HENKEL, WILLIAM: Files, 1982-1987 – REAGAN LIBRARY COLLECTIONS

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HENKEL, WILLIAM: Files, 1982-1987

Advance, Office of Presidential: Special Assistant to the President and Director of Presidential Advance (1982-1984)
Deputy Assistant to the President and Director of Presidential Advance (1984-1986)
Assistant to the President and Director of Presidential Advance (1986-1987)

William Henkel (1941- ) first served in the White House Advance Office under Presidents Nixon and Ford, including as Director of the Advance Office beginning in 1973. In 1975 he left the White House staff to become Deputy Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development Operations. When President Ford left office, Henkel took a position with the brokerage firm Merrill Lynch, the company for which he had worked prior to joining the White House staff.

Henkel was asked by the Reagan White House to help coordinate the U.S. logistical arrangements for the G-7 economic summit held at Versailles, France in June 1982. Following the Summit, he was granted a two-year leave of absence from Merrill Lynch so he could serve as a White House special consultant on Presidential advance. Henkel was asked to improve the management operations of the President’s trips and public appearances, better integrate the advance and planning process with other White House operations, and develop a long-term advance strategy that would take into account the need for increased security for the President.

In September 1982 Henkel left Merrill Lynch for a full-time position as Director of Presidential Advance, with a mandate to implement his own recommendations. He reported to Michael Deaver, the Deputy Chief of Staff. Deaver and the Deputy Chief of Staff office retained a large amount of direct involvement in Presidential events.

In March 1984 Henkel was promoted to a Deputy Assistant, due to his increased responsibilities for schedule coordination in the 1984 campaign season. In September Henkel temporarily left the White House payroll for that of the Reagan/Bush re-election campaign, while continuing to work within the White House staff just as before. He returned to the White House payroll after Election Day, while also serving as Director of Operations for the 1985 Presidential Inaugural Committee. After Deaver left the White House staff in May 1985, Henkel assumed a greater role in Presidential schedule coordination and event development, while maintaining general oversight of the Advance Office. He was promoted to Assistant to the President in January 1986. He left the White House staff in September 1987.

Although Henkel did not join the White House staff until 1982, his files include some reference copies of memos from 1981.
The William Henkel collection has been arranged by the Library Staff and the following is the preliminary container list. The Library has received numerous Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests for this material, including a request for the entire collection. We have begun reboxing the entire collection and this material is represented at the beginning of the inventory for Boxes 1-5. The remainder of the available folders is responsive to other Henkel and/or subject FOIA requests and is still shown contained with “OA” numbered boxes.

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