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THE REAGAN PRESIDENCY AFTER SIX YEARS

Eugene C. Lee
Moderator

Institute of Governmental Studies
University of California Berkeley

87-6

October, 1987

Institute of Governmental Studies
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Unedited transcript from Symposium tapes.

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**THE REAGAN PRESIDENCY
AFTER SIX YEARS**

On March 19, 1987 a panel of distinguished correspondents and observers of the national political scene met to reflect on and speculate about the Reagan Presidency--its dynamics, contributions, and prospects. The public symposium--sixth in an annual series extending back to 1981--took place on the evening following an important presidential press conference just as the Iran-Contra investigation was getting under way.

Excerpts from the symposium transcripts are printed here. Following a "Washington Week in Review" format, moderator Eugene C. Lee first questioned the panel, followed by questions from the audience. Approximately 500 Berkeley students, faculty and local citizens were in attendance.

The panel included:

Gerald Lubenow, San Francisco Bureau Chief, Newsweek
Charles McDowell, Washington Columnist, Richmond Times-Dispatch and
"Washington Week in Review"
Austin Ranney, Professor of Political Science, University of California,
Berkeley
Ellen Warren, National Political Correspondent, Knight-Ridder Newspapers
Eugene C. Lee (Moderator), Director, Institute of Governmental Studies,
University of California, Berkeley

Lee: Yesterday Senator Allan Simpson, ordinarily a nice guy with a sense of humor (at least that's the way it was reported) described the White House corps as sadistic. This morning on TV the national broadcasting commentator said Simpson had it wrong, the press corps was masochistic. Sadistic or masochistic, Charles. What is it?

McDowell: I don't think either, but I understand Senator Simpson. I admire him. He's a very steady sensible person. For instance, (I'm going to get to an answer), when President Reagan got in all this trouble and couldn't seem to perceive why he was in trouble, Allan Simpson not only went to the White House and talked with him for hours, but took other Republicans of all stripes to talk to the president.

He took Bob Strauss, former Democratic National chairman to the White House to talk to the president to try to explain to the president why he was in so much trouble. Simpson is a well motivated man, he is tremendously popular with the press. Helps the press a lot. He is offended by us yelling at the president at photo opportunities. The reason Sam Donaldson and other good reporters yell at the president at photo opportunities is to make the point that the president doesn't very often have press conferences. But Allan Simpson from Wyoming is just offended at that bellowing and yelling at the president. I don't think the fate of the U.S. hangs on it one way or the other.

Lee: Anybody else want to comment on the sadism or the masochism of the press corps?

Lubinow: I may add something if I may, Gene. For us neophytes in Washington

and for us academics, newsmen play a terrifically important role mediating between the politicians and us. Some of the best advice when I first got to Washington, long before this administration (the Lyndon Johnson Administration), and I was invited to go to a White House press conference and I was amazed, I thought that man was so impressive. He had all of these facts and figures at his finger tips, just right on command. I'm not making any contrast to any subsequent presidents, but it always disturbed me a little. As we all know he had something of a reputation for not always the truth to the absolute last degree. I asked one of Charlie's and Ellen's then-senior colleagues of the White House press corps, how can you tell when Johnson is telling the truth? He said it's very easy, he said he always gives signals. For example, when he's straightening his tie he's always telling the truth. Or when he's adjusting his handkerchief in his breast pocket he's always telling the truth. Or when he's hiking up his belt he's telling the truth. But when he begins to move his lips....

Lee: I think we've got a match for Nelson Polsby here tonight.

I had the good fortune to be sitting with Charles McDowell and Ellen Warren watching the press conference over in the journalism building, Northgate Hall, on a big, giant screen. Ellen, I'd like to ask you, what's the lead in tonight's press conference? What will we see in the headline tomorrow in our papers?

Warren: I can't predict what, (you're really putting me on the spot, Gene). I think that a big deal will be made out of the last parting remark that the president made about George Bush's involvement in the Iran-Contra thing. By the time it occurred I think those of us in the room weren't paying much attention, but apparently in response to a reporter's question he said that George Bush had not disapproved of the arms to Iran scenario, as had Weinburger and Schultz. I think that will be a big deal. You will probably see analysis that suggests that the president seemed fairly much in command and proved that he wasn't semi-comatose or something. That will probably be the general gist of the analysis that is forthcoming. If newspapers are allowing for another story it will probably be the truth squad will be out to say on this date President Reagan said X, but in fact last night he said Y. These contradictions remain.

Lee: Jerry?

Lubinow: Gene, if I could, I want to respond to both of those questions. It seems to me that was a press conference where it's very difficult to come up with a lead. Part of the reason is, I think, because the press corps in a lot of cases are masochists. Here is a situation where for months they have been saying, let us at him, and it's clear that what they want to get at him about. It should be clear to anyone, even this president's aides, what the key questions are going to be, and the whole preparation is aimed at turning those aside, and how can you diffuse this, and how can you rebuff that one? So all these press corps, the men and women, are carefully crafting these questions figuring, how can I pin him down on this thing, nail him on that thing? Actually nothing came out until there was this sort of throw away line at the end.

Lee: Charlie, do you agree with that?

McDowell: Roughly. I was interested in the throw away line. At the end of the press conference the president has made clear that he doesn't mind if everyone sort of gathers around and asks some more. He's good in those situations, or feels he is. Tonight, if you noticed, Helen Thomas of United Press used her prerogative to end the press conference after 31 minutes. As she ended it she said, "Thank you Mr. President, now I want to ask you something." And Helen's a nice lady, and that was a smart thing to do. The president did not retreat. I don't know what she asked, but what she got around to asking the Bush question--did he deny that. I believe that there's no great news in the answer, which was no, Bush didn't approve. The president has said that before, and Bush has said that before. But if I recognize the voice right, the person that seized on that and said "You say he didn't have anything to do with it?" or whatever the key question was, "Bush didn't even disapprove?" "No," said the president. "Thank you" said this voice. That voice is a right wing republican person, one of the few members of the Washington Press corps that wears a figurative sign on his head that says: I am a right wing republican and I particularly don't like George Bush. So to the degree that becomes a big news story tomorrow, it seems to me that we've been had.

Warren: It wouldn't be the first time, Charlie.

McDowell: No, we've been had by the same man before.

Lee: Charlie, though isn't this an example of the cacophony of sound that Allan Simpson was protesting against? Isn't this an example of bombarding the president with 20 voices at once?

McDowell: I think so. The president would say so. Presidential press conferences 20 years ago were people jumping up and waving their arms and yelling and rude, rarely asking followup questions. There was a discourtesy about the press conference. I suppose it's progress that that press conference tonight was orderly and quiet. No one stood and waved and yelled. People did ask followup questions (not great ones), but better than I've done. It was fairly deferential, hard questions about calling the president on things got asked. Not great, difficult, intellectual questions. I thought it was a fairly successful example of the American press conference and that the press did well, the president did well in expressing what he had to say. I think there will be some disappointment that he still doesn't seem to perceive exactly what kind of trouble he got into. But I'm not mocking that, I just would think that's the hard thing to put in the newspaper. It's hard to draw that out of that press conference. It seems to me that's the news world.

