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News Summary

OFFICE OF THE PRESS SECRETARY

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 1987 -- 6 a.m. EST EDITION

TODAY'S HEADLINES

IRAN-NICARAGUA

Reagan Counsel Recounts Chaos Over Iran Affair -- President Reagan's chief legal adviser today depicted scenes of chaos in the White House in recent months and said he had been prevented from looking into the Iran affair for several weeks after its disclosure last November.

(New York Times, AP, Reuter)

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Verification At Heart Of Treaty Offer -- The Reagan Administration edged toward a U.S.-Soviet missile treaty Thursday, proposing tough procedures to ensure both sides abide by any pact.

(New York Times,
Washington Post, USA Today, AP, Reuter)

NATIONAL NEWS

Duberstein Is Chosen As Baker Deputy -- President Reagan yesterday named Kenneth Duberstein, a veteran Republican strategist and former White House congressional liaison, to be deputy chief of staff under Howard Baker.

(Washington Post, AP, UPI)

NETWORK NEWS (Thursday Evening)

NORTH'S LAWSUIT -- Two lawsuits brought by Lt. Col. North were thrown out today by a federal judge.

DEAVER -- Michael Deaver won a small victory in his fight to keep a special prosecutor from indicting him on perjury charges.

ARMS CONTROL/INF -- The Reagan Administration presented to the Soviet Union its terms for an agreement eliminating medium-range nuclear missiles in Europe.

What's the deal?

White House correspondent Jerry O'Leary reported this comment from Senate Minority Leader Robert Dole on the issue of \$40 million in aid to the Contras: "It's a done deal."

United Press International carried the same quotation.

The version shipped by Reuters may explain in part why Winston Churchill said the Americans and the English were a common people divided by a common language. The British wire service had Mr. Dole saying: "It's a dumb deal."

— John Elvin

IRAN — NICARAGUA

REAGAN COUNSEL RECOUNTS CHAOS OVER IRAN AFFAIR

President Reagan's chief legal adviser today depicted scenes of chaos in the White House in recent months and said he had been prevented from looking into the Iran affair for several weeks after its disclosure last November.

In an interview, he offered other new details of the internal maneuvering as the White House tried to come to grips with the crisis involving sales of arms to Iran and the reports that some of the proceeds had been diverted to the Nicaraguan insurgents.

(Gerald Boyd, New York Times, A1)

Reagan's Legal Adviser Says Iran-Contra Facts Were Kept From Him

NEW YORK -- President Reagan's chief legal adviser said in an interview that he was rebuffed by Vice Adm. Poindexter when he tried to learn details of the Iran arms-contra aid scheme in the days after its disclosure.

Peter Wallison said that when he sought details of the affair from Poindexter, who was then Reagan's national security adviser, Poindexter replied: "I'm sorry, we've had all the legal advice we need from the attorney general, and you really don't have a role in this." (AP)

Report: Reagan's Legal Adviser Describes White House Chaos

NEW YORK -- President Reagan's legal adviser described a chaotic White House in the aftermath of the Iran arms scandal and a president who could not recall when he approved a 1985 arms sale, the New York Times said today.

"We were trying to stimulate his (Reagan's) recollection and he had no recollection, although he remembered being surprised about something," Peter Wallison was quoted as saying in an interview with the newspaper.

"That led us to expect that he would not be able to recall when he appeared before the Tower Board," Wallison said, referring to the question of whether Reagan gave prior approval to an Israeli shipment of U.S. arms to Iran. (Reuter)

NORTH'S CHALLENGE TO PROBER DISMISSED Judge Backs 'Expeditious' Disclosure On Iran

A federal judge yesterday dismissed two lawsuits Lt. Col. North had brought in an effort to halt independent counsel Lawrence Walsh's investigation of the Iran-contra affair.

U.S. District Court Judge Barrington Parker held that North has no cause for complaint at this point and that if he did, there is good reason to think that it would be rejected on its merits.

(George Lardner, Washington Post, A1)

North's Challenge To Prosecutor Act Dismissed By Court

A federal district judge today dismissed two lawsuits brought by Lt. Col. North and authorized the special prosecutor in the Iran arms case to continue his investigation.

For the moment, the judge's decision would seem to remove what Mr. Walsh earlier described as the "perception of danger" to his investigation posed by the constitutional challenges.

(Philip Shenon, New York Times, A1)

Walsh Can Proceed With Iran-Contra Probe After North Lawsuit Tossed Out

Dismissing lawsuits that struck "at the core" of independent counsel Lawrence Walsh's authority, a judge says Walsh can forge ahead with his investigation of the Iran-contra affair and the man who tried to stop it: Oliver North.

U.S. District Judge Barrington Parker's rejection of two North lawsuits Thursday cleared one potential obstacle for Walsh, but still left him racing to develop a possible criminal case before North and other key figures are granted congressional immunity.

(Larry Margasak, AP)

Judge Throws Out North's Challenge To Special Prosecutor

A federal judge who threw out two challenges by Lt. Col. North to independent prosecutor Lawrence Walsh sees overwhelming public interest in Walsh's criminal probe of the Iran arms-contra aid scandal.

U.S. District Judge Parker, in dismissing two lawsuits by the fired White House aide named as a major figure in the scandal, also rejected North's arguments that Walsh is a "vigilante" with unconstitutional power.

(Lori Santos, UPI)

Judge Rejects Legal Attack By North On Iran Investigation

Fired White House aide Oliver North has lost a major legal battle aimed at halting a special prosecutor's criminal investigation into the Iran arms scandal, in which he played a key role.

Federal Judge Parker yesterday dismissed North's lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of the law that empowered special prosecutor Lawrence Walsh to investigate the affair that has rocked Reagan's presidency.

(James Vicini, Reuter)

CIA ANALYST WHO SPOTTED FUND DIVERSION GETS REDUCED JOB LOAD

Charles Allen, the CIA analyst who apparently was the first to detect the possibility that Iranian arms payments were diverted to the Contra rebels, has been given a reduced workload, intelligence community sources say.

Allen, who had served for some time as a deputy to Duane Clarridge at the CIA's counterterrorism center, as well as being a national intelligence officer for terrorism, is leaving the deputy's post, the sources said Thursday. The sources said the purpose was to give him a more manageable workload.

(Michael Sniffen, AP)

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

U.S. OUTLINES MISSILE-INSPECTION PLAN AT GENEVA

The Reagan Administration gave the Soviet Union yesterday its proposals for verification of a new medium-range missile agreement, including on-site inspection of military facilities and factories.

State Department spokesman Charles Redman said, referring to Soviet leader Gorbachev's "glasnost" policies, "We hope that Secretary Gorbachev's recent call for openness will augur well for resolving these concerns and avoid new ones in future arms control agreements."

(UPI story, Washington Post, A35)

U.S. Is Demanding Wide Verification For A Missile Pact

The United States proposed in Geneva today elaborate verification measures that the Reagan Administration will insist the Soviet Union agree to before signing any treaty removing American and Soviet intermediate-range nuclear missiles from Europe.

Arms control experts consider the verification issue to be one of two major points that could block an agreement on medium-range missiles in Europe. The other is how to limit shorter-range nuclear weapons in Europe.

(John Cushman, New York Times, A1)

Verification At Heart Of Treaty Offer

The Reagan Administration edged toward a U.S.-Soviet missile treaty Thursday, proposing tough procedures to ensure both sides abide by any pact.

The plan -- to be discussed at Geneva this coming week -- includes unprecedented on-site monitoring by U.S. inspectors at Soviet plants and Soviet watchers at USA plants.

(Juan Walte, USA Today, A4)

U.S. Offers Soviets New Inspection Plan On Euromissiles

The Reagan Administration is offering the Soviets a new inspection plan as part of the effort to eliminate medium-range nuclear missiles from Europe, while also appealing to U.S. critics for more time to negotiate arms reductions.

The U.S. plan was presented Thursday to the Soviet Union in Geneva, where the two sides are trying to work out a treaty. The Soviets already have accepted the principal of on-site inspection to help verify compliance, which is the major stumbling block to an agreement.

(Tim Ahern, AP)

U.S. Proposes On-Site Inspection In Draft Missile Treaty

GENEVA -- U.S. negotiators have proposed measures to the Soviet Union for on-site inspections to ensure compliance with a draft treaty to cut medium-range missiles.

In Washington, State Department spokesman Charles Redman told reporters the proposals included "inspection and a permanent presence" at key installations to monitor adherence to a treaty now under negotiation.

(Stephanie Nebehay, Reuter)

SHEVARDNADZE ACCUSES U.S. OF TRYING TO RAISE TENSION IN ASIA

BANGKOK -- Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, now on a visit to Vietnam, has accused the United States of trying to transform Southeast Asia into a "hotbed" of international tension.

Shevardnadze, on a tour of Asia during which he has stressed the Kremlin's drive for a zone of peace and stability in the region, said Washington was trying to boost its political and military role in the area.

(Reuter)

SENATE ENDORSES LATIN PEACE EFFORTS Republican Leader Averts Attempt To Vote On Contra-Aid Moratorium

The Senate, sharply divided over continuing U.S. aid to the Nicaraguan contras, yesterday approved a cautiously worded resolution endorsing Central American peace efforts and then stalled over a House-approved moratorium on further assistance to the rebels.

The nonbinding resolution, approved by a vote of 97 to 1, was hailed by supporters as a sign that Congress is demanding a new policy toward Central America but dismissed as "a big dose of drivel" by its lone opponent, Sen. Gordon Humphrey. (Helen Dewar, Washington Post, A12)

In Contra Aid Preliminaries, The Score Doesn't Seem To Count

The Senate is renewing the battle over aid to Nicaragua's contra rebels, and like a baseball team in spring training, the game may seem real, but the score doesn't really count.

According to advance billing on next week's fray, there will be impassioned arguments pro and con, press releases, a filibuster, a vote to end the filibuster, more speeches and, finally, a final vote.

But none of this is more than a warm-up for the real season ahead.

(Lawrence Knutson, News Analysis, AP)

IN 1ST TEST, HOUSE FRESHMEN TOE PARTY LINE Only One On Each Side Crossed The Aisle In Contra-Aid Vote

In its first major foreign policy test, the House's freshman class of 27 Democrats and 23 Republicans displayed extraordinary party loyalty as only one lawmaker in each party broke ranks and opposed its leadership on the issue of aid to the Nicaraguan contras.

Rep. Constance Morella (R-Md.) was the only Republican freshman to oppose President Reagan's policy in the House's 230-to-196 approval Wednesday of a resolution to impose a moratorium on contra aid until the Administration accounts for all money from earlier aid efforts.

(Edward Walsh, Washington Post, A13)

NUNN AGAIN HITS ABM PACT SHIFT

4 Administrations Backed Strict Interpretation, Senator Says

Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Sam Nunn asserted yesterday that four U.S. administrations consistently supported a restrictive interpretation of the 1972 ABM Treaty until the Reagan Administration's attempt in 1985 to advance a new, broad reinterpretation of the pact.

The Georgia Democrat, a key arms-control and military affairs figure on Capitol Hill, for the second time in two days rebuked the Administration for attempting to provide a new legal basis for aggressive testing and development of the components of SDI, or "star wars", missile defense.

(Dusko Doder, Washington Post, A35)

Nunn Again Blasts Broad ABM Interpretation

President Reagan, pushing to expand his "star wars" space defense plan, contends the powerful Senate armed services committee chairman is wrong to reject the Administration's broad reading of the 1972 ABM Treaty.

Reagan dismissed the analysis of Sen. Nunn, after the influential lawmaker issued his second critical report in as many days on the President's arguments against a close reading of the ABM Treaty.

"Nunn's wrong," Reagan said when told of the senator's remarks Thursday. (Eliot Brenner, UPI)

POLICE TORTURE CHARGED IN KENYA

After Detention, 66 Have Confessed To Sedition In Past Year

NAIROBI -- Under the rule of President Daniel arap Moi, Kenya's government in the past year has become increasingly intolerant of political dissent.

According to court documents here and well-placed Kenyan sources, Kenyan police, who report to the office of the president, have used torture repeatedly in the past 12 months to coerce confessions from accused political dissidents. (Blaine Harden, Washington Post, A1)

DISMAY FROM A DEEP FRIEND

Apprehensions from Israel's backers that Secretary of State Shultz would impose unreasonable pressures on Jerusalem melted away soon after the former Bechtel executive became secretary of state.

So it was with a special poignance that Shultz, describing himself as a "deep friend," registered his disappointment this week over Israeli spying on the United States. Almost simultaneously with his statement to a House appropriations subcommittee, the Israeli Cabinet reversed its hands-off policy and appointed a panel to look more closely into the Jonathan Pollard spy affair. (Barry Schweid, News Analysis, AP)

SPY STRAINS U.S.-ISRAELI TIES

But Strong Friendship With Israel Will Preclude Harsh Sanctions

The fallout from the Pollard spy case is raising fundamental questions in the United States about relations with America's closest friend in the Middle East.

But a broad range of sources say it is unlikely this consternation will translate into major U.S. sanctions against Israel, such as cutting foreign aid. Ties with Israel run too deep and the influence of America's pro-Israel lobby is too strong to permit that, they say.

(George Moffett & Warren Richey, Christian Science Monitor, A1)

JEWISH LEADERS TO WARN ISRAEL ON POLLARD AFFAIR

Approximately 65 American Jewish leaders will arrive in Jerusalem on Monday carrying a blunt warning to Israeli leaders that their handling of the Pollard spy scandal threatens serious, long-term damage to Israel's relations with the United States.

"The espionage activity for which Jonathan Pollard was justly sentenced was a serious crime and should never have taken place," said delegation leader Morris Abram, chairman of the conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations. "I am also deeply concerned by the public perception of the official treatment accorded Col. Sella and Rafael Eitan, and I will raise these concerns with the proper authorities in Israel next week."

(John Goshko, Washington Post, A1)

ISRAELI SHUNS POLLARD PROBE

Appointee Says Panel Would Not Have Authority It Needs

JERUSALEM -- Israel suffered a new setback today in its effort to quell the controversy over the Jonathan Pollard spy affair when a retired Supreme Court justice declined to head a commission established to look into the case, saying it lacked the legal authority needed to do the job.

The government later announced that a retired lawyer had agreed to head the two-member panel. But the rejection by former Supreme Court president Moshe Landau, combined with comments by Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir that the government would not be bound by the commission's findings, cast doubts on the panel's independence and on its chances of success.

(Glenn Frankel, Washington Post, A32)

Shamir Says Israel Not Obligated By Spy Probe Findings

TEL AVIV -- Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir says his government will not be obligated to carry out the recommendations of an Israel inquiry into the embarrassing case of former U.S. spy Jonathan Pollard.

"We are not obligated by anything, but there's no doubt the recommendations of this commission will have the most serious moral importance," said Shamir, who initially opposed the investigation.

(Howard Goller, Reuter)

HOUSE PANEL APPROVES TRADE BILL Retaliatory Tariffs Dropped In Measure

A key House subcommittee, moving swiftly to deal with the nation's huge trade deficits, yesterday unanimously approved legislation that went far toward satisfying Reagan Administration and House Democratic leadership demands for a tough but nonprotectionist bill.

The bill, passed by the trade panel of the Ways and Means Committee, stripped away a provision sponsored by Rep. Gephardt that would have imposed retaliatory tariffs on countries that have enjoyed large surpluses in trade with the United States through unfair tactics.

(Stuart Auerbach, Washington Post, A1)

Trade Bill On The Move But Pitfalls Remain

Prospects are increasing for approval of a sweeping trade bill following House subcommittee action, but several other trade proposals are expected to be tacked on before it reaches President Reagan.

"Everybody believes that within this bill there is the possibility of a consensus trade bill that the President can sign," Rep. William Frenzel said Thursday after the measure cleared its first House hurdle.

(Mike Robinson, AP)

House Panel Approves Trade Bill

A sweeping proposal to strengthen U.S. trade policy, after winning unanimous approval in a House subcommittee, now faces extensive debate in the full committee next week.

