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TELEGRAM NUMBER 2522 OF 25 AUGUST

INFO SAVING ALL CG'S IN USA, ANKARA ATHENS BRUSSELS BONN  
COPENHAGEN LISBON LUXEMBOURG OTTAWA OSLA PARIS ROME REYKJAVIK  
THE HAGUE UKDEL NATO UKDEL VIENNA MADRID DUBLIN UKREP BRUSSELS  
BIS NEW YORK MOSCOW TOKYO PEKING

**REPUBLICAN NATIONAL CONVENTION**

## SUMMARY

1. FEW SURPRISES IN DALLAS, AND NATIONAL IMPACT PROBABLY NOT GREAT. BUT THE PRESIDENT'S REAFFIRMATION OF THE SUN BELT FAITH WILL HAVE SATISFIED THE ACTIVISTS. THE YOUNG TURKS HAD THEIR SAY, PARTICULARLY ON THE PLATFORM. BUT CONTINUITY, NOT RADICAL CHANGE, WAS THE DOMINANT THEME.

## DETAIL

## A. THE CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS

2. WITH THE NOMINATION OF BOTH PRESIDENTIAL AND VICE-PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES LOCKED UP IN ADVANCE, THE CONVENTION INEVITABLY BECAME SOMETHING OF A RITUAL SET-PIECE. THE PRESIDENT'S SPEECH APART, THE ORATORY FELL WELL BELOW THE STANDARD SET AT SAN FRANCISCO (E.G. BY CUOMO): AND THERE WERE - INEVITABLY - NO EXCITEMENTS TO COMPARE WITH THE TENSION BEFORE THE HART OR, JACKSON SPEECHES THERE, OR THE EXUBERANCE OVER FERRARO. ON THE LAST TWO DAYS THE PROCEEDINGS IN DALLAS WERE CONFINED TO SHORT EVENING SESSIONS GEARED TO PRIME TIME TELEVISION. BUT MOST OF THE DELEGATES HAD COME ONLY TO SEE THE PRESIDENT'S RE-CORONATION. HIS ACCEPTANCE SPEECH (SEE MIFT, NOT TO ALL) DID NOT DISAPPOINT THEM. AND THE RISK THAT DISAGREEMENTS OVER THE PLATFORM, OR JOCKEYING AMONG THE POTENTIAL CONTENDERS FOR 1988, MIGHT DISRUPT THE CONVENTION WAS AVOIDED. THE PRESIDENT WENT TO DALLAS 15 POINTS AHEAD IN MOST POLLS: IT SEEMS UNLIKELY THAT THE LEAD HAS NARROWED AS A RESULT OF THE CONVENTION.

## B. THE PLATFORM

4. THE POLITICAL DEBATE A WEEK EARLIER, DURING THE HEARINGS ON THE PARTY PLATFORM, WAS FAR LIVELIER THAN ANYTHING THAT HAPPENED DURING THE CONVENTION. THE DOCUMENT AS APPROVED IS A VICTORY FOR THE HARD-LINE SUPPLY-SIDERS ON ECONOMIC POLICY, AND FOR THE HARD RIGHT ON SOCIAL ISSUES. IT SETS ITS FACE AGAINST TAX INCREASES, AND CONGRESSMAN LOTT, THE PLATFORM COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN, AND OTHER HOUSE REPUBLICANS HAVE PLEDGED THEMSELVES TO VOTE AGAINST ANY PROPOSALS FOR AN INCREASE NEXT YEAR. THE FOREIGN POLICY SECTION IS MORE BALANCED, AS ARE THE PASSAGES ON TRADE AND AGRICULTURAL POLICY. ON THE SOCIAL SIDE, AS IN 1980, THE ABSENCE OF A REFERENCE TO THE EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT, HAS DISAPPOINTED MANY REPUBLICAN WOMEN. THE PLATFORM OPPOSES ABORTION AND SUPPORTS PRAYER IN SCHOOLS. MODERATE REPUBLICANS, REALISING THAT THEY

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WERE BADLY OUTNUMBERED AMONG CONVENTION DELEGATES, DECIDED NOT TO CHALLENGE THE PLATFORM IN FLOOR DEBATE BUT THEIR DISSATISFACTION WAS GIVEN A FULL AIRING ON TELEVISION AND IN THE PRESS BY MEDIA STARVED OF ANY GENUINE NEWS.

5. SENATOR LAXALT (GENERAL CHAIRMAN OF THE REAGAN/BUSH CAMPAIGN AND OF THE PARTY), JAMES BAKER (WHITE HOUSE CHIEF OF STAFF) AND OTHERS HAVE MADE CLEAR OVER THE LAST WEEK THAT THE PRESIDENT WILL NOT FEEL QUOTE LOCKED IN UNQUOTE BY THE PLATFORM. AS BAKER SAID, HE IS QUOTE NOT UNCOMFORTABLE UNQUOTE AND QUOTE GENERALLY AGREES UNQUOTE WITH IT BUT, WHERE THE PLATFORM IS NOT CONSISTENT WITH HIS POLICIES, HE WILL RUN ON THE LATTER. THIS WEEK THE SPEECHES OF THE PRESIDENT, VICE PRESIDENT AND OTHERS HAVE STRESSED THE THEME OF CONTINUITY, NOT RADICAL CHANGE. ASKED HOW LONG PEOPLE WOULD PAY ATTENTION TO THE PLATFORM, SENATOR DOLE SAID, QUOTE ABOUT AS LONG AS IT TAKES TO PACK UNQUOTE.

