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# News Summary

OFFICE OF THE PRESS SECRETARY

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 1985 -- 6 a.m. EST EDITION

## TODAY'S HEADLINES

### NATIONAL NEWS

Balanced-Budget Measure Snags -- Despite White House misgivings, House Democratic leaders involved in negotiations predicted that remaining problems would be resolved and the measure would be enacted by Congress.

(Washington Post, New York Times, Baltimore Sun)

GOP Warned Of Backlash If Tax Bill Dies -- The White House warned Republican House members that the GOP will suffer if they fail to support a tax overhaul bill.

(Washington Post, Baltimore Sun, AP)

### INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Shultz Arrives In London -- Secretary Shultz arrived in London today on an eight-day trip to Europe.

(UPI, Reuter)

New Guatemalan Leader To Visit U.S. Seeking Aid -- "They've owed it to us for a long time," Cerezo said of the U.S. aid.

(Washington Post, AP, UPI)

### NETWORK NEWS (Monday Evening)

**TAX REFORM** -- Once it became known Reagan had committed himself, Tip O'Neill declared: "The Gipper is in the game."

**DRUG SMUGGLING** -- The Vice President was in Miami to ride on the newest boat the government has to chase drug smugglers.

**U.N. TERRORISM** -- The General Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution condemning all acts of terrorism as criminal.

#### SOVIETS: SAKHAROV NOT IN EXILE

Samuel Zevs, vice president of the Soviet Lawyers' Association, Monday denied dissident physicist Andrei Sakharov is in internal exile, saying he was sent to the city of Gorky, which is like "Detroit or Cleveland," because he advocated war with the United States. (Jack Redden, UPI, 12/9)

## NATIONAL NEWS

### BUDGET BILL SHOWDOWN NEARS

Legislation to force a balanced federal budget within five years moved toward a congressional showdown yesterday amid renewed signs of White House alarm over the measure's likely impact on defense spending. Spokesman Larry Speakes said the Administration wanted to be "absolutely certain" that automatic spending cuts that would be mandated by the measure does not take a larger hit out of defense than we would like..."

(Edward Walsh, Washington Post, A1)

### Military Impact On Deficit Plan Stalls Conferees

House and Senate conferees sought Monday to resolve White House objections that a bill to require a balanced budget would hit the Pentagon too hard. But top negotiators from the House and the Senate said they still thought agreement could be reached today.

(Jonathan Fuerbringer, New York Times, A1)

### Vote On Balanced Budget Sidetracked By Details

Despite a tentative accord in Congress on a balanced-budget plan, House and Senate negotiators were unable to wrap up a final agreement on the measure yesterday and delayed a formal vote until today at the earliest.

(Baltimore Sun, A1)

### GOP WARNED OF BACKLASH IF TAX BILL DIES

The White House warned Republican House members yesterday that the GOP will suffer politically if they fail to support a tax overhaul bill, and key Republicans acknowledged that combined pressure from President Reagan and Democratic leaders is having an effect. But Democratic leaders predicted their version will be approved this week. And some GOP strategists privately agreed.

(Anne Swardson, Lou Cannon, Washington Post, A1)

### Rival Tax Plans Heading For House Showdown

Reagan, whose own tax recommendations are closer to the GOP plan, has urged the House to approve one of the two bills just to keep the tax reform movement alive. But if both bills die in the House, the President said Monday in a letter to House members, "it is reasonable to suggest that tax reform might be 'dead' for several years."

(AP)

### GOP Leaders Rebuff Reagan On Tax Reform

House Republican leaders rebuffed President Reagan yesterday when he personally urged them to refrain from actively opposing tax overhaul legislation prepared for floor action this week.