Rep. Dan Rostenkowski said the plan adopted unanimously by the Trade subcommittee Thursday would "toughen our trade policy, but in a manner that opens markets without this frightening word of protectionism."

(Mary Beth Franklin, UPI)

GAO ASKED TO PROBE ALLEGED DIVERSION OF AFGHAN REBEL AID Scrutiny Of Covert Program May Be Hampered By Secrecy, Jurisdictional Questions

Rep. William Gray has asked the General Accounting Office to investigate allegations that hundreds of millions of dollars in covert U.S. military aid for the anticommunist resistance in Afghanistan has been diverted in the past seven years.

The request by Gray, chairman of the House Budget Committee, was made in a letter to the GAO on Feb. 25. Gray aides and GAO investigators will meet Monday to discuss the scope of the investigation, according to congressional sources.

(David Ottaway, Washington Post, A19)

PILOT SHOT DOWN OVER HONDURAS HAD DRUG TIES

MIAMI -- The pilot of a DC3 shot down by the Honduran Air Force had a record of drug-related arrests in the Bahamas and Miami, authorities said today.

No illegal cargo was found aboard the plane, but Honduran authorities said the crew apparently pushed something, possibly drugs, out of the aircraft before it was intercepted.

(AP story, Washington Post, A16)

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NATIONAL NEWS

DUBERSTEIN IS CHOSEN AS BAKER DEPUTY Veteran Strategist To Have Broad Role

President Reagan yesterday named Kenneth Duberstein, a veteran Republican strategist and former White House congressional liaison, to be deputy chief of staff under Howard Baker.

The appointment was the first move in Baker's effort to rebuild the White House staff following the resignation of Donald Regan and many of his aides. Duberstein, who has enjoyed close ties with members of both parties, will have wide-ranging responsibilities in the management of the White House, officials said. (David Hoffman, Washington Post, A3)

Reagan Brings Former Legislative Affairs Director Back To White House

President Reagan, seeking to restore his Administration's momentum after its Iran-contra setbacks, is turning to a veteran of past legislative triumphs to right-hand man to Chief of Staff Howard Baker.

"The announcement of Ken Duberstein as deputy chief of staff is the first step in putting together a top-flight organization and system for pursuing the President's objectives in the next two years," Baker said. (Dale Nelson, AP)

Reagan's Former Hill Lobbyist Joins White House Staff

Kenneth Duberstein says he was lured from lucrative lobbying work to become No. 2 on the White House staff out of loyalty to President Reagan and admiration for new Chief of Staff Howard Baker.

Reagan says Duberstein's appointment as his deputy chief of staff will help the Administration "move forward in the next two years" from the stagnation caused by the Iran arms-contra aid scandal. (Ira Allen, UPI)

***PERLE RESIGNS TOP ARMS POLICY POST Hard-Liner Says Stance Succeeded**

Assistant Secretary of Defense Richard Perle, for six years a chief architect of Reagan Administration strategic arms policies, yesterday announced his resignation, saying that recent events had vindicated the Administration's tough stance toward arms control with the Soviet Union.

In an interview, Perle predicted that President Reagan will meet Soviet leader Gorbachev this year in a full summit, and said he anticipates that the two leaders will agree on eliminating intermediate-range nuclear forces in Europe. (Marjorie Williams, Washington Post, A25)

Pentagon Arms Control Policymaker Leaving

Richard Perle, the Pentagon arms control policymaker whose hard-line views earned him the title the "Prince of Darkness," is leaving the Administration.

"I came to the conclusion that there's never a good moment (to leave); there's never a moment at which all of the issues in which one is interested in are resolved, but I think the direction of the Administration on the issues is pretty clearly set," Perle said at a Pentagon briefing.

(Norman Black, AP)

Perle Leaving Pentagon, But Keeping Influence On Arms Control

Richard Perle, the Reagan Administration's most controversial expert on arms control, is leaving the Pentagon after six years of firing barbs at liberals in Washington and in the NATO alliance.

Perle, a strong critic of past superpower arms agreements who is known as "Doctor Doom" by arms control advocates, said thursday he had resigned as assistant defense secretary for international security affairs in order to complete a novel.

He said he would stay on the job until spring when a successor is named and will thereafter continue to do consulting work for President Reagan on arms control.

(Charles Aldinger, Reuter)

INDICTMENT OF DEEVER BARRED AGAIN Lawyers Obtain Emergency Order

Attorneys for former White House aide Michael Deaver obtained an emergency court order yesterday that temporarily blocks a prosecutor for the second time from seeking a perjury indictment against Deaver.

A three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals granted Deaver a five-day stay against any further action by Whitney North Seymour, the independent counsel who has been investigating Deaver's lobbying activities.

(Howard Kurtz, Washington Post, A10)

ADMINISTRATION SEEKING SALE TO INVESTORS OF U.S. LOANS

The Reagan Administration yesterday asked Congress to approve the sale of \$39.8 billion in federal loans to private investors during the next five years as part of a major "credit reform act" that would dramatically alter the way the government counts and manages its \$702 billion portfolio of loans.

"This is a major piece of legislation that addresses the long-standing shortcomings in the management of government loans," said Joseph Wright, deputy director of the Office of Management and Budget.

(Judith Havemann, Washington Post, D1)

AUTO COMEBACK BUOYS UPTURN IN RETAIL SALES

Buyers returned to auto showrooms last month and other retailers rang up modestly higher sales in all categories, boosting retail sales in February by 4.1 percent, the government reported yesterday.

The figures showed a strong rebound from a bleak January, when auto sales plummeted and sent total sales into a nose dive. The department said yesterday that the dive was even steeper than reported earlier.
(William Kronholm, Washington Post, D1)

HILL CHAIRMEN SKEPTICAL OF NAVY CARRIER REQUEST

The Navy's request for money to start building two new aircraft carriers next year ran into rough water yesterday during the Senate's first hearing on the issue.

Sens. Edward Kennedy and Carl Levin, chairmen of two Senate Armed Services subcommittees, questioned the wisdom of beginning two new carriers with a total price tag of \$7 billion -- particularly since numerous other military programs would have to be canceled or stretched out to provide the money. The Pentagon has requested a down payment of \$660 million for the two carriers for fiscal 1988.

(George Wilson, Washington Post, A22)

REPUBLICANS SAY DEMOCRATS MISCALCULATED BY ALLOWING PAY RAISE

Six Republican members of congress say House Democrats may have outfoxed themselves in their efforts to pocket a pay raise that boosted congressional salaries to \$89,500 a year.

The Republicans filed a lawsuit Thursday asking a federal judge to rescind the \$12,100 pay raise, centering their arguments on when a 30-day window of disapproval kicked in.
(Sandy Johnson, AP)

NETWORK NEWS SUMMARY

(Thursday Evening, March 12, 1987)

NORTH'S CHALLENGE OF THE SPECIAL PROSECUTOR

ABC's Peter Jennings: We suspect there is hardly anyone in the U.S. who doesn't want Col. North to tell his story of the Iran affair, certainly the President wants him to. And so, when a federal judge in Washington said today that Col. North's challenge to the Special Prosecutor should be dismissed, it was seen by those who want the investigation to go forward as welcome news.

ABC's Dennis Troute: In dismissing North's complaint, Judge Barrington Parker did not decide the constitutional question of whether or not the independent counsel position violates the separation of powers laws of the Constitution. Parker's opinion said simply it's not time yet to decide the question. He's allowing the investigation to move forward to an indictment by a grand jury if sufficient evidence of wrong doing is turned out. Said Parker's opinion, quote, "The nation demands an expeditious and complete disclosure of our government's involvement in the Iran-contra affair. Independent Counsel Walsh disclosed...that he's trying to wrap up a sound criminal case in the next ninety days.

(Walsh: "We do want to develop as much evidence as we can and have it under seal before they give testimony under the compulsion of an immunity grant.")

Walsh said also that Congress is far likelier to get the full story in this kind of case from Congressional witnesses who know they are under scrutiny for criminal investigations as well.

(Walsh: "Our further concern is that if they, if immunity is granted to such important persons prematurely, that it will not produce the full truth.")

With today's ruling, federal judges have twice in two days refused to knock down the law authorizing independent counsels, meaning that later court challenges are not likely to succeed either. (ABC-Lead)

NBC's Tom Brokaw: Two lawsuits brought by Lt. Col. Oliver North challenging the legal basis of the Special Prosecutor's investigation of his role in the Iran-contra affair -- those lawsuits were thrown out today by a federal judge. The judge's ruling said the investigation was serving an important public interest and it should continue. Meanwhile, National Public Radio reported tonight that North's former secretary at the National Security Council, Fawn Hall, has had plenty to tell the Special Prosecutor. It quotes sources saying that she testified that North not only destroyed but also altered important documents at a time when he knew that Attorney General Edwin Meese was investigating the Iran-contra affair. (NBC-3)

CBS' Dan Rather: President Reagan's former national security council aide, Lt. Col. Oliver North, lost today in court. North has been trying to get a judge to stop the Special Prosecutor in the Iran arms case on constitutional grounds. U.S. District Judge Barrington Parker, said in dismissing North's suit, and I quote, "the nation demands an expeditious and complete disclosure of our government's involvement in the Iran-contra affair." (CBS-3)

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DEAVER

Brokaw reports that Michael Deaver won a small victory in his fight to keep another special prosecutor from indicting him on perjury charges. The court blocked any such indictment until next Tuesday, allowing Deaver's lawyers to press their challenge to the constitutionality of the special prosecutor law. (NBC-4, ABC-2,)

ARMS CONTROL/INF

Brokaw: There were major signs today that the U.S. and the Soviet Union are moving quickly toward an agreement to eliminate their medium-range nuclear missiles in Europe. The top Soviet arms control expert...said that a treaty could be completely reached within six months. In Geneva, U.S. negotiators presented a plan to solve one of the major obstacles: how both sides can verify how the treaty is being honored.

NBC's Anne Garrels: Soviet inspectors on this NATO base in Italy -- that's one of the far reaching verification measures the U.S. is proposing. The Soviet inspectors would make sure that missiles the U.S. agreed to eliminate are indeed destroyed. The Soviets accept this idea.

(Viktor Karpov: "...And we will allow Western inspectors in our bases where SS-20s will be dismantled or destroyed.")

But once these missiles are destroyed, what's to stop either side from secretly replacing them? To prevent cheating -- the covert stock piling of illegal missiles -- the U.S. is also asking that each side be allowed to monitor missile reduction and maintenance facilities. For instance, in this normally closed area around Rostov an American inspector would be posted outside the Soviet SS-20 factory. And outside this General Dynamics factory in San Diego, where American cruise missiles are assembled, a Soviet inspector would watch what goes in and comes out of the plant. Not total access, but officials believe it will be enough to prevent cheating and not so much to allow Soviet espionage. Arms control experts warn this may not satisfy everyone.... The cruise missile could cause the biggest fight. Air-launched cruise missiles are not covered under this treaty. But they closely resemble land-based systems which are prohibited under the draft. So how would the Soviets tell the difference from the outside? Richard Perle believes this problem can be solved.

(Richard Perle: "Bringing Soviet inspectors to a sight where they allege there may be suspicious activity -- that can be done while protecting secrets.")

Verification is the key to this treaty. But while both sides now agree on the principle of on-site inspection, officials expect tough negotiations. As one put it: "the Devil is in the details."

Brokaw reports Richard Perle confirmed that he will be leaving the Pentagon this spring. Perle said that U.S. arms control policy is now set in the direction that he championed for six years....

(NBC-5)

ABC's John McWethy: The Reagan Administration immediately went public with its new position reaching for the high ground in the public relations battle.

(Charles Redman: "The U.S. tabled at the negotiations on intermediate-range missiles a treaty article providing for on-site inspection. With this article, the U.S. has completed tabling its draft INF treaty.")

To assure that neither side is cheating, the Administration is proposing the following: on-site inspections of missile bases, factories, and storage areas. This could mean up to one hundred American and West European inspectors permanently based inside the Soviet Union and an equal number of Soviets in the U.S. and Western Europe. Short notice inspections may also be required in which one side demands to see an area where missiles are not supposed to be, but where something suspicious appears to be happening. The U.S. is also asking that electronic monitoring devices be posted outside certain facilities to help further check on missile deployments. Though negotiations on this have just begun, the superpowers are falling all over themselves endorsing the concept, at least in public.

(Redman: "...both sides understand the need for a very effective verification regime.")

(Viktor Karpov: "So we are interested to have no escape clauses, loopholes.")

The Pentagon has resisted stringent verification, fearing it could provide the Soviets with access to sensitive Western facilities. Supporters, however, argue that the potential benefits of on site inspections in the Soviet Union, a closed society, far outweigh other problems. (ABC-3)

CBS's Bill McGlocklin: In Geneva today, the Reagan Administration presented to the Soviet Union its terms for an agreement eliminating medium-range nuclear missiles in Europe. The U.S. is demanding strict rules of inspection, including the permanent basing in each country of more than one hundred inspectors, inspection of nuclear facilities at short notice, and a total ban on efforts to conceal missiles from spy satellites.

(Redman: "We hope that Secretary Gorbachev's recent calls for more openness will augur well for resolving these concerns and avoiding new ones in future arms control treaties.")

Senior U.S. arms control negotiators said today on Capitol Hill the new rules are needed because the Soviets cannot be trusted.

(Kenneth Adelman: "...If we consider this process of year after year finding clear violations that the Soviets have made without them cleaning up their act, I think that presents a very ominous picture to arms control.")

But Soviet negotiators remain optimistic.... While Washington and Moscow may be nearing an arms control agreement, the White House and Congress are facing a showdown on arms control. Sen. Nunn says President Reagan is distorting the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty to save his SDI Space weapons program. The President today said Nunn's charges were false.

(TV coverage: The President.)

Despite the tough talk in today's U.S. proposal, Administration officials are eager to reach an arms control agreement. Sources say it would help restore the credibility of the Reagan foreign policy and give the President a much needed victory. (CBS-Lead)

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SDI

Jennings reports the Reagan Administration is also negotiating about nuclear arms and its star wars missile defense plan with the Congress. The Administration's broad interpretation of the ABM treaty is now being challenged by a very important Senator.

ABC's Brit Hume: The Chairman of the Senate Arms Services Committee, Sam Nunn,...continued his three-day analysis of, and attack on, the Administration's reinterpretation of the 1972 ABM treaty.

(Nunn: "It's an amazing sort of legalistic gymnastics that we've seen here. The Reagan Administration's unilateral reinterpretation of the ABM treaty constitutes a fundamental constitutional challenge to the Senate with respect to its powers and prerogatives in this area.")

The Administration wants the 1972 treaty interpreted broadly to allow further testing and development of the President's strategic defense initiative....

(TV coverage: Reporter: "Mr. President, Sen. Nunn says your interpretation of the ABM treaty is wrong. What do you have to say to that?" The President shrugs.)

Sen. Nunn is wrong, he said, a view echoed today by the Administration's chief strategist on arms control, Richard Perle.

(Perle: "I disagree profoundly with the views expressed by the Chairman of the Arms Services Committee.")

Perle, however, is leaving the government. Indeed this was his valedictory news conference and there are signs that with him might go the Administration's enthusiasm for a fight with Congress on this issue at this time. As Perle himself put it:

(Perle: "At the end of the day, this isn't a legal question, it's a political one.")

Not only is it a political question but it's the kind of question where the Administration has usually had and frequently needed the support of people like Sam Nunn. (ABC-4)

CONSERVATIVE REBELLION

Brokaw reports conservatives feel abandoned and they blame George Shultz and Howard Baker.

(TV coverage: The President with Howard Baker.)

NBC's Andrea Mitchell: Instead of rallying around the embattled President, conservatives are declaring civil war against him. First, by demanding that he dump his Secretary of State whom they consider too moderate.

(Richard Viguerie: "In my view it's time for George Shultz to resign.")

