

President Ronald Reagan Oral History Project

Briefing Materials

William P. Clark

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Prepared by Rob Martin, Research Assistant
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WILLIAM P. CLARK TIMELINE

Prepared by Rob Martin

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1966 William P. Clark meets Ronald Reagan while serving as County Chairman for Reagan's California gubernatorial campaign. (*The Washington Post*, 01/14/1982)

With a Reagan victory looking all but certain, Clark and Phil Battaglia begin to work on Reagan's transition shortly before the election. Battaglia serves as Executive Secretary and Clark serves as Cabinet Secretary in the Reagan transition. (Lyn Nofziger, *Nofziger*, Washington, D.C.: Regnery Gateway, 1992, p. 57)

1967 Clark returns to private life.

Clark helps several senior Reagan aides investigate rumors that Battaglia and another Reagan aide are involved in an illicit affair. (Nofziger, p. 77)

Clark replaces Battaglia as Governor Reagan's Executive Secretary in August. Clark is credited with restoring order to the Governor's office and providing much needed reorganization in the wake of Battaglia's resignation. Among Clark's innovations is the "mini-memo," which becomes the standard one-page briefing that Reagan utilizes throughout his career in public service. Clark hires Michael Deaver to serve as his deputy and has Deaver act as the Governor's office liaison with Nancy Reagan. (Michael Deaver, *Behind the Scenes*, New York: William Morrow and Company, 1987, p. 38; Nofziger, pp. 67, 77-79, 250; *The Washington Post*, 04/17/1983)

1969-1971 Clark leaves the Governor's office to serve as a California Superior Court judge. Clark is succeeded as Executive Secretary by Edwin Meese. (Edwin Meese, *With Reagan: The Inside Story*, Washington, D.C.: Regnery Gateway, 1992, p. 33)

1971-1973 Clark serves as a California Court of Appeal Justice.

1973-1981 Clark serves as a Justice on the California State Supreme Court.

1980

February Nancy Reagan asks Clark to take over Reagan's presidential campaign after a power struggle ensues between senior campaign advisers Ed Meese and John Sears. Clark declines the offer and chooses to remain on the California State Supreme Court. (*The New York Times*, 10/26/1980, 08/14/1983; *The Washington Post*, 01/23/1983)

On the day of the New Hampshire primary, Reagan asks Sears, James Lake and Charles Black to resign from the campaign. (*The New York Times*, 10/26/1980)

- October* Deaver calls Clark to discuss staffing questions should Reagan win the presidential election. Deaver asks Clark what position to give Ed Meese should James Baker be named Chief of Staff. Clark says, "That's easy. You make Meese chief counsel to the president." Reagan agrees and appoints Meese as Counsellor to the President. (Deaver, p. 124)
- November* Clark is reported to be a possible candidate for Attorney General but tells friends in California that he does not want the job. Clark is also reportedly considered for the positions of Director of Central Intelligence and Secretary of Agriculture. (*The New York Times*, 11/21/1980)
- December* President-elect Reagan nominates Alexander Haig as Secretary of State.

1981

- January* Haig meets with Richard Allen, Reagan's appointment for Assistant to the President for National Security, to discuss possible candidates for Deputy Secretary of State. Haig writes that Allen suggests Clark. (Alexander Haig, Jr., *Caveat: Realism, Reagan and Foreign Policy*, New York: Macmillan, 1984, pp. 65-66)

Reagan sends Meese to San Francisco to encourage Clark to accept the position of Deputy Secretary of State. Clark is reportedly reluctant to take the position, as he is not sure he would be welcomed by Haig. (*The Washington Post*, 01/14/1982)

Clark meets with Haig to discuss the deputy position. Haig writes that he is not concerned with Clark's lack of foreign policy experience because he is more interested in finding a deputy who understands how Reagan operates. (Haig, pp. 65-66)

On inauguration day, Haig presents Meese with a draft of National Security Decision Document 1 (NSDD-1), which establishes the Administration's foreign policy decision-making apparatus. The draft draws heavy resistance from other agencies, including the Defense Department, as it places the State Department at the top of the decision-making hierarchy. (Haig, pp. 58-61; *The Washington Post*, 05/03/1981)

Numerous reports concerning Clark's nomination as Deputy Secretary of State circulate in the press. *The Washington Post* reports that Clark's nomination has been delayed by opposition from Haig. Other papers report that Clark is hesitant to accept the position because it would allow California Governor Edmund Brown to replace Clark with a liberal Democrat on the California Supreme Court. (*The Economist*, 01/10/1981; *The Washington Post*, 01/23/1981; *The New York Times*, 01/23/1981)

During the ceremony swearing Haig into office, Haig announces that he will be Reagan's "vicar" in conducting the Administration's foreign relations. (*The Washington Post*, 01/23/1981)

Clark accepts Reagan's nomination as Deputy Secretary of State. Haig quickly issues a statement expressing his pleasure with the nomination. The press subsequently reports that Clark was planted in the State Department by the White House to serve as

Reagan's "eyes and ears." Clark tells Haig that the reports are false. (Haig, pp. 93-94; *The New York Times*, 01/24/1981)

Robert McFarlane is selected to serve as Counselor to the State Department. McFarlane serves as a key adviser to Clark on foreign policy. (Haig, p. 70)

Haig has two foreign policy experts, David Abshire and Joe Jordan, prepare Clark for his confirmation hearings. (Haig, p. 67)

February The Senate confirms Clark as Deputy Secretary of State following a difficult confirmation process. (*The New York Times*, 02/24/1981)

March Acting on his own, Allen sends a letter to Weinberger requesting that the Defense Department chair a meeting to determine whether the Administration should postpone the SALT (Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty) talks with the Soviet Union scheduled in Geneva for late March. Deputy Secretary of Defense Frank Carlucci and Clark send a reportedly terse letter back to Allen informing him that the issue is already under review. (*The Washington Post*, 03/22/1981)

In a highly publicized memo to NATO leaders in Europe, Haig signals a strong U.S. commitment to fighting the spread of communism in Central America. The memo calls the issue "critical" and announces that the Administration will send additional military advisers to El Salvador and request massive military aid from Congress. Haig's remarks are later qualified by the White House. (*The New York Times*, 3/15/1981; *The Washington Post*, 03/22/1981)

