clark enforce coordination between these two? He says he sends out ``an earlier warning on issues so that there is time [for them] to cough out their views'' in private before the issues come to a head. He adds, ``I get them to realize that their positions now are only positions--not decisions, that the decisions are the President's....Now, the debate stands less change of getting out of hand and getting contentious...[And] the President has more of a chance to make a decision than he did in the first year.''

Clark talks to both Haig and Weinberger 10 or so times everyday, mostly on the phone. He says he tends to side with neither one, and strives to be ``an objective broker.'' But he also says that ``at times I've had to remind some of my colleagues at State that I no longer work there.'' This probably refers to Haig himself.

Veep Bush. Bush is more cautious than Clark in offering his views to the President. Yet Clark claims that Bush ``has a very definite role'' in shaping foreign policy.

``He [Bush] maintains good lines of communication [with Reagan]...He is careful never to place himself between the President and the staff...He offers an opinion when the President says, "George, what do you think?"--and that isn't

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frequent." Eush influences Reagan's thinking more by asking "sharp questions" of the President than by stating his views.

Eush was reluctant to intrude on Clark's daily NSC briefings in the Oval Office but Clark asked that he attend on a regular basis.

NSC staff. Clark likes a lean staff. He boasts that the NSC staff is now down to 30, compared to 200 during the mid-'70s. He is interviewing experts to replace some of those staffers he forced out, but he says the overall size of the staff will remain close to 30.

(END)

STORY: REEDCLK
MA: 60 FMT:

QUEUE: BEQ-BEQ
HJ:

MSG:
INI:

OPR: RAK ; 03/30, 16:20

TO: MLS, LT, JF, BFP, JG, DR, GP, DXB, DCB, LH, JWM, SJF,
PA, PGH, SKM

FROM: RAK

RE: Background-only ivu with Thomas C. Reed

Reed, a former secretary of the Air Force, is a special consultant to William Clark and the National Security Council. He is a Californian and a Reaganite of long standing, having been Reagan's campaign manager in his 1970 bid for re-election as governor, and a Reagan campaign coordinator in 1966. In addition to being a friend of Reagan's, Reed has been a close associate of Clark and of Defense Secretary Weinberger for more than 15 years. He may join the NSC staff permanently as Clark's deputy, but as of now he is an outside consultant.

Strategic study. Reed is overseeing a sweeping NSC review, initiated by Clark, of the administration's "national security strategy" around the globe--the Persian Gulf, Western Europe, etc., including U.S. strategic forces. In effect, the study will assess American military capabilities vis-a-vis our political and military objectives in various parts of the world, projecting ahead to the end of the decade.

This is the first NSC analysis to be done by the Reagan administration. Under Richard Allen, independent NSC reviews were discontinued. Clark also has begun an NSC

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study of U.S. energy supplies and a separate review focusing on American strategic forces.

As Reed explains it, the national-security study will be presented to the President in May for his formal approval. It will include ``alternatives`` for action that may force Reagan to make a number of defense and foreign-policy decisions. Once ratified by the President, it will serve as a blueprint for the administration's broad, long-range goals in foreign policy. The review is being compiled by a half dozen working groups composed of representatives from the State Department, the Pentagon, the CIA, the NSC staff and the uniformed military branches. The working groups meet twice each week to hash over issues.

Reed complains that this study should have been undertaken in the first days of the Reagan administration--as previous Presidents have done--but that it was never carried out, because ``the NSC [under Allen] was moribund for a year...Frankly, Mr. Meese and Mr. Allen were incompetent and never did get their act together.``

He describes the strategic review as an effort to ``codify`` the administration's foreign policy. ``It will be the equivalent of a little red book from which everyone will get his marching orders...The aim is to see that all parts of the national-security apparatus head in the same direction...It's awfully important that the administration march to one set of music and that Congress know where we're headed.``

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In addition, the study will ``identify where our objectives can't be met and what vulnerabilities there are'' in American policy and military capability.

Meese & Allen. In dumping on Meese and Allen, Reed points out that a formal ``decision document'' outlining the duties and responsibilities of the national security adviser and his staff was never signed by Reagan until January of this year. Under Allen, ``that document lay foundering for a year.'' The document was among several pending presidential decisions that were part of the ``backlog'' Clark inherited from Allen. The decision document, says Reed, is a valuable tool used by Clark to keep Secretaries Haig and Weinberger in line. (Clark also has initiated a number of new presidential decision documents, including the one restricting travel abroad by cabinet secretaries. Reed claims that until Clark moved to the White House, Haig and Weinberger literally were leaving the country on formal trips without the President knowing about it.) ``The President was very annoyed that nothing ever made its way to him,'' he adds.

Clark's role. Reed generally subscribes to the view that Clark has tilted Reagan's foreign policy somewhat to the conservative side. Although Clark is no more conservative than was Allen (In fact, Reed notes that Clark is less doctrinaire than Allen.), Reagan listens more to Clark and respects his views. Clark is especially hard nosed in his views of the Soviet Union. Under Allen, says Reed, Reagan

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``had an NSC adviser that he never saw.'' Clark spends an hour or so each day on the phone to Haig and Weinberger. Reed maintains that the two cabinet secretaries did not have nearly so much contact with the White House when Allen was NSC adviser.

Of Clark, Reed says: ``He's not a Henry Kissinger conceptualizing a world order and then flying off in the dark of night to carry it out. But he's very effective in making sure that the President maintains control and that his wishes are carried out.''

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STORY:RADIO
MA:60 FMT:

QUEUE:BEQ-BEQ
HJ:

MSG:
INI:

OPR:RAK ;03/30,18:42

TO: MLS, LT, JF, DR, BFP, JG, GP, DXB, DCB, LH, JWM, SJF,
PA, PGH, SKM, LJJ

FROM: RAK

RE: Reagan on the radio

The White House announced today that Reagan on Saturday will begin a series of 10 weekly radio broadcasts to the nation. Each will be five minutes long and be aired live at 12:05 p.m. They will cover "topics of current interest," according to David Gergen. The first broadcast probably will focus on the economy.

The last in the 10-part series will be aired live on June 5 from Versailles, where Reagan will be attending the economic summit of Allied leaders. In April, he will broadcast his report live from Barbados, where he will be vacationing at the home of Claudette Colbert. (This one should be a big hit with unemployed auto workers.) On weekends when he is at Camp David, Reagan will broadcast live from the retreat. Gergen said that if the first 10 broadcasts are well received, Reagan probably will continue with more later.

The Republican National Committee is not buying time for these broadcasts. The White House is simply making them available to all stations that will carry them. Gergen said it is impossible to estimate the audience for the broadcasts, because the White House does not yet know how many stations will use them. The White House has no

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official name for Reagan's broadcasts. For now, they are being called ``the President's weekend reports.``

The Saturday time slot was chosen, said Gergen, because ``you reach a pretty broad audience at noon on Saturday.``

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