

Ronald Reagan Presidential Library
Digital Library Collections

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

Collection: Allen, Richard: Papers
Folder Title: [March 30, 1981 – Tape 1 Transcript]
Box: 1

To see more digitized collections visit:

<https://reaganlibrary.gov/archives/digital-library>

To see all Ronald Reagan Presidential Library inventories visit:

<https://reaganlibrary.gov/document-collection>

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

Citation Guidelines: <https://reaganlibrary.gov/citing>

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

WITHDRAWAL SHEET

Ronald Reagan Library

Collection Name ALLEN, RICHARD V.: PAPERS

Withdrawer

CAS 1/10/2011

File Folder [MARCH 30, 1981-TAPE 1 TRANSCRIPT]

FOIA

ALLENSYSTEMA
TIC

Box Number 1

1

ID	Doc Type	Document Description	No of Pages	Doc Date	Restrictions
102738	TRANSCRIPT	OF TAPE 1	31	3/30/1981	B1
		PAR 3/15/2011 ALLENSYSTEMATIC			

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- B-1 National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- B-2 Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
- B-3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
- B-4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
- B-6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
- B-7 Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
- B-8 Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
- B-9 Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

~~TOP SECRET~~

MARCH 30 - TAPE 1

RVA: Baker said they are controlling the press over there. Nofziger is over there. He wants us to put it out, but not anymore than that. Who would do it? You? Is Al talking to the Vice President?

GERGEN: I'll write it out.

? They're going to bring statement back in.

RVA: Oh shit, it looks like they got Jim right smack in his head. Is it? Oh my God! Oh Jesus, God in heaven.

? Operated on

RVA: Is there any faster way to get him back.

MURPHY Air Force 2.

? I'm questioning

MURPHY Unfortunately they have to refuel.

? Where, GW

RVA: Remind me to tell you of the sensation I had upon departing L/Enfant Plaza Hotel. I had a premonition, but it wasn't on him.

RVA: Well, yes sir, Did you get to George?

HAIG: No, by the way he called us, Signal people thought we were calling him.

? Come on up here

HAIG: He knows what he has to know.

RVA: Is Frank Ursomarso going to put the statement out?

? No, David is redrafting it. He's going to draft it and then bring it here, get clearance, and then put it out.

? Get one person out here, not five people.

HAIG: Listen that's awfully important.

RVA: Nobody talks

HAIG: Lets everybody stay together on, nobody do anything. Gergen cannot be playing public relations without everybody knowing it and we will decide here what the hell we're doing. That's the best way. Always!

RVA: The point is we need a spokesman to put this out and Larry, I think is at the hospital too.

~~TOP SECRET~~

DECLASSIFIED IN PART
MLRR/Allen System 102731
BY CU 3/5/11

~~TOP SECRET~~

? Larry is at the hospital. One person designated, nobody else does it.

? Unless you want to undo what Meese and Baker said.

? David is going to type it. He is doing that right now.

? Ah, OK

RVA: Make sure it comes back in here, Frank.

Frank: Yeh, we will bring it back in.

HAIG: Yes

? Is Cap on his way?

? Yes, other Cabinet members are on their way.

HAIG: I think, frankly, we have three ranges of problems we've got to think about - talk about. First is how we portray this character. You know when the Kennedy thing happened they intentionally submerged any Leftist

RVA: Yes

HAIG: Aspect of this thing, I don't think that is in our interest if we have it and I think we ought to be straight honest.

RVA: As soon as we can get the poop on the guy

Dear MURPHY That's what they're trying to find out now.

RVA: Is the service moving on the psychiatrist record?

? He will be arraigned here by the U.S. attorney in one hour.

? Yes

HAIG Now, he may be just plain nuts

? Do we have any information - Do we have any information from the Secret Service as to whether there is any evidence of his being other than alone?

? Not yet.

? Is there a conspiracy?

HAIG: Should we bring Webster over?

? Webster is flying back from Williamsburg. I talked to him about ten minutes ago.

HAIG: If we get CIA here, then we can check it out on that end.

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

RVA: What about Casey? We haven't thought about bringing him.

? He's coming

RVA: Is he, is he?

? Yes

? Well, actually Webster's only an hour away. As a matter of fact probably about 45 minutes.

HAIG: Well I think the most important thing now, they'll move everything out to the hospital. Dave its awfully important that we're all together here now and not everybody jumping on phones and talking on things that have not been proven -- we're all together here now.

RVA: That's right

HAIG: Until we decide thats the way to do it and then we'll implement.

RVA: Just move those maps out of the way

? We should put something out here, which confirm what they said up there.

RVA: Why don't you read it Al

HAIG: This is to confirm the statements made at George Washington Hospital that the President was shot once in the left side, not on, in as he left the hotel. His condition is stable. We are informed by James Baker that the decision is now being made (inaudible)

RVA: As to the course of medical treatment as to whether or not

RVA: Are you going to say the word operate

HAIG: Yes

HAIG: Whether or not to operate now to remove the bullet.