(Stephen Nordlinger, Baltimore Sun, A1)

### NO VETO THREATS YET, BLOCK SAYS OF FARM BILL

Secretary Block said yesterday that despite "serious defects" in House and Senate versions of the farm bill, the Administration isn't ready to threaten a veto. Mr. Block predicted that a compromise bill will be on the President's desk by Christmas. (Washington Times, A2)

### CONGRESS APPROVES SANCTIONS AGAINST FARMERS WHO DON'T CONSERVE

Tough new sanctions against farmers who contribute to the nation's erosion problems won easy approval in Congressional negotiations, but the overall farm bill remained tangled in disagreement over commodity subsidies. Soil conservation language approved by negotiators Monday would for the first time tie farm program benefits -- from subsidies to crop insurance -- to the way a farmer treats his fragile crop land. It also would offer federal rent payments to entice farmers to retire from production their most erosion-prone acreage. (AP)

### VICE PRESIDENT TESTS NEW CUSTOMS SPEED BOAT

MIAMI -- Vice President Bush tested a new weapon in the war against drug smugglers, but reported that narcotics traffickers are winning at least half the battle. Bush said he was "determined ... that we will win the war on drugs." The Vice President took a \$150,000 "blue thunder" speedboat used by U.S. customs agents for a test ride Monday and said the government will buy 18 of the catamaran craft designed by former U.S. and world champion powerboat racer Don Aranow. (UPI)

### VIRGINIA RACE SEEN AS OMEN FOR THE GOP

WILMINGTON, Del. -- Republican National Committee Chairman Frank Farenkopf Jr. warned his party's governors Monday that GOP hopes in 1986 may be blighted if Democrats follow the lead of Virginia Gov. Charles Robb and the successful Democratic campaign in the Old Dominion this year. (David Broder, Washington Post, A1)

### GOP SEES VICTORY IN MOST '86 GUBERNATORIAL RACES

WILMINGTON, Del. -- Republicans expect a net gain of eight to 10 governorships in the 1986 elections on the strength of what their top pollsters say is broad public support for GOP policies, programs and performance. "It's going to be a very promising year for the Republican Governors' Association, said the group's outgoing chairman, Pennsylvania Gov. Richard Thornburgh, who predicted the GOP will win a majority of the 1986 gubernatorial races. (Bill Kling, Washington Times, A4)

## ANTI-WASHINGTON CAMPAIGNS SAID TO HURT APPOINTMENT PROCESS

WASHINGTON -- Presidents Carter and Reagan had a hard time getting talented people to serve in their administrations because of the anti-Washington nature of their campaigns, Frank Carlucci, head of Sears World Trade Inc., and a former top level official in the departments of HEW and Defense and the CIA, says. (UPI)

## Federal Government Said Facing Loss Of Talent At Top

The federal government is suffering a steady erosion of talent at the top, and the system presidents use to pick agency officials must be revised to ensure the nation has leaders of quality, a study said Monday.

"The presidential appointments system is in distress -- and it is getting worse," said Calvin Mackenzie, the director of the study, 'Leadership In Jeopardy,' conducted by the non-partisan, congressionally chartered National Academy of Public Administration. (AP)

## NASA MAILES STATEMENT SUPPORTING BEGGS

A NASA official says someone made a "mistake" by mailing out a statement signed by 28 top space agency officials expressing support for NASA administrator James Beggs, who faces federal fraud charges.

Although a copy of the statement arrived at UPI in the mail, Frank Johnson, director of public affairs for NASA, said Monday that to his knowledge the statement was hand-delivered on Capitol Hill and to some media outlets. (UPI)

## NLRB ACTS IN DISCRIMINATION CASE

The National Labor Relations Board has accused ConAgra of illegally refusing to hire union workers at the new, nonunion plants, board officials said Monday. The complaint must first be heard by an administrative law judge, whose decision likely will be reviewed by the five-member board, probably next year. (Washington Post, A5)

## REPORT ON MIDGETMAN STALLED IN PENTAGON

An Air Force draft report to Congress, which says 500 Midgetman mobile nuclear missiles deployed on five military bases could help counter the Soviet military threat, has been stalled on Secretary Weinberger's desk because of Pentagon uncertainty over the next generation of U.S. strategic forces, according to congressional sources.

(Walter Pincus, Washington Post, A6)

## JUDGE TURNS DOWN BAIL FOR ACCUSED SPY'S WIFE

A federal judge ruled yesterday that it would be a "threat to our national security" to release Anne Henderson-Pollard, wife of accused spy Jonathan Pollard, and turned down a request to grant her bail.