The Washington Post reports that Vice President George Bush will head the Administration's national security crisis management. After Meese assures Haig there is no truth to the report, Haig appears before Congress and is asked about the article. Haig answers that he has also read the article "with a lack of enthusiasm" but that the report is not accurate. (Haig, pp. 141-145) White House Press Secretary James Brady later announces that the published reports are true but does not inform Haig, leaving Haig to learn about the White House's announcement from a reporter's question. The White House also announces that responsibility for coordinating policy preparation for foreign trips will shift from the State Department to the White House. Haig dictates his letter of resignation and calls Clark in to talk with him. Clark reassures Haig that this must be a mistake and promises to find out what had happened. Clark helps to settle the dispute between the White House and State Department and explains to Haig that the President was shocked by the misunderstanding. (Haig, pp. 141-145; *The Washington Post*, 03/22/1981, 05/03/1981, 01/14/1982; *The New York Times*, 03/24/1981)

Reagan survives a near-fatal assassination attempt on the 30th. Speaking to reporters at the White House, Haig announces that he is "in control." (Caspar Weinberger, *Fighting for Peace*, New York: Warner Books, 1990, p. 89, *The New York Times*, 04/01/1981)

- Spring* Clark and William Casey, Director of Central Intelligence, begin to meet regularly with Pope John Paul II's delegate in Washington, D.C., Archbishop Pio Laghi, to discuss the situations in Poland and Central America. Clark, Reagan, and Assistant to the President for National Security Richard Allen also meet regularly with Cardinal John Krol of Philadelphia. Krol serves as an intermediary between the White House, Poland and the Vatican. The Reagan Administration and the Vatican fear the Polish government will crackdown on the growing reform movement in Poland that is spearheaded by the Solidarity labor union. (*Time*, 02/24/1992; *Catholic World Report*, November 1999; Haig, pp. 246-248)
- April* Clark and Bush, along with congressional and church leaders, meet with Bishop Arturo Rivera y Damas, the acting head of the Roman Catholic Church in El Salvador. In the meeting, Rivera y Damas calls for the U.S. to stop providing military aid to El Salvador so that the country could find a non-military solution to meet its social needs. Rivera y Damas also denounces military aid from Cuba and Nicaragua. (*The Washington Post*, 04/07/1981)
- The Reagan Administration lifts the Soviet grain embargo. (Haig, p. 113)
- Following weeks of reports of feuding between Haig and senior Reagan officials, *The Washington Post* reports that Haig has arranged a meeting with long-time Reagan friend Senator Paul Laxalt (R-NV) to signal that Haig wants to be a "team player." Clark also reportedly tells Haig that Meese and Deaver are both supportive of Haig. (*The Washington Post*, 05/03/1981)
- June* Clark and Chester Crocker, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, travel to South Africa and Zimbabwe to discuss the Namibian independence process. Robert Mugabe, the Prime Minister of Zimbabwe, meets with Clark to caution the U.S. against pursuing changes in the UN plan for Namibian independence set during the Carter Administration. The South African government is seeking constitutional guarantees for the 110,000 white people living in Namibia. In South Africa, Clark and Crocker reportedly introduce the idea that Namibian independence be linked with the withdrawal of Cuban forces from Angola. (*The New York Times*, 06/11/1981; *The Washington Post*, 06/14/1981, 03/05/1984)
- July* Clark criticizes Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin after Israel launches an air attack against Palestinian forces in southern Lebanon. Clark says that Reagan felt "disappointment – and there might be some frustration" with the Israeli actions. (*The Washington Post*, 07/26/1981; *The Economist*, 07/25/1981)
- August* U.S. planes shoot down two Libyan fighters after being fired upon while conducting military exercises in international waters. Libya had claimed the international waters as Libyan space. (Weinberger, pp. 176-179)
- Zimbabwe Prime Minister Robert Mugabe says he is optimistic that Reagan will be a more effective proponent of peaceful change in southern Africa. Mugabe stands in sharp contrast to other black African leaders who are critical of the Reagan Administration's policy towards the region. Clark later explains that the Reagan

Administration's policy towards South Africa reflects "our California upbringing not to criticize friends and relatives in public, but to work it out in private." (*The Washington Post*, 08/04/1981, 01/14/1982)

September Clark calls Haig to relay a message from James Baker that Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin has been lobbying congressional leaders while visiting the U.S. against the sale of U.S. aircraft to Saudi Arabia. Begin had promised not to speak out against the sale. (Haig, p. 187)

Reagan asks Meese to head a small, secret group to study strategic defense. Clark later places one of his top aides in the group. (George Shultz, *Turmoil and Triumph*, New York: Scribner, 1993, p. 263)

October Clark and Commerce Secretary Malcolm Baldrige schedule a January trip to Nigeria. U.S. relations with Nigeria reportedly continue to improve despite the Administration's controversial decision to work with South Africa in the Namibian peace process. U.S. opposition towards Libya, however, continues to generate support for the U.S. throughout much of the region. (*The Christian Science Monitor*, 10/21/1981)

November In an "eyes-only" memo to Haig, Clark and Undersecretary for Management Richard Kennedy recommend human rights advocate Elliott Abrams to the human rights post in the State Department. Citing human rights as a defining difference between the U.S. and Soviet bloc, the memo argues, "Human rights is at the core of our foreign policy... We will never maintain wide public support for our foreign policy unless we can relate it to American ideals and to the defense of freedom." (*The New York Times*, 11/05/1981)

December Reagan signs NSDD-17 authorizing funding for the Contras in Nicaragua. (Robert A. Pastor, "The Centrality of Central America, in *Looking Back on the Reagan Presidency*, Larry Berman, ed., Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990, p. 35)

Clark travels to Ireland where he is to serve as the Administration's point man on the Irish-Protestant conflict. The U.S. has yet to place an ambassador in Dublin. The Anglo-Irish Council, recently established by London and Dublin, is a particularly controversial issue among northern Protestants. (*The Washington Post*, 10/22/1981; *The Christian Science Monitor*, 12/16/1981)

General Wojciech Jaruzelski imposes martial law in Poland on the 12th.