RVA: Hum, yea

HAIG: The Vice President has been notified and he is now en route to Washington from Texas. He expects to arrive in Washington this afternoon. Mrs. Reagan is currently with the President at the hospital.

RVA: Don't say from Texas -- and just say is on route to the

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

? say en route back
? Yes, He is on public schedule
? Yea, ok
HAIG: and is, and is expected to arrive in Washington
this afternoon.
? Who is standing out there?
? Who
? Would you say the Vice President has been notified.
? That sounds as though he is a little out of it.
RVA: He's returning, just that he is returning.
? Well what
? Well he has to know the status
? The question is will he know what's going on?
? Has been informed?
? The Vice President returned
? Why don't you put it more open. The White House
and the Vice President are in communications
? That's better
? And the Vice President is returning.
RVA: To the White House.
? You want to say his condition is stable and he is
conscious
RVA: That's a good question.
? We have get the direct line now to the hospital.
? If he is conscious (inaudible)
? Excuse me,
HAGI Yes
? Secretary Haig I have the Vice President on the
line.
HAIG: Alright, here he is.
HAIG: Ed, I think you ought to say that the
? Can I read this to you?
HAIG: Secretary of State, Secretary of Treasury, the At-
torney General, Assistant to the President are in
the Situation Room at this time.
? I wouldn't say the Situation Room
? Say
? General, in all due respect sir I would not say
that

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

? I agree

? Who is here

? I agree

? It sounds

? Situation Room

? I agree, the question -- I want to I would like
5/11/77 to send something reassuring

? candor?

? Then I don't think you ought to say he is conscious

? If you say he is conscious then you create the impression
that he might not be.

RVA What about

RVA We need immediate ICA guidance on this too.

RVA Frank, we better

RVA Dave, Dave

RVA We better have ICA guidance so we can have a flash
on Voice of America that picks up what ever statement
is made.

? I think they are getting it already

RVA: Are they?

? Alright

? Don't -- double check it

? When I go upstairs, Fred *FF*

RVA: We need something to all posts as well

? Is Deaver alright?

RVA: He got, yea, Deaver's alright. He got him in the
first shot.

? Yes

? Baker said that when he went in the hospital he
didn't know he had been hit.

? Yes,

? Lets finish this, Dave.

? I don't think it is a bad thing to say that the
5/11/77 Secretary of State, Secretary of Treasury and the
Attorney General are in the building -- in the White
House

RVA: Hi Cap, have a seat

? in the White House

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

RVA: right next to
? and the Secretary of Defense
RVA: Are you up to speed on the - everything Cap
CW: No not really
? various members of the cabinet
CW a bit coming over, excuse me
RVA: The president has been hit, as you know.
CW: Yes
RVA: And he's stable and he walked in the hospital.
Jim Baker said that he didn't know that he had been
shot. That he has lost a lot of blood. They've
replaced that blood. Ah, the decision is being
made whether or not to operate. Ah, the Vice President
is contacted and he is on his way back from Texas
right now. It will be some hours before he is back
and a statement was made at the hospital; we're
about now to make a statement here.
? Why don't you read this for Secretary Weinberger
and others
? Yea
HAIG: Yes, this is the statement that will go out. This
is to confirm the statements made at George Washington
Hospital. The President was shot once in the left
side as he left the hotel. His condition is stable
and a decision is now being made whether or not
to operate to remove the bullet.
RVA: Where is he
RVA: Where the hell is 91
RVA: Hello Ed, yes Hi.
? Hold on
RVA: Thats right
RVA: He is here, Cap has arrived.
RVA: Alright
RVA: Haig is here too, you know.
? Situation Room
RVA: Ok, thank you
? Secretary Weinberger you have a message
RVA: Is he in the operating room now?
RVA: I understand, but for our

~~TOP SECRET~~

RVA: OK
RVA: Stable and conscious
RVA: Alright
? He's on the line with Mr. Allen
? Cap is on, you got Cap on?
? Grab 264
? Is this the same line?
? Come on, give Secretary Weinberger --
? That's Ed on here
? Yes, just a minute please
? OK, he is on another line
? Do we have a doctor's report?
? We have an open line
? *Cap* Yes, I think
? Right

Meese: What we want to do is indicate that he is not in any major danger.

MURPHY I would like to get the head of the Secret Service for the VP.

CW And you think this is the appropriate time to start some word to foreign governments?

Meese Well I wouldn't think so; you might talk to Al about that but I don't think ----
Yes, don't want to have any thought of any kind of a vacuum. We want to make sure everyone understands that the situation is under control.

? He came to the hospital to see how Brady is?

CW No I don't think that is exactly right. Where is the Vice President?

RVA: He is en route

Meese: The Vice President is en route from Texas; he should be in the area.

MURPHY He'll be in about 6:30 Cap

CW 6:30, apparently he's due in. Dan, 6:30?

MURPHY: 6:30

CW: OK

MEESE: And I think what you want to do is maintain the Situation Room as the principal headquarters. Keep our operations center there.

~~TOP SECRET~~

CW: Yea
RVA: Yes
Meese: The other situation is there are other injuries which if there are any questions about, Jim Brady received a head wound and he is being operated on.