(Washington Post, A16)

Henderson-Pollard To Stay In Jail

Henderson-Pollard was arrested four days after she allegedly telephoned a third person and asked that person to pick up a suitcase -- stuffed with classified documents -- and bring it to her in a Washington hotel so she could burn the contents. (UPI)

HOSTAGE VIGIL

WESTMINSTER, Calif. -- Relatives of four American hostages held in Lebanon joined supporters for an afternoon of prayers and Christmas Carols, and heard a negotiator say he is hopeful the men will be returned soon. Anglican envoy Terry Waite, who is trying to negotiate the hostages' release, wished the group "a merry Christmas and good luck," in a brief telephone call Monday from London. (UPI)

BURFORD WANTS MEESE IMPEACHED IF HE FAILS  
TO SEEK EPA INQUIRY

Attorney General Meese "should be impeached" if he fails to seek an independent inquiry into allegations that Reagan Administration lawyers lied to Congress and a federal court in withholding EPA files in 1983, former EPA chief Anne Burford said Monday.

"They ought to just bomb the Justice Department" ... Burford said in an interview. (Washington Post, A17)

EDITOR'S NOTES: Page C1 of the Washington Post contains "Dressing Up A White House Christmas", "Puffing It Out", and "The Mess Market" -- all stories on the White House and/or Reagans. Page B1 of the Washington Times contains "Bill Buckley Unassuming Amid Praise", "Santa Arrives Early At 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue", and page B4 of the Washington Times has "How The First Dog Lost His Job."

-more-

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### SHULTZ ARRIVES IN LONDON

LONDON -- Secretary Shultz arrived in London Tuesday on an eight-day trip to Europe that will include his first official visits to Berlin, Yugoslavia and two Soviet bloc nations. In London, Shultz was to deliver what aides term a "globally oriented" speech to the Pilgrim Society, a prestigious group dedicated to Anglo-U.S. relations. (UPI)

### Shultz Believes Israeli Spying Limited To One Case

LONDON -- Secretary Shultz said Tuesday he knew of no other cases of Israel spying on the U.S. beyond that of Jonathan Pollard, arrested last month for passing secret documents to Israel. A U.S. official team is due in Israel tomorrow to interview Israeli officials on the spy case, which strained relations between the two close allies. (Reuter)

### U.S. DELAYS ANGOLA REBEL AID TO FOSTER TALKS ON CUBANS

The Reagan Administration has tentatively decided to provide less than \$30 million as the first installment of a covert aid program to rebels fighting the Marxist regime in Angola, according to Administration sources.

Secretary Shultz, according to congressional sources, has effectively lobbied to kill several congressional proposals for \$27 million in either humanitarian assistance or overt military aid.

(David Ottaway, Washington Post, A1)

### GUATEMALA'S NEW LEADER TO VISIT U.S. SEEKING AID

GUATEMALA CITY -- President-elect Vinicio Cerezo announced Monday that he will visit Washington on Dec. 17 for talks with members and with Administration officials who "very probably" will include Vice President Bush.

"They've owed it to us for a long time," Cerezo said of the U.S. aid.

(Robert McCartney, Washington Post, A23)

### President-Elect To Seek Aid In Washington

One of Cerezo's top priorities is renegotiation of Guatemala's \$2.3 billion foreign debt because loan payments threaten to eat up half of the country's export earnings next year. (AP)

### President-Elect To Ask Bush, Congress For More Aid

"But we will only accept economic aid without conditions," Cerezo said Monday after final results gave him an overwhelming victory in presidential runoff elections the day before. (UPI)

### McFARLANE OPTIMISTIC ON ARMS CONTROL

National Security Affairs Adviser Robert McFarlane said yesterday that the United States and the Soviet Union "are at a real moment of opportunity in arms control," and have the chance to achieve an interim agreement that would limit intermediate-range ballistic missiles in Europe.

(Lou Cannon, Washington Post, A7)

### McFarlane Says More Effort Needed To Put Down Spying

Former National Security Adviser Robert McFarlane, in his first speech since leaving office, said Monday the United States should make greater efforts to reduce spying even at the cost of straining U.S.-Soviet relations. In a speech before the World Affairs Council, McFarlane defended Reagan's goals of rearmament and restoring a sense of national purpose.

(Bill Gertz, Washington Times, A3)

### OPEC SHIFTING POLICY

GENEVA -- In a clear move away from its traditional pricing and production quota policies toward responding to market forces, OPEC decided Monday to concentrate during the next six months on defending its share of the world market against such competitors as Britain and Norway.