Lee: One of the issues that we've heard a lot about in the last few weeks, and we certainly heard some things about it tonight, concerns "Management Style." Austin, last week one of your Washington colleagues even has stated that "Management Style" is being grossly overplayed. It's not hands-off management that's the problem, it's the president not being interested. It's just kinder to criticize the president's management style, rather than

question his leadership ability. I wondered if tonight's conference illuminated that, or if you had a general comment on that.

Ranney: Well Gene, I think that the guy who thought up "Management Style" and fed it to John Tower or Brent Snowcroft was the same guy who three or four years ago thought up "revenue enhancement for tax increase." It conveys meaning. It doesn't land so harshly on the ears. That's what it means. It is a fact that has been well known about Ronald Reagan ever since his first term as Governor of California. He does not regard it, even if he were capable of doing it, as carrying in his mind every last detail of every legislative bit. If that's the kind of president that we're looking for, somebody who can do that, then his immediate predecessor was really skilled at doing that. In fact, we're even told that he carried the White House tennis schedule in his mind. He could tell you who was supposed to be on what court at what hour. Had he ever been asked a question about how do you account for the fact that Eisenstadt used to be on from 10-11, he could have answered that very knowledgeably.

Reagan has always had the idea that he ought to be kind of like a chairman of the board. That he sets the general course and gives the orders and it's his subordinates that are supposed to figure out how to get to that particular course. In that sense I think that even Steve Hess, who has watched a lot of presidents and has talked about them very knowledgeably, is quite correct--that management style doesn't quite get it and that the idea that somehow or other Reagan has suddenly become uninterested in what is going on in government. I can't believe that Steve meant that, and it certainly is not true.

Lee: Well earlier on I read a question to you from a previous evening here, in which I suggested that Reagan's management style, whatever that means, had served him quite well in Sacramento as governor. In his first term it had served him quite well, it appears. In fact they're talking now, the transition team, that's an interesting phrase being used now, in midterm; but the transition team is talking about drafting a plan that appears similar to the White House operated in Reagan's first term. Let me pose to the panel: Why did Reagan drop a strategy that he had used rather effectively for 8 years as governor and in his first term as president? What happened? Why did he abandon his management style?

McDowell: Jerry, do you have some thought on that?

Lubinow: I don't think he abandoned his management style or changed the management style. I think the problem is in terms of the people who were handling his management style. I think it's a mistake to separate leadership from management style. The two in a sense have very little to do with one another. Part of the reason Reagan got in such terrible trouble was that it was quite clear that what he as a leader wanted done through that period, and North and Poindexter were down there in the basement doing it. To say that Ronald Reagan had a management style is like saying that Jerry Brown had a management style. Jerry Brown didn't have a management style. Jerry Brown had Gray Davis. Gray Davis ran the state pretty well. I don't know what Jerry Brown would have done if he'd been elected governor, I mean

elected president. I think the breakdown for Reagan came when he lost the people around him who knew him well enough to go to him and tell him "no" on some things; who knew how he operated and how to manage his time and how to focus him, and that's what he lost.

McDowell: A tremendous change occurred at the White House when, as everybody in here knows, when Jim Baker and Don Regan decided independent of the president to change jobs. Tells you a whole lot. It tells you almost all you want to know--that they decided to change jobs. They're both very competent in very different ways and the president said that sounds like a pretty good idea. He knew the two guys but he didn't anticipate how different it was going to be, and Jerry and Austin between them have laid it out. In the first term, whatever you thought of it, the White House ran. It ran well. Maybe it ran a lot better than Democrats and liberals wanted it to run. It ran well because Jim Baker who had run a George Bush campaign was a sort of Rockefeller republican. Brought a bright staff of young people who had no conservative ideology into that White House and found there in surrounding offices, Ed Meese, and Judge Clark, who Californians know, and Mike Deaver, who Californians know, the ideas of Baker and the young staff were debated with Meese, Clark and Deaver. If Meese took a very conservative ideological position Deaver was there to conspire with Baker to say "yeah, but the president has a wider following than the right wing, let's move him around a little bit." Mrs. Reagan was involved in those. None of this stuff is new.

It was a very dynamic White House where the president heard a lot of options, and a lot of arguments and compromises were struck. People worked, the White House worked. When Baker was gone, and Meese and Clark and Deaver were all gone, Don Regan came in to run it like a business. The curse of politics is to have anyone come and run it like a business. Look for trouble the day that pyramid gets established. The president hasn't changed much. He was a leader, he reestablished the American Presidency. I quote Edward Kennedy and Mario Cuomo. They both said he had restored the presidency to pride and to an operating efficiency. He had. He hadn't changed much to this day. Everything around him has changed. He doesn't seem to perceive that. That's bad news.

Lee: Any of the rest of you want to comment on this one?

Warren: Just on Charlie's eloquent point, when Don Regan came in with his coterie of aides. I think it's telling, Charlie, that Regan's aides were known as "the mice" and they just scurried about as the boss told them to. Instead of people who were offering some serious input and challenging ideas there were some fairly weakly characters in their stead.

Ranney: Well the problem was some of the mice had ambitions to be rats, but you know, Gene, I do have something of substance to say even though the evidence is against it. There's been a lot of talk in the past--Charlie has emphasized it--I think it's terribly important that for a long time now we have had failed presidencies. You have to go back pretty far to say now there was a president that was pretty successful. Whether you liked it or not, and I suspect that a fair number of people in this room did not like it

very much, nevertheless Reagan was, by a lot of standards a successful president and by those same standards he is not now. I hope that one of the things that we'll get this evening is really what do we mean when we say a president is a success or a failure? Do we measure it by how much of his legislative program he got through--by a quarterly kind of score? Do we measure it by whether or not he got re-elected by a large margin? Do we measure it by whether he carried a lot of people in his party into office? Is a successful president one who has bad ideas and gets them into effect, or a president who has good ideas but doesn't get them into effect? We can think of a recent president that might qualify on that score as well. There's a lot of talk about whether presidents are successful or not and where I think we not only assume the same standards to answer this question, but different people that make this judgment have different standards when they talk about failure and success.

McDowell: I think it's a good point and you've laid out a whole lot of different ways we could go at it. I think it's a real interesting subject. I'm not going to launch back at you because I'd pick one of those contexts and I'd speak to it.

Lee: One of the issues that came up tonight of course was the whole Middle East conflict and what the president's underlying motivations were. We're fortunate tonight that Ellen Warren has covered the Middle East for the Knight-Ridder chain, what paper was it at the time?

Warren: The now defunct Chicago Daily News.