RVA: Is this a draft?
? Yes
RVA: Ed, here is a draft statement to foreign governments.
Meese: Alright
RVA: You will have heard that on March 30th there was an attempt on the life of President Reagan. Although he was injured in the attack, his condition is stable. You should inform the government that in spite of this terrible event the government in Washington continues to carry out its obligations to its people and its allies.

Meese: Yea, OK
RVA: That statement alright for a temporary?
CW: I wonder if the last sentence is a bit more alarmist than it should be?
Meese: I think it might be.
RVA: Is functioning?
Meese: And I would put in
RVA: Is continuing to function
Meese: I would just leave it out.
CW: Or I'd just say something you know
Meese: Or something that, make it simple
Along the lines that the President was stable and conscious following the injury.

RVA: Alright
Meese: Something along that line
CW: I think the latter one about continuing to function and honoring obligations sounds much more serious

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

Meese: Yea

RVA: Yea it does, you're right it does. We shouldn't say instead of this terrible event. You should inform the government that, ah, we'll figure out something to say that its normal.

CW: Yea

Meese: Yea

RVA: That the situation is normal

CW: Very good

Meese: Alright

RVA: OK

Meese: We'll count on you guys staying over there.

CW: We'll stay right here.

Meese: We'll keep the line open at both locations

RVA: Alright, fine. Bye

?: Did you just talk to the hospital

RVA: Where's Al Haig?

?: He's right here, sir.

RVA: Oh, OK

RVA: Bill Casey, are you up to speed on all?

WC: I was when I left the agency.

RVA: What

WC: Anything new in about ten minutes.

RVA: Al, they're beginning the operation now, are you aware of that. They're beginning to operate now but its not for publication. Here we go, here's Lyn.

(LYN BRIEFING ON TELEVISION)

COLSON: Someone out there wants to know if you want the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs.

RVA: I don't think we need him here.

COLSON: Weinberger is on his way here.

RVA: I don't think we need him here. Cap is the -- Cap is here.

HAIG: Cap is the -- and the Football is near the Vice President - so that's fine.

RVA: We should get one over here. We have a duplicate one here.

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

HAIG: Get the Football over here.

RVA: There is one at the Military Aide's Office. The Football is in the -----

CW: I don't think we need the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs over here, do you?

RVA: Lets leave him at the NMCC. And this is a draft statement but I want to put something else in it.

? Are any of them cabinet members?

RVA: No they should all be told to stand by. Here's a copy of that draft statement.

RVA: You don't want the chairman of the Joint Chiefs over here.

HAIG: Not over here no I want him

RVA: NMCC

CW: And they should go on alert or be ready to go on alert. SAC went on alert with Kennedy's assassination.

RVA: Here's Gergen

GERGEN TV STATEMENT

HAIG: No question! No question! All night that's too -- too hard. Woody!. He's not in any state for that

RVA: Don't take anymore questions (INAUDIBLE) No more questions

RVA: Get off the platform

HAIG: I didn't think he was going to be there.

HAIG: I thought the press guy was going to be there.

ALLEN: He is the press guy

RVA: Thr Three press guys (inaudible)

RVA: Background!!

(GERGEN ON TV)

RVA: Al, we want something about the President's condition being stable.

HAIG: Thats right and stable and he is conscious. I don't think we need that. The Vice President ---

RVA: What we are saying the Vice President is en We don't need to say anything more. The Vice President is en route

? From Texas

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

We don't need to say anything more. The Vice President is en route

? From Texas

? No, we're not saying Texas

RVA: The Vice President on route

HAIG: Due to return to Washington this afternoon. He is returning to Washington

? How about that?

MURPHY 6:30

? Anybody interested in who did it?

? A fellow by the name of

RVA: We do have him. John Warner

? John Warner Hinkley

HAIG: Who is he?

? 22. Comes from Evergreen, Colo.

HAIG: Get that out right away

? He has no criminal record that is, that we have been able to find.

? Psycharist ---

RVA: Get that out to ICA too (Repeats) Get that out to ICA.

? Some further information that might be helpful. We do have an agent in the FBI George Chimel, ah, with the suspect at this time. The guy's refusing to give a statement.

? Ah, I've ought to find out -- is any known background. We should start...

? No, they have already done that. He has no...

? I know it. There is no criminal record. He is not in our Secret Service files. But what organization does he belong to.

? that's right, they're working on that.

? Going back into the....

? they're working on that right now. There is nothing of immediate record, but they are trying to check out whether or not he does belong to any organizations.

? Is there something on the assailant?

Regan: He looks to me Al, as though this is a loner. That's initial hunch.

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

HAIG: Yeah.

? Kook or nut but how did he get there with a 38 caliber?

RVA: Get a real phone in here and plug it in and get a secure phone here.

DO: OKAY

RVA: And leave them on this table. Thank you

DO: Here's some new information we have. One item

HAIG: You've got the conn.

RVA: Hickley or Hinkley?

HAIG: They've already announced surgery, see.

