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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

December 5, 1986

MEMORANDUM FOR DONALD T. REGAN

FROM: THE COMMUNICATIONS GROUP

SUBJECT: Iran - A Strategy/General Observations

This is to address how we can best utilize our "other than President Reagan" assets -- press, Hill, political, etc. -- to communicate to the American people the positive actions that have been taken by the President and this Administration since the Iran issue has come to light. Those making up that infrastructure are in a unique position to carry this message. They can speak to the post-Iran revelations and not take the "what did you do" questions. Instead they can outline the President's leadership in getting to the bottom of the matter and his sharing everything with the American people.

Administration officials can be used in a different, but equally important way -- reassurance that we are governing -- in foreign policy, in domestic matters, and in setting the agenda.

Our focus should be on what the President has done to "get out the facts." Fifty-nine percent of the people trust the President. We must reinforce this view -- because unless that special relationship between the President and the public is maintained there will not be an acceptance of what we say, irrespective of the facts. Our strongest message is the affirmative action the President has taken -- the Tower Commission, the Independent Counsel, appointing a new NSC Advisor, the willingness to cooperate with the Hill, and finally the complete and immediate sharing of information with the American people.

While we may not convince the public of the correctness of our policy toward Iran and of the facts surrounding its implementation, we can demonstrate leadership and restore confidence by those actions taken after learning of the policy and the transfer of monies.

This is particularly important because Dick Wirthlin finds less than one out of ten persons identifies Iran as the most important issue. Therefore, if we show leadership in handling this issue and leadership on the other issues that are of importance to people we have the potential of rebuilding popular opinion to acceptable levels.

In summary we need to energize our support systems and spokesmen and emphasize what we have done to secure the facts and our leadership in other issues. What follows is an outline of a variety of activities for your consideration. You can review this over the weekend and then reconvene the group on Monday to discuss and then put into motion those recommendations you approve.

You should note press direction is needed even earlier because some actions are contemplated for this weekend.

CABINET AFFAIRS

Secretaries Shultz, Weinberger and Meese are directly involved in the Iran process and they know what they have to say. They will be consistently questioned. The same is true with CIA Director Casey but he has eschewed public forum. Ambassador Walters can also be put in this category and can directly focus on the details and issues of the Iran crisis.

None of the above should be used in a broad-based appeal to shore up the President's authority and record of success. If they do go out to do this they will be immediately put on the defensive for their roles, whatever they may be, in the Iran crisis. They must, as part of their regular public affairs programs, in their talks defend the President first, his policies and their roles in the Administration.

Regarding the rest of the Cabinet some things are obvious. The Secretary of Energy or Interior or Transportation simply cannot go out and make a speech on Iran. What they should do is step up their normal speaking efforts to their regular constituencies as well as the particular areas that are discussed below and make speeches about: (a) their particular areas; (b) their Department's roles in the 1987 agenda; (c) the Administration's program in general.

In their role of promoting the President they will have to allude to Iran. When Iran does come up they essentially should respond to the effect that the President has made certain policy decisions for good and sufficient reasons (and they can elaborate on that) that he believes they were sound reasons, but he recognizes that the majority of the American people disagree with that judgment and that therefore he has suspended all such activities with Iran.

He also recognizes that the diversion of funds was totally improper. He and other top Administration officials were surprised by the revelation. He has taken all of the necessary steps to ensure that that kind of violation of not only law and ethics but his own directives cannot happen again.

Talking points will be provided the Cabinet and sub-Cabinet official to achieve the above. They need to be asked to speak out.

To that end there might be two full Cabinet meetings in the near future. A briefing for the Cabinet on Iran -- what has happened, what did not happen, and what the Administration's position is on all of the relevant matters. (The Cabinet and the White House staff have yet to be briefed on these issues.)

A second Cabinet meeting should also be held before Christmas focusing entirely on the 1987 agenda -- a pre-State of the Union meeting so that the President can indicate the agenda for 1987, receive feedback from the Cabinet and allow the Cabinet to prepare itself over the holidays as well as for the President to consider Cabinet input.

During the holidays we should revive a practice we have had in the past of making some domestic announcement every day the President is away. Since we may not want to reveal the specific details of the State of the Union this early it becomes important to make sure these events are important enough without diminishing the effect of the State of the Union Address.