(Washington Post, A23)

### OPEC's Loss Of Clout Stirs Consumer Hopes

Gasoline prices in 1986 could plunge below a dollar, airline prices could fall as well, and so could prices for a wide variety of consumer goods -- all because of OPEC's failure to dominate global oil prices.

(Washington Times, A1)

### JAPAN SOUGHT TO HEAD OFF CHIPS INVESTIGATION

While the semiconductor issue appears on center stage for the present, there are other areas of trade frictions waiting in the wings. Yeutter has said he will reassess Washington's trade strategy with Japan at the end of the year based on results in a series of ongoing trade talks.

(Washington Post, E3)

### FREEING OF U.S.-SOVIET TRADE URGED

MOSCOW -- The President of a U.S.-Soviet Trade Council meeting here this week contended Monday that Washington's efforts to alter policies in Moscow through trade restrictions should give way to a more positive approach. "Many of us are asking whether we have used the stick long enough and whether we should start to use the carrot. After all, 10 years of restrictions have not got us much," said President James Giffen of the non-governmental U.S.-U.S.S.R. Trade and Economic Council at a press conference.

(Washington Post, A25)

### U.S. IMPOSES TRAVEL CURBS

The Reagan Administration said Monday that it had imposed new travel restrictions on officials of four Warsaw Pact countries because of their recent record of hostile activity. The restrictions affect East Germany, Poland, Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia. The Soviet Union already is subject to tough travel rules. (Reuter story, Washington Post, A26)

### NUCLEAR PACT WITH CHINA PUT IN DOUBT

The Senate voted unexpectedly yesterday to attach stiffening language to the nuclear trade agreement with China that goes into effect this week, casting doubt on whether the Chinese will stand by the pact.

The amendment, offered by Sen. Glenn (D-Oh.) to the catchall government spending bill that is still under debate, would require the President to certify that materials sold to China and bought from it are subject to International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards against the spread of nuclear weapons. (Washington Post, A30)

#### Senate Votes Restrictions On Nuclear Sales To China

The Senate voted yesterday to put restrictions on the sale of nuclear technology to China, a move that could prevent U.S. businesses from gaining a share of China's \$6 billion nuclear power plant construction program. (Washington Times, A2)

### HOPES FOR FILIPINO UNITY DIE -- LAUREL TO RUN ALONE

MANILA -- Leading oppositionist Salvador "Doy" Laurel yesterday officially filed to run for President, apparently eliminating any hope that a united opposition will face Philippine leader Ferdinand Marcos in an election planned for February 7. (Washington Times, A6)

### U.N. OKs ANTITERROR RESOLUTION -- ITS FIRST

NEW YORK -- The U.N. General Assembly yesterday approved by consensus a resolution that condemned terrorist acts as "criminal" -- the first time the world body has unequivocally passed such a resolution condemning terrorism. (Washington Times, A1)

#### Spate Of Hijackings Prompts Anti-Terrorist Mood At U.N.

The General Assembly's unanimous adoption Monday of a resolution condemning as criminal all acts of terrorism is being hailed by U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar as a "truly important achievement" during the world body's 40th anniversary year. (AP)

## NETWORK NEWS SUMMARY

(Monday Evening, December 9, 1985)

### BUDGET

NBC's Roger Mudd: This is a showdown week on Capitol Hill and with time running out on the Christmas recess, all the major players in the balanced budget fight are using Santa Claus as their hostage.

NBC's Bob Kur: All over the Capitol today, meetings to put the finishing touches on a major change in the budget process. A controversial plan by Republican Senators Gramm and Rudman and Democrat Hollings to force a balanced budget in five years.

(Senator Warren Rudman: "The people are serious about wanting to get the federal budget under control and this is extraordinarily good legislation.")

Next year's projected \$200 billion deficit cut to \$172 billion. Big annual cuts would follow leading to a balanced budget by 1991. If the President and Congress failed to meet the annual budget targets, the President would order across the board budget cuts. But more than half the budget would be exempt from any cuts: social security, anti-poverty and many social programs, veterans pensions and interest on the national debt. All cuts would come from a severely limited slice of the budget affecting education, health research, job training, mass transit and defense. Today, at the last moment, President Reagan's budget director tried to pressure Congress to be more generous on defense.

(TV coverage of James Miller: "Obviously some of his advisors have grave concerns about substantial further reductions in the defense budget.")