REGAN: Hinkley, it's not Hippley. Its Hinkley. I think this is based on what we have.

? Brady wasn't stirring?

RVA: Brady really looked like he caught it right in the front. Right smack in.

? He really looked incontinent from here. He went down immediately.

RVA: Unbelievable

RVA: God, what a tragedy.

? Hinkley?

? Hinkley

RVA: It is said to be Hinkley.
John Warwick Hinkley

RVA: Well, Sec Def....

? Meese just said they're sending Speakes back here. And they'd like us to echo what they say there. So within moments of what they say, we're going to put out the same statement and henceforth we'll coordinate what we say back here.

? Okay

? Dick can we just get a line in? Can we just get a line in ... so they make it public so we can hear. Sort of a hook up.

RVA: Yeah. Sit Room can do.

? I bet you could.

? That would be the easiest way. Then we wouldn't have to worry about it.

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

-13-

HAIG: Bill, do your guys have the name of this fellow
that they're doing a background into.

? Do you have a phone?

RVA: Yeah!

? What my own office?

RVA: Right in that drawer there. What's happening.
Hold it a second. There is Jerry

? See the agent out there also

? He really gets hit

RVA: Does anyone know the caliber of the weapon

? 38

RVA: Jesus Christ!

? Okay if it's close range. Better if its close range.

HAIG: Dave, Al. We're be on a straight line with the hospital.
So anything that is said, before it's said, we'll
discuss at this table. And any telephone calls
that anybody is getting with instructions from the
hospital come to this table first. Right here.
And we discuss it and know what's going on.

? This will be the Command Center

HAIG: That's right

RVA: Why don't you stand by and make yourself comfortable?

? I have the chairman of the

CW: Joint Chiefs coming on, Jones, in just a second.
We're going to tell him to get alerts to the Strategic
Air Command and such other units that seem to him
to be desirable at this point.

? Not to come up here.

HAIG: What kind of an alert, Cap?

CW: It's a standby alert...just a standby alert.

HAIG: You're not raising readiness.

CW: NO, NO, NO.

CW: The main thing is that he should stay at the Command
Center. Not here.

? Is that information not to be released up til.

? It'll leak.

CW: Until we know more about it. The alert, they'll
probably put themselves on alert but I just want
to be sure.

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

-14-

HAIG: Do we have a football here? Do we?
? Yes sir. Right there.
Regan: Al. Don't elevate it. Be careful.
HAIG: Aboslutely! Absolutely! That's why I toned down
the message that was going out.
Regan: Yeah, I don't think anything that talks about the
continuing of government or anything that sounds
like we know a lot more than we do.
Regan: This is apt to turn out to be a loser
HAIG: I think it was
? Cap, what do they mean by alert?
CW: Well an alert is
? We've been down this path once before with Henry.
CW: That's right. The alert simply is that there are
conditions that may require very quick actions.
? Are you sure that doesn't mean Defcon 3? or 4?
CW: NO, NO.
CW: I'll fill in....It's a matter of being for some
later call. Probably Defcon 2. I guess.
HAIG: Yeah, I think the important thing fellows is that
there are things always generate a lot of dope stories.
Everyone and everybody is running around telling
everybody everything that they can get out of their
gut.
? That's right.
HAIG: And I think that it is God Damm important that none
of that happens. The President as long as he is
conscious and can function.....
CW: Well that's right.
? The Vice President is on an Air Force plane.
RVA: Well, just let me point out to you that the President
is not now conscious.
HAIG: No, ofcourse not.
? Question, Al - should you talk to the Speaker of
the House?
HAIG: Yes

~~TOP SECRET~~

? The Speaker of the House and Bob Michel have both been contacted and are ready when called to come to the hospital to walk in and walk out and say that the President is in great shape, if that's what we want them to say. Or anything else that's appropriate.

HAIG: Yeah but I think we better call from here.

? They are not going to move until we tell them.

HAIG: Yeah, well I think we ought to call Howard Baker.

? He's ready too.

HAIG: First, just tell him where we stand. Let him take care of the Republican side and then the minority leader from his side.

? The Vice President is in an Air Force plane and is in full communication.

HAIG: The important thing is that we all, everyone knows that there is no problem here. And that we're all where we should be. And government is going on as usual.

HAIG: I want to talk to Baker and Byrd.

CW: Hello, yeah, Your post should be the National Military Command Center.

? A rather technical thing is that the President can pass the baton temporarily under the law and we're preparing that right now ... towards the eventuality...

HAIG: that's what I was going to ask next. What are legal...

? It's being prepared right now.

HAIG: That's the pass the baton to the Vice President...

? On a temporary basis. It passes to him in writing from the President until he rescinds it.

HAIG: Has somebody gone into the Eisenhower precedent on this? and also is it working okay. And I think that we need that from a public relations point of view.

? Well, we may not want to put it out.

HAIG: No Dave. The things you want to make note of are first precisely what happened, notification of the Vice President, Assembly of the key crisis cabinet, preservation of continuity of command on and that it was handled.

