

# Ronald Reagan Presidential Library Digital Library Collections

---

This is a PDF of a folder from our textual collections.

---

**Collection:** News Summary Office, White House:  
News Summaries, 1981-1989

**Series:** II: WHITE HOUSE NEWS SUMMARY FINALS,  
1981-1989

**Folder Title:** 03/02/1987

**Box:** 394

---

To see more digitized collections visit:

<https://www.reaganlibrary.gov/archives/digitized-textual-material>

To see all Ronald Reagan Presidential Library Inventories, visit:

<https://www.reaganlibrary.gov/archives/white-house-inventories>

Contact a reference archivist at: **reagan.library@nara.gov**

Citation Guidelines: <https://reaganlibrary.gov/archives/research-support/citation-guide>

National Archives Catalogue: <https://catalog.archives.gov/>



# News Summary

OFFICE OF THE PRESS SECRETARY

MONDAY, MARCH 2, 1987 -- 6 a.m. EST EDITION

## TODAY'S HEADLINES

### INTERNATIONAL NEWS

U.S., NATO Optimistic Over Soviet Arms Proposal -- U.S. and Soviet officials believe the issue of verification will pose a major obstacle to negotiating Moscow's offer to eliminate U.S. and Soviet intermediate-range missiles in Europe. NATO and European leaders praised the proposal as a positive step. (AP, UPI, Reuter)

### IRAN-NICARAGUA

President Termed Unready To Yield On Iran Arms Deal -- One of President Reagan's most trusted advisers, former Sen. Paul Laxalt, said today that he did not think Reagan was yet prepared to condemn the reasoning that led to the Iran arms deal. (New York Times, AP, Reuter)

### NATIONAL NEWS

GOP Leaders Pressuring Reagan To Jettison Gates -- President Reagan should consider withdrawing Robert Gates' name for CIA director because his confirmation chances have been complicated by the Iran-contra affair, key Republicans said yesterday.

(Washington Post, Washington Times, UPI)

### NETWORK NEWS (Sunday Evening)

TOWER REPORT/WHITE HOUSE -- President Reagan is reasserting control over his presidency.

SOVIET ARMS PROPOSAL -- The U.S. and its European allies expressed pleasure over the Soviet leader's willingness to move forward on a medium-range missile reduction agreement.

GATES NOMINATION -- The Gates confirmation is clearly in trouble in the Senate.

#### \$20 MILLION TO THE CONTRAS?

Paul Laxalt: "Well, obviously, everybody wants to know where the money is."

David Brinkley: "\$20 million, is that about right?"

Laxalt: "Yes, whatever. I would hope that internally we could get at that."

George Will: "The Senate restaurant can lose \$20 million. That's piddling."

("This Week with David Brinkley," 3/1)

## **INTERNATIONAL NEWS**

### **GENEVA NEGOTIATIONS CALL SPECIAL SESSION TO DISCUSS SOVIET OFFER**

GENEVA -- U.S. and Soviet arms negotiators scheduled a special session today to discuss the Kremlin's offer to sign an immediate accord eliminating superpower medium-range nuclear missiles from Europe.

Richard Perle on Sunday described the Soviet offer as a "constructive step that should open the way to concluding the remaining issues leading ultimately to a treaty."

But Perle warned that both sides at the Geneva talks would have to agree on ways to police a treaty and on many other details before a final document could be offered. (Hanns Neuerbourg, AP)

### **Moscow Spells Out New Offer To Abolish All Euro-Missiles**

GENEVA -- The Soviet Union, offering an arms deal without linkage to President Reagan's "Star Wars" project, presents its proposals to the U.S. today for a separate pact to abolish all medium-range missiles in Europe.

"Yes, we will make our concrete proposals at the special plenary session," Soviet spokesman Vladimir Shibanov told Reuters.

U.S. delegation spokesman Terry Shroeder said Washington also wanted to present "treaty language in the near future" for an accord on eliminating the Euro-missiles. (Stephen Weeks, Reuter)

### **U.S., NATO Optimistic Over Soviet Arms Proposal**

GENEVA -- U.S. and Soviet officials believe the issue of verification will pose a major obstacle to negotiating Moscow's offer to eliminate U.S. and Soviet intermediate-range missiles in Europe. NATO and European leaders praised the proposal as a positive step.

Max Kampelman, chief of the U.S. delegation to the Geneva arms talks, told ABC News Sunday that the proposal made by Soviet leader Gorbachev was a positive move. But he said it could take six months to negotiate an accord. (John Callcott, UPI)

### **U.S. SENATORS IN GENEVA WELCOME SOVIET PROPOSAL**

GENEVA -- The senatorial observer group monitoring the Soviet-U.S. arms talks here welcomes Soviet leader Gorbachev's new initiative to negotiate a separate agreement on intermediate-range nuclear missiles as "a positive step," Sen. Ted Stevens said today.

Stevens said the U.S. "had had a good INF proposal before, and if we could make some progress on that point now, we could move on to more serious strategic discussions in the next two to three months."

Sen. Albert Gore told reporters earlier, "This is a positive development which should help us reach an agreement here on medium-range missiles and lend new impetus to the talks on long-range and space-based missiles." (John Parry, Washington Post, A14)

### EUROPEANS WELCOME SOVIET MOVE Worries Remain On 'Zero Option' For Mid-Range Missiles

BONN -- Several Western European governments today welcomed a new Soviet proposal to negotiate a separate arms control agreement for medium-range missiles despite misgivings that such a pact could create military and political dilemmas for the European allies.

The West German, Belgian and Danish governments, and NATO Secretary General Lord Carrington, praised yesterday's Soviet offer as a significant breakthrough. They said that it opened the way for a pact embodying the so-called "zero option," providing for the removal of all U.S. and Soviet medium-range, nuclear missiles from Europe.

Britain, Italy and the Netherlands said that they still were studying the proposal. A British official said privately, however, that the offer was "encouraging" because it suggested that Moscow was willing to bargain seriously.  
(Robert McCartney, Washington Post, A1)

### NAKASONE HAILS GORBACHEV'S ARMS PROPOSAL

TOKYO -- Prime Minister Nakasone said Monday he welcomes the Soviet proposal for an agreement with the U.S. on reductions of intermediate-range nuclear missiles by the two superpowers.

"The proposal is welcome because it shows Moscow's positive attitude toward promoting dialogue," Nakasone told reporters.

"The Japanese government welcomed the proposal as a step forward toward nuclear disarmament and peace of the world," Nakasone's official spokesman, Chief Cabinet Secretary Masaharu Gotoda, told a news conference.  
(UPI)

### KREMLIN OFFER ENHANCES GORBACHEV IMAGE

MOSCOW -- Soviet leader Gorbachev stole the international diplomatic spotlight with his offer to separate the elimination of intermediate-range missiles in Europe from talks on the U.S. "Star Wars" space defense plan.