Miller insists the President remains committed to an increase in military spending and other Republicans, fearful of cutting as deeply as Gramm-Rudman would require, say the signs all point one way.

(Senator William Roth: "All I can call it is a mandatory act of tax increases for 1986.")

President Reagan has pushed balanced budget legislation all along but tonight, with his military build up threatened and warnings of a tax increase, the White House won't say whether Mr. Reagan will sign the bill.

(NBC-4)

### TAX REFORM

Mudd: But the White House today did sent out heavy signals on the tax reform bill and once it became known that Mr. Reagan had committed himself, Speaker O'Neill's office declared: The Gipper is in the game.

NBC's Chris Wallace: The White House moved today to save the President's top domestic initiative, saying in a letter to all House members that if they don't pass something this week, tax reform may be dead for years.

(Monday Evening, December 9, 1985)

Wallace continues: (TV coverage of Larry Speakes: "A vote against final passage in the House would doom our efforts to achieve real tax reform for the American people. We must not allow that to happen.") The President's new lobbying campaign is directed at members of his own party who overwhelmingly oppose the Democratic bill of Ways and Means Chairman Rostenkowski and say they want a Republican plan or nothing. Today, with Democrats saying they need at least 50 Republicans to pass tax reform but the White house having picked up only a handful of votes, the President started making calls himself. But at a Republican conference, Mr. Reagan's lobbying had no immediate effect.

(Rep. Robert Michel: "Well I just don't think up to this point there has been erosion on our side and I would be surprised if there would be more than 25 people on our side of the isle that would eventually vote for a Rostenkowski bill if that were the final product.")

The Republicans charge that by reducing investment incentives, the Democratic bill could cause a recession and a private study by Reagan economic advisor Burl Sprinkle projects a slow down of business activity and employment growth under the plan. The White House says the Senate can improve the bill next year, but many business leaders just want to start over.

(Richard Rahn: "We think we ought to have pro-growth tax reform rather than 'anti' tax reform like this bill.")

With Republicans fighting Republicans, Nancy Reagan was asked whether husband would like a tax reform bill for Christmas.

(Mrs. Reagan: "Your not going to get me into that. I'm talking about Christmas.")

But the President would have a very bad Christmas if his own party killed this major initiative, which is why Mr. Reagan will put on a blitz this week for a bill some of his closest political allies oppose.

(NBC-5)

ABC's Peter Jennings: The House of Representatives is getting closer to a vote on tax reform. It may not be exactly what President Reagan wants, but as Steve Shepard reports, today he tried to give the plan another nudge.

ABC's Steve Shepard: White House spokesman Larry Speakes today read a letter President Reagan sent this morning to all 435 members of the House.

(TV coverage: Speakes in the Press Briefing Room.)

In it the President spelled out his position on tax reform in no uncertain terms.

(TV coverage: Graphics of the President and the letter. Audio is Speakes reading the letter. "I strongly urge you to vote for tax reform. If the bill does not move forward from the House now, tax reform might be dead for several years.")

But in meetings on Capitol Hill it has become clear the Republican tax reform bill isn't given a prayer by most Congressmen, and the Democratic Ways and Means bill is detested by many Republicans who think it will damage the economy. Several of them said today that they were not about to vote for the Democratic bill and that the President's letter hadn't changed their minds.

(Monday Evening, December 9, 1985)

Shepard continues: (Rep. Newt Gingrich: "It is ridiculous to say that it's this or nothing. We have three more years of the Reagan Administration, we can do a lot better. This is a pityful bill to be called tax reform.")

Plenty of Democrats also oppose the bill which means some 75 Republican votes are needed to get it through the House. Mr. Reagan worked the telephones today trying to sway wavering Republicans to vote for passage. In the mean time the President also faces a key vote this week on the Gramm-Rudman deficit reduction bill. Budget director James Miller made it clear today that the Administration likes the general outlines of the bill but is concerned that it may result in serious defense cutbacks.

(TV coverage of Miller in the Press Briefing Room.)