Lee: The Chicago Daily News stationed in Beirut. Can you put the whole Irangate and issue in some sort of perspective for us, Ellen, leaving out the whole of issue diverting funds to Nicaragua? Can any sense be made out of our attempt to influence the Iran-Iraq conflict, which I didn't get a sense tonight of what the president's real intentions were, but what are our strategic interests there anyway? The question was asked tonight, what about our relationships with other middle eastern nations, but no specific question was addressed to Israel (brought to light by this whole affair as well as exacerbating aspects of Pollard case). Can you just open up a discussion?

Warren: Is there anything else you would like to add to that question Gene?

McDowell: Your time is about up.

Warren: That sounds like a subject for an entire course here at the university.

Lee: People are getting credit here tonight.

Warren: It would take a long time to even address some of those issues, but I think in the American public's mind, critical to the whole Iran-Contra question is why were we selling arms to terrorists? We think of the Iranians as the people who held our people hostage for 400 some days so why were we selling them arms? Reagan tells us it's because he felt for the hostages and he doesn't address the question really except tangentially about

our geopolitical motives. He rightly believes America needs to establish, once it's possible, some sort of renewed relationship with moderates in Iran, if in fact it can be demonstrated that there are any, or that they want to talk to us. The whole thing was an abject disaster from the get-go, but the thing that is on the minds of Americans is why were we selling missiles to these people who in our minds are the Ayatollah and the picture of burning the American flag and holding our people hostage?

Lee: The issue that I got out of this conference tonight was that the president was suggesting that we had a goal or strategic interest in promoting some sort of balance that European nations, Asians, and so on had sold far more arms to Iraq and we were in a position of trying to restore some sort of balance.

Warren: In fact he made the point I think, that the amount of arms that we've ultimately sold to Iran for an undefined amount of money, which we don't know where it went, was not, he emphasized, enough to tip the balance in that war. That was the point he was making. In fact I think he was trying to suggest that that was not our motivation and he was at great pains again to talk about the little teeny weeny amount of arms we sold to Iran. I gather that among the truth squad that's been out after the president just incidentally has suggested that the amount of arms we ultimately did sell, in fact would not have fit in one cargo plane--a point that he has made over and over again in his televised speech. In all events I think that the Iran-Iraq conflict and the American position in that conflict was one that was way down in terms of the public's awareness on this issue. Do you disagree Jerry?

Lubinow: It seems to me that there was an element in the press conference tonight that goes to the question that Austin raised about what makes an effective leader. I think that what has made Reagan as effective as he has been, and he has been very effective whether you like what he has done or not, is that he has this image of the way the world should be and is absolutely convinced that that can happen and that he can make that happen. It seems to me that sometimes, whether you like it or not, you have to take him at his word. He said that what we were trying to do there was end this war so there would be no vanquished and no victor and everyone would return to their own territory. That we would reestablish in the Middle East with Iran, the kind of relationship we used to have before. Now, it seems to me if any president suggested that policy goal and that it might be obtainable, somehow that the people in his cabinet ought to tell him he's slightly loony.

Lee: There are two investigations going on, the Senate and the House as well as what the president tonight called the special prosecutor. Will any good come out of all of this?

Lubinow: Well, I think to the extent that it examines the whole process of how the NSC works. I think that a lot of good has already come out of it. Especially in terms of the country and how the White House is operating now. As Reagan says, now we've got a whole bunch of people taking notes who are going to know what's happened. Seriously, I think just in terms of the processes I think that things had gotten dangerously out of hand that and

that has already been set right. I also think that just in terms of the future that what we find out about how these things work will be of some benefit. I don't know if I can see what it will be now.

Lee: Charlie, what's going to be the impact on our political process though, of six months more of this daily drip drip?

McDowell: It's going to be 60 more days until we begin the televised hearings, and the hearings are going to be interesting because for better or worse Ollie North and Admiral Poindexter are national celebrities and this is going to have tremendous concentration by the country on what happens. One would hope (to short circuit a lot of words that I have in my head) we would see again that secrecy and evasion of congressional directive, and manipulation and covert action, and all those things, in a democracy lead to trouble nearly every time. We have to keep the balance and do as little of that as you have to, to keep your country alive. We're just going to see in those investigations what a real freelance outlaw operation was going on here, for whatever good purposes. I hope something else we're going to see--and I know it's going to happen--I just hope that people will appreciate it, when these committees begin, and incidentally what you hear is that congress is dragging it's feet and wants to make the president look bad, or the democrats are particularly dragging their feet because they want to string this out to and embarrass the president. Well my view of that is finally the people that ought to be in charge of political affairs are going to be back in charge, which is, politicians. I am so glad to see them coming that I almost sing. They'll go at these hearings fairly and deliberately and cleanly as Sam Irvin and Howard Baker did in the Watergate case, except that in this case they have Watergate to trade on and learn from. The Republican Deputy Chairman of the Senate investigating committee is Senator Rudman, a fairly conservative Republican from New Hampshire, who is connected to Gramm-Rudman. He says Gramm-Rudman is a bad idea whose time has come. It clears him with me. It shows he sees some help. He says as of the day before yesterday, as you sit in that investigating committee there is no way to know which are democrats and which are republicans if you didn't know them. The democrats have been exceedingly fair minded and cooperative. He says the House and the Senate have cooperated to a degree he couldn't believe. He says they're progressing with the thing with a fairness to the president that he sees not one smirch on. This is a friend and a follower of the president. When I see good politicians doing good work, and I see that a lot in Washington, and hear them mocked by the business people and college people (I'm a college professor's son), and everybody that thinks we could do it better, I like a politician that got elected by the people and goes up there and politics. Then I feel safe in my country and I like what I see.

Lee: Any of the rest of you want to follow up?

Ranney: What an interesting thought of what it would be like if Sam Donaldson were president of the U.S. (comments among panel)

Lee: Let me keep Charlie McDowell on the panel here. A few days ago the Los Angeles Times national poll (it's a respectable poll), reported that 40%

of the public believe that the president is in control of the government, 48% think he is losing control, 80% like Reagan personally and 52% approve of his job performance. Now what are we to make of all this, Charles?