~~TOP SECRET~~

-16-

CW: I think what we want to do is increase the degree of alertness so that in the event there should be anything conspired that could be done with a minimum of modicum of time.

? Who's he (Cape) talking to.

RVA: The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

Gergen: Al, a quick question. We need some sense, more better sense of where the President is. Is he under sedation now?

HAIG: He's not on the operating table.

Gergen: He is on the operating table.

HAIG: So the helm is right here. And that means right in this chair for now, constitutionally, til the Vice President gets here.

Gergen: I understand that. I understand that.

CW: At this point generally quiet but we want to be (on Phone) ready and in that has to be ---- we want to get on it now.

? Fred, just what do you turn over?

Fielding: If the President feels compelled to do it, he, in writing, transfers his authority on a temporary basis by law to the Vice President. Remains in effect, although obviously he's alive, it remains in effect until he directly rescinds it.

?: That is correct, sir. And it is being prepared right now.

RVA: We have no secure to AF-2

Murphy: What do you mean? I just checked it and they said they did, no secure voice but they do have message.

RVA: Secure comm.

Murphy: I just talked to the colonel on board. But youre right no voice.

RVA: How far?

Murphy: They're just about getting airborne now.

RVA: Dan, one thing. You can talk with Pete. Is he here or...

Murphy: He's here.

RVA: Here.

~~TOP SECRET~~

Murphy: I'll just tell him to say nothing.

RVA: Yeah.

Murphy: Unless anything comes out of here.

RVA: Unless it comes out of here. That's right.

RVA: We better set up traffic control for the Sit Room

? Do we have any more information on Jim.

? No. They're trying to determine that now.

Gergen: Frank, can somebody be made to find out the condition of Brady?

Frank: Pardon?

Gergen: Can somebody be made to find out the condition of Jim?

Frank: Yeah.

RVA:back here and this includes a secretary in here all the time.

RVA: Brady is is; Brady looks bad. Looks like he caught it right smack in the front of the head. He's been taken into a Catscan unit. A Washington policeman, Cap, and a Secret Service Agent, yeah.

? We don't know what...ah... Ed Meese said it was apparently medical evidence indicated a low calibre

RVA: 38

Regan: I just gave to the Attorney General to check on. The word from the Secret Service is it is a 22 calibre with long rifle bullets.

RVA: Oh, oh. That would explain how he is able to walk into the ah.....

? Unless it's a hollow point

RVA: What? yeah

? But even at close range, a hollow point would not have....

? I thought it was just a graze. I really didn't think that it actually penetrated.

? It had to be removed.

RVA: Well if it was a 22. Then Brady has a fighting chance. A 38 in the front of the head, ah.

? That's kind of lethal.

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~18~~

RVA: God almighty, why was he taken into a Catscan unit.
Yeah. What? Anne? What did you say

Anne: There's a call for a Major Kline. I'm to see if
he was in here.

Kline: Yes

? This is the place (viewing TV) Watch Deaver bend
over. Right now. See Deaver?

RVA: Ouch

? Looks like he was hurt. Shockwaves were ... by
him.

RVA: Look at the Secret Service Agent get it. My God!

RVA: Irene, thanks.

? Is that Secret Service with the gun?

ALL: Yes.

Golding: Is this a regular phone

RVA: That's a secure, Woody. You can probably use it.
No you can't, go out and use one of those.

RVA: All this has happened in an hour, and what? The
shot was at 2:30. 2:30 was it? Exactly?

? That's the time we were given.

? Is this the assailant, they are all....

RVA: Yes. They are huddled around the assailant.

? They've got the guy against the wall.

Regan: A policeman was actually hit too, Cap. A policeman
and a Secret Service agent as well as Jim and the
President.

CW: We've got the chairman of the Joint Chiefs, the
Joint Chiefs in the Military Command Center. The
alert has been raised from a normal condition to
a standby condition under which they can move to
a much higher degree very quickly. There is no,
there will be no publicity about it. And the degree
of alertness at the moment is going to commanders
only so that there would not be a lot of leaks right
away from the men. All of that on the basis that

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

at the point it looks an isolated incident but there isn't enough information and we just want to remain alert. So that's where the armed forces stand.

CW: What? Are we now notifying the other governments.
RVA: Yes, the message is going out to other governments.
CW: We did change that last. Didn't we?? That last line?

? Yes

RVA: In whose hands is it actually fall now Not order of succession but the Command Structure.

? The Vice President

RVA: It's the Vice President but he's not here.

? The sequence of succession goes to the Secretary of State.

RVA: In succession

Regan: How are the politicians.

HAIG: Oh they're fine. They always good, they're pros. I don't know...

RVA: How about Brady's child. Is there somebody to watch Brady's child? On.... We live across, you around the block...

HAIG: Did we get a report on Jim?

RVA: I guess somebody's taking care of it. She must be with a neighbor or something. They've got two kids, little kids, or one little kid, one little kid. Ah, never mind, that's all right.

HAIG: I heard, Dick, you know I heard at the Department before I left that he was fine, a superficial wound to the head.

RVA: Pray to God.

Regan: We now hear it might have been a 22, Al.