But it is a move likely to create tensions within the NATO alliance and force a re-examination of NATO defense policy, while adding to Gorbachev's image as a flexible arms negotiator.

Gorbachev's proposal is likely to win him some more publicity points in the West and reinforce his image as a flexible and serious arms negotiator willing to compromise and to float new ideas to keep arms reduction talks going.  
(Charles Mitchell, News Analysis, UPI)

### SHULTZ URGES CHINESE TO CONTINUE REFORMS Secretary Of State Begins 5-Day Visit

BEIJING -- Secretary Shultz today urged China's communist leadership to continue pursuing economic reforms and expanded openings to the West despite recent uncertainty about the country's future political course.

"Our political values differ profoundly," Shultz said. "But greater openness has resulted in broader mutual understanding and respect. It is important that we remain open to each other as we seek to further strengthen our relationship."  
(William Drozdiak, Washington Post, A13)

### Shultz Meets With Chinese Leaders

BEIJING -- Secretary Shultz met with Chinese leaders today for talks expected to touch on U.S. support for Taiwan, Sino-Soviet ties and Beijing's alleged arms sales to Iran.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wu Xueqian made an indirect reference to Taiwan in a banquet toast Sunday, warning that "we should be soberly aware of the differences and obstacles standing in the way of Sino-U.S. relations."  
(Ron Redmond, UPI)

### United States And China Probe Each Other's Crises

PEKING -- Secretary Shultz started talks with top Chinese leaders today in which each side was expected to probe each other's political crises.

U.S. officials and Western diplomats said the political difficulties in both countries lent added importance to Shultz's visit, with each deeply concerned about the impact of the crises on the policies of the other.

They said China was concerned about the impact on U.S. foreign policy of the Iran arms scandal and Washington worried about major ideological battles raging in Peking over the influence of Western political ideas.  
(Michael Battye, Reuter)

### Shultz Hopes To Outcharm Soviets On Peking Visit

PEKING -- Secretary Shultz begins talks with Chinese leaders today on a visit aimed at countering recently intensified wooing of China by the Soviet Union.

At last night's welcoming banquet in the Great Hall of the People, Wu Xueqian and Shultz promised each other full and frank discussions on a range of world issues that were certain to include China's open-door policies, the Iran-contra affair, Soviet foreign policy and other issues.

(Edward Neilan, Washington Times, A1)

### Chinese Are Wooed By East And West U.S., Soviets Renew Diplomatic Efforts

BEIJING -- Even as Secretary Shultz arrived in Beijing today, the Soviet Union was reported to be preparing new diplomatic initiatives toward China.

Western diplomats said Shultz had placed Sino-Soviet relations high on his list of subjects to discuss with the Chinese when his five days of talks began here Monday.  
(Daniel Southerland, Washington Post, A13)

## **TOWER REVIEW BOARD**

---

### **REAGAN HIGHLY DISTURBED BY REPORT, ABSHIRE SAYS Tower Findings Have 'Constructive Effect'**

Presidential counselor David Abshire said yesterday that President Reagan was "deeply disturbed by the implications" of the Tower commission report and that the panel's findings are having "a very constructive effect" on him.

Abshire, who was present when the Tower board presented its report to Reagan Thursday, said in an interview that the President was "shaken by some of the findings" and predicted that he would deal directly and personally with the issue when he addresses the nation on television Wednesday night.

One of Reagan's closest friends, former senator Paul Laxalt, publicly urged him yesterday to "get his head and gut squarely into this operation and stay on top of it" in an effort to rebuild his presidency.

(Edward Walsh & Lou Cannon, Washington Post, A1)

### **AN ABSENCE OF LEADERSHIP**

The Tower special review board has performed a public service by documenting the extraordinary delegation of presidential authority, lack of oversight and obsession with secrecy that characterized the Iran-contra affair. But these findings came as no surprise to any official who has worked closely with President Reagan and knows how totally detached he is from the day-to-day realities of governance.

The Tower report might be called the portrait of a White House without a president. It is a picture of a president with genuine compassion for the plight of American hostages but only vague awareness of the progress of a bizarre initiative that ran in directions totally contradictory to his enunciated policy.

Why should it have been necessary to instruct Reagan? In 1980, when the plight of American hostages in Iran helped propel him into the White House, Reagan understood the danger of yielding to terrorists. In a televised speech Oct. 19, 1980, the President said the U.S. "must take the lead in forging an international consensus that firmness and refusal to concede and pay ransom are ultimately the only effective deterrents to terrorism."

These were words uttered on stage by Reagan, playing the role of an American leader who understands that trading for hostages inevitably produces more hostages. Reagan the president was not such a leader. He was the president who wasn't there. (Lou Cannon, Washington Post, A2)

## **IRAN — NICARAGUA**

---

### **REAGAN FACES RENEWED CRITICISM OVER IRAN SCANDAL**

New White House Chief of Staff Howard Baker today joins efforts to restore President Reagan's image after new criticism of the President's handling of the Iran arms scandal.

"He's going to have to have a hands-on management style," former Sen. Paul Laxalt said. "The days of hands-off policy in connection with serious policy matters are all over."

"We do not regard him as a mental case, but regard him as a president who did not do his job...the President was clearly responsible for the mistakes made, responsible in a very real way," Edmund Muskie said yesterday. (Robert Kearns, Reuter)

### **President Termed Unready To Yield On Iran Arms Deal**

One of President Reagan's most trusted advisers, former Sen. Paul Laxalt, said today that he did not think Reagan was yet prepared to condemn the reasoning that led to the Iran arms deal.

Sen. Laxalt, who has been in close touch with Reagan, gave this summary today of his advice to the President: "I'd particularly like to have him, in retrospect, 20-20, look back and say, 'This was a flawed policy.'" (Steven Roberts, New York Times, A1)

### **Laxalt Unsure Whether Reagan Will Admit Iran Initiative Was Wrong**

Former Sen. Paul Laxalt said Sunday he doubts President Reagan is ready to admit that U.S. arms sales to Iran were wrong, despite the Tower commission's condemnation of that policy.

Laxalt said the President should go further and admit "this was a flawed policy...a trip that shouldn't have been taken.... I'd like to have him do that, but I don't think he's there in his own mind yet." (Merrill Hartson, AP)

### **GARY HART/PAC**

DES MOINES, Iowa -- Democratic presidential front-runner Gary Hart said Sunday that political action committees were used to "launder money" to the Nicaraguan contras and that probes of the Iran-contra scandal will show the PAC system is "out of control."

Hart, in an interview, said the Tower commission investigation of U.S. arms sales to Iran, "only scratched the surface" and that future probes will show Oliver North diverted up to \$12 million to the contras through a variety of right-wing political action committees.

(Bill Brewer, UPI)

#### TOWER SAYS ARMS PROCEEDS VANISHED 'INTO A BLACK HOLE'

The major unsolved mystery of Iran-contra affair is the whereabouts of the money allegedly diverted to the Nicaraguan resistance, the three members of the Tower commission said yesterday.

