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# WITHDRAWAL SHEET

## Ronald Reagan Library

**Collection Name** CULVAHOUSE, ARTHUR B.:FILES

**Withdrawer**

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**File Folder** IRAN/ARMS TRANSACTION: GEOFFREY KEMP

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ID	Doc Type	Document Description	No of Pages	Doc Date	Restrictions
164209	PAPER	ADDEDUM TO MEMO RE: KEMP	3	ND	B1

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

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Unclassified with  
TOP SECRET Attachment

May 6, 1987

MEMORANDUM FOR THE FILE

FROM: PETER D. KEISLER **POK**  
SUBJECT: Interview of Geoffrey Kemp

On April 20, 1987, Geoffrey Kemp was interviewed by Bud Hall (House Select Committee), Dennis Teti (House Select Committee), and Victoria Nourse (Senate Select Committee). Dean McGrath and I attended the interview. The interview began at 4:30 p.m. and ended at approximately 6:00 p.m.

Kemp said that he is currently employed as a Senior Associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, where his job is to write and think about international affairs. Kemp said that he has been employed there for nine months, and prior to assuming that position had been employed by Georgetown University for eighteen months. Kemp said that he left the White House staff in January of 1985, but noted that he had "physically left" right after the November elections; he had accumulated several weeks of leave, and January 1985 is simply when he received his last paycheck.

Kemp said that he worked at the NSC staff from February of 1981 through December of 1984. He said that he served as Director for Near East and South Asia, and in 1983 was promoted to Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs. He noted that this promotion did not result in any change in his responsibilities.

Kemp was asked who his "employees" were, and named Howard Teicher. Kemp was asked whether he had done any work relating to the draft NSDD on Iran. Kemp said that he had not, and that the NSDD had been drafted after his time. Kemp said that the draft NSDD did not seem to have reflected any of his ideas or recommendations, but explained that he has never actually seen the draft, and therefore does not know whether there might be some portions with which he would agree, or some portions which might in fact have drawn upon his thinking. Kemp said that he would not have approved or concurred in the draft NSDD as it has been described. Kemp said that he had worked while he was at the NSC to try to establish better relations with groups trying to "make life difficult for the Ayatollah." Kemp said that any discussions concerning arms shipments to Iran during his tenure were in one



of two contexts: either in the context of proposals to ship arms to exile or dissident groups, or in the context of efforts to stop the flow of arms to the Iranian government. Kemp said that his reaction to what he read about the draft NSDD was "amazement." Kemp was asked whether he has spoken to Teicher since news of the arms shipments became public. Kemp said that he talked by telephone with Teicher in November of 1986, and has run into him a couple of times since. Kemp said that they have never discussed the draft NSDD. Kemp said that he initiated the November 1986 phone call prior to appearing on the McNeil-Lehrer show. Kemp said that he spoke to Teicher to see whether Teicher could tell him anything that he might need or wish to know for his television appearance. Kemp said that Teicher declined to talk about the Iranian situation. Kemp said that this telephone conversation occurred at the time when the story of the arms shipments was just starting to break in the Middle East.

Kemp said that the last time he spoke with Teicher was in February of 1987. Kemp said he asked Teicher what Teicher was doing, and Teicher told Kemp that he was looking for a job. Kemp said that Teicher has also called him to ask about job opportunities.

Kemp was asked to speculate on how the policy towards Iran could have changed so drastically and so quickly. Kemp reiterated that he has not read the draft NSDD, and therefore was not entirely sure what it said. Kemp said that there were certain components of that draft NSDD with which he agreed. Kemp said that all of them at the NSC were concerned about the possibility that the Soviet Union might have an entree into Iran if things went awry. Kemp said that his amazement arose from the fact that this concern was linked to changing our policy on supplying arms. Kemp said that he did not understand how that change could have happened, and said that it was totally contrary to what we had been doing previously. Kemp said that the fact that the Iranians were so desperate for advanced weapons was a ringing endorsement of what we had already done.

Kemp was asked whether he had had any conversations with McFarlane concerning the arms shipments to Iran. Kemp said that he had had one such conversation during a party held just after Christmas. Kemp said he had asked McFarlane about Secretary Shultz's position on the disclosures, and about why Shultz was not "saying more." Kemp said that McFarlane responded by saying "You know Shultz, what else do you expect?" Kemp said that McFarlane seemed depressed and lonely, and appeared to feel somewhat betrayed by Shultz.

Kemp said that he first met North in the summer of 1981. Kemp said that North had come over to the NSC right after the decision was made to place Richard Allen in charge of the effort to lobby Congress on the AWACs sale. Kemp said that North came over with two others from the Pentagon to help with the AWACs campaign, and stayed on after it was over. Kemp said that North served for a year as the liaison between the Office of Political-Military



Affairs, and Teicher and himself, on matters relating to arms sales in the Middle East. Kemp said that they worked closely together on such matters until the summer or fall of 1982, at which point Philip Durr came to the NSC and assumed the role that North had been filling. Kemp said that North then moved on to other things, and that from that point on, he and North did not work together very much. Kemp added that, given North's ubiquitous mandate, which was counter-terrorism, North could move in and out of every regional office with perfect legitimacy. Kemp said that he knew North was tasked with Central America, but he did not talk with North on Central American matters. Kemp said that Roger Fontaine and Constantine Menges did most of the talking at staff meetings regarding Central America. Kemp said that North did not attend many staff meetings himself, and that when he did, he was very quiet. Kemp said that he did not connect North in his mind with Iran, but that he did work with North on Lebanon in 1982. Kemp said that to his knowledge North did not know anything about Iran.