6. FOR ALL THIS, THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT THAT THE PLATFORM SUCCESSES OF THE SUPPLY-SIDERS WILL MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT, THOUGH NOT OF COURSE IMPOSSIBLE, FOR THE PRESIDENT TO DEAL EFFECTIVELY WITH THE DEFICIT IN A ~~SECOND TERM~~. THE CONTRADICTORY PRESSURES MAY NOT, HOWEVER, HAVE CHANGED DRASTICALLY AS A RESULT OF THE CONVENTION. THE PRESIDENT'S PERSONAL OBJECTIVE OF REDUCING THE TAX BURDEN HAS NEVER BEEN IN DOUBT, AND NO-ONE HAD EVER THOUGHT THAT A DECISION TO RAISE TAXES WOULD BE EASY FOR HIM. IN HIS OWN SPEECH HE AGAIN REFERRED TO RAISING TAXES AS A LAST RESORT MEASURE: HE THUS RETAINS AT LEAST IN PRINCIPLE, THE FLEXIBILITY WHICH IS ABSENT FROM THE PLATFORM. MONDALE WILL NO DOUBT CONTINUE TO PRESS HIM TO BE SPECIFIC.

7. DETAILED COMMENTS ON THE PLATFORM ARE IN MY TEL NO 2509, AND THREE SAVINGRAMS (NOT TO ALL).

#### C. THE PARTY STANCE

8. WHATEVER ITS PRACTICAL EFFECT, THE PLATFORM DOES CONFIRM THE DIRECTION THE PARTY HAS TAKEN SINCE 1980: GOLDWATER WAS RECEIVED WITH ACCLAIM IN DALLAS. BUT PUBLIC OPINION POLLS, AND VOTER REGISTRATION FIGURES SHOW THAT THE COUNTRY AS A WHOLE HAS BEEN MOVING IN THE SAME DIRECTION IN RECENT YEARS. THE REPUBLICAN PARTY HAS BENEFITTED FROM THIS RIGHTWARD SHIFT, AND ITS CENTRE OF GRAVITY HAS PROBABLY NOT MOVED TOO FAR RIGHT TO DISCOURAGE IT OR TO LEAVE A SIGNIFICANT GAP IN THE CENTRE OF THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM.

9. MANY CONVENTION SPEAKERS, INCLUDING THE PRESIDENT, MADE AN OPEN PITCH FOR THE HEARTS, MINDS AND VOTES OF DEMOCRATS. AS BEFORE, REAGAN CONTINUES TO MAKE FULL USE OF THE VOCABULARY AND NAMES OF ROOSEVELT AND TRUMAN: AND THE EVIDENCE IS THAT THIS APPEAL SUCCEEDS. WHILE THE STRIDENT RIGHT OF MANY DALLAS SPEECHES SUGGESTS A PARTY STILL LACKING IN SELF-CONFIDENCE ABOUT ITS IDENTITY, INTROSPECTION CAN BE AVOIDED WHILE A POPULAR PRESIDENT RIDES HIGH IN THE POLLS.

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### D. THE CLASS OF '88

10. WITH THE 1984 NOMINATION DECIDED IN ADVANCE, MUCH SPECULATION WAS RESERVED FOR THE 1988 RACE. VICE PRESIDENT BUSH HAD A GOOD CONVENTION. DESPITE HIS PRE-1980 RECORD, WHICH MUST LOOK SUSPICIOUSLY LIBERAL TO THE PARTY MAINSTREAM NOW, HE HAS WON RESPECT FOR HIS LOYALTY TO THE PRESIDENT AND HIS ABILITY TO SELL ADMINISTRATION POLICIES, AT HOME AND ABROAD. HE CAN NEVER BE THE RIGHT WING'S FAVOURITE SON, BUT REMAINS TOP OF THE POLLS. CONGRESSMAN JACK KEMP, WHO DRAFTED THE FOREIGN POLICY SECTION OF THE PLATFORM AND WAS A MAJOR INFLUENCE ON THE ECONOMIC SECTIONS, ALSO IMPROVED HIS POSITION IN THE 1988 STAKES. HIS SPEECH ON 21 AUGUST WAS ONE OF THE FEW RECEIVED WITH GENUINE ENTHUSIASM. SENATORS BAKER AND DOLE GAVE LACKLUSTRE PERFORMANCES, AND THEIR ODDS MAY HAVE LENGTHENED. AND ALTHOUGH, IF SHE REMAINS A DEMOCRAT, MRS KIRKPATRICK COULD NOT BE A CANDIDATE, HER PERFORMANCE CERTAINLY CONFIRMED HER POPULAR APPEAL AMONG REPUBLICANS.

### E. CONCLUSION

11. ALL IN ALL, A GOOD CONVENTION FOR THE REPUBLICANS. THE MOOD IN DALLAS WAS CONFIDENT, BUT NOT COMPLACENT: THE ABSENCE OF FIREWORKS WAS PROBABLY ON BALANCE BENEFICIAL: AND THE PRESIDENT'S AUTHORITY WAS RINGINGLY RE-ENDORSED. THE PLATFORM WOULD NOT SERIOUSLY INCOMMUNE HIM, OTHER THAN ON TAX, AND THE PARTY'S EVIDENT MOVE TO THE RIGHT WILL PROBABLY NOT WEAKEN HIS PERSONAL SUPPORT IN MIDDLE AMERICA.

12. SEE MIFT (NOT TO ALL)

FCO PLEASE PASS SAVINGS TO - ANKARA ATHENS BRUSSELS BONN  
COPENHAGEN LISBON LUXEMBOURG OTTAWA OSLO PARIS ROME REYKJAVIK  
THE HAGUE UKDEL NATO UKDEL VIENNA MADRID DUBLIN  
UKREP BRUSSELS MOSCOW TOKYO PEKING

HANNAY

FCO (PALACE) WHITEHALL  
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