Regarding particular constituencies several of the Cabinet members are particularly strong in certain areas.

Secretary Hodel has strong followings in the south and southwest and also with the Christian communities and should step up his exposure there. Similarly Secretary Brock is also strong in the south and also among the large city editorial boards. Secretary Baker is strong in Texas, in the money centers and the major city editorial boards. Secretary Dole is especially strong with conservatives in general and Democratic conservatives in particular.

In general all of our efforts must begin to focus on issues such as trade, competitiveness, agriculture and energy that will be the focus on the domestic program.

CABINET AFFAIRS ACTION

Schedule a meeting with the President and the full Cabinet the week of December 8th to brief on Iran.

Approve	_____
Disapprove	_____
Let's Discuss	_____

Schedule a meeting with the President and the full Cabinet the week of December 15th to discuss agenda for 1987.

Approve _____

Disapprove _____

Let's Discuss _____

CONGRESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Our best ally in dealing with the Hill is information. In providing facts to our Republican leaders they have been able to speak out on behalf of the President.

The meetings with the Bipartisan Leaders last week and the meeting schedule for this Friday reinforce the perception the President is open and dealing with this in a bipartisan way. This will increasingly be seen to be in sharp contrast to the more shrill and partisan statements made by certain Democratic Members of Congress.

Continued meetings with Republican Members and the President and the Chief of Staff will build on the base of support already established. There is also a need to insure a coordinated response to Hill requests for testimony and information. This involves not only requests of the White House but Administration-wide requests.

Consistent with our goal to both handle Iran and focus on other issues additional Congressional meetings on non-Iran matters are in order. Senator Bentsen is undertaking a trip to Canada regarding trade. A follow-up meeting would be good. Speaker Wright has requested a SALT II meeting, Senator Domenici and Senator Domenici require Presidential direction regarding the budget. There is a Freshman orientation next week -- and they are scheduled to visit with the President.

All of the above represent opportunities to demonstrate leadership -- on Iran and non-Iran matters. Continued contact with the President and other White House and Administration persons can serve to diminish the criticism and increase the support.

CONGRESSIONAL ACTIVITIES ACTION

Schedule a meeting with Senator Bentsen and the President and appropriate Administration officials following his trip to Canada.

Approve _____
Disapprove _____
Let's Discuss _____

Schedule the already agreed to meeting with Speaker Wright on Salt II.

Approve _____
Disapprove _____
Let's Discuss _____

Schedule a Budget meeting with Senator Dole and Domenici prior to Christmas break.

Approve _____
Disapprove _____
Let's Discuss _____

Open coverage of Presidential statement to Republican Freshmen Meeting, December 10th, 10:00 a.m., White House

Approve _____
Disapprove _____
Let's Discuss _____

Invite key Republicans in for series of meetings with DTR to solicit their views on State of the Union.

Approve _____
Disapprove _____
Let's Discuss _____

Regular meetings with DTR and key House/Senate Republicans -- to keep informed and to seek advice.

Approve _____

Disapprove _____

Let's Discuss _____

PRESS ACTIVITIES

The objective is to seek as many credible non-Administration persons to engage the press as much as possible. The message must be the strong action the President has taken to get to the bottom of this matter

PRESS ACTIVITIES ACTIONS

Attached is a recommended series of press events that we would have to generate. You will need to review the interviews that would take place Sunday and Monday in order to seek their participation.

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN
December 7 - 12, 1986

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7, 1986

11:00 am	NBC	Meet the Press Henry Kissinger is guest
12 noon	CBS	Face the Nation Jeanne Kirkpatrick is guest

MONDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1986

8:00 am	Sperling Breakfast Group Paul Laxalt is guest
10:00 am	Congressman Bob Michel, Congressman Trent Lott and Congressman Dick Cheney hold press conference to stress administration's willingness to cooperate with House committee.
11:00 am	Senator Bob Dole and Senator Alan Simpson hold press conference to stress administration's willingness to cooperate with Senate committee.
3:00 pm	Tower Review group meets with the President to outline his plans for study of National Security Council. Announces staff structure and details of their approach to the review of NSC policy and procedures.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 9, 1986

3:30 pm	President meets with Republican Governors. He reiterates his willingness to "get to the bottom of" the Iranian matter.
4:00 pm	Republican governors brief press on their view of the Iranian situation.