McDowell: I don't feel that we're living in a time where it's terribly complicated to understand the president. I think there are a whole lot of things going on around us that are terribly complicated, like the most popular president in this century who lost control of the House and Senate long before this disaster. The president's agenda died in 1982-83. Now we've decided that he's failed. He's been failing in many ways. But to try to answer some of those. I can't answer them, but I can sort of look at the perspective. I don't think the president is much different than he was when he was very successful. At his work in 1981 he is a little older and remoter, but he started out very remote from detail, as people have explained. The president by 1985 was very _____ 1984 when he carried 49 states. Many people, often majorities, disapproved of the basic elements in his program. This man was a very popular president and not just because he's an actor. Because he was somebody that seemed authentic to people, the opposite of an actor. He stood up for what a lot of Americans think are basic American values. He stood up for them. They thought we had gotten kind of flimsy in the world, he built up defense. He gave everybody a tax cut. That doesn't make a lot of enemies. It probably earned us about 30 years of trouble, with the deficit, but whatever. The man is admired to this day, massive numbers of Americans, if we ask them and we all ask them, what do you think of the president? Well, I like the president alright. Well, where do you stand you stand on his Nicaragua policy? Well, I'm against that. How do you think he did in the Iran thing? Well, he did terrible. But you like him and you trust him? I sure do. The people want to like him, they like what he has stood for. As Mario Cuomo said, when he was shot they were proud of him, when he went to the hospital with cancer they were proud of him. Those are not just corny things to Americans. The man has spirit, he gets across a sense of some sort of values in this country. He is not sophisticated, he is not by any means the ideal president, but after Jack Kennedy's death trace the presidents through. The disasters we've had with presidents, the disappointments and dismay. The man restored the presidency and he restored America's pride. We can argue about it but the place worked over there, until this very latest episode. If you say, I'll get off of this, it isn't very often we feel stuff about it, people don't want any more harm to come to this man if they can help it. If it turned out that he did know about the Iran arms deal and forgot about it or whatever he did, if it turned out that he obstructed justice I don't think the 3 members of congress would move to impeach him. They don't want to bother him. They want him to do his work, they're reassured he's got Howard Baker and a bunch of bright people in there and they want to go easy on this old guy. And that's sort of the mood where I work, maybe y'all are meaner.

Lee: Austin, you're a student of public opinion, what does this seeming paradox mean to you? Against the policies, but like the performance, like the guy and so on?

Ranney: Well Gene, if you start with the presumption that the American people, are like all of us in this room and all of our students and

colleagues, always logical and consistent and every belief always fits with everything else....

Lee: Sounds like Berkeley to me.

Ramney: ...then it's truly appalling that those uneducated slobs out there are having the benefit of our class system. (inaudible) On the other hand, one of the advantages of having been teaching college for some 80 or 90 years is that all of my sense of shock and wonder and horror at people having inconsistent views about some things have gone by the board. I remember when I started out (I won't identify the year), I was all burned up about the great question in political theory about the logical inconsistency between majority rule and minority right. You could have one or you could have the other, but you couldn't have both. Absolutely irresistible logic, eloquently argued, beautifully illustrated and totally unbelievably among my students.

Their reply to my assertion: You can't believe those things because they're logically inconsistent, was, well, we do. I finally came to believe that. I think that there are so many other illustrations of this. The American people--all kinds of public opinion polls, the best possible conducted opinion polls, that CBS-Times poll is one of the best--will tell you that government is too big, that government spends too much money, that we need to cut back on the money that the government is spending. Well, should we cut back on the money on education? Oh no, we should spend more on that. Well, should we cut back money on aid to the poor? Oh no, the poor deserve help. Well, what about the elderly? No, we need a lot of that. What about building roads and bridges? No, we've got to keep our roads and bridges up. So everybody is strongly in favor of small government and not cutting programs. I think that another noted conservative thinker, George Will, had the final word in this. Charlie may remember when four or five years ago the American Farmers came to Washington and parked their damned tractors on the mall and did about \$150,000 worth of damage to that beautiful stretch of greenery. George Will went around and talked to them. Why were they there? They were there to protest the intrusion of government into their affairs and telling them how much they could grow, whether or not they could sell to the Soviet Union. It was just awful. George says you must certainly be against all these government subsidies and buying the crops that you can't sell? Oh no, if you want to save the family farm of this country you've got to have parity and even more support than we have now. It's terrible the way the government is supporting the farmers. So Will decided, and I think it's absolutely true, he said it's just as liberals are very free with other people's money so can conservatives be so conservative with other people's benefits. That is one level of the term very illogical.

But you know in another way maybe it's quite logical in that if the major premise is whatever is good for me (the General Motors premise), is good for the country. Then it's possible to like Ronald Reagan and not like not any of the policies that he stands for. The most important thing that a president does is give this feeling of confidence, of upbeatness, of decency. Maybe that's more important than most of the specific policies.

Lee: Austin, you're remarks about our propensity to like individual spending

items but to like reduced taxes leads me to the president's lead in tonight. He dragged out that old chestnut of the balanced budget. Has this got any life, gentlemen and ladies?

All: No.

Ranney: Gene, if you would explain what a balanced budget is....

Lee: Why does it continue to have an appeal for the president? This is rhetoric, Ellen?

Warren: It's something we can all understand, something we as individuals aspire to--not spending more money than we've got. It's beautifully simple and indeed, I was just looking at another poll before we came over here, the American public, I think, is concerned about the budget deficit. It said that 23% of the people are really concerned about the budget. If Reagan says in this amorphous and congenial way, let's do something about it, people say whew, glad he's worried about it, we're going to do something about it. Somehow you have this feeling that okay, so good, we're working on it. The Reagan Administration is the chief responsible party for the record deficit that we've got. There's no way that the president can deny that though he doesn't bring it up too often.

Lubinow: There are lots of ways he can deny it. He does all the time.

Warren: The problem is the facts, however.

Lubinow: (garbled)

Lee: I want to shift gears to what many might think is frivolous, and try to treat this next question in a quite serious institutional vein, if I may. I want to start out by reading a quote about the first lady: "Nancy Davis Reagan is not the usual politician's wife anymore than her husband is the usual politician. Nancy Reagan shows a similar disinclination to be ridiculed and an equal passion for detail. (I'm jumping around on this quote). Nancy is the dominating person in the Reagan household and in Reagan's life. She runs the household with an iron hand. She doesn't hesitate to inform the president on an issue of great importance to her, particularly when her husband is under attack. Telephone calls like these give rise to the notion that Nancy runs more than the household. 'Jesus Christ, who's running the country?' said one prominent Republican at an out of town session interrupted twice by telephone calls from the first lady." The comment reflects a misunderstanding not so much about Nancy Reagan's influence, but about her concern. She tries to run Ronald Reagan, not the nation. The give and take of daily politics is more difficult for her than for the president. She tends to take any criticism personally. I don't like it when anybody says anything about Ronnie, she declares. Nancy Reagan's ire is also directed at staff members who she does not think are representing him in a good enough light. I've changed this quote slightly because it's from a book written by Lou Cannon in 1969. Instead of using the word "governor," I used the word "president." What I want to try to draw our panel out on this is has anything changed, but more importantly, what lessons

can we learn from this experience not only about this presidency but about the role of the first lady in the White House? Jerry, do you want to start on that?

Lubinow: Let's see, there were a number of people who thought that, who were talking before all this started, that we might see some arms control because Reagan was concerned about his place in history. I think what we're seeing is this effort to shore up Ronnie because Nancy is concerned about her place in history. I think that she hasn't changed in the sense that she has always been terribly concerned about him and about his image and how he is seen and I don't think that she gets involved in particular policy questions. She has always been very concerned about how he is perceived and is treated by people, and particularly in terms of campaigning and how his time is used and think that's become more true as he has gotten older and has less energy. Also a lot of these things--the quote about Reagan saying to her, get off my goddamned back, that very same quote I heard when she was said to have gotten after him about something during the campaign in 1976. So a lot of these things are recurring themes. I don't think though that I tend to be a pragmatist about this. I'm less concerned about where the advice comes from than how good it is. It seems to me in getting rid of Don Regan and cleaning that out there was pretty good advice.