In response to the Soviet Union's support for the crackdown on Solidarity, the Reagan Administration suspends negotiations to renew a long-term grain agreement with the Soviet Union. The Administration had lifted the grain embargo earlier in the year. The Reagan Administration also imposes sanctions on U.S. firms participating in the construction of a Soviet natural gas pipeline from Siberia through Western Europe. Several Western European countries are considering participating in the pipeline construction despite opposition from the U.S. The sanctions on U.S. firms are

interpreted retroactively to include existing contracts. Reagan also steps up his secret work with the Vatican to keep the Solidarity movement alive in Poland. (Robert McFarlane, *Special Trust*, New York: Cadell & Davies, 1994, p. 202; Shultz, p. 135, 271; Haig, p. 254; *The Washington Post*, 10/31/1982; *Time*, 02/24/1992)

Late 1981 Reagan meets with Clark and the rest of his foreign policy team and announces, “Gentlemen, our concentration has been on domestic matters this year, and I want to roll the sleeves up now and get to foreign policy, defense, and intelligence.” (William P. Clark, “NSDD-75: A New Approach to the Soviet Union,” in *The Fall of the Berlin Wall*, Peter Schweizer, ed., Washington, D.C.: William J. Casey Institute of the Center for Security Policy, 2000, p. 69.

1982

January Reagan appoints Clark to succeed Allen as Assistant to the President for National Security. Allen had resigned amidst a controversy involving gifts from Japanese journalists. Clark explains his role at the National Security Council (NSC) as an honest broker and says he will not make policy recommendations. Meese’s role in national security matters is downsized, as the national security adviser will no longer report to Meese. McFarlane moves from State to the NSC with Clark to serve as Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security. Clark establishes the practice of briefing Reagan on national security every morning at 9:30. At Clark’s behest, Reagan issues a directive delineating the lines of authority and responsibility within the Administration’s foreign-policy team. The document is reportedly similar to the document Haig attempted to have Reagan sign the previous year. Clark directs the NSC to launch a series of broad studies on national security. Clark later creates a “crisis management center” at the NSC to provide instant support during foreign crises. (McFarlane, p. 194; *The New York Times*, 05/12/1982, 07/08/1982; *U.S. News & World Report*, 04/12/1982, 05/23/1983; *The Washington Post*, 01/14/1982)

Reagan decides against the sale of advanced fighters to Taiwan. Reagan had previously discussed strengthening ties with Taiwan. (*Financial Times*, 01/13/1982)

Reagan announces that he has asked Clark to look into the recent leaking of classified national security documents to the press. (*The Economist*, 01/30/1982)

Clark reportedly approves a State Department recommendation that the U.S. government secretly cover uncollected guaranteed loans made by American banks to Poland without requiring the debtor to be declared in default. The decision is made known after a classified memo from Clark is leaked to the press. (*The New York Times*, 02/01/1982, 02/05/1982)

February Clark proposes to reduce the number of foreign policy specialists on the NSC staff and to allow mid-level experts to attend his daily briefings to Reagan. (*The New York Times*, 02/09/1982)

The Reagan budget plan calls for an unprecedented peacetime military build-up, requesting \$258 billion in fiscal 1993. (*The Economist*, 05/29/1982)

While traveling in the Middle East, members of Weinberger's party announce that the Reagan Administration is "getting tough on Israel" and is seriously considering a new arms sale to Jordan. (*U.S. News & World Report*, 03/01/1982) The controversial remarks draw sharp criticism both from Haig and senior Israeli officials. Clark convinces Reagan to call Begin personally to smooth over the incident. Clark sets the rule that all foreign travel by presidential appointees must be cleared by the White House. (*The New York Times*, 07/08/1982)

March Clark tells Haig and Weinberger to end their public feud over a proposed arms sale to Jordan "or they'd hear from someone else over here [the President.]" (*Newsweek*, 03/08/1982)

Clark speaks with Senator Mark Hatfield (R-OR) about legislation Hatfield is sponsoring calling for a nuclear freeze. (*The Washington Post*, 03/11/1982)

Spring At Clark's suggestion, Reagan proposes early arms talks with the Soviet Union. Soviet Premier Leonid Brezhnev responds positively. (*The New York Times*, 07/08/1982)

Richard Pipes, a senior adviser on the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe at the NSC, says that the current probability for nuclear war is roughly 40 percent. Pipes also argues that that probability would be significantly decreased if the U.S. builds its nuclear arsenal to match the Soviets. (*The Washington Post*, 04/11/1982)

April Argentine forces invade the Falkland Islands on the 2nd. Haig serves as a mediator between the Argentines and British to help negotiate a peaceful settlement but is unsuccessful. (Haig, pp. 288-295)

May Bush travels to Beijing. Clark and Reagan toughen the terms of U.S. proposals that Bush will offer on the China-Taiwan situation. (Haig, p. 212)

Reagan signs NSDD-32, which authorizes economic, diplomatic, and covert actions to challenge and reverse Soviet expansionism in the Third World. The document provides the strategic rationale for the Reagan Doctrine. (McFarlane, pp. 219-220; *Time*, 02/24/1992)

Speaking at Georgetown University, Clark outlines the Administration's global strategy. The speech emphasizes the need for NATO to develop a "coalition strategy" built "on a foundation of military strength" to apply greater economic pressure on the Soviet Union by cutting Western trade and credits. (*The New York Times*, 05/27/1982) Clark also argues that the U.S. cannot simultaneously meet the Soviet threat on all fronts and must set defense priorities. Weinberger had previously argued that the U.S. must be prepared to fight a global war on all fronts. (*The Christian Science Monitor*, 05/26/1982)