With William Casey's departure, conservatives lost a major voice in the Cabinet and they are really alarmed by the arrival of Howard Baker.

(TV coverage: The President meeting with the Cabinet)

They view him as the enemy, a man willing to compromise on what they call the holy trinity of issues -- star wars, contra aid and taxes....

Mitchell continues: For the Chief Executive, who relies heavily on subordinates, they worry that Baker will become surrogate president.... Conservatives have long viewed Baker as a dunce. They kept him off the ticket in 1980 and ignored him in '84. Since coming to the White House, Baker has worked hard to reassure conservatives that he will let Reagan be Reagan.

(Howard Baker: "I am Ronald Reagan's Chief of Staff. I am to serve Ronald Reagan and his policies are my policies.")

One day after conservative Senators complained that they hadn't seen the President in months, Baker gave them a chance to voice their complaints.

(President Reagan: "Well, I've come here to listen to them.")

Baker even brought a conservative to the White House for the Justice Department. Conservatives want Kenneth Cribbs to keep an eye on Baker and hold him to his promises.

(Griff: "He has accepted this position for one purpose only, and that is to restore the President's ability to implement the Reagan agenda.")

So far, the Reagan revolution has failed to fulfill many of its promises such as bringing back school prayer, or banning all abortions and it has hardly produced a balanced budget. But if the President's programs are to have any chance of success with the Democratic Congress, he needs all the help he can get. So he has to put down the growing rebellion among conservatives. (NBC-6)

ISRAEL/POLLARD

Brokaw reports Israel appointed a lawyer and a former army chief of staff to investigate its role in the case of Jonathan Pollard. Israel admits that it is conducting the investigation mainly to restore its credibility with the U.S.. (NBC-9)

CATASTROPHIC HEALTH INSURANCE

CBS's Jane Bryant Quinn reports on the Administration's catastrophic illness supplement to Medicare. At the start, the coverage would cost seniors only sixty dollars a year, deducted from their social security check.... But only three percent will run out of Medicare benefits a year. And most of them have private insurance anyway. Critics are saying stop spending money on people who don't need more coverage.... The real need, critics say, is more insurance for the poor. Under the Reagan plan everyone, including poor people, must come up with as much as two thousand dollars of their own before catastrophic coverage begins. There's another problem with the bill: although it is called "catastrophic health insurance," it does not cover long-term care in a nursing home, which for the elderly is the biggest financial catastrophe of all. But the Administration says you have to start somewhere.... This plan may [become more costly]. With Senior power strong in the voting booths, both Democrats and Republicans are already tacking attractive extras on to the bill. To the surprise of conservatives, one of President Reagan's legacies may be the costliest Medicare program ever. (CBS-7)

HUNGER STRIKE ARMS CONTROL PROTEST

Rather reports an American physicist, on a hunger strike to protest the arms race, has received an invitation to visit the Soviet Union. Dr. Charles Hyder has appeared regularly on Soviet television since his protest began last September.... (CBS-2)

SOUTH AFRICA

Jennings reports in South Africa today about 50 blacks, singing freedom songs, were met by riot police as they left a church. Their demonstration, which was broken up with tear gas, was one among hundreds in South Africa today. Most were peaceful, all were to protest the continuing detention of thousands of people under South Africa state of emergency law. (ABC-5)

NCAA TOURNAMENT AND DRUGS

ABC's Bill Blakemore reports on the NCAA basketball tournament and drug testing....
(TV coverage: The President congratulating the Villanova squad, 1985 champions) (ABC-10, CBS-12)

EDITORIALS/COLUMNISTS

IRAN-CONTRA/PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Forget 'Hands On': Let Reagan Be Reagan -- "Critics, and some of Reagan's friends, go too far in demanding a new management style from him.... Even as Reagan admitted mistakes and accepted responsibility for the Iran-contra scandal it was clear that he hated doing so. He then blamed former subordinates and even found a new villain -- a bad filing system. Moreover, trying to turn Reagan into a hands-on manager is a bad idea. To get this crisis of competence behind him, his Administration must make solid accomplishments.... The President has now brought on board the ideal people to help.... Let Secretary of State Shultz and Carlucci bring home a safe-and-sound arms agreement. Let Baker work out the budget, the trade bill and catastrophic health insurance with the Democratic Congress. And let Reagan be Reagan.

(David Aaron, Los Angeles Times, 3/6)

The Reagan Values -- "Reagan's popularity has not all that much to do with his speaking ability, his luck, or even his stand on issues. The key to Reagan's strength is that he symbolizes what most of us believe to be true about our country, our beliefs, our values, and ourselves.... The source of Reagan's strength is not simply that he endorses these values. Anyone can do that. It is that he personifies and lives them. They are integral parts of his being."

(Ray Shamie, Boston Globe, 3/8)

Mr. Reagan's Third Term -- "[The President's speech] didn't sound like an inaugural address. Yet an inaugural address is what President Reagan's speech Wednesday night amounted to, an appeal for a fresh start.... It's not in anyone's power to grant that fresh start. Questions about his credibility will hang like thunderclouds until Congress and the independent counsel conclude their investigations. Still, the world won't stop, and the Commander-in-Chief insists he's eager to command, to start again."

(New York Times, 3/8)

Owning Up And Moving On -- "The President did what most Americans and allies wanted him to do: own up and move on, while reaffirming 'American values' and the rule of law. Reagan also took care not to diminish 'the importance of continuing investigations.... At 76, he is not likely to become a slave to detail, so his new team...can bring important changes in attitude -- open-mindedness toward arms control and the Contadora peace plan in Central America." (Boston Globe, 3/6)

'I Cannot Escape Responsibility' -- "'It was a mistake.' That final simple declarative statement, uttered early in President Reagan's 11½ minute speech...was an unprecedented act of contrition by an American president. By admitting his mistakes and accepting responsibility for those of others within his Administration, Ronald Reagan took a critical first step toward restoring public confidence in his ability -- indeed, his willingness -- to lead the nation during the final two years of his Presidency."

(San Diego Tribune, 3/5)

EDITORIALS/COLUMNISTS (continued)

The President's Contrite Speech -- "It's never easy for a politician to admit he made a mistake. It's even harder for the President of the U.S., who must project an image of strength to the world, to concede errors of judgement and performance.... The speech was a trip to the confessional for the President, and it should go a long way toward restoring the public's confidence in the Reagan White House.... Barring unforeseen revelations, last night's speech should calm the waters that have nearly engulfed the White House in recent weeks. The Iran arms investigation will go on, but the President may no longer be the main target."

(San Francisco Chronicle, 3/5)

The following editorials on the President's address were compiled by the Associated Press:

"The President deserves praise for admitting his mistakes in the Iran-contra affair.... Where in the world would you find a country where the President had appointed a commission to look into the misdoings of his own Administration, and then accepting before the American people the fact, 'I've made mistakes and let's face it, we blew it, but let's go on from here?' We believe a strong consensus will emerge that the President has, in admitting mistakes and accepting responsibility, taken a step toward winning the confidence of the American people in the last two years of his term."

(San Gabriel Valley Tribune, 3/6)

"Many would have felt better had Mr. Reagan been more direct in acknowledging his own culpability. They also wonder, given the President's age, if he really can change a style that was so vulnerable in this case to the freelancing he referred to. We would guess that we have seen the extent of the President's contribution."

(South Bend Tribune, 3/6)

"Once upon a time it would not have been necessary for an aide [David Abshire] to President Reagan to feel called upon to say, in effect, that Reagan tells the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.... It is up to the Congressional committees to see if Reagan's position of the contra aid part of the scandal squares with the facts, because the American people are not so inclined any more to accept what President Reagan says simply on its face."

(Arkansas Gazette, 3/10)

"President Reagan's relatively brief speech...on the Iran-contra affair -- billed in advance as the most important speech of his Presidency -- contained the obligatory expressions of responsibility for the botched arms-for-hostages deal, but it was no Gettysburg Address. History books may accord it a footnote at best. What will be of lasting significance are not the President's words...but his actions and those of his Administration over the next two years. In a sense Reagan is now starting what amounts to a third term in office and his 1980 campaign slogan, 'A New Beginning,' has as much if not more validity today than it did then."

(Seattle Post-Intelligencer, 3/6)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

"Baseball players who hit three out of 10 become national heroes. Not so with U.S. presidents. If they score eight home runs and strike out once, our mass media muckrakers demand their scalps. Ronald Reagan is a classic example. His 'home runs' include keeping us out of war, reducing inflation sharply, cutting interest rates, lowering unemployment, rebuilding our armed forces, 'unpacking' the courts, and trying to decrease Congressional pork-barrel spending. His reward? The savagely over-played 'scandal' called Irangate."

(Walt Seifert, Washington Times, 3/10)

"The Iran-contra affair will be with us longer than you think, for its effects will be felt long after this President...has left office. We cannot be surprised when our future voters and public servants, who will have been weaned on disinformation and denied political role models, will be a generation of apathetic and cynical citizens. As a social studies teacher, I cannot forgive Ronald Reagan for his legacy."

(Andrea S. Libresco, Newsday, 3/8)

"Reagan had to be provided a 'built-in deniability,' so that he could later claim that he was not informed. Thus the scenario if playing out as planned in case something went wrong with his secret Iran-contra policy, as it did. One can be sure that once given immunity for prosecution, North and Poindexter will testify that they kept President Reagan completely in the dark about their own work in the affair, thereby keeping intact the 'built-in deniability' for Reagan to continue to claim. After all, North and Poindexter are Reagan's 'national heroes.'"

(Suresh M. Sheth, Orange County Register, 3/9)

"We need [The President] and most of those [who are] close to him. He should keep seeking good people who are devoted to the Presidency and serving it. He should find a way to extricate the best people from their comfortable living and convince them to be tough enough to do the toughest jobs -- to run the government, to maintain eternal vigilance against outside, hostile forces and to discover the forces eating at our nation from within and eliminate their effectiveness."

(Gary Weir, Plain Dealer, 3/10)

"Letting international terrorists know that they can blackmail the U.S. by taking a citizen hostage is sending the wrong signal. We must take a hard-line stance with terrorists. Some people have become angry with the press' handling of the scandal. But when the government does something terribly wrong, the people have a right to know. I hope the President can continue the rest of his Administration without any more problems."

(John Steiner, Birmingham News, 2/23)

"To all the people bashing President Reagan for forgetting, do they in turn forget how this man was elected by a landslide, how he revived patriotism, lowered inflation and interest rates, invaded Grenada, intercepted that terrorist plane, bombed Khadafy, pushed for job training rather than handouts, is trying to contain communism in Central America, built our defenses and brought Russia to the bargaining table without giving away SDI?"

(Jim Greeran, New York Post, 3/12)



News Summary

OFFICE OF THE PRESS SECRETARY

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 1987 -- 6 a.m. EST EDITION

TODAY'S HEADLINES

IRAN-NICARAGUA

Reagan Counsel Recounts Chaos Over Iran Affair -- President Reagan's chief legal adviser today depicted scenes of chaos in the White House in recent months and said he had been prevented from looking into the Iran affair for several weeks after its disclosure last November.

(New York Times, AP, Reuter)

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Verification At Heart Of Treaty Offer -- The Reagan Administration edged toward a U.S.-Soviet missile treaty Thursday, proposing tough procedures to ensure both sides abide by any pact.

(New York Times,
Washington Post, USA Today, AP, Reuter)

NATIONAL NEWS

Duberstein Is Chosen As Baker Deputy -- President Reagan yesterday named Kenneth Duberstein, a veteran Republican strategist and former White House congressional liaison, to be deputy chief of staff under Howard Baker.

(Washington Post, AP, UPI)

NETWORK NEWS (Thursday Evening)

NORTH'S LAWSUIT -- Two lawsuits brought by Lt. Col. North were thrown out today by a federal judge.

DEAVER -- Michael Deaver won a small victory in his fight to keep a special prosecutor from indicting him on perjury charges.

ARMS CONTROL/INF -- The Reagan Administration presented to the Soviet Union its terms for an agreement eliminating medium-range nuclear missiles in Europe.

What's the deal?

White House correspondent Jerry O'Leary reported this comment from Senate Minority Leader Robert Dole on the issue of \$40 million in aid to the Contras: "It's a done deal."

United Press International carried the same quotation.

The version shipped by Reuters may explain in part why Winston Churchill said the Americans and the English were a common people divided by a common language. The British wire service had Mr. Dole saying: "It's a dumb deal."

— John Elvin

IRAN — NICARAGUA

REAGAN COUNSEL RECOUNTS CHAOS OVER IRAN AFFAIR

President Reagan's chief legal adviser today depicted scenes of chaos in the White House in recent months and said he had been prevented from looking into the Iran affair for several weeks after its disclosure last November.

In an interview, he offered other new details of the internal maneuvering as the White House tried to come to grips with the crisis involving sales of arms to Iran and the reports that some of the proceeds had been diverted to the Nicaraguan insurgents.

(Gerald Boyd, New York Times, A1)

Reagan's Legal Adviser Says Iran-Contra Facts Were Kept From Him

NEW YORK -- President Reagan's chief legal adviser said in an interview that he was rebuffed by Vice Adm. Poindexter when he tried to learn details of the Iran arms-contra aid scheme in the days after its disclosure.

Peter Wallison said that when he sought details of the affair from Poindexter, who was then Reagan's national security adviser, Poindexter replied: "I'm sorry, we've had all the legal advice we need from the attorney general, and you really don't have a role in this." (AP)

Report: Reagan's Legal Adviser Describes White House Chaos

NEW YORK -- President Reagan's legal adviser described a chaotic White House in the aftermath of the Iran arms scandal and a president who could not recall when he approved a 1985 arms sale, the New York Times said today.

"We were trying to stimulate his (Reagan's) recollection and he had no recollection, although he remembered being surprised about something," Peter Wallison was quoted as saying in an interview with the newspaper.

"That led us to expect that he would not be able to recall when he appeared before the Tower Board," Wallison said, referring to the question of whether Reagan gave prior approval to an Israeli shipment of U.S. arms to Iran. (Reuter)

NORTH'S CHALLENGE TO PROBER DISMISSED Judge Backs 'Expeditious' Disclosure On Iran

A federal judge yesterday dismissed two lawsuits Lt. Col. North had brought in an effort to halt independent counsel Lawrence Walsh's investigation of the Iran-contra affair.

U.S. District Court Judge Barrington Parker held that North has no cause for complaint at this point and that if he did, there is good reason to think that it would be rejected on its merits.

(George Lardner, Washington Post, A1)

North's Challenge To Prosecutor Act Dismissed By Court

A federal district judge today dismissed two lawsuits brought by Lt. Col. North and authorized the special prosecutor in the Iran arms case to continue his investigation.

For the moment, the judge's decision would seem to remove what Mr. Walsh earlier described as the "perception of danger" to his investigation posed by the constitutional challenges.

(Philip Shenon, New York Times, A1)

Walsh Can Proceed With Iran-Contra Probe After North Lawsuit Tossed Out

Dismissing lawsuits that struck "at the core" of independent counsel Lawrence Walsh's authority, a judge says Walsh can forge ahead with his investigation of the Iran-contra affair and the man who tried to stop it: Oliver North.

U.S. District Judge Barrington Parker's rejection of two North lawsuits Thursday cleared one potential obstacle for Walsh, but still left him racing to develop a possible criminal case before North and other key figures are granted congressional immunity. (Larry Margasak, AP)

Judge Throws Out North's Challenge To Special Prosecutor

A federal judge who threw out two challenges by Lt. Col. North to independent prosecutor Lawrence Walsh sees overwhelming public interest in Walsh's criminal probe of the Iran arms-contra aid scandal.

U.S. District Judge Parker, in dismissing two lawsuits by the fired White House aide named as a major figure in the scandal, also rejected North's arguments that Walsh is a "vigilante" with unconstitutional power.