Lee: Charlie what about the role of the first lady?

McDowell: I think Jerry said it all right there at the end. I think it matters that the president get good advice. There wasn't going to be any progress made about restoring this administration to any kind of viability until the president was willing to change the staff radically. He was advised by every close friend of California "Change the staff radically." That means get rid of Don Regan. Rebuild the whole thing, bring in another kind of person. The Washington establishment and everybody talked to him and they couldn't get the job done. Mrs. Reagan got the job done. I say, great. A lot of Nancy Reagan's running the country is merely a turning on sexism that is not too wholesome. The teasing and battering of president's wives "they're trying to run the country" well, they aren't really running the country but they sort of are involved in some sort of partnership with the guy or woman who is doing it. I'm not shocked at it at all. I'm not a Mrs. Reagan fan but I thought her getting the White House off the dime and making it possible to bring in Howard Baker and a new staff and Carlucci and Judge Webster, we've got a pretty good establishment at the White House these days. If she's responsible for that let's give her a small medal and move along!

Lee: Any more comments on that one?

Warren: I don't think there is anything wrong with standing by your man. It's seems to me that's the biggest charge that's been leveled against her. She isn't trying to negotiate a new arms control treaty. Indeed Charlie's right, she did get the job done. I don't envy Howard Baker. By all accounts Nancy Reagan is one of the biggest nags in the country. I guess that Mike Deaver was considered successful because he was able to listen to her 10 or 12 phone calls a day. I can't think of anybody I would less like to talk to

10 or 12 times a day. To the extent that she stood behind her husband and tried to influence him in a direction she thought was beneficial to him, she got a bit of a bum rap. It is a bum turn on sexism, Charlie. Thank you for pointing it out.

Lee: Interesting. We've got only a few minutes left before we turn the meeting over to you and I want to shift gears to the future for a minute. Let's start out with Austin, and ask the whole panel to comment on this. Sunday's Atlanta Journal reported on a poll and concluded with respect to Super Tuesday, March 8th, 1988, the 12-state primary in the south, some political surprises will be in store for the candidates and political pros of both parties. For example, Georgia Senator Sam Nunn was the choice of only 11% of southern Democrats, evangelist Pat Robertson 9% of southern Republicans. On the other hand, and still quoting the Atlanta Journal, Bill Bradley made an unexpectedly strong showing, as did Howard Baker, leading the reporter to suggest that the new White House chief of staff changed his mind about standing as a candidate. Austin, will you start our discussion, can anything be made of all early maneuvering ?

Ranney: I think there is a technical point that has to be made first, (I'm always more comfortable with those anyway). The point is that polls as predictors are not very reliable the further away you get from the event, that's point one. Two is, they are notoriously much less reliable as predictors of what people are going to do in primary elections than they are of what people are going to do in general elections. Once the Republican is running against the Democrat polls can forecast the outcome accurately nine times out of ten, or even better. Their record at forecasting the winners, particularly close primary elections where there are a lot of candidates running, are less than 50-50. There is a good reason for that, again a technical point but it's very basic. Primary elections, including the elections that are going to take place on Super Duper Tuesday, (the southern primary, in effect in March the year ahead), are going to be low turnout elections. You can take as kind a rule of thumb that of the people who are going to vote in November 1988 in all of those states, only about half of those are going to vote in those primaries. That is very unpredictable, much more than a general elections.

People, we know from many studies, make up their minds if they're going to vote in a primary or decide that they're not going to bother to vote in a primary, the morning of the election itself. It's a very wild and random kind of thing. So the prediction that some real surprises are likely to come out of Super Duper Tuesday is correct, but it's not a surprise that there are going to be surprises coming out of that. The same thing applies to everything else as well. It's quite possible that after the southern primaries that Jessie Jackson will have more delegates by a fair margin than any other candidate, yet I think I have to say that it is unlikely that Jessie Jackson will be the party's next nominee. Sam Nunn might do very well, or he might not enter at all. Certainly that kind of poll is very shaky evidence to base that kind of guesswork on, I think.

Lee: Charlie, will Howard Baker remain in the running?

McDowell: I don't know what will happen to Howard Baker, but what we're seeing is the return of the ghost that stalks the news business. We're seeing the famous deadlock convention stalking among us again. What you see really is, Bush is fading and Dole can't quite make and Kemp didn't catch on, it's going to be a deadlock convention and all these people are suddenly going to nominate Howard Baker. All that is very marvelous. Because I'm very old I covered the two national conventions in 1952 and actually saw a contested convention. The Democrats went 3 ballots and found Adlai Stevenson. Republicans had a one ballot convention and it was very close and contested. It hasn't happened since. The idea of a deadlocked convention really has to remind me that there still is a convention, it's a token thing. I do not see how you can get to be president of the U.S. without getting into the primaries very early, and become established. I can't imagine a deadlocked convention. People visualize these delegates we used to send from counties and cities, farmers and labor people, and they all went to a convention. Some were for somebody and some were for somebody else. We don't send them there anymore even. We have a string of primaries in which the candidates take control of the delegates they won. We send the candidates' people to the convention. We don't send the party to the convention. We're living with a dream. We don't even have those things anymore. We're doing it a pretty dumb way in my opinion. But, we're doing it. I cannot imagine that Howard Baker, who would make a superb candidate, I can't see how he could ever get the nomination at all. Is that what you asked me?

Warren: NO!

Lee: Any one else want to comment on this? I want to ask you to take out your pencils for one minute and I want you to put down your prediction of the tickets for both parties, that means four names. You've got 30 seconds. (after some time) I don't know which panelist did which ballot, if I did know I promise not to tell, but the tickets I have: A Baker/Dole ticket, Hart/Dukakis ticket, (same again), Dole/Baker, Baker/Dole. I thought we might get a Dole/Dole ticket, but...we have a Dole/Deukmejian ticket, a Biden/Nunn ticket, Cuomo/Nunn ticket, a Bush/Simpson ticket. If we had innumerable hours and energy we would do a poll of the audience. But we haven't. What I'm going to ask you now is to let me recognize you for questions either to one or all of the panelists.

Aud: (to CM) Does Jack Kemp have widespread appeal in the South?

McDowell: My impression from looking at polls and talking to people is, no. The most interesting thing about the Kemp candidacy is it doesn't have widespread support anywhere. That would be contrary to what I would have expected. I thought that a man that stands for Reaganism, who is a pretty good speaker and active and enthusiastic, had the qualities I thought were required to get people at least interested. It is a remarkable disappointment to himself and others so far. I don't hear much talk, especially in the South, about Kemp. It's just a candidacy that isn't moving.