June Clark travels with the presidential party to Europe on the 1st to visit London, Rome, Vatican City, and attend the NATO summit in Bonn. Major issues include economic anxiety in Europe over high interest rates in the U.S. and the strength of the dollar, as

well as the weakness of the franc. The Europeans are also still resisting U.S. pressure to cease work on the Soviet pipeline. During the trip, Reagan gives a series of speeches in which he adopts a more cooperative tone towards the NATO allies. The NATO foreign and finance ministers also reach a tentative agreement in which the U.S. would help bolster the franc, the Europeans would limit Soviet credits, and the U.S. in turn would ease its position on the Soviet pipeline. However, the agreement quickly dissolves after U.S. Treasury Secretary Don Regan, French President Francois Mitterrand, and West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt publicly repudiate the agreement. (Haig, pp. 306-310; *The New York Times*, 06/13/1982, 07/08/1982; *The Washington Post*, 10/31/1982)

Israeli forces invade Lebanon on the 6th after Arab terrorists attempt to assassinate Israel's ambassador to Great Britain in London. The PLO had been attacking northern Israeli settlements from fortified positions in southern Lebanon for some time. The U.S. had warned Israel not to intervene without clear provocation. Philip Habib, the U.S. special envoy to the Middle East, had helped to broker a cessation of hostilities after Israel carried out its agreement to return the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt on April 25th, but the cessation did not hold. (Weinberger, p. 141; Haig, pp. 187, 310, 330-334)

Clark and Haig disagree on the diplomatic instructions to send to Habib. While Clark wants to wait for a formal NSC meeting to allow the President to fully weigh all options, Haig argues time is essential and immediately issues instructions to Habib on his own authority. Reagan later warns Haig not to move out in front of him again. Haig tells Reagan that he can no longer serve as Secretary of State under the current arrangements. Reagan agrees to think over the situation. (Haig, p. 311)

Clark approves a proposed draft resolution in the UN demanding an immediate Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon. Clark and Bush both reportedly call for the Administration to denounce Israel's determination to defeat the P.L.O. Confusion ensues after Haig instructs Jean Kirkpatrick, the U.S. Ambassador to the UN, to veto the resolution. Reagan agrees to reverse the decision. (Haig, pp. 338-339; *The New York Times*, 07/08/1982, 08/05/1982, 08/16/1982)

Upon returning from Europe, Clark tells McFarlane, "The situation with Al [Haig] is very serious... It's always been very prickly and abrasive, but on this trip it was the worst I've ever seen. The President has just about reached the end of his rope." Clark and McFarlane discuss possibilities for Haig's successor in the event of Haig's departure. They agree that George Shultz, who is currently heading Bechtel, would be a good candidate. Clark has McFarlane find out how to contact Shultz should it be necessary. (McFarlane, pp. 200-201)

The NSC meets on the 18th to discuss the construction of the Soviet natural gas pipeline. With the strong backing of Clark, Weinberger and Casey, Reagan imposes sanctions on foreign companies holding U.S. licenses and U.S. subsidiaries abroad that are participating in the construction of the pipeline. The Administration had already imposed sanctions on U.S. firms participating in the construction of the pipeline. The sanctions meet with strong opposition in Western Europe. (Shultz, pp. 135-136; *U.S. News & World Report*, 05/23/1983; *The Washington Post*, 06/27/1982, 09/16/1982)

Reagan informs Haig on the 25th that he has decided to accept Haig's resignation. Clark reportedly plays a key role in Reagan's decision. Clark calls Shultz in London and asks Shultz to go to the U.S. embassy to take an important call from the President on a secure line. Reagan asks Shultz to be his Secretary of State. Shultz immediately returns to the U.S. to meet with Reagan, Clark, Meese and James Baker at Camp David. Reagan asks Haig to continue serving as Secretary of State until Shultz is confirmed. (Shultz, pp. 3-4; McFarlane, pp. 204-205; *The New York Times*, 07/08/1982)

July Haig formally resigns as Secretary of State on the 5th. Shultz's confirmation hearings begin on the 15th. Deputy Secretary of State Walter Stoessel serves as acting Secretary of State in the interim. (Shultz, pp. 14-15; Haig, p. 351)

As Israel's attack on southern Lebanon continues, Clark calls Shultz to say, "The President's friendship for Israel is slipping. Enough is enough." (Shultz, p. 87)

August Former President Jimmy Carter tells *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* that "very knowledgeable people" in Israel have told him that the Reagan Administration gave the green light to Israel to invade Lebanon. (*The Christian Science Monitor*, 09/16/1982)

The U.S. and China sign the joint communiqué that preserves U.S.-China relations while acknowledging U.S. arms sales to Taiwan. (Haig, pp. 214-215)

Firms in France, England, Italy, and Germany begin shipping sanctioned goods to proceed with the construction of the Soviet pipeline. The Reagan Administration responds with carefully limited and specific denial orders. (Shultz, pp. 138-139)

The PLO begins to withdraw its forces from Lebanon. The U.S. agrees to participate in a multinational force to oversee the evacuation. (McFarlane, p. 209)

September Reagan announces his "September 1st" peace initiative for the Middle East. The plan calls on Jordan to negotiate on behalf of the Palestinians and proposes a five-year transition period with Palestinian self-government in Gaza and the West Bank under formal Israeli rule. Palestinian self-government would later be associated with Jordan. The proposal also calls for a freeze on Israeli settlements in the West Bank while reaffirming America's commitment to Israeli security. The proposal does not call for an independent Palestinian state. While largely receiving strong praise from around the world, the initiative draws strong opposition from Israel, criticism from the PLO, and is rejected by Jordan's King Hussein. (McFarlane, pp. 207-208; Shultz, pp. 96-98)

Reagan sends Clark to Mexico to discuss Mexico's mounting debt problems. The Reagan Administration is concerned whether Mexico will agree to implement the IMF's recommended measures to tighten its monetary policy. (*The Wall Street Journal*, 09/16/1982)

The Israel-backed Phalange militia massacres scores of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon after Lebanese President Bashir Gemayel is assassinated. The multinational forces had been withdrawn from Lebanon earlier in the week. Shultz, Casey, Clark, McFarlane and Meese recommend sending another multinational force to Lebanon. U.S. troops reenter Lebanon on the 29th. (McFarlane, p. 219; Weinberger, pp. 152-153)