4:30 pm Republican governors interviewed by local program networks for direct feeds to key television stations in their home states.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 1986

7:00 am Attorney General Meese appears on Good Morning America.

10:00 am Frank Fahrenkopf makes speech in which he stresses party stability under Reagan leadership.

10:45 am President meets with newly-elected Representatives of Congress, stresses his willingness to cooperate with House committee.

3:00 pm Vice President Bush makes major address reiterating points made in American Enterprise Institute speech.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 11, 1986

8:00 am Senator Laxalt meets with Conservative Breakfast Club group.

10:00 am Secretary Shultz makes major address to stress stability and forward approach to United States foreign policy.

2:00 pm Briefing by key White House officials for selected panelists on Sunday television interview shows:
John McLaughlin
Mort Kondracke
Fred Barnes
Hugh Sidey
James J. Kilpatrick

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1986

10:00 am Pat Buchanan meets with conservative columnists.

OP ED PIECES

Op Ed pieces to be placed in major newspapers:

New York Times	Zbigniew Brzezinski
Washington Post	Gerald Ford
Los Angeles Times	Henry Kissinger
Chicago Tribune	Anne Armstrong
Wall Street Journal	James J. Kilpatrick

PUBLIC LIAISON ACTIVITIES

The effort here would be to "get the message out." As you will see in reading the following, contacts would be made with a myriad of groups and with individuals other than the President.

As in the past if the schedule allows, and as the need arises we could have the President to do a drop-by. Office of Public Liaison is prepared to move quickly on these meetings -- many next week.

OPL Outreach Plan

I. Meetings/Speaking Engagements

a. In House

- December 17: National Religious Broadcasters Executive Board
- New Right Leadership
- Heritage Foundation and other public policy "think tanks" analysts and surrogate speakers.
- Veteran Organization leadership
- Briefing for National Republican Heritage Groups Council, Room 450, December 10, 2-3:15
- Meetings for Jewish, ethnic and hispanic leaders with Pat Buchanan and Mari Maseng
- December 10 - Roosevelt Room lunch with top association presidents (Leshner, Trowbridge, Maury and Van Dongen)
- December 11 - 3:00 p.m. Roosevelt Room meeting with ten key Washington business leaders
- December 12 - 2:00 p.m. Roosevelt Room meeting with leaders from small business
- December 15 - 10:00 a.m. Roosevelt Room meeting with business groups on mandated benefits
- December 16 - 3:00 p.m. meeting in Room 208 OEOB with presidents of ten other major associations

a. In-House Meetings continued:

- December 18 - 10:00 a.m. Roosevelt Room meeting with ten key Washington business leaders
- Two meetings for top CEO's on trade with Mr. Regan
- An additional Washington business leader meeting with Will Ball
- A meeting for Washington energy leaders with NSC and legislative affairs
- Urban Affairs Meetings:
 - a. Public education
 - b. Higher education
 - c. Employment and training
 - d. Minority business development
 - e. The Economy (including possible activities to extend the economic recovery to black communities).
- 1987 budget and trade briefing for Presidents of national women's organizations and female business leaders.
- Defense and foreign policy briefing for the Daughters of the American Revolution.
- Luncheon for Presidents of national women's organizations.

b. Outside

- Pat Buchanan address Stanton Group
- Pat Buchanan address Conservative Opportunity Society luncheon.
- Dade County, Florida, Republican Committee and other Cuban American organizations are hosting a "Support the President" rally at the Dade County Civic Center on Monday, December 8, at 7:00 p.m.
- National Jewish Coalition dinner with Pat Buchanan as guest speaker
- Linas Kojelis to address luncheon hosted by Association of American Women, Los Angeles, December 15.