Aud: How can the panel analyze 6 years of the Reagan presidency without

paying any attention to the military budget of this nation and the fact that it has gone completely out of balance and we're financing it by selling big chunks of the people from overseas? If you look over here and we see in Pittsburg that Koreans own our steel capacity, if you look in Fremont you see the Japanese own our automobile capacity, everywhere we're selling the country to finance this budget. At the same time we've made no overtures for peace, and Gorbachev has picked that all up to the point where Europeans see him as the hope for peace, and I personally do too.

Lubinow: Did anybody hear the question?

Lee: Jerry will you try to sort that one out? There are about three questions really, the military budget, the foreign ownership of American assets, and Gorbachev.

Ranney: I think the question discusses the Reagan presidency without mentioning those things and I think the answer is obviously, it's easy.

Lee: Anybody on the panel want to take a shot on one of the issues?

Lubinow: I think Ellen referred to the problems with the defense budget, at least indirectly when she talked about Reagan being responsible for this huge deficit we've got. It certainly isn't coming about because of the welfare expenditures. I think that there is a relationship, again this goes with the question Austin raised about what makes a terrific leader, here Reagan has put forth his notion about Star Wars, which at the point that he mentioned it his chief scientific advisors had very little idea of what he was talking about. I'm not sure he had any great idea of what he was talking about. What he's managed to do in the process is to channel huge sums of money into a program that most people don't think makes any sense, which at the same time is drawing research resources away from commercial uses, and I think harming the economy of the country. For some reason that doesn't seem to get a lot of attention.

Ranney: In part of the answer to it of course is, you have to look at many aspects of the country. You have to look not only at the president and the people who elected and re-elected him, the 58% of the vote; you also have to look at the congress, which by majority votes made up of members of both parties. Over a period of six years it has been voting for low taxes, tax reform, revenue neutral while also voting for large defense expenditures, although in fact the proportion of defense expenditures of the whole budget has come down quite radically in the last 2 or 3 years from what was the first couple of years. (I think most of the people in this room, including me, would think not far enough.) In the end I believe the greatest political theorist in this country has summed it up in one sentence, and I think Charlie also believes because I've heard him quote it, namely, we have met the enemy and they are us. We the American people are the ones who elected Ronald Reagan. We're the ones that elected those congressmen. Any time we've decided that by God we want defense cut 3/4 or 2/3 or dump all of our arms in the ocean or to conclude in agreement with the Soviet Union and insist that our guys will do it, they'll do it. Ultimately, we have the whip hand over them. The fact is, on that question, as on a lot of others, we are

divided. We want lots of things, some of the things are incompatible with some of the other things and as long as that continues to be the case we are going to move forward not as an airplane, or an automobile or any else that moves forward, but crabwise or maybe like a raft in a stream bumping up against all sorts of things, and hopefully like most people in a raft we won't sink. For sure our feet are going to continue to get very wet indeed, almost all the way up to our knees, but I repeat, if there is a fault and a mistake here, and I believe there is, I think that many of us in this room share that fault as much as Nancy's husband.

Aud: Could the panel comment on the idea that John Locke argued the prerogative of the sovereign in a time of national danger, and Machiavelli argued a separation between public responsibility and public morality and private morality? Is it really wise for this country to have the NSC exposed to extent that it probably will be? Regardless of what you think of the CIA, I think that you should have one. It seems really wise. Obviously we need a free press, but shouldn't there be some restraint on the press' ability to break cases?

McDowell: I was kind of listening happily until the end, some restraint on the press? No, I don't see any particular need for restraint on the press. I wish we were better at what we do and weren't snide and things like that. I would just try to reassure the questioner and I ain't going to patronize the questioner because he seems to know what he's talking about. I know of no proposition to do anything to the CIA. It's appropriations continue to go up, it's now under good management. The oversight function, the Republicans in congress have shown a particular attention to that it seems to me and I would find that very encouraging. I think that when they get the oversight matter working over at the CIA and the new management there that we're going to have a Central Intelligence Agency that's been quite good. We haven't exposed their covert stuff much that I know of. The National Security Council--one thing that everybody seems to agree on is that you ought to have one and it ought not to be involved in operations. It ought to be involved in advising people of things. We're on the way with Carlucci absolutely accepting the Tower report and the president indeed accepting it and we're on the track there. So if you'll be patient with us ole press who aren't near as good at uncovering secrets as you think, I think we're on a track that shouldn't upset you much. In terms of the CIA and NSC.

Lee: Ellen, would you like to add to that?

Warren: Charlie, I'm tired of agreeing with you all night here, but indeed I think you're right. I can't think of one revelation in this Iran-Contra mess that was damaging to the national security of the country that can be attributed to the press. I think if there's been damage to our country's national security it wasn't from revelation by the press about what the NSC or CIA was up to. I kind of like being snide Charlie, myself.

Aud: Will the present crises generate more openness, possibly more congressional involvement in foreign affairs, or will the secrets which seem to have dominated the past three years in foreign affairs continue?

Warren: It would be refreshing indeed to think that there would be more openness. I tend to doubt it. I think there may be more, congress may indeed be kept better apprised of what's going on than they have been heretofore. Whether this translates into some sort of sunshine government more so than we've already seen, I would tend to doubt. The lessons of Watergate are such that I would believe that I would believe that, no, it's not going to.

Lee: There was a premise in the question that things are more open 20 years ago, is that a fair statement? Austin? Is that a fair judgement of history?

Ranney: Twenty years ago? That was 1968. I want to tell you they were not more open then.

Aud: Historical perspective, the press is being criticized as being soft on Reagan. What has Reagan done to dictate to the press that Jimmy Carter didn't do? Can you possibly give some advice to future presidents or future political leaders on the kind of relationship or to manipulate the press? Get my point?

Ranney: I think it appropriate that an academic and not a journalist comment on that first. I think that they did it because they had the best game for dealing with the press than any administration in my memory, maybe any administration ever. I'll say wherein I think that's true in a minute, and I think that any future administration, whether it's run by any of these people that we see up at the board is going to take many leaves out of that book. What did they do? They began by very carefully analyzing the bad relations that previous administrations had gotten into with the press, very soon after the so called honeymoon period was over. We all remember what happened to Jimmy Carter. We all remember what happened to Jerry Ford. The man who on Monday restored the government's decency, and sense of morals, on Wednesday was the klutz that kept hitting his head on top of airplane doors. No need to say anything about Lyndon Johnson or Richard Nixon. We kind of forget now that we have sanctified him, that Jack Kennedy got a very rough go with the press too, during most of the time that he was in office. And so on. I think Jim Baker, (Charlie's already talked about what a great chief of staff he was) and his principal assistant, another terrific person in my opinion, David Gergin, started off with the assumption that the great mistake that's involved here is to accept that this is a permanently, unavoidably adversarial situation. Those guys are out to ruin you and you're out to tell them practically nothing so that nobody will buy their newspapers, watch their television program. That's a mistake. They're there to stay. Furthermore, you have to deal with them. You have to understand things from their points of view. They're trying to get stories, accurate stories. Be cooperative with them, help them out. Give them all the information, go out of your way and make them your friends, not your enemies. I think, by and large, that worked pretty successfully. Charlie has emphasized the difference between Jim Baker and Don Regan. An even more dramatic difference was the difference between David Gergin and Pat Buchanan. Had the same set of facts emerged, with that team maybe that policy wouldn't have been followed in the first place. Even if it had been, it would have been handled in a substantially different way, the damage control would have been a lot

better right from the beginning, because stonewalling and giving the president false information, which he couldn't remember anyway, was not the right way to handle this. I don't believe that Baker-Gergin team would do it. I think any future administration is going to say what we've got to have is that Baker-Gergin relationship with the press. God knows we don't want that Regan-Buchanan or Jordan-Jody Powell relationship, to say nothing of what it was like under Nixon or Lyndon Johnson.