"We know that money was diverted, but we don't know that the contras ever got it or material purchased by it," said former Sen. John Tower, who headed the investigative panel.

"It's disappeared into a black hole, so to speak," Tower said on ABC-TV. (Mary Belcher, Washington Times, A1)

#### TOWER REPORT SELLS WELL, GPO SAYS

The Tower commission report on the Iran-contra scandal had impressive first and second-day sales, according to GPO.

The volume, formally titled "Report of the President's Special Review Board," sold 3,450 copies in the two days, said Carlyn Crout, GPO manager of media relations. (Joanna Falcone, Washington Post, A9)

EX-HOSTAGE QUESTIONS REAGAN'S  
CREDIBILITY, REGRETS ARMS DEAL

CHICAGO -- The Rev. Lawrence Martin Jenco, a Lebanon hostage who was released last July, said today he questions President Reagan's credibility after the Tower commission found that the priest's freedom was the result of a weapons deal.

"I honestly believe the man is compassionate," said Jenco, referring to Reagan. "But I don't think one accomplishes anything with arms that will eventually be destructive to men, women and children."

"I had to accept his word that I was not exchanged for arms. Now I read all this, and I have a deep question mark, a question mark of credibility," Jenco added.

(AP story, Washington Post, A6)

EDITOR'S NOTE: "Reagan & Iran: Do You Believe In Magic?" by Sidney Blumenthal, appears in The Washington Post, B1.

## **NATIONAL NEWS**

### **GATES TO WITHDRAW AS CIA NOMINEE Reagan's Choice Facing Senate Rejection**

Robert Gates will withdraw as President Reagan's nominee as director of central intelligence this week, according to well-informed Administration and congressional sources.

One of these sources said Gates had arrived at the decision "without much prodding" in the wake of warnings from Republican congressional leaders that his nomination was likely to be rejected by the Senate.

Former senator Paul Laxalt, a close friend of the President who was instrumental in the selection of Howard Baker, said yesterday on ABC News "This Week With David Brinkley" the nomination has "the smell of Irangate" on it. (Lou Cannon & Bob Woodward, Washington Post, A1)

### **GOP Leaders Pressuring Reagan To Jettison Gates**

President Reagan should consider withdrawing Robert Gates' name for CIA director because his confirmation chances have been complicated by the Iran-contra affair, key Republicans said yesterday.

Sen. Bob Dole predicted on NBC-TV the White House will decide early this week whether to withdraw the nomination of Gates.

At the White House, a senior official would not say whether the President would withdraw the Gates nomination early this week. "He's still the President's choice for director of central intelligence," said the official, who asked not to be named.

(Mary Belcher, Washington Times, A2)

### **Gates/CIA Nomination**

Acting CIA Director Robert Gates could become the latest victim of the burgeoning Iran arms-contra aid scandal because "he has the smell of Irangate on him," a presidential confidant said Sunday.

"I think the Gates nomination is in trouble," said former Sen. Paul Laxalt. "It isn't so much with Mr. Gates. I think everybody recognizes he's a proven professional. It's because he has the smell of Irangate on him."

"Unfortunately, I think that Mr. Gates is a victim of circumstances, one among many, and that he'd have great difficulty in getting confirmed. I think the Administration ought to take a second look."

(Rob Gloster, UPI)

### **NEW WHITE HOUSE CHIEF OF STAFF BEGINS WORK TODAY**

New White House Chief of Staff Howard Baker, starting work today with a formidable mandate for change, is likely to field his own team of aides and send those who followed Donald Regan right out the door after him.

The former Tennessee senator began a crash course in White House management upon accepting the chief of staff's job three days ago, but with the system of the autocratic Regan faulted in the Iran-contra crisis, Baker is expected to make changes in both internal politics and personnel.

(Helen Thomas, UPI)

Baker Moves To Revitalize Presidency

President Reagan and new White House Chief of Staff Howard Baker start today to move beyond the Iran-contra arms episode in hopes of reviving the Reagan presidency for its final two years.

Stung by criticisms contained in last week's Tower commission report and by the advice of this closest friends and advisers, Reagan is expected to become more involved in the details of leading the nation, Administration sources said. (Jeremiah O'Leary, Washington Times, A1)

IN BATTLE WITH REGAN, FIRST LADY GOT LAST WORD

Former White House Chief of Staff Donald Regan probably never had a chance in his battle with the First Lady for control of President Reagan's schedule, and finally was deprived even of a graceful exit, sources said yesterday.

"Don forgot the old axiom that hell hath no fury like a woman scorned," according to one longtime friend of the Reagans. No matter how much control Regan had over management of the White House over the past two years, Nancy Reagan always got in the last word, the friend said.

(Jeremiah O'Leary, News Analysis, Washington Times, A2)

EDITOR'S NOTE: "Selection For Superfund List Puts Utah Resort In Dumps -- As EPA Reconsiders, Property Values Plunge," by Michael Weisskopf, appears in The Washington Post, A1.

## **NETWORK NEWS SUMMARY**

---

(Sunday Evening, March 1, 1987)

### **TOWER REPORT/WHITE HOUSE**

ABC's Sam Donaldson: President Reagan's approval rating has dropped to an all-time low in the wake of the Tower commission report on the Iranian arms sale episode according to a Gallup organization poll taken for Newsweek magazine. Only 40% of the Newsweek respondents now approve of Mr. Reagan's job performance -- down sharply from 64% last October. Fifty-three percent in the new poll give Mr. Reagan a negative performance rating, and one-third of those sampled believe the President should consider resigning. It is in this public atmosphere that former Senator Howard Baker tomorrow begins his new job as White House chief of staff. His first priority: to stop this erosion in public confidence.

ABC's Kenneth Walker: For Howard Baker his short-lived Florida vacation ended today as he prepared to return to Washington to take command of the White House staff.

(Mr. Baker: "I'll have something more to say tomorrow. Thank you very much.")

Despite the near unanimous praise of Baker's selection, even the President's friends say he must do more, particularly in his speech later this week.

(Sen. Dole: "He must, if not apologize, get very close to that -- indicate that mistakes were made and that some of them may have been mine.")

One of the President's closest friends on This Week with David Brinkley agreed but isn't certain Mr. Reagan will heed the advice.

(Sen. Laxalt: "I'd particularly like to have him, in retrospect -- 20-20 -- look back and say this was a flawed policy. It was a trip that shouldn't have been taken. I'd like to have him do that, but I don't think he's there in his mind yet.")

Whatever the President says, most observers believe Mr. Reagan must move quickly, if he can, to show he's in charge of the government.

(Sen. Muskie: "One wonders whether after a lifetime doing business as he has, whether or not he can really come to grips with the responsibilities of his office.")