(Lori Santos, UPI)

Judge Rejects Legal Attack By North On Iran Investigation

Fired White House aide Oliver North has lost a major legal battle aimed at halting a special prosecutor's criminal investigation into the Iran arms scandal, in which he played a key role.

Federal Judge Parker yesterday dismissed North's lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of the law that empowered special prosecutor Lawrence Walsh to investigate the affair that has rocked Reagan's presidency.

(James Vicini, Reuter)

CIA ANALYST WHO SPOTTED FUND DIVERSION GETS REDUCED JOB LOAD

Charles Allen, the CIA analyst who apparently was the first to detect the possibility that Iranian arms payments were diverted to the Contra rebels, has been given a reduced workload, intelligence community sources say.

Allen, who had served for some time as a deputy to Duane Clarridge at the CIA's counterterrorism center, as well as being a national intelligence officer for terrorism, is leaving the deputy's post, the sources said Thursday. The sources said the purpose was to give him a more manageable workload.

(Michael Sniffen, AP)

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

U.S. OUTLINES MISSILE-INSPECTION PLAN AT GENEVA

The Reagan Administration gave the Soviet Union yesterday its proposals for verification of a new medium-range missile agreement, including on-site inspection of military facilities and factories.

State Department spokesman Charles Redman said, referring to Soviet leader Gorbachev's "glasnost" policies, "We hope that Secretary Gorbachev's recent call for openness will augur well for resolving these concerns and avoid new ones in future arms control agreements."

(UPI story, Washington Post, A35)

U.S. Is Demanding Wide Verification For A Missile Pact

The United States proposed in Geneva today elaborate verification measures that the Reagan Administration will insist the Soviet Union agree to before signing any treaty removing American and Soviet intermediate-range nuclear missiles from Europe.

Arms control experts consider the verification issue to be one of two major points that could block an agreement on medium-range missiles in Europe. The other is how to limit shorter-range nuclear weapons in Europe.

(John Cushman, New York Times, A1)

Verification At Heart Of Treaty Offer

The Reagan Administration edged toward a U.S.-Soviet missile treaty Thursday, proposing tough procedures to ensure both sides abide by any pact.

The plan -- to be discussed at Geneva this coming week -- includes unprecedented on-site monitoring by U.S. inspectors at Soviet plants and Soviet watchers at USA plants.

(Juan Walte, USA Today, A4)

U.S. Offers Soviets New Inspection Plan On Euromissiles

The Reagan Administration is offering the Soviets a new inspection plan as part of the effort to eliminate medium-range nuclear missiles from Europe, while also appealing to U.S. critics for more time to negotiate arms reductions.

The U.S. plan was presented Thursday to the Soviet Union in Geneva, where the two sides are trying to work out a treaty. The Soviets already have accepted the principal of on-site inspection to help verify compliance, which is the major stumbling block to an agreement.

(Tim Ahern, AP)

U.S. Proposes On-Site Inspection In Draft Missile Treaty

GENEVA -- U.S. negotiators have proposed measures to the Soviet Union for on-site inspections to ensure compliance with a draft treaty to cut medium-range missiles.

In Washington, State Department spokesman Charles Redman told reporters the proposals included "inspection and a permanent presence" at key installations to monitor adherence to a treaty now under negotiation.

(Stephanie Nebehay, Reuter)

SHEVARDNADZE ACCUSES U.S. OF TRYING TO RAISE TENSION IN ASIA

BANGKOK -- Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, now on a visit to Vietnam, has accused the United States of trying to transform Southeast Asia into a "hotbed" of international tension.

Shevardnadze, on a tour of Asia during which he has stressed the Kremlin's drive for a zone of peace and stability in the region, said Washington was trying to boost its political and military role in the area.

(Reuter)

SENATE ENDORSES LATIN PEACE EFFORTS Republican Leader Averts Attempt To Vote On Contra-Aid Moratorium

The Senate, sharply divided over continuing U.S. aid to the Nicaraguan contras, yesterday approved a cautiously worded resolution endorsing Central American peace efforts and then stalled over a House-approved moratorium on further assistance to the rebels.

The nonbinding resolution, approved by a vote of 97 to 1, was hailed by supporters as a sign that Congress is demanding a new policy toward Central America but dismissed as "a big dose of drivel" by its lone opponent, Sen. Gordon Humphrey. (Helen Dewar, Washington Post, A12)

In Contra Aid Preliminaries, The Score Doesn't Seem To Count

The Senate is renewing the battle over aid to Nicaragua's contra rebels, and like a baseball team in spring training, the game may seem real, but the score doesn't really count.

According to advance billing on next week's fray, there will be impassioned arguments pro and con, press releases, a filibuster, a vote to end the filibuster, more speeches and, finally, a final vote.

But none of this is more than a warm-up for the real season ahead.

(Lawrence Knutson, News Analysis, AP)

IN 1ST TEST, HOUSE FRESHMEN TOE PARTY LINE Only One On Each Side Crossed The Aisle In Contra-Aid Vote

In its first major foreign policy test, the House's freshman class of 27 Democrats and 23 Republicans displayed extraordinary party loyalty as only one lawmaker in each party broke ranks and opposed its leadership on the issue of aid to the Nicaraguan contras.

Rep. Constance Morella (R-Md.) was the only Republican freshman to oppose President Reagan's policy in the House's 230-to-196 approval Wednesday of a resolution to impose a moratorium on contra aid until the Administration accounts for all money from earlier aid efforts.

(Edward Walsh, Washington Post, A13)

NUNN AGAIN HITS ABM PACT SHIFT

4 Administrations Backed Strict Interpretation, Senator Says

Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Sam Nunn asserted yesterday that four U.S. administrations consistently supported a restrictive interpretation of the 1972 ABM Treaty until the Reagan Administration's attempt in 1985 to advance a new, broad reinterpretation of the pact.

The Georgia Democrat, a key arms-control and military affairs figure on Capitol Hill, for the second time in two days rebuked the Administration for attempting to provide a new legal basis for aggressive testing and development of the components of SDI, or "star wars", missile defense.

(Dusko Doder, Washington Post, A35)

Nunn Again Blasts Broad ABM Interpretation

President Reagan, pushing to expand his "star wars" space defense plan, contends the powerful Senate armed services committee chairman is wrong to reject the Administration's broad reading of the 1972 ABM Treaty.

Reagan dismissed the analysis of Sen. Nunn, after the influential lawmaker issued his second critical report in as many days on the President's arguments against a close reading of the ABM Treaty.

"Nunn's wrong," Reagan said when told of the senator's remarks Thursday.

(Eliot Brenner, UPI)

POLICE TORTURE CHARGED IN KENYA

After Detention, 66 Have Confessed To Sedition In Past Year

NAIROBI -- Under the rule of President Daniel arap Moi, Kenya's government in the past year has become increasingly intolerant of political dissent.

According to court documents here and well-placed Kenyan sources, Kenyan police, who report to the office of the president, have used torture repeatedly in the past 12 months to coerce confessions from accused political dissidents.

(Blaine Harden, Washington Post, A1)

DISMAY FROM A DEEP FRIEND

Apprehensions from Israel's backers that Secretary of State Shultz would impose unreasonable pressures on Jerusalem melted away soon after the former Bechtel executive became secretary of state.

So it was with a special poignance that Shultz, describing himself as a "deep friend," registered his disappointment this week over Israeli spying on the United States. Almost simultaneously with his statement to a House appropriations subcommittee, the Israeli Cabinet reversed its hands-off policy and appointed a panel to look more closely into the Jonathan Pollard spy affair.

(Barry Schweid, News Analysis, AP)

SPY STRAINS U.S.-ISRAELI TIES

But Strong Friendship With Israel Will Preclude Harsh Sanctions

The fallout from the Pollard spy case is raising fundamental questions in the United States about relations with America's closest friend in the Middle East.

But a broad range of sources say it is unlikely this consternation will translate into major U.S. sanctions against Israel, such as cutting foreign aid. Ties with Israel run too deep and the influence of America's pro-Israel lobby is too strong to permit that, they say.

(George Moffett & Warren Richey, Christian Science Monitor, A1)

JEWISH LEADERS TO WARN ISRAEL ON POLLARD AFFAIR

Approximately 65 American Jewish leaders will arrive in Jerusalem on Monday carrying a blunt warning to Israeli leaders that their handling of the Pollard spy scandal threatens serious, long-term damage to Israel's relations with the United States.

"The espionage activity for which Jonathan Pollard was justly sentenced was a serious crime and should never have taken place," said delegation leader Morris Abram, chairman of the conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations. "I am also deeply concerned by the public perception of the official treatment accorded Col. Sella and Rafael Eitan, and I will raise these concerns with the proper authorities in Israel next week."

(John Goshko, Washington Post, A1)

ISRAELI SHUNS POLLARD PROBE

Appointee Says Panel Would Not Have Authority It Needs

JERUSALEM -- Israel suffered a new setback today in its effort to quell the controversy over the Jonathan Pollard spy affair when a retired Supreme Court justice declined to head a commission established to look into the case, saying it lacked the legal authority needed to do the job.

The government later announced that a retired lawyer had agreed to head the two-member panel. But the rejection by former Supreme Court president Moshe Landau, combined with comments by Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir that the government would not be bound by the commission's findings, cast doubts on the panel's independence and on its chances of success.

(Glenn Frankel, Washington Post, A32)

Shamir Says Israel Not Obligated By Spy Probe Findings

TEL AVIV -- Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir says his government will not be obligated to carry out the recommendations of an Israel inquiry into the embarrassing case of former U.S. spy Jonathan Pollard.

"We are not obligated by anything, but there's no doubt the recommendations of this commission will have the most serious moral importance," said Shamir, who initially opposed the investigation.

(Howard Goller, Reuter)

HOUSE PANEL APPROVES TRADE BILL Retaliatory Tariffs Dropped In Measure

A key House subcommittee, moving swiftly to deal with the nation's huge trade deficits, yesterday unanimously approved legislation that went far toward satisfying Reagan Administration and House Democratic leadership demands for a tough but nonprotectionist bill.

The bill, passed by the trade panel of the Ways and Means Committee, stripped away a provision sponsored by Rep. Gephardt that would have imposed retaliatory tariffs on countries that have enjoyed large surpluses in trade with the United States through unfair tactics.

(Stuart Auerbach, Washington Post, A1)

Trade Bill On The Move But Pitfalls Remain

Prospects are increasing for approval of a sweeping trade bill following House subcommittee action, but several other trade proposals are expected to be tacked on before it reaches President Reagan.

"Everybody believes that within this bill there is the possibility of a consensus trade bill that the President can sign," Rep. William Frenzel said Thursday after the measure cleared its first House hurdle.

(Mike Robinson, AP)

House Panel Approves Trade Bill

A sweeping proposal to strengthen U.S. trade policy, after winning unanimous approval in a House subcommittee, now faces extensive debate in the full committee next week.

Rep. Dan Rostenkowski said the plan adopted unanimously by the Trade subcommittee Thursday would "toughen our trade policy, but in a manner that opens markets without this frightening word of protectionism."

(Mary Beth Franklin, UPI)

GAO ASKED TO PROBE ALLEGED DIVERSION OF AFGHAN REBEL AID Scrutiny Of Covert Program May Be Hampered By Secrecy, Jurisdictional Questions

Rep. William Gray has asked the General Accounting Office to investigate allegations that hundreds of millions of dollars in covert U.S. military aid for the anticommunist resistance in Afghanistan has been diverted in the past seven years.

The request by Gray, chairman of the House Budget Committee, was made in a letter to the GAO on Feb. 25. Gray aides and GAO investigators will meet Monday to discuss the scope of the investigation, according to congressional sources.

(David Ottaway, Washington Post, A19)

PILOT SHOT DOWN OVER HONDURAS HAD DRUG TIES

MIAMI -- The pilot of a DC3 shot down by the Honduran Air Force had a record of drug-related arrests in the Bahamas and Miami, authorities said today.

No illegal cargo was found aboard the plane, but Honduran authorities said the crew apparently pushed something, possibly drugs, out of the aircraft before it was intercepted.

(AP story, Washington Post, A16)

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NATIONAL NEWS

DUBERSTEIN IS CHOSEN AS BAKER DEPUTY Veteran Strategist To Have Broad Role

President Reagan yesterday named Kenneth Duberstein, a veteran Republican strategist and former White House congressional liaison, to be deputy chief of staff under Howard Baker.

The appointment was the first move in Baker's effort to rebuild the White House staff following the resignation of Donald Regan and many of his aides. Duberstein, who has enjoyed close ties with members of both parties, will have wide-ranging responsibilities in the management of the White House, officials said. (David Hoffman, Washington Post, A3)

Reagan Brings Former Legislative Affairs Director Back To White House

President Reagan, seeking to restore his Administration's momentum after its Iran-contra setbacks, is turning to a veteran of past legislative triumphs to right-hand man to Chief of Staff Howard Baker.

"The announcement of Ken Duberstein as deputy chief of staff is the first step in putting together a top-flight organization and system for pursuing the President's objectives in the next two years," Baker said.

(Dale Nelson, AP)

Reagan's Former Hill Lobbyist Joins White House Staff

Kenneth Duberstein says he was lured from lucrative lobbying work to become No. 2 on the White House staff out of loyalty to President Reagan and admiration for new Chief of Staff Howard Baker.

Reagan says Duberstein's appointment as his deputy chief of staff will help the Administration "move forward in the next two years" from the stagnation caused by the Iran arms-contra aid scandal. (Ira Allen, UPI)

***PERLE RESIGNS TOP ARMS POLICY POST Hard-Liner Says Stance Succeeded**

Assistant Secretary of Defense Richard Perle, for six years a chief architect of Reagan Administration strategic arms policies, yesterday announced his resignation, saying that recent events had vindicated the Administration's tough stance toward arms control with the Soviet Union.

In an interview, Perle predicted that President Reagan will meet Soviet leader Gorbachev this year in a full summit, and said he anticipates that the two leaders will agree on eliminating intermediate-range nuclear forces in Europe. (Marjorie Williams, Washington Post, A25)

Pentagon Arms Control Policymaker Leaving

Richard Perle, the Pentagon arms control policymaker whose hard-line views earned him the title the "Prince of Darkness," is leaving the Administration.

"I came to the conclusion that there's never a good moment (to leave); there's never a moment at which all of the issues in which one is interested in are resolved, but I think the direction of the Administration on the issues is pretty clearly set," Perle said at a Pentagon briefing.

(Norman Black, AP)

Perle Leaving Pentagon, But Keeping Influence On Arms Control

Richard Perle, the Reagan Administration's most controversial expert on arms control, is leaving the Pentagon after six years of firing barbs at liberals in Washington and in the NATO alliance.

Perle, a strong critic of past superpower arms agreements who is known as "Doctor Doom" by arms control advocates, said thursday he had resigned as assistant defense secretary for international security affairs in order to complete a novel.

He said he would stay on the job until spring when a successor is named and will thereafter continue to do consulting work for President Reagan on arms control.

(Charles Aldinger, Reuter)

INDICTMENT OF DEAVER BARRED AGAIN Lawyers Obtain Emergency Order

Attorneys for former White House aide Michael Deaver obtained an emergency court order yesterday that temporarily blocks a prosecutor for the second time from seeking a perjury indictment against Deaver.

A three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals granted Deaver a five-day stay against any further action by Whitney North Seymour, the independent counsel who has been investigating Deaver's lobbying activities.

(Howard Kurtz, Washington Post, A10)

ADMINISTRATION SEEKING SALE TO INVESTORS OF U.S LOANS

The Reagan Administration yesterday asked Congress to approve the sale of \$39.8 billion in federal loans to private investors during the next five years as part of a major "credit reform act" that would dramatically alter the way the government counts and manages its \$702 billion portfolio of loans.

"This is a major piece of legislation that addresses the long-standing shortcomings in the management of government loans," said Joseph Wright, deputy director of the Office of Management and Budget.

(Judith Havemann, Washington Post, D1)

AUTO COMEBACK BUOYS UPTURN IN RETAIL SALES

Buyers returned to auto showrooms last month and other retailers rang up modestly higher sales in all categories, boosting retail sales in February by 4.1 percent, the government reported yesterday.