RVA: Alright, yeah. I can't hear you.

Regan: You get the Secret Service on the phone right away because there was no reason that the President would have gone to the hospital. The service wouldn't have let him go to the hospital.

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

-20-

RVA: Yeah.
? (Query for Block)
RVA: Secretary Block, he's not here.
Regan: Its saying why we didn't get the message... that
the President... the story that they're putting
out is that they had the message there but they
couldn't give it to you for security reasons.

ABC TV News Discussion of Succession/Reagan walked into hospital/
He is conscious

RVA: The operation has begun
? Who is doing the operation?
RVA: We don't know but the operation has begun. Okay
but that is not.
? Not for publication
RVA: That's right. I don't know resident surgeons.
Regan: Have they got a good man
RVA: George Washington University is tops. But apparently
the bullet is lodged in the lung from what I can
gather.
Frank: Larry Speakes is coming back.
Regan: Are we getting reports from the hospital?
HAIG: Yeah.
? You have got a line right through now to the military
aide.
RVA: Here's a message from Thatcher.

ABC TV - VP returning to WASHINGTON

? They're not airborne yet
? You sure

TV Says VP on ground in Austin, Texas

RVA: Letter from Mrs. Thatcher

TV Reports Brady's Condition Critical

Murphy: Theyve got more information than anybody else.

RVA: Oh God! Oh God! Oh God! (sigh) on

ABC Reports Age of Brady's child

RVA: 2 years old. He has a daughter

RVA: Yes, Marty.

ANDERSON: We've got to make a real special effort to make sure that whats said is factually true. Already we are getting conflicting stories; it's a 38 calibre, it's a 22 calibre. That's just the kind of thing that causes all kinds of trouble.

RVA: Oh well, we're not announcing anything.

ANDERSON: No, no. I know that. But I'm saying we ought to make a real very powerful effort to do that.

RVA: Right, establish the facts.

ANDERSON: We are already getting misinformation. And then the public gets suspicious and then they don't believe anything.

(Inaudible)

RVA: Let's pick it up here.

ANDERSON: (Inaudible)... it's a 38 calibre, now its a 22 calibre.

Regan: Dick, written declaration..

RVA: Augh ---

? Are you interested in some of the specifics?

RVA: Yes, yeah.

? Its not vital stuff but it is.....

RVA: Dave turn it down.

? It was a 22 calibre rifle model rifle RG-14, which handles long rifle

RVA: Rifle?

? Long rifle bullet.

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

-22-

ALL: Long rifle bullet
? But it was a pistol
? It was a revolver
? And we're checking that with the usual sources.
? What kind of a revolver or a pistol was it?
? It was a RG-14. What ever that means. It is a revolver that handles long rifle bullets. Now he refuses to sign any waiver (WHAT) He refuses to sign any waiver or to make any statement. And he's trying to get a hold of a lawyer in Texas. He stays, he's been staying in a Washington hotel. We've got a search warrant. So we can do that. In his pocket we found a card, psycharist card, and on it was stated 'call me at any time!'
?: It was just a card of a psycharist. I don't....
? There were two cards. One was in Texas, one was somewhere else
? No it was Colorado and Texas, Captain.
? Matter of fact one thing that is very important is where he is housed. The effort is made now to have the judge to to the jail rather than take him to the judge.. Because this is where the risk always is.
? Where is he now?
? Make sure he's protected.
? He's in the custody of the Washington D.C. police.
HAIG: Our we satisfied with our communications to the hospital to make sure we can preempt and get into that line. Do we have a signal specialist.
RVA: We have an open line. It's supposed to be maintained open.
HAIG: Alright lets just be sure that all our communication are hung.
RVA: There's supposed to be at least one line open.
HAIG: Lets have 2 lines open.
Regan: Are they arraigning him federally?
? He is going to be arraigned by the U.S. attorney and the thought is to put him into Quantico, that seems to be the most secure place.

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

-23-

HAIG: I was going to suggest you put him in federal custody.
RVA: Dick, close that door, will you?
? Oh, yes he'll be transferred. Its clearly, clearly
a Federal case.
? Federal case, yeah.
? There's a special statute that deals with attempted
assassination of the President.
? Right
? So its clearly federal jurisdiction. The idea was
that Quantico would be the most secure place.
HAIG: Now I talked to Jim Baker, follows, and I told Jim
that because of a potential confusion here. If
he had any messages for anybody, to please call
right here to the Sit Room and pass them through
me. And if its a press problem, Dave you would
handle it, if its a legal problem, legislative problem
we can handle it. Its not to be, it is awfully
important that they're all singing from the same
sheet of music and that's why we're here.
RVA: Trading has halted.

ABC Announcing President in Surgery/Bio data on
Hinkley

RVA: Defcon 5. No we decided not to
? The next one is going to be if we upgrade it.
RVA: No. Defcon 5.
? Oh. You decided not to do that. Good
RVA: Now they've got it. Its open.

ABC confirming President in Surgery)
(ABC Eyewitness Account of shooting)
(Cross conversation in Conference Room - inaudible)

RVA: He's, He's, the President is strong. He's going
to come through this alright.
? Oh, sure.