Kemp said that he did connect North with hostage issues. Kemp said that it was known that North was the NSC point man on matters relating to terrorism, counter-terrorism, and hostages. Kemp said that "beyond that, it was all a little vague." Kemp said that once the policy decision was made to ship arms, North was an obvious choice to be involved, since North handled hostage issues and terrorism. Kemp said that, in addition, North was an "operational whiz." Kemp said that North knew how to make phone calls and move planes around. Kemp said that when he worked with North in the summer of 1982 on Lebanon, North was "terrific." Kemp said that North could keep secrets, and was willing to get on the telephone and do the "scut work." Kemp said that the last time he and North talked was in or around the spring of 1985. Kemp said that he had called North's office because he had been asked by a friend to pass on information concerning a threat to an American diplomat in the south of France. Kemp said that he could not get through to North, and therefore talked with Fawn Hall, and told her that he would bring over a memorandum for North, which he did. Kemp said that Hall later told him that she had received the memorandum. Kemp said that he does not believe he had any direct contact with North on that occasion.

Kemp said that he first heard stories of the arms sale initiative in November of 1986. Kemp said that he had not heard anything before that that he would have taken seriously. Kemp noted that there had been a Jack Anderson column on the subject as well as some pieces by John Wallop. Kemp said that he does not know if he read them at the time, and Kemp said that if he had he probably would not have taken them seriously.

Kemp said that he has no idea why there was a policy change. Kemp was asked to speculate. Kemp said that, in his judgment, had the original team of Baker, Meese, and Deaver been in the White House when this initiative was discussed, the proposal would have been killed. Kemp said that Baker, Meese, and Deaver

would have "twisted Shultz's and Weinberger's arms" and gotten them to go to the President and talk him out of it.

Kemp said that he had not met Poindexter until he joined the staff in 1981. Kemp said that Poindexter's first job at the NSC was as a military assistant to Richard Allen. Kemp said that Poindexter then became the number three man when Judge Clark was NSC Adviser, and that the "pecking order" was Clark, McFarlane, Poindexter. Kemp said that Poindexter then became the Deputy. Kemp said he saw Poindexter "all the time." Kemp said that Poindexter was "the guy who got things done -- a terrific paper pusher."

Kemp said that the last time he talked with Poindexter was in late spring, 1985. Kemp said that when Poindexter became NSC Adviser in 1986, Kemp had an appointment with him, but the appointment was postponed and the two of them never had a chance to have a meeting.

Kemp was asked who he thought was behind the arms initiative. Kemp responded that he believes that the decision to explore relations with Iran through the Israelis was probably McFarlane's idea, because McFarlane was the one with the closest ties to Ledeen. Kemp said that he did not know what role Teicher or Fortier played in the matter. Kemp reiterated that he had no first-hand knowledge of this, except for the fact that he knew that Ledeen and McFarlane were close.

Kemp said that he had no idea what Ledeen's job was. Kemp said that he is certain that there was a period when Ledeen served as a consultant to the NSC. Kemp said that he sometimes saw Ledeen at the White House, and that he assumed that Ledeen talked to McFarlane about an array of subjects, one being the Middle East.

Kemp said that he believes that the decision to sell arms would ultimately have been McFarlane's decision. Kemp said that he was basing this speculation on what he had read in the press.

Kemp said that he has had no discussions with the principals concerning any diversion of funds to the Contras, and had no direct knowledge of it.

Kemp was asked whom he believed to have been the NSC point man on the Contras. Kemp responded that he did not know for certain. Kemp said that he knew that Constantine Menges was the regional expert who took the greatest interest in Central America, and he knew that North had visited Central America. Kemp said that, beyond that, he had no clear knowledge of what they did.

Kemp was asked to elaborate on North's involvement with the AWACs sale. Kemp explained that the National Security Council was assigned the responsibility of coordinating several interagency task forces which were lobbying the Hill on the AWACs sale. Kemp said these were divided up into several teams, with each team



containing representatives from the State Department and the White House. Kemp said that North worked with those teams.

[Kemp was shown various classified memoranda, and a summary of the discussion pertaining to those memoranda is appended to this report as a classified addendum.]

Kemp was asked, based on his past experience, how he imagines that North became directly involved in an "operational mode." Kemp responded that the subject matters in which North was engaged were very sensitive ones. Kemp stated that he did not see anything wrong with senior NSC officials becoming involved in operational matters on sensitive issues so long as no laws were broken. Kemp said that he would endorse what was said in the Tower Commission Report, that we should not create a series of reporting requirements with respect to the NSC, because future Presidents may need operational tasks carried out from time to time. Kemp was asked whether he thought it would have been characteristic of Poindexter not to let the President know that something was going on. Kemp said that Poindexter was one of the most efficient and organized officers he had ever met. Kemp said that Poindexter kept very precise notes on meetings, and was "up on factual matters." Kemp said that he always found Poindexter very pleasant, decent, and open about what was going on in any area on which he felt that the person he was talking to had a right to be informed. Kemp said that anything that he would say about what Poindexter did after Poindexter became National Security Adviser would be pure speculation, and "I wouldn't want to speculate."

cc: Arthur B. Culvahouse, Jr.  
Jay B. Stephens  
William B. Lytton III  
C. Dean McGrath  
Alan C. Raul  
Paul Schott Stevens  
Paul L. Colby

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ID	Document Type Document Description	No of pages	Doc Date	Restric- tions
164209	PAPER  ADDEDUM TO MEMO RE: KEMP	3	ND	B1

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