But the President will continue to be shadowed by questions about the extent of his knowledge -- especially in the diversion of Iranian arms sale money to Nicaraguan contras.... When Howard Baker shows up for work in the morning his first order of business will be to help shape the President's speech. But even if that proves to be a success, one of Baker's main responsibilities will be for him familiar. He'll have to help the White House answer questions from investigators about what the President knew and when did he know it.

(ABC-Lead)

CBS's Forrest Sawyer: New White House Chief of Staff Howard Baker is back in Washington today from a Florida weekend. He'll hold his first staff meeting bright and early tomorrow morning. The President was getting some advice on what to say in his nationwide address later this week.

CBS's Jacqueline Adams: His closest advisers say President Reagan has spent so much time studying the Tower commission report this weekend it's practically become an appendage.

(TV coverage: The President at the presenting of the Tower Board report.)

But the President has apparently missed one of its main points. Aides say Mr. Reagan still believes that his Iran initiative would have freed all the American hostages if only it had remained secret.

(Sen. Laxalt: "Many of us who are close to him are imploring him to reevaluate this on a retrospective basis and perhaps indicate to the American people this week that it was a mistake. Not only in terms of implementation but the policy itself was flawed.")

There are also continuing doubts about Mr. Reagan understands how deeply this crisis has affected his presidency. Take the case of Robert Gates to be CIA director. On Friday, congressional leaders told Mr. Reagan that the nomination was in trouble because of Gates' role in the Iran scandal. The President did not respond, and today, White House aides are reduced to hoping that Gates will take the hint and step aside.... Then there's the President's laid-back management style. Aides hope that Mr. Reagan will begin to dispel that image through this week's meetings with the Cabinet, his new staff, and congressional leaders.... Officials here say last week they hit the bottom of the trough. But after just one meeting with new Chief of Staff Howard Baker the President's aides say there's a new sense of freedom and openness here, and so aides believe they can begin inching upward. (CBS-4)

NBC's Chris Wallace: Ronald Reagan was warned by friends today that to salvage his presidency he must admit he made mistakes in the Iran arms deal, and that he must reassert control over his office. Mr. Reagan is counting on his new chief of staff to help him through one of the roughest patches of his presidency.

NBC's Jamie Gangel: Howard Baker returned to Washington today to face a critical week as the President's new chief of staff. His first challenge will be to overcome suggestions that the President is no longer up to the job.

(Sen. Muskie: "I wouldn't say that we've treated him as a mental patient, or considered him a mental patient. But certainly we were all appalled by the absence of the kind of alertness and vigilance to his job and to these policies that one expects of a president.")

Sen. Dole: "I don't know how you can run anything without knowing what's going on.")

The President's response will come in a televised speech mid-week.

(TV coverage: The President speaking from the Oval Office with words beneath.)

One senior official said the President will accept responsibility for the mistakes made and may even acknowledge, for the first time, that the Iran deal was a swap of arms for hostages. But the official added, "Do not expect anything startling." And said, "It's unlikely the President will admit that he himself made serious mistakes." Even the President's long-time friend and confidant, Paul Laxalt, has been trying to convince the President such an admission is essential. But Laxalt says the President is resisting.

Gangel continues:

(Sen. Laxalt: "I'd like to have him do that but I don't think he's there in his own mind yet.")

The White House also is expected to deal with the nomination of Robert Gates as CIA director. Congressional leaders say the nomination is in trouble and an Administration official has told NBC the White House would like Gates to withdraw. Possible replacements include Tower Board members General Brent Scowcroft and former Senator John Tower, as well as former CIA deputy director Admiral Bobby Inman. Despite all the criticism, the White House continues to push a picture of the President as, "upbeat and looking forward." But Republican leaders say they're worried. They see a President plunging in public opinion polls, and are skeptical that this late in the game Mr. Reagan can really become a hands-on president, reinvigorate his Administration, and repair the damage to the Republican party. (NBC-2)

#### IRAN-CONTRA AFFAIR/MONEY TRAIL

Sawyer: At the very top of the Tower commission list of unanswered questions is what happened to over \$30 million apparently intended for the contras. There's a chance investigators may never know.

CBS's Robert Shackney: The Tower commission confirms that a mind-boggling amount of money, at least \$33 million is unaccounted for in the Iran-contra deals. For congressional investigators, that money mystery is priority number one.... The answers to the money questions are not likely to come, investigators say, until and unless they gain access to those secret bank accounts in Switzerland and elsewhere and until and unless some of the key players now pleading the Fifth start to talk. (CBS-5)

#### U.S./HONDURAS

Sawyer: A Senate committee will hold hearings this month on a Pentagon request to build permanent-type barracks for U.S. troops in Honduras, where American paratroopers have just completed two weeks of exercises. The U.S. has spent millions of dollars in Honduras, which is home base to most of the contras. But most Hondurans haven't seen any of the money. (CBS-6)

#### SOVIET ARMS PROPOSAL

Donaldson: The United States and its European allies expressed pleasure today over Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's apparent willingness to move forward on a medium-range missile reduction agreement. But they also express reservations about how easily and quickly one can be reached.

ABC's Rick Inderfurth: Soviet television: "The Soviet Union suggests that the problem of medium-range missiles in Europe be singled out from the package of issues, and that a separate agreement be concluded on it without delay." In Geneva today, high-ranking U.S. officials responded.

(Paul Nitze: "We feel it would be sounder both for the Europeans and for us if we could get rid of all this class of weapons. The Soviets have many more than we do.")

Max Kampelman: "I've been told by the Soviets that they intend to return to the agreement we previously had, and we're pleased about that.")

(TV coverage: The President sitting with Gorbachev in Hofdi House in Reykjavik.)

...Ambassador Kampelman believes it will take at least six months to hammer a medium-range missile agreement. And that clock starts ticking tomorrow when the Soviets place their new proposal on the table.

ABC's Mike Lee: It was good news for the British government of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. She had already scheduled her own summit with Gorbachev later this month and will now be in a position to act as a go-between for what could be an historic arms reduction breakthrough.... Soviet television tonight devoted several minutes to positive reaction throughout Europe. In Bonn, West Germany, Foreign Minister Gentscher is quoted as calling for speedy negotiations to finalize a treaty. In Brussels, Lord Carrington, the Secretary General of NATO, called it a substantial step forward.... No European leader wants to be seen to be laying down in the path of progress on arms reduction, but it is a widely held view that there is a dangerous downside to the elimination of so-called Euromissiles.... It seems likely NATO will throw its support behind a proposed treaty on medium-range missiles but not without first trying to hold America's feet to the fire for an increased commitment in U.S. men and equipment on the ground in Europe.

Donaldson: This European concern that a simple missile reduction would unbalance things was seconded today by General Bernard Rogers, the NATO commander, who was quoted as saying the West would be mad to agree to it by itself. (ABC-5)

Sawyer: Tonight, cautious reaction to the Soviet Union's dramatic proposal to immediately eliminate medium-range missiles in Europe and to separate that issue from the talks about star wars. In Washington, officials say they'll wait to see the proposal when it's out of the headlines and on the negotiating table. In Europe the first blush of excitement has given way to concern for security if the missiles are taken away.