~~TOP SECRET~~

TOP SECRET

-24-

RVA: The thing about, the tragedy of Brady is unbelievable.
? What happened?
RVA: Well I mean they say he's in very, very critical
condition.

ABC on Brady's condition)
? This was a 22?
RVA: Long rifle
? A 22 long rifle
RVA: extra punch.
HAIG: From a revolver?
RVA: Yeah. With a long rifle shell
? Jim Bakers on the phone, sir. There is nothing
new to report, unless you want to talk to him.
? Can't you get it on this phone.
RVA: Dick, we're having problems. Put another line in.
I think that red one over there. See that red one.
? Yeah
RVA: No, thats secure. You don't want that.
? There really ought to be an official announcement
on exactly what happened put out on (inaudible)
Gergin: Are you up to speed?
Helene: Certainly....
RVA: Ed, this is Dick
Meese: Dick I think it would be a good idea to get Gergen
to keep the White House staff generally appraised.
Same thing on putting out. Just so that we keep
everybody in the know on what is going on. We're
not putting out anything that isn't on the air right
now.
RVA: Alright
Meese: First that I think you can tell that the President
was conscious and those type of things.
RVA: The President is again conscious?
Meese: No he was, you know, after.
RVA: He's still under? He's still under?
Meese: Yeah appears to be.

TOP SECRET

~~TOP SECRET~~

RVA: Okay

Meese: Nothing will come out until we get the first word after the operation.

RVA: We're all set here.

Meese: Will you kind of keep a log of what happens in case there more unusual occurs.

RVA: I'm doing it.

Meese: Very good. Alright, that'll be the nerve center, right there.

RVA: Right. Maybe we should call the White House staff together however.

Meese: I think its a good idea to have say Gergen or yourself, or someone

RVA: Yeah. We'll doit.

Meese: ... to keep people apprised of what's happening. We can't permit any rumors to get started.

RVA: I affirm.

Meese: And let them know we'll keep them apprised.

Meese: Alright thank you

RVA: Okay, we are going to stay. Keep this line open. Is that the idea?

Meese: Yeah, right.

DO: We have this one here, Sir.

RVA: Okay, Okay.

Meese: Thanks alot.

RVA: Alrighty

RVA: We should, are you all apprised. I mean everything is normal, all normal. You know as much as we do from the news reports. The President is being operated on. He walked in on his own.

? He's in surgery at this time.

RVA: He is. He was stable, He walked in. Didn't, apparently, said he didn't know he was hit. He had lost some blood. They replaced that blood. Then they took him into surgery.

HAIG: Why don't you come with me.

RVA: Okay I'll be back later.

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

-26-

RVA: Listen, I want that kept clear down there. Will you do that Bob. Just keep it clear.

HAIG: (Inaudible) ... he's turning this into a God Damm disaster.

RVA: Who has?

HAIG: He walked into the press room to hear me talk to Speakes.

RVA: Did he walk into here?

HAIG: Yeah. He's up there now.

RVA: Oh, Jesus Christ, Almighty, Almighty. Why is he doing that?

? They want to know who's running the government.

RVA: Oh well, just.

HAIG: We'll assemble them.

? They're coming back again -- the Secretary of State, the Secretary of State

HAIG: Ladies and Gentlemen: I just want to touch on a few matters associated with today's tragedy. First as you know we are in close touch with the Vice President and he is returning to Washington. We have in the Situation Room all of the officials of the cabinet, who should be here and ready at this time. We have informed our friends aboard of the situation of his condition as we know it. Stable. Now undergoing surgery. And there are absolutely no alert measures that are necessary at this time, or contemplated. Now, if you have some questions, I'll be happy to take.

? : Crisis management. Is that what you put into effect when you arrived?

HAIG: Crisis management, no.

? Who's making the decisions for the government right now? Whose making the decisions right now?

HAIG: Constitutionally, gentlemen, you have the President, the Vice President, and the Secretary of State, in that order. And should the President decide he wants to transfer the helm to the Vice President, he will do so.

? He has not done that?

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

-27-

HAIG: As of now I am in control, here in the White House, pending the return of the Vice President and in close touch with him. If something came up, I would check with him, of course.

? What are the extent of the President's injuries?

HAIG: Well as best we know, he is had one round enter his body in the left side, into the left lung and there is surgery underway to remove the round now. When the President entered surgery, he was conscious. And all his signs were stable and the situation is very clear.

? Did you talk to him before surgery?

HAIG: No I did not. Nor was it necessary. I was in close touch with both Mr. Meese and Mr. Baker throughout and have been.

?: Personally, when did you arrive at the White House?

HAIG: Very few moments after the incident. Very few moments after the incident.

? Did you know what is the condition of Mr. Brady?

HAIG: We understand that, ah. I just saw on television what you saw and it sounds serious.

? What is the reaction of the Soviets to this?

HAIG: I don't anticipate reaction. I think you've gotten all that you need.

? We'll you remain in charge here until the Vice President returns?