Despite significant Republican opposition, the Administration believes it has a good chance to get tax reform safely through the House this week. On Gramm-Rudman it's still not really sure it wants a bill passed unless defense spending can somehow be spared. (ABC-6)

#### AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

CBS's Dan Rather: The latest to come out of the turmoil within President Reagan's Donald Regan run White House circle. This time over one of the touchiest issues of the day inside or outside the Administration, Affirmative Action hiring goals. Bill Plante has been told that President Reagan will most likely not change the rules, rules which now require those doing business with the government to hire women and minorities in certain numbers to prevent job discrimination. This would amount to rejecting Attorney General Edwin Meese's line of argument. He's been saying the guidelines amount to illegal hiring by quota and he's been urging President Reagan to change the Affirmative Action guide lines with the stroke of a pen by changing an Executive Order signed by President Johnson. (CBS-14)

#### DRUG SMUGGLING

Jennings reports Vice President Bush was in Miami today to take a ride on the newest patrol boat the government has to chase drug smugglers. It is a high powered speed boat which they say can do 60 mph in rough seas. (TV coverage of the Vice President riding in the boat.) (ABC-7)

#### WHITE HOUSE CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS

Jennings reports today the First Family unveiled this year's Christmas decorations.

ABC's Sheilah Kast reports that's just what they have done at the White House. Tinsel trees, home made dolls and the traditional ginger bread house with Presidential jelly beans. TV scrooge Larry Hagman turned up as Santa Claus.

(Monday Evening, December 9, 1985)

Kast continues: As he and the First Lady toured the decorations, she was asked what her husband wants for Christmas, maybe a tax reform bill?

(TV coverage of the First Lady: "You're not going to get me into that.")

Instead she talked about the 1,500 ornaments which volunteers from a drug rehabilitation program had made from the 40,000 Christmas cards the Reagans received last year. And she showed off the Christmas gift the President had given her, a year old King Charles cocker spaniel named Rex. This afternoon the East Room was buzzing with 300 children of foreign diplomats. A new Santa, alias weatherman Willard Scott, welcomed them. The First Lady was escorted by Emanuel Lewis, better known to this audience as Webster. Mrs. Reagan shared her guests delight in the antics of "Abner the Eccentric". She joined Santa and Webster on stage for carols and added a holiday thought.

(Mrs. Reagan: "I wish you all a very, very Merry Christmas.")

(ABC-11, CBS-16)

#### SOUTH AFRICA

Jennings reports there has been a major political embarrassment for the government of South Africa at a treason trial for 16 black and Asian leaders. First the government's star witness said he had made a fundamental mistake in his evidence, and then today the government's charges against 12 of them were suddenly dropped.... The trial for the other 4 will continue.

(ABC-2, CBS-4, NBC-Lead)

#### OPEC

Rather reports crude oil prices started dropping today, where they'll stop nobody knows. It happened when OPEC oil ministers ended their meeting in Geneva by practically daring non-OPEC producers to start a price war and see who comes out on top.

(ABC-5, CBS-Lead)

#### U.N. TERRORISM

Rather reports after years of rangling about semantics and definitions, the United Nations General Assembly today unanimously adopted a resolution condemning all acts of terrorism as criminal.

(NBC-3, CBS-3, ABC-4)

#### MONEY OWED TO U.S.

Rather reports there is no end of stories about how much and how deep the federal deficit is, today a report on how much is owed to the federal government in over due debts. All in all, says the government's General Accounting office, from unpaid taxes to unrepaid student loans, small business loans, even foreign governments that didn't make good on their debts, the U.S. government is owed a total of \$64.6 billion and it has been growing by about \$53 and a half million a day.

(CBS-13)

## EDITORIALS/COLUMNISTS

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### NATIONAL SECURITY STAFF CHANGES

McFarlane's Ill-Timed Exit -- "The departure of national security adviser Robert McFarlane means a loss of focus, a skipped beat, at a time when President Reagan faces crucial decisions.... If the President decides that he wants a new deal with the Russians, he must somehow control the Pentagon spoilers who do not. It would help to have the benefit of a confident deputy, knowledgeable enough to counsel a sound course and strong enough to make it happen." (Boston Globe, 12/6)

Primus, Pares and Poindexter -- "A less dramatic reading seems in order: that one competent staff officer has supplanted another, that President Reagan is the master and not the puppet of his staff and that the biggest gainer isn't in the White House. His name is George Shultz." (New York Times, 12/6)