CBS's Tom Fenton: The reactions of our European allies has so far been mostly positive. But behind the scenes can be detected a note of caution. Here in London at least, the feeling seems to be that they agreed to the so-called zero option years ago when they thought the Soviets wouldn't buy it, and now they're stuck with it....

Sawyer: Coming as it does in the middle of a crisis in the Reagan presidency, the Soviet arms proposal is a bold maneuver -- one that raises more questions than it answers.

CBS's Wyatt Andrews: It is Gorbachev's apparent intention to strike a deal on European missiles quickly. There is no doubt the American side has given those assurances.... Despite the optimism, negotiations in Geneva could be difficult....

(TV coverage: The President and Gorbachev shaking hands outside Hofdi House in Iceland.)

...Speculation is that Gorbachev might be handing President Reagan a way out of the Iran crisis, or is seeking to take advantage of Reagan's Iran distraction. Whatever his motives, arms control experts will always wonder why Gorbachev is saying yes now to a deal he could have had last October. (CBS-Lead)

Wallace: Positive but cautious. That's the U.S. reaction so far to Mikhail Gorbachev's latest surprise. After insisting for months that any cuts in offensive weapons were linked to restrictions on the President's star wars defense plan, Gorbachev now says he wants a separate agreement to eliminate medium-range missiles in Europe. American officials see chances for progress and some problems.

NBC's Jim Miklaszewski: When the Soviets made their proposal, Administration officials say the U.S. was prepared to present its own plan to eliminate medium-range missiles and that it came very close to the Gorbachev offer. So the White House welcomed the Soviet proposal and called it a positive development, while reaction from Congress has been both positive and bipartisan.

(Sen. Lugar: "It's always a source of rejoicing when there's a possibility that a nuclear threat might be reduced for our allies as well as the United States.")

Rep. Hamilton: "I think the proposal by the leader of the Soviet Union presents us with a remarkable opportunity.")

...There's speculation that Gorbachev is attempting to exploit President Reagan's political problems over the Iran arms scandal to force him to accept any nuclear arms agreement. John Tower, who headed an investigation into the Iran arms scandal and as a former arms negotiator, warns of a possible propaganda trap.

(Sen. Tower: "The reason Gorbachev has shifted is because I think he believes it's public diplomacy-wise, it's in his interests to do so.")

...U.S. officials are anxious to look at the fine print in the latest Soviet proposal, but acknowledge Gorbachev may have given President Reagan an offer he can't refuse: The opportunity to reach some kind of arms agreement and keep his star wars project on track.

(NBC-Lead)

Sawyer: The Soviet Union's proposal to make star wars a separate negotiating issue and to move quickly to eliminate medium-range missiles comes just as the Reagan Administration has begun to reorganize. Is that a coincidence? William Hyland, Editor of Foreign Affairs magazine, was with a group of Americans who met with Mikhail Gorbachev just a few weeks ago. Earlier today I asked him what he thought of the timing of the proposal.

-more-

Hyland: Well, it might seem. But I think they've been moving in this direction to separate this Reykjavik package for several weeks -- this is what we heard in Moscow several weeks ago when we were there.... But the exact timing could be related to the Tower commission.

Sawyer: How do you mean that?

Hyland: I think they feel that if the President is interested in making a bargain on arms control he's probably ripe for bargaining right now because he's weak and he's on the defensive.

Sawyer: What's the danger?

Hyland: I think the danger is separating out European security and European interests from this Soviet-American relationship, and perhaps putting Europe in a secondary position.

Sawyer: Now star wars has been pulled out and set aside. Does this mean that the Soviet Union is essentially caving in on this negotiating point?

Hyland: On this particular point this is quite a concession, because at Reykjavik they surprised the President with a new package in which it was all tied together and star wars was an essential element. Now they're saying they would negotiate a separate agreement on the medium and intermediate-range missiles so that's a concession. But I think the Russians have it in the back of their mind to come back to star wars and relink the whole package.

Sawyer: You know that you have heard people saying that if this Administration wants to put itself back on track -- if it wants to get the Iran arms controversy behind it -- a negotiating agreement could be one way to do that. Is there a danger that the Administration will move too quickly?

Hyland: I think there's a considerable danger. It must be awfully tempting in the White House to say, "Now we can go ahead. Here's an agreement we can wrap up within a few months without new concessions because after all, it's basically an American proposal, and then the President will overcome the Irangate." I think that would be quite a danger and a bad mistake. (CBS-7)

#### U.S. CRUISE MISSILE TEST

Sawyer reports While the new arms proposals made world headlines, the U.S. launched another unarmed cruise missile on a 1,500-mile test flight across the wilds of Canada today. The Air Force says it went smoothly. (CBS-2)

#### GATES NOMINATION

Donaldson: White House officials will be considering this week whether the nomination of Robert Gates to head the CIA ought to be withdrawn. It is clearly in trouble in the Senate. Former Senator Paul Laxalt said today it ought to be given a second look. "Gates is the victim of circumstances," said Laxalt. "But he has the smell of Irangate on him." (ABC-3)

VICE PRESIDENT/TOWER REPORT

Donaldson: In the case of Vice President Bush it is not the smell of Irangate, but the scent of indecision that Tower commission Edmund Muskie complained about today. Muskie said the record shows that Bush attended many meetings on the subject during the time the President was considering selling arms to Iran, but that no one can recall him ever saying whether he was for or against it. Shultz and Weinberger stated their opposition, said Muskie. The Vice President should have made it clear where he stood but he never did. (ABC-4)

SECRETARY SHULTZ/CHINA

Donaldson: Secretary of State Shultz has arrived in China for a goodwill visit but even there he can not escape some degree of personal preoccupation with what's been going on in the Iranian arms sale story back home.

ABC's John McWethy: Secretary Shultz comes to China at a time when the governments in both Washington and Beijing are struggling with internal crisis. Though Shultz chatted amiably with his host during a long boat trip through some of China's most spectacular scenery...he refused public comment on what is going on back home, waiting for the President to speak first. Sources close to Shultz, however, say he regards the Tower commission report as sloppy and inaccurate. Those sources also say one way Shultz plans to defend himself is to release, perhaps later this week, the full transcript of his until now classified testimony before the House and Senate Intelligence committees. That detailed testimony, his aides claim, will be Shultz's best defense against the charge that he did not do enough to stop President Reagan from selling arms to Iran.... Tomorrow in his first meetings with China's leadership Shultz is expected to urge them to stop selling weapons to Iran. Something the U.S. now believes China does in a big way. The Chinese are expected to listen politely, perhaps ask a few questions about U.S. sales to Iran, then do exactly as they please. (ABC-2)

Sawyer: As Administration officials in Washington wrestle with the new Soviet proposal, Secretary of State Shultz is out of the fray beginning the first day of his mission to China.