The figures showed a strong rebound from a bleak January, when auto sales plummeted and sent total sales into a nose dive. The department said yesterday that the dive was even steeper than reported earlier.
(William Kronholm, Washington Post, D1)

HILL CHAIRMEN SKEPTICAL OF NAVY CARRIER REQUEST

The Navy's request for money to start building two new aircraft carriers next year ran into rough water yesterday during the Senate's first hearing on the issue.

Sens. Edward Kennedy and Carl Levin, chairmen of two Senate Armed Services subcommittees, questioned the wisdom of beginning two new carriers with a total price tag of \$7 billion -- particularly since numerous other military programs would have to be canceled or stretched out to provide the money. The Pentagon has requested a down payment of \$660 million for the two carriers for fiscal 1988.

(George Wilson, Washington Post, A22)

REPUBLICANS SAY DEMOCRATS MISCALCULATED BY ALLOWING PAY RAISE

Six Republican members of congress say House Democrats may have outfoxed themselves in their efforts to pocket a pay raise that boosted congressional salaries to \$89,500 a year.

The Republicans filed a lawsuit Thursday asking a federal judge to rescind the \$12,100 pay raise, centering their arguments on when a 30-day window of disapproval kicked in.
(Sandy Johnson, AP)

NETWORK NEWS SUMMARY

(Thursday Evening, March 12, 1987)

NORTH'S CHALLENGE OF THE SPECIAL PROSECUTOR

ABC's Peter Jennings: We suspect there is hardly anyone in the U.S. who doesn't want Col. North to tell his story of the Iran affair, certainly the President wants him to. And so, when a federal judge in Washington said today that Col. North's challenge to the Special Prosecutor should be dismissed, it was seen by those who want the investigation to go forward as welcome news.

ABC's Dennis Troute: In dismissing North's complaint, Judge Barrington Parker did not decide the constitutional question of whether or not the independent counsel position violates the separation of powers laws of the Constitution. Parker's opinion said simply it's not time yet to decide the question. He's allowing the investigation to move forward to an indictment by a grand jury if sufficient evidence of wrong doing is turned out. Said Parker's opinion, quote, "The nation demands an expeditious and complete disclosure of our government's involvement in the Iran-contra affair. Independent Counsel Walsh disclosed...that he's trying to wrap up a sound criminal case in the next ninety days.

(Walsh: "We do want to develop as much evidence as we can and have it under seal before they give testimony under the compulsion of an immunity grant.")

Walsh said also that Congress is far likelier to get the full story in this kind of case from Congressional witnesses who know they are under scrutiny for criminal investigations as well.

(Walsh: "Our further concern is that if they, if immunity is granted to such important persons prematurely, that it will not produce the full truth.")

With today's ruling, federal judges have twice in two days refused to knock down the law authorizing independent counsels, meaning that later court challenges are not likely to succeed either. (ABC-Lead)

NBC's Tom Brokaw: Two lawsuits brought by Lt. Col. Oliver North challenging the legal basis of the Special Prosecutor's investigation of his role in the Iran-contra affair -- those lawsuits were thrown out today by a federal judge. The judge's ruling said the investigation was serving an important public interest and it should continue. Meanwhile, National Public Radio reported tonight that North's former secretary at the National Security council, Fawn Hall, has had plenty to tell the Special Prosecutor. It quotes sources saying that she testified that North not only destroyed but also altered important documents at a time when he knew that Attorney General Edwin Meese was investigating the Iran-contra affair. (NBC-3)

CBS' Dan Rather: President Reagan's former national security council aide, Lt. Col. Oliver North, lost today in court. North has been trying to get a judge to stop the Special Prosecutor in the Iran arms case on constitutional grounds. U.S. District Judge Barrington Parker, said in dismissing North's suit, and I quote, "the nation demands an expeditious and complete disclosure of our government's involvement in the Iran-contra affair." (CBS-3)

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DEAVER

Brokaw reports that Michael Deaver won a small victory in his fight to keep another special prosecutor from indicting him on perjury charges. The court blocked any such indictment until next Tuesday, allowing Deaver's lawyers to press their challenge to the constitutionality of the special prosecutor law. (NBC-4, ABC-2,)

ARMS CONTROL/INF

Brokaw: There were major signs today that the U.S. and the Soviet Union are moving quickly toward an agreement to eliminate their medium-range nuclear missiles in Europe. The top Soviet arms control expert...said that a treaty could be completely reached within six months. In Geneva, U.S. negotiators presented a plan to solve one of the major obstacles: how both sides can verify how the treaty is being honored.

NBC's Anne Garrels: Soviet inspectors on this NATO base in Italy -- that's one of the far reaching verification measures the U.S. is proposing. The Soviet inspectors would make sure that missiles the U.S. agreed to eliminate are indeed destroyed. The Soviets accept this idea.

(Viktor Karpov: "...And we will allow Western inspectors in our bases where SS-20s will be dismantled or destroyed.")

But once these missiles are destroyed, what's to stop either side from secretly replacing them? To prevent cheating -- the covert stock piling of illegal missiles -- the U.S. is also asking that each side be allowed to monitor missile reduction and maintenance facilities. For instance, in this normally closed area around Rostov an American inspector would be posted outside the Soviet SS-20 factory. And outside this General Dynamics factory in San Diego, where American cruise missiles are assembled, a Soviet inspector would watch what goes in and comes out of the plant. Not total access, but officials believe it will be enough to prevent cheating and not so much to allow Soviet espionage. Arms control experts warn this may not satisfy everyone.... The cruise missile could cause the biggest fight. Air-launched cruise missiles are not covered under this treaty. But they closely resemble land-based systems which are prohibited under the draft. So how would the Soviets tell the difference from the outside? Richard Perle believes this problem can be solved.

(Richard Perle: "Bringing Soviet inspectors to a sight where they allege there may be suspicious activity -- that can be done while protecting secrets.")

Verification is the key to this treaty. But while both sides now agree on the principle of on-site inspection, officials expect tough negotiations. As one put it: "the Devil is in the details."

Brokaw reports Richard Perle confirmed that he will be leaving the Pentagon this spring. Perle said that U.S. arms control policy is now set in the direction that he championed for six years....

(NBC-5)

ABC's John McWethy: The Reagan Administration immediately went public with its new position reaching for the high ground in the public relations battle.

(Charles Redman: "The U.S. tabled at the negotiations on intermediate-range missiles a treaty article providing for on-site inspection. With this article, the U.S. has completed tabling its draft INF treaty.")

To assure that neither side is cheating, the Administration is proposing the following: on-site inspections of missile bases, factories, and storage areas. This could mean up to one hundred American and West European inspectors permanently based inside the Soviet Union and an equal number of Soviets in the U.S. and Western Europe. Short notice inspections may also be required in which one side demands to see an area where missiles are not supposed to be, but where something suspicious appears to be happening. The U.S. is also asking that electronic monitoring devices be posted outside certain facilities to help further check on missile deployments. Though negotiations on this have just begun, the superpowers are falling all over themselves endorsing the concept, at least in public.

(Redman: "...both sides understand the need for a very effective verification regime.")

(Viktor Karpov: "So we are interested to have no escape clauses, loopholes.")

The Pentagon has resisted stringent verification, fearing it could provide the Soviets with access to sensitive Western facilities. Supporters, however, argue that the potential benefits of on site inspections in the Soviet Union, a closed society, far outweigh other problems. (ABC-3)

CBS's Bill McGlocklin: In Geneva today, the Reagan Administration presented to the Soviet Union its terms for an agreement eliminating medium-range nuclear missiles in Europe. The U.S. is demanding strict rules of inspection, including the permanent basing in each country of more than one hundred inspectors, inspection of nuclear facilities at short notice, and a total ban on efforts to conceal missiles from spy satellites.

(Redman: "We hope that Secretary Gorbachev's recent calls for more openness will augur well for resolving these concerns and avoiding new ones in future arms control treaties.")

Senior U.S. arms control negotiators said today on Capitol Hill the new rules are needed because the Soviets cannot be trusted.

(Kenneth Adelman: "...If we consider this process of year after year finding clear violations that the Soviets have made without them cleaning up their act, I think that presents a very ominous picture to arms control.")

But Soviet negotiators remain optimistic.... While Washington and Moscow may be nearing an arms control agreement, the White House and Congress are facing a showdown on arms control. Sen. Nunn says President Reagan is distorting the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty to save his SDI Space weapons program. The President today said Nunn's charges were false.

(TV coverage: The President.)

Despite the tough talk in today's U.S. proposal, Administration officials are eager to reach an arms control agreement. Sources say it would help restore the credibility of the Reagan foreign policy and give the President a much needed victory. (CBS-Lead)

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SDI

Jennings reports the Reagan Administration is also negotiating about nuclear arms and its star wars missile defense plan with the Congress. The Administration's broad interpretation of the ABM treaty is now being challenged by a very important Senator.

ABC's Brit Hume: The Chairman of the Senate Arms Services Committee, Sam Nunn,...continued his three-day analysis of, and attack on, the Administration's reinterpretation of the 1972 ABM treaty.

(Nunn: "It's an amazing sort of legalistic gymnastics that we've seen here. The Reagan Administration's unilateral reinterpretation of the ABM treaty constitutes a fundamental constitutional challenge to the Senate with respect to its powers and prerogatives in this area.") The Administration wants the 1972 treaty interpreted broadly to allow further testing and development of the President's strategic defense initiative....

(TV coverage: Reporter: "Mr. President, Sen. Nunn says your interpretation of the ABM treaty is wrong. What do you have to say to that?" The President shrugs.)

Sen. Nunn is wrong, he said, a view echoed today by the Administration's chief strategist on arms control, Richard Perle.

(Perle: "I disagree profoundly with the views expressed by the Chairman of the Arms Services Committee.")

Perle, however, is leaving the government. Indeed this was his valedictory news conference and there are signs that with him might go the Administration's enthusiasm for a fight with Congress on this issue at this time. As Perle himself put it:

(Perle: "At the end of the day, this isn't a legal question, it's a political one.")

Not only is it a political question but it's the kind of question where the Administration has usually had and frequently needed the support of people like Sam Nunn. (ABC-4)

CONSERVATIVE REBELLION

Brokaw reports conservatives feel abandoned and they blame George Shultz and Howard Baker.

(TV coverage: The President with Howard Baker.)

NBC's Andrea Mitchell: Instead of rallying around the embattled President, conservatives are declaring civil war against him. First, by demanding that he dump his Secretary of State whom they consider too moderate.

(Richard Viguerie: "In my view it's time for George Shultz to resign.")

With William Casey's departure, conservatives lost a major voice in the Cabinet and they are really alarmed by the arrival of Howard Baker.

(TV coverage: The President meeting with the Cabinet)

They view him as the enemy, a man willing to compromise on what they call the holy trinity of issues -- star wars, contra aid and taxes....

Mitchell continues: For the Chief Executive, who relies heavily on subordinates, they worry that Baker will become surrogate president.... Conservatives have long viewed Baker as a dunce. They kept him off the ticket in 1980 and ignored him in '84. Since coming to the White House, Baker has worked hard to reassure conservatives that he will let Reagan be Reagan.

(Howard Baker: "I am Ronald Reagan's Chief of Staff. I am to serve Ronald Reagan and his policies are my policies.")

One day after conservative Senators complained that they hadn't seen the President in months, Baker gave them a chance to voice their complaints.

(President Reagan: "Well, I've come here to listen to them.")

Baker even brought a conservative to the White House for the Justice Department. Conservatives want Kenneth Cribbs to keep an eye on Baker and hold him to his promises.

(Griff: "He has accepted this position for one purpose only, and that is to restore the President's ability to implement the Reagan agenda.")

So far, the Reagan revolution has failed to fulfill many of its promises such as bringing back school prayer, or banning all abortions and it has hardly produced a balanced budget. But if the President's programs are to have any chance of success with the Democratic Congress, he needs all the help he can get. So he has to put down the growing rebellion among conservatives. (NBC-6)

ISRAEL/POLLARD

Brokaw reports Israel appointed a lawyer and a former army chief of staff to investigate its role in the case of Jonathan Pollard. Israel admits that it is conducting the investigation mainly to restore its credibility with the U.S.. (NBC-9)

CATASTROPHIC HEALTH INSURANCE

CBS's Jane Bryant Quinn reports on the Administration's catastrophic illness supplement to Medicare. At the start, the coverage would cost seniors only sixty dollars a year, deducted from their social security check.... But only three percent will run out of Medicare benefits a year. And most of them have private insurance anyway. Critics are saying stop spending money on people who don't need more coverage.... The real need, critics say, is more insurance for the poor. Under the Reagan plan everyone, including poor people, must come up with as much as two thousand dollars of their own before catastrophic coverage begins. There's another problem with the bill: although it is called "catastrophic health insurance," it does not cover long-term care in a nursing home, which for the elderly is the biggest financial catastrophe of all. But the Administration says you have to start somewhere.... This plan may [become more costly]. With Senior power strong in the voting booths, both Democrats and Republicans are already tacking attractive extras on to the bill. To the surprise of conservatives, one of President Reagan's legacies may be the costliest Medicare program ever. (CBS-7)

HUNGER STRIKE ARMS CONTROL PROTEST

Rather reports an American physicist, on a hunger strike to protest the arms race, has received an invitation to visit the Soviet Union. Dr. Charles Hyder has appeared regularly on Soviet television since his protest began last September.... (CBS-2)

SOUTH AFRICA

Jennings reports in South Africa today about 50 blacks, singing freedom songs, were met by riot police as they left a church. Their demonstration, which was broken up with tear gas, was one among hundreds in South Africa today. Most were peaceful, all were to protest the continuing detention of thousands of people under South Africa state of emergency law. (ABC-5)

NCAA TOURNAMENT AND DRUGS

ABC's Bill Blakemore reports on the NCAA basketball tournament and drug testing....
(TV coverage: The President congratulating the Villanova squad, 1985 champions) (ABC-10, CBS-12)

EDITORIALS/COLUMNISTS

IRAN-CONTRA/PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Forget 'Hands On': Let Reagan Be Reagan -- "Critics, and some of Reagan's friends, go too far in demanding a new management style from him.... Even as Reagan admitted mistakes and accepted responsibility for the Iran-contra scandal it was clear that he hated doing so. He then blamed former subordinates and even found a new villain -- a bad filing system. Moreover, trying to turn Reagan into a hands-on manager is a bad idea. To get this crisis of competence behind him, his Administration must make solid accomplishments.... The President has now brought on board the ideal people to help.... Let Secretary of State Shultz and Carlucci bring home a safe-and-sound arms agreement. Let Baker work out the budget, the trade bill and catastrophic health insurance with the Democratic Congress. And let Reagan be Reagan.

(David Aaron, Los Angeles Times, 3/6)

The Reagan Values -- "Reagan's popularity has not all that much to do with his speaking ability, his luck, or even his stand on issues. The key to Reagan's strength is that he symbolizes what most of us believe to be true about our country, our beliefs, our values, and ourselves.... The source of Reagan's strength is not simply that he endorses these values. Anyone can do that. It is that he personifies and lives them. They are integral parts of his being."

(Ray Shamie, Boston Globe, 3/8)

Mr. Reagan's Third Term -- "[The President's speech] didn't sound like an inaugural address. Yet an inaugural address is what President Reagan's speech Wednesday night amounted to, an appeal for a fresh start.... It's not in anyone's power to grant that fresh start. Questions about his credibility will hang like thunderclouds until Congress and the independent counsel conclude their investigations. Still, the world won't stop, and the Commander-in-Chief insists he's eager to command, to start again."