October Clark gives a speech in San Diego outlining the Administration's "Framework for Peace" agenda. (William P. Clark, "President Reagan's Framework for Peace," United States Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, 10/29/1982; McFarlane, p. 219)

November Clark wakes Reagan in the middle of the night to inform him that Brezhnev has died. Clark and Shultz recommend that Reagan personally attend the funeral. Reagan decides not to attend. (*Financial Times*, 11/12/1982)

The Reagan Administration reaches an agreement with its European allies on the Soviet pipeline sanctions. Under the agreement, the U.S. agrees to lift the pipeline sanctions while the Europeans agree to tighter controls over the sales of strategic goods to the Soviet Union and to limit future credits. The agreement also stipulates that no new contracts on the construction of the Soviet pipeline will be signed until a study on alternative energy is conducted. France is the lone hold-out refusing to agree to the compromise. Reagan calls France's bluff and announces the agreements anyway. (McFarlane, pp. 221-222; Shultz, pp. 141-143)

December The press reports that Clark gives serious consideration to resigning but Reagan asks Clark to stay. (*The Washington Post*, 04/17/1983; *The New York Times*, 08/14/1983)

Over the New Years' holiday, Clark meets with Reagan and Shultz to discuss the arms control talks with the Soviet Union. (Shultz, p. 160)

1983

January Reagan signs NSDD-75 outlining the Administration's foreign policy towards the Soviet Union. Emphasizing realism, strength and dialogue, McFarlane suggests the document signals an official repudiation of détente. Clark argues the document is particularly significant because it introduces to U.S. policy the strategy of applying "internal pressure on the USSR to weaken the sources of Soviet imperialism" through economic and ideological tools. (Clark, "NSDD-75: A New Approach to the Soviet Union," pp. 71-72; James Scott, *Deciding to Intervene: Reagan Doctrine and American Foreign Policy*, Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1996, pp. 20-21; McFarlane, pp. 219-220)

Reagan creates the bipartisan Commission on Strategic Forces to review the country's nuclear weapons program, develop a basing plan for the MX missile, and consider responses to the nation's growing nuclear freeze movement. The commission is chaired by Brent Scowcroft. (Clark, "NSDD-75: A New Approach to the Soviet Union," p. 74; *The Washington Post*, 01/04/1983)

The New York Times reports that U.S. and Soviet negotiators in Geneva had worked out a compromise to limit intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF) in Europe last July but that the deal was rejected by both the U.S. and Soviet leadership. Reagan remains committed to the “zero option” position in which both sides would renounce the deployment of all INF in Europe. The Soviet Union, meanwhile, is unwilling to consider either the “zero option” or the deployment of any U.S. INF in Europe. Eugene Rostow is dismissed as the Director of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. U.S. arms control negotiator Paul Nitze returns to Washington, D.C. in an attempt to broaden his instructions beyond the “zero option.” (Shultz, p. 271; *The New York Times*, 01/20/1983; *Financial Times*, 01/17/1983)

Reagan selects Clark to head the cabinet-level Special Planning Group to coordinate “on a regular basis national security public affairs matters of Presidential interest.” (*The New York Times*, 01/20/1983)

February Clark strongly opposes a plan under consideration at the State Department to pursue negotiations with leftist guerillas in Central America. (*Financial Times*, 02/11/1983)

Clark attends a meeting on the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) on the 11th with Reagan, Weinberger, McFarlane, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The Joint Chiefs support moving forward with SDI. (McFarlane, pp. 229-230; Shultz, p. 263)

The Reagan Administration debates whether Reagan should agree to a White House meeting with Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin. Clark argues against the meeting. (Shultz, pp. 164-165)

March Reagan delivers his “Evil Empire” speech on the Soviet Union. Over Clark’s objections, Nancy Reagan and Deaver reportedly convince Reagan to soften the rhetoric in the speech. According to Deaver, “When Bill went to Nancy, and was told point-blank that I stood with her, he decided it was time to go home.” (Deaver, pp. 129-130)

Reagan asks Clark to find a way to stop the leaks coming from the White House. Clark proposes to use polygraphs to investigate the leaks. Reagan authorizes Clark’s proposal, which is supported by Meese and opposed by James Baker, Deaver and Shultz. The presidential directive, along with an earlier, similar directive within the Pentagon, is halted by Congress until it can hold hearings on polygraphs. Reagan ultimately decides against the use of polygraphs. (Meese, p. 113; *The Christian Science Monitor*, 09/15/1983)

Clark attends a meeting in Shultz’s office on the 18th with the new Chinese ambassador, Zhang Wenjin, to discuss several issues including U.S. policy on technology transfers to China. (Shultz, p. 393)

Clark informs Shultz on the 18th that physicist Edward Teller and the President’s science adviser, Jay Keyworth, are studying a proposal to build a strategic defense system. (Shultz, p. 249)

Clark, McFarlane and Shultz work on Reagan's upcoming address on SDI. Shultz suggests that Clark and McFarlane are calling for a bold address announcing SDI while Shultz is pushing to tone down the language in the address. (Shultz, pp. 250-256)

Reagan gives an important address announcing SDI on the 23rd.

Reagan asks Clark to head an "intensive effort" to develop a long-term research and development program for SDI. (Shultz, p. 259)

The Reagan Administration debates whether to compromise with Congress and accept less than the ten percent increase in defense spending it had proposed in its budget. While Weinberger and Clark reportedly support staying closer to the ten percent level, James Baker supports larger cuts. (*U.S. News & World Report*, 05/23/1983; *The New York Times*, 03/31/1983; *The Washington Post*, 04/17/1983)

April

Reagan tentatively approves two compromise proposals on the defense budget. The Clark-Senator John Tower option proposes an eight percent increase in defense spending. The Senate Majority Leader Howard Baker (R-TN) and James Baker proposal calls for a seven and one-half percent increase. Both options are then reportedly subject to Weinberger's approval. However, miscommunication in the Administration reportedly ensues and no compromise proposal reaches the Senate committee. A last minute Administration proposal of 7.9 percent is then rejected in the Senate committee in favor of five percent. (Meese, p. 112; *U.S. News & World Report*, 5/23/1983; *The New York Times*, 03/31/1983, 04/09/1983; *The Washington Post*, 04/17/1983)