Aud: (inaudible) The terrorist nature of the Contras is seldom referred to in the mainstream press. In an uproar about selling arms in Iran, we're doing the same thing in Nicaragua. The human rights are admitted to or acknowledged by groups like Amnesty International.

Lee: Would you agree there is an inconsistency in the treatment of the Contras as terrorists vs. the terrorists in Iran or the Middle East?

Lubinow: I think the press has dealt with the inadequacies of the Contras to some extent. The problem, I think, is a question of degree. Clearly the news that is going out each day deals with funding for the Contras, deals with all sorts of problems. The press is simply not going mention in each story when they refer to the Contras that they are a terrorist group or that they have been accused of terrorism. That is not going to happen. I don't think that that happens with groups in the Middle East.

Warren: To that point, one of the papers that I work for is the Miami Herald, which has been writing stories just of the nature you described absolutely years before anybody had heard of the Contras). Pointing out the failings of the Contras, (1) I don't think your criticism as premised is universally acceptable, and (2) I recall just seeing an absolutely chilling story in the New York Times that in fact, described in some brutal and horrifying detail some of those atrocities. While indeed I don't think that some newspapers are covering the Contras to an extent that you would like, to charge the American media with ignoring atrocities by the Contras is just not true.

Aud: One of the underlying premises is that in some ways the press has been superficial in it's coverage and (inaudible)--we're thinking about the coverage of presidents. I'm wondering to what extent that may contribute to our perception of what has been said about the string of failed presidents. So when we talk about Reagan and what you were saying earlier, the lead from the press conference is that he gave this image of being a leader of forceful control. Yet we know for 6 years we have had an emperor with no clothes, yet that's the lead. You talk about Jimmy Carter, you talk about someone whom I don't particularly think was great. We talk about the tennis court reservations, we don't talk about the remarkable achievement of Camp David. With Jerry Ford you talked about him bumping his head. I'm wondering to what extent one do you agree with the premise that even on our wonderful public television that coverage is superficial, and to what extent that's responsible for this inconsistent perception of the presidents that is cited in the polls.

Lee: Charlie, you can take that one on.

McDowell: News coverage by definition is going to be superficial for you sometimes. Getting the damned stuff out everyday. I'm not going to answer very well I fear, but I would point out that first of all most of the communication that goes on really is television doing all kinds of things to us, but it goes to that which can be pictured. There is merit in what you say. What troubles me is, we talk in short hand. I think it's perfectly fair to describe a thing like Jerry Ford as the one who bumps his head. It's a metaphor for a whole situation that I think we all understand. I don't remember a time in my life thinking of Jerry Ford as the one to bump his head all the time. I think there is a tremendous tragedy in what a complex man he was, and I think you have plenty of newspapers in this neighborhood. (inaudible) Have a look at some that dealt very thoughtfully throughout his term. I don't feel that superficial is the answer or a very good symptom of why Ronald Reagan is fascinating. It is that he won't simplify. You said in your own phrase, you said it well, here's a guy who turns out to be the emperor with no clothes all along. The hell he didn't. The emperor did very well for four years with the right people in place. We're not having a contest about how was he personally, he was the leader in charge of the place. It ran well for four years. It began to run down. The American people began to find some fault with it. I don't think anyone said it was as simple as he wasn't competent and we just found out. The thing was, he was competent. Things changed and he was less competent. He changed, and a lot of people changed. That would be my view. It doesn't make you happy.

Aud: I'm very concerned with the fact that we seemed to discover his flaws when the polls went down. I'm wondering how free the free press is. I wonder if it's possible that you're looking over your shoulder at how popular he is and the story gets tailored a little bit based on his approval rating. That's what concerns me.

Lubinow: Ellen, you've flown a long way to get beat up here.

Warren: It concerns me too, because I think there's at least a small element of truth to what you say. I know that early on in the Reagan presidency I wrote stories after every press conference about "Well, he said X, but it's not true," "he said Y, that's not true either." You would write these stories and boy would you get nasty letters. Why are you beating up on this guy? Why don't you leave him alone? You're just out to get him, just like you did Carter, and so on. While I like to think that I'm just reporting the news, I suppose there is a certain effect. I write truth squad stories. Fewer and fewer newspapers use them because it becomes old news. It now becomes fact that the president always bends the truth at his news conferences. It's not even news anymore when he mistakes the truth. There is that element too. When he's down it does become more acceptable to point out the fact that "hey, this guy doesn't tell the truth" or his recollection of the truth is grossly faulty. Indeed, I fear that it is more acceptable today to point out what we have known all along. That is, that the guy is remote, disengaged, dozes off, and doesn't always pay attention. It's easier to get people to tell you that. I got congressmen on the phone last week telling me "I was in a meeting with him two weeks ago and he didn't

know what the hell I was talking about." That congressman would not have said that to me a month ago or two months ago because it really wasn't acceptable. So that enters into reporting too. So it's not just there's blood in the water, let's really attack. It's an element.

Aud: How can presidents be made accountable to the public at large? In England the prime minister has to appear before the Parliament once a week to undergo a barrage of hostile questions from the members of Parliament. Here we have the president in before these periodic press conferences. Should we have mandatory monthly press conferences? Would that help?

McDowell: I would like to see more press conferences. That is a poor substitute for whatever that day is in England when the Prime Minister has to face the opposition and answer hard questions. We went a different route when Madison and Jefferson and some of those people had a different thing in mind, they had a much stronger national leader in mind. A person elected by a national majority of people and we went at it a different way. I think we've gotten enough strong leader presidents our way to justify our system. Although the British system has advantages, I'm not sure I wouldn't prefer ours for the independent strong presidency. My support for all that was founded on half a lifetime of thinking there was a good deal of accountability in political parties. As I see political parties withering and becoming sort of staff offices for consultants and see the two party system that became a cliché of glory in my youth, withering in the face of this de-alignment from political parties, I'm more worried about your question than I've ever been before. It's a good question and we better look at it. I doubt that we can revive the party system in the age of television that somehow was one of our checks. I not satisfied with it.