(New York Times, 3/8)

Owning Up And Moving On -- "The President did what most Americans and allies wanted him to do: own up and move on, while reaffirming 'American values' and the rule of law. Reagan also took care not to diminish 'the importance of continuing investigations.... At 76, he is not likely to become a slave to detail, so his new team...can bring important changes in attitude -- open-mindedness toward arms control and the Contadora peace plan in Central America." (Boston Globe, 3/6)

'I Cannot Escape Responsibility' -- "'It was a mistake.' That final simple declarative statement, uttered early in President Reagan's 11½ minute speech...was an unprecedented act of contrition by an American president. By admitting his mistakes and accepting responsibility for those of others within his Administration, Ronald Reagan took a critical first step toward restoring public confidence in his ability -- indeed, his willingness -- to lead the nation during the final two years of his Presidency."

(San Diego Tribune, 3/5)

EDITORIALS/COLUMNISTS (continued)

The President's Contrite Speech -- "It's never easy for a politician to admit he made a mistake. It's even harder for the President of the U.S., who must project an image of strength to the world, to concede errors of judgement and performance.... The speech was a trip to the confessional for the President, and it should go a long way toward restoring the public's confidence in the Reagan White House.... Barring unforeseen revelations, last night's speech should calm the waters that have nearly engulfed the White House in recent weeks. The Iran arms investigation will go on, but the President may no longer be the main target."

(San Francisco Chronicle, 3/5)

The following editorials on the President's address were compiled by the Associated Press:

"The President deserves praise for admitting his mistakes in the Iran-contra affair.... Where in the world would you find a country where the President had appointed a commission to look into the misdoings of his own Administration, and then accepting before the American people the fact, 'I've made mistakes and let's face it, we blew it, but let's go on from here?' We believe a strong consensus will emerge that the President has, in admitting mistakes and accepting responsibility, taken a step toward winning the confidence of the American people in the last two years of his term."

(San Gabriel Valley Tribune, 3/6)

"Many would have felt better had Mr. Reagan been more direct in acknowledging his own culpability. They also wonder, given the President's age, if he really can change a style that was so vulnerable in this case to the freelancing he referred to. We would guess that we have seen the extent of the President's contribution."

(South Bend Tribune, 3/6)

"Once upon a time it would not have been necessary for an aide [David Abshire] to President Reagan to feel called upon to say, in effect, that Reagan tells the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.... It is up to the Congressional committees to see if Reagan's position of the contra aid part of the scandal squares with the facts, because the American people are not so inclined any more to accept what President Reagan says simply on its face."

(Arkansas Gazette, 3/10)

"President Reagan's relatively brief speech...on the Iran-contra affair -- billed in advance as the most important speech of his Presidency -- contained the obligatory expressions of responsibility for the botched arms-for-hostages deal, but it was no Gettysburg Address. History books may accord it a footnote at best. What will be of lasting significance are not the President's words...but his actions and those of his Administration over the next two years. In a sense Reagan is now starting what amounts to a third term in office and his 1980 campaign slogan, 'A New Beginning,' has as much if not more validity today than it did then."

(Seattle Post-Intelligencer, 3/6)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

"Baseball players who hit three out of 10 become national heroes. Not so with U.S. presidents. If they score eight home runs and strike out once, our mass media muckrakers demand their scalps. Ronald Reagan is a classic example. His 'home runs' include keeping us out of war, reducing inflation sharply, cutting interest rates, lowering unemployment, rebuilding our armed forces, 'unpacking' the courts, and trying to decrease Congressional pork-barrel spending. His reward? The savagely over-played 'scandal' called Irangate."

(Walt Seifert, Washington Times, 3/10)

"The Iran-contra affair will be with us longer than you think, for its effects will be felt long after this President...has left office. We cannot be surprised when our future voters and public servants, who will have been weaned on disinformation and denied political role models, will be a generation of apathetic and cynical citizens. As a social studies teacher, I cannot forgive Ronald Reagan for his legacy."

(Andrea S. Libresco, Newsday, 3/8)

"Reagan had to be provided a 'built-in deniability,' so that he could later claim that he was not informed. Thus the scenario if playing out as planned in case something went wrong with his secret Iran-contra policy, as it did. One can be sure that once given immunity for prosecution, North and Poindexter will testify that they kept President Reagan completely in the dark about their own work in the affair, thereby keeping intact the 'built-in deniability' for Reagan to continue to claim. After all, North and Poindexter are Reagan's 'national heroes.'"

(Suresh M. Sheth, Orange County Register, 3/9)

"We need [The President] and most of those [who are] close to him. He should keep seeking good people who are devoted to the Presidency and serving it. He should find a way to extricate the best people from their comfortable living and convince them to be tough enough to do the toughest jobs -- to run the government, to maintain eternal vigilance against outside, hostile forces and to discover the forces eating at our nation from within and eliminate their effectiveness."

(Gary Weir, Plain Dealer, 3/10)

"Letting international terrorists know that they can blackmail the U.S. by taking a citizen hostage is sending the wrong signal. We must take a hard-line stance with terrorists. Some people have become angry with the press' handling of the scandal. But when the government does something terribly wrong, the people have a right to know. I hope the President can continue the rest of his Administration without any more problems."

(John Steiner, Birmingham News, 2/23)

"To all the people bashing President Reagan for forgetting, do they in turn forget how this man was elected by a landslide, how he revived patriotism, lowered inflation and interest rates, invaded Grenada, intercepted that terrorist plane, bombed Khadafy, pushed for job training rather than handouts, is trying to contain communism in Central America, built our defenses and brought Russia to the bargaining table without giving away SDI?"

(Jim Greeran, New York Post, 3/12)



News Summary

OFFICE OF THE PRESS SECRETARY

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 1987 -- 6 a.m. EST EDITION

TODAY'S HEADLINES

IRAN-NICARAGUA

Reagan Counsel Recounts Chaos Over Iran Affair -- President Reagan's chief legal adviser today depicted scenes of chaos in the White House in recent months and said he had been prevented from looking into the Iran affair for several weeks after its disclosure last November.

(New York Times, AP, Reuter)

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Verification At Heart Of Treaty Offer -- The Reagan Administration edged toward a U.S.-Soviet missile treaty Thursday, proposing tough procedures to ensure both sides abide by any pact.

(New York Times,
Washington Post, USA Today, AP, Reuter)

NATIONAL NEWS

Duberstein Is Chosen As Baker Deputy -- President Reagan yesterday named Kenneth Duberstein, a veteran Republican strategist and former White House congressional liaison, to be deputy chief of staff under Howard Baker.

(Washington Post, AP, UPI)

NETWORK NEWS (Thursday Evening)

NORTH'S LAWSUIT -- Two lawsuits brought by Lt. Col. North were thrown out today by a federal judge.

DEAVER -- Michael Deaver won a small victory in his fight to keep a special prosecutor from indicting him on perjury charges.

ARMS CONTROL/INF -- The Reagan Administration presented to the Soviet Union its terms for an agreement eliminating medium-range nuclear missiles in Europe.

What's the deal?

White House correspondent Jerry O'Leary reported this comment from Senate Minority Leader Robert Dole on the issue of \$40 million in aid to the Contras: "It's a done deal."

United Press International carried the same quotation.

The version shipped by Reuters may explain in part why Winston Churchill said the Americans and the English were a common people divided by a common language. The British wire service had Mr. Dole saying: "It's a dumb deal."

— John Elvin

IRAN — NICARAGUA

REAGAN COUNSEL RECOUNTS CHAOS OVER IRAN AFFAIR

President Reagan's chief legal adviser today depicted scenes of chaos in the White House in recent months and said he had been prevented from looking into the Iran affair for several weeks after its disclosure last November.

In an interview, he offered other new details of the internal maneuvering as the White House tried to come to grips with the crisis involving sales of arms to Iran and the reports that some of the proceeds had been diverted to the Nicaraguan insurgents.

(Gerald Boyd, New York Times, A1)

Reagan's Legal Adviser Says Iran-Contra Facts Were Kept From Him

NEW YORK -- President Reagan's chief legal adviser said in an interview that he was rebuffed by Vice Adm. Poindexter when he tried to learn details of the Iran arms-contra aid scheme in the days after its disclosure.

Peter Wallison said that when he sought details of the affair from Poindexter, who was then Reagan's national security adviser, Poindexter replied: "I'm sorry, we've had all the legal advice we need from the attorney general, and you really don't have a role in this." (AP)

Report: Reagan's Legal Adviser Describes White House Chaos

NEW YORK -- President Reagan's legal adviser described a chaotic White House in the aftermath of the Iran arms scandal and a president who could not recall when he approved a 1985 arms sale, the New York Times said today.

"We were trying to stimulate his (Reagan's) recollection and he had no recollection, although he remembered being surprised about something," Peter Wallison was quoted as saying in an interview with the newspaper.

"That led us to expect that he would not be able to recall when he appeared before the Tower Board," Wallison said, referring to the question of whether Reagan gave prior approval to an Israeli shipment of U.S. arms to Iran. (Reuter)

NORTH'S CHALLENGE TO PROBER DISMISSED Judge Backs 'Expeditious' Disclosure On Iran

A federal judge yesterday dismissed two lawsuits Lt. Col. North had brought in an effort to halt independent counsel Lawrence Walsh's investigation of the Iran-contra affair.

U.S. District Court Judge Barrington Parker held that North has no cause for complaint at this point and that if he did, there is good reason to think that it would be rejected on its merits.

(George Lardner, Washington Post, A1)

North's Challenge To Prosecutor Act Dismissed By Court

A federal district judge today dismissed two lawsuits brought by Lt. Col. North and authorized the special prosecutor in the Iran arms case to continue his investigation.

For the moment, the judge's decision would seem to remove what Mr. Walsh earlier described as the "perception of danger" to his investigation posed by the constitutional challenges.

(Philip Shenon, New York Times, A1)

Walsh Can Proceed With Iran-Contra Probe After North Lawsuit Tossed Out

Dismissing lawsuits that struck "at the core" of independent counsel Lawrence Walsh's authority, a judge says Walsh can forge ahead with his investigation of the Iran-contra affair and the man who tried to stop it: Oliver North.

U.S. District Judge Barrington Parker's rejection of two North lawsuits Thursday cleared one potential obstacle for Walsh, but still left him racing to develop a possible criminal case before North and other key figures are granted congressional immunity. (Larry Margasak, AP)

Judge Throws Out North's Challenge To Special Prosecutor

A federal judge who threw out two challenges by Lt. Col. North to independent prosecutor Lawrence Walsh sees overwhelming public interest in Walsh's criminal probe of the Iran arms-contra aid scandal.

U.S. District Judge Parker, in dismissing two lawsuits by the fired White House aide named as a major figure in the scandal, also rejected North's arguments that Walsh is a "vigilante" with unconstitutional power.

(Lori Santos, UPI)

Judge Rejects Legal Attack By North On Iran Investigation

Fired White House aide Oliver North has lost a major legal battle aimed at halting a special prosecutor's criminal investigation into the Iran arms scandal, in which he played a key role.

Federal Judge Parker yesterday dismissed North's lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of the law that empowered special prosecutor Lawrence Walsh to investigate the affair that has rocked Reagan's presidency.

(James Vicini, Reuter)

CIA ANALYST WHO SPOTTED FUND DIVERSION GETS REDUCED JOB LOAD

Charles Allen, the CIA analyst who apparently was the first to detect the possibility that Iranian arms payments were diverted to the Contra rebels, has been given a reduced workload, intelligence community sources say.

Allen, who had served for some time as a deputy to Duane Clarridge at the CIA's counterterrorism center, as well as being a national intelligence officer for terrorism, is leaving the deputy's post, the sources said Thursday. The sources said the purpose was to give him a more manageable workload. (Michael Sniffen, AP)

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

U.S. OUTLINES MISSILE-INSPECTION PLAN AT GENEVA

The Reagan Administration gave the Soviet Union yesterday its proposals for verification of a new medium-range missile agreement, including on-site inspection of military facilities and factories.

State Department spokesman Charles Redman said, referring to Soviet leader Gorbachev's "glasnost" policies, "We hope that Secretary Gorbachev's recent call for openness will augur well for resolving these concerns and avoid new ones in future arms control agreements."

(UPI story, Washington Post, A35)

U.S. Is Demanding Wide Verification For A Missile Pact

The United States proposed in Geneva today elaborate verification measures that the Reagan Administration will insist the Soviet Union agree to before signing any treaty removing American and Soviet intermediate-range nuclear missiles from Europe.

Arms control experts consider the verification issue to be one of two major points that could block an agreement on medium-range missiles in Europe. The other is how to limit shorter-range nuclear weapons in Europe.

(John Cushman, New York Times, A1)

Verification At Heart Of Treaty Offer

The Reagan Administration edged toward a U.S.-Soviet missile treaty Thursday, proposing tough procedures to ensure both sides abide by any pact.

The plan -- to be discussed at Geneva this coming week -- includes unprecedented on-site monitoring by U.S. inspectors at Soviet plants and Soviet watchers at USA plants.

(Juan Walte, USA Today, A4)

U.S. Offers Soviets New Inspection Plan On Euromissiles

The Reagan Administration is offering the Soviets a new inspection plan as part of the effort to eliminate medium-range nuclear missiles from Europe, while also appealing to U.S. critics for more time to negotiate arms reductions.

The U.S. plan was presented Thursday to the Soviet Union in Geneva, where the two sides are trying to work out a treaty. The Soviets already have accepted the principal of on-site inspection to help verify compliance, which is the major stumbling block to an agreement.

(Tim Ahern, AP)

U.S. Proposes On-Site Inspection In Draft Missile Treaty

GENEVA -- U.S. negotiators have proposed measures to the Soviet Union for on-site inspections to ensure compliance with a draft treaty to cut medium-range missiles.

In Washington, State Department spokesman Charles Redman told reporters the proposals included "inspection and a permanent presence" at key installations to monitor adherence to a treaty now under negotiation.

(Stephanie Nebehay, Reuter)

SHEVARDNADZE ACCUSES U.S. OF TRYING TO RAISE TENSION IN ASIA

BANGKOK -- Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, now on a visit to Vietnam, has accused the United States of trying to transform Southeast Asia into a "hotbed" of international tension.

Shevardnadze, on a tour of Asia during which he has stressed the Kremlin's drive for a zone of peace and stability in the region, said Washington was trying to boost its political and military role in the area.

(Reuter)

SENATE ENDORSES LATIN PEACE EFFORTS Republican Leader Averts Attempt To Vote On Contra-Aid Moratorium

The Senate, sharply divided over continuing U.S. aid to the Nicaraguan contras, yesterday approved a cautiously worded resolution endorsing Central American peace efforts and then stalled over a House-approved moratorium on further assistance to the rebels.

The nonbinding resolution, approved by a vote of 97 to 1, was hailed by supporters as a sign that Congress is demanding a new policy toward Central America but dismissed as "a big dose of drivel" by its lone opponent, Sen. Gordon Humphrey. (Helen Dewar, Washington Post, A12)

In Contra Aid Preliminaries, The Score Doesn't Seem To Count

The Senate is renewing the battle over aid to Nicaragua's contra rebels, and like a baseball team in spring training, the game may seem real, but the score doesn't really count.

According to advance billing on next week's fray, there will be impassioned arguments pro and con, press releases, a filibuster, a vote to end the filibuster, more speeches and, finally, a final vote.

But none of this is more than a warm-up for the real season ahead.

(Lawrence Knutson, News Analysis, AP)

IN 1ST TEST, HOUSE FRESHMEN TOE PARTY LINE Only One On Each Side Crossed The Aisle In Contra-Aid Vote

In its first major foreign policy test, the House's freshman class of 27 Democrats and 23 Republicans displayed extraordinary party loyalty as only one lawmaker in each party broke ranks and opposed its leadership on the issue of aid to the Nicaraguan contras.

Rep. Constance Morella (R-Md.) was the only Republican freshman to oppose President Reagan's policy in the House's 230-to-196 approval Wednesday of a resolution to impose a moratorium on contra aid until the Administration accounts for all money from earlier aid efforts.