McFarlane's Exit -- "The decision has led to much speculation that he was a victim of a power play by White House Chief of Staff Donald Regan. Such an interpretation, however, may be unfair to both. There is no question that Regan has an autocratic style. Neither is there any question that he and McFarlane have clashed.... Yet there also is no reason to believe that McFarlane, a former Marine Corps officer, would walk away to escape a fight over turf.... On balance, it is best to simply accept McFarlane's statement that he wants to move on to something else.... Boring as it may seem, that's frequently how such things happen." (Chicago Sun-Times, 12/6)

His Departure Marks A Troubling Shift in White House Power -- "The President, true to his hands-off philosophy toward the White House organization, has just agreed that another step toward the centralization of power in Mr. Regan's hands take place. This could prove to be a major mistake as he shapes his second term." (Detroit Free-Press, 12/6)

Who's In Charge? -- "A President whom many regard as too dependant on a small circle of advisers can ill afford to let one lieutenant, however trusted, further restrict access to the Oval Office." (Miami Herald, 12/6)

A New Security Adviser -- "Above all else, Mr. Poindexter's appointment provides a measure of continuity in the national security post.... Mr. McFarlane leaves behind a number of accomplishments to which he can point with pride: the successful Geneva summit meeting, the peaceful resolution of several crises and some progress in coordinating the fight against world terrorism. One can only hope Mr. Poindexter does as well." (Dallas Times Herald, 12/6)

Taming the NSC -- "The job of NSC chief is almost impossibly difficult, and in that way allegiances to both Regan and Weinberger may ease Poindexter's way. But the NSC runs the risk of seeming subjugated and thus losing credibility. Thus Poindexter's first task will be to assert his independence. Against Weinberger and Regan, Poindexter will need strength and luck. Wish him both, in abundance."

(Cleveland Plain Dealer, 12/6)

(Editorials/Columnists continued)

### CONGRESS/TAX REFORM

Rush Jobs -- "As so often happens, Congress and the President have left it to the last few days. The tentative congressional adjournment date is Friday, there are five major bills left, summing up the entire year's work -- and the President is said to be content with none in its most recent form.... Congress seems incapable of acting except in the rush of adjournment, when seized with the pressure finally to go home. At some point in all this, you can expect the President to deplore the behavior and the habits of the legislators. The remarks will be deserved. Congress is not one of the world's more efficient or impressive institution. But the President is equally responsible for the likely week ahead -- the possible train wreck."  
(Washington Post, 12/8)

Tax-Code Bill Isn't Reform, But It Is A Good Beginning -- "Mr. Reagan made tax reform his highest domestic priority for his second term. He shouldn't abandon the drive now. He should push this tax bill through the House. Once it gets to the Senate, he and everyone else devoted to true tax reform should work doubly hard to pare away more exemptions, which would permit the shift toward business taxation to fall less onerously across the board. Now is not to time to abandon the battle."  
(Philadelphia Inquirer, 12/6)

The GOP's Red Herring -- "While Mr. Rostenkowski's bill is not one we can get enthusiastic about, it is a commanding improvement on the tax bills Democrats used to write. And in the Senate, of course, the issue has already been roped and branded by Democrat Bill Bradley. It will be ironic beyond words if the supply-side tax policies introduced by Ronald Reagan now becomes the property of the other party -- perhaps, indeed, the new engine of Democratic political endurance."  
(Wall Street Journal, 12/9)

Pass This Tax Bill; It's Simpler, Fairer -- "If it isn't weakened, this tax bill will lead to a simpler, fairer, better tax code. It is a step in the right direction, and more improvements can be made in later years. It took a long time to get the tax reform engine running. If the President and Congress let it stall, it may be impossible to jump start it again. That would leave the USA hitchhiking down the road to even worse tax chaos."  
(USA Today, 12/9)

Tax Show Should Go On The Road -- "Let the House bill be passed, with the needed Republican support. Let the GOP and White House then develop in the Senate a bill that would amend whatever defects they see in the Ways and Means proposal, and let the differences between the two bills be horsetraded and otherwise resolved."  
(Atlanta Constitution, 12/6)

Over To The Senate -- "The President's course is correct. Mr. Reagan could not abandon tax reform -- certainly not after giving it the intensive support that he has the past year. If that means, as a first step, winning acceptance of the plan hammered together by Dan Rostenkowski, then so be it, in the eyes of the pragmatic White House. That is not necessarily shortsighted. Comprehensive and genuine tax reform remains a worthy goal."  
(Christian Science Monitor, 12/6)