Reagan creates a new group under Clark to study Soviet compliance with nuclear arms control treaties. (*The Christian Science Monitor*, 04/22/1983)

Reagan announces that the U.S. is ready to begin negotiating a long-term grain agreement with the Soviet Union, thereby lifting the suspension on grain negotiations imposed in December, 1981. (Shultz, p. 271)

According to Shultz, Clark argues against issuing a joint U.S.-Mexican statement of principles on Central America that Shultz had drafted with Mexican Foreign Minister Bernardo Sepulveda. Clark argues, "We do not want the Mexicans to deal bilaterally with Central America." (Shultz, p. 302)

Shultz begins shuttle diplomacy in the Middle East. Clark had reportedly urged Shultz to travel to the Middle East to assist in negotiations to secure the withdrawal of foreign forces from Lebanon. (T.G. Fraser, *The USA and the Middle East Since World War 2*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989, p. 181; *U.S. News & World Report*, 05/23/1983; *The New York Times*, 08/14/1983;)

May

Reagan decides to ban the sale of Nicaraguan sugar to the U.S. (*U.S. News & World Report*, 05/23/1983, 09/19/1983)

Reagan promises Congress he will be more flexible in upcoming arms control talks with the Soviet Union. In return, Congress agrees to approve additional funding for the MX missile. (*U.S. News & World Report*, 05/23/1983)

Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs Thomas Enders is nominated as Ambassador to Spain following repeated disagreements with the White House on Central American policy. Clark had reportedly been critical of Enders willingness to consider negotiating with the leftist guerillas in Central America. (*The New York Times*, 06/07/1983)

Reagan chairs a National Security Planning Group meeting to discuss a CIA proposal to mine Nicaraguan waters. Reagan decides against the proposal. (Shultz, p. 308)

Clark travels with the presidential party to attend the Williamsburg economic summit. (Shultz, p. 307)

June Clark meets with Grenada Prime Minister Maurice Bishop. The Reagan Administration is alarmed by possible Soviet and Cuban support in the construction of a military airfield in Grenada. (Weinberger, p. 106; Shultz, p. 324)

July Clark sends Reagan a memo on the 18th proposing to conduct massive military exercises off of Nicaragua's coasts and in Honduras. Reagan authorizes the operation, which is dubbed, "Big Pine II." The first Big Pine was conducted in February on a smaller scale. The military exercises spark strong opposition in Congress. (Shultz, pp. 310-311; *The New York Times*, 08/14/1983; *U.S. News & World Report*, 08/08/1983, 09/19/1983)

With Clark's backing, Kissinger is selected to head a bipartisan commission to review U.S. policy in Central America. (*U.S. News & World Report*, 08/08/1983, 09/19/1983)

Shultz requests a meeting with Reagan, Bush, Clark, Meese and James Baker on the 25th. In the meeting, Shultz nearly resigns as he complains that his work as Secretary of State is being undermined by a faulty process. Shultz is particularly disturbed that McFarlane had made a secret trip to the Middle East earlier in the year. (Shultz, pp. 312-313; *The New York Times*, 12/12/1988)

Clark and Shultz brief Congress on the military exercises in Central America on the 27th. (Shultz, p. 315)

The House of Representatives vote on the 28th to cut-off aid to the Contras. Contra aid is saved later in the year in a Senate-House compromise. (Shultz, pp. 301, 311; *The New York Times*, 08/14/1983)

Clark is selected to head the Senior Arms Control Policy Group, a new interagency task force created to set strategy for arms control negotiations with the Soviet Union. (*The New York Times*, 08/14/1983; *U.S. News & World Report*, 8/08/1983, 09/19/1983)

Clark names McFarlane as special envoy to the Middle East. McFarlane also retains his position at the NSC as Clark's deputy. (*U.S. News & World Report*, 8/08/1983)

The U.S. continues its moves to improve relations with China as it agrees to increase the import quota on Chinese textiles and increase U.S. grain sales to China. (*U.S. News & World Report*, 9/19/1983)

Martial law is lifted in Poland. (*The New York Times*, 12/14/1983)

The U.S. and Soviet Union conclude a long-term grain agreement on the 28th. (Shultz, p. 281)

September The Soviet Union shoots down a South Korean airliner on the 1st. Reagan strongly denounces the Soviet Union and imposes limited sanctions. Conservative critics charge that the sanctions are too moderate. (*U.S. News & World Report*, 9/19/1983)

Clark opposes a congressional compromise to make the anti-Castro Radio Marti part of Voice of America. Clark calls for an independent radio station run by a special appointee. (*The New York Times*, 09/26/1983)

The U.S. peacekeeping forces in Lebanon come into conflict with the Syrian-backed Druze militia. On the 28th, the House authorizes the deployment of U.S. troops in Beirut for an additional eighteen months. (Shultz, p. 227)

October Clark meets with McFarlane in Rome. McFarlane is involved in negotiations on the inclusion of neutral observers in Lebanon. Shultz had failed the week before to persuade Syria to accept a UN truce observer team. (Shultz, pp. 318-319; *The New York Times*, 10/07/1983)

Clark meets with Shultz and McFarlane to review U.S. strategy in the Middle East peace talks. (*The New York Times*, 10/07/1983, 10/14/1983)

The Reagan Administration proposes to build a special Jordanian strike force to help support pro-Western governments in the Persian Gulf. Israel opposes the proposal. (*The New York Times*, 10/14/1983; *The Christian Science Monitor*, 10/17/1983)

Reagan nominates Clark on the 13th to succeed James Watt as Secretary of the Interior. Reagan calls Clark "a God-fearing Westerner, fourth-generation rancher and a person I trust." (*The New York Times*, 10/14/1983) Watt had come under heavy fire from environmentalists. Clark was reportedly tired of the political in-fighting within the Administration and requested the move. Casey and Weinberger had unsuccessfully tried to talk Clark out of leaving the NSC. (Weinberger, pp. 358-360; Meese, pp. 113-114)

Reagan names McFarlane as Clark's successor at NSC on the 17th. Former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld takes over as special envoy to the Middle East. According to some reports, Reagan had originally accepted James Baker and Deaver's proposal that Baker move to the NSC and Deaver take over as Chief of Staff.