II. Radio

- Contact America
- International Christian Media
- National Forum Foundation
- Moody Broadcasting
- Work with National Forum Foundation to get pro-Administration speakers (Burt Pines, etc.) on up to 150 radio stations.
- Briefing for Hispanic Media
- Briefing for Ethnic Media

III. Television

- 700 Club
- Falwell Live
- CBN News
- The U.S. Chamber's BizNet TV

IV. Mailings

- Evangelical leaders and Media (1,300)
- Inter-denominational religious leaders (350)
- Catholic leaders (300)
- Mail all appropriate Presidential and Vice Presidential speeches, and White House press releases to our mailing list.
- Background pieces or information to major associations.
- ASAE could mail to 1, 000 associations

-- Pro-Administration press releases, and offers to speak to the press from following people/organizations:

- A. Gerry Carmen, President, Citizens for America
- B. Daniel Graham, President, Coalition for the Strategic Defense Initiative
- C. Stanley Gecys, President, Lithuanian American Community of U.S.A., Inc.
- E. Burt Pines, Heritage Foundation
- F. Oscar Moran, LULAC
- G. Hector Barreto, U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- H. Jose Sorzano, Cuban American Foundation
- I. Carlos Perez, Freedom for Democracy
- J. David Morales, National Association of Hispanic Contractors
- K. Steve Denlinger, President, Latin American Manufacturers Association
- L. Rudy Sanchez, President, Hispanic Americana
- M. Alba Moeser, President, National Council of Hispanic Women
- N. Dr. Ana Perera, Past President of Cuban Women Foundation
- O. Fernando DeBaca, Chairman of RNHA
- P. Frank Vinh, Vietnamese Republican Organization
- Q. Joy Cherian, Asian American Voters Coalition
- R. Fuad Sahouri, Chairman, American-Arab Business and Professional Association

V. Print Materials - We could work to generate favorable op-ed pieces in newspapers and major periodicals. Business groups who would help -

- Council for National Policy
- Citizens for a Sound Economy
- Wall and Ceiling Contractors
- COMET

We could probably also get help from others like -

- Amer TRucking Assoc
- Edison Electric Institute
- American Paper Institute
- National Soft Drink Association
- American Electronic Association

PUBLIC LIAISON ACTIVITIES ACTION

With your approval the above activities will be undertaken.

Approve _____
Disapprove _____
Let's Discuss _____

POLITICAL AFFAIRS ACTIVITIES

There are a number of efforts underway to try to use our political assets to get the President's message out on the Iranian problem, and, ultimately, moving beyond the subject. There are other ways in which our political allies can be helpful.

The Republican National Committee, Citizens for America and Project '88 have already disseminated material to their leadership in all 50 states making our points and urging support of the President. All three organizations have been encouraging their leaders to speak out on behalf of the President.

A number of Republican party leaders in the various states have issued statements or made comments to the media in support of the President and, particularly, of the actions taken concerning the independent counsel, etc. Results are somewhat mixed, both in terms of effort by the state and local party leaders and in acceptance and use by local media.

We are monitoring the party effort daily and are staying in close touch not only with the RNC but with the state leaders directly. We're keeping similar close contact with groups like CFA and Project '88.

GENERAL

Our central dilemma is to demonstrate that the President is in charge of affairs. That points to "life goes on" activities of everyday governance, but also requires an active Presidential visibility in the cleanup process. In the public mind, that's what running the country means right now.

Possible steps:

- o Meet with Tower Commission for interim reports.
- o Meet with Meese and/or Webster for briefings on findings.
- o Then have Meese hold public briefings to release new facts -- almost anything will do -- a couple times per week prior to giving them to the Special Prosecutor.

Another important goal is to dissociate this situation from Watergate as clearly as possible. The two basic distinctions are:

- o The goals and motives in the present controversy were beyond reproach.
- o It's apparent that no coverup will occur.

Possible steps:

- o Sound out Sen. Baker, Ruckelshaus, Elliott Richardson for public appearances, interviews, op eds if they are willing to take this line.
- o Meese, Wallison, or others could bring people like the above in for a conspicuous consultation on the best handling of the Congressional hearings, etc. to ensure maximum possible openness.

A third specific problem is the public misunderstanding of the 5th Amendment, and the belief that its invocation even temporarily, by individuals acting on advice of counsel, constitutes an Administration "stonewall."

Possible steps:

- o Approach Warren Burger to make a speech, issue a statement, etc., addressing the matter and pointing out that not even a President of the United States can compel an American citizen to waive his constitutional rights.
- o We need to underscore, perhaps through a letter from Wallison to Poindexter's and North's counsel, the President's intense desire that they provide forthright testimony as soon as they are prepared to do so.