HAIG: We're staying right where we are until the situation clarifies itself.

? When is the Vice President expected?

HAIG: Later this afternoon.

? Do you know what time the operation began on the President?

HAIG: WasI here? Yes, I was here.

? No, no. What time was the operation.

HAIG: I don't know. It was shortly after the announcement that you heard on the radio....

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

-28-

? What time will the Vice President be back, sir?
HAIG: Early evening. I'm not going to make it a habit of saying that I will be back.
? Will you come back and talk to us soon.
HAIG: Thank you. If necessary, of course.
? Was this a conspiracy or an act by one person?
HAIG: We have no indication of anything like that now and we are not going to say a word on that subject until the situation clarifies itself.
? Do you anticipate from what you know of the President's condition that the Vice President will have to take the role of acting President?
HAIG: That's a fundamentally premature question. Thank you very much.

PRESS CONFERENCE ENDS

RVA: Well done
(Inaudible)
RVA: (TV chatter about Vice President returns) He's still 2 hours out, right.
? Yeah. That's what I....
RVA: Where are we going to bring him?
? Right here.
? Al, preliminary investigation by the FBI, no plot, no reason why the suspect shouldn't be in the area. They've conducted a background investigation of him in Lovett, Texas. He stayed at the Park Central Hotel here, which is one block from the Executive Office Bldg.
RVA: Where did he check in? Do you know?
? No, that's not....
RVA: Well.
? Well Daniel,
? Come on now, you guys got me nervous.
RVA: You better give him one too.
? Can we have SAC please?

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

-29-

CW: Have the crews who are normally on alert 24 hours a day move from the base to their planes. The nearest submarine is [redacted] minutes; 47 seconds off, which is about 2 minutes closer than normal. 3.3 (b)(1)

RVA: Nearest Soviet sub?

CW: Yeah. Not enough to worry about. They're in and out there all the time but it is a close approach.

RVA: [redacted] minutes, 47 seconds nearest Soviet sub. 3.3 (b)(1)

CW: And the bomber crews of the Strategic Air Command, they are always on the alert, certain numbers, those that are on alert now are moving alert in their quarter and on the post to their planes. Simply stated that's all -----

HAIG: That's based on the Soviet (unaudible) not on anything here.

CW: Well, based on the idea that until we know a little bit more about it, it is better to be in the plane that saves 3½-4 minutes than it is to stay in their quarters.

RVA: Is the NEACAP up

CW: huh?

RVA: Is the NEACAP up and running?

CW: No

HAIG: I think that what's really important is that we not suggest that because of this incident-----

CW: Nobody is suggesting anything. This is what I thought we ought to know is happening. But there is no public statements of any kind being issued at all. Specifically, what Kline told them not to issue any statement out of the NMCC. But it is essential I think to save 3 or 4 minutes if we can save 3 or 4 minutes.

CW: But it is not a permanent condition as soon as anything more is known, they can standdown again.

RVA: I just wonder if the NEACAP is at Andrews.

CW: It is. It's warmed up -- we can go.

HAIG: I sat up there, Cap. I'm not a liar. I said there had been no increased alert.

TOP SECRET

~~TOP SECRET~~

-30-

CW: I didn't know you were going up there, Al. I think if.....

HAIG: I had to because we had the question already started and we were going to be in a big flap.

CW: I think we could have done better if we concentrated on a specific statement to be handed out. When you're up there with questions, it is not anything you can control and -----

HAIG: Well, we had just discussed that at the table here and we said we were not going to increase alert.

CW: It may not be increasing the alert from a technical point of view but once you get the added information which I got about the one sub being closer than is normal but not closer than they've been before. Then it seemed prudent to save 3 or 4 minutes.

HAIG: Yeah, but I think we could have discussed it.

CW: Yeah, well you were not here. I didn't know that you were going to make any statement and I don't think it was a good idea to make a statement when you are with a question period. I think the best thing -----

HAIG: Well you have the right to say that when we discuss it. We did talk about it and everyone agreed that there wouldn't be an increased alert.

CW: I didn't know you were going up. I didn't have the information about the sub at that time. The stuff is coming in every 3 or 4 minutes.

HAIG: You're not telling me that you're on increased alert.

CW: Well, we have changed the condition to the extent I had indicated.

HAIG: Is that a Defcon increase?

CW: No, I don't think it is formally classified as such.

RVA: It's a change of degree, is it not? Its a change

CW: It's an increased degree of alertness.

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

-31-

RVA: Within Defcon 5 I presume.

CW: Yes.

? I think it is worthwhile classifying. I think that you have probably increased defcon for strategic forces to probably 4.

? They are already on 4, so don't say 5.

HAIG: Can't we say that?

? We ought to find out exactly.

CW: I don't think there's any advantage or any point in saying it.

HAIG: No the problem is that it will get out. And then it looks like-----

CW: If it gets out, it gets out but I mean if you issue the statement then in this kind of a climate you add enormously to the tensions.

HAIG: You're telling me. That's why I didn't want to do it.

CW: Well I think it is important to do it.

~~TOP SECRET~~