(Edward Walsh, Washington Post, A13)

NUNN AGAIN HITS ABM PACT SHIFT 4 Administrations Backed Strict Interpretation, Senator Says

Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Sam Nunn asserted yesterday that four U.S. administrations consistently supported a restrictive interpretation of the 1972 ABM Treaty until the Reagan Administration's attempt in 1985 to advance a new, broad reinterpretation of the pact.

The Georgia Democrat, a key arms-control and military affairs figure on Capitol Hill, for the second time in two days rebuked the Administration for attempting to provide a new legal basis for aggressive testing and development of the components of SDI, or "star wars", missile defense.

(Dusko Doder, Washington Post, A35)

Nunn Again Blasts Broad ABM Interpretation

President Reagan, pushing to expand his "star wars" space defense plan, contends the powerful Senate armed services committee chairman is wrong to reject the Administration's broad reading of the 1972 ABM Treaty.

Reagan dismissed the analysis of Sen. Nunn, after the influential lawmaker issued his second critical report in as many days on the President's arguments against a close reading of the ABM Treaty.

"Nunn's wrong," Reagan said when told of the senator's remarks Thursday. (Eliot Brenner, UPI)

POLICE TORTURE CHARGED IN KENYA

After Detention, 66 Have Confessed To Sedition In Past Year

NAIROBI -- Under the rule of President Daniel arap Moi, Kenya's government in the past year has become increasingly intolerant of political dissent.

According to court documents here and well-placed Kenyan sources, Kenyan police, who report to the office of the president, have used torture repeatedly in the past 12 months to coerce confessions from accused political dissidents. (Blaine Harden, Washington Post, A1)

DISMAY FROM A DEEP FRIEND

Apprehensions from Israel's backers that Secretary of State Shultz would impose unreasonable pressures on Jerusalem melted away soon after the former Bechtel executive became secretary of state.

So it was with a special poignance that Shultz, describing himself as a "deep friend," registered his disappointment this week over Israeli spying on the United States. Almost simultaneously with his statement to a House appropriations subcommittee, the Israeli Cabinet reversed its hands-off policy and appointed a panel to look more closely into the Jonathan Pollard spy affair. (Barry Schweid, News Analysis, AP)

SPY STRAINS U.S.-ISRAELI TIES
But Strong Friendship With Israel Will Preclude Harsh Sanctions

The fallout from the Pollard spy case is raising fundamental questions in the United States about relations with America's closest friend in the Middle East.

But a broad range of sources say it is unlikely this consternation will translate into major U.S. sanctions against Israel, such as cutting foreign aid. Ties with Israel run too deep and the influence of America's pro-Israel lobby is too strong to permit that, they say.

(George Moffett & Warren Richey, Christian Science Monitor, A1)

JEWISH LEADERS TO WARN ISRAEL ON POLLARD AFFAIR

Approximately 65 American Jewish leaders will arrive in Jerusalem on Monday carrying a blunt warning to Israeli leaders that their handling of the Pollard spy scandal threatens serious, long-term damage to Israel's relations with the United States.

"The espionage activity for which Jonathan Pollard was justly sentenced was a serious crime and should never have taken place," said delegation leader Morris Abram, chairman of the conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations. "I am also deeply concerned by the public perception of the official treatment accorded Col. Sella and Rafael Eitan, and I will raise these concerns with the proper authorities in Israel next week."

(John Goshko, Washington Post, A1)

ISRAELI SHUNS POLLARD PROBE
Appointee Says Panel Would Not Have Authority It Needs

JERUSALEM -- Israel suffered a new setback today in its effort to quell the controversy over the Jonathan Pollard spy affair when a retired Supreme Court justice declined to head a commission established to look into the case, saying it lacked the legal authority needed to do the job.

The government later announced that a retired lawyer had agreed to head the two-member panel. But the rejection by former Supreme Court president Moshe Landau, combined with comments by Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir that the government would not be bound by the commission's findings, cast doubts on the panel's independence and on its chances of success.

(Glenn Frankel, Washington Post, A32)

Shamir Says Israel Not Obligated By Spy Probe Findings

TEL AVIV -- Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir says his government will not be obligated to carry out the recommendations of an Israel inquiry into the embarrassing case of former U.S. spy Jonathan Pollard.

"We are not obligated by anything, but there's no doubt the recommendations of this commission will have the most serious moral importance," said Shamir, who initially opposed the investigation.

(Howard Goller, Reuter)

HOUSE PANEL APPROVES TRADE BILL Retaliatory Tariffs Dropped In Measure

A key House subcommittee, moving swiftly to deal with the nation's huge trade deficits, yesterday unanimously approved legislation that went far toward satisfying Reagan Administration and House Democratic leadership demands for a tough but nonprotectionist bill.

The bill, passed by the trade panel of the Ways and Means Committee, stripped away a provision sponsored by Rep. Gephardt that would have imposed retaliatory tariffs on countries that have enjoyed large surpluses in trade with the United States through unfair tactics.

(Stuart Auerbach, Washington Post, A1)

Trade Bill On The Move But Pitfalls Remain

Prospects are increasing for approval of a sweeping trade bill following House subcommittee action, but several other trade proposals are expected to be tacked on before it reaches President Reagan.

"Everybody believes that within this bill there is the possibility of a consensus trade bill that the President can sign," Rep. William Frenzel said Thursday after the measure cleared its first House hurdle.

(Mike Robinson, AP)

House Panel Approves Trade Bill

A sweeping proposal to strengthen U.S. trade policy, after winning unanimous approval in a House subcommittee, now faces extensive debate in the full committee next week.

Rep. Dan Rostenkowski said the plan adopted unanimously by the Trade subcommittee Thursday would "toughen our trade policy, but in a manner that opens markets without this frightening word of protectionism."

(Mary Beth Franklin, UPI)

GAO ASKED TO PROBE ALLEGED DIVERSION OF AFGHAN REBEL AID Scrutiny Of Covert Program May Be Hampered By Secrecy, Jurisdictional Questions

Rep. William Gray has asked the General Accounting Office to investigate allegations that hundreds of millions of dollars in covert U.S. military aid for the anticommunist resistance in Afghanistan has been diverted in the past seven years.

The request by Gray, chairman of the House Budget Committee, was made in a letter to the GAO on Feb. 25. Gray aides and GAO investigators will meet Monday to discuss the scope of the investigation, according to congressional sources.

(David Ottaway, Washington Post, A19)

PILOT SHOT DOWN OVER HONDURAS HAD DRUG TIES

MIAMI -- The pilot of a DC3 shot down by the Honduran Air Force had a record of drug-related arrests in the Bahamas and Miami, authorities said today.

No illegal cargo was found aboard the plane, but Honduran authorities said the crew apparently pushed something, possibly drugs, out of the aircraft before it was intercepted.

(AP story, Washington Post, A16)

NATIONAL NEWS

DUBERSTEIN IS CHOSEN AS BAKER DEPUTY Veteran Strategist To Have Broad Role

President Reagan yesterday named Kenneth Duberstein, a veteran Republican strategist and former White House congressional liaison, to be deputy chief of staff under Howard Baker.

The appointment was the first move in Baker's effort to rebuild the White House staff following the resignation of Donald Regan and many of his aides. Duberstein, who has enjoyed close ties with members of both parties, will have wide-ranging responsibilities in the management of the White House, officials said. (David Hoffman, Washington Post, A3)

Reagan Brings Former Legislative Affairs Director Back To White House

President Reagan, seeking to restore his Administration's momentum after its Iran-contra setbacks, is turning to a veteran of past legislative triumphs to right-hand man to Chief of Staff Howard Baker.

"The announcement of Ken Duberstein as deputy chief of staff is the first step in putting together a top-flight organization and system for pursuing the President's objectives in the next two years," Baker said.

(Dale Nelson, AP)

Reagan's Former Hill Lobbyist Joins White House Staff

Kenneth Duberstein says he was lured from lucrative lobbying work to become No. 2 on the White House staff out of loyalty to President Reagan and admiration for new Chief of Staff Howard Baker.

Reagan says Duberstein's appointment as his deputy chief of staff will help the Administration "move forward in the next two years" from the stagnation caused by the Iran arms-contra aid scandal. (Ira Allen, UPI)

***PERLE RESIGNS TOP ARMS POLICY POST Hard-Liner Says Stance Succeeded**

Assistant Secretary of Defense Richard Perle, for six years a chief architect of Reagan Administration strategic arms policies, yesterday announced his resignation, saying that recent events had vindicated the Administration's tough stance toward arms control with the Soviet Union.

In an interview, Perle predicted that President Reagan will meet Soviet leader Gorbachev this year in a full summit, and said he anticipates that the two leaders will agree on eliminating intermediate-range nuclear forces in Europe. (Marjorie Williams, Washington Post, A25)

Pentagon Arms Control Policymaker Leaving

Richard Perle, the Pentagon arms control policymaker whose hard-line views earned him the title the "Prince of Darkness," is leaving the Administration.

"I came to the conclusion that there's never a good moment (to leave); there's never a moment at which all of the issues in which one is interested in are resolved, but I think the direction of the Administration on the issues is pretty clearly set," Perle said at a Pentagon briefing.

(Norman Black, AP)

Perle Leaving Pentagon, But Keeping Influence On Arms Control

Richard Perle, the Reagan Administration's most controversial expert on arms control, is leaving the Pentagon after six years of firing barbs at liberals in Washington and in the NATO alliance.

Perle, a strong critic of past superpower arms agreements who is known as "Doctor Doom" by arms control advocates, said thursday he had resigned as assistant defense secretary for international security affairs in order to complete a novel.

He said he would stay on the job until spring when a successor is named and will thereafter continue to do consulting work for President Reagan on arms control.

(Charles Aldinger, Reuter)

INDICTMENT OF DEEVER BARRED AGAIN Lawyers Obtain Emergency Order

Attorneys for former White House aide Michael Deaver obtained an emergency court order yesterday that temporarily blocks a prosecutor for the second time from seeking a perjury indictment against Deaver.

A three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals granted Deaver a five-day stay against any further action by Whitney North Seymour, the independent counsel who has been investigating Deaver's lobbying activities.

(Howard Kurtz, Washington Post, A10)

ADMINISTRATION SEEKING SALE TO INVESTORS OF U.S LOANS

The Reagan Administration yesterday asked Congress to approve the sale of \$39.8 billion in federal loans to private investors during the next five years as part of a major "credit reform act" that would dramatically alter the way the government counts and manages its \$702 billion portfolio of loans.

"This is a major piece of legislation that addresses the long-standing shortcomings in the management of government loans," said Joseph Wright, deputy director of the Office of Management and Budget.

(Judith Havemann, Washington Post, D1)

AUTO COMEBACK BUOYS UPTURN IN RETAIL SALES

Buyers returned to auto showrooms last month and other retailers rang up modestly higher sales in all categories, boosting retail sales in February by 4.1 percent, the government reported yesterday.

The figures showed a strong rebound from a bleak January, when auto sales plummeted and sent total sales into a nose dive. The department said yesterday that the dive was even steeper than reported earlier.

(William Kronholm, Washington Post, D1)

HILL CHAIRMEN SKEPTICAL OF NAVY CARRIER REQUEST

The Navy's request for money to start building two new aircraft carriers next year ran into rough water yesterday during the Senate's first hearing on the issue.

Sens. Edward Kennedy and Carl Levin, chairmen of two Senate Armed Services subcommittees, questioned the wisdom of beginning two new carriers with a total price tag of \$7 billion -- particularly since numerous other military programs would have to be canceled or stretched out to provide the money. The Pentagon has requested a down payment of \$660 million for the two carriers for fiscal 1988.

(George Wilson, Washington Post, A22)

REPUBLICANS SAY DEMOCRATS MISCALCULATED BY ALLOWING PAY RAISE

Six Republican members of congress say House Democrats may have outfoxed themselves in their efforts to pocket a pay raise that boosted congressional salaries to \$89,500 a year.

The Republicans filed a lawsuit Thursday asking a federal judge to rescind the \$12,100 pay raise, centering their arguments on when a 30-day window of disapproval kicked in.

(Sandy Johnson, AP)

NETWORK NEWS SUMMARY

(Thursday Evening, March 12, 1987)

NORTH'S CHALLENGE OF THE SPECIAL PROSECUTOR

ABC's Peter Jennings: We suspect there is hardly anyone in the U.S. who doesn't want Col. North to tell his story of the Iran affair, certainly the President wants him to. And so, when a federal judge in Washington said today that Col. North's challenge to the Special Prosecutor should be dismissed, it was seen by those who want the investigation to go forward as welcome news.

ABC's Dennis Troute: In dismissing North's complaint, Judge Barrington Parker did not decide the constitutional question of whether or not the independent counsel position violates the separation of powers laws of the Constitution. Parker's opinion said simply it's not time yet to decide the question. He's allowing the investigation to move forward to an indictment by a grand jury if sufficient evidence of wrong doing is turned out. Said Parker's opinion, quote, "The nation demands an expeditious and complete disclosure of our government's involvement in the Iran-contra affair. Independent Counsel Walsh disclosed...that he's trying to wrap up a sound criminal case in the next ninety days.

(Walsh: "We do want to develop as much evidence as we can and have it under seal before they give testimony under the compulsion of an immunity grant.")

Walsh said also that Congress is far likelier to get the full story in this kind of case from Congressional witnesses who know they are under scrutiny for criminal investigations as well.

(Walsh: "Our further concern is that if they, if immunity is granted to such important persons prematurely, that it will not produce the full truth.")

With today's ruling, federal judges have twice in two days refused to knock down the law authorizing independent counsels, meaning that later court challenges are not likely to succeed either. (ABC-Lead)

NBC's Tom Brokaw: Two lawsuits brought by Lt. Col. Oliver North challenging the legal basis of the Special Prosecutor's investigation of his role in the Iran-contra affair -- those lawsuits were thrown out today by a federal judge. The judge's ruling said the investigation was serving an important public interest and it should continue. Meanwhile, National Public Radio reported tonight that North's former secretary at the National Security Council, Fawn Hall, has had plenty to tell the Special Prosecutor. It quotes sources saying that she testified that North not only destroyed but also altered important documents at a time when he knew that Attorney General Edwin Meese was investigating the Iran-contra affair. (NBC-3)

CBS' Dan Rather: President Reagan's former national security council aide, Lt. Col. Oliver North, lost today in court. North has been trying to get a judge to stop the Special Prosecutor in the Iran arms case on constitutional grounds. U.S. District Judge Barrington Parker, said in dismissing North's suit, and I quote, "the nation demands an expeditious and complete disclosure of our government's involvement in the Iran-contra affair." (CBS-3)

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DEAVER

Brokaw reports that Michael Deaver won a small victory in his fight to keep another special prosecutor from indicting him on perjury charges. The court blocked any such indictment until next Tuesday, allowing Deaver's lawyers to press their challenge to the constitutionality of the special prosecutor law. (NBC-4, ABC-2,)

ARMS CONTROL/INF

Brokaw: There were major signs today that the U.S. and the Soviet Union are moving quickly toward an agreement to eliminate their medium-range nuclear missiles in Europe. The top Soviet arms control expert...said that a treaty could be completely reached within six months. In Geneva, U.S. negotiators presented a plan to solve one of the major obstacles: how both sides can verify how the treaty is being honored.

NBC's Anne Garrels: Soviet inspectors on this NATO base in Italy -- that's one of the far reaching verification measures the U.S. is proposing. The Soviet inspectors would make sure that missiles the U.S. agreed to eliminate are indeed destroyed. The Soviets accept this idea.

(Viktor Karpov: "...And we will allow Western inspectors in our bases where SS-20s will be dismantled or destroyed.")