However, Weinberger, Meese and possibly Clark successfully oppose the move, instead calling for Kirkpatrick to take over at NSC. McFarlane is then chosen as the compromise candidate between Baker and Kirkpatrick. (Meese, p. 114; Deaver, p. 130; Shultz, pp. 228, 319, 321; *The Washington Post*, 10/14/1983, 10/17/1983, 10/19/1983; *The New York Times*, 10/14/1983; *U.S. News & World Report*, 10/24/1983)

At a press conference, Reagan stresses that he is moving Clark out of the NSC at Clark's request. (*The New York Times*, 10/23/1983)

A terrorist bombing kills 241 U.S. marines in Beirut on the 23rd. The U.S. forces are later withdrawn in February 1984.

U.S. forces invade Grenada after a Marxist coup ousts and kills Prime Minister Maurice Bishop. (Weinberger, pp. 105-108)

November During his confirmation hearings, Clark says, "I am making no announcement on changes in policy other than to say I will review all policy." (*The Christian Science Monitor*, 11/03/1983) Clark also says he will try to reduce the number of lawsuits currently filed against the Department of Interior through negotiation and settlement. (*The New York Times*, 11/06/1983)

The Senate confirms Clark as Secretary of the Interior on the 21st. (*The New York Times*, 11/22/1983)

Clark makes a number of moves during his first few months at Interior to address the strong criticisms of Watt's environmental record. Clark agrees to scale back Watt's plan to sell the rights to ten billion tons of coal at reportedly "fire-sale prices." Clark scales back Watt's plan to open one billion offshore acres to energy exploration. Clark agrees to put Watt's ambitious program to open large tracts of public land for oil, gas, and mineral development on hold for further review. Clark also announces he will speed up the review process for proposed water projects out West and requests additional funding to accelerate the listing of endangered species. Clark pledges not to allow drilling or mining in wilderness areas and returns 132,000 acres to the Hualapi Indians. Clark also dismisses three of Watt's more controversial assistant secretaries. Later in the year, Clark scales back the Garrison Diversion Project, a large-scale irrigation program in North Dakota, and reaches a compromise with Congress over a Watt initiative to open tracts of wilderness to mineral development. (*The New Republic*, 10/01/1984; *U.S. News & World Report*, 02/27/1984, 7/02/1984; *The New York Times*, 12/29/1983)

1984

January Clark calls for Interior officials to speak more openly with the public and media, thus ending Watt's moratorium on contact between Interior officials and environmental groups. (*U.S. News & World Report*, 02/27/1984)

The Supreme Court rules that the federal government does not have to consider coastal land-management programs of states when offering offshore oil and gas leases. (*The Economist*, 01/21/1984)

Clark announces that the Interior Department will concentrate on leasing only those offshore tracts that generate the most interest from energy companies. (*The Economist*, 01/21/1984)

- February* Clark requests \$175 million in land-acquisition funds in the fiscal 1985 budget, thereby reversing Watt's moratorium on national park expansion. However, environmental groups are still critical since the expansion will consist of purchasing private land within existing parks and park renovation rather than adding new units to the national park system. (*The Christian Science Monitor*, 01/03/1985)
- March* Testifying before a House subcommittee, Clark announces that the Reagan Administration will not fight to lift a congressional ban against offshore oil leases this year and will keep controversial tracts off of California, Massachusetts, and Florida off-limits until 1986. (*The Wall Street Journal*, 03/02/1984)
- April* Clark says if Congress passes a bill that would overturn the Supreme Court's coastal zone management ruling, he will recommend that Reagan veto it. (*Oil and Gas Journal*, 04/09/1984)
- May* Testifying before Congress, Clark faces criticism of the Interior's offshore leasing program. Texas and Louisiana are in the process of challenging the Interior's area-wide lease sales. Many states are also calling for the federal government to share the revenue generated from lease-sales with coastal states. (*Oil & Gas Journal*, 05/07/1984)
- June* Testifying before Congress, Clark expresses concern over the congressional ban on offshore drilling in certain tracts. Clark argues that the U.S. needs greater energy exploration and production to reduce the nation's dependence on foreign producers. Clark also testifies that seismic surveys in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge have not harmed the region's ecology and signals that the Administration might recommend opening tracts of land in the refuge to drilling. (*Oil & Gas Journal*, 06/24/1984, 07/02/1984)
- Clark calls for the federal government to share a portion of offshore lease sales revenue with coastal states. Reagan decides against Clark's proposal. (*Oil & Gas Journal*, 06/25/1984)
- July* Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis calls on the Department of the Interior to further scale back its plan to open offshore tracts to oil and gas exploration. (*Christian Science Monitor*, 07/12/1984)
- August* Clark supports a U.S. International Trade Commission (ITC) proposal that the U.S. work with other copper producing countries to negotiate a coordinated decrease in world copper production. (*Financial Times*, 08/22/1984)

Clark further scales back Watt's proposal to open tracts offshore of Massachusetts to gas and oil exploration by limiting the September 26th lease sale to 1,138. (*The Christian Science Monitor*, 09/06/1984)

September Massachusetts Governor Dukakis takes the Interior Department to court in an effort to further limit the offshore tracts available for gas and oil exploration. (*The Christian Science Monitor*, 09/06/1984)

Reagan decides against an ITC and Interior Department recommendation to grant the U.S. copper-mining industry protection in coordination with other world copper producers. The move is reportedly meant to provide the Administration with more leverage in offering the U.S. steel industry greater protection. (*Financial Times*, 09/08/1994)

1985

January Clark announces he will resign as Secretary of the Interior.

Reagan nominates Energy Secretary Donald Hodel to replace Clark as Secretary of the Interior.