CBS's Bill McGlocklin: ...Shultz's toast to Foreign Minister Woo carefully avoided any controversial subjects but they will come up. China's recent crackdown on students and intellectuals oblige Shultz to bring up the human rights issue. Even more difficult is the issue of the secret sale of Chinese weapons to Iran.... Shultz will ask China's leaders to stop the flow even though he knows the Reagan Administration's record on that score has crippled his argument. (CBS-3)

## **ABC -- THIS WEEK WITH DAVID BRINKLEY**

---

Moderator: David Brinkley.      Panel: George Will and Sam Donaldson.  
Guests: Former Senator John Tower, Former Senator Paul Laxalt.

Brinkley: Senator Laxalt, you have talked to the President. How did he feel about this report?... What was his reaction?

Laxalt: ...I think he was stunned by the revelations in the Tower report.... He didn't attempt to draw distinctions. He embraced the report, and considered it to be constructive. And I think that's terribly important for his frame of mind.

Will: What lesson is he drawing...from the fact that he could be surprised by so much?

Laxalt: I think the principal lesson is that the days of hands-off policy in connection with serious policy matters are over for Ronald Reagan.

Will: This Wednesday he'll talk to the country.... What should he say?

Laxalt: I think he ought to perhaps briefly indicate to the people the reasons why the initiative was proposed to Iran and what happened thereafter. And I'd particularly like to have him, in retrospect, look back and say, this was a flawed policy....

Will: Do you think Mr. Gates can and should be confirmed as head of the CIA?

Laxalt: From all that I hear, and this comes from my colleagues in the Senate on both sides of the aisle, I think the Gates nomination is in trouble.

Donaldson: You say now you think he's going to turn into a hands-on President; is that correct?

Laxalt: I think he must.... In this period, under these circumstances, with the vigilant press watching every move, and recognizing that this has been a very difficult year's period, he's going to have to get his head and his gut squarely into this operation, and stay on top of it.

Donaldson: Do you think he can now move forward on an arms control agreement? Do you think he wants to?

Laxalt: I hope so. I think the revelation this morning, and Gorbachev's offer of yesterday, is the most reassuring news that I've seen in the international front for a long time.

---

Guest: Senator Tower.

Will: What do you think is the biggest remaining question now that Congress has to look at?

-more-

THIS WEEK (continued)

Tower: The biggest remaining question is, where did the so-called contra diversion money go?

Brinkley: Your report was very tough on Donald Regan.... What was his problem?

Tower: The funny thing is, we only devoted one paragraph to Don Regan in terms of our conclusions. But that paragraph has probably been the most widely quoted of all.... When a man assumes that kind of power and insists on disciplining the whole organization, then he's got to accept the lion's share of the responsibility.

Donaldson: You say in the report you don't think he (the President) intended to mislead the American people. How did you reach the conclusion in light of all the statements Mr. Reagan made during that period which were false?

Tower: We've talked about the President's management style, about the way he delegates authority to others. He did want to make public comment, and he directed his subordinates to prepare material for him. You have to consider the fact that the President did not follow this thing on a day-to-day basis....

Donaldson: I'm talking about "No foundation to a story that we had been selling arms to Iran."

Tower: Also, the President had convinced himself that selling arms to Iran was strikingly different from ransoming hostages from captors.

Donaldson: Let's talk about his memory.

Tower: The fact is there is a very poor paper trail on this because records were not kept.... As far as his memory is concerned, you have to remember what was going in that period of time. There was the run up to Geneva.... The President had a major appearance before the United Nations.... Several heads of state visited the country, the Achille Lauro incident occurred during that period. This was a very, very busy time for the President of the United States in terms of external affairs.

---

FREE-FOR-ALL DISCUSSION -- (Mary Anne Dolan joins panel.)

Brinkley: We have heard Senator Tower's view about Gorbachev's offer to remove medium range missiles from Europe. What's your thought?

THIS WEEK (continued)

Donaldson: What Gorbachev appears to have offered is what was tentatively agreed to at Reykjavik, Iceland by President Ronald Reagan. We were told that the Iceland summit fell apart on Gorbachev's insistence that SDI be linked to all of this and the President's refusal to do that. Gorbachev appears to be saying now that SDI can be de-linked from the intermediate weapons. If that's true, in effect he's calling President Reagan's bluff. And President Reagan is now going to have to decide whether finally he takes George Shultz and Caspar Weinberger and Richard Perle, et. al., and knocks them together and comes out with a unified position which can lead to some sort of agreement.... It's one test of whether Ronald Reagan is, in fact, back.

Will: Let's give the President a mild credit, in a week that's not been full of credits for him. People have said by sticking to SDI, you kill all possibility of arms control because the Soviet Union will never decouple the various agreements from the insistence that we stop SDI. They've just decoupled.

Brinkley: May this not give Mr. Reagan a chance to restore...his presidency -- to restore his prestige -- by making some kind of deal with the Soviet Union?

Donaldson: ...It gives him a chance to hold a summit here in Washington -- to say, "I have made it a peaceful world"; and to say that, in fact, "I'm back running my Administration."

Brinkley: Can Mr. Reagan restore his presidency to the preeminence it had before all of this stuff came out from Iran?

Donaldson: Howard Baker is a very able man. The outpouring of relief in this town and praise for Baker...is extraordinary.... Clearly, people are saying, "Baker is gonna run the government. Howard Baker is gonna make it work," and I have no doubt that he can. I don't think Ronald Reagan...with a life-time habit of managing, or mismanaging, or non-managing, that he's had, can suddenly become a dynamic, hands-on, what's going here, I'm gonna crack heads, let me see what's happening here, kind of guy. It's just not gonna happen.

Dolan: I don't think that's what he has to do. What he has to do...is continue the kinds of appointments and replacements of personnel which he has been making.... He has to get back to conveying the image that he is a man who is on top of his job....

Will: I don't think Howard Baker is expected to be a panacea here. It is up to the President to show that he cares enough, that he understands that the presidency's hard work and he's willing to do it.

## ***CBS -- FACE THE NATION***

---

Moderator: Lesley Stahl.

Guests: Former Secretary Edmund Muskie; Senator William Cohen; Representative Lee Hamilton.

Stahl: Senator Muskie...are you worried about the President's mental state?

Muskie: I'm not too clear as to the extent to which he applies his energy, including his mental energy, to his job. But at those meetings we had with him, in each instance...he looked comfortable, he looked relaxed, and he looked more healthy the second time than the first, because of his illness.

Stahl: But what about his grasp of reality?

Muskie: He was definite in what he remembered and what he didn't. But what he didn't remember astonished us....

Stahl: Are you worried about that?

Muskie: Of course, that worries us; I mean, to have the President not focusing and not recalling as he did on these significant occasions is worrisome.