But once these missiles are destroyed, what's to stop either side from secretly replacing them? To prevent cheating -- the covert stock piling of illegal missiles -- the U.S. is also asking that each side be allowed to monitor missile reduction and maintenance facilities. For instance, in this normally closed area around Rostov an American inspector would be posted outside the Soviet SS-20 factory. And outside this General Dynamics factory in San Diego, where American cruise missiles are assembled, a Soviet inspector would watch what goes in and comes out of the plant. Not total access, but officials believe it will be enough to prevent cheating and not so much to allow Soviet espionage. Arms control experts warn this may not satisfy everyone.... The cruise missile could cause the biggest fight. Air-launched cruise missiles are not covered under this treaty. But they closely resemble land-based systems which are prohibited under the draft. So how would the Soviets tell the difference from the outside? Richard Perle believes this problem can be solved.

(Richard Perle: "Bringing Soviet inspectors to a sight where they allege there may be suspicious activity -- that can be done while protecting secrets.")

Verification is the key to this treaty. But while both sides now agree on the principle of on-site inspection, officials expect tough negotiations. As one put it: "the Devil is in the details."

Brokaw reports Richard Perle confirmed that he will be leaving the Pentagon this spring. Perle said that U.S. arms control policy is now set in the direction that he championed for six years....

(NBC-5)

ABC's John McWethy: The Reagan Administration immediately went public with its new position reaching for the high ground in the public relations battle.

(Charles Redman: "The U.S. tabled at the negotiations on intermediate-range missiles a treaty article providing for on-site inspection. With this article, the U.S. has completed tabling its draft INF treaty.")

To assure that neither side is cheating, the Administration is proposing the following: on-site inspections of missile bases, factories, and storage areas. This could mean up to one hundred American and West European inspectors permanently based inside the Soviet Union and an equal number of Soviets in the U.S. and Western Europe. Short notice inspections may also be required in which one side demands to see an area where missiles are not supposed to be, but where something suspicious appears to be happening. The U.S. is also asking that electronic monitoring devices be posted outside certain facilities to help further check on missile deployments. Though negotiations on this have just begun, the superpowers are falling all over themselves endorsing the concept, at least in public.

(Redman: "...both sides understand the need for a very effective verification regime.")

(Viktor Karpov: "So we are interested to have no escape clauses, loopholes.")

The Pentagon has resisted stringent verification, fearing it could provide the Soviets with access to sensitive Western facilities. Supporters, however, argue that the potential benefits of on site inspections in the Soviet Union, a closed society, far outweigh other problems. (ABC-3)

CBS's Bill McGlocklin: In Geneva today, the Reagan Administration presented to the Soviet Union its terms for an agreement eliminating medium-range nuclear missiles in Europe. The U.S. is demanding strict rules of inspection, including the permanent basing in each country of more than one hundred inspectors, inspection of nuclear facilities at short notice, and a total ban on efforts to conceal missiles from spy satellites.

(Redman: "We hope that Secretary Gorbachev's recent calls for more openness will augur well for resolving these concerns and avoiding new ones in future arms control treaties.")

Senior U.S. arms control negotiators said today on Capitol Hill the new rules are needed because the Soviets cannot be trusted.

(Kenneth Adelman: "...If we consider this process of year after year finding clear violations that the Soviets have made without them cleaning up their act, I think that presents a very ominous picture to arms control.")

But Soviet negotiators remain optimistic.... While Washington and Moscow may be nearing an arms control agreement, the White House and Congress are facing a showdown on arms control. Sen. Nunn says President Reagan is distorting the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty to save his SDI Space weapons program. The President today said Nunn's charges were false.

(TV coverage: The President.)

Despite the tough talk in today's U.S. proposal, Administration officials are eager to reach an arms control agreement. Sources say it would help restore the credibility of the Reagan foreign policy and give the President a much needed victory. (CBS-Lead)

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SDI

Jennings reports the Reagan Administration is also negotiating about nuclear arms and its star wars missile defense plan with the Congress. The Administration's broad interpretation of the ABM treaty is now being challenged by a very important Senator.

ABC's Brit Hume: The Chairman of the Senate Arms Services Committee, Sam Nunn,...continued his three-day analysis of, and attack on, the Administration's reinterpretation of the 1972 ABM treaty.

(Nunn: "It's an amazing sort of legalistic gymnastics that we've seen here." The Reagan Administration's unilateral reinterpretation of the ABM treaty constitutes a fundamental constitutional challenge to the Senate with respect to its powers and prerogatives in this area.") The Administration wants the 1972 treaty interpreted broadly to allow further testing and development of the President's strategic defense initiative....

(TV coverage: Reporter: "Mr. President, Sen. Nunn says your interpretation of the ABM treaty is wrong. What do you have to say to that?" The President shrugs.)

Sen. Nunn is wrong, he said, a view echoed today by the Administration's chief strategist on arms control, Richard Perle.

(Perle: "I disagree profoundly with the views expressed by the Chairman of the Arms Services Committee.")

Perle, however, is leaving the government. Indeed this was his valedictory news conference and there are signs that with him might go the Administration's enthusiasm for a fight with Congress on this issue at this time. As Perle himself put it:

(Perle: "At the end of the day, this isn't a legal question, it's a political one.")

Not only is it a political question but it's the kind of question where the Administration has usually had and frequently needed the support of people like Sam Nunn. (ABC-4)

CONSERVATIVE REBELLION

Brokaw reports conservatives feel abandoned and they blame George Shultz and Howard Baker.

(TV coverage: The President with Howard Baker.)

NBC's Andrea Mitchell: Instead of rallying around the embattled President, conservatives are declaring civil war against him. First, by demanding that he dump his Secretary of State whom they consider too moderate.

(Richard Viguerie: "In my view it's time for George Shultz to resign.")

With William Casey's departure, conservatives lost a major voice in the Cabinet and they are really alarmed by the arrival of Howard Baker.

(TV coverage: The President meeting with the Cabinet)

They view him as the enemy, a man willing to compromise on what they call the holy trinity of issues -- star wars, contra aid and taxes....

Mitchell continues: For the Chief Executive, who relies heavily on subordinates, they worry that Baker will become surrogate president.... Conservatives have long viewed Baker as a dunce. They kept him off the ticket in 1980 and ignored him in '84. Since coming to the White House, Baker has worked hard to reassure conservatives that he will let Reagan be Reagan.

(Howard Baker: "I am Ronald Reagan's Chief of Staff. I am to serve Ronald Reagan and his policies are my policies.")

One day after conservative Senators complained that they hadn't seen the President in months, Baker gave them a chance to voice their complaints.

(President Reagan: "Well, I've come here to listen to them.")

Baker even brought a conservative to the White House for the Justice Department. Conservatives want Kenneth Cribbs to keep an eye on Baker and hold him to his promises.

(Griff: "He has accepted this position for one purpose only, and that is to restore the President's ability to implement the Reagan agenda.")

So far, the Reagan revolution has failed to fulfill many of its promises such as bringing back school prayer, or banning all abortions and it has hardly produced a balanced budget. But if the President's programs are to have any chance of success with the Democratic Congress, he needs all the help he can get. So he has to put down the growing rebellion among conservatives. (NBC-6)

ISRAEL/POLLARD

Brokaw reports Israel appointed a lawyer and a former army chief of staff to investigate its role in the case of Jonathan Pollard. Israel admits that it is conducting the investigation mainly to restore its credibility with the U.S.. (NBC-9)

CATASTROPHIC HEALTH INSURANCE

CBS's Jane Bryant Quinn reports on the Administration's catastrophic illness supplement to Medicare. At the start, the coverage would cost seniors only sixty dollars a year, deducted from their social security check.... But only three percent will run out of Medicare benefits a year. And most of them have private insurance anyway. Critics are saying stop spending money on people who don't need more coverage.... The real need, critics say, is more insurance for the poor. Under the Reagan plan everyone, including poor people, must come up with as much as two thousand dollars of their own before catastrophic coverage begins. There's another problem with the bill: although it is called "catastrophic health insurance," it does not cover long-term care in a nursing home, which for the elderly is the biggest financial catastrophe of all. But the Administration says you have to start somewhere.... This plan may [become more costly]. With Senior power strong in the voting booths, both Democrats and Republicans are already tacking attractive extras on to the bill. To the surprise of conservatives, one of President Reagan's legacies may be the costliest Medicare program ever. (CBS-7)

HUNGER STRIKE ARMS CONTROL PROTEST

Rather reports an American physicist, on a hunger strike to protest the arms race, has received an invitation to visit the Soviet Union. Dr. Charles Hyder has appeared regularly on Soviet television since his protest began last September.... (CBS-2)

SOUTH AFRICA

Jennings reports in South Africa today about 50 blacks, singing freedom songs, were met by riot police as they left a church. Their demonstration, which was broken up with tear gas, was one among hundreds in South Africa today. Most were peaceful, all were to protest the continuing detention of thousands of people under South Africa state of emergency law. (ABC-5)

NCAA TOURNAMENT AND DRUGS

ABC's Bill Blakemore reports on the NCAA basketball tournament and drug testing....
(TV coverage: The President congratulating the Villanova squad,
1985 champions) (ABC-10, CBS-12)

EDITORIALS/COLUMNISTS

IRAN-CONTRA/PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Forget 'Hands On': Let Reagan Be Reagan -- "Critics, and some of Reagan's friends, go too far in demanding a new management style from him.... Even as Reagan admitted mistakes and accepted responsibility for the Iran-contra scandal it was clear that he hated doing so. He then blamed former subordinates and even found a new villain -- a bad filing system. Moreover, trying to turn Reagan into a hands-on manager is a bad idea. To get this crisis of competence behind him, his Administration must make solid accomplishments.... The President has now brought on board the ideal people to help.... Let Secretary of State Shultz and Carlucci bring home a safe-and-sound arms agreement. Let Baker work out the budget, the trade bill and catastrophic health insurance with the Democratic Congress. And let Reagan be Reagan.

(David Aaron, Los Angeles Times, 3/6)

The Reagan Values -- "Reagan's popularity has not all that much to do with his speaking ability, his luck, or even his stand on issues. The key to Reagan's strength is that he symbolizes what most of us believe to be true about our country, our beliefs, our values, and ourselves.... The source of Reagan's strength is not simply that he endorses these values. Anyone can do that. It is that he personifies and lives them. They are integral parts of his being."

(Ray Shamie, Boston Globe, 3/8)

Mr. Reagan's Third Term -- "[The President's speech] didn't sound like an inaugural address. Yet an inaugural address is what President Reagan's speech Wednesday night amounted to, an appeal for a fresh start.... It's not in anyone's power to grant that fresh start. Questions about his credibility will hang like thunderclouds until Congress and the independent counsel conclude their investigations. Still, the world won't stop, and the Commander-in-Chief insists he's eager to command, to start again."

(New York Times, 3/8)

Owning Up And Moving On -- "The President did what most Americans and allies wanted him to do: own up and move on, while reaffirming 'American values' and the rule of law. Reagan also took care not to diminish 'the importance of continuing investigations.... At 76, he is not likely to become a slave to detail, so his new team...can bring important changes in attitude -- open-mindedness toward arms control and the Contadora peace plan in Central America." (Boston Globe, 3/6)

'I Cannot Escape Responsibility' -- "'It was a mistake.' That final simple declarative statement, uttered early in President Reagan's 11½ minute speech...was an unprecedented act of contrition by an American president. By admitting his mistakes and accepting responsibility for those of others within his Administration, Ronald Reagan took a critical first step toward restoring public confidence in his ability -- indeed, his willingness -- to lead the nation during the final two years of his Presidency."

(San Diego Tribune, 3/5)

EDITORIALS/COLUMNISTS (continued)

The President's Contrite Speech -- "It's never easy for a politician to admit he made a mistake. It's even harder for the President of the U.S., who must project an image of strength to the world, to concede errors of judgement and performance.... The speech was a trip to the confessional for the President, and it should go a long way toward restoring the public's confidence in the Reagan White House.... Barring unforeseen revelations, last night's speech should calm the waters that have nearly engulfed the White House in recent weeks. The Iran arms investigation will go on, but the President may no longer be the main target."

(San Francisco Chronicle, 3/5)

The following editorials on the President's address were compiled by the Associated Press:

"The President deserves praise for admitting his mistakes in the Iran-contra affair.... Where in the world would you find a country where the President had appointed a commission to look into the misdoings of his own Administration, and then accepting before the American people the fact, 'I've made mistakes and let's face it, we blew it, but let's go on from here?' We believe a strong consensus will emerge that the President has, in admitting mistakes and accepting responsibility, taken a step toward winning the confidence of the American people in the last two years of his term."

(San Gabriel Valley Tribune, 3/6)

"Many would have felt better had Mr. Reagan been more direct in acknowledging his own culpability. They also wonder, given the President's age, if he really can change a style that was so vulnerable in this case to the freelancing he referred to. We would guess that we have seen the extent of the President's contribution."

(South Bend Tribune, 3/6)

"Once upon a time it would not have been necessary for an aide [David Abshire] to President Reagan to feel called upon to say, in effect, that Reagan tells the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.... It is up to the Congressional committees to see if Reagan's position of the contra aid part of the scandal squares with the facts, because the American people are not so inclined any more to accept what President Reagan says simply on its face."

(Arkansas Gazette, 3/10)

"President Reagan's relatively brief speech...on the Iran-contra affair -- billed in advance as the most important speech of his Presidency -- contained the obligatory expressions of responsibility for the botched arms-for-hostages deal, but it was no Gettysburg Address. History books may accord it a footnote at best. What will be of lasting significance are not the President's words...but his actions and those of his Administration over the next two years. In a sense Reagan is now starting what amounts to a third term in office and his 1980 campaign slogan, 'A New Beginning,' has as much if not more validity today than it did then."

(Seattle Post-Intelligencer, 3/6)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

"Baseball players who hit three out of 10 become national heroes. Not so with U.S. presidents. If they score eight home runs and strike out once, our mass media muckrakers demand their scalps. Ronald Reagan is a classic example. His 'home runs' include keeping us out of war, reducing inflation sharply, cutting interest rates, lowering unemployment, rebuilding our armed forces, 'unpacking' the courts, and trying to decrease Congressional pork-barrel spending. His reward? The savagely over-played 'scandal' called Irangate."

(Walt Seifert, Washington Times, 3/10)

"The Iran-contra affair will be with us longer than you think, for its effects will be felt long after this President...has left office. We cannot be surprised when our future voters and public servants, who will have been weaned on disinformation and denied political role models, will be a generation of apathetic and cynical citizens. As a social studies teacher, I cannot forgive Ronald Reagan for his legacy."

(Andrea S. Libresco, Newsday, 3/8)

"Reagan had to be provided a 'built-in deniability,' so that he could later claim that he was not informed. Thus the scenario if playing out as planned in case something went wrong with his secret Iran-contra policy, as it did. One can be sure that once given immunity for prosecution, North and Poindexter will testify that they kept President Reagan completely in the dark about their own work in the affair, thereby keeping intact the 'built-in deniability' for Reagan to continue to claim. After all, North and Poindexter are Reagan's 'national heroes.'"

(Suresh M. Sheth, Orange County Register, 3/9)

"We need [The President] and most of those [who are] close to him. He should keep seeking good people who are devoted to the Presidency and serving it. He should find a way to extricate the best people from their comfortable living and convince them to be tough enough to do the toughest jobs -- to run the government, to maintain eternal vigilance against outside, hostile forces and to discover the forces eating at our nation from within and eliminate their effectiveness."

(Gary Weir, Plain Dealer, 3/10)

"Letting international terrorists know that they can blackmail the U.S. by taking a citizen hostage is sending the wrong signal. We must take a hard-line stance with terrorists. Some people have become angry with the press' handling of the scandal. But when the government does something terribly wrong, the people have a right to know. I hope the President can continue the rest of his Administration without any more problems."

(John Steiner, Birmingham News, 2/23)

"To all the people bashing President Reagan for forgetting, do they in turn forget how this man was elected by a landslide, how he revived patriotism, lowered inflation and interest rates, invaded Grenada, intercepted that terrorist plane, bombed Khadafy, pushed for job training rather than handouts, is trying to contain communism in Central America, built our defenses and brought Russia to the bargaining table without giving away SDI?"

(Jim Greeran, New York Post, 3/12)