March Reagan appoints Clark as Chairman of the blue-ribbon Task Group on Nuclear Weapons Program Management. (*The San Francisco Chronicle*, 03/02/1985)

McFarlane suggests Clark and former Secretary of Transportation Drew Lewis as possible candidates to serve as special envoys for the U.S. on acid rain. Canada is reportedly urging that both countries appoint special envoys to work with each other to study the problem. Lewis is selected for the job. (Deaver, p. 238)

April Reagan names Clark as a presidential emissary to help resolve a land dispute between the Navajo and Hopi Indian tribes (*The New York Times*, 05/09/1985)

June Reagan appoints Clark to the Packard Commission to study Defense Department management and procurement. (*The Washington Post*, 04/02/1986)

Late 1985 Clark cautions Admiral John Poindexter, Assistant to the President for National Security, about the NSC's continued support for a proposal to build an Iraqi pipeline through Jordan. After Syria had shut down an Iraqi pipeline in 1982, Iraq began to explore other routes to export its oil. In 1983 and 1984, a U.S. firm met with Iraqi and Jordanian officials to discuss a project to build a pipeline to carry Iraqi oil through Jordan. However, Iraq wanted insurance against the possibility of an Israeli attack on the pipeline. The project quickly becomes a political mess for the U.S., as Clark warns Poindexter that private parties are attempting to manipulate U.S. security policy for their own interests. Poindexter rescinds the NSC's support for the project. (*The New York Times*, 01/31/1988)

1986

- January* Clark calls Shultz to argue in favor of a *quid pro quo* deal with the South African government in which the Reagan Administration agrees to give South African President P.W. Botha a White House visit and Botha agrees to begin taking steps towards the dismantling of apartheid. The Administration later decides against the deal, feeling that Botha is not prepared to go far enough with reforms at this time. (Shultz, pp. 1119-1121)
- Late 1986* Reagan names Clark to the NSC and Defense Department's Commission on Integrated Long-Term Strategy. (*The Washington Post*, 01/11/1988)
- Clark, McFarlane, and Poindexter say that William Wilson, the former U.S. Ambassador to the Vatican, had been repeatedly ordered to cease unauthorized contact with Libyan officials. Wilson nonetheless sought help from Italian officials to arrange a meeting with Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi. Wilson had met with Gadhafi in Tripoli in November 1985 without notifying anyone in the U.S. government. (*The New York Times*, 12/20/1986)

1987

- November* Reagan Administration officials confirm that Clark had sent a letter to Reagan urging him to pardon Poindexter and Colonel Oliver North. Clark argued that both deserve pardons because their efforts in the Iran-contra affair were undertaken at “considerable personal risk” and “without consideration for personal gain.” (*The New York Times*, 11/23/1987)

WILLIAM P. CLARK SUGGESTED TOPICS

Prepared by Rob Martin

Miller Center of Public Affairs, University of Virginia, 7/13/2003

Working for Governor Reagan

- Discuss your early relationship with Ronald and Nancy Reagan. How did you come to meet Ronald Reagan? Describe your work on Reagan's gubernatorial campaign and on the transition. Discuss your work as Governor Reagan's Executive Secretary.
- Comment on the 1980 presidential campaign. Did you play any role in the campaign? What role, if any, did you play in the transition?

The State Department

- How did you come to join the Reagan Administration? Did you have any reservations about leaving the California Supreme Court? Discuss your selection as Deputy Secretary of State. Comment on your confirmation process.
- What type of work did you do at the State Department? Describe your role and responsibilities as Deputy Secretary of State.
- Comment on your relationship with Alexander Haig. What was it like working with Haig? Discuss Haig's relationship with other members of Reagan's foreign policy team. Comment on your role in helping to manage Haig's rocky relations with the White House staff.
- How was foreign policy made in the Reagan Administration? What role did the State Department play in the interagency process?
- Comment on the events surrounding Reagan's assassination attempt.

The National Security Council (NSC)

- How did you come to join the NSC? Describe your role as Assistant to the President for National Security. To what degree did you play policy-maker versus honest broker? What kind of mandate did you receive from Reagan on your job at the NSC? What were your "rules of engagement?"
- How was the NSC organized? Did you make any changes upon joining the NSC?
- Which issues occupied most of your time at the NSC?
- Comment on Reagan's foreign policy decision-making style. How did he like to have foreign policy decisions made? Did Reagan's preference for "decision-making by cabinet" carry over from his days in Sacramento? What role did Reagan himself like to play in foreign policy-making?
- Discuss your relationship with other senior Administration officials, such as Haig, Shultz, Weinberger, Casey, Baker, Meese, and Deaver. How did your close relationship with Reagan affect your role at the NSC and your standing within the Administration?
- What were Reagan's foreign policy priorities? How did you see the differences between the "hard-liners" and the "negotiators" within the Administration in approaching relations with the Soviet Union? How did Reagan come down on the issue? Did Reagan's approach towards the Soviets change during his first term?

Joining the Department of the Interior

- How did you come to be Secretary of the Interior? Was this a position that had previously interested you while you were deciding whether to leave the NSC?
- Describe your responsibilities as Secretary of the Interior. Did Reagan give you any specific instructions regarding your work at the Department of the Interior?
- Comment on the legacy of James Watt.
- Describe the organization and management of the Department of Interior. What changes did you implement upon joining the Department? Discuss your relationship with the career staff.
- Which issues occupied most of your time?
- How did you approach your relationship with Congress, environmentalists, interest groups, and the energy industry?

Leaving the Reagan Administration

- Discuss your decision to leave the Reagan Administration at the end of the first term.
- Comment on your public service work after leaving the Reagan Administration, including your work on the Task Group on Nuclear Weapons Program Management and the Packard Commission.

The Reagan Presidency in Retrospect:

- What were the strengths and weaknesses of the Reagan Presidency?
- What do you feel was your greatest accomplishment in the Reagan Administration?
- What features of the Reagan Presidency were missed or misunderstood by the press?
- How did foreign diplomats and heads of state view Reagan? Were there any common misconceptions?
- Discuss your observations of Reagan's decision-making style and grasp of policy. How effective was Reagan as a public leader, a legislative leader, a foreign policy leader, and a party leader?
- How should the Reagan Presidency be viewed by future historians?

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