Stahl: What are you worried about?

Muskie: We are conscious of the fact that in the interests of the country he's got to recover as much as he can of what he has lost. Politically I doubt that he will ever again be the dominant figure that he was, say, six months ago.

Stahl: What is the key question or questions that remain in your mind?

Muskie: The diversion of funds is important.

---

Stahl: Let's go to Senator Cohen and ask him what he thinks about Mr. Gorbachev's sudden new proposal to de-link medium-range-missile arms talks from the star wars proposal.... Why do you think he did that at this particular point in time, Senator?

Cohen: Obviously some will feel that this is an opportunity for Gorbachev to try and exploit President Reagan's current difficulties and seek to push him into an arms control agreement that might not be in our best interests.... I think rather than try to determine motivation, we ought to look at the merits.

Stahl: Congressman Hamilton, is this a good time or a dangerous time for President Reagan to start back on the arms control negotiation trail with the Russians?

FACE THE NATION (continued)

Hamilton: I think the Soviet Union has given the President an extraordinary opportunity here. I don't know whether we should jump at it -- I don't think we should -- but it's quite clear that unusual things are going on in the Soviet Union.

Stahl: Sen. Cohen...do you think the President should withdraw Mr. Gates' name?

Cohen: I think we should wait, and certainly have consultations with Howard Baker.

Stahl: (Is) the question of what the President knew about the diversion is still a question?

Hamilton: Oh, sure, yes indeed; it's probably one of the more important questions that we must yet answer.

Stahl: Can you both quickly tell us what you think the most important thing President Reagan has to say in his speech this week to the American people.

Cohen: I think he's got to come forward and admit his responsibility for what took place, the fact that he authorized the program... and accept the full responsibility for the acts and excesses of his subordinates. And, secondly, I think he has to take a strong affirmative action in gaining control over the White House.

Hamilton: The President is facing the most serious crisis of his presidency; he must, in a word, demonstrate his control, that he's in charge. He must also accept responsibility.

---

VICE PRESIDENT BUSH INTERVIEW

Joe Day of CBS affiliate WNEV in Boston: Had you been more heavily involved -- do you think this could have been averted?

Bush: No, it's a good question, and I'd love to give you a self-serving answer. But I don't think the system worked that way. If the President had been told some of the things that are in that report, they wouldn't have happened....

Day: Does this affect at all your presidential possibilities?

Bush: Yes, it makes it much better. Because I think some people out there were wondering what was the Vice President's involvement, and (the report) makes very clear that I wasn't involved in some of the things that people consider wrong.... I think the President is now much freer to move this country forward from a base of support -- after all this pounding, he's 55% in the polls.... We are going to get this thing moving, believe me.

## ***NBC -- MEET THE PRESS***

---

Moderator: Marvin Kalb.      Panel: Chris Wallace, Robert Kaiser.

Guests: Lt. Gen. Brent Scowcroft; Senator Bob Dole.

Kaiser: Gen. Scowcroft, Marvin said in his opening that the report, your report left the President shaken and angry.... Was he shaken and angry?

Scowcroft: Certainly, certainly shaken. I think in the meeting we had with him, we told him things, gave him examples of what had happened that he had no idea about, and I think that it upset him.

Wallace: Should the President withdraw his (Gates') nomination as CIA director?

Scowcroft: ...As to his (Gates') possible knowledge, role, in the contras, we saw no evidence.

Kalb: Could North and Poindexter have been doing all of this without the knowledge of people above them?

Scowcroft: I think it's possible in large part. I think one of the things you have to remember is that both of these programs are programs the President wanted to pursue.

Kalb: I've got to go to this phrase "management style." What are you really saying? A lack of concern, a lack of interest?

Scowcroft: No, I don't think, I don't think any of those. I think it is in fact a management style, and the other extreme possibly is somebody like President Carter whom you all criticized sharply for being so involved in details he didn't understand what the policy was all about.

Kaiser: Let's pursue this question about the President. Bob Woodward has a story this morning about this memorandum, this so-called undated North memorandum that was the key document that alerted Meese that money had been diverted to the contras.... As you point out for the first time in the report, this memorandum was directed to the President. Did he see it, do you think?

Scowcroft: We have no evidence that it went anywhere outside of, outside of North's files.

Wallace: Aren't there minimum standards that this President, any president must meet in terms of staying on top of the job, knowing what's going on, and didn't this President fail to meet those standards?

Scowcroft: I think basically what we said was that he was too trusting of the people around him, that he failed to ask the hard questions which would have forced up to him the kinds of answers which would have revealed what was going on.

Wallace: Does it trouble you that you have a President who...can't remember these things?

MEET THE PRESS (continued)

Scowcroft: It troubles me that he couldn't remember.

Wallace: Newsweek has a new poll out this weekend that says that one-third of the country -- a remarkable figure -- thinks the President ought to now consider stepping down. After all you've seen...do you have any doubt at all whether this President is still up to the job?

Scowcroft: No, I have no doubt.

---

Kalb: Senator Dole, do you believe that the nomination of Robert Gates should now be withdrawn?

Dole: I know it's been discussed at the White House. Indicated to him that it could be in some difficulty if there was a demand for a quick vote.

Wallace: What would you do specifically advise the President to do if he had chosen you as his new chief of staff? In his speech this week, should he apologize?

Dole: First, he made the right choice; he chose Howard Baker.... I think he must, if not apologize, get very close to that, indicate that mistakes were made, and that some of it may have been mine....

Kalb: What were the mistakes that he made, you mentioned a moment ago in answer to Chris's question?

Dole: I think the general mistake has already been pointed out, that he didn't have enough contact with what was happening.... But I think also, we made mistakes at the outset. I mean, when this happened in November, some dramatic action should have been taken.

Kaiser: Can you see a 76-year-old man changing his ways (of leadership) that dramatically? Is that something we should expect?

Dole: I think we'll find out on Wednesday evening when the President gives his speech. We were really pleased with the President, with his visit with the Republican leaders on Thursday.... I think it really alerted him to some of the real problems he may not have really thought about in the White House.... I would just lay it out, tell the American people he's sorry about it, let's get on with the domestic agenda. He's done a lot of things this year that haven't been noted.

## **THE McLAUGHLIN GROUP**

---

Moderator: John McLaughlin.

Panel: Eleanor Clift, Morton Kondracke, Ben Wattenberg, Fred Barnes.

McLaughlin: Was Howard Baker a good choice?

Barnes: Reagan could have done a lot worse, but he's not gonna help as much as you think. He'll give Reagan a boost in the short run with the press, with Congress, with the political community, but Reagan has to do so much more than merely replace Don Regan if he's gonna salvage his presidency.

Clift: I think he's a brilliant choice. We have in effect a co-president. ...He brings those Watergate spurs to this White House at a time when they really need it.