Ranney: Like everything that Charles says, 99% correct. The remaining part is that there is a price to be paid for having strong political parties as you have in Great Britain. A price that may not be worth paying. The price is this: Mrs. Thatcher appears not one day a week, it's three days a week--Monday, Tuesday, Thursday--for an hour in a period called question time, and she takes hostile questions not only from the Labor Party, the Liberal Party, and the Social Democratic Party, but from her own back benchers as well. It's really Parliament against the Prime Minister. When that hour is over she then, on that same day or the next or a week later, will say: All right Parliament you've had your fun. Now you've asked me these questions I want you to pass this piece of legislation, and they always do. Because every member of her party always votes for whatever the party-endorsed piece of legislation is. You may have noticed that one or two, or twenty or fifty occasions when Ronald Reagan (like any other president of the U.S.) tells his fellow party members of the congress: okay, you've had your fun, I want you to go pass this legislation that I'm telling you to pass. They say, maybe we will and maybe we won't. Lots of times they don't. If you're going to have what you have in England you've got to have everything, but you can't just buy a little part of it and not get the rest of the package. You've got to buy the whole thing, responsible meaningful parties, which by definition, Charlie, I think we have to accept this, disciplined parties that follow what the leader says. Even often when the leader is wrong. The only recourse is not to say, well Maggie, we're with you this one

and but not on that one. The only recourse they have is when something comes along that they simply can not stand anymore, they throw her out of office. And that happens to a Prime Minister once every thirty years or so. You may want to think about if that is what you would like in this country.

Aud: I submit a scenario that I'm not wild about, but is one worth thinking about--what will be the perception of the world when Gorbachev in the coming fall is awarded the Nobel Peace Prize?

Ranney: Well it's too bad that Boris Pasternak won't be there to see it. It just raises the question, if he is awarded it, will he be allowed to go and collect it?

Aud: If the election is going to be held, and let's say it's a Democrat and a Republican running, the economy is stable and you had to make odds, would each one of you give us the odds on whether(inaudible) a Democrat or a Republican?

McDowell: I wouldn't stray very far from 50-50 at all. I do not think the country is political-party connected anymore. Let's assume the Reagan Administration (which I doubt) will be described as a failure, disgrace and all that. I do not think that any longer means that the Democrats have a nice easy ride. The party identification in this country, the strength of party feeling is not sufficient, that I think you get far off 50-50 in the presidency in the near future.

Ranney: I just thought of a terrific way to test that out and to really answer your question instead of weaseling about the way you did. All we need is a modest little change in the way we elect our president. Nothing quite as drastic as the item (inaudible) as the balanced budget amendment. Let's not tell people and let them know the names of the presidential candidates at all. Let's just say that when you vote next November you vote for the Republican candidate--we won't tell you who that is--the Democratic candidate, you won't know who that is. Under those circumstances my guess would be that the Democrat would win 53% to 47%.

Aud: I prefer to focus a little bit more on the point about the mainstream president. As particularly addressed at the Washington press conference, but again (inaudible) the notion that there's a kind of intention among politicians and the press that certain kinds of issues are not emphasized. One, is the international court of justice decision that ruled on every point against the U.S. on Central America and that there is open on Contra brutality and less questioning of the possibility that the Sandanistas may not be all that bad. The facts seem to justify. Also domestically, on the issue of what might euphemistically be termed: The New McCarthyism. Including in the Bay Area numerous direct physical assaults by the police on members of the press. If you don't find the issue of domestic political oppression or foreign policy or trade in a balanced way there is a kind of (inaudible) what happened? Why aren't they raised?

Lee: What shapes your coverage (I guess) is the question.

Warren: I don't accept the questioner's premise entirely. To reduce it to it's absurdity, why isn't there enough good news in the paper, why isn't there enough bad news, why isn't there more news that I agree with, why is there more news I disagree with? It's not as clear cut as we would like how a story becomes a story; who makes these decisions. It's a whole variety of factors. It's different at a news weekly than it is at a news daily. It's different in San Francisco than it is in Detroit. This is not a very responsive answer to your question but it's not an easy question to answer. The international court of justice story, why wasn't that covered very extensively? Because the international court of justice has no effect whatever, I suppose is one answer. Why don't we cover the UN more? Why don't we cover the Hague more? These are the kind of questions that we constantly get at forums like this. There aren't any really good answers or satisfactory answers to the people who pose the questions. I'm going to join the long line of reporters who failed to answer that question.

Aud: I just find it hard to ration the (inaudible).

Lee: We've got a supporter of the press.

Aud: In light of the particular laissez-faire attitude of (inaudible) more specifically it's increase of re-armament. How real is the threat of the military industrial-conflict and how concerned should we be if in fact it does it exist?

Lee: The answer is very complex. I'd like to ask the panel to close with just a brief comment on this question: What will be the enduring legacy of the Reagan Administration that historians will note? Charlie, will you start off?

McDowell: I think the enduring legacy will be a restoration of the presidency with the lessons learned that we cannot operate a government with people whose theme is anti-politics. We tried that with a nice southerner named Mr. Carter and it didn't work. And we tried it with a conservative republican named Ronald Reagan from California and it hasn't worked very well. To base a candidacy and a movement in America on anti-politics, get rid of the politicians, push aside and let the people do it is a fraud and a snare and a delusion. If Reagan is to have restored our faith in politicians I think we will have had the best shot we could get.

Lubinow: I think in a positive way a lot of politicians will be reevaluating the importance of how they are viewed as individuals. I think that Reagan's strength, particularly in the first term when he really was able, ... Reagan was elected because Jimmy Carter was right, there was a malaise in this country. The problem was that Jimmy Carter didn't know what to do about it. To some extent what the president has to do is to make the country feel good about itself. To give people a feeling that they can take care of things. In that sense, Reagan may have been anti-government, but I think there are a lot of people in this country that feel that the government can't solve all the problems. It goes to the poll that Gene mentioned--I think that the only thing that's different this time is that perhaps pollsters haven't thought to ask whether the president was in charge of the government or not.

I think people assumed that. I think if we had been polling all that time we might have found that the majority of people really didn't want a president who wasn't in charge of the government.

Warren: I think I agree with Jerry in that the legacy will be that Reagan enabled us to feel good about ourselves again. To feel proud about being Americans and to feel patriotic to put out your American flag on the 4th of July and all of that. It will be tempered, that kind of feel good feeling, a lot by his involvement in the Iran-Contra scandal. That has wounded and tarnished what I think would have been a pretty nice gold star in history.

Ranney: I think it depends on what happens as a result of the deficit. If the deficit has the absolutely horrendous disastrous economic effects that many economists think it will have, then I think it will be the enduring legacy that will go down in history, just as the enduring legacy of the Coolidge administration is now thought to have been the great depression. If those forecasts do not come true and the deficit doesn't either do any great harm or it kind of dribbles away or we get used to it or something of the sort, then it could very well go down as an administration that made a change in the direction in the role of government--somewhat comparable to what Franklin Roosevelt made in the 1930's. So if you tell me what the deficit is going to do over the next ten or twenty years, I think I can tell you what historians will be writing.

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