Kondracke: I think he's a great choice.... I think Howard Baker knows what the job of chief of staff involves and one thing it involves is not substituting your agenda for the President's....

McLaughlin: Considering the whole situation of the presidency today, how would you rate Howard Baker on the basis of 0-10?

Barnes: Uno.      Wattenberg: 8.7.      Clift: Seven.  
Kondracke: 7.5.      McLaughlin: Nine.

McLaughlin: How damaging is this report and do you agree that the President is now off the hook?

Wattenberg: He is not off the hook....

Clift: This report was the best he could have hoped for.... But he's been exposed as a dupe and the dirty little Washington secret about how disembodied, disengaged, detached he is has now been codified by these three eminent persons.

McLaughlin: What kind of an adjective or word would you use to describe the presidency right now?

Barnes: Hen-pecked.      Wattenberg: Newsworthy.      Clift: Struggling.  
Kondracke: Almost dead in the water.      McLaughlin: Automatic pilot.

McLaughlin: In the housecleaning of the Administration who else should go?

Barnes: Weinberger and Shultz.

Wattenberg: Poindexter went, North went, Regan went -- unless they have criminal evidence on anybody else they ought to go with what they got.

McLaughlin: Will the Israelis serve to buffer Ronald Reagan and help save his political hide?

Kondracke: No, but the Israelis come out of this very bad.

MCLAUGHLIN GROUP (continued)

McLaughlin: What is the likelihood of Ronald Reagan changing his ways?

Clift: There's no way you're going to get a 76-year-old man to change his ways. That's why he got Mr. Baker. Howard Baker makes this White House a player again.

Barnes: The first thing he has to do in his speech Wednesday is explain how the whole Iran deal can never happen again, that he's instituted some new procedures. The second thing he's gotta do is overhaul his whole Cabinet. He needs five or six new Cabinet members to create some excitement. And finally, and most important, he needs a cause.

McLaughlin: Do you think Ronald Reagan, as a result of this Tower Board report, has now been truly reborn?

Kondracke: Not yet. Not by no means.

McLaughlin: Assuming he does everything right, how far back can he bring the presidency on a scale of 0-10, ten being maximum government.

Barnes: A seven.                      Wattenberg: Assuming he does everything right, about an eight.                      Clift: A three. The best he can hope for is to go out quietly like Eisenhower.                      Kondracke: A seven.                      McLaughlin: Eight.

PREDICTIONS:

Barnes: A big winner in all this is Paul Volcker, who was not going to be appointed as chairman of the Fed if Don Regan were there. Now he has a good chance.

Wattenberg: Sam Nunn is not out of the race for the presidency and he may well be a major player.

Clift: Bye, bye, George. The Tower commission shows us you can't defend the indefensible and he can not explain either his support for the arms deal or his silence.

Kondracke: The first crisis of the Reagan Administration has been handed to them by Mikhail Gorbachev with this INF deal which would essentially demand the United States get rid of its missiles while the Soviets keep lots of them.

McLaughlin: Within 10 days Mikhail Gorbachev will send out exit visas to about 500 Jewish dissidents thus extending his reforms.

## **AGRONSKY & COMPANY**

---

Moderator: Martin Agronsky.

Panel: James J. Kilpatrick, Hugh Sidey, Strobe Talbott, Marianne Means.

ON THE WHITE HOUSE/TOWER REPORT

Agronsky: Will this (Howard Baker's appointment) help save the Reagan presidency?

Kilpatrick: Yes, I think it will. It's a superlative appointment. But the presidency can be save finally only by the President himself, not by a subordinate appointment.

Sidey: The last two years of any presidency of this length should be a time of conciliation, and Howard Baker is a superb conciliator. It'll help immensely.

Talbott: He's perfect for what the job means, and that is to be the kind of prime minister -- somebody who can run the government while the President goes back about the business of being the chief of state.

Means: It's a political master-stroke as far as it goes.... It doesn't go to the basic problem which is that we have a President who's a President in title and not in fact.

Talbott: What's clearly necessary is either for the President to become a new kind of leader entirely, or for him to rely heavily on somebody who is competent and good at what needs to be done.

Means: The President...in his speech next week...he has to stand up there and say, "I was responsible for this policy. This policy was a mistake. I will change these policies...."

Sidey: You are going to hurt the presidency more if you want him to get up there and grovel and wring his hands. You have to have a strong man, and he's already said mistakes were made.

Agronsky: Hugh, you write in your column you write for TIME magazine that will appear this week your own very serious concerns about the capacity of Mr. Reagan to continue.

Sidey: If he is going to be effective at all, he's got to come out of this shadow that he's been in over these last several months because of physical disability, because...of the emotional battering that he's gotten over the Iran matter, and then, also, his age. We have to see, is he capable of engaging, is he capable of sustained energy now to do this job?

Means: ...He has to take some more dramatic steps in addition to taking responsibility. I would suggest he fire the Secretary of State or let him resign because I think he's been badly compromised, he's been shown to be not in charge of foreign policy....

AGRONSKY & CO. (continued)

Sidey: There are a lot of people...including at least one Cabinet member that I'm aware of, that believe that both Mr. Weinberger and Mr. Shultz should go because they are associated with defense policy and they need a clean sweep from the start.

Agronsky: And that Mr. Gates' nomination should be withdrawn.

Kilpatrick: We in Washington are deeply concerned with the appointment of Howard Baker as chief of staff. Eighty miles west of here, 100 miles south of here you're not going to find nearly that concern. And out abroad in the land Howard Baker's appointment is not going to make that much difference. The people want to know about Ronald Reagan not Howard Baker.

Sidey: We come back to what the report said. Mr. Scowcroft said in the end it depends on people. You can have the best system in the world, if the people don't perform -- and that's what he said. People failed, not the process.

Agronsky: The criticism in that Tower commission report was absolutely devastating. Do you think it can be corrected? Can the points, the concerns that they raise be overcome?

Kilpatrick: Most of them I think can. Mr. Carlucci...already has set in motion some policies intended to correct and eliminate the abuses that developed under Admiral Poindexter....

Kilpatrick: The New Republic magazine this week has a little cover teaser trying to equate this with Watergate, and I declare that it just won't stand up....

Talbott: There's a critical difference with Watergate. In Watergate there was this...sense that sooner or later we were gonna succeed in closing in on the Oval Office -- that the President was gonna be "gotten" in some respect and driven out of office.... That is not true here. The closer we get to the President, the more, I think, people hope that he survives.

Agronsky: There is no appetite to wreck the President or his presidency.

Sidey: May I also point out something that is perhaps a little plus amidst all the disaster, and that is that this was a self-appointed commission. This Administration, Ronald Reagan's presidency, appointed the commission, provided through Ambassador Abshire a way to get the documents, had it printed, Mr. Fitzwater had 25,000 copies printed. I don't think that's ever happened in modern times. That they've done it to themselves.... The harshest criticism of a president that I